



Media Release

Embargoed until 5/12/2017



Solutions for a Brown Planet

What essential resource are scientists seeking practical solutions for to help challenge pressing global environmental problems: global warming, flooding, food security, desertification and pollution?

A clue is that today is World Soil Day, an ideal time to talk about how scientists are looking at how the soil can capture carbon and so lessen climate change, how to stabilise the soil to slow the flow of water and stop flooding, and how agricultural soils can be managed sustainably into the future ensuring we are all fed.

The EU-funded RE CARE project has brought together leading soil scientists from across Europe to find practical solutions to the problems facing the soil. Ranging from the cold deserts of Iceland to the burnt areas of Portugal, Europe has issues with its soil that are relevant, both locally and globally. Fires and floods in 2017 have highlighted soil related problems and the importance of utilizing the techniques and technologies on hand to provide solutions. RE CARE project scientists have been working on forest fire-related issues in Portugal, and on how soil can be protected from flooding in mountainous areas.

This year the RE CARE team has been working on a new way of looking at soil problems to provide early warnings and the chance of early interventions. Using satellite data, information about land management and knowledge of how soil works in the ecosystem, they are producing a new Integrated Assessment Model (IAM) that can show detail down to 100m. With maps created by this system, policy-makers, planners and land managers can anticipate where problems will arise. Hedwig van Delden, the scientist leading this part of the project said:

"With the IAM model, we are bringing together a range of previous studies, using the knowledge of many colleagues to create a new tool that will be of direct interest to policymakers. Our new tool looks to inform people in their decision-making processes, to help all of us make better future choices about how we use the soil."

RE CARE project manager, Rudi Hessel said:

"The RE CARE project has been very ambitious bringing scientists together across many specialist areas. We are now beginning to see the results of that collaboration in tools such as IAM, bringing data-driven maps about soil threats to decision-makers in a way that they can use. At the same time, we also have a suite of techniques that farmers and other land managers can use to address urgent soil threats."

Ends

Notes for Editors.

1. For information on the Integrated Assessment Model go to <http://recare-hub.eu/tools-and-outputs/integrated-models>

2 - For information on the trials taking place in your area please go to <http://www.recare-hub.eu/tools-and-outputs/recare-experiments>

3 - For a media pack, including photographs, local contact information and RECARE Facebook postings, please contact Jane Mills. jmills@glos.ac.uk +44 1242 714137 @Jane Mills ou Cláudia Fernandes ac.fernandes@ua.pt +351 234370349 | Ext. 22612

4 - Suggested tweet text

"Solutions for a Brown Planet, how Portuguese scientists are working with local people to reverse damage to the land (link to article) @RECARE_EU". The project and associated twitter account will retweet tweets mentioning the project.

5 – Watch more about RECARE on YouTube -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dt7gINkCJw>

6 – RECARE is a project supported by the EU FP7 programme.