

# Pedological characteristics of artificialized soils: A snapshot

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- 1 Pedological characteristics of artificialized soils: a snapshot
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#### Abstract

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The onset of industrialization entailed the increase in soil artificialization worldwide. Soils from artificialized zones (SAZ) are the result of urban, industrial, traffic, mining or recreational land use. Knowledge of their characteristics is a prerequisite for evaluating the ability of SAZ to perform key functions and provide soil ecosystem services. Based on a selection of 102 papers published between 1991 and 2017, this article aims at providing a quantitative vision of the pedological characteristics of the different categories of SAZs as a function of the land use and soil type (natural profile, soil developed on allochthonous material). We show that, overall, the inherent characteristics of SAZ topsoil generally depend on the soil type - soil of allochthonous material being more stony and poorer in the  $< 2 \,\mu m$  fraction - while manageable characteristics are a function of both the soil type and the land use, with the exception of pH that is mainly driven by the land use. However, a good characterization of SAZs requires a more systematic description, sampling and analysis to obtain comprehensive knowledge of their characteristics as several features are still too rarely measured such

as cationic exchange capacity, electrical conductivity, soil depth, and nutrient concentrations. Sealed soils are still too rarely considered despite their large surface area. Such a characterization would allow a better management of the ecosystem services that SAZs fulfill.

- **Keywords:** urban soils, mining soils, industrial soils, recreational soils, traffic soils,
- 35 artificialization, land use, soil properties, anthropogenic impact

# Introduction

As Vitousek et al. (1997) highlighted several years ago, man has profoundly modified terrestrial ecosystems, including the soil compartment. This change is particularly extreme in the case of artificialized environments. In these environments, the question arises of the persistence of the soil functions as defined by e.g. Robinson et al., (2009) and Dominati et al. (2010). These functions depend on the soil characteristics. Some of them, considered as inherent, are therefore little impacted by human activities that initially focused on agriculture (Karlen et al., (1997); Robinson et al., (2009); Dominati et al., (2010)). However, for artificialized soils such as Technosols for example, the hypothesis of no human impact on the so-called inherent characteristics is no longer valid (Barles et al., 1999). More generally, the actual effect of artificialization on the pedological profile and associated soil characteristics is still insufficiently documented, with in particular the absence of synthesis except for organic matter, nutrients or contamination (e.g. Joimel, 2016). It is essential, however, to determine the soil characteristics in order to assess the functions they provide, such as 1) water flow and

retention, 2) retention and cycling of nutrients, 3) physical stability and support, 4) maintenance of biodiversity and habitat, and 5) preservation of the natural soil heritage (Commission of the European Communities, 2006; Bone et al., 2010). Knowledge of both their inherent and manageable (Dominati et al., 2010) characteristics is therefore a prerequisite for evaluating the ability of soils in artificialized areas (SAZ) to provide services in order to propose appropriate management.

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Artificialized areas are generally identified according to their land-use as defined by the European Corine Land Cover inventory (CLC) that differentiates (i) urban fabric; (ii) industrial, commercial and transport units; (iii) mine, landfill; and (iv) artificial nonagricultural. The soils of these artificialized zones were categorized by the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) in 1998 with land use as the determining factor (the SUITMA categorization for Soils of Urban, Industrial, Traffic, Mining and Military Areas). It is postulated that a given land use implies a certain degree of soil artificialization understood as degradation as shown by Vasenev et al. (2012) who point out the "increasing human load" when moving from recreational areas to residential and industrial areas. It is also implicitly postulated that the more "artificialized" the soils are, the more degraded they are (Kurucu and Chiristina, 2008; Vasenev et al., 2012; Peng et al. 2013; Morel et al., 2015) and that they will be unable to perform their functions, leading eventually to the abandonment of artificial soils considered as sterile. Attempts at characterizing the impact of artificialization by comparing SAZ characteristics with those of soils under natural vegetation or agriculture are rare, except within the study by Joimel et al. (2016) for French SUITMAs. They showed that SUITMAs exhibit a greater variability of characteristics than that recorded for forested or agricultural soils. The reasons for this variability may lie in that:

- 1- all the SUITMAs were grouped together while specificities might occur among the different land uses;
  - 2- each SUITMA category contains soils with contrasted levels of artificialization and thus different pedological profiles, ranging from (pseudo)natural soils to Technosols (Morel et al., 2005; Rossiter, 2007; IUSS Working Group World Reference Base, 2015).

This paper aims at (i) providing a quantitative vision of the pedological characteristics of the different categories of soils of artificialized zones (SAZ) in relation to a soil profile categorization that we developed based on the descriptions available in the literature (called soil types hereafter), and in comparison to those of other environments (natural vegetation and cultivated soils), and (ii) identifying some of the drivers of their variability (land use or soil type). The level of contamination is beyond the scope of this paper.

2. Methodology

2.1. Building the corpus of scientific papers

In France, in 2017, a pluridisciplinary and collective scientific state-of-the-art on the drivers and the environmental, social and economic effects — positive and adverse- of soil artificialisation was published (Béchet et al., 2017). Among a global corpus of about 2500 scientific references a corpus of 970 articles on SUITMAs was constituted from an automatic query on the Web of Science (WoS) on the basis of the script presented in SI-1. From this corpus, only papers dealing with pedological characteristics were kept for

the present review. It was further enriched with additional research on the WoS including the following key words: urban or mining or industrial and soil and pH or cation exchange capacity (CEC) or electrical conductivity (EC) or gravel or stone (coarse elements) or carbonates, or organic matter or compost or C cycles. Articles focusing on agricultural soils and agricultural activities were excluded as argriculture was not considered as artificialized soils. Only book chapters and papers in referenced journals were selected.

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- Out of this corpus a database was built with all the studies that fulfilled the following two conditions:
- (i) the soils studied could be assigned with the provided information to a given land use;
- (ii) the article contained pedological information and data for surface soil horizons (0 to 0.3 m maximum) and/or a deep horizon (> 0.4 m).
- The resulting database contains data gathered from 102 articles published from 1991 to 2017.

