



Alliance ELIANT

European Alliance of Initiatives for Applied Antroposophy

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Land for agriculture – an immensely valuable yet ever reducing commodity

Dear Friends of ELIANT,

The amount of agriculturally farmed land is declining not only across the world but also within Europe. Road building and the use of land for housing and industrial development is a major reason but even more significant is the increasing loss of soil through erosion. This is caused by inappropriate cultivation methods, the long term use of powerful weed killers and of course today's changing climate. Over against this is the growing demand for food from the world's expanding population.



Practical experience and research demonstrates that biodynamic and organic agriculture can prevent soil erosion and furthermore that by using the biodynamic approach it is possible to reclaim the desert and create verdant oases such as those in [Sekem](#). This is why it is important that these areas continue to be sustainably managed and that their soil's fertility is maintained.

The availability of land declines, while demand for it increases

When land goes on the market it is usually bought by the highest bidder. Farmers who manage their land in a sustainable way are not seeking the highest return but are aiming for healthy plants and animals and a fertile soil. This is why such farmers do not generally have the capital to buy the land. It is instead taken on by property developers or international investors.

Land to produce healthy food

In 2012 our ELIANT partners Demeter International and the International Biodynamic Association co-financed a research study: 'Releasing the True Value of Land'. It investigated the European land market as well as new forms of agricultural land ownership including the successful Terre de Liens initiative in France and the Regionalwert AG in Germany. In these civil society initiatives members of the public make the land available to farmers on favourable terms. Farmers are then able to focus their attention on producing healthy food and creating fertile soil.

This study led to the foundation of Kulturland eG . It works in close consultation with farmers and farm communities to take on ownership of the land and lease it to them on a long term basis. Another initiative the Bio-Bodenfonds Cooperative of GLS Bank has also recently been launched. The [Biodynamic Land Trust](#) in England is active in a similar way as is the Association for Biodynamic Agriculture in Switzerland.

What can you as members of the public do?

Sustainably managed soils are part of our [cultural heritage](#) and are the basis for producing healthy food. You too can help to support these initiatives for the future by making an annual contribution, an interest free loan or a gift.

We are also very grateful for any contribution you can make towards ELIANT as that will enable us to engage with and inform Brussels and the wider public about new social projects that aim to conserve the soil for sustainable production. For this we thank you most warmly!

Michaela Glöckler

How you can help. Many thanks.

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