



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



United Nations  
Convention to Combat  
Desertification



# World Soil Day Celebration

Hybrid Format - UN Headquarters, Conference Room 8

15 December 2022 | 13.15 – 14.30 EST

Registration [here](#)

## Overview on World Soil Day

In 2014 the United Nations General Assembly designated 5 December as World Soil Day (WSD). WSD 2022 and its campaign aim to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining healthy ecosystems and human well-being by addressing the key challenges related to soil fertility, soil health and nutrient imbalance. WSD is a unique platform that celebrates soils and engages citizen around the world to improve soil health. The day, which is the birthday of Thailand's His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great, marks the occasion to pay tribute to His Majesty and his lifelong work on sustainable soil management.

The Permanent Missions to the United Nations of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Republic of Namibia, together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification invite you to a hybrid celebration of WSD in New York, on Thursday 15 December 2022, from 13:15 – 14:30 hrs at UN Headquarters in Conference Room 8. Live virtual attendance on the Webex platform will be available upon registration. The event will also be webcasted on UN WebTV. The event will be in English.

The event will feature a variety of voices including Member States, UN agencies, scientists, and soil heroes such as this year's Glinka World Soil Prize Laureate and King Bhumibol World Soil Day Award Laureate.

The discussions will address solutions available to help reverse the trend of soil degradation and nutrient imbalance in soils, and highlight innovative work going on in the field. We will also hear the experience of young scientists working on the ground.

## Soils: Where food begins

The role of soil fertility in providing sufficient, high-quality, safe, and more nutritious food for all is critical to achieve SDG2 through the transformation of agri-food systems that centers on better production, better nutrition, better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind. Against the context of rapid population growth, growing demand for food, and the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, the

**sustainable improvement of soil fertility** and the **prevention of nutrient imbalances** are essential to enhancing the resilience of agri-food systems to external shocks, sustaining agricultural productivity, and improving the livelihoods of all individuals, especially smallholder farmers and people in vulnerable situation.



In addition, soils are essential for life on Earth, but the finding of *Status of the World's Soil Resources* report<sup>1</sup> indicates that they are being threatened by multiple forms of degradation, such as soil erosion, soil organic carbon loss, and soil acidification. **Nutrient imbalance** has been identified as one of the top ten threats to soil health worldwide, with adverse environmental, social, and economic impacts. The loss of soil fertility means that many cereals, vegetables, and fruits are not as rich in vitamins and nutrients as they were, and the two-thirds of the world's population is at risk of **nutrient deficiency**. When crops are harvested, nutrients are removed from the soil. While these nutrients can be replaced by the addition of inorganic or organic fertilizers, **underuse, misuse, or overuse of fertilizers** contributes to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and degradation of soil and water resources, thereby posing risks to humans, animals, and soil health. WSD's theme this year **"Soil, where food begins"** is, therefore, more relevant than ever as this underlines the importance of ensuring healthy soils for food security and nutrition, food safety and healthy diets, and sustainable food production through a **One Health approach** that inextricably links the health of humans, animals and environment.

Ultimately, it is hoped that enhanced awareness on the importance of soil and its fertility to better livelihoods, to the agricultural ecosystem, and to a better environment will make some contributions to the promotion of sustainable development and to improving the quality of life of people.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/i5199e/i5199e.pdf>

## Agenda

13:15 - 13:20	<b>Welcoming remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- H.E. Dr. Suriya Chindawongse, Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations (in person)</li></ul>
13:20 - 13:40	<b>Opening remarks</b> (4-5 minutes each) by <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- H.E. Mrs. Lachezara Stoeva, President of the Economic and Social Council, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations (in person)</li><li>- H.E. Mrs. Alicia Buenrostro, Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations (in person)</li><li>- Ms. Helena Kuzee, Deputy Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations (in person)</li><li>- Mr. Lifeng Li, Director of Land and Water Division, FAO (virtual)</li></ul>
13:40 - 13:43	Curtain-raiser video, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation of Thailand
13:43 - 14:05	<b>Panel Discussion</b> moderated by Ms Yingqian (Lily) Chen <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Dr. David Lindbo, Director, Soil &amp; Plant Science Division, US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), and Chair of Steering Committee of North America Soil Partnership (in person)</li><li>- Prof. Elizabeth Solleiro Rebolledo, on behalf of the Institute of Geology, National Autonomous University of Mexico (IGI-UNAM), 2022 King Bhumibol World Soil Day Award laureate (virtual)</li><li>- Dr. Ashok Kumar Patra, ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil Science, 2022 Glinka World Soil Prize laureate (virtual)</li><li>- Mr. Axel Cerón, Vice-chairman of International Union of Soil Sciences "Young Scientists" Working Group (virtual)</li></ul>
14.10 – 14.24	<b>Interventions from the floor</b>
14:24 – 14:26	World Soil Day encore video
14.26 – 14.30	<b>Closing remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Mr. Melchiade Bukuru, Director of UNCCD Office in New York (in person)</li></ul>

The event will be moderated in person by:

Ms. Yingqian (Lily) Chen, Senior On-Camera UN Correspondent and anchor at Phoenix Satellite Television