

# Soil Alliance News

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

Issue 3/2024



**EUROPEAN LAND  
& SOIL ALLIANCE**

ELSA

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

Woody plants and the protection of soils play a decisive role in adapting to climate change and the sustainable design of habitats. In cities, trees and other woody plants contribute to greening and offer a variety of benefits: they improve the microclimate, provide shade, cool through evaporation and bind harmful air particles. This 'green infrastructure' helps to reduce heat islands and improve the quality of life in urban areas. At the same time, woody plants strengthen biodiversity by creating habitats for numerous animal and plant species.

In rural areas, woody plants are often used in the form of hedges or agroforestry systems in which trees are combined with agricultural use. These systems offer ecological, economic and social benefits: they protect the soil from erosion, improve water retention and promote soil fertility. Agroforestry systems also contribute to increasing biodiversity and offer additional sources of income, for example through fruit or timber production.

The protection and targeted use of soils and woody plants are therefore essential to mitigate climate change and create more resilient ecosystems - in both urban and rural areas.

At the annual conference 2024 of the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA e. V.) on 26 and 27 September, the focus will be on the role of woody plants in settlement areas and in the cultural landscape, successful examples from various municipalities and regions in Europe will be presented and potentials for adaptation to climate change at various levels will be discussed. The event is organised by the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA e. V.) in cooperation with the Province of Lower Austria, the Municipality of Tulln, the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU) and Climate Alliance Austria.

We cordially invite you to join us at the conference to discuss and find exciting solutions!

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: Contribution of woody plants to soil protection**

**Annual Conference of the European Land and Soil Alliance 2024: Soil - Tree - Climate in Town and Country.** This year's international conference and excursion will take place on 26 and 27 September 2024 in Tulln an der Donau (AT). The conference will focus on the role of woody plants in settlement areas and in the cultural landscape - often referred to as agroforestry systems -, present successful examples from various municipalities and regions in Europe and discuss the potential for adapting to climate change at various levels.

[More information](#)

**BoBaSt - Soil substrate and tree species selection for climate-adapted urban tree planting:** The project, funded by the Federal Environment Agency, is concerned with the development of practice-orientated adaptation measures to climate change. The aim is to promote the resilience of future urban tree populations to prolonged dry periods in summer by using suitable soil substrates in combination with the selection of sustainable tree species and varieties.

[More information](#)

**Hedges and climate protection:** Hedges are a biotope in their own right, providing food and habitat for many animals. They protect the soil and also bind large amounts of carbon. Only moors are better CO<sub>2</sub> reservoirs. The hr television programme about the importance of hedges can be viewed in the ARD media library.

[More information](#)

**Soil protection through agroforestry - SIGNAL project at the final BonaRes conference:** This year, the final conference of the BMBF funding initiative 'Soil as a sustainable resource for the bioeconomy - BonaRes' took place in Leipzig (GER). Scientists were invited to discuss the results of nine years of research into sustainable soil utilisation. The SIGNAL project, one of the ten collaborative projects, is focussing on the sustainable intensification of agriculture through agroforestry systems.

[More information](#)

**Soil biodiversity in agroforestry systems:** The topic sheet from the German Association for Agroforestry Systems (DeFAF) deals with the positive impact of agroforestry systems in agriculture on soil fertility and soil life.

[More information](#)

**What are the benefits of planting trees in the field?** A farmer from Peickwitz (GER) has been testing how animal husbandry, agriculture and tree cultivation can be sensibly combined since 2015 and is taking stock after nine years.

[More information](#)

**Heat check of German cities by Deutsche Umwelthilfe (DUH):** 190 cities were analysed based on aerial photographs. How large is the proportion of sealed surfaces compared to the proportion of green spaces in the cities? The results show: The majority of cities in Germany do not adequately protect people from the extremely high temperatures resulting from the climate crisis.

