



unser Boden
wir stehen drauf!



Eine Initiative von Landeshauptmann Dr. Erwin Pröll
und Landesrat Dr. Stephan Pernkopf

Retrospection and Perspectives

dates from September 2011



unser Boden
wir stehen drauf!

Our soil
we stand upon it!
Nase puda
je pro nás duležitá
A mi földünk
ragaszkodunk hozzá!
Наша земя
не стамане нгузу нст!
Pământul nostru,
cel pe care stăm!
Pământul nostru,
cel pe care stăm!
Наше зємљиште
нам је јуко важно!
НАША ЗЕМЛЯ
— на ній ми стоїмо!

SINDAR

Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region



Editor: Office of Lower Austrian Government, Department of Rural Development, Dr. Erwin Szlezak
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Soil map source: Atlas of the Danubian Countries, Austrian Institute of East and Southeast European Studies, Vienna 1984

Soil needs Partners like you!

Our soil is an important commodity, because it cannot be increased. We need it. We and all the coming generations.

A careful and conscious treatment of soil is therefore essential.

We look back upon a time full of events, in which numerous activities have taken place. We cordially thank all partners, who have committed themselves to our soil with dedication and interest in the past years.

On the one hand, the campaign „our soil - we stand upon it!“ shall create awareness and illustrate soil with its precious functions among the general public. On the other, it is also a matter of contemplating the topic of soil quality when implementing propositions and projects on a provincial and municipal level and of considering it in planning.

For this reason, Lower Austria has been strongly committed to the European Land and Soil Alliance. Around half of the more than 150 members in all of Europe are situated in our Region, and the model of active citizens, schools and municipalities is also effective beyond our borders. This is shown by soil protection projects, which have already been implemented or begun upon Lower Austrian initiative in the Czech Republic, in Slovakia and Hungary.

In Tulln, the 9th Annual Meeting of the European Land and Soil Alliance took place. Within the framework of the event, also the admissions of the first member municipalities of the Soil and Land Alliance in the Czech Republic (Nová Lhota) and in Slovakia (Kocovce) were signed.

In cooperation with the Forum Land, the competition “Power of Soil” was performed for children and young people from elementary school up to university. More than 1,150 submissions and 12 winning projects in four categories show the interest and the great enthusiasm of young people to commit themselves to soil. In the first years of the campaign “our soil - we stand upon it!” more than 40,000 people have been reached at events, competitions, and symposia, and 34 committed municipalities were awarded soil plates.

A large number of activities, broad cooperation and support in the field of schools and municipalities have in the meantime rendered the Lower Austrian soil campaign the European best-practice example for an active and vivid communication concerning the topic of soil protection and use of soil.

We are looking forward to many more ideas and projects, and we thank you for each single activity, which you contribute to this vivid and growing partnership of the European Land and Soil Alliance - for our common soil!

**Governor Dr. Erwin Pröll
and Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs Dr. Stephan Pernkopf**



July 13, 2011

Soil Plate for Lichtenegg

Pernkopf: Aktive Municipalities promote conscious Treatment of Soil

"More than 70 members of the European Land and Soil Alliance turn Lower Austria into the soil protection region number 1 in Europe. Active municipalities like Lichtenegg are positive examples of a sustainable development worth being imitated", states Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs Dr. Stephan Pernkopf on the occasion of the unveiling of the soil plate at the municipality of Lichtenegg. A two meter "Lower Austria" plate at the forecourt of the school shall in the future create consciousness among citizens of the municipality and visitors of soil and its properties. A soil profile extracted in the municipal area has been directly integrated into this plate. Mayor Franz Rennhofer, Member of Lower Austrian Parliament, received the soil plate for his municipality Lichtenegg

in the "Bucklige Welt", where the awareness of the value of soil has been sharpened for many years through various activities.

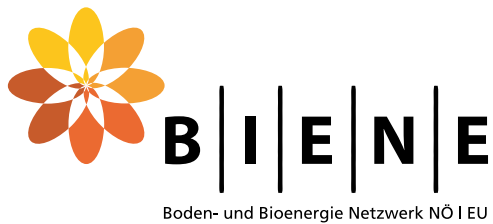
Soil Activity Concepts for Municipalities

Starting with the „forest playground“, where a forest official offers education for elementary school and kindergarten, from the targeted implementation of leaching areas in the construction of roads, paths and areas, from the farmers' market and farmer shops with their own mill in the village, from composting of cemetery waste to the long-term use of soil as an energy source, to local heat provision as well as to innovative wind power projects the numerous activities of the municipality have been summarized in a "soil activity concept". Furthermore, Mr. Rennhofer is chairman of the Soil and Energy Network of European



Countries (SENEC/BIENE) and cooperates with the municipality of Lichtenegg and a large number of partners in setting up a soil protection network in the Danube region and in precise EU projects in Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic.

Certainly, also other municipalities in the Southern region are actively engaged in soil protection. Within the framework of the events, mayors and representatives of municipalities from the municipalities of Zoebern, Scheiblingkirchen-Thernberg, Krumbach, Grimmenstein and Bad Erlach received "soil postcards" with a soil profile typical for their municipality.



June 16, 2011

Termination of EU Project Lower Austria - CZ: Painting with the Colours of the Earth

On June 16, 2011 at the Museum at Mickulcice the final event of the cross-border project, subsidized by the EU, „Painting with the Colours of the Earth / Malujeme barvami země“ took place. School boys and girls from a total of 27 schools in Southern Moravia and in Lower Austria have recently committed themselves intensely to the general topic of soil, arts, and history under artistic supervision by Prof. Irena Ráček. In the course of this event, more than **120 pieces of art painted with soil colours** were created and assessed by an international expert jury in a double-stage procedure.

In addition, the international participants were able to vote for their favorites by means of online voting.

The website www.soilart.eu counted **213,000 website calls** in the months of April and May!

For further information on the project please refer to: www.soilart.eu



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MASARYKOVO MUZEUM V HODONÍNĚ

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Eine Initiative von Landesrat Dr. Erwin Pröll
und Landesrat Dr. Stephan Pernkopf



www.sollart.eu

www.sondar.eu

www.unserboden.at

BODENKUNST

mit den Farben der Erde

UMĚNÍ A PŮDA

barvami země

EU-Wettbewerb für 27 Schulen,
128 Werke aus Südmähren und Niederösterreich

evropská soutěž pro 27 škol
128 děl z jižní Moravy a dolního Rakouska



Malen
mit den Farben der Erde



unser Boden – sinnvoll nutzen, sorgsam schützen!
naše půda – smysluplně využívat, starostlivě chránit!

Malujeme
barvami země



EUROPEAN UNION
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landwirtschaftskammer
Österreich



Sollart
with the colours of the earth



SONDAR



ELSA n.v.



Isernoe



LA MÚ



emmaus



HELDENRIG



PICOS



PICOS



BIENE



ELSA n.v.

May 17, 2011

Cross-Generation Project - Painting with the Colours of the Earth!

SeneCura Social Center at Pöchlarn, May 17, 2011

For the first time, there was a painting station with soil colours, at which young and old were painting together. In the beautiful courtyard of the castle, tables had been set up, and the utensils had been prepared. The residents of the SeneCura social center were pleased with the visit of the children from the kindergarten.

At first, the colours were produced together. The fact that colours can be mixed from earth, water, and eggs, fascinated the children, and also the elderly had never seen anything like this before. They started working diligently with brush, roller, cork plug, toothbrushes, birds' feathers, and sponge stamps. Working with soil colours was obviously great fun, and the young and elderly artists were profoundly preoccupied with their own creativity, and many wonderful pieces of art were created.

Some children then chose to sieve and to stamp and rub earth, others participated in the common painting: Upon a canvas, curd-glue was applied, and then it was decorated with pieces of linen, bivalves, grains, earth, and stones - there was no limit to creativity. Time elapsed quickly, and the children had to say goodbye, everyone gave their thanks for the wonderful morning. The residents retained a special impression by this activity: "That was something different, very interesting - painting with earth!"





March 29 - 30, 2011



ARBEITSGEMEINSCHAFT
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PODUNÁSKÝCH ZEMÍ
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PODUNÁSKÝCH KRAJIN
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ASOCIATIA DONAUBENE
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PPIJBYBCKAJA APAH

SONDAR: Lower Austrian initiative for Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region 18th Meeting of Danube Countries in St. Poelten

Pernkopf: Cooperation with Danube Countries provides for strong Impetus for preventive Soil Protection!

The province of Lower Austria has been a member of the European Land and Soil Alliance since 2003, and the campaign 'our soil - we stand upon it!' has become the international best-practice example for citizen-friendly creation of awareness. Through the SONDAR Soil Strategy Network an initiative of cooperation of the Danube countries is launched, starting with Slovakia, concerning the crucial topics of preventive soil protection.

18th Meeting of the Danube Countries in St. Poelten
On March 29 and 30, at this year's expert meeting of the Ecology Working Group about 60 experts, with Michal Dzatko (Slovakia) presiding, were concerned with the current questions of preventive soil protection in the Danube region.

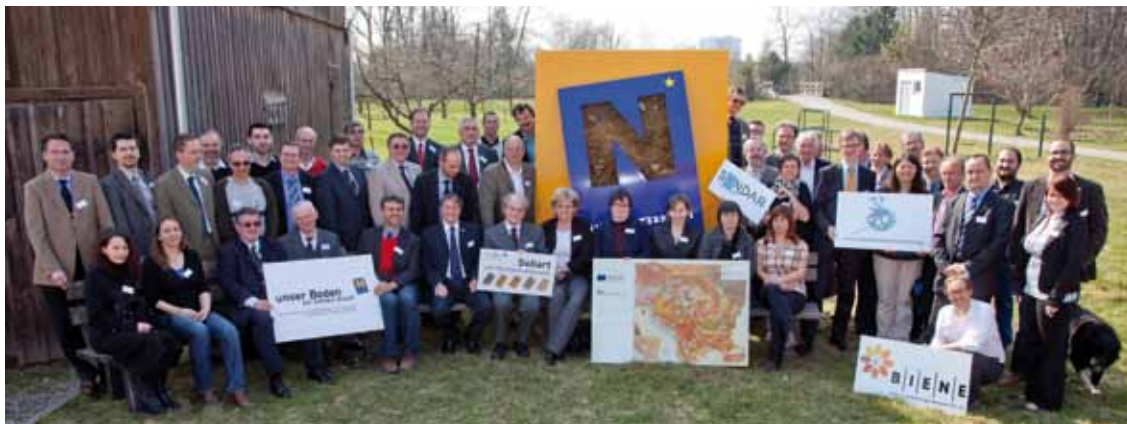
SONDAR - Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region
Soil is the starting point for all life on Earth, and it provides for more than 90% of our food. It is threatened in various ways: excessive construction and exploitation in favorable conditions, neglect and give-up in unfavorable conditions. A general awareness of the population seems to fall

into oblivion and does no longer correspond to reality, respectively. Soils are living systems, which can only perform their functions in the ecosystem and for man, if their properties are largely intact. A sustainable cultivation in the Danube region may provide an essential contribution to soil fertility, preventive flood protection, and the use of soils as a carbon reservoir, and thus to climate protection.

