



Press invitation

Global Soil Week 27-31 October 2013: Losing ground?

Fertile soils are essential in order to achieve the most important global goals such as combating hunger, curbing climate change and securing fresh water supplies. However, we are currently continually losing soils: each year around 24 billion tonnes of soil are destroyed! With it, a basic resource on which life depends is also vanishing. In order to develop specific solutions for protecting soils and fostering sustainable agriculture, the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) is hosting the 2nd Global Soil Week along with representatives from politics, science and civil society. The event is being held from 27 to 31 October 2013 in Berlin under the slogan “Losing ground?”.

Together with our international and national partners, this international multi-stakeholder event was established one year ago as a platform that, among other things, intends to address one of the ambitious goals of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), namely to achieve zero net land degradation.

One quarter of the earth’s land surface has already been destroyed through erosion, non-sustainable agriculture, urbanisation and political mismanagement. Along with the fertile soil, the largest terrestrial carbon sink is also vanishing, which is therefore exacerbating climate change. Further serious consequences include famines and increased conflicts over the use of land. Without soils, there is no future for humanity. This is why there is a need to act and make changes quickly.

The Global Soil Week 2013 is focussing on the following issues concerned with protecting threatened soils:

- How can soil and climate protection be combined effectively with food security, and how can sustainable and responsible political action be organised in the rural sector?
- How can we ensure that the protection of soils is anchored in the global sustainable development goals (SDGs)? How can the implementation of SDGs be organised in local activities?
- How can we combat soil contamination and restore soil fertility on a large scale?
- How can civil society be systematically involved in the relevant decision-making processes?

The Global Soil Week is being organised by the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the European Commission, the German Federal Environment Agency (UBA), the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).



Information on taking part

Media representatives require accreditation. You can register directly at media@iass-potsdam.de.

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