[More information](#)

**Trees in the city:** City trees don't have an easy life. They struggle with pollutants from the air, planting areas that are too small with little space for roots, the use of salt in winter and injuries caused by construction work or accidents. Yet urban trees are great sources of shade, cool their surroundings, bind fine dust, improve the soil and provide a

habitat for animals and insects. The Schutzgemeinschaft Deutscher Wald (SDW) provides information about urban trees and how to handle them correctly.

[More information](#)

**Tree planting as a water reservoir in urban areas:** The 'Natur im Garten' company, which is supported by the state of Lower Austria, provides helpful tips on how to make cities more climate-friendly in the future. Special attention is paid to the importance of the soil for the trees as well as for the environment.

[More information](#)

**The garden in a changing climate:** Climate change can also be felt in our gardens. Summers are hot and dry, there is an increase in heavy rainfall and winters are mild. We can adapt to these new conditions in our gardens.

[More information](#)

## More messages

**Land Recycling Prize 2025:** We are looking for projects in Baden-Württemberg (GER) that have been realised on previously used land between 2021 and 2024 with a focus on 'Inner development - sustainable and future-proof'. Local authorities, administrative communities and special-purpose associations, private investors, development companies as well as architects, urban planners and engineers are eligible to participate. Closing date for entries: 11 October 2024

[More information](#)

**'Nature Restoration Law' comes into force:** The "Nature Restoration Law" has been in force in all EU member states since August 2024. It aims to restore ecosystems to a good state that secure our food supply and regulate the climate. This includes forests, moors, seas and living agricultural landscapes.

[More information](#)

**Funding for machinery and equipment to strengthen natural soil functions:** The Natural Climate Protection Action Programme (ANK) aims to significantly improve the general condition of ecosystems in Germany, strengthen their climate protection performance and thus make a lasting contribution to climate protection. The guideline for the promotion of investments in machinery and equipment to strengthen natural soil functions in agricultural landscapes is intended to support agricultural businesses and nature conservation organisations in particular in the acquisition of soil-conserving cultivation technology. The focus here is on machinery and equipment for the cultivation of wet or rewetted peat soils.

[More information](#)

**The 3rd German Environmental Award from the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU) goes to soil conservationist Dr Franziska Tanneberger:** the peatland researcher has been head of the Greifswald Mire Centre (GMC) for nine years and sees it as a great tribute to the work of the team of around 100 people. She intends to use the prize money of €250,000 to further advance the work on moors.

[More information](#)

**Ground:breaker Award:** The International Commission for the Protection of the Alps (CIPRA) is looking for good practice examples of unsealing and soil improvement measures. Be it the conversion of car parks into green spaces, the revitalisation of soils

to promote biodiversity, the elimination of heat islands, the restoration of water-permeable surfaces or the creation of recreational spaces. Until November 2024, the competition is still looking for examples from urban and peri-urban areas in different countries, of different sizes and with different stakeholders.

[More information](#)

## Publications

**6th edition of the Soil Science Mapping Guide (KA6):** The Soil Mapping Guideline is the binding guide for soil mapping and the collection of soil data in Germany. Since the publication of KA5 in 2005, the requirements for the Soil Mapping Guidelines have changed considerably. The new edition KA6 was published in August 2024.

[More information](#)

**Interactive soil moisture maps and profiles:** On the interactive map of the German Weather Service (DWD), the soil moisture for different depths (up to 200 cm) and under different crops can be looked up retrospectively for one year.

[More information](#)

**Draft law to strengthen integrated urban development:** The Federal Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Building (BMWSB) has submitted a draft law to strengthen integrated urban development (amendment to the Building Code) for consultation with the federal states and associations. The amendment to the Building Code is expected to be passed by the cabinet in the near future and adopted by the German Bundestag by the end of the year. A statement by the Bundesverband Boden e. V. (German Soil Association) on the draft bill was published on 15.08.24.

