

Soil Alliance News

Newsletter of the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA),
Soil and Land Alliance of European Cities, Districts and
Municipalities



Issue 2/2023

Dear members and friends of the European Land and Soil Alliance,

Soil is the basis of production for agriculture and the location for the production of healthy food. Over 90 per cent of global food production depends directly on soil.

Soils provide essential ecosystem services such as supporting clean water, carbon sequestration and thriving habitats for biodiversity. Despite their importance, about 60 to 70 per cent of soils in Europe are not considered healthy. According to the United Nations, the global food system is inefficient and threatening to human health and the environment. In addition, millions of hectares of arable land are lost to the world every year. This threatens the livelihoods of many people, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and South America.

There is an urgent need for action. And it begins - as so often - on our own doorstep.

The Board

Soil Alliance News is published regularly. We welcome your suggestions and criticism. In addition, you have the opportunity to spread news, projects, events etc. here. Simply send us an [e-mail](#).

Top Topic: Soil and nutrition

Technical Guideline "Soil and Nutrition": The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has published technical guidelines on the importance of soil health for nutritional quality. Recommendations for soil management are also provided.

[More information](#)

„Food for Europe“ Podcast: European podcast series about our food and the farmers who produce it. Each episode focuses on one of the developments that are changing agriculture in the EU and stories about it from across Europe.

[More information](#)

Organic farming and climate protection: A new scientific study by the Technical University of Munich shows the positive environmental effects of organic farming and how it reduces costs for society.

[More information](#)

Fertilising with compost: Using compost helps to close regional nutrient cycles and optimise soil nutrient supply. Compost from organic waste bins is often contaminated with plastic and weed seeds. But the ProBio project of the Technical University of Munich shows: Fertilising with certified compost works.

[More information](#)

Allotment gardens - service providers for our ecosystem: The Bundesverband Deutscher Gartenfreunde e.V. offers an educational film series on the different functions of allotment gardens.

[More information](#)

More messages

Position Paper on the European Soil Monitoring Law: The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) has published a position paper outlining why an ambitious and progressive soil monitoring law is urgently needed. It provides recommendations for EU decision-makers.

[More information](#)

Mission Soil Manifesto: The EU Commission and the European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN) have launched the Mission Soil Manifesto. By signing the Manifesto, organisations and individuals can demonstrate their commitment to protecting and restoring soil health and engage in activities to improve soil health. They will have access to the latest research and have the opportunity to participate in knowledge-sharing activities and other events on the topic.

[More information](#)

Local authorities wanted: The Logist + project, which investigates how the interests of the logistics sector can be reconciled with sustainability goals, is looking for (German) municipalities that want to participate in the testing of the practical guidelines developed in the project. The effort is manageable, there are no costs. Contact: Maike Bosold, Tel.: 05472 – 966239, bosold@bvboden.de

Rise of flash droughts: Droughts usually develop slowly. In extreme heat and drought, however, they can also develop within a few weeks. The phenomenon has been known for about ten years. Researchers have now found that the number of "flash droughts" in Central Europe has increased significantly.

[More information](#)

Urban gardening: It grows and greens everywhere. On sealed squares, city wastelands, at railway stations and on the central reservation of multi-lane roads. Urban gardening is a future trend with a plus for the environment.

[More information](#)

Manifesto for a ban on PFAS: Per- and polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS) are extremely persistent chemicals and accumulate in the soil, among other things. Currently, only a few of them are regulated by legislation at the global level. Numerous European civil society organisations, urge EU Member States and the Commission to ban all PFAS in consumer products by 2025 and to implement a complete ban by 2030.

[More information](#)

Publications

Arable soils as storytellers: On the occasion of the declaration of the arable soil as Soil of the Year 2023, the Lower Saxony State Office for Mining, Energy and Geology publishes various additional information. This time it is about historical arable soils and what they tell us about earlier forms of cultivation.

[More information](#)

On the ground: Soil Degradation and Sustainable Development in Europe: This joint communication from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the European Environment Agency (EEA) aims to draw attention to the state of soil in Europe: It aims to stimulate discussion on the need for a pan-European (and global) soil policy.

[More information](#)

Carbon Farming: stakes, issues and alternatives: Will carbon farming be a greenwashing disaster or a real opportunity for farmers and climate protection? This is the question addressed in the study by Mathieu Weinreb-Willard, Policy Analyst / ARC2020.

[More information](#)

The Soil Idea

Soilcast: This podcast presents in-depth knowledge about soils. It covers classic soil topics such as soil type, rootability, humus accumulation and the nitrogen cycle. But the programme also includes gardening tips and interviews with soil players.

[More information](#)

Soil Alliance internal

Save the date! ELSA Annual Conference "Soil and Climate": This year's conference will take place on 14 and 15 September 2023 in Wuppertal (DE). The climate function of soils has long been underestimated and new practical but sustainable options for action are needed here. Agriculture must adapt to the changing framework conditions and focus more on preserving and improving soil functions. In cities and municipalities, "water-sensitive" urban development with the creation of a blue/green infrastructure, the search for multifunctional areas or the creation of a "sponge city" has become an important objective in future and sustainable urban planning. The City of Wuppertal is organising the conference in close cooperation with the European Land and Soil Alliance and the Climate Alliance.

[More information](#)

General Assembly: The General Assembly 2023 will take place on 15 September following the Annual Conference "Soil and Climate" in Wuppertal (DE).

Board meeting: The next meeting of the Board will be held on 7 July 2023, 10 am to 12 pm digital.

New members: Marktgemeinde Frankenmarkt (AT), Freistadt Eisenstadt (AT) and Österreichische Bodenkundliche Gesellschaft (ÖBG) (AT). A warm welcome!

Event information

Nature-oriented school grounds design - planning steps, conditions for success and stumbling blocks, 23 August 2023, Höxter (DE)

[More information](#)

Application of adapted measures for agricultural soil protection, 24/25 August 2023, Zollikofen, Moosseedorf and Seeland (CH)

[More information](#)

134th VDLUFA Congress "Climate Adaptation and Food Security - Challenges for Agriculture", 5-8 September 2023, Freising (DE)

[More information](#)

30th Contaminated Sites Day Hannover 2023, Forum for Soil and Groundwater Protection, 7 September 2023, Suderburg (DE)

[More information](#)

Water Aware Urban Development Conference, 28/29 September 2023, Osnabrück (DE)

[More information](#)

Soil Health in the Danube Region, 30th Conference of the Working Group Sustainability / Soil Protection of the Working Community of the Danube Regions, 12. / 13. September 2023, Tulln (AT)

[More information](#)

Soil and Climate. International Symposium and Field Trip, 14-15 September 2023, Wuppertal (DE)

[More information](#)

Impressum

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