

26th CONFERENCE OF THE WORKING COMMUNITY OF THE DANUBE REGIONS

TUESDAY, APRIL 09 & WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019

UFT / BOKU TULLN

KONRAD LORENZSTRASSE 24, A-3430 TULLN AN DER DONAU / AUSTRIA

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SOIL QUALITY INNOVATION through Research & Demonstration Farms

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Sustaining and enhancing soil quality is one of the keys for ensuring a liveable environment, biological resources and a bio-based economy for future generations. Soils provide multiple services for ecosystem functioning and human life, including the production of food, feed, fibre and fuels, and various ecological functions such as water retention, organic carbon storage, or filtering and buffering of nutrients and pollutants. They also serve as sources for microbial genes and habitats for biota, and valuable archives of the earths and human mankind's history.

Agricultural land use nowadays directly affects the global land surface, and the Danube region. There is no doubt that the mode of agricultural management regimes largely controls the quality of our soils. National agro-environmental programmes under the umbrella of the Common Agricultural Policy provide substantial monetary incentives for moving towards more sustainable, environmentally-friendly management regimes, and among other aspects, target also soil quality.

Negotiations for the upcoming CAP period are underway. This workshop will therefore provide a forum to discuss the various approaches to protect soils and to enhance soil quality in the Danube region within the framework of the national agro-environmental programmes by reviewing past experiences (success stories, failures) and determining future needs in the light of recent advances in soil science and the results of the periodical evaluations of agro-environmental programme outcomes.

We welcome oral and poster contributions from all Danube countries as well as case studies from abroad. Based on the plenary contributions, parallel workshop will be organised to further discuss specific aspects of interactions between soil quality and agro-environmental programmes. A field-trip to GRAND_FARM and Rodale Institute Europe in Absdorf, Lower Austria will provide insight into an innovative practitioner's approaches to maintain and enhance soil quality.

Programme

Tuesday, April 09, 2019

- Morning Session at UFT – Introduction to the topic, case studies from different countries and regions
- Afternoon session at the research farm of Alfred Grand, Absdorf (demonstration)
- Evening: Dinner at in Absdorf, Governor of Lower Austria (TBC)

Wednesday, April 10, 2019

- Official Opening Keynote / input lectures (case studies from different countries)
- Introduction of a the concept of a Farm Network in the Danube Region, linking innovative practice with research organisations
- Four parallel Workshops covering different aspects of soil degradation and soil quality in relation to agro-environmental programmes:
 - Workshop I: Physical degradation and quality of soil
 - Soil erosion by water and wind
 - Soil compaction
 - Workshop II: Chemical degradation and quality of soil:
 - Organic carbon / organic matter
 - Nutrients
 - Pollutants
 - Workshop III: Biodiversity of soils and related ecosystems
 - Workshop IV: Soil and human health

Dinner at UFT