It is the aim of the SONDAR project (Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region) to create a network of increasing responsibility for soil:



between science and practice, between administration and users of land, between education, arts, and the entire population. It is a matter of implementing measures and initiating processes, which shall be able to develop further successfully in other regions and countries as a consequence. The effect of the project examples shall become relevant to the entire Danube region, and after end of project the development of strategies for a continuation of activities shall be attained.



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The measures taken by the partners aim at showing quantitative and qualitative soil protection through demonstration of best-practice examples.

Start of ETC-Project "SONDAR SK-AT"

At the outset of the SONDAR initiative, a partner project between Lower Austria and Slovakia, subsidized by the European Union was elaborated within the framework of the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC).



The partners are VVB - Vodohospodárska výstavba (water engineering institute) Bratislava, VUPOP - Výskumný ústav pôdoznanectva a ochrany pôdy (Soil Science and Conservation Research Institute), as well as BOKU University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences Vienna, Institute of Soil Protection. Lead partner is SENEC Soil and Energy Network of European Countries. The Department of Rural Development of the Lower Austrian government is responsible for strategic project coordination.

AWARENESS OF SOIL and SOIL-WATER-INTERACTION:

In this cooperation, scheduled from 2011 to 2013, the focus is on improving awareness of soil of the people by target-relevant information, service/support for multipliers, work in educational institutions, production of soil colours from regional soils, launching a soil colour painting competition, and documentation of municipal best-practice projects. In the field of "soil-water-interaction", the connection between soils and flood events, which can be read

from the soils, in the past 1,000 years shall be integrated into current soil map material. Existing map material and such as shall be newly elaborated is checked with respect to its suitability with a view to the management of dangers caused by acts of nature and flood protection. For a practical implementation of these findings, cooperation with voluntary organizations (such as fire brigades) is sought. In municipalities serving as models, the bases for future planning considerations are elaborated. Soil Protection and Sustainability! Activities of soil protection in Lower Austria are coordinated by the Department of Rural Development. In the meantime, there are 70 members of the European Land and Soil Alliance in Lower Austria: municipalities, a model region of the Soil and Land Alliance, and further associated partner organizations, i.e. around half of all European members of the Soil and Land Alliance! They work on a cooperative level, and they use the synergies of the network through exchange of information and experience. On the second day of the meeting, the focus is on sustainability.

An "International Practice Day for Soil protection and Sustainability" with workshops and reports of experiences concludes the program.


www.sozialproduziert.at

January 11, 2011

Private View „with the Colours of the Earth“ opened at the Landhaus Pernkopf: Great Commitment of Pupils and Teachers

St. Poelten (2011-01-12) On January 11, Dr. Stephan Pernkopf, Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs, together with the South-Moravian District Councilor Pavel Balik, Grad. Eng. opened an exposition of soil colour paintings, painted and designed by children from the Czech Republic and Lower Austria, in the foyer of House 1A of the Lower Austrian Government in

St. Poelten. „Children and young people from the Czech Republic and Lower Austria have created wonderful pieces of art, and have committed themselves to soil protection in a creative manner. This exposition shows the extraordinary commitment, also of the teachers“, emphasized Regional Minister Dr. Stephan Pernkopf.

Special commitment for the implementation of this exposition was shown by Director Irena Chovančíková from the Masaryk Museum at Hodonín and by Christian Steiner, Grad. Eng., Chairman of the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA). Soil colour artist Prof. Irena Ráček acted as a guide through the exposition. The pieces of art shown are part of the preparations of the EU project “Painting with the Colours of the Earth / malujeme barvami zeme“, which is performed by the Department of Rural Development of the Lower Austrian Government in cooperation with the Masaryk Museum. Up to spring 2011, in more than thirty Moravian and Lower Austrian schools further pieces of art with relation to soil and the history of both countries will be diligently designed.



f.l.t.r.: South Moravian District Councilor Pavel Balik, Grad. Eng., Director Irena Chovančíková, soil colour artist Prof. Irena Ráček, Dr. Stephan Pernkopf, Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs with school girls.

Awareness of a common historical heritage of the region is also cultivated in the Lower Austrian Soil Colour Creative Center at Heldenberg. There, Irena Ráček holds seminars for educators and artists. SOIL COLOURS are colour pigments extracted directly from soil. Mankind has been familiar with them for many thousands of years, in our times the knowledge about their utilization has, however, largely fallen into



oblivion.

Within the framework of the campaign for soil protection „our soil – we stand upon it!“, in Lower Austrian schools soil colours have been in use since 2007. More than 300 schools and at least 25,000 pupils have ever since painted soil colour paintings and participated in competitions. This commitment has also triggered a cooperation with neighbouring countries.

You will find further information on international soil protection, the Land and Soil Alliance, and offers for schools and municipalities under www.unserboden.at

For information on the topic of soil art refer to www.soilart.eu



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World Soils Day 2010

Numerous Activities in Lower Austria

“In all of Europe, Lower Austria has most members of the Soil and Land Alliance. Regions, municipalities, and schools are committed to soil protection. Soil is of crucial importance for the production of our food and for climate protection”, emphasized Dr. Stephan Pernkopf, Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs, on the occasion of the World Soils Day 2010.

A healthy and living Soil improves our Climate Balance!

The amount of carbon stored in soils - in Europe this amounts to around 75 billions of tons - surpasses by far the amount of carbon in the atmosphere and in vegetation! This leads to the conclusion: Also in climate protection, our soil is of crucial importance!

Working for Soil Protection:

74 Lower Austrian members of the Soil and Land Alliance

The Province of Lower Austria has become an associated member of the European Land and Soil Alliance in 2003. In Lower Austria, all activities concerning soil are coordinated by the Department of Rural Development. The number of partners of the Soil and Land Alliance and correspondingly the number of people who live in a member municipality have strongly increased. Currently, 64 Lower Austrian municipalities with a total number of inhabitants of around 212,000 persons and furthermore 10 associated members are members of the Soil and Land Alliance.



Soil Focuses 2010

In the past year, beside constant service activities for Lower Austrian municipalities and schools, also especially the international annual meeting of the European Land and Soil Alliance, held in Tulln in May, and the meeting of the experts in soil protection of the Working Community of the Danube Countries, which took place in St. Poelten in March, shall be emphasized. Within the framework of the implementation of a cross-border school competition, the EU project “Painting with the Colours of the Earth”, performed by the Department of Rural Development in cooperation with the Masaryk Museum at Hodonín, is occupied with the artistic aspects of soil and with the history linking the border regions Weinviertel / Southern Moravia.

December 7, 2010

SONDAR - Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region

On December 7, 2010 at the Lilienhof in St. Poelten the first international project meeting of the SONDAR Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region took place. Experts from Austria, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic exchanged experiences and determined the further steps of their planned cooperation. The essential items of the agenda contained measures for improving soil

awareness by means of activities, such as „Painting with the Colours of the Earth“, as well as the topics of “Soil as an Indicator of Flood Events” and “Methods of Soil Protection for improving the Soil–Water–Balance/ Flood Prevention”.



November 8, 2010

Opening of Soil Colour Exposition at Hodonín

One of the children's works of the exposition "Painting with the Colours of the Earth" which was opened on November 8 at 11 a.m. in the Europe hall at Hodonín is called "The secret of the earthy depths".

The young artists showed sure instinct, poetical imagination, and great commitment, not only in choosing the title of their works, but also in designing the paintings and plastic pieces of art using natural materials and soil colours.



After greeting and opening by Director Irena Chovančíková, soil colour artist Prof. Irena Ráček led through the program. The Department of Rural Development was also invited to the opening of the exposition, and Dr. Erwin Szlezak addressed the gathered pupils and honorary guests, among them regional manager Anna Čárková, Dagmar Adámková, Grad. Eng., Department Director of the Agricultural Agency at Břeclav, and Vojtěch Hromek, Grad. Eng., Department Director of the Agricultural Agency at Hodonín. The paintings exposed are part of the preparation of the EU project "Painting with the

Colours of the Earth / malujeme barvami zeme", which is performed by the Department of Rural Development together with the Masarykovo muzeum at Hodonín. Further pieces of art with relation to soil and the history of both provinces will be created in more than 30 Moravian and Lower Austrian schools up to spring 2011.

.... The excavations showing our history have inspired us. Our history is in the soil. Thanks to archaeological excavations, we are able to read in the soil like in a book", the children of ZUŠ Hodonín write about their painting "History of the Earth - Man".



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October 22, 2010

Soil Colour Private View at the Conference of Voluntary Workers in Tulln

On Friday, October 22, 2010 Lower Austrian and Czech representatives of "voluntary organizations", such as the Red Cross, the Samaritians, and many more met at the provincial headquarters of the fire brigade in Tulln. Regional Minister Dr. Stephan Pernkopf and the Representative of the Governor of Southern Moravia, Mgr. Ivo Polák also attended the private view showing soil colour paintings from both countries, arranged by Prof. Irena Ráček within the framework of the ETC project "Painting with the Colours of the Earth".



Successful Cooperation between Lower Austria and the Czech Republic!

Within the successful campaign „our soil – we stand upon it!“ by Regional Minister Dr. Stephan Pernkopf and the Department of Rural Development of the Office of the Lower Austrian Government, since 2007 there has been active painting with the colours of the Earth, in order to strengthen awareness of the importance of healthy soil. The project which has arisen therefrom is called soilart and has already expanded beyond

the borders.

“Painting with the Colours of the Earth” has always sought an integral and sustainable approach. Examples for this are that the paint boxes are produced by social institutions, consist of Austrian wood, and that the colours are extracted from Lower Austrian soils. Today there is a Soil Colour Creative Center at Heldenberg in Lower Austria, where every year a large number of creative seminars take place, and there exists a cross-border EU project with Southern Moravia, the first fruits of which were presented at the meeting of voluntary workers in Tulln in the course of the private view of soil paintings.



In the above picture you see the Director of the Soil Colour Creative Center, Prof. Irena Ráček with Regional Minister Dr. Stephan Pernkopf and Representative of the Provincial Governor of Southern Moravia Mgr. Ivo Polák.

October 20, 2010

Soil Colour Creative Seminar for Lower Austrian Educators at the Provincial Museum

Hundreds of educators have already attended soil colour seminars by Prof. Irena Ráček in Lower Austria. Such a creative seminar took place at the Lower Austrian Provincial Museum for the current exposition, which is performed in cooperation between Lower Austrian and Czech schools in this school year.

On account of the huge success of the Lower Austrian project, currently a cross-border competition with the Czech Republic (Southern Moravia) takes place. Within the framework of the Meeting of Voluntary Organizations on October 22, 2010 in Tulln, the winning pieces of art of the pilot project "Painting with the Colours of the Earth" will be exposed.

The winners were invited on October 1st, 2010 upon invitation by the Department of Rural Development to a guided tour through the Lower Austrian governmental quarters as well as to a visit of the Lower Austrian Provincial Museum.

