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Response to “The “4p1000” initiative: A new name should be adopted” by Baveye and White (2019)

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Although we appreciate the comments made by Baveye and White (2019) on our manuscript and we agree with several of their analyses, we, the Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) of the 4 per 1000 initiative, would like to clarify three points:

1. Baveye and White (2019) suggested that the name of the initiative should be changed from “4p1000 initiative” to “4p1000 aspiration”. We believe that this does not really help. If it were called the 4p1000 “goal” or “target”, we would see their point, but “initiative” does not imply targets or goals per se. “Initiative” implies action. As the objective for 4p1000 is to promote action through projects that will contribute to increasing soil carbon, it is truly an ‘initiative’ and the name appropriate.
2. The misleading statement “an annual growth rate of 0.4% in the soil carbon stocks, or 4‰ per year, would halt the increase in the CO₂ concentration in the atmosphere related to human activities” on the 4p1000 webpage was replaced in response to advice from the STC by the following one: “An annual growth rate of 0.4% in the soil carbon stocks, or 4‰ per year, in the first 30–40 cm of soil, would significantly reduce the CO₂ concentration in the atmosphere related to human activities”.
3. Baveye and White (2019) argue that any “compensation” methodology is wrong because it encourages the GHG producers to continue business as usual. This “moral jeopardy” argument is very well rehearsed for all land-based greenhouse gas removal options. We

would like to stress that the land-based greenhouse gas removal options (including soil C sequestration) need to be *additional* to aggressive and immediate mitigation across all sectors. Limiting the earth temperature increase to 1.5 or even 2 °C will not be achievable without both (Anderson et al. 2019).

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