

Soils and soil ecosystem services

Links4Soil Summer School

Youth Parliament of Alpine Convention (YPAC)

Invitation and preliminary information

August – October – November 2018

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Ljubljana, Wednesday, November 2018

Invitation to participate to the Links4Soils Summer School 2019

Dear Sir / Madame,

The soil is an essential but primarily overlooked natural resource that enables life in terrestrial ecosystems. To put it simply: no soil, no life on the land. The importance of soil is being recognised, and several international institutions, some of them under the UN- FAO umbrella, launched campaigns to raise awareness on soils.

The Links4Soils¹ project, financed by the Interreg Alpine Space programme², aims to bridge soil knowledge gaps, to link users and soil experts, to introduce best soil management practices in the Alps and especially to raise awareness on the importance of soil for nature, environment and human well-being.

Dissemination of knowledge on soils and environment to youth - the future managers and users of natural resources, already proved to be an essential task and can be an exciting event. Short but intensive summer school camps are appreciated and beneficial for high school students as well as professors. That is why the Links4Soils project partners decided to expand the content of the project with the invitation of high schools a third year – mostly students to participate to the Links4Soils Summer School, to learn about soils, and the services they provide to ecosystems and humans.

Knowledge dissemination and education on soils is the main reason for the organization of the Links4Soil Summer School that will take place from June 10th of June to 14th 2019 on the Pokljuka Plateau, a part of the Triglav National Park (TNP) biosphere reserve.

On behalf of the Links4Soils project partner I am pleased to invite members of the Youth Parliament (YPAC)³ of the Alpine Convention (AC)⁴ to join and learn about soils, how soil is vital for humans, nature, environment and entire life in terrestrial ecosystems. Soils, soil diversity, soil ecosystem services and protection are main topics that will be presented to the youth interestingly and understandably. Groups of five to six students with a school mentor will be hosted by the local organisers (the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia and the Slovenian Forest Service) and coached by an international group of professors of soil science and experts – Links4Soils project partners. Accommodation of participants (students and accompanying teachers, soil experts of international reputation as well as researchers from institutes and universities the school mentors) and meals will be arranged with the kind assistance of the TNP and the Slovenian Ministry of Defence. Please see the appendix for preliminary information and content of the Links4Soils Summer School 2019.

On behalf of the Links4Soils project team, I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Faithfully,

Dr Borut Vrščaj, Links4Soils project leader



¹ <http://www.alpine-space.eu/projects/links4soils/en/home>

² <http://www.alpine-space.eu/>

³ <http://www.ypac.eu/>

⁴ www.alpconv.org

Links4Soils Summer School in brief

Timeframe

- Spring 2019 – Preparations for Summer School
- Early Summer 2019 – Summer School: Monday, June 10th - Friday, June 14th
- September/October 2019 – post-fieldwork activities; reporting and data processing
- Next YPAC congress autumn 2019 – spring 2020 public presentation of the Summer School activities.

Location

Triglav National Park, Slovenia, <https://www.tnp.si/en/learn/>

Pokljuka Plateau, Rudno polje, Biathlon Centre and surrounding area, 1200 – 1500 meters a.s.l.
Landuse: forest and mountain pastures, natural area.

Participants

- High school third-year students – five per country/school
- School mentors one or max two per country/school

Teaching staff

Soil experts

- Prof Dr Michele Freppaz, University of Torino, Italy
- Prof Dr Silvia Stanchi, University of Torino, Italy
- Assoc Prof Borut Vrščaj, Agricultural Institute of Slovenia
- Dr Aleš Poljanec, Slovenian Forest Service
- Prof Dr Clemens Geitner

Support group

Researchers, soil scientists and experts from:

- Agricultural Institute of Slovenia: preparation of material, mentoring coaching of student groups, coaching field work, expert help with presentations;
- Slovenian forestry institute: preparation of material, mentoring, field work, expert help with presentations.
- The Triglav National Park employees and field supervisors: field work and mentoring, expert help and presentation activities.

