

Soil Alliance News

Newsletter of the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA)



Issue 4 / 2021

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

On 17 November 2021, the EU Commission presented its new Soil Protection Strategy. It draws attention to the fact that soil is a limited resource and cannot be replenished! For a long time, efforts to create a uniform legal framework throughout Europe had failed due to the resistance of some member states. The adoption of the Soil Strategy raises new hopes. In Germany, too, something is happening. Soil protection has made it into the coalition agreement of the new government and is explicitly mentioned there.

Let's hope that 2022 can build on these positive initiatives and that European soil protection takes a decisive step in the right direction.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a reflective and peaceful Christmas season. Come well into the new year and stay healthy!

The Board

Soil Alliance News is published regularly. We appreciate your suggestions and criticism. In addition, you have the opportunity to disseminate news, projects, events, etc. Just send us a short email.

Featured topic: News in soil protection

European Soil Protection Strategy: The EU Commission has presented a new EU Soil Strategy. The strategy provides a framework with specific measures for the protection, restoration and sustainable use of soils and proposes a number of voluntary as well as legally binding measures.

[More information](#)

[Video](#)

ELSA Annual Statement on the EU Soil Strategy: ELSA strongly welcomes the adoption of the EU Soil Strategy and has dedicated its Annual Statement to the issue. It stresses the importance of a legally binding regime for soil protection being widely discussed, developed and adopted.

[More information](#)

DNR on the EU Soil Strategy: The environmental umbrella organisation Deutscher Naturschutzring (DNR German League for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection) also welcomes the EU Commission's Soil Strategy and calls for action. Central to this is the development of a long overdue European legal framework in the form of a "Soil Health Law"

[More information](#)

Soil protection in the Coalition Agreement: The Coalition Agreement of the future German government explicitly mentions soil protection on pages 41/42. Among other things, it announces that it will work at the European level for improved soil protection and binding regulations.

[More information](#)

Reform of EU agricultural policy: The European Parliament has given the green light for the reformed Common Agricultural Policy of the EU. In future, it is to become more environmentally friendly, fairer, more flexible and more transparent. Among other things, 25% of direct payments must be used for environmental and climate protection measures in future.

[More information](#)

Additional reports

Alliance against trade in humus certificates: CO2 emission certificates are not a suitable instrument for maintaining and building humus. More than 30 organisations and individuals from environmental and climate protection, agriculture and science have spoken out against the issuing of CO2 emission certificates as an instrument for maintaining and building up humus. The Soil & Land Alliance is one of the signatories.

[More information](#)

Soil of the Year 2022: On the occasion of the International Soil Day on 5 December, Pelosol was singled out as "Soil of the Year 2022". The name is derived from the Greek (pelos = soft clay, mud) and expresses the high clay content of this soil.

[More information](#)

Saving land: Saving land: With this project, CIPRA is campaigning for a turnaround in the use of land in peri-urban areas in order to transfer scientific findings into practice, make pilot examples visible and encourage imitation.

[More information](#)

Environmental Prize: This year, biodiversity researcher Prof. Dr Katrin Böhning-Gaese, Director of the Senckenberg Biodiversity and Climate Research Centre, and peatland conservationist Prof. Dr h.c. Hans Joosten share the prize. Hans Joosten, who worked at the Institute of Botany and Landscape Ecology at the University of Greifswald until his retirement, received the environmental prize awarded by the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (German Federal Environment Foundation).

[More information](#)

Publications

National Water Strategy: The German Federal Ministry for the Environment has presented its National Water Strategy. This also calls for measures towards water-sensitive cities ("Sponge City").

[More information](#)

Soil Discovery Trail "Soul Meets Soil": Image film by Interessengemeinschaft Gesunder Boden e.V. on the Soil Discovery Trail in Regensburg.

[More information](#)

Position paper on protecting soil biodiversity: The Global Soil Biodiversity Initiative and the Scientific Advisory Committee have submitted a position paper to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) calling for soil biodiversity to be protected, restored and promoted.

[More information](#)

The soil idea

#wormup: The initiative “The Urban Worm” in Great Britain wants to motivate people to compost organic waste. Various simple instructions for building “worm farms” show how this can be done even without a garden. You don’t need much more than a bucket and you're ready to go!

[More information](#)

News from the Climate Alliance

The time for action was yesterday – Climate Alliance at COP26 in Glasgow: Expectations before the climate conference were extremely high – perhaps too high. Given the different needs, resources and interests of almost 200 negotiating countries, the UN climate process is extremely complex. Real action will follow only after the agreements have been successfully ratified by national parliaments and transposed into national law. Despite all the shortcomings, each country committed to further action in Glasgow – potentially making an important contribution to avoiding failure at the international level. When it comes to action on the ground, the local level continues to have a hugely important role to play. Climate Alliance was on the ground in Glasgow making the voices of its members heard. A review of the conference and the network’s activities is available online.

[More information](#)

Soil Alliance internal news

(Online) Workshop “Sponge City – From Idea to Implementation”, 21 January 2022, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Climate Alliance and Soil & Land Alliance are dedicating this online workshop to the topic of the Sponge City for the third time. While the first two workshops focused on the definition of the Sponge City principle and the concrete design of measures, this workshop will focus on important steps in the planning process.

Out of what motivation and with what goal did cities and municipalities decide to set out on the path to becoming a Sponge City? Who took the initiative and what obstacles had to be removed on the way to implementation? Which levels were involved and which planning instruments were used?

We would like to get to the bottom of these questions with representatives of cities and municipalities.

[More information](#)

Save the date! Annual Soil Alliance Conference 2022: The conference will take place on 29 and 30 September 2022 in Bolzano (IT).

Board meeting: The next board meeting will be held digitally on 28 January 2022.

New members: Municipality of Mank (Austria). A warm welcome!

Event information

(Online) Workshop “Sponge City – From Idea to Implementation”, 21 January 2022, online

[More information](#)

Pedological site support for authority representatives: 17 February 2022, Osnabrück (Germany)

[More information](#)

Pedological site support for authority representatives: 12 May 2022, Munich (Germany)

[More information](#)

Workshop on soil functions and spatial planning in the Alps: 29 and 30 March 2022, Munich (Germany)

[More information](#)

Annual Meeting 2022 of the Swiss Soil Science Society (BGS): 31 March to 1 April 2022, Zollikofen (Switzerland)

[More information](#)

Contaminated Sites Symposium 2022, 9 to 11 March 2022, Lübeck (Germany)

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Legal notice

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