From October 2010 until March 2011, the cross-border painting competition with around 30 educational institutions from Lower Austria and Southern Moravia will take place. Within the framework of a creative seminar under supervision of Irena Ráček, the Lower Austrian educators received the paint boxes "with the Colours of the Earth" by Dr. Erwin Szlezak from the Department of Rural Development on October 20, 2010.



Some educators had already participated in various soil colour activities, and they emphasized within the framework of the creative seminar that it is every time a new challenge and brings joy to commit oneself to this topic. Ms. Irena Ráček made use of this opportunity in order to present various painting techniques and working with natural glues. We are pleased with the great number of participants, and will report constantly about news under www.soilart.eu and www.unserboden.at.



October 7, 2010

An emotional, but matter-of-fact and honest Coming-to-Terms with Causes for Flooding: Mastering Floods & Catastrophes in common

About one month before the end of the exposition "Danube.Curse&Blessing", at Ardagger causes of flooding, mainly, however, the future of flood prevention were discussed. Furthermore, on October 7, within the framework of a symposium, Regional Minister Dr. Stephan Pernkopf held an open exchange of opinions with experts from agriculture, water management, soil protection, municipalities, forestry, and fire brigades.



The tenor of this afternoon: Only in common, in an interdisciplinary and most of all anticipatory manner floods and catastrophes can be counteracted. Each single one of the expert lectures, however, made it understood that in the end catastrophes will occur now and again, and that the awareness of the people needs to be constantly raised despite protective measures. Action forces and persons concerned reported on all the things that happen at the occasion of flooding. At the same time experts from various fields of soil and water management proposed approaches toward solutions, which were finally discussed and worked through together with Regional Minister Dr. Stephan

Pernkopf.

The exciting moment in this discussion was, according to the local mayor and project director of "Danube. Curse&Blessing", that this discussion and the exchange of opinions facilitated a glimpse beyond one's own discipline. And in this context, each single discipline has got much left to do, summarized Regional Minister Dr. Stephan Pernkopf. "In case of sealing of land and retention of rain water, the municipalities are required to act. I stand for productive agriculture, but it is also the first and foremost interest of agriculturists to protect themselves against underwashing. And finally we have to keep an eye on our voluntary workers and our fire brigades, for they are immediately on site, when there is imminent danger and help is needed."

Mainly municipal representatives, representatives of authorities and action forces, and also persons concerned and agriculturists gathered at this expert exchange of opinions, which finally turned into an extensive discussion, which lasted until late in the evening. "We hope to have given an impetus, to have triggered a first change of attitude of one or the other, or maybe to have raised understanding for each other in the context of reasons for flooding", summarized Christian Steiner, Grad. Eng. from the Department of Rural Development of Lower Austria, the moderator and organizer of this event.

October 6, 2010

The Football Cage! has landed ... at Mistelbach

During the meeting „Know-how in the Rural Area in Lower Austria“, organized by the Department of Rural Development at the Agricultural Vocational School at Mistelbach, a sustainable sports device with a touch of cult was presented: the football cage! Dr. Stephan Pernkopf, Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs, assumed

the official kick-off of this cup and was pleased with his perfect start-out goal ; 4x2 meters of action, fun, and sustainability: The football cage! was presented to the general public out of a private garden in 2009/2010 in cooperation with the HLUW (institution of higher education for environment and economy) Ysper, Initiative Future, Lower Austrian village refurbishment,



and the Department of Rural Development. Outwards: a transportable football pitch, action and movement on smallest space. A new type of fun sports, indoor, outdoor, for use anywhere - and "inside"? Optimum sustainability: "The material either stems from the region (wood), or it is recycled (waste

container plastics).

The producers come from the second and third labor market, part of the project returns is given away for chosen social projects: "Social commitment, fun, and sensible occupation are mingled in this context, in the right way!" says Mag. Wolfgang Zechner, who will also in the future make use of the football cage he has developed and of the idea of "playfully experienced sustainability" at events organized by the Department of Rural Development. Pupils and teachers of the Agricultural Professional School at Mistelbach obviously enjoyed the game, exactly like some of the attendants of the meeting, who definitely appreciated the alternation between "know-how" and



"movement"!

Finally, the most successful football artists were awarded sustainable prizes: "Fair" footballs from the fair trade shop and trendy shoulder bags made of old canvases, produced by Caritas workshops.

For further information and application for the football cage cups:

www.scheiberkistn.at

October 1st, 2010

Cross-Border Soil Colours! CZ Winners of Pilot Competition visit St. Poelten

On October 1st, 2010 the winners of the pilot competition from Moravia visited the provincial capital St. Poelten. The pupils from the Czech Republic visited the Tower of Sound and the Lower Austrian Provincial Museum. Upon invitation by the Department of Rural Development, they had lunch at the MP Snuggery of the Lower Austrian Government.

In the pictures, you can admire two winning pieces of art. Motive as well as painting technique have been assessed by the jury as excellent. In continuation of the cultural sightseeing tour, they had ice-cream in the historic center in order to conclude the event. Altogether it was an impressive day for all participants - and the opportunity for pleasant anticipation of further cooperation and many more pieces of art within the framework of this competition.



September 30, 2010

Start of Competition „Painting with the Colours of the Earth” at Hodonín

On 2010-09-30, a group of educators experienced a creative adventure in the Europe hall. Amidst many dried natural materials and multi-colour natural soils, they created a large number of small pieces of art within three hours only. These are the starting point of a creative wave lasting for months in the Moravian schools. The two seminar leaders Lucka Turanová and Jana Brodecká attended a seminar at the Soil Colour Creative Center at Heldenberg in summer 2010, and they have passed on their knowledge and ability in a very professional manner to the educators at Hodonín.

All persons attending received paint boxes with soil colours, in which beside the five Lower Austrian soils, which have been in use for years, five Moravian earth pigments are added (donated by the Moravian construction entrepreneur Navrátil). The Department of Rural Development had these precious paint boxes produced by employees of Emmaus, and they handed them over to the Czech EU partner as a gift.

Until end of February 2011, the school groups which have applied for the competition may continue their works and thereby also use the resources of their environment. Not only as a source of inspiration, but also of materials: stones, tree bark, dried grasses, flowers and leaves, fruits and herbs, snail shells, sand and clay, and soil showing a different shade in various places. Nature offers us many possibilities of creative discoveries. Natural glues for the production of soil colours have been in use for thousands of years. Herbal glues are resources, which are available constantly in large amounts. The rest of the colours used in the competition may be composted.

**OUT OF NATURE AND BACK TO NATURE AGAIN -
THE CIRCLE IS CLOSED.**



September 24, 2010

Soil as an Indicator of Flood Events

“For thousands of years, soil has stored all information on flood events. One glance at the soil map may strengthen the urgently required creation of awareness of risk and shows the significance of soil, beside agricultural production, for the present and the coming generations”, said Dr. Stephan Pernkopf, Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs, on the occasion of the information day on flooding in Tulln.



Soil Map throws Light on Flooding Danger Potential
The Austrian soil map 1 : 25,000, the expert evaluation of land map of the official evaluation of land authorities, and a mapping of soil performed by themselves was checked by experts of WPA GmbH, the soil research institute, and the financial authorities of evaluation of land concerning their suitability for the prediction of flooding areas. The results were compared with a flood attack line of the year 2002, evaluated by the Austrian Hydro Powers, as well as a flood attack line calculated by the Kamp Consortium for HQ 100. Both land evaluation maps show flooding areas with sufficient accuracy, while the expert evaluation of land map of the official evaluation of land authorities is more suited especially in small-area drainage basins. The soil map 1 : 25,000 in turn covers larger areas and is available as a GIS application.

The utilization of soil maps for the creation of awareness of risk, spatial planning and in comparison to hydrological models is recommended on the basis of this research. Service for Member Municipalities of the Soil and Land Alliance

The Department of Rural Development coordinates the activities of soil protection in Lower Austria. The possibility of the use of soil maps as a long-term instrument of prediction and sensitizing shall subsequently also be made available to the almost 70 Lower Austrian member municipalities of the Soil and Land Alliance.

For further information on the topic of soil as a flood indicator, on the European Land and Soil Alliance and on offers for schools and municipalities, please refer to www.unserboden.at



September 18, 2010

Experiencing Soil at the Finale of the 1st Lower Austrian Sustainability Cup at Ysper

On September 18, 2010 in the schoolyard of the Ysper Vocational School for Environment and Economy, the finale of the first Lower Austrian sustainability cup took place.

Local favorites from St. Oswald won the Lower Austrian Sustainability Cup. 15 teams were competing for the title of the best football-cage team in the Yspertal Valley. In an exciting, emotional finale finally the SKV Oldies came out on top.



The event, organized by the Vocational School for Environment and Economy Yspertal, was made a great success through enjoying movement and the fairness of all teams. The spectators could win a bike and further nice prizes in kind at a competition, donated by the Spar company. The implementation of the "football cage" project was possible on account of financial support by the Lower Austrian Village and Town Refurbishment. Also in the future, the football cage can be reserved at events in member municipalities of the Soil and Land Alliance.

The "football cage!" itself, which was devised for this cup, is a sustainable product produced according to socially fair criteria. Each work step is based on an ecological and social additional value, not on profit.

For information refer to: www.scheiberlkistn.at



The Department of Rural Development also was in charge of a painting station "with the Colours of the Earth". The children gave free rein to their creativity, and designed a large number of pieces of art.

September 15, 2010

Soil Colour Creative Center - Seminar for Pupils of Elementary School

On September 15, 2010, 48 children from the Tulln Elementary School I visited the Soil Colour Creative Center.

Not only literally natural pieces of art were created under supervision by Prof. Irena Ráček. The children from the first to the fourth form also visited the Neolithic village, the circular ditch, and received a guided tour to the Spanish Riding School.

As a conclusion, the children received sausages. They were - just like it suits the "Stone Age" - grilled above open fire.

If you are interested in painting seminars, please directly refer to Prof. Ráček:
racek@soilart.eu.



September 12, 2010

Soil Event at Opening Worship in Tulln

On September 12, 2010, the new premises of the Evangelical Free Church in Tulln were ceremonially opened. The mayor of Tulln, Mag. Peter Eisenschenk, gave his greetings to the persons present, and congratulated all participants on the successful common work. Beside the provincial director of the Free Church, also landlord Dr. Christian Moser, who provided for the premises, was present and also wished the Christian community all the best for the future.



The urban municipality of Tulln entered the European Land and Soil Alliance in 2010. And in September 2010, for the first time a congregation entered the Soil and Land Alliance as an organization. Dr. Erwin Szlezak from the Department of Rural Development of the Office of the Lower Austrian Government gave his thanks to the Evangelical Free Church in Tulln, the symbolic "gentle soul" of the project, for their commitment to soil protection and their admission to the Soil and Land Alliance.

In his festive speech, Dr. Szlezak has addressed the topic how wonderful it is that the location of Tulln as a "soil platform" becomes ever more important on account of these memberships and of the fact that the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences will source out some departments to Tulln in the year 2011.