118 In the database, the soils of the considered studies were assigned to a land use category. 119 Following the CLC classification, we classified the artificialized surfaces into urban, 120 industrial, mining, traffic and recreational, the latter referring to parks and urban 121 forests. Since private gardens were referred to as "residential" in most papers, they were 122 included in the "urban" land-use. The urban class may also include soils from industrial, 123 recreational or traffic areas when no further information was provided than "soils 124 sampled in the city of...", resulting in a relatively heterogeneous category. In addition, in 125 order to provide a vision of the pedological characteristics of the SAZs with reference to 126 soils in other environments (forest, cultivated land...), "control" or "natural" soils, which 127 were explicitly designated as such in the articles, were also entered in the database.

128 They were categorized as soils with "natural vegetation", "crop cover" or "unspecified 129 cover". 130 The soils entered in the database consisted either of a single soil profile or a topsoil 131 sample; the latter consisted either of a single sample or of the average value of a set of 132 samples (counted as one, as few authors gave individual data). Based on the information 133 at hand, and when a minimal description of soil profiles was provided, we were able to 134 categorize the corresponding soil profiles into four rough classes, namely "natural soil profile", "natural truncated soil profile", "soil profile developed on allochthonous 135 136 materials (of natural or technogenic origin)", and "sealed profile". When the description 137 was reduced to "mining soil or urban soils" without any further specification, the soil 138 was categorized in a fifth class called unspecified unsealed soil profile. 139 Both manageable and inherent characteristics were entered in the database. Manageable 140 characteristics are soil water pH, soil organic carbon (SOC) content, cation exchange 141 capacity (CEC), electrical conductivity (EC) and bulk density. Nutrient concentrations 142 were either too seldom reported or were measured with methods that were too 143 different to be compared. Thus, N, P and K were not included in the database. The 144 inherent characteristics recorded were stoniness (coarse element content) and < 2 μm 145 fraction content. For each study, we also recorded the morphology of the soil profiles (i.e. 146 description of profile), the type of soil used as a reference, as well as the occurrence and 147 nature of artefacts (here defined as by-products derived from industrial or artisanal 148 activities). 149 Methods used to measure the different parameters varied for the different studies. Only 150 data obtained with methods considered as comparable were entered in the database. 151 Nevertheless, a variability due to the various methods used cannot be excluded, that is 152 the reason why the parameters were presented as classes (see below). Soil water pH

was measured with the soil/water ratio varying from 1/1 (Chichester and Hauser, 1991; Johnson and Skousen 1995; Hearing et al., 2004; Howard et al., 2013) to 1/5 (Nikiforova et al. 2014); soil organic carbon (SOC) content was measured by wet (e.g. Jim, 1998a) or dry (e.g. Abel et al., 2015a) combustion, CNS analyser (e.g. Hiller 2000; Norra et al., 2008), dichromate oxidation (e.g. Wang et al., 2007; Oliveira et al., 2014; Ahirval and Maiti, 2016; Pellegrini et al., 2016); cation exchange capacity (CEC) was measured after ammonium acetate extraction (e.g. Johnson and Skousen, 1995; Jim, 1998a; Fu et al., 2011; Ahirval and Maiti, 2016; Pellegrini et al., 2016) or cobalt hexamine extraction (e.g. Capilla et al., 2006), electrical conductivity (EC) was measured with the soil/water ratio varying from 1/2 (Johnson and Skousen, 1995) to 1/2.5 (Greinert, 2015); bulk density was measured on clods (Jim, 1998a) or by the cylinder methods (e.g. Oliveira et al., 2014; Ahirval and Maiti, 2016); particle size fractionation was performed by sieving and Stocks law (e.g. Jim, 1998a; Schleuß et al., 1998; Hiller, 2000; Oliveira et al., 2014; Greinert, 2015) or sieving and the pipette method (e.g. Capilla et al., 2006; Ahirval and Maiti, 2016; Pellegrini et al., 2016). Coarse elements, when measured, were generally defined as > 2 mm without specification of an upper boundary size limit (e. g. Hiller, 2000; Beyer et al., 2001; Golubiewski et al., 2006). Schleuß et al. (1998) defined them as gravels and stones that were less than 0.20 m in size according to the IUSS Working Group WRB (2015). Jim (1998a) also mentioned boulders.

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## 2.2. Database structure

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For each parameter considered, the data were organized into classes. Consequently, the database does not contain the absolute value of each soil parameter considered for each

soil, but the number of soil samples belonging to each class of the parameter considered.

The classes were defined according to international references as specified for each

parameter in the figure captions (www.fao.org; FAO, 1993; Jim, 1998a, b; Baize, 2000;

Schoeneberger et al., 2002; Vrščaj et al., 2008, among others...).

181 Two depths were considered: topsoils and subsoils. Topsoil thickness was usually 0.3 m,

but ranged in some cases from 0.05, 0.10, 0.15, 0.20 to 0.30 m or was sometimes not

even specified (Lottermoser et al., 1999; Flynn et al., 2003; Chung et al., 2005; Wahsha et

al., 2016). This may have induced a bias, notably for SOC. When several layers were

analyzed within the 0.3 m, a mean value was calculated. The so-called subsoil layer

consisted in the soil horizon ideally below 0.4 m, but the limit could be between 0.4 and

0.6 m. When soil sampling was more superficial than 0.4 m, no subsoil was recorded.

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2.3. Data representation and statistical treatments

Tables 1 and 2 present the number of topsoil and subsoil samples respectively for each

soil category within each SAZ type and for each parameter. In addition, Table SI-2 gives,

for each of the papers included in the database, the type of land use, the existence of a

reference soil (where relevant), the type of sample (surface or profile), and the

pedological characteristics measured. Data were further represented in Figures SI-1

and 2 as radar plots for references and SAZs topsoils and subsoils with more than eight

occurrences. Correspondence analysis (CA) was performed for each parameter and for

the soil types, SAZs and references with more than eight occurrences. In order to

identify the similarity among the different soil types/SAZs and references, an

agglomerative hierarchical cluster analysis (AHC) was performed on the two first factors

of the CA.

