FAQ013 Soil is not renewable

Soil as a non-renewable limited resource

Non-renewable resources must be used sustainably, but must not be consumed or lost. Soil is an indispensable, non-renewable resource for agriculture and all stable ecosystems on earth. Erosion causes the loss of 24 billion tons of fertile humus layer per year worldwide. In Europe, soil loss is on average 17 times higher than formation of new soil. In Germany, an average of 0.14 to 0.35 mm of soil is eaten away per year (corresponding to 1.4 to 3.5 t per ha). A quarter of all agricultural areas are highly endangered by erosion and have an area erosion of approx. 0.5 mm per year.

Only through the use of soil-conserving agricultural practices it is possible to stop erosion by wind and water and avoid further degradation of soil quality. A trend reversal towards more soil fertility and soil protection is urgently needed. This is the only way to maintain the fertility of the soils still available and increase their stability/resilience to agricultural use, drought, heavy rainfall and wind erosion. Once soils are lost, as in many areas of southern Italy and Greece for example, many centuries will not be enough to make them available again as a basis for life for the environment and mankind.

Crop.zone can make an important contribution to protecting and regenerating soils by avoiding soil movement during weed control and by providing the possibility to stabilize soils by replenishing organic matter.

An important source:

https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/themen/boden-landwirtschaft/bodenbelastungen/erosion#textpart-9