The numerous adults and children were able to get physical exercise after the worship with sustainable football in the football cage! The tag-tool presentation by Josef Dorninger and his colleague Matthias Fritz was the highlight of the event. They visualized the story of the sower from the Gospel according to Matthew, and were accompanied by orator Karl Schauer and on the piano by Mr. Lunquist.



Also the visitors had an opportunity to draw with the tag-tool on the one hand and to paint at the popular painting station "Painting with the Colours of the Earth" within the framework of the event.

For information on the Evangelical Free Church, please refer to: www.christen-tulln.at.

For information on the football cage!, please refer to: www.scheiberkistn.at

For information on the tag-tool, please refer to: www.tagtool.org

September 11-12,

400 Soil Colour Paintings finished! Event at Organic Farm Adamah

The nice weather and the extensive offer attracted numerous visitors to come to Glinzendorf. Beside culinary delicacies and information stands of any kind, there was a bouncing castle, carving pumpkins, farmers' golf, tractor round-trips, garden walkabouts, a climbing wall, building straw castles, concerts with participation, and a lottery. Live music and moderation provided for good mood.



This year, this great event has its 10th anniversary. This year was a premiere, for the first time there was a painting station with soil colours, provided by the Department of Rural Development of the Office of the Lower Austrian Government.

The crowding and the interest were great, nearly 400 paintings were completed, and 44 eggs were mixed, indeed, eggs are needed in order to prepare the colours from smoothly sieved, stamped earth and water, with which there is so much space for creativity. There was much experimenting with brush, roller, cork plug, toothbrushes, straws, birds' feathers, and sponge stamp.

For further information on „Painting with the Colours of the Earth“, please refer to www.soilart.eu!

Three girls went for a search of earth from the surroundings – drying, stamping, sieving, mixing ; It worked! In such a manner, their own soil colours were produced! Also the adults were interested in this type of art, and some really wanted to try it out and stated:

It is not only results that count, working with earth has a relaxing effect. The information roll-ups concerning the topic “our soil – we stand upon it!” satisfied the thirst for knowledge of the guests of the event.

We give our thanks to the team of the Adamah organic farm for the excellent cooperation, and are looking forward to next year!

For information on the Adamah organic farm, please refer to: www.adamah.at



August 30, 2010

Workshop „Painting with the Colours of the Earth” at the Summer Education Week at Langenlois

Within the framework of the 2010 Summer Education Week, on August 30 in the Gardening School at Langenlois, amongst others, a workshop concerning the topic “Painting with the Colours of the Earth” took place. 15 teachers and employees of the Lower Austrian agricultural school system participated.

The room of the workshop was divided into “buffet tables” and work stations. There was a buffet with various kinds of earth, mortars, sieves, and graters (for preparing the grit material). At the “colour buffet”, the soil colours were mixed in common. The participants were very interested, and they were impressed by the natural possibilities of preparation (earth, egg yolks, water, carnation oil).



One step ahead to the “tools buffet”: Brush, roller, fork, rubber, toothbrushes ; invited for experimenting. In this way, within short time the first pieces of art were created.

For some participants, the SOILart calendar and the exposition catalogue were a wonderful inspiration.

In the second part of the workshop, we prepared curd–borax glue, and opened the next “buffet” with natural materials, pieces of linen, scissors, and glue. On canvases also quite plastic works were created. All buffet tables were much frequented, in an easy atmosphere the work was done with concentration, creativity spread among the participants, the most different techniques were tried out and newly invented, respectively. After cleaning up, there was a summary (recipes), and a feedback group. We contemplated all of the paintings once again – a respectable result for this three–hour workshop.

Many thanks to all participants for this successful workshop.

August 28 and August 21-22

Event at Deindorfer's Organic Farm and Soil Adventure at the Schallaburg Castle



For further information on the topic of SOILart - Painting with the Colours of the Earth, please refer to: www.soilart.eu

August 2nd, 2010

Austrian Scouts celebrate their 100th Anniversary Lower Austrian Campaign „our soil - we stand upon it!“ also at Laxenburg

The soil which lies beneath our Scout feet is in the center of Austria's greatest Scout camp, which takes place from August 2 to 12, 2010 at the Laxenburg Castle grounds. By means of a soil lab, games, and even a station for painting with the colours of the soil, the young girl and boy scouts experience and literally grasp whereupon they "stand". The Province of Lower Austria and the scouts have devised a wonderful project for the adolescent participants, which provides for insight and overview. The Department of Rural Development has now made available to the scouts the provincial campaign "our soil - we stand upon it!", which was initiated by Governor Dr. Erwin Pröll, together with Michael Stiller, Grad. Eng. responsible for parts of the special "keen on green" program at the camp.



Thus the approx. 2,000 Caravelles and Explorers (aged 13 to 16 years) are able to experience the ancient element of soil first-hand and learn to know it.

Environmental protection goes without saying for girl and boy scouts of any age. "Leave your camp such, as you wish to find it" - one of the rules that go without saying, which all of them learn at the earliest stage. What, however, is beneath your camp? Caravelles and Explorers (fondly also called "CaEx") will know a lot more about this after this huge camp. Under the slogan "keen on green", they have an opportunity to take a closer look at the soil beneath their feet together with their scout supervisors.

Whoever wishes to occupy himself intensely with soil as a commodity, which cannot be increased, can do this by means of soil colours, which are produced from soil pigments, which occur in Lower Austria only. In a lab, practically built overnight, the immense treasure of soil organisms is made visible by means of microscopes, magnifying glasses, sieves, filter paper, and tweezers. By means of arranged and clearly prepared soil profiles, i.e. vertical cuts through soil down to massive rocks, the young girl and boy scouts learn, what they have to take into consideration for instance when choosing a camp. They will also be able to assess a camp, whether the water will quickly trickle away after a cloudburst, or whether the whole camp will be under water. Games like soil boccea and soil memory show soil variations in an easily comprehensible manner. For all those who are still excited one month after the Football World Cup, the football cage offers the best preconditions to get their kicks.

In teams of two, a football is conjured into the opposite goal - or fetched from one's own ...

**Soil and Scouts go together like a horse and carriage
- simply keen on green!**



June 17, 2010

Pilot Competition in the CZ

On June 17, at the SLAVONIC CASTLE SITE AT MIKULCICE, a branch of the Masaryk Museum at Hodonín, the final event of the pilot competition "Painting with the Colours of the Earth" took place.

Around 250 persons - children, parents, teachers, and honorary guests from the regions of Southern Moravia and Lower Austria - were celebrating the winners.

Dr. Erwin Szlezak from the Department of Rural Development of the Lower Austrian Government handed over to the winners of both categories of competition (10 to 15 and 16 to 19 years old) a

voucher for a trip to St. Poelten, inclusive of a visit to the governmental quarters and to the Lower Austrian Provincial Museum.

The primary organization of the competition was performed by the Czech EU project partners from the Masaryk Museum, Director Irena Chovančíková, supported by Dr. Frantisek Synek, Director of the branch, and by Prof. Irena Ráček. She is also in charge of artistic supervision of the soil colour project on the Austrian side.



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June 11 & 18, 2010

BOKU - Soil Walk at Gfoehl!

On June 11 and 18, soil walks took place under the expert leadership of Prof. Dr. Walter Wenzel at the urban municipality of Gfoehl. On a route through the municipal area, the history of soil and landscape of the municipality were grasped by wandering.

The Lower Austrian soil plate was the starting point. On the route, some soil columns were erected - devised and produced by WPA, counseling engineers. Thus the numerous students of the University of Natural

Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna were able to gaze at the actual soil type at eye level. We give our thanks to the urban municipality of Gfoehl, to Prof. Dr. Walter Wenzel, as well as to Dr. Michael Pollak, whose engineering office is responsible for designing the soil sings and columns, for the excellent cooperation.

www.wpa.at
www.gfoehl.gv.at



May 17, 2010



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MIT UNTERSCHIEDLICHEN
RAJONS ZAJEDNICA
PODUNAVSKIH REGIJA
RAJONS ZAJEDNICA
PODUNAVSKIH ZEMALJA
COMUNITATE DE LUCRU
A STATELOR DUNĂRENI
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ДУНАВСКИХ СТРАНИ
РАБОЉА СЛУЖБЕНОСТ
ПРИДУНАВСКИХ АРАНИ

20 Years of Working Community of Danube Countries

St. Poelten (OTS/NLK) - Exactly on this day twenty years ago, in 1990 in the Wachau valley 14 members founded the Working Community of Danube Countries with the target of supraregional cooperation. Today, this Working Community has 38 members in ten countries in the Danube river basin, from the Black Forest to the Black Sea.

On the occasion of the 20 years' foundation anniversary, this Monday, May 17, a ceremonial act has taken place in the festival room at the Vienna town-hall, where currently the 20th Conference of government leaders of the Working Community of Danube Countries is taking place. In the course of this celebration, the honorary ring of the Danube Countries Working Community was awarded for the first time to

Lower Austrian Governor Dr. Erwin Pröll and Mayor Dr. Michael Häupl. "The Danube will play a significant role also in the future", emphasized Governor Pröll in his commemorative speech. On the road towards the future, it is a matter of "trusting in cross-border cooperation".

The Province of Lower Austria has, in this context, launched "many initiatives in dialogue and action", added the Lower Austrian Governor, who in this context referred to the Wachau Valley Europe Forum, the cross-border Lower Austrian Exhibition in the year 2009, and to the bridge between Hof Castle and the region of Bratislava: "In our times we are building bridges instead of burning them", said Pröll.



unser Boden
wir stehen drauf! 

May 6 to 7, 2010

Meeting of European Land and Soil Alliance in Tulln

"Soil is the basis of our lives. More than 90% of all food stem from soil. Therefore it is a matter of sensibly using and carefully protecting this soil", states Dr. Stephan Pernkopf, Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs.

Meeting of Soil and Land Alliance: Fertile soils The 9th International Annual Meeting of the Soil and Land Alliance of European towns, districts, and municipalities takes place in Tulln / Danube this time. Around 180 persons will meet for an expert exchange and an informative framework program. Six expert lectures and four workshops at the Tulln town-hall will deal with the topic of "fertile soils - to use and to protect them". 25 information stands of partners of the Soil and Land Alliance show a rich spectrum of offers and initiatives for environmental and soil protection. The significance of soil as the basis of alimentation has largely fallen into oblivion in

industrial countries. Soils, however, are an essential base of life for man. Man produces in soils over 90 per cent of all food, of animal fodder, and of fibers. Soil fertility is connected with a careful treatment of soil and sustainable cultivation, which takes special consideration of humus build-up.

In order for plants to grow, they need a large number of nutrients, which they have to gain from fertile soil in a dissolved condition.





Parallel to the meeting, there are numerous activities at the main square of the town, which intend to convey the topic of soil in a playful manner to the inhabitants. A soil walking trail invites for going barefoot on various grounds. Children may play soil bocchia and soil memory. Creative persons find the right thing for their taste at the soil colour painting station. At the bike saloon, bicycles can be admired and tried out. A special attraction is waiting for football enthusiasts: the football cage - a 4x2 meters mini-football pitch -



is presented, and there will immediately take place a cup for pupils at the kick-off of the 1st Lower Austrian Sustainability Cup.