#### 3. Results and discussion

3.1 Location and publication date of the articles contained in the database

The earliest papers contained in our database were published in the early 90s and reported studies related to mining soils, following the decommissioning of many mines (Figure 1). Among the articles collected, studies dealing with soils associated to traffic, urban and recreational areas only appeared from the mid-90s. Lastly, soils associated to industry appeared after 2000. The total number of studies related to mining, recreational and urban soils in the database is about the same, around 35 to 40, while those focusing on traffic and industrial soils are less numerous with only 15 and 10 studies respectively (Figure 1).

Studies were mainly performed for European sites (accounting for 45 to 65 % depending on the land use considered, Figure 2). Studies in North America (mainly the USA) and East-Asia are also well represented in the database (5 to 40 %), while we found only few studies for the rest of the world, except for mine soils. Lastly, only a third of the studies provided a reference soil. For the latter, the land use was described only in 60 % of the cases, most of it being covered by natural vegetation (Figure 3).

3.2. Morphological characteristics of soils of artificialized zones

**SAZ profiles are generally poorly described.** When described, the profiles are not classified according to any pedological classification. Only a few studies identify them as Anthrosols or Technosols according to the WRB (IUSS Working Group WRB, 2015). For one third of the urban soils, and 70 % of the industrial soils, no description at all was provided, with the notable exception of soils in mining areas. Indeed, for mining soil, the

use of the soil as "dump" or "tailing" allowed an easy categorization as soil profile developed on allochthonous materials, resulting in a particularly low proportion of unspecified profiles (10 %, Figure 4). Soils developed on allochthonous materials of natural or technogenic origin are the most common SAZ profiles specified. They represent more than 50 % of cases in urban and mining contexts and 10 % to 40 % of cases for the other SAZs (Figures 4 and 5). However, for these soils, the substrate was rarely explicitly described, despite its potential diversity and its importance in soil profile development. Natural soil profiles represented a maximum of 20 % of all the studied profiles and were mainly encountered in recreational, industrial and urban contexts. When encountered in a mining context (less than 10 % of the cases), they consisted of soils "not physically disturbed" but considered as receivers of airborne particles from mining or associated smelters or impacted by acid mine drainage. Truncated natural soil profiles were only encountered in mining contexts and sealed soils in traffic areas, as expected. Both were nevertheless poorly represented in the database (13 and 5 cases respectively): truncated natural soil profiles were thus merged with natural soil profiles in the rest of this analysis and sealed soils were not further considered. The vertical differentiation of the SAZs is strongly dependent on the nature of the **soil profile.** While the soils with a natural or pseudo-natural pedon (possibly truncated at the surface) comprise horizon types and sequences that depended on the nature of the native soils present in the area, the soils developed on allochthonous materials are characterized by clear limits between layers generally strongly marked by their formation history (e.g. Jim, 1998a; Abel et al., 2015a, Figures 5a, b, e, f, g). The nature of the parent materials is generally markedly different from native materials with a strong vertical contrast with depth (Figures 5c, e). Pedogenetic development is often quite

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limited with an A over C profile-type (Murolo et al., 2005, Figures 5d, f) as these soils are rather young as compared to natural soils.

Lastly, SAZs are often characterized by a complex pattern of spatial variability resulting from the superimposition of the complexity of their recent history on the natural heterogeneity. In some cases, the spatial variability becomes metric to centimetric with discontinuities in the soil cover as in the extreme case of soil development in pavement joints (Burghardt and von Bertrab, 2016, Figure 5h).

# 3.3. Inherent pedological characteristics of soils of artificialized zones

Inherent soil characteristics are considered as stable over a time scale of a few years (Dominati et al., 2010) in contrast to manageable soil characteristics, which are considered as more dynamic. The inherent soil characteristics encompass mainly texture, depth, structure at depth, horizonation and the nature of the mineral phases (Dominati et al., 2010).

#### 3.3.1. SAZ stoniness and fine ( $< 2 \mu m$ ) fraction content is a function of land use and soil type

Stoniness is usually considered when assessing agronomic performances because the presence of coarse materials modulates the surface available for water infiltration, water storage and root development (Yilmaz et al., 2018). The non-consideration of these coarse elements may result in an overestimation of the C and N stocks (Rytter, 2012). Stoniness may also create fissures at the interface with fine backfill materials (Cousin et al., 2003; Wang et al., 2018), thus allowing for preferential flows. However, the abundance of coarse elements was recorded in only nine percent of the articles, mainly from soils developed in allochthonous materials (Tables 1 and 2), resulting in 58 and 42 surface and deep horizons respectively (including reference soils, Tables 1 and 2). This low amount of data on soil stoniness is not surprising since Bünemann et al. (2018) concluded in their literature review that stoniness was not considered as an important soil characteristic to define soil quality. The two first factors of the CA performed for the topsoils and subsoils explain 95 and 96 % of the total variance respectively (Figures 6a and 7a). In both case, three poles are identified by the AHC made on the two CA factors, one very rich in coarse elements, one with less than 1 %

coarse element and one with 1 to 25 % of coarse elements (Figures 6a and 7a).

Nevertheless, these results showed that the reference soils in the database contained less than 25 % of coarse elements (whatever the land use considered, agriculture or natural vegetation, Figure 6a), which is consistent with results of the LUCAS European soil database showing that only Mediterranean and mountain soils had higher coarse element contents (European Commission – JRC - ESDAC, 2020). When considering SAZs, the amount of coarse elements is higher than in natural soils, especially at depth (Figures 7a). This global trend masks a more complex reality. Artificialized natural soil profiles were poorly represented and did not differ from the reference soils in terms of stoniness. Most of the soils developed on allochthonous materials in urban and recreational zones contained 5 to 25 % of coarse elements as seen for the reference soils, with a small proportion (10 %) containing more than 25%, while mining soils on allochthonous materials contained generally between 50 and 80 %, of coarse elements in the topsoils (Figure 6a). Industrial soils exhibit a more complex distribution pattern and traffic soils on allochthonous materials have a low amounts of coarse elements in the topsoils (Figure 6a). At depth, all SAZs contained more coarse elements than the reference soils, mining soils remaining the ones with the largest amounts of stones and gravels (Figures 7a). Indeed, a layer of "arable" soil is often applied to the surface notably in recreational soil profiles developed on allochthonous material (e. g. Jim, 1998a; Abel et al., 2015a).

