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First Soil Strategy of Austria

SURFACE Final Conference, 4th February 2022

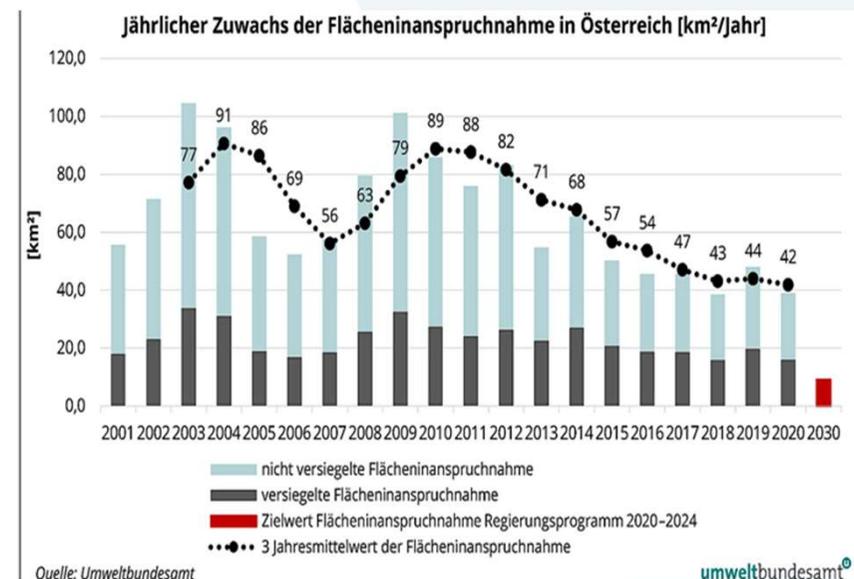
Martin Schamann, Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Regions and Tourism, AT

Facts and Figures (I)

- In Austria, by 2020 a total of 5,768 km² land were taken
- This corresponds to 7% of the national territory and 18% of the permanent settlement area
- Austria's productive soils decreased by 39 km² in 2020
- The sealed share was around 41% of the annual land take
- Growing awareness concerning high soil consumption and reduction of agricultural land
- Government goal: Reduction from currently 11,5 to 2,5 ha/d by 2030

Facts and Figures (II)

- Reduction of land take to half within last 10 years, however still too high
- Soil and spatial planning competences within the provinces
- Municipalities: Responsible for local spatial planning
- Federal government has coordination competence



Annual increase land take [km²/y]

- not sealed (light)
- sealed (dark)
- government goal 2030 (red)

Further information: www.umweltbundesamt.at

Political Agreement 20th Oktober 2021

- Milestone in Austria's spatial planning and soil policy
- Agreement on Austria's Spatial Development Concept 2030
- Agreement on the development of a "Soil Strategy for Austria"



Further information: [Österreichische Raumordnungskonferenz - ÖREK 2030](https://www.oerok.gv.at)
www.oerok.gv.at

Political Mandate

- The Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning is instructed to elaborate a "Soil Strategy for Austria" under the leadership of the Ministry for Agriculture, Regions and Tourism and the provinces Tyrol and Vienna
- Submit draft for political decision within one year

Conference on Spatial Planning (ÖROK)

- Organisation, established in 1971 to coordinate spatial development at the national level.
 - Political decision-making body
 - Chaired by the Federal Chancellor
 - Federal ministers
 - Heads of the provinces
 - Presidents of the Association of Cities and Towns and the Association of Municipalities
- High political level, not only governmental representatives!

Political Mandate - Goals

- Substantially reduce the increase in land take by settlement and transport areas and new sealing by 2030.
 - Unsealing of land, if possible
 - Setting quantitative targets for reduction
- Safeguarding agricultural soils
- Contribute to climate protection and adaptation to climate change

Political Mandate – Content (I)

Agree on:

- Austria-wide harmonised data basis and uniform data collection methods
- Target system with quantitative national targets and target horizons at the level of the provinces
- Uniform nationwide monitoring system

Political Mandate – Content (II)

- Identification of particularly effective instruments and measures, especially
 - inner development and redensification
 - activation of vacant spaces
 - recycling of brownfield sites
 - mobilisation of zoned building land
 - those for the protection of nature, greenland and recreational areas;
- Action plan with concrete activities, milestones and target horizons for implementation by 2030

Political Mandate – Comment

Working title “First **Soil** Strategy for Austria”

- Focus on **reduction of land take** (quantitative aspects)
- Quality aspects with link to land take respected
- due to high pressure by public and NGO’s
- need to safeguard agricultural land for food security



Ambitious goals can only be achieved by joint efforts

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