

## 5.12. World Soil Day

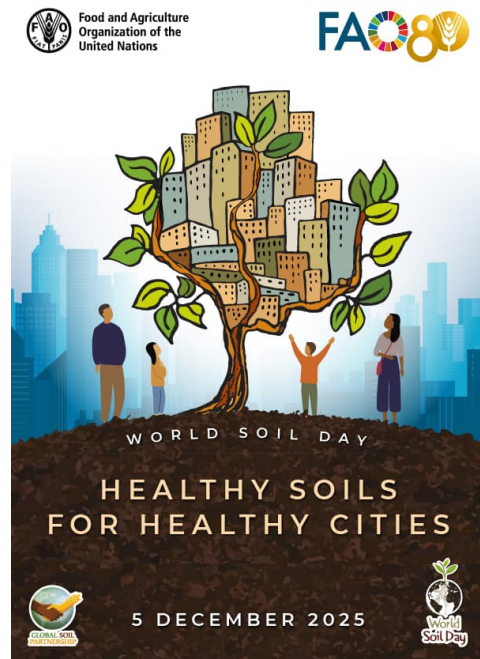
The treasure beneath our feet

World Soil Day is celebrated worldwide on 5<sup>th</sup> December.

This day reminds us how essential healthy soils are to our lives. Soils are more than just 'earth' – they are the basis of our food supply, they store water, bind carbon and are home to billions of microorganisms, insects and plants. Without fertile soil, there would be no biodiversity, no agriculture and no effective climate protection.

Why is this important?

- Soil protects the climate: it stores large amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> and thus helps to slow down climate change.
- Soil stores water: healthy soil absorbs rain and prevents flooding.
- Soil is a habitat: a teaspoon of soil contains more living organisms than there are people on Earth!



Allotments as guardians of the soil

Allotments are true sanctuaries for our soil. While more and more land in cities is being sealed, allotments remain green islands that preserve and nurture the soil. They are places where sustainable soil use is put into practice:

- Natural cycles instead of waste: Allotment gardeners compost organic waste and return nutrients to the soil. This creates humus, which improves the soil structure and maintains fertility.
- Diversity instead of monoculture: Allotments are colourful – vegetable beds, fruit trees, flowers and shrubs alternate. This diversity promotes active soil life and protects against soil erosion.
- No chemicals: Many allotment gardeners rely on organic methods and do not use pesticides or artificial fertilisers. This protects not only the soil, but also the groundwater and biodiversity.
- Habitat for soil organisms: Earthworms, microorganisms and fungi find ideal conditions in gardens that are cultivated in a natural way. They loosen the soil, improve water absorption and ensure a stable ecosystem.
- **Climate protection on a small scale:** Healthy soil in allotments stores carbon and thus contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gases. Every square metre counts!

Allotments are therefore not only places of relaxation, but also important partners in the fight against climate change and species loss. They show how soil protection works in everyday life – right on our doorstep.

What can we do?

- Create compost and maintain it properly
- Do not dig the soil unnecessarily in order to preserve soil life
- Mulch to retain moisture and prevent erosion
- Avoid chemical fertilisers and pesticides

World Soil Day is an invitation to appreciate the soil – because it is the basis of all life. Every allotment is a piece of the future: for us, for nature and for the climate.