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Conversely, the content of the < 2  $\mu$ m fraction was considered since it controls most of the soil parameters such as cation exchange capacity (CEC), structural stability, and water holding capacity. The results were measured in fine earth (< 2 mm). The distribution of the reference soils in the different classes of < 2  $\mu$ m percentage is similar

to that provided at the global scale by Shangguan et al. (2014) and Dai et al. (2019). The two first factors of the CA performed for the topsoils and subsoils explain 98 and 93 % of the total variance respectively (Figures 6b and 7b). In both cases, three poles are identified by the AHC made on the two first CA factors, one with concentrations in the < 2 μm fraction lower than 15 %, one with a contribution of soils having concentrations in the < 2 µm fraction higher than 35 % and, one with a large contribution of soils having a < 2 µm fraction ranging from 15 to 35 % (Figures 6b and 7b). In general, SAZ topsoils have a < 2 µm fraction lower than 15 % (Figure 6b), unlike reference topsoils, which have a < 2 μm fraction content between 35 and 60 %. However, topsoils of urban natural soil profiles, mining soils on allochthonous materials and unspecified recreational soils may exhibit concentrations in the  $< 2 \mu m$  fraction ranging from 15 to 35 % as some topsoils of the reference soils (Figure 6b). At depth, the situation is more contrasted with natural profiles that are clearly differentiated from SAZs. Recreational soils on allochthonous materials have the lowest concentration in the < 2 µm fraction (Figure 7b). Since the same SAZs are also richer in coarse elements than the reference soils, the < 2µm fraction in the whole soil matrix is even lower compared to the reference soils.

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This analysis clearly shows that, while as expected SAZ with a natural profile do not differ much in terms of stoniness and < 2  $\mu$ m content from reference soils, SAZ on allochthonous materials are generally stonier with a lower < 2  $\mu$ m fraction.

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# 3.3.2. SAZs are characterized by the presence of artefacts

Beside the occurrence of the minerals classically encountered in soils, a characteristic of SAZs is their content in artefacts of different sizes, from coarse elements, which constitute a large fraction of the allochthonous soil profiles, to micro artefacts such as

ash deposition also encountered in SAZs with natural profiles (Fu et al., 2011; Howard and Olriki, 2016).

The nature of these materials depends on the type of artificialized zone. Due to their generally long and complex history, urban soils on allochthonous material contain a wide variety of technogenic materials such as building/demolition materials (brick (Nehls et al., 2013), mortar, nails, glass, wood, plaster (Schleuß et al., 1998; Howard et al., 2013; Greinert, 2015)), ashes, coals, slags, asphalt and ferrous residues (Howard et al., 2013), industrial deposits (Greinert, 2015), municipal waste (Schleuß et al., 1998; Greinert, 2015), and stormwater sediments (El-Mufleh et al., 2014a,b). On the contrary, other SAZ contain more specific materials related to their land use: (i) disturbed recreational soils may contain demolition materials (Abel et al., 2015a) or filling with materials of natural origin (Jim, 1998a); (ii) soils from traffic areas contain building materials, ashes, coals, slag, ballast (Hiller, 2000), natural embankment (Kida and Kawahigashi, 2015) or dredged sediments for soils near waterways (Capilla et al., 2006); (iii) soils from quarries contain rock debris with a large particle size distribution (Fu et al., 2011), while metalliferous mining soils contain sludge, mine wastes (Pellegrini et al., 2016) or even foundry wastes when associated with smelters, and soils from coal and lignite mining contain various types of spoils (Shankar et al., 1993; Kundu and Ghose, 1994; Pedrol et al., 2010; Adeli et al., 2013; Clouard et al., 2014; Ahirwal and Maiti, 2016; Kolodziej et al., 2016), with the presence of fossil carbon. To a much less extent, airborne technogenic materials of the same nature are also encountered in SAZ with natural profiles (Fu et al., 2011; Howard and Olriki, 2016).

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For all the inherent characteristics, the main differences are observed between the reference soils and soils on allochthonous materials. The latter are modified to such an

extent that the distinction between inherent and manageable properties might not be meaningful anymore. In addition, it remains to be clarified whether allochthonous materials will follow the same line of evolution as natural parental material.

3.4. Soil manageable pedological characteristics in soils from artificialized zones

Soil characteristics are considered as dynamic or manageable (Dominati et al., 2010) when they can be impacted by land use or management decisions (Karlen et al., 2003). In the following, we address the physical manageable properties (bulk density, hydrodynamic properties, aggregation), organic matter concentration and physicochemical manageable characteristics (pH, CEC, electrical conductivity).

3.4.1. SAZs have a large range of bulk densities depending on their land use and soil profile type

The two first factors of the CA performed for the topsoils and subsoils explain 79 and 75

% of the total variance respectively (Figures 6c and 7c).

The topsoil bulk densities of reference soils are lower than 1.4 g cm<sup>-3</sup> under natural vegetation with a mode at 1-1.2 g cm<sup>-3</sup> (Figure 6c). Cultivated soils have a bulk density mode at 1.4-1.55 g cm<sup>-3</sup> with nearly 10 % of the soil having a bulk density greater than 1.55 g cm<sup>-3</sup> (Figure 6c), which agrees with results reported by Kern (1995). SAZs have an even bulk density distribution from low densities (< 1 g cm<sup>-3</sup>) to densities of 1.7 g cm<sup>-3</sup>, with a small percentage of very high bulk densities (> 1.8 g cm<sup>-3</sup>, Figure 6c). This distribution indicates a higher variability linked both to the land use and the soil profile type. Recreational soils with natural profiles exhibit bulk densities comparable to those measured for reference soils, while natural soils at mining sites have a higher proportion

