



See the [ON LINE VERSION](#)



Global Soil Partnership Newsletter



Celebrating World Soil Day!

"Caring for the planet starts from the ground"



5 December 2017 - Soil, like air and water, is critical to life on earth. Soils are incredibly resilient, but they are also fragile and can easily be damaged or lost. **Improved management of our planet's limited soil resource** is essential to ensure a sustainable future and guarantee healthy and productive soils for food security, as well as to support many essential ecosystem services that enable life on earth. Caring for the planet and its environment means caring for its soils. On the occasion of World Soil Day (WSD), declared by the United Nations General Assembly, **let's work together from the ground, our soils, to build a better future for us and generations to come!**

We are thrilled that so many **events and celebrations** were organized around the world for World Soil Day 2017. This shows how many people are enthusiastic, involved and maintaining the interest in soils moving forward. The GSP Secretariat looks forward to the active participation of all its partners and the fast-growing soil community across the globe on this day

Happy reading!

Eduardo Mansur,
Director Land and Water Division, FAO | GSP Secretariat

Why does caring for the planet start from the ground?



©FAO/Matteo Sala

Soil is our ally against climate change, earth's recipe for food, a supermarket of resources for daily life... the soil we walk on is very valuable! We don't think about soil with every step, but we should: if we want to take care of the Planet we must begin right from the ground! So let's tread lightly.



Soil is a non-renewable resource in the human timeline: we can't replace all the healthy soil we have lost, as it can take up to one thousand years to form one cm of soil.



First of all, soils are the **foundation of agriculture**, it is where food begins. Ninety-five per cent of food is produced from our soil, so healthy soils are critical. Moreover, soil plays a key role in the supply of **clean water and resilience to floods and droughts**.

The largest store of terrestrial carbon occurs below-ground, so its preservation contributes to **climate change adaptation and mitigation**.

Soils are also a crucial part of **reducing forced migration**, because without them, people are forced to migrate to feed themselves and their families. The upper layer of the earth is the reservoir for at least a quarter of **global biodiversity**, so it deserves the same attention as above-ground biodiversity. Caring for the planet and its environment means caring for its base, nurturing soil to unlock its full potential by restoring degraded soils and improving soil health. This requires the universal implementation of sustainable soil management.

Download the communication toolkit from the World Soil Day webpage:

[العربية](#) | [中文](#) | [English](#) | [Français](#) | [Русский](#) | [Español](#)

Main technical output: launch of the GSOCmap

The Global Soil Organic Carbon map (GSOCmap) was officially launched on 5 December 2017, on the occasion of WSD celebrations in New York, Rome, Nairobi, and Moscow.



This map represents an important stepping stone to an improved understanding of the **estimated soil organic carbon (SOC) stock** and the amount of data available globally for mapping. It is the first ever global SOC map produced through an inclusive process driven by member countries. More than 90 countries prepared their national SOC maps under the guidance of our Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS) and the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) Secretariat. This process makes this global product totally unique and paves the way to establishing national soil information systems and represents the first step towards the **introduction of a soil monitoring programme**.

[Discover the GSOCmap](#) | [GSOCmap video](#)

World Soil Day at the UN



World Soil Day 2017

Caring for
the planet
starts from
the ground

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has co-organized official World Soil Day events in **New York** (UN Secretariat), **Rome** (FAO headquarters) and **Nairobi** (UN Environment). The events in Rome and New York were broadcast live via the FAO and UN channels. The UN Secretary-General António Guterres's message for the official celebration, along with the participation of FAO Deputy Director-General María Helena Semedo, bear testament to the importance of the event.

At the 2017 World Soil Day celebration in **New York**, the Director of the FAO Liaison Office to the United Nations, Carla Mucavi, emphasized the urgency to sustainably manage our soils, as they can be degraded and lose their potential to provide products and essential ecosystem services to people. The event was co-organized by FAO and the Permanent Missions of Colombia, Lesotho, Thailand and the Netherlands to the United Nations, as well as the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

A special celebration opened by H.E. Sergei Levin, Vice-minister for Agriculture of the Russian Federation, took place at **FAO Headquarters in Rome**, where the Global Soil Organic Carbon map was released. The new ITPS report on the "Global assessment of the impact of plant protection products on soil functions and soil ecosystems", was launched together with the second award of the Glinka World Soil Prize to recognize incredible efforts for promoting sustainable soil management as per the Revised World Soil Charter Principles.

In Nairobi, Kenya, the attention of the world focused on **pressing issues affecting soils, including pollution**. The World Soil Day event, organized as part of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA 3) - the world's highest level decision-making body on the

environment - was also the occasion to announce the **Global Symposium on Soil Pollution 2018 (GSOP18)**, planned from 2 to 4 May 2018, at FAO headquarters.