The program of the international meeting of the European Land and Soil Alliance is concluded with an excursion to Michelhausen (best-practice project of Soil and Land Alliance, implementation in the municipality), as well as to the Garden Fair "The Tulln Gardens", and with the Annual General Meeting.



April 30, 2010

12 Winners awarded at the Lower Austrian Landhaus!

„Children and young people may commit themselves to soil protection in a creative manner. More than 1,150 pieces of art submitted show the great commitment, also of the teachers!” emphasized Dr. Stephan Pernkopf, Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs.

Awarding of Winners at the Parliament Hall

Today, 300 children and young people provided for good mood and cheerful hilarity at the Parliament Hall. Winners from all over Lower Austria and of any age met for awarding of winners of the creative competition “Power of Soil”, from elementary school up to university. Dr. Stephan Pernkopf, Regional Minister of

Environmental Affairs, President of Provincial Parliament Hans Penz, Eng. and Ernst Figl, Lower Austrian Educational Board awarded the

prizes.

The meeting took place on the occasion of the competition “Power of Soil”, which was announced last autumn by the Department of Rural Development and the Forum Land, where pupils and students were equally allowed to participate. A total of 1,151 pieces of art were submitted in four categories. “soil posters”, “soil stamps”, video clips, photos, and photo compositions.

The public and experts chose the winners. Public voting via internet yielded broad participation. The homepage www.kraftdesbodens.at counted over 177,000 website calls in March!



April 23, 2010

Admission of the first Czech Member Municipality of the Soil and Land Alliance!

On April 23, the first Czech municipality, Nová Lhota has entered the European Land and Soil Alliance.

Within the framework of an information event for the local population, mayor Antonin Okenka and chairman of ELSA, Christian Steiner signed the admission deed.

The municipality of Nová Lhota has about 700 inhabitants, and is situated in the White Carpathians at the border to Slovakia, in the region of Horňácko,

embedded in a very natural environment. Many projects deal with protection of nature and species, sustainable economy and gentle tourism. This is also an excellent starting point for soil protection.

In cooperation with the Department of Rural Development (Province of Lower Austria) and the 1st Lower Austrian member municipality of the Soil and Land Alliance, Lilienfeld, a survey of municipality projects relevant to soil will be made as a next step.



Our Soil Perspectives



Also in the coming years, an intense cooperation with Lower Austrian member municipalities of the European Land and Soil Alliance will be continued. Concepts of soil activities for municipalities and regions shall be drafted, and practical projects shall be implemented. In continuation of the campaign "our soil - we stand upon it!", numerous events acquaint children and adults with the topic of soil protection: well-kept soil - fertile soil - living soil - soil resources - economical treatment of soil, as well as the contribution of soil to climate protection, for instance "soil as a carbon reservoir" and "preventive flood protection".



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A STATELOR DUNARENE
РАБОТНА ОБЩНОСТ
ДУНАВСКИХ СТРАН
РАБОЧА СПІВРУБНІСТЬ
ПРИДУНАВСЬКИХ КРАЇН



BIENE
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In cooperation with regional and international partners, such as SENEC/BIENE – Soil and Energy Network of European Countries - and the Climate Alliance through the Ecology and Soil Protection Working Group of the Working Community of Danube Countries further municipalities and organizations shall become members of the European Land and Soil Alliance, and cooperate in practical projects.

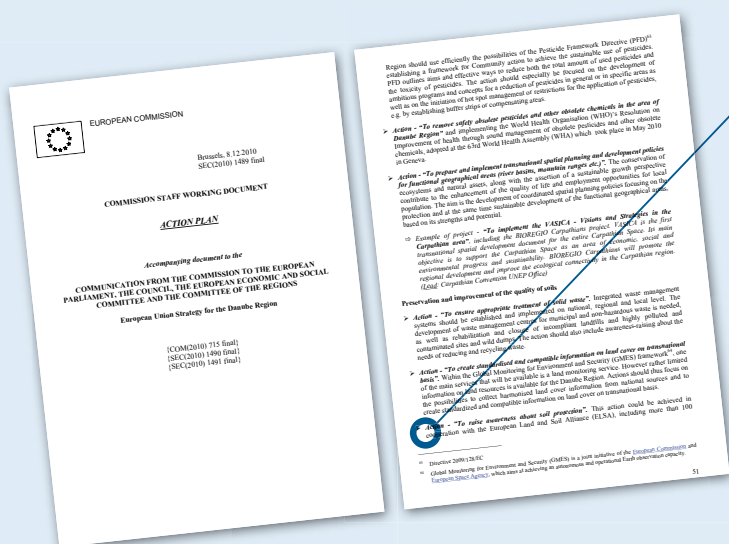


European Union Strategy for the Danube Region

Action - “To raise awareness about soil protection”.
This action could be achieved in cooperation with the



European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA)



Action - “To raise awareness about soil protection”.

This action could be achieved in cooperation with the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA), including more than 100 members from 7 Member States. Further partnerships in the Danube Region should be initiated on communal level and in the educational domains.

Example of project - “To implement the strategy for soil protection”

Responsible, multifunctional use of land and soil and interlinkages to the regional development, as well as new governance tools and the „learning region“ concept would be developed.

SONDAR SK - Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region: Best-Practice Examples in Lower Austria and Western Slovakia

At the outset of the SONDAR initiative, within the framework of the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) a partner project, subsidized by the European Union, between Lower Austria and Slovakia has been elaborated.

Structure of Partnership SONDAR SK:

- Lead partners:** Soil and Energy Network of European Countries - SENEC, Eschenau/Austria
Chairmen: Mayor Franz Rennhofer, Member of Lower Austrian Parliament,
Mayor Michael Singraber, Franz Rybaczek
Project manager: Bernhard Kuderer, MSc
- PP1:** VVB Vodohospodárska výstavba (water engineering institute) Bratislava, Vladimír Holcík, Eng., David Purchart, Eng.
- PP2:** BOKU University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Institute for Soil Protection, Hon.-Prof. Dr. Walter Wenzel, Grad. Eng.
- PP3:** VUPOP Výskumný ústav pôdoznanectva a ochrany pôdy (Soil Science and Conservation Research Institute) Bratislava
Dr. Michal Dzatko, Dr. Jaroslava Sobocka, Dr. Ján Hríbik

Strategic Control / national Co-financing:

Office of Lower Austrian Government, Department of Rural Development, Dr. Erwin Szlezak, Grad. Eng.
Cooperation with European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA), Christian Steiner, Grad. Eng.

Period of Project: 3 years, from October 2010 to October 2013

Soil is the starting point for all life on Earth, and it provides for more than 90% of our food. It is threatened in various ways: excessive construction and exploitation in favorable conditions, neglect and give-up in unfavorable conditions. A general awareness of the population seems to get lost and does no longer correspond to reality, respectively. **The Province of Lower Austria has been a member of the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA) since 2003. Upon the initiative of Governor Dr. Erwin Pröll, numerous best-practice projects have ever since been implemented in municipalities, and the campaign "our soil - we stand upon it!" has become an international best-practice example for citizen-friendly creation of awareness.**

About half the members of the European Land and Soil Alliance are situated in Lower Austria. Also the "Ecology Working Group" of the Working Community of Danube Countries with Michal Dzatko from the project partner VUPOP (Soil Science and Conservation Research Institute, Slovakia) presiding, is evaluating a soil protection strategy and shows principles of good soil practice in the whole of the Danube region. And the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences Vienna (BOKU) has participated in the foundation of a network linking universities (ICA Network for Central and South Eastern Europe, CASEE) in the Danube region. The project partner VVB (Bratislava water engineering institute) has rich experience in planning, implementation, and supervising large flood protection projects.

It is the target of the SONDAR project to set up a network of increasing responsibility for soil: between science and practice, between administration and users of land, between education, arts, and the entire population. It is a matter of implementing measures and initiating processes, which shall be enabled to develop further, as a consequence, in the regions and countries participating in the project, but also in others. The effect of the project examples shall become relevant to the entire Danube region, and after end of project the development of strategies for a continuation of activities shall be achieved.

The measures taken by the partners aim at showing quantitative and qualitative soil protection by means of a demonstration of best-practice examples. **Main topics of the project are AWARENESS OF SOIL and SOIL-WATER- INTERACTION.**



Therefore, the target is an increase of soil awareness among the people by means of information relevant to target groups, service / support for multipliers, work in educational institutions, extraction of soil colours from regional soils, soil colour painting competition, and the documentation of municipal best-practice projects. In the field of "soil-water-interaction", the connection between soils and flood events of the past 1,000 years, which can be read from the soils, shall

be integrated into current map material, and existing maps shall be compared with respect to the management of natural dangers and flood protection. Voluntary organizations (fire brigades etc.) will be informed about these findings, and will be trained. In best-practice municipalities, the bases for future planning considerations are elaborated. Using the example of at least one cross-border region, the potential threats shall be specially illustrated. The flood events in 2002 or 2006 shall be explained as examples using soil maps.

Soils are living systems, which can only perform their functions within the ecosystem and for man, if their properties are largely intact. A sustainable agriculture in the Danube region can be a substantial contribution to soil fertility, preventive flood protection, and the use of soils as carbon reservoirs (= climate protection).

Practical Measures / Work Packages

- Cooperation / acquisition of 20 active municipalities (new members of the European Land and Soil Alliance)
- Organization of 3 international expert meetings (1 per year) (300 persons)
- Evaluation of existing map material - elaboration of current „new interpretations“ (Slovakia is top in soil monitoring)
- Identification of potential flooding areas alongside the March on the basis of common map material of at least 1 best-example region / municipality
- Examination of comparability Lower Austrian soil map - SK pedo-ecological map
- Elaboration of teaching material concerning the topic of „Soil - Water“ in Lower Austria and in Slovakia for educational institutions (Lower Austrian cooperation with provincial Board of Education), municipalities, and voluntary organizations
- Performance of information events „Soil as an Indicator of Flood Events“ (target groups municipalities, voluntary organizations)
- Implementation of 6 multiplier trainings (around 180 persons)
- Appointment of 20 „soil ambassadors“ (municipal servants, architects, planners, constructors, artists, voluntary organizations)
- Performance of Soil Colour Creative Competition between approx. 50 schools (7,500 persons)
- Performance of private views in combination with soil information on the topic of soilart / soil art / soil colours
- Production of regional soil colours / sustainability in the project as a confidence-building measure
- Multilingual imaging of best-practice models on the web for an optimum storage and transfer of knowledge
- Production of a soil film as a documentation of activities on the one hand, and as a medium of information and training on the other. Numerous copies of the medium (for schools, municipalities, stakeholders)
- Transfer of knowledge of project milestones to various committees: Working Community of Danube Countries, ELSA ...
- Press work / drafts for municipal newspaper
- Elaboration of regional best-practice examples as „models“ for municipalities / regions (for instance measures against soil sealing in settlement areas) - rich wealth of experience on the basis of the "LowerAustrian Actionbase for sustainable soil protection"
- Implementation of above-mentioned events and measures in municipalities, where „soil protection projects“ are actually implemented. This leads to an elaboration of the topic on various levels and with various target groups within one "system"/municipality. This supports the process of creation of awareness at the best.
- Installation of soil ambassadors in Slovakia, in order to elaborate the topic further in the long run (symbiosis of arts, practice, and theory)



EUROPEAN UNION
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Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region: Cooperation between Lower Austria and West Hungary

As a second project of the SONDAR initiative, within the framework of the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), a partner project subsidized by the European Union between Lower Austria and Hungary has been elaborated. The Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region is continued in the SONDAR HU project. The activities shall be a contribution for the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EU-SDR) – implementation of measures for soil protection / for sensible use of soil / for creation of awareness on a municipal level.