of bulk densities larger than 1.55 g cm<sup>-3</sup> (35 %) since their topsoil has often been stripped (truncated) and compacted (Figure 6c). SAZs on allochthonous materials exhibit bulk densities comparable to those encountered in cultivated soils (Figure 6c). Edmondson et al. (2011) and Pouyat et al. (2007) showed that the urban soils for the City of Leicester (UK) (136 sites with a median bulk density class of 0.81-1 g cm<sup>-3</sup>) and Baltimore (USA) (0.71 to 1.74 g cm<sup>-3</sup>, with a median value of 1.18 g cm<sup>-3</sup>) were less compact than those of the surrounding agricultural area, while Jim's study of the city of Hong Kong (1998b) showed that in two-thirds of the cases, urban soils of alignment trees were often very compacted (1.4 to 2.2 g cm<sup>-3</sup>), with bulk densities greater than 1.6 g cm<sup>-3</sup>, which is the threshold for root development (Hanks and Lewandowski, 2003). Scharenbroch et al. (2005) also showed that the bulk density was a function of the age of the residential area with bulk densities around 1.73 g cm<sup>-3</sup> in new residential areas against 1.41 g cm<sup>-3</sup> in old residential areas. In recreational areas, studies showed an extreme spatial variability of the topsoil bulk density with locally very high bulk density values linked to the spatial variability of trampling (Jim, 1998a; Cakir et al., 2010). Traffic topsoils on allochthonous materials have very low bulk density (Figure 6c). At depth, SAZs generally exhibit higher bulk density than reference soils, especially mine soils developed on allochthonous materials (Figure 7c). This is however not the case for urban soils on allochthonous materials or recreational soils (Figure 7c). The strong compaction of certain types of SAZ results in (i) a reduced total porosity, (ii) a few coarse pores and a large percentage of fine pores (Baumgartl, 1998; Yang and Zhang, 2011), which induces (iii) low aeration, (iv) a poorly effective drainage (Jim, 1998b) and increases (v) the risks of runoff and erosion (Gregory et al., 2006).

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Soil organic carbon (SOC) content is one of the most frequently reported soil parameters in the database with 63 references resulting in 410 topsoil and 100 subsoil SAZ SOC data respectively (Tables 1 and 2). In France, a country considered as having a very high pedovariability (Minasny et al., 2010), Joimel et al. (2016) observed that the median soil organic carbon (SOC) concentration of the topsoil (0-0.3 m) was 9 g kg<sup>-1</sup> for vineyards and orchards, 14.9 g kg<sup>-1</sup> for cultivated soils, 24.8 g kg<sup>-1</sup> for grassland, 26.2 g kg<sup>-1</sup> for gardens, 26.8 g kg-1 for forests and 37.3 g kg1 for SAZs grouped in one category (all SUITMAs). The latter seem thus to contain higher SOC concentrations than vineyards and orchards, agricultural and grassland soils, while the difference is less marked with forest soils. On the other hand, the authors showed that the variability of the SOC concentrations in SAZs was higher than that observed for other land uses (as also seen on Figure 6d). This result probably derives from the high variability of the soil types grouped under the term "SAZ" as observed in our database. The two first factors of the CA performed for the topsoils and subsoils explain 74 and 64 % of the total variance respectively. The AHC made on the two first CA factors identified three types of profiles for the topsoils and four at depth (Figures 6d and 7d). While urban and industrial topsoils have a comparable level of SOC to natural soils whatever the soil profile considered, 40% of traffic and 50% of mining topsoils on allochthonous materials are very poor in SOC (Figure 6d). Recreational natural profiles also exhibit a large amount of very poor SOC topsoils, notably in natural profiles (Figure 6d). Soil organic carbon concentrations in the top 0.30 m of urban zones are often higher than in agricultural soils (Pouyat et al., 2006; Lorenz and Lal 2009; Edmondson et al., 2014; Vasenev et al., 2014; Cambou et al., 2018; Figures 6d) and sometimes higher than

those of some forest soils, in the case of soils in residential neighbourhoods (Pouyat et al., 2002; Cambou et al., 2018). It may be one of the factors responsible for the lower bulk density measured in urban topsoils (Edmondson et al., 2011; 2014). In addition, SOC concentrations in urban soils vary widely. For example, in the city of Stuttgart, Germany, SOC concentrations in soils ranged from 5 to 207 g C kg<sup>-1</sup> (Lorenz et al., 2006). The soil cover for a given land use may be responsible for this variability. As an example, tree-planted gardens had higher SOC concentrations than non-planted community gardens or non-domestic spaces planted with trees or lawns (Edmondson et al., 2014). However, the difficulty of this analysis lies in the very variable depth of sampling of the topsoil horizons, which ranges from 0.05 to 0.30 m depending on the authors. This variability probably induces a bias as SOC decreases exponentially with depth over the first 0.50 m of soil. At depth, the differences are more marked among SAZs, especially soils on allochthonous materials, with some mining soils having lower concentrations than both the reference soils and urban soils (Figure 7d). Conversely, some urban and industrial soils have a higher SOC concentration at depth than the reference soils (Figures 7d) as also shown by Cambou et al. (2018) for Paris and New York. In some remediated soils in New York City, for instance, the concentrations reached 160 g C kg<sup>-1</sup> at 0.40 m depth and were still 80 g C kg<sup>-1</sup> at 1 m depth (Huot et al., 2017). Soil organic carbon concentration along the whole soil profile is also investigated to assess the soil potential for climate change mitigation through the calculation of carbon stocks. The depth of SOC accumulation seems to be related to the history of use, which determines the dynamic of the SOC stock changes (Bae and Ryu, 2015; Cambou et al., 2018) but is still too seldom measured to give reliable trends (Cambou et al., 2018).

However, some authors have shown that urbanization, through land-use change and the

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removal of vegetation cover, creates in some areas a critical SOC stock reduction, e. g. a 30 % reduction in 25 years for an exponentially growing city such as Changzhou (increase in surface area by a factor of 10 in 20 years from 1980 to 2000; Tao et al., 2015). Obviously, organic carbon stock decreases or increases in SAZs need to be investigated in greater detail.

