

Soil Alliance News

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



Issue 2 / 2022

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

Climate change is affecting soils in many ways. The impact is particularly noticeable on permafrost soils. Around one sixth of the entire earth's surface is considered a permafrost area. This includes the cold climate zones of the high latitudes as well as high mountain peaks. Thawing permafrost has extensive consequences: if permafrost soils soften, it affects the global climate and entire ecosystems as well as the regional landscape, infrastructure, economy and population. In the Alpine region, many tourist areas are already affected. Hiking trails are becoming unstable and the risk of falling rocks is increasing.

The Soil Alliance will also address this particular problem during its annual conference 'Land Use and Climate Change – Regional and European Ideas', which will take place on 29 and 30 September in Bolzano (IT). We would like to invite you to join our discussions in Bolzano!

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: Permafrost Soils in Climate Change

Film 'Permafrost – What is it?': A short film by the Alfred-Wegener Institute explains the characteristic features of permafrost soils and explores the consequences when these special soils thaw.

[More information](#)

Permafrost Soils – An Overview: The BR Wissen podcast has put together a summary of the various consequences of thawing permafrost soils. How does thawing affect climate change? What consequences can be expected for roads, buildings and other infrastructure elements? What countermeasures can be taken?

[More information](#)

Frozen Cartoons: Delightful and humorous cartoons explain the consequences of thawing permafrost soils from the perspective of reindeer and other animals. They are supplemented by an app. Not just for kids!

[More information](#)

Permafrost Podcast: In Resonator, the free audio podcast of the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres (Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft Deutscher Forschungszentren), Prof. Guido Grosse from the Alfred Wegener Institute talks about permafrost soils.

[More information](#)

Northern European Permafrost Soils on the Brink of Extinction? The shrinkage of large parts of Northern Europe's permafrost landscapes can no longer be stopped. This is the conclusion of a group of researchers led by Richard Fewster of the University of Leeds.

[More information](#)

Alpine Permafrost – Climate Indicator and Glue of the Alps: Warming of permafrost soils is also causing issues in the Alps: alpine mountain refuges built on permafrost grounds are beginning to sag; formerly safe crossings and normal routes are increasingly at risk of rockfall. The German Alpine Association has compiled a lot of information on its website.

[More information](#)

Additional reports

Soil, Seeds and Senses: As part of the First New European Bauhaus Festival in June 2022, 10 soil experts presented positions and visions on the future of soil under the title 'Celebration on Soil, Seeds, and Senses'. The videos are available online.

[More information](#)

Let's Address the Elephant in the Room: How Can We Transform Soil Usage to Benefit the Common Good? In the podcast 'Stadtrederei. Reflexionen zu Stadt und Raum' (City Talk. Reflections on City and Space), experts from the fields of urban planning and architecture talk to (urban) stakeholders from a wide range of professions about ideas for shaping the future of urban landscapes.

[More information](#)

BonaRes – Soil as a Sustainable Resource: 'BonaRes stands for 'Boden als nachhaltige Ressource für die Bioökonomie' (Soil as a Sustainable Resource for the Bioeconomy). The primary goal of BonaRes is to expand the scientific understanding of soil ecosystems and to improve the productivity of soils and their other functions. This includes developing new strategies for the sustainable use and management of soils.

[More information](#)

Brownfield Dialogue: The Austrian Federal Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) designed this multi-year programme to make brownfields usable again.

[More information](#)

AKUT – A Tool for Municipal Flood Prevention: Researchers at the Mainz University of Applied Sciences have created software that provides municipalities with an overview of hazard situations and potential precautionary measures. The advisory tool AKUT was developed for municipal staff and technical planners to examine municipalities in rural areas.

[More information](#)

Soil Protection Award 'ERDREICH': Protecting Nature and Soil: The Austrian Ministry for Climate Protection awards prize for soil protection and sustainable soil and land use. Submissions can be made until 7 July 2022.

[More information](#)

Soil – An Impossible Proposition: This episode of the children's programme 'Löwenzahn' combines many exciting facts about soil with information about soil in an entertaining way.

[More information](#)

Publications

Building Land Development in Germany: The goal of the German government coalition is to build 400,000 flats per year. At the same time, the daily use of new land for settlement and transport purposes is supposed to be reduced to less than 30 hectares by 2030. The recently published results of the building land survey show: With inner development potentials of at least 84,000 ha nationwide, there is sufficient land available to meet the demand without taking up new land.