Accommodation

Modest, but suitable overnight with shared bathroom and kitchen for students.

The accommodation cost is covered by the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia, Links4Soils project funds. Students and accompanying persons will be hosted by the Rudolf Badjura Centre, Ministry of Defence, Rudno polje, Pokljuka (46.346734, 13.923284).

Accommodation for experts, teachers and professors: Hotel Jelka, Pokljuka <http://hotel-jelka.si/> and Hotel Center, Rudno Polje, Pokljuka, 46.344749, 13.922072
<http://www.center-pokljuka.si/en/hotel-center/accomodation/hotel-center.html>

Meals:

Breakfast in hotels, lunch and dinner in the self-service restaurant of the Rudolf Badjura Centre.

Accommodation and meals are covered by the Links4Soils Project.

Transportation

Transportation of participants to Slovenia: participants themselves cover organisation and cost.

Transportation in Slovenia

Transportation from train stations or airport to Pokljuka can be arranged for groups of the participant that will travel by train or aeroplane (train stations Bled, Jesenice or Ljubljana; Ljubljana Airport (Brniki, Jožeta Pučnika airport). Transfer in Slovenia covered by organisers.

The course of the Links4Soils Summer School

Monday, June 10th:

- Morning: Arrival
- Noon: Formation of the groups, the introduction of groups with demonstrations prepared by experts and mentors.
- Afternoon: Practical implementation in work in different locations depending on the group

Tuesday, June 11th

- Theoretical introduction to soil properties – lecture in English
- Practical work in groups: learning about soil, excavation of soil profile

Wednesday, June 12th – Thursday, June 13th

- During the day: visiting locations with different soil types, excavation of soil profiles, learning and analysing morphological soil properties and soil description. Discussion about soil physical and chemical properties, linking soil properties and soil ecosystem functions, how soils define landscapes and land uses, soil threats, sustainable soil management, etc.
- Late afternoon – evening hours: Theme lectures about TNP

Friday, June 14th:

- Morning: presentation of activities; what did we learn and wrapping-up session
- Early Afternoon: Farewell & departure

List of selected institutions and international activities that promote soil protection and management

ASP	Alpine Soil Partnership	https://alpinesoils.eu/aboutalpinesoilspartnership/
ESDAC	European Soil Data Centre, JRC	http://esdac.jrc.ec.europa.eu/networkcooperations/national-reference-centers-soil
GSP	Global Soil Partnership	http://www.fao.org/global-soil-partnership/overview/why-the-partnership/en/
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization FAO soils portal	http://www.fao.org http://www.fao.org/soils-portal/en/
ITPS	Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils	http://www.fao.org/global-soil-partnership/intergovernmental-technical-panel-soils/en/
JRC	European Joint Research Centre	http://esdac.jrc.ec.europa.eu/networkcooperations/national-reference-centers-soil
ENSA	European Network on Soil Awareness	http://www.bodenbuendnis.org/ensa/
SSS	EGU, Division on Soil System Sciences	http://www.egu.eu/sss/home/
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network	https://www.eionet.europa.eu/
ESBN	European Soil Bureau Network	http://esdac.jrc.ec.europa.eu/networkcooperations/european-soil-bureau-network
ESSC	European Society for Soil Conservation	http://www.soilconservation.eu/

URL's worth visiting

- Let's talk about soil (EN) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=1ND5Jl-ijml>
- Let's talk about soil (DE) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSQxO43CRsk>
- FAO Soil 101
<https://youtu.be/CZNanIXMXk4?list=PLzp5NgJ2-dK7iaOH5OKUYRVOROUMEztd>
- FAO – R. Vargas
<https://youtu.be/e3G4z7Ijg8A?list=PLzp5NgJ2-dK7iaOH5OKUYRVOROUMEztd>