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#### 3.4.3. The pH of SAZs is mainly basic

The water pH is the other most frequently reported soil parameter in the database with 64 references resulting in 416 topsoil and 115 subsoil SAZ pH data (Tables 1 and 2). The two first factors of the CA performed for the surface and deep horizons explain 70 and 66 % of the total variance respectively. The AHC made on the two first CA factors identified three types of profile for the topsoils and four at depth (Figures 6e and 7e). pH of all SAZs is higher than that of the reference soils (Figures 6e and 7e). This is in agreement with Joimel et al. (2016) who found that the pH of SAZs was mainly basic while the pH of agricultural and natural soils varied over a very wide range with rather acidic soils in forest and grassland, neutral in agriculture and rather basic for orchards and vines. pH values above 7 observed for urban, recreational, industrial and traffic infrastructure at both depths (Figures 6e and 7e) are due to the frequent presence of 1) technogenic carbonated materials, notably due to rubble for profiles on allochthonous materials (Jim, 1998b; Abel et al., 2015b); 2) carbonate, siliceous and fossil carbon microparticles for all profile types (Howard and Orlicki, 2015), whose pH ranges mostly from 8 to 12; 3) and/or the use of road deicing products in winter, which may result in the formation of salty alkaline soils as observed in a cold urban context (Nikiforova et al., 2014). Mining soils and sometimes industrial soils can exhibit very acid pH values (Figures 6e and 7e), with low pH (< 5) accounting for 40 to 50% of the cases depending on the soil type considered. In the case of soils from mining areas, the acidic pH are usually restricted to the metalliferous areas, since soils from coal and lignite mine areas are predominantly neutral to alkaline (Ogala et al., 2012). Some very low pH (less than 4.5) are observed in nearly 30 % of the allochthonous soils from metalliferous areas (Figure 7e) that can notably be due to the presence of pyrite in the mine spoils (Schaaf and Hüttl, 2005; Rivas-Pérez et al., 2016).

#### 3.4.4. Electrical conductivity is very high in some SAZ types

The electrical conductivity (EC) data are scarce (Tables 1 and 2) as this parameter was mainly measured in soils where high EC values were expected (Table SI-3f). In most of the SAZ types, the EC range was not different from that of the reference soils and was always lower than 2 mS cm<sup>-1</sup> which is the limit for non-saline soils (Baize, 2000; Schoeneberger et al., 2002). With EC above this threshold, saline soils represent 3.4 % of soils worldwide according to the FAO (www.fao.org). However, in 20 % of urban and mining soils, EC higher than 2 mS cm<sup>-1</sup> were recorded and EC values exceeding 4 mS cm<sup>-1</sup> were encountered in about 15 % of the cases. Some soils reached extremely high EC (≥ 16 mS cm<sup>-1</sup>), in relation with the salinization observed in Northern cities like Chicago (Scharenbroch and Catania, 2012) or Moscow (Nikiforova et al., 2014) due to the use of salt for deicing roads and the concentrated drainage observed at some metal mine sites (Pellegrini et al., 2016). At depth, high EC was observed only for mining soils (Table SI-3f).

#### 3.4.5. CEC is rarely measured in SAZs

CEC was measured in only 12% of the studies (Tables 1 and 2), resulting in the absence

of data for some SAZs or some soil types, notably for deep horizons (Table 2). If one considers the soil with CEC larger than 6 cmol<sup>+</sup> kg<sup>-1</sup> (which is a low value if fertility is considered), there is no difference between the SAZs and the reference soils with the exception of the 10 % of traffic soils on allochthonous materials and 10 to 20 % of the mining soils on allochthonous materials or undefined. However, these CECs were measured for the fraction less than 2 mm, which in the case of soils on allochthonous materials may represent a rather small fraction of the whole soil because of their high stoniness as mentioned above.

## 4. Synthesis and recommendations

Among the different SAZs, more data on pedological characteristics are available in the literature on urban, mining or recreational soils than on industrial and traffic soils. The reason behind this lower representation of industrial and traffic soils is probably their partial inclusion in urban soils as very often only the mention "soil sampled in an urban area" is reported in the articles. Care should be taken to better describe the land use in SAZ studies. In addition, despite their surficial abundance (70 % of the artificial surfaces) only a few studies have focused on sealed soils, which were therefore not considered in this synthesis. However, the few existing studies showed that sealed soils can store a substantial amount of SOC (Raciti et al., 2012), despite the decrease in the SOC stock in the first years after sealing (Jim et al., 1998b; Wei et al., 2014). The amount of organic carbon stored in sealed soils, and the potential importance of its role, have not been sufficiently investigated to draw general conclusions and more studies dedicated to this soil type should be performed.

For unsealed soils, we showed that different soil types are encountered, ranging from only slightly disturbed soils to Technosols on allochthonous material, the latter being the most

abundant in the literature. Studies often focus on disturbed areas, but it remains necessary to assess urban land surfaces with natural or little disturbed profiles for functions such as supporting urban food production.

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We also showed that both the soil profile type and the land use determine the pedological characteristics of SAZs. While inherent characteristics are strongly linked to the type of soil profile, with allochthonous soils being richer in coarse elements and poorer in < 2 µm fractions, manageable characteristics are linked either to land use (the case of pH), or to both land use and soil type (the case of organic carbon or bulk density). Here again, the frequent absence of descriptions of soil profiles prevents a detailed understanding of the determinants of the acquisition of their pedological characteristics. In addition, the characterization SAZs is mainly limited to their surface horizons (topsoils) and not enough studies have been conducted on subsoils. Drawing conclusions from our set of data for deep horizons is thus more difficult. This highlights the need for a more systematic study of soil profiles. The articles reporting information at depth point to the importance of subsoils in fulfilling some ecosystem services such as carbon storage as already observed in natural soils (Balesdent et al., 2018) or, on the contrary, preventing water infiltration. Lastly, not all soil characteristics are investigated systematically. As observed from the 102 papers in the database, some parameters were either too seldom reported (e.g. total soil depth) or with too various methods (e.g. nutrients, pH other than water pH) to be included for discussion in this analysis. Some parameters were discussed but in a limited number of studies (e.g. % coarse elements, EC and CEC).

To take advantage of future data to be produced on SAZs and thus improve their

characterization, we suggest that the following points should be systematically

557	addressed:
558	- the history of the soil formation by systematically associating data on land use,
559	historical background, demographic growth, economic growth, and typology of uses, to
560	the studied profiles;
561	- the whole soil profile must be considered when characterizing the soil physicochemical
562	properties on well-defined horizons;
563	- the use of a common set of sampling and analytical methods and a common typology of
564	the technogenic materials present in soils;
565	- assessment of the representativeness and the spatial extension of the reported points
566	or profiles, in the same way as it is usually performed for agricultural or forest soils.
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Figure 2: Origin of the studies of the database per SUITMA. Papers including several SUITMAs are counted once per SUITMA, which explains the discrepancy between the number of papers included in the database (n=102) and the number of studies recorded for the different SUITMAs (n=138).

