



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



Soil and Water:  
a source  
of life

# Agenda

5 December, 2023





Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations



# World Soil Day celebration

*“Soil and water: a source of life”*

5 December 2023 (12:30 - 14:00 CET)

Hybrid format | Sheikh Zayed Center - [Virtual \(Zoom\)](#)

Our planet’s survival depends on the precious link between soil and water. Over 95 percent of our food originates from these two fundamental resources. Water in soils, vital for nutrient absorption by plants, binds our ecosystems together. This symbiotic relationship is the foundation of our agricultural systems. However, in the face of climate change and human activity, our soils are being degraded, putting excessive pressure on our water resources. Erosion disrupts the natural balance, reducing water infiltration and availability for all forms of life. Sustainable soil management practices, such as minimum tillage, crop rotation, organic matter addition, and cover cropping, improve soil health, reduce erosion and pollution, and enhance water infiltration and storage. These practices also preserve soil biodiversity, improve fertility, and contribute to carbon sequestration, playing a crucial role in the fight against climate change.

The **World Soil Day 2023 (WSD)** and its campaign aim to raise awareness on the importance and relationship between soil and water in achieving sustainable and resilient agrifood systems. WSD is a unique global platform that not only celebrates soils but also empowers and engages citizens around the world to improve soil health.

**Artistic performances** and **keynotes** will enliven the programme and the winners of the Glinka World Soil Prize and King Bhumibol WSD award will also be announced. Together, let’s pave the way for a future where soil and water are sustainably managed to continue to be the steadfast guardians of our environment and climate.

**Interpretation will be available in the FAO six official languages of FAO.**

12:30 - 12:35	Welcome and introduction by moderator: <b>Ms Maria Helena Semedo</b> , Deputy Director-General, FAO
12:35 - 12:40	Opening by <b>Dr QU Dongyu</b> , Director-General, FAO
12:40 - 12:55	Remarks by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>H.E. Olga María Pérez Tuna</b>, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Guatemala to FAO</li> <li>• <b>H.E. Rodney M. Hunter</b>, Chargé d'affaires of the United States Mission to the United Nations Agencies in Rome</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Mary Mwale</b>, Head of Food Security and Nutrition, Ministry of Agriculture, Republic of Kenya</li> </ul>
12:55 – 13:00	Artistic performance “Soil and Water, a source of life”
13.00 – 13:05	Presentation of the Glinka World Soil Prize 2023 by <b>H.E. Igor L. Golubovskiy</b> , Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to FAO Delivery of the Glinka World Soil Prize 2023 by <b>Dr QU Dongyu</b> , Director-General, FAO and by <b>H.E. Igor L. Golubovskiy</b> , Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to FAO
13:05 – 13:15	Keynote presentation by the Laureate of the Glinka World Soil Prize 2023
13:15 – 13:25	Delivery of the King Bhumibol World Soil Day Award 2023, by <b>H.E. Kundhinee Aksornwong</b> , Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the Kingdom of Thailand
13:25 – 13:30	Announcement of the winners of the book contest for Children on soils and water, <b>Ms Laura Bertha Reyes Sanchez</b> , Past-President and liaison officer to FAO, International Union of Soil Sciences
13:30 – 13:35	Announcement of the winners of the soil and water photo contest and poster contest, <b>Ms Isabelle Verbeke</b> , Land and Water Officer, FAO
13:35– 13:40	Conclusions and closure of the event, <b>Mr Lifeng Li</b> , Director, Land and Water Division, FAO

**Release of the video animation: soil & water: a source of life**

*Light refreshments will be served at the end of the World Soil Day celebration*





World Soil Day (WSD) is held annually on 5 December as a means to focus attention on the importance of healthy soil and advocating for the sustainable management of soil resources.

An international day to celebrate Soil was recommended by the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) in 2002. Under the leadership of the Kingdom of Thailand and within the framework of the Global Soil Partnership, FAO has supported the formal establishment of WSD as a global awareness raising platform. The FAO Conference unanimously endorsed World Soil Day in June 2013 and requested its official adoption at the 68th UN General Assembly. In December 2013 the UN General Assembly responded by designating 5 December 2014 as the first official World Soil Day.

FAO, within the framework of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP), has received the official mandate to facilitate the implementation of the World Soil Day.



The Global Soil Partnership (GSP) is a globally recognized mechanism established in 2012. Our mission is to position soils in the Global Agenda through collective action. Our key objectives are to promote Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) and improve soil governance to guarantee healthy and productive soils, and support the provision of essential ecosystem services towards food security and improved nutrition, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and sustainable development.

Land and Water division - Natural Resources and Sustainable Production

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[www.fao.org/global-soil-partnership](http://www.fao.org/global-soil-partnership)

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