Structure of Partnership SONDAR HU

Lead partners: Soil and Energy Network of European Countries – SENEK, Eschenau/Austria
 Chairmen: Mayor Franz Rennhofer, Member of Lower Austrian Parliament,
 Mayor Michael Singraber, Franz Rybaczek
 Project manager: Bernhard Kuderer, MSc

PP1: North Transdanubian District Environment and Water Directorate; Dir. Emil Janák,
 Miklós Pannonhalmi,
 Dep.–Director Environ. Prot. Eng., Mohácsiné Simon Gabriella

PP2: University of West Hungary, Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences
 Rector Prof. Sándor Faragó, Fin. Director László Herczeg, Koltai Gábor PhD

PP3: Municipality of Mosonmagyaróvár, Mayor Dr. István Nagy, Andrea Nemeth

PP4: University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna
 Hon.–Prof. Dr. Walter Wenzel, Grad. Eng., Dr. Peter Strauß, Grad. Eng.

PP5: Bio Research Austria, Dr. Wilfried Hartl, Ivoneta Diethart

PP6: International Association for Danube Research (IAD)
 Dr. Harald Kutzenberger, Dr. Meinhard Breiling

Strategic Control / national Co-financing:

Office of Lower Austrian Government, Department of Rural Development, Dr. Erwin Szlezak, Grad. Eng.
 Cooperation with European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA), Christian Steiner, Grad. Eng.

Period of Project: 3 years, from February 2011 to December 2013

Basis of Project: EU Strategy for the Danube Region / Working Community of Danube Countries /
 European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA)

1) Awareness of Soil and Sustainability

- Potential soil contact through municipal structure with 1.6 mio. inh. (Lower Austria), and 1.05 mio. inh. (project area HU = Győr/Moson/Sopron + Vas + Zala)
- Acquaintance of 20 active municipalities (new members of the European Land and Soil Alliance)
- Organization of 3 international expert meetings (1 per year) (a total of approx. 300 persons)
- Elaboration of teaching material concerning the topic of "soil filter – ground water" in Lower Austria and Western Hungary for educational institutions
- Soil information tour (numerous stops of soil information bus in project area)
- Sustainable events concerning the topic of soil protection (for instance "Danube Day" 2011+12+13)
- Nomination of 20 "soil ambassadors" (municipal servants, teachers, planners, land owners)
- Production of soil colours from regional soils by local social institutions



- Performance of Soil Colour Creative Competition between approx. 50 schools (around 7,500 persons)
 - Implementation of at least one exposition of winning paintings in competition in combination with soil information on the topic of soilart / soil art
 - Worm compost system and training for at least 5 educational institutions
 - Production of a soil film for documentation of project and as a medium of information and training, a large number of copies of this medium (for schools, municipalities, stakeholders)
 - Press work / drafts for municipal newspaper / website SONДАР
 - Summarizing positive examples of preventive soil protection - as „models“ for municipalities / regions
 - imaging on the web (for instance measures against soil sealing in settlement areas) on the basis of the “Lower Austrian Actionbase for sustainable soil protection”
- 2) Soil as a Filter: Contribution to Protection of Ground Water and against Erosion
- Protection of soil and ground water. Storage and filtering of nutrients and pollutants is in close connection with the production of safe food, protection of water courses and drinking water
 - Reduction of soil erosion through area-wide soil protection
- 3) Mobile Soil Lab
- Soil information and training unit for schools and municipal multipliers (soil ambassadors)
- 4) Soil Protection using the Example of „Soil-Sparing and Soil-Saving Settlement“
- model project, definition of framework conditions, parameters of assessment, soil monitoring
- 5) Networking: Sustainable Network of Soil Protection
- Cooperation in build-up of a strong soil service network in the Danube region
 - Communication of project results to regional and local decision-makers and to adequate media
 - Establishment of a regional (West)Hungarian coordination point for the European Land and Soil Alliance
 - Acquaintance and consultation as regards contents of member municipalities of the Soil and Land Alliance
 - Organization of cooperation with other SONДАР projects
 - Strengthening of international SOILart network. Painting and designing with soil colours as a contribution towards strengthening awareness of soil
 - Further information and cooperation with newly appointed soil ambassadors and multipliers
 - Expanding and deepening of existing activities of the Lower Austrian Government in the field of “awareness of soil” and socially sustainable projects in the rural area





Soil Strategy Network in the Danube Region Improving soil quality, strengthening awareness of soil - efficient measures against erosion - soil as an archive Best-practice examples from Lower Austria, Vienna, Southern Moravia, and Vysocina

Soil is the basis for our life. It is the upper layer of our planet. 50 cm or more, 30 cm and sometimes scarcely 10 cm of fertile soil provide for over 90 % of our food. Work and life in the entire Danube region, especially in the project area of SONDAR CZ-AT, i.e. in Lower Austria, Vienna, and the Southern parts of the Czech Republic are closely intertwined with soil and its harvest. Soil is a regulator, filter, cushion, and transformer of various substances.

Soil also cannot be increased arbitrarily, therefore soil protection and the right use of soil is a central task. Soil is threatened in many ways. For instance by erosion due to misuse and exploitation in favorable conditions, neglect and give-up in unfavorable conditions.

The Problem of Soil Erosion

Soil erosion is one of the main causes for degradation of soils. Effective measures in order to prevent soil erosion are therefore of crucial importance, in order to maintain healthy, fertile soils for coming generations. Recently the European Union has published a new strategy for the Danube countries, which also contains regional environmental aims. This strategy also determined the environmental aim to reduce soil erosion of areas with an erosion ratio of more than 10 tons/ha/a until 2020 by 25 %.

One Way towards a Solution: Strengthening Soil Awareness in the Communal Field!

A general soil awareness among the population seems to get lost and does no longer correspond to reality, respectively. Especially in the communal field and in the educational system, a long-term process of rethinking has to be initiated, which proves itself in concrete actions: Consciously improve soil quality in one's own sphere of action - against erosion and for a sustainable basis worth living of rural development in the Danube region.

The Province of Lower Austria has been a member of the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA) since 2003, and upon the initiative of Governor Dr. Erwin Pröll, ever since a large number of best-practice projects have been implemented in municipalities. The campaign „our soil - we stand upon it!“ has become an international best-practice example for citizen-friendly creation of awareness. The campaign was developed in cooperation with Lead partner SENEC. Around half the members of the European Land and Soil Alliance are situated in Lower Austria. The **“Ecology Working Group” of the Working Community of Danube Countries** as well is elaborating a soil protection strategy and shows principles of good soil practice in the entire Danube region. Within the framework of this Working Group, for more than 20 years there has been a close cooperation as regards contents for sensible protection of soil and sustainable use of soil between the Brno Masaryk University (project partner 1) and the Province of Lower Austria as a strategic project partner.

The further project partners provide for rich experience as regards contents in project work and cooperation between the two partner countries and/or for precious expertise as regards the long-term safeguarding of the use and distribution of project results.

The SONDAR project intends to create a network of increasing responsibility for soil against the background and in close connection with the Working Community of Danube Countries and the EU Strategy for the Danube Region: between science and practice, between administration and land users, between education, arts, and the entire population. It is a matter of implementing measures and initiating processes, which subsequently are able to develop further in the regions and countries participating in the project, but also in others. The effects of the project examples shall become relevant to the entire Danube region, and after termination of project, they shall flow into a development of strategies for a continuation of activities.

The measures taken by the partners aim at showing quantitative and qualitative soil protection through a demonstration of best-practice examples. The main topics of the project are an IMPROVEMENT OF SOIL QUALITY by INCREASING AWARENESS OF SOIL and by a demonstration and best-practice implementation of possibilities of REDUCING SOIL EROSION. The implementation shall be effected by practical best-practice projects and target-relevant information, by offers of training for “soil ambassadors”, by an artistic approach towards the topic of soil, by “painting with the Colours of the Earth” as well as service and support of municipalities and stakeholders.

Amongst others, the project partner EKOVIN (PP6) and ZERA (PP7) will perform protection against erosion by means of circular flow economy and greening of areas, which are in danger of erosion in the communal field of 4 regions (CZ). A further core aim is setting up a national coordination branch exceeding the term of project for the European Land and Soil Alliance in the Czech Republic and the acquisition of at least 20 new members of the Soil and Land Alliance.



In cooperation with member municipalities of the Soil and Land Alliance from Lower Austria and the Czech Republic, together with the **first Czech member municipality, Nova Lhotá (CZ)** there will be an intense elaboration and implementation of relevant projects and sustainable best-practice examples.

It is a matter of sensibly using and carefully protecting our soil.

Soils are living systems, which can only perform their functions within the ecosystem and for man, if their properties are largely intact. A sustainable cultivation of land in the Danube region may be a decisive contribution to avoidance of erosion and to soil fertility, to preventive flood protection, and to the use of soils as carbon storage reservoirs (climate protection and improvement of CO₂ balance).

Best-Practice Region: Awareness & Activities against Erosion (CZ/AT)

Sonder CZ brings together experts from the Czech Republic and from Austria, in order to demonstrate the risk of erosion on both sides using the example of at least one municipality each. An analysis of factors influencing erosion shall identify differences specific to the countries. On this basis, specific counter-measures can be proposed for the various municipalities, and thus contribute to a measure plan within the framework of sustainable municipality management.

Information and practical aids on the topic of erosion: target-relevant information and guidelines for communal stakeholders, proprietors of real property, users of land, educational institutions and the general public as a whole.