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Figure 6: Two first factors of the CA performed on the different soil types of the different SAZs and reference soils for the different parameters: a- coarse elements (CE); b- < 2  $\mu$ m fraction; c- bulk density; d- soil organic carbon; and e- water pH for the topsoil (0-0.1, 0-0.2 or 0-0.3 m depending on the study). Ellipses represent the AHC performed on the two first factors of the CA.

Figure 7: Two first factors of the CA performed on the different soil types of the different SAZs and reference soils for the different parameters: a- coarse elements (CE); b- < 2  $\mu$ m fraction; c- bulk density; d- soil organic carbon; and e- water pH for a deep horizon selected around or under 0.4 m depth. Ellipses represent the AHC performed on the two first factors of the CA.

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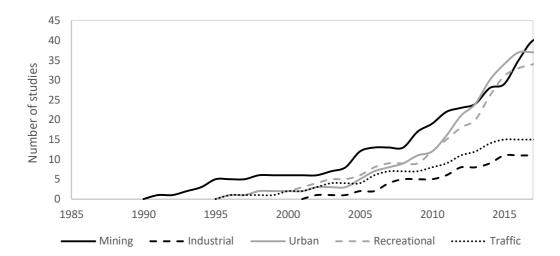


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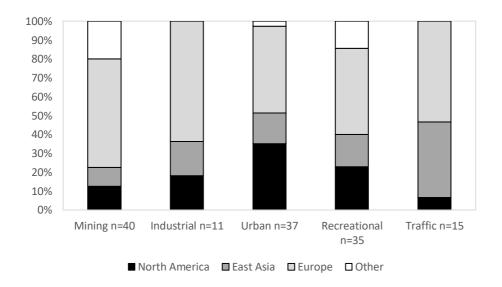


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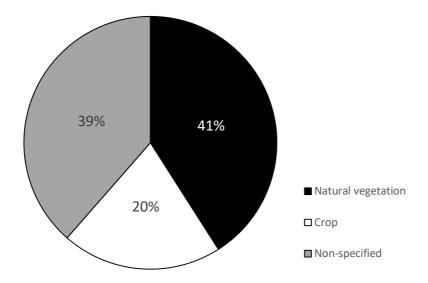


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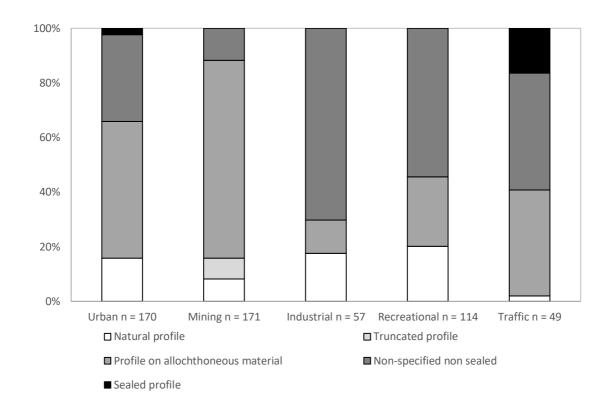


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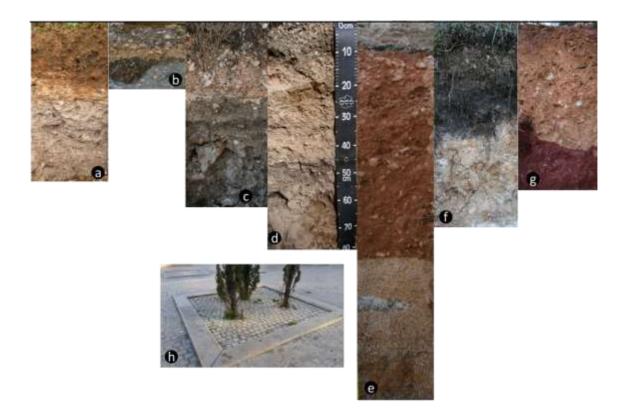


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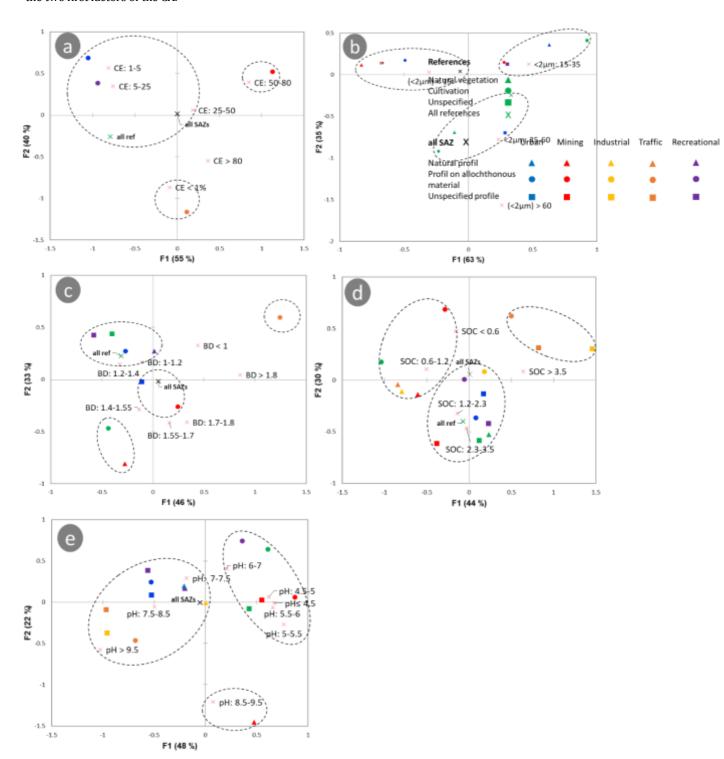


