

Soil Alliance News

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



Edition 2 / 2019

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

Soil protection and energy revolution – it can be done! Under this motto, ELSA members and numerous interested parties met in Rheine for the annual ELSA conference in May. And even if some would rather have seen a question mark at the end of the conference title, in the end it became clear: Where there is a will, there is usually also a way! The challenges of the energy transition policy and the associated impairment of soils require constructive and fair dialogue to identify solutions and for people to think outside the box.

Particularly in rural areas, where effects of the energy transition through plant and line construction are particularly severe, many dedicated people have decided to rethink the future. The small municipality of Saerbeck near Münster now generates three times as much green electricity from wind, solar and biomass as the town consumes. A large part of it is generated in the bioenergy park Saerbeck, a former ammunition depot of the Bundeswehr (German Federal Armed Forces), which was visited by the participants of the ELSA conference and is also considered for nature and soil protection.

This and other examples clearly demonstrate: It can be done!

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: Soil protection and energy revolution – it can be done!

Annual ELSA Conference post-briefing 'Soil protection and energy revolution – it can be done!': The ELSA conference took place on 17/18 May 2019 in Rheine (DE). The presentations of the conference are now available for download.

[For more information, visit](#)

Annual ELSA Declaration 2019: The energy revolution is a challenge for society as a whole, and nobody seriously doubts how important it is anymore. The challenge is to make it sustainable, i.e. environmentally friendly, economically viable and socially acceptable. Soil protection must also be considered during implementation of the energy transition. It must not be neglected. The annual ELSA declaration summarises the most important findings and requirements from the annual conference.

[For more information, visit](#)

Bioenergy park Saerbeck: In a joint effort with many local investors, the Münsterland municipality of Saerbeck developed the bioenergy park Saerbeck (BEP) on the site of a former ammunition depot. It is considered a competence centre for renewable energy and the energy revolution. Accordingly, the BEP is not only used to generate electricity, but also for research and education. Part of the park is under nature conservation.

[For more information, visit](#)

Additional reports

Land usage in Germany has dropped: Utilisation of new land has decreased in Germany. The daily increase in settlement and traffic areas from 1997 to 2000 averaged 129 hectares (ha) per day, which corresponds to about 180 football fields. By contrast, the average daily increase from 2014 to 2017 dropped to just 58 ha. Nevertheless, the 30-hectare target (by 2020) formulated in the Federal Government's sustainability strategy is expected to be missed.

[For more information, visit](#)

Best soils need protection: The online petition is directed against the settlement of a REWE logistics centre on the A 45 near Berstadt (DE) on more than 300,000 m² of high-quality farmland. It was initiated by the citizens' initiative 'Citizens for soil'

[For more information, visit](#)

Petition 'For fair and sustainable land readjustment through a land value tax': The Initiative for Natural Economic Order (INWO e.V.) has launched a petition at change.org to introduce a land value tax.

[For more information, visit](#)

Film about soil: The film about soil by the province of Upper Austria is also available on YouTube in HD. The film explores the many fascinating aspects of our soil: from fantastic insights into the multifaceted and exciting world of soil organisms to the significance of soil for the environment and humans. The DVD and an accompanying brochure are available for order.

[For more information, visit](#)

Guide to peat moss propagation for restoration purposes: The DBU action guidelines – Development and testing of methods for the establishment of peat moss in rewetted raised bogs after peat digging is proving to be a promising method for raised bog restoration.

[For more information, visit](#)

Now online: The soil inspection for your community: What about the soil in your community? The new soil inspection of Climate Alliance Tyrol is an interactive questionnaire. The soil inspection provides ideas and measures for sustainable soil management in the community. All relevant areas, from spatial planning and natural hazards to raising awareness, are surveyed. The soil inspection was developed by Climate Alliance Tyrol as part of the EU interregional project Links4Soils.

[For more information, visit](#)

Alpine Soil Partnership: Comprehensive soil protection requires the cooperation of many people. The Alpine Soil Partnership is a network for all stakeholders from the Alpine region, from politics, administration, science, and industry, who are committed to soil protection. Join the network!

[For more information, visit](#)

Publications

Save the soil! Why we have to fight to save the life under our feet: In his book, environmental journalist Florian Schwinn calls for a fundamental change in thinking and a 'humus revolution'.

[For more information, visit](#)

Peat-free soil for the future – a plea against the removal of peat moss for sale as garden soil for climate protection.

[For more information, visit](#)

The Soil Idea

'Soil of the year 2018' travelling exhibition: The Alpine Felshumusboden (Folic Leptosol or Folic Histosol) was chosen by the General Committee as the 'Soil of the Year' in order to raise awareness about how important it is to the natural and cultural region of the Alps. Among other initiatives, the Bavarian State Ministry for Environment and Consumer Protection launched the exhibition 'Preserving the Soil. With foresight into the future. – Alpine Felshumusboden (Folic Leptosol or Folic Histosol) – Soil of the Year 2018'.

[For more information, visit](#)

Soil Alliance Internal News

Reserve the date in your diary! ELSA conference 2020 – 20 years of Soil Alliance:

The next ELSA conference will take place on 14 and 15 May 2020 in Bozen (IT). For the anniversary year '20 years of Soil Alliance', the ELSA conference returns to the place where the idea for the European Land and Soil Alliance was born in 2000.

New members: Market town Artstetten-Pöbring (AT), Geopark Erz der Alpen (AT), Geopark Karawanken (AT), City of Rheine (DE), St. Georgen an der Gusen (AT)

New Board elected: On 17 May 2019, the General Assembly elected a new Management Board following the annual conference in Rheine (DE). Christian Steiner, state of Lower Austria, was confirmed as Chairman of the Board.

[Additional information](#)

Event information

Annual Meeting of the German Soil Science Society: 24 – 29 August 2019, Bern (CH)

[For more information, visit](#)

2. Symposium 'The pesticide-free community': 9 – 10 September 2019, Dessau-Roßlau (DE)

[For more information, visit](#)

Alpine Soil Forum – Perspectives for Sustainable Land Use in the Alps / Final Conference Links4Soils: 14 – 16 October 2019, Innsbruck (AT)

[For more information, visit](#)

Certification course 'Pedological Site Support': from October 2019, Dresden (DE)

[For more information, visit](#)

4th Thünen Symposium on Soil Metagenomics, 11 – 13 December 2019, Braunschweig (DE)

[For more information, visit](#)

Legal notice

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