Structure Plan – PROJECT PARTNER (PP):

Number	Institution	WP Lead
LEAD	LEAD SENEC – Soil and Energy Network of European Countries – Franz Rennhofer, Member of Lower Austrian Parliament, Mayor Michael Singrauber, Franz Rybaczek; Bernhard Kuderer (General Project Management)	WP1, WP6
PP1	Brno Masaryk University – Dr. Milan Sanka, CZ	WP5
PP2	BOKU Wien – Dr. Peter Strauß, Prof. Dr. Walter Wenzel	WP2
PP3	Brno Mendel-University, CZ – Dr. Jaroslav Zahora, Jiřka Přichystalová, Grad. Eng.	
PP4	Bio Research Austria, AT – Dr. Wilfried Hartl, Ivoneta Diethart, Grad. Eng.	
PP5	Municipality of Nová Lhota, CZ – Mayor Mgr. Antonin Okenka	WP3
PP6	EKOVIN – Milan Hluchy, PhD Eng.	
PP7	ZERA – Kvetuse Hejatkova, Eng.	WP4
Strategic Partner 1	Province of Lower Austria, Department of Rural Development + Ecology Working Group focusing on Soil Protection of the Working Community of Danube Countries – Dr. Erwin Szlezak, AT; Strategic Project Controlling and National Co-Financing	
Strategic Partner 2	Ministry of Environment, Praha, CZ – Helena Bendova, Eng.	
Strategic Partner 3	ELSA – European Land and Soil Alliance, Osnabrück, G – Christian Steiner, Grad. Eng.	
Strategic Partner 4	IAD – International Association for Danube Research, AT – Dr. Harald Kutzenberger	

Structure Plan – WORKING PACKAGES (WP):

Number	Title	WP Lead	WP Partners
WP1	Soil Awareness and Sustainability Action: To raise awareness of soil protection on a communal and public level and in the educational domains	Lead	PP1 PP2, PP3, PP4, PP5, PP6, PP7
WP2	Catalogue of Measures to avoid Erosion in order to maintain soil quality and avoid soil degradation within municipalities	PP2	PP1 PP3, PP4, PP5, PP6, PP7, LEAD
WP3	SOIL: Quality & Protection – Best Practice Examples on a communal level in CZ-AT	PP5	PP6 PP3, PP4, PP7, LEAD
WP4	SOIL Training & Education on a communal and public level and in the educational domains	PP7	PP4 PP1, PP3, PP5, PP6, LEAD
WP5	International Congress of SONДАР in CZ (2014) in Cooperation with ELSA	PP1	LEAD + all PP
WP6	SOIL as an Archive „Soil Map“ European Soil-WEB-Archive for citizens' & experts' use in the project area	Lead	PP1 PP2, PP3, PP4, PP5, PP6, PP7

Manifesto

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

Preamble

Soils, together with air and water, are the central basis of life on earth. The characteristics and functions of soils are very different regarding their site and composition. Due to increase of buildings and sealing by settlement and transport areas as well as by the continuing exploitation of the soil and land resources and the overuse, soils are regionally endangered and highly endangered globally, too, by the sum, the extent and the spreading of all damages. The far-reaching consequences of land consumption and degradation as well as the fact of irretrievability and very slow process of soil formation correspond to the impacts of global climate change and the loss of biodiversity. In addition, there is a close linkage of soil change to climate change.

There is an urgent need of action seen on the global level. All countries have to contribute to a sustainable improvement of soils and land on a national, regional and local level. In this context the cities and towns (local authorities) are especially important as they are directly related to the local land and nearest to its owners. It is their task to improve soil awareness, to protect the natural soil functions as well as to follow social justice. They have instruments of spatial planning and planning control law, which serve to foster and realize a sustainable use of soils and land in municipalities.

We, the local authorities, are conscious of these questions and issues and at the same time of the chances of a sustainable use of soils and land. Together we will take the initiative to work on the solutions of the problems. We, as local authorities, take the chance to realize this in a uniting Europe through the European Soil & Land Alliance.

1. The responsibility of the cities and towns

We, the local authorities, assume responsibility for a sustainable soil policy in our areas. This includes the ecological side by improving the natural soil functions as well as an economically and socially just soil and land use. For that we want to

- exploit our scope of action for a sustainable development,
- set a good example as local authorities,
- integrate all stakeholders according to the Agenda 21 into the planning and management of urban and other local areas and constitute a participation process in the solution of the specific urban and rural soil and land problems,
- contribute to public awareness for a sustainable use of soils and land.

We acknowledge that the problems of soil and land not only have local and regional significance, but that we furthermore - in the prospect of global responsibility - cause global effects on soils in other parts of the world by our life style.

2. Objectives of the Soil & Land Alliance

Our overriding objective is the sustainable use of all types of soils for the conservation and improvement of all soil functions as well as the land resources and the natural and cultural heritage for the present and future generations and the socially just and fair use of soils and land. The Soil & Land Alliance of European Cities and Towns is in agreement with the objectives of the Tutzing proposal for a „Convention on Sustainable Use of Soils“ (Soil Convention) and the „UN Convention to Combat Desertification“.

3. Guidelines and strategies

Our overriding objective will be especially realized by the following guidelines and strategies.

3.1. We foster our independence and identity by a responsible local soil and land policy. For that

- we raise awareness for the chances but also the problems of a sustainable use of soils,
- we register land consumption and re-usable fallow land,
- we make every effort to reverse the trend towards land consumption and soil degradation,
- we define priority objectives for sustainable development and pursue actively an economical use of soil and land resources,
- we support educational measures concerning soils and land use,
- we inform the public about the above-mentioned objectives and strategies to be taken and promote public awareness.

3.2. We promote qualitative growth or stabilization in responsibility for environment, society and culture. For that

- we restrict soil and land consumption, direct the settlements development inwards and promote the quality of the settlement management,
- we register and redevelop dangerous old waste deposits and prepare the land for an appropriate re-use,
- we take questions of social justice and gender fairness into consideration when using soils and land,
- we employ intensified efforts to conserve and improve soil fertility and soil formation processes, whereby special importance is attached to soil care and the unsealing of areas,
- we take measures for soil conservation, soil improvement and soil regeneration, safeguarding especially valuable soils, protect soils from erosion and compaction and reduce pollution,
- we maintain the function of soil as carbon (and nitrogen) storage reservoir taking into account of the major natural material cycles,
- we take measures for the improvement of the microclimate and the water balance, thus contributing to the enhancement of the quality of life in the settlement area,
- we promote the marketing of regionally grown products,
- we take care of the natural and cultural heritage,
- we promote the ecological networks of the biosphere.

3.3. We trust in the innovative empowerment of co-operation in a spirit of partnership. For that

- we co-ordinate soil-improving and spatially relevant projects with regard to an optimal expediency and sustainability,
- we support the realization of the objectives of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) on sustainable spatial development and soil protection,
- we include the concerns of neighbouring municipalities and regions,
- we improve the relation between urban and rural areas mutual coordination,
- we work together as partners across borders.

3.4. We support the sustainable use of soils by means of spatial planning and planning control law instruments. For that

- we keep and enhance the specific character and quality of the soils and land when used or intruded and upgrade their value,
- we use soils through effective assignment for diverse uses as well as differentiated rules for their use, so that soils, nature and landscape can develop optimally,
- we include the requests of the population and the interests of the land users and land owners and take them into consideration when realizing measures,
- we contribute to the specification and realization of additional instruments according to the market economy as rules for a sustainable use of soils and land.

4. Benefits of a Soil & Land Alliance

The benefit of a Soil & Land Alliance for Cities and Towns is first of all to declare the cities' and municipality's support for having a share of the responsibility for a sustainable use of soils and land on a local level. The sustainable use of soils and land improves soil fertility, microclimate, and water balance, may lead to enormous cost savings, especially with regard to the extension and maintenance of infrastructure, saves resources for future development and future generations, improves the full use of existing areas and the stabilization of settlement density, revives public spaces and, on the whole, contributes to an improvement of the quality of life and the image of the municipality. The member cities and towns of the Soil & Land Alliance profit from the advantages of the co-operation and the exchange of experiences with other cities and towns.

5. Global responsibility and partnership

Soil problems are specific for local conditions and sites and have to be solved primarily at the local level. At the same time they also have an international dimension, that comprises the ecological as well as the social, economical and legal aspects. In many countries the question of the availability of soils, the rights for land use, and the rights of indigenous nations on their traditional territories is prone to conflicts. Especially in the arid and rainforest regions of the South serious problems arose through soil and land degradation.

We contribute to these problems by our way of economy and way of life, as we clearly claim more land than is available and in use in our countries. We see partnerships with indigenous nations and other local communities in all parts of the world, e.g. local authorities and organizations, as a very important objective of the Soil and Land Alliance. We want to take into consideration the soil problems in our partnerships and try to use our potentials to contribute to problem solving, especially in areas which are strongly affected by soil and land degradation.

The international work of the Soil & Land Alliance is specially based on the „Convention 169“ of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). It grants the indigenous tribes and people rights on their land and their resources, their own way of life, culture and language.

6. The relation between Soil & Land Alliance and Climate Alliance

There is a close and direct relationship between the world-wide soil and land degradation and the global climate change. The soil bears all resources and stores materials that influence the climate. Climate changes have a far-reaching effect on the condition of soils. Soil & Land Alliance and Climate Alliance see themselves as complementary initiatives under the overriding objective of a sustainable development. They focus jointly on responsible local action in cities and towns and the inclusion of the North-South dimension in municipal action.

7. Commitment of the members of the Soil & Land Alliance

As member cities and towns we commit ourselves, fully using our responsibility and competence to establish the objectives of the Soil & Land Alliance and to decide and realize the appropriate measures according to its guidelines.

We are determined to initiate a reversal of the trend in the still growing land consumption and soil degradation and to be active in continuing the improvement of the situation of soils and land. For the solution of these tasks we include all stakeholders according to the Agenda 21. We commit ourselves to regular reporting, fixing appropriate targets, and controlling the success of our soil policy.

In addition we foster an open exchange of information and experiences with the member local authorities within our country and internationally, and develop joint projects and standards. We ask the higher political levels to support a sustainable use of land and soils and to set the needed framework for the realization of the objectives of the manifesto.

We regard all associations, public institutions and business actors, which support these guidelines, obligations and measures of the Soil & Land Alliance, as our allies.

Bolzano on 24 October 2000



The European Land and Soil Alliance

Use for Member Municipalities

- **Creation of Awareness for sparing Treatment of Soils**

On account of Public Relations and exemplary projects a corresponding creation of awareness is achieved, which prevents sealing of soils. Soil retains its important functions for trickling away and filtering of rainwater.

- **Cost-Cutting municipal Budget**

On account of an increase of settlement density and economical building permissions, less space is required. This leads to cost-cutting in the installation of infrastructure on account of shorter lengths of ways and lines. Compact settlement structures achieve strong cost-cutting for the municipal budget.

- **Improvement of Image and Quality of Life**

On account of a revitalization of the village centers and the installation of compact structures, the quality of life is improved, and the municipality benefits from a positive image.

- **Revitalization of public Space**

Projects removing sealing and the creation of free space in harmony with nature spare soils and at the same time revitalize public space. This in turn leads to an improvement of the quality of life.

- **Capacity Utilization of available Building Area**

When building land is seized, areas are permitted as building land through soil-relevant political instruments, in order to seize parcels of land for purposes of building, which were not available up to that point. The reactivation of vacant buildings gives an opportunity to use existing surfaces at the best.

- **Increased Soil Fertility and Balanced Water Supply**

Soil-sparing agriculture, in connection with sustainable humus cultivation and careful landscape architecture, such as planting native shrubs and trees, protects soil against erosion. Intact soils are able to absorb rainwater, store it, and partially release it to the layers below. An important measure of flood protection.

- **Improvement of CO₂-Balance**

By an increase of organic substance, soils are able to perform their function as a CO₂ reservoir. Space-saving building and removing sealing from soils promote climate protection.

