

ENSA European Network on Soil Awareness

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General remarks on Lower Austria ⁽¹⁾

- Lower Austria is the largest of the ten federal provinces (19,200 km²) and covers almost one quarter of the surface area of Austria
- Lower Austria offers a lot of wide open spaces and is therefore marketed for tourists as the "wide open country"
- Despite the strong growth in population, Lower Austria has retained its agricultural character and comprises more than 50 % of Austria's cultivated land.

General remarks on Lower Austria (2)

- Lower Austria has great strategic importance in providing the population with food, and for the production of animal feed and renewable raw materials.
- urban agglomeration of Vienna – Bratislava:
at only 60 km apart, they are the closet two capitals in the EU, separated by the natural paradise of the "Danube-March-Auen" National Park.

Soil Protection in Lower Austria ⁽¹⁾

- Lower Austria entered the European Land and Soil Alliance ELSA in 2003 in order to underscore its soil protection activities and to set an example for its communities and regions.
- Lower Austria has decided on a sector-based land planning programme to retain agricultural land. This has empowered communities in remote regions to require areas to remain non-timber areas and act as a bulwark against increasing forestation.

Soil Protection in Lower Austria (2)

- Since 2007 Lower Austria has been running the campaign “unser Boden – wir stehen drauf!” – “our soil – we stand upon it!” aimed at heightening awareness of the soil through a raft of activities.

unser Boden
wir stehen drauf!



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

There is still much to do ... (1)

- Lower Austria must husband its land resources.
- Green field sites must not be developed merely because this option is easier and quicker.
- Urban centres must be injected with life and not lose its population.

There is still much to do ... (2)

- Much agricultural land has been lost through residential developments, transport, infrastructure and forestation. This robs us of future chances and increases the dependence on imports.
- We need agricultural land for food and animal feed, renewable energy and high quality fibre materials.

Conclusions

- ... the respectful and careful treatment of this valuable resource soil constitutes an indispensable basis for a positive future in our federal province of Lower Austria
- we will continue to systematically pursue the path of sustainable development.