

SuRF Italy Programmatic Document 2026–2030

“Toward a National Network for Sustainability Applied to Environmental Remediation”

January 2026

1. Background and Vision

The first Italian Forum on Sustainable Remediation (SuRF Italy – Sustainable Remediation Forum) was originally established in 2012 as a voluntary initiative, inspired by similar forums developed internationally in other countries (including the UK, US, ANZ, Canada, Taiwan, Colombia, Brazil, and Japan), and contributed to launching the debate in Italy on the topic of Sustainable Remediation.

Following the recent joint initiative launched by Assoreca and Ferrara Expo, SuRF Italy is being relaunched, in continuity with the mission defined in the 2015 White Paper and with the proposal for an Operational Guideline for Sustainable Remediation developed by Assoreca in 2023. The current objective of the SuRF Italy network is to reaffirm its role as the national reference platform for promoting **sustainability in environmental remediation**, fostering integration between technical innovation, regulatory vision, circular economy, and climate resilience.

The five-year horizon (2026–2030) is aligned with that outlined by major international strategies — the **UN 2030 Agenda**, the **European Green Deal**, and the **EU Taxonomy Regulation** — which call for transforming principles into concrete operational tools and regulatory guidance, together with the increasing pressure from economic operators to embed ESG considerations across all areas of their operations, including environmental management.

Moreover, the entry into force of the Nature Restoration Law (2024) and the Soil Monitoring and Resilience Directive (2025) is expected to make remediation policies more effective and transparent, particularly at contaminated sites. The latter, in particular, provides a strong impetus for managing remediation activities in a fully sustainable way, encouraging the use of low-impact techniques and treating soil as a valuable resource.

Initiative promoted by

SuRF Italy therefore positions itself as a **technical, cultural, and networking driver** to consolidate “sustainable remediation” as the reference standard for both the public and private sectors in Italy.

2. Strategic Objectives through 2030

I. Consolidate SuRF Italy as an open and authoritative national network

- Expand participation to include public authorities, universities, consulting firms, industrial operators, and local associations. Enhance national recognition of the SuRF Italy brand and establish a structured and clearly identifiable membership system (“SuRF Italy Network Members”).
- Strengthen the role of the permanent **Technical-Scientific Committee**, with responsibilities for technical guidance and knowledge dissemination.

II. Integrate sustainability into the remediation process

- Finalize the Operational Guideline for Sustainable Remediation based on the 2023 proposal.
- Promote and support the adoption of the **Operational Guideline for Sustainable Remediation** as the national technical reference document, encouraging the systematic use of methodologies based on:
 - the **Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA)** approach;
 - multicriteria sustainability assessments, **ESG criteria, Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), cost-benefit analysis, carbon footprint, and water footprint**;
 - **climate resilience, circularity, and sustainability** criteria applied across the entire **value chain**.

III. Promote regulatory harmonization and best practices

- Collaborate with public authorities at both local and national levels—particularly the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security and ISPRA—to promote the adoption of sustainability principles within remediation procedures and to integrate them into revisions of Legislative Decree 152/06 and the national remediation regulatory framework. This includes advocating for regulatory changes so that sustainability is explicitly addressed within the core legislative provisions, and not only in annexes, and extending its

application beyond environmental impacts to also encompass economic and socio-health impacts. In addition, provide guidance to support the transposition into national legislation of European directives affecting the management of contaminated sites (e.g., the Soil Monitoring Law).

- Promote the adoption of sustainability principles and the broader application of **risk-based approaches** within regulatory instruments governing the management of excavated soils and rocks at the national level (e.g., in the context of updating Presidential Decree 120/2017).
- Participate in European and international technical working groups to share best practices with SuRF UK, SuRF US, NICOLE, ITRC, and ISRA.

IV. Promote sustainability as a measurable value

- Promote **multicriteria assessment** tools applicable to remediation activities.
- Encourage the introduction of **key sustainability performance indicators (KPIs)** for remediation projects among sector stakeholders.
- Foster **sustainable finance** mechanisms and access to funding opportunities (tax incentives, Green Deal instruments, Horizon Europe).

V. Education and communication

- Disseminate simplified guidelines and digital tools for public administrations and businesses.
- Establish a **SuRF Italy Academy** to provide technical training on sustainable remediation, circular economy, and ESG principles applied to environmental management.
- Organize an **annual SuRF Italy Forum** as a platform for dialogue and exchange among institutions, businesses, and citizens.
- Promote the identification of pilot projects (including “Living Labs”) to test innovative and nature-based sustainable remediation approaches, combined with best practices for stakeholder and local community engagement.
- Define and manage appropriate communication and marketing tools to disseminate network initiatives (e.g., newsletters, website, social media).

3. Priority Lines of Action (2026–2030)

Area	Action Line	Objectives
Technical and scientific	Update of the <i>Operational Guideline</i>	Provide a nationally shared reference document
Regulatory	Proposal to incorporate sustainability principles into Title V of the Consolidated Environmental Act (TUA)	Achieve formal regulatory recognition by 2030
Communication and engagement	Creation of an interactive SuRF Italy Community	Engage at least 200 stakeholders by 2030
Training and dissemination	Organization of thematic and regional workshops	Disseminate sustainable remediation (SR) principles and provide continuing professional development for specialists in the application of sustainability principles to remediation
International	Active participation in ISRA (International Sustainable Remediation Alliance) and other forums focused on sustainable remediation	Participation in European and international technical working groups

4. Plan Governance

- **Overall coordination:** Assoreca – Ferrara Expo
- **Coordinator:** facilitates decision-making processes and coordinates activities within the Technical-Scientific Committee (TSC).
- **Technical-Scientific Committee:** representatives from companies, public administrations, universities, and organizations, appointed in a personal capacity by Assoreca and Ferrara Expo as recognized sector experts. The

Committee provides strategic guidance and technical direction in line with this program.

- **Operating Rules:** document available in Italian at – <https://assoreca.it/surf-italy-en/>
- **Website:** currently <https://assoreca.it/surf-italy-en/>

Members: companies, public administrations, universities, and organizations, through formal membership and acceptance of the Operating Rules.

- **Working Groups (preliminary proposal):**
 - Technical documentation (finalization of the Operational Guideline)
 - Tools for assessing the sustainability of remediation activities
 - Circular economy and technological innovation
 - International Regulatory and Policy Observatory
 - Communication and Training

5. Progress Indicators (Monitoring 2026–2030)

Objective	Indicator	Source	2030 Target
National Network	Number of active members within the Network	SuRF Italy Members Registry	≥ 200
Guidelines Implementation	Pilot projects launched applying sustainable remediation approaches and/or technologies	SuRF Italy Reports	≥ 10
Capacity Building	Training workshops organised	SuRF Italy Reports	≥ 10
Stakeholder Engagement	Annual stakeholder forum	SuRF Italy Reports	1 per year
Innovation and Research	Scientific publications authored by Network members	SuRF Italy Reports	≥ 10

6. Conclusions

Over the next five years, **SuRF Italy** aims to consolidate a shared culture of sustainable remediation, in which the regeneration of contaminated sites becomes a driver of territorial competitiveness, ecological transition, and social cohesion.

The network positions itself as a catalyst for best practices, a promoter of a common technical and regulatory language, and an authoritative stakeholder in national and European forums dedicated to the sustainable management of land.