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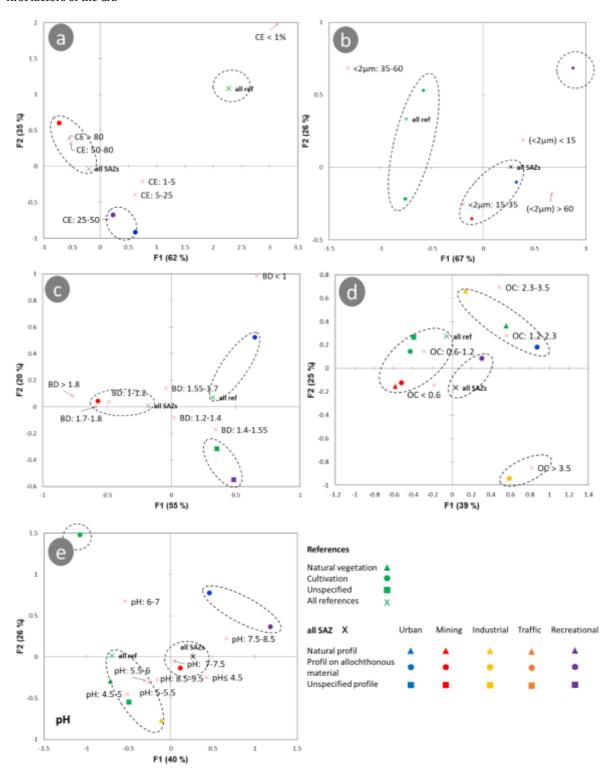


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		SAZ					References					
	Tot	Urb	Recre	Indust	Traffic	Mine	Tot	Nat.	Crop	Unsp.		
pН										_		
sealed	5											
Natural profile	69	14	16	10	0	29	64	20	11	33		
Profile on												
allochthonous materials	184	52	18	6	13	95						
Unspecified profile	158	47	35	36	15	25						
Total	416	113	69	52	28	149						
SOC												
sealed	1											
Natural profile	55	12	21	2	0	20	63	27	13	23		
Profile on												
allochthonous materials	183	46	26	22	22	67						
Unspecified profile	171	56	53	30	18	14						
Total	410	114	100	54	40	101						
Bulk density	2											
sealed Natural profile	2 28	5	8	0	0	15	31	7	10	14		
Profile on	28	3	8	U	U	15	31	/	10	14		
allochthonous materials	113	20	6	2	15	70						
Unspecified profile	72	41	24	$\overset{2}{2}$	5	0						
Total	215	66	38	4	20	85						
< 2 μm	213	00	30	7	20	0.5						
sealed	2											
Natural profile	29	13	6	0	0	10	39	10	11	18		
Profile on		13	O	Ü	O	10	3)	10	11	10		
allochthonous materials	123	31	26	0	3	63						
Unspecified profile	66	25	18	4	14	5						
Total	220	69	50	4	17	78						
Coarse elements												
sealed	1											
Natural profile	2	2	0	0	0	0	5	2	3	0		
Profile on												
allochthonous materials	49	8	9	0	15	17						
Unspecified profile	2	1	1	0	0	0						
Total	<i>54</i>	11	10	0	15	<i>17</i>						
Cation Exchange Capac	city											
sealed	0											
Natural profile	9	0	4	0	0	5	8	2	3	3		
Profile on						_						
allochthonous materials	66	10	9	0	10	37						
Unspecified profile	40	28	2	0	0	10						
Total	115	38	15	0	10	52						
<b>Electrical conductivity</b>												
sealed	1		0	0	0	4	10	2	4	10		
Natural profile	16	6	9	0	0	1	13	2	1	10		
Profile on	<b>5</b> 2	1.4	1	0	0	20						
allochthonous materials	53	14	1	0	0	38						
Unspecified profile	43	10	3	19	1	10						
Total	113	30	13	19	1	49						

Table 2: Number of subsoils (> 0.4 m) in the data base for each considered soil property, each soil type and each land use (Tot, stands for total; Urb, for urban; Recre, for recreational; Indust, for industrial; Mine, for mining; Nat., for natural vegetation and Unsp., for unspecified vegetation).

				SAZ				References		
	Tot	Urb	Recre	Indust	Traffic	Mine	Tot	Nat.	Crop	Unsp.
pН									_	_
sealed										
Natural profile	18	2	4	8	0	4	37	10	9	18
Profile on										
allochthonous materials	<b>75</b>	11	9	1	2	52				
Unspecified profile	22	7	3	1	4	7				
Total	115	20	16	<i>10</i>	6	<i>63</i>				
SOC										
sealed										
Natural profile	14	1	4	0	0	9	41	15	10	16
Profile on										
allochthonous materials	72	15	10	11	2	34				
Unspecified profile	14	5	6	0	3	0				
Total	100	21	20	11	5	43				
Bulk density	200									
sealed	0									
Natural profile	3	2	0	0	0	1	19	3	3	13
Profile on		_	Ü	Ü	Ŭ	-			Ü	10
allochthonous materials	44	11	6	3	5	19				
Unspecified profile	12	2	8	0	2	0				
Total	59	15	14	3	7	20				
< 2 μm	37	10	4.7		,	20				
sealed	0									
Natural profile	6	1	0	0	0	5	24	4	8	12
Profile on	Ū		O	U	U	3	24	7	O	12
allochthonous materials	67	18	9	0	0	40				
Unspecified profile	12	1	3	1	2	5				
Total	85	20	12	1	2	<b>50</b>				
Coarse elements	0.5	20	12	1	2	30				
sealed	0									
Natural profile	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	3	0
Profile on	U	O	Ü	U	U	U	3	_	3	O
allochthonous materials	37	8	9	0	5	15				
Unspecified profile	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Total	37	8	9	0	5	15				
Cation Exchange Capac		O	,	U	3	13				
sealed	0									
Natural profile	7	0	4	0	0	3	7	2	3	2
Profile on	,	U	4	U	U	3	,	2	3	2
allochthonous materials	41	10	9	0	0	22				
	41 5	0	1	0	0	4				
Unspecified profile	5 53	10	1 14	<b>0</b>	0	29				
Total  Floatrical conductivity	33	10	14	U	U	29				
<b>Electrical conductivity</b> sealed	Λ									
	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	1	2
Natural profile	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	1	2
Profile on	26	2	1	0	0	22				
allochthonous materials	36	3	1	0	0	32				
Unspecified profile	14	1	0	9	0	4				
Total	51	4	1	9	0	<i>37</i>				