[More information](#)

How Green Are German Cities? A research consortium was commissioned by the German Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development to create an 'Urban Green Grid Germany' between 2018 and 2021. This marks the first time, nationwide grid data sets were created methodologically based on uniform criteria and made available in a high resolution of 10 x 10 metres.

[More information](#)

Instruments for Reducing Land Use – A Look Beyond Germany: Land use for settlement and transport is a Europe-wide problem. The German Federal Environment Agency initiated the SURFACE project to compare strategies and instrumental solution concepts in Europe. The objective is to identify promising solutions to the problem.

[More information](#)

The soil idea

Course 'Municipal Spatial Planning and Soil Protection – 11th Course on Town Centre Gentrification Completed: Thanks to their decision-making powers, municipalities have a significant influence on land use, soil quality and preventive flood protection. Unfortunately, they often lack information and expertise on the subject of soil that would allow them to cultivate a careful approach to soil handling. In collaboration with various partners, Climate Alliance Austria and the Soil Alliance offer seminars lasting several days with certifications for municipal representatives on the subject of soil management and soil protection. The course is aimed at municipal employees and is also open to interested parties from outside Austria.

On 14 June, the 11th course was completed in Mäder (AT). We congratulate 20 new course graduates. They are now part of a community of 200 people who continue to promote town centre gentrification and inner development.

[More information](#)

News from the Climate Alliance

International Annual Climate Alliance Conference – Register Now! From 28 to 30 September 2022, Climate Alliance's International Annual Conference will take place in Hesperingen (Luxembourg) under the motto 'Unleashing Local Potential – Driving Global Transformation'. The conference will explore the key question of how municipalities can harness local energy and existing ideas to strengthen climate justice and cushion the impact of global heating. Through interactive workshops and inspiring examples from areas such as energy poverty, renewable energy, sustainable mobility, building retrofitting, climate justice and nature-based solutions, the conference will illustrate how engagement with local stakeholders can bring us all closer to global transformation. Registration is open now until 16 September 2022.

[More information](#)

Soil Alliance internal news

Annual Conference 'Land Use and Climate Change – Regional and European Perspectives':

In collaboration with the Autonomous Province of Bolzano (South Tyrol), the Soil Alliance invites you to the international symposium on 29 and 30 September 2022 in Bolzano (IT). In the Alpine region, the scarce resource soil is under particular scrutiny in terms of quantity and quality. As a result of climate change, large parts of the permafrost soils are thawing, and the ongoing land use is threatening landscapes as well as tourism. Municipalities must find individual local solutions to help them tackle the challenges wisely and sustainably. We would like to invite you to an open-forum discussion with us.

[More information](#)

Board meeting: The next board meeting will be held digitally on 7 July 2022.

New members: Büro für multifunktionale Umweltplanung und Beratung (Office for Multifunctional Environmental Planning and Consulting; DE), Market Town of Bad Goisern am Hallstättersee (AT), Market Town of Euratsfeld (AT), Municipality of Gießhübl (AT), City of Hungen (DE), Peaceful Community of Moosdorf (AT), Municipality of Rohr im Kremstal (AT), Market Town of Scharnstein (AT). A warm welcome!

Event information

Transatlantic Perspectives on Soil Health, 28 June 2022, (digital).

[More information](#) and [registration](#)

Crossing boundaries, changing societies, World Congress of Soil Science 2022 (International Union of Soil Science): 31 July to 5 August 2022, Glasgow (SCO)

[More information](#)

Contaminated Sites Day Hannover 2022, 1 September 2022, Suderburg (DE)

[More information](#)

Overcoming limitations, crossing scales: Annual Meeting of the German Soil Science Society, 3 to 10 September 2022, Trier (DE)

[More information](#)

A Soil Deal for Europe – European R&I Conference, 27 September 2022, Brussels (BE)

[More information](#)

Symposium: Microplastics in soils – Hazard for Humans and the Environment? 19 and 20 October 2022 (hbrid event), Dessau (DE)

[More information](#)

Soil in movement, 14th annual conference of the Bundesverband Boden (Federal Soil Association), 21 to 23 September 2022, Hannover (DE)

[More information](#)

Legal notice

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