FAO regional, sub-regional and country offices are called on to raise awareness on soil resources at global, regional and country level to mobilize public support of global soils and their sustainable management.

Find out more about **WSD official events** and join virtually through webcast:

[Nairobi](#) | [New York](#) | [Rome](#)

World Soil Day celebrations around the globe



World Soil Day 2017 is an excellent opportunity for the soil community, organizations and individuals around the world to engage the public in a conversation about the vital role that soils play in our daily lives. Hundreds of exciting events including lectures, scientific roundtables, fun soil experiments, tree-planting ceremonies and soil-shaped cake baking competitions, soil parades, workshops dedicated to children and more [have been registered on our interactive map](#). These events are being held simultaneously in more than 70 countries worldwide.

We are amazed and delighted to see how many people around the globe support WSD by taking part in our proposed activities or by organizing their own events. **Outreach activities** range from large publicity campaigns to talks on soil at local elementary schools or a poster campaign in a storefront window. This means more events and activities than ever before on and around World Soil Day. Furthermore, **extensive media coverage of the events**, even through social media, is drawing attention to the crucial role that young people play in promoting sound resource-management. WSD campaign material was printed, translated and disseminated worldwide.

[Complete the online form to record your event on the map:](#) registrations are still open!

We would like to keep track of your successes! So, do not forget to share your successes with us by sending your amazing pictures, videos, and extraordinary stories about global soils via email. They will be compiled in the WSD17 photogallery.

Worldwide events interactive map [here](#).

A special thank you to all event organizers!

Award of the Glinka World Soil Prize 2017



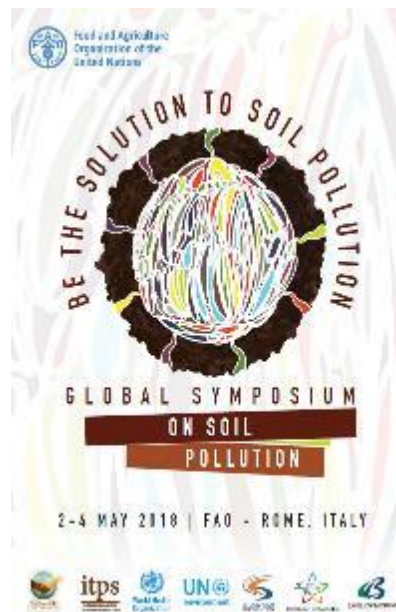
Capitalizing on the awareness raising momentum created by the International Year of Soil 2015, the second Glinka World Soil Prize was awarded today to the **Asociación Argentina de Productores en Siembra Directa (AAPRESID)**. This award celebrates their efforts to promote sustainable soil management practices on the ground by combating soil erosion as a direct contribution to food security in South America and the world.

The **Glinka World Soil Prize**, named after the pioneering Russian scientist Konstantin D. Glinka, was established by the Global Soil Partnership with the support of the Russian Federation in 2016. It honors individuals and organizations whose leadership and

activities have contributed to the promotion of **sustainable soil management and the protection of soil resources**.

[2nd Glinka World Soil Prize Video](#)

Global Symposium on Soil Pollution | GSOP18, 2-4 May 2018



FAO, The Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS), together with the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, UN Environment and World Health Organization (WHO) are glad to announce that the **Global Symposium on Soil Pollution will be held from 2 to 4 May 2018 at FAO headquarters**. It is the first step in implementing the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management in terms of preventing and reducing harmful substances in soil as a way to maintain healthy soils and food safety in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Specifically, the symposium should provide scientific evidence to support actions and decisions to prevent and reduce soil pollution for increased food security and nutrition, and ecosystem services, and promote the restoration of polluted sites. The organizing committee will soon launch the GSOP18 website and circulate the Call for Abstracts.

Soil painting competition: Deadline is approaching



The Soil Painting competition is an activity proposed for World Soil Day 2017: It is open to **children, teens and university students** all over the world, from age 5 upwards, to raise awareness about our soils and their crucial importance. The Soil Painting Tutorial is designed to guide potential entrants on how to produce a painting with soil-derived colours for the 5th of December. Three age groups will showcase their creativity in depicting how soils are indispensable for sustainable development.

Deadline for entry is 11 December. Amazing prizes up for grabs! More information [here](#).

Download the tutorial : [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

***[Share with us](#) the time-lapse videos/photographs of your artwork **to take part in the competition!**

Close to the conclusion of 2017, the global soils community should be proud that World Soil Day 2017 proves to be a success and gives a voice to our silent ally, soil.

Our best wishes for an exciting and unforgettable World Soil Day 2017!