

# Achieving 'no net land take' until 2050: Research insights and governance approaches in France

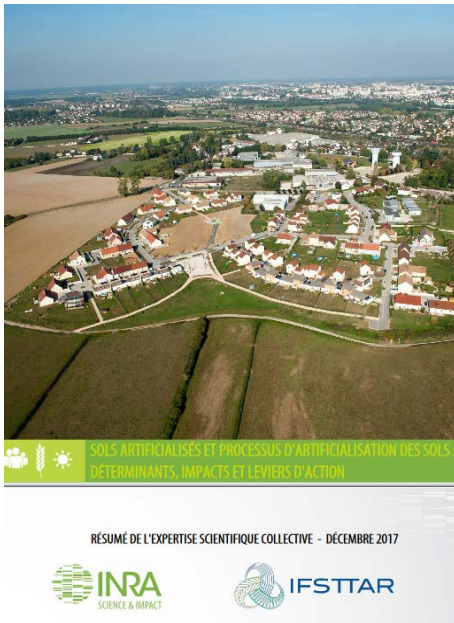
---

MAYLIS DESROUSSEAUX, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

NATIONAL CONSERVATORY OF ARTS AND CRAFTS, LE MANS, FRANCE

[maylis.desrousseau@lecnam.net](mailto:maylis.desrousseau@lecnam.net)

# Linking biodiversity and land take: a political ambition



State of the art

## PLAN BIODIVERSITÉ



Chapter on Land take

## Diagnostic elements

Commissariat général au développement durable

### Objectif « zéro artificialisation nette »

#### Éléments de diagnostic

impermeabilisées chaque année) est constant, voire augmente, sur la première décennie observée (voir figure 1). Comptées à la démographie qui est un facteur déterminant de l'artificialisation, les surfaces bâties et revêtues ont crû ainsi trois fois plus vite que la population (1,5 % par an entre 1981 et 2012 contre 0,5 %). En projetant la tendance jusqu'en 2020, la part de ce type de surface artificialisée pourrait passer de 6 à 9 % du territoire métropolitain (cf. graphiques), soit une augmentation d'un tiers de la surface actuellement imperméabilisée.

Figure 1 - Surface imperméabilisée en métropole de 1981 à 2020 (en km² et revêtus, % de la superficie métropolitaine)

Year	Percentage of impermeabilized surface
1981	30%
2012	42%
2020 (projected)	45%

OCTOBRE 2018



Citizen convention for climate

# What is at stake?

---

**In the European Union** (source: EEA, Land and soil in Europe 2019; Remote sensing)

1. Artificial surfaces cover less than 5 % of the wider EEA territory, a sizeable area — slightly smaller than Slovenia — still became sealed between 2000 and 2018.
2. The rate of increase in artificial surface areas has slowed down, from 1 086 km<sup>2</sup> per year between 2000 and 2006 to 711 km<sup>2</sup> per year between 2012 and 2018.

**In France** (source: CEREMA; property files and land register)

Between 2009-2017: 27000 ha/year

9.3% of the surface of the country



# There is no specific governance but numerous governances

---

The expression « Soil Artificialization » = land take

Artificialized means: not Natural, agricultural nor Forest land

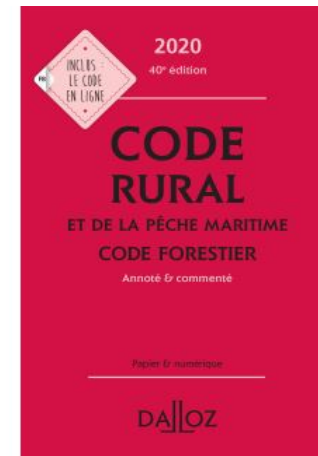
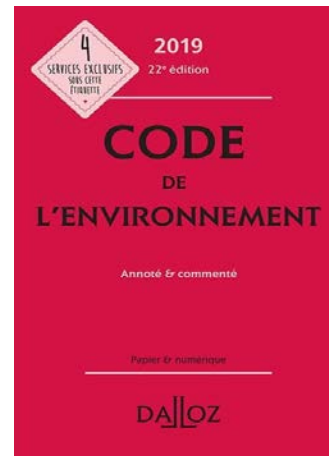
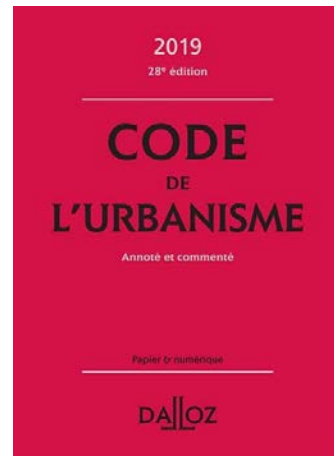
- A Negative definition
- All human activities are (more or less) drivers of artificialization
- A legally scattered notion: no global regime of soil artificialization



# Artificialization: urbanization or soil sealing

---

- Various intensity of anthropization
- Different environmental impacts
- Different legal responses: water regime, urban land planning, polluted soil rehabilitation



# Somewhere between Land and Soil

---

In French, the word **Soil** means the « ecosystem soil » as well as a « surface ».

It has no environmental definition in the law and **it is not protected** as a natural element of the environment.

The word **Land** is translated as **terre** which implies a very narrow interpretation of « agricultural/cultivated land »

The expression soil artificialization is an opportunity for France to acknowledge the multifunctionality of soil

- Emancipate the no net land take policy in order to **improve soil protection**
- **The Zero net land artificialization objective** could be based on the recognition of at least two functions: water retention/captation and biodiversity habitat.
- They would be used as indicators of artificialization.

# Recognizing soil artificialization as an impact on the environment

---

-Environmental impact assessments supposedly take into account the impacts on « land and soil »

French: « les terres, le sol » (*nb* plural; singular)

-feedback of experience (CEREMA): both are rarely seriously measured and then are not part of the eviction/reduction/offsetting measures.

-proposition:

1. Recognizing soil artificialization as an impact on the environment
2. Reframing the scope of the EIA in order to take into account this impact

# Examples of projects not subject to EIA

---

-Parking below 50 slots

-Vacation villages below 1 hectare (10km<sup>2</sup>)