- **Exchange of Experiences – Networking**

Meeting and exchange of opinions with European member municipalities of the Soil and Land Alliance, and support by the Lower Austrian Government in measures of Public Relations

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

Alianza para los Suelos de las Ciudades y Municipalidades Europeas

Alleanza per il suolo delle città e dei comuni europei

Alliance en faveur du sol des villes et communes européennes

Soil & Land Alliance of European Cities and Towns

Zveza za zemljo evropskih mest in občin

Boden-Bündnis europäischer Städte Kreise und Gemeinden



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date of issue: feb. 2002

The European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA) e.V. is an association of cities, towns, rural districts and comparable local authorities in Europe, which have set themselves the goal of an active commitment to a sustainable treatment of soils. On the basis of the Bolzano Manifesto of 10/24/2000, the participating local authorities commit themselves in awareness of their global responsibility to purposeful action on the local level. Furthermore they will participate in joint activities in the fields of soil protection and spatial planning. At the same time, they will benefit from cooperation in partnership and an exchange of information and experience with the partners of the alliance.

Declaration of Admission
European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA) e. V.

By signing the present document,

- we enter the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA) e.V. as a **full member**;
- we acknowledge the Manifesto passed in Bolzano on 10/24/2000 on the Land and Soil Alliance of European cities and towns and comparable local authorities;
- we commit ourselves to actively pursue and implement the goals of this Manifesto for a sustainable treatment of soils in our own municipality;
- we care for creation of awareness among the population and the integration of all parties interested in soils and communal development;
- we actively participate in cooperation as well as an exchange of information and experience with local authorities and partners of the Soil and Land Alliance.

We will annually contribute a membership fee of €, which shall be calculated on the basis of the current membership rate of the European Land and Soil Alliance (ELSA) e.V.*

Name of organization/
 institution/person:

date of decision:

stamp and signature of the responsible authority:

contact address	POB:	street:
	ZIP:	location:
authorities		
contact person		
tel.		
fax.		
e-mail:		
web:		
number of inhabitants:		
member of Climate Alliance:	yes	no

* The annual membership fee for cities and towns, districts, municipalities or comparable local authorities, according to the decision of the general meeting of 02/01/2002, amounts to 60 € per each 10,000 inhabitants commenced. In case of membership of the Climate Alliance / Alianza del Clima e.V. at the same time, the fee is reduced by 50 %. The minimum fee amounts to € 60, the maximum fee amounts to € 9,000.

Soil Protection meets Sustainability:

sozial produziert

www.sozialproduziert.at

A project of the Austrian Sustainability Strategy



Social Production – appreciating Man and Environment!

In Lower Austria, there is traditionally a strong relation towards nature and environment. Especially in times of global economic crises, it is obvious that clean environment alone is not sufficient. A life worth living in the long run needs useful work and regional value creation. Sustainable action means to take into consideration the needs of the currently living generations and, at the same time, to maintain the bases of life and liberties of action of the generations to come.

The project idea of „social production“, which stems from the field of environment and soil protection, gives a good opportunity to achieve advantages for all participants.

I kindly invite you to use this offer of the project and of the website “sozialproduziert.at”. Many sustainable products and services showing a social profile shall arise from the constant cooperation with social projects. To the advantage of all participants!

Dr. Stephan Pernkopf, Regional Minister of Environmental Affairs

Project of Social Production

Promoting cooperation with Social Institutions, developing sustainable Products and Services

Social production is a project idea of the Komunitas OG, which has been implemented in cooperation with the Province of Lower Austria. Its aim is to expand cooperation of enterprises and public clients with social institutions, and to find and develop sustainable products and services of high quality, and to promote their suitability for the market, in order to make them familiar to a broader public.

sopro intends to throw light on goods and services of social enterprises – enterprises and projects on the second and third labour market – under the aspect of sustainability, because their output is generally a type of regional economy with a social component.

Coming in Existence of the Project

Social production is based on the knowledge about strengths, advantages and „sustainability“ of occupational projects in the expanded labour market. Social production was developed as the result of positive practical experiences with qualification enterprises in the production of ecologically sustainable and innovative products. The basic thought of the project is increased advertising and use of social enterprises by the public sector and by the private sector.

Based upon these experiences, in 2009 a cooperation between the Province of Lower Austria (Department of Rural Development) and the Komunitas OG came into existence, in order to try possibilities of a broader cooperation between public institutions (Province of Lower Austria) and occupational projects under the aspect of sustainability and regional promotion and rural development, respectively.

Social Production - Best-Practice-Examples:

The “Treasure Chest“ with sustainable Effect Emmaus St. Poelten produce Paint Boxes for the Department of Rural Development

Since 2007, Emmaus St. Poelten have produced the “soil colour paint box“ for the Department of Rural Development of the Province of Lower Austria, more precisely for the field of soil protection.

The Director of the soil campaign Dr. Erwin Szlezak then devised this project in cooperation with the Komunitas OG, and addressed Emmaus St. Poelten for production. “We have intended to cross the t’s and dot the i’s, and this implies performance by a social enterprise”, stated client Erwin Szlezak.



Recycling of Waste Containers

Since 2006, employees of various Lower Austrian social enterprises produce useful quality products from worn waste containers. In the beginning, there was the recycled snow shovel in five different sizes. In the meantime, the products range from numerous tools to clever product ideas (shovel, blade, rake, birdhouses, transport boxes, snow removal symbols for road maintenance staff and many more).

For further information: www.mtr-online.at



Football Cage! – Sustainability CUP

Outwards: a transportable football pitch, action and movement on smallest space. A new type of fun sports, indoor, outdoor, for use anywhere – and “inside“?

Optimum sustainability: The material either stems from the region (wood), or it is recycled (waste container plastics). The producers come from the second and third labor market, part of the project returns is given away for chosen social projects: “Social commitment, fun, and sensible occupation are mingled in this context, in the right way!



For further information: www.scheiberkistn.at

Aims:

Maintenance and Improvement of Soil Fertility and Soil-Saving Treatment of Soils

1. EU Soil Strategy and Condition of Soil

Target Group: EU member states, Working Community of Danube Countries, scientific networks.

- Expert supervision and further active cooperation as regards contents of the EU soil policy (Lower Austrian Lobbying).
- Direction of Ecology Working Group focusing on soil protection of the Working Community of Danube Countries.
- Orientation towards area-wide European soil protection.
- Quantitative protection of the best agricultural soils.
- Further development of measure-oriented soil policy.
- Humus management as the key to soil fertility and as a contribution to protection of soil, climate, and against flood events.
- Soil / climate projects „Soil as a Carbon Reservoir“, „Climate Protection through Planning of Soil Protection“.
- Projects within the framework of the Austrian Sustainability Strategy (land use policy, Land and Soil Alliance and participation of citizens, soilart/socialart).
- EU-Projects: Strategic leadership and structure of SONDAR network

2. Land and Soil Alliance of European Towns and Municipalities

Target Group: Municipalities

- Support of Lower Austrian municipalities in implementation of effective measures and entry to the Land and Soil Alliance of European towns and municipalities (ELSA).
- Planned entry of municipalities associations to the Land and Soil Alliance.
- Implementation of projects in member municipalities of the Land and Soil Alliance (gathering best-practice examples), elaborating "soil activity concepts", "soil balances", and "soil walks".
- Service offers for furthering member municipalities of the Land and Soil Alliance and their educational institutions.
- International meetings of ELSA.

3. Soil Campaign „our soil - we stand upon it!“

Target Group: Educational Institutions and Citizens

- Implementation of the action „our soil - we stand upon it!“, according to the slogan "to sensibly use, carefully protect it". Topics, current focus: well-kept and living soil. Fertile soil and climate change / soil resources / sparing treatment of soil.
- Awarding of soil plates to specially active member municipalities of the Land and Soil Alliance.
- Soil art and soil colours - „Soil Colour Creative Center“ at Heldenberg.
- Coordination of seminars and events.
- Continuation of creative competition „with the Colours of the Earth“ (participation of up to now more than 250 schools with 25,000 children).
- Support of symposium on soil art www.soilart.eu
- Soil film.
- Build-up of a partner network.
- Annual event at "World Soils Day".
- Competition "Power of Soil".



Service Offers

for Furthering Member Municipalities of the European Land and Soil Alliance
and of their Educational Institutions in Lower Austria

unser Boden
wir stehen drauf!



Eine Initiative von Landeshauptmann Dr. Erwin Pröll
und Landesrat Dr. Stephan Pernkopf

1. Service Offers for Member Municipalities of the European Land and Soil Alliance

- Soil folder
- Website
- Soil Actionbase
- Soil film
- Exposition of Soil Alliance
- Information file for municipalities
- Paint box „with the Colours of the Earth“
- Competition for schools
- Colouring block „with the Colours of the Earth“
- Creative seminar with soil colour artist Irena Ráček
- Soil plate
- Post card „our soil“ - our own typical soils
- Soil profiles
- Soil memo
- Soil boccia
- Website SOILART
- Articles in municipal newspaper
- Soilart calendar for member municipalities of Land and Soil Alliance
- Exposition of soil colour paintings, top 30
- Soil art poster

2. Workshops and Offers for Educational Institutions of Member Municipalities of the Land and Soil Alliance

- Competition for schools
- Paint box „with the Colours of the Earth“
- Colouring block „with the Colours of the Earth“
- Creative seminar with soil colour artist Irena Ráček
- exposition of soil colour paintings, top 30 (repro)
- Website SOILART
- Soil Colour Creative Center at Heldenberg
- Grasping Soil, Schawerda, Grad. Eng.
- The secret of the earthworms, VermiGrand
- Lower Austrian worm compost system – VermiGrand
- The mobile soil lab, Bio Research Austria
- Augustin, the worm narrates about the Earth, die umweltberatung
- The cycle of nature, die umweltberatung
- Life underground, die umweltberatung
- The poster for young soil researchers, die umweltberatung

3. Educational Offers for Adults, Persons interested in Soil, and Garden Owners

- Creative seminar with soil colour artist Irena Ráček
- Website
- The mobile soil lab, Bio Research Austria
- Courses by VermiGrand
- Lecture: Soil is well - all is well, die umweltberatung
- Soil party - Healthy soil with home-made compost, die umweltberatung
- Website SOILART
- Folder: Composting - it is this simple, die umweltberatung

4. For Municipalities interested in the Land and Soil Alliance

- Soil folder
- Website
- Soil Actionbase
- Soil film
- Post card collection „our soil“
- Exposition of Land and Soil Alliance
- information file for municipalities
- Soilart calendar and poster
- Paint box „with the Colours of the Earth“



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unser Boden
wir stehen drauf!



Our soil
we stand upon it!
Nase puda
je pro nás duležitá
A mi földünk
ragaszkodunk hozzá!
Нашата земя
ние стъпваме върху нея!
Pământul nostru,
cel pe care stăm!
Pământul nostru,
cel pe care stăm!
Наше земљиште
нам је јако важно!
наша земля —
на ній ми стоїмо!

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