

## **SE31: Fostering resilient food systems through fertile and healthy soils**

Organized by: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Global Soil Partnership (GSP), The United States, department of State, Office of Global Food Security, the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany and the Global Environment Facility

### Summary of the side event

The side event was held at FAO headquarters on 25 October 2024, focusing on the critical role of soil health in enhancing resilient, sustainable food systems. The event highlighted the need for collaboration, policy coherence, and innovative technologies in sustainable soil management, aligning with the goals of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to strengthen global food security and nutrition through resilient agrifood systems.

Opening remarks were delivered by the H.E. Ambassador Andreas von Brandt, Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Rome, Germany, and Ms. Simone Passarelli, Policy Advisor, US Department of State. Both highlighted the urgent challenges posed by soil degradation and the pivotal role of healthy soils in meeting global food demands and climate goals. Key presentations explored FAO's SoilFER framework, the Soil4Nutrition initiative, and the Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS), showcasing projects aimed at improving soil fertility, productivity, and nutrition. These presentations emphasized how sustainable soil management supports food systems resilience, particularly in vulnerable regions facing climate change impacts.

The moderated panel discussion featured experts on practical soil fertility models and highlighted new soil and fertilization technologies for increasing productivity while preserving soil health. Panelists from various sectors, including youth agricultural development groups, emphasized the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration in driving innovation and adaptation in soil management.

The event underscored the importance of healthy, fertile soils in building resilient food systems that ensure food quality, availability, and security. Degraded soils compromise crop nutrition and productivity, making sustainable

soil and fertility management vital for achieving global food security and nutrition goals. Moving forward, a number of actionable priorities emerged:

- Enhancing soil health initiatives: Support and expand initiatives like FAO's SoilFER, Soil4Nutrition, VACS, and GEF's SoilCare, which focus on sustainable soil management to boost fertility and productivity.
- Promoting global collaboration: Strengthen international partnerships, data sharing, and resource pooling. Engaging youth and diverse groups in soil innovation can drive progress.
- Aligning with SDGs: Sustainable soil management is vital to achieving SDGs, particularly for food security and climate adaptation. Scaling innovative soil and fertilizer methods will help transform agrifood systems, promoting resilience and sustainability.

Read more:

Agenda: <https://www.fao.org/global-soil-partnership/resources/events/detail/en/c/1711914/>

Photogallery: <https://digital-media.fao.org/Folder/2A6XC5I7M4GX>