[Press release of BMWSB](#)

[Statement of the Bundesverband Boden e. V.](#)

**Soil use and soil protection - Copernicus Soil Network Office:** Copernicus is the European Union's earth observation programme. It provides important data for environmental protection, climate monitoring, infrastructure monitoring and other social tasks. By deriving soil parameter values from satellite data and evaluating them, soil properties and soil condition can be derived and observed over a large area, enabling soils to be managed even more sustainably. All data is open and freely accessible.

[More information](#)

## The Soil Idea

**Soil detectives – the mystery of biodiversity:** a mystery story not just for children. As part of the BonaRes project, a children's book has been created that teaches children about the importance of biodiversity in the soil in an appropriate and playful way. The book is available for download in eight languages.

[More information](#)

## News from the Climate Alliance

**11th Climate Star Competition:** The Climate Alliance is looking for your local success stories! This year, the time has finally come again: for the eleventh time, the Climate Alliance is looking for innovative and sustainable role model projects in local climate protection and climate adaptation. The Climate Star competition offers a platform to

honour the impressive and creative solutions of Climate Alliance members from all over Europe. By taking part, you have the chance to put your city or municipality in the spotlight and present your projects on the European stage. Applications can be submitted from now until 31 October.

[More information](#)

## Event information

**Soil is valuable - conserving resources, making good use of it**, 15th BVB Annual Conference, Conference of the German Soil Association (BVB), 18-20 September 2024, Karlsruhe (GER)

[More information](#)

**Soil - Tree - Climate in City and Country**, Annual Conference of the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA), 26/27 September 2024, Tulln (AT)

[More information](#)

**EUROPE - NATURAL - CONNECTED**, 37th German Nature Conservation Day, 24 to 28 September 2024, Saarbrücken (GER)

[More information](#)

**Evaluation of soils of post-mining landscapes**, conference of the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg (BTU), the Technical Tax Office Cottbus (TFA) responsible for soil estimation, the Research Institute for Post-Mining Landscapes Finsterwalde (FIB), the State Office for Mining, Geology and Raw Materials (LBGR) and Lausitzer Energie AG (LEAG), 30 September to 2 October 2024, Cottbus (GER)

[More information](#)

**Perception and evaluation of soils in society**, 09 to 11 October 2024, University of Potsdam (GER)

[More information](#)

**Promoting resilience in our regions, cities & communities**, International Annual Conference of the Climate Alliance, 09 to 11 October 2024, Cascais (PT)

[More information](#)

**Soil Symposium 2024 - Forest soil: An overtaxed all-rounder?** Event organised by the Ministry of Food, Rural Areas and Consumer Protection (MLR) and the Forest Research Institute Baden-Württemberg (FVA), 16 October 2024, Stuttgart (GER)

[More information](#)

**Soils and climate in transition**, Marktredwitz Soil Protection Days, 16 to 18 October 2024, Marktredwitz (GER)

[More information](#)

**Heavy rainfall events in a changing climate - challenges for soil, water and settlement protection**, Soil-Water-Site Protection Forum, 18 October 2024, Osnabrück (GER)

[More information](#)

**Forest.Soil.Climate.Change:** Conference and excursion on the Soil of the Year 2024, 22 to 24 October 2024, Götzis-Vorarlberg on Lake Constance (AT)

[More information](#)

**Living Soils - Stable Systems in Climate Change,** Soil Day 2024 of the Interessengemeinschaft Gesunder Boden e. V., 20/21 November 2024, Neunburg v. Wald (GER)

[More information](#)

**DCONex:** Congress + exhibition on pollutant management, 28/29 January 2025, Münster (GER)

[More information](#)

## Impressum

European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA) e.V.

Klaus-Strick-Weg 10, D - 49082 Osnabrück

Phone: +49 (0) 541 323 7035 | Fax: +49 (0) 541 323 15 7035

E-Mail: [mail@soil-alliance.org](mailto:mail@soil-alliance.org)

Web: [www.soil-alliance.org](http://www.soil-alliance.org)

Osnabrück, Osnabrück Local Court, registration number: VR 3124

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