Hello $[UD:FIRST_NAME|]$

EDITORIAL by Isabelle Gattin, Chairholder



Between the air and water, soils form a vital interface in our environment. This unique position gives them a major role to play in addressing major environmental and climate challenges. As the FAO points out, they provide 95% of our food and are, as such, central to global food security. Yet soils remain largely misunderstood and are often overlooked in public discourse. It is precisely to address this situation that the **UNESCO Chair "Soils, Biodiversity, Future Generations"** was established. Its mission is to raise awareness about soils, to explain to all generations what soil is and why it is essential, and to emphasize that there is not just one type of soil, but many, whose diversity deserves to be understood and protected to ensure the sustainable development of our societies. Knowledge generation, tools for assessing soil health, training materials, new agricultural practices, action research approaches…

We wanted to share all of this work, these experiences, and these initiatives in this newsletter. This first edition marks the launch of a communication and exchange tool designed to support our respective activities. Its purpose is to highlight our expertise, foster cross-disciplinary perspectives, and inspire new ways of working, communicating, and taking action to improve soil assessment and management in our research laboratories, institutions, regions, and countries. We therefore invite you to widely share this newsletter, but also to contribute to it. Please feel free to send us your news: research or action-research projects and methods, internship or thesis opportunities that promote mobility between our institutions, publications, conferences in which you are participating… **This newsletter is yours: let's make it a vibrant space for sharing in the service of the soil and future generations.**

- Isabelle Gattin

HIGHLIGHT

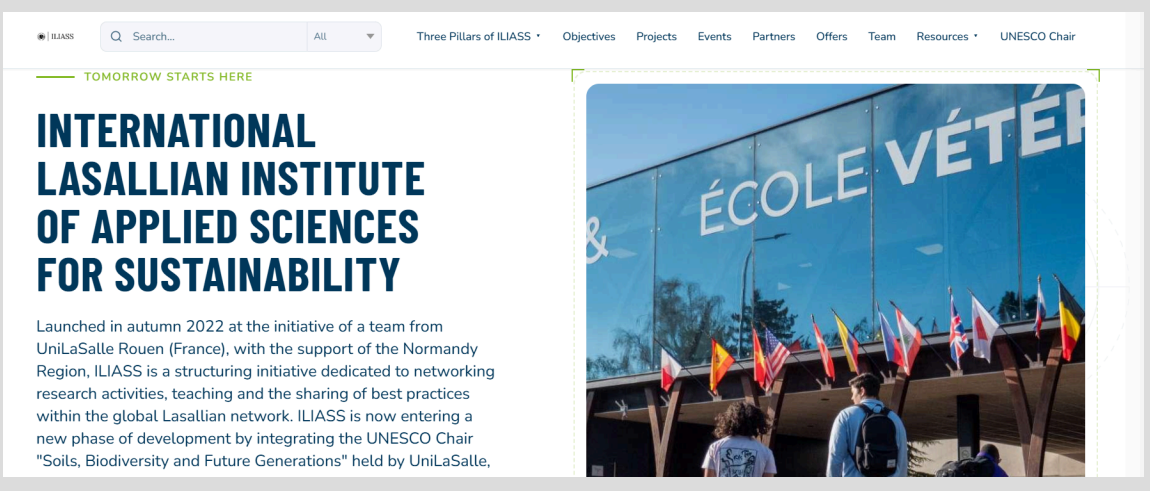
Official signing of the partnership agreement at UNESCO headquarters in Paris.



On April 10, 2026, the Institut Polytechnique UniLaSalle had the honor of being hosted at UNESCO headquarters in Paris for the official signing of the partnership agreement for the UNESCO Chair "Soils, Biodiversity, and Future Generations." Bringing together partners from six countries across four continents, the UNESCO Chair structures its activities around three pillars: research, training, and outreach.

Read more

THE ESSENTIAL TOOL : ILIASS



UniLaSalle and the Chair are pleased to announce the launch of the new version of the ILIASS (International Lasallian Institute of Applied Sciences for Sustainability) collaborative platform. This platform will facilitate networking and collaboration among scientists worldwide who are working on soil and sustainable development—and will make their research easier thanks to the site's new search features. Sign up!

Read the article

Sign up

RECOMMENDED READING - UniLaSalle Article

Lyver A., Cliquet J.-B., Travaille E., Leroy F., Trinsoutrot-Gattin I., Veloso M., 2026. Root or shoot : tracing the pathways of soil organic carbon accumulation through plant-specific contributions. **European Journal of Soil Science,** e70324.

This study highlights contrasting pathways for soil organic carbon stabilization depending on the plant type. Wheat contributes primarily to SOC (soil organic carbon) through its roots and rhizodeposition, promoting carbon accumulation in particulate organic matter due to the high content of recalcitrant structural compounds in its roots. Conversely, legumes contribute primarily to SOC via above-ground residues, whose carbon is preferentially stabilized in fine organo-mineral fractions due to their high content of soluble compounds and nitrogen. These results underscore the functional complementarity of grasses and legumes in soil carbon storage mechanisms.

Read the article

EVENTS

Nature Fest Day



In late May, to mark Nature Day, we will welcome the Chair's partners: Andrés Cruz Hernández and Patricia Villasana from La Salle Bajío University in Mexico, as well as John Cristhian Fernández Lizarazo from the Utopía Rural University Campus in Yopal, Colombia. Isabelle Gattin, a lecturer and researcher at UniLaSalle Rouen, will join us. On this occasion, we will host a webinar on the topic of **integrated strategies aimed at strengthening crop resilience to environmental stresses on May 19 from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. UTC+1.**

Register now

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought



On **June 17, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. UTC+1,** to mark World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, the Chair is hosting its second thematic webinar. Our two guests will be: Sahar Abidi from the Tabarka Silvo-Pastoral Institute in Tunisia and Lahcen Zourhi, a hydrogeologist at UniLaSalle Beauvais.

Register now

International Day of Cooperatives



In early July, we will welcome Ana Maria Castro Triana from our partner university,

Conference at SoilSet, April 1–3, 2026



The quality of crop residues, application rates, and the initial soil organic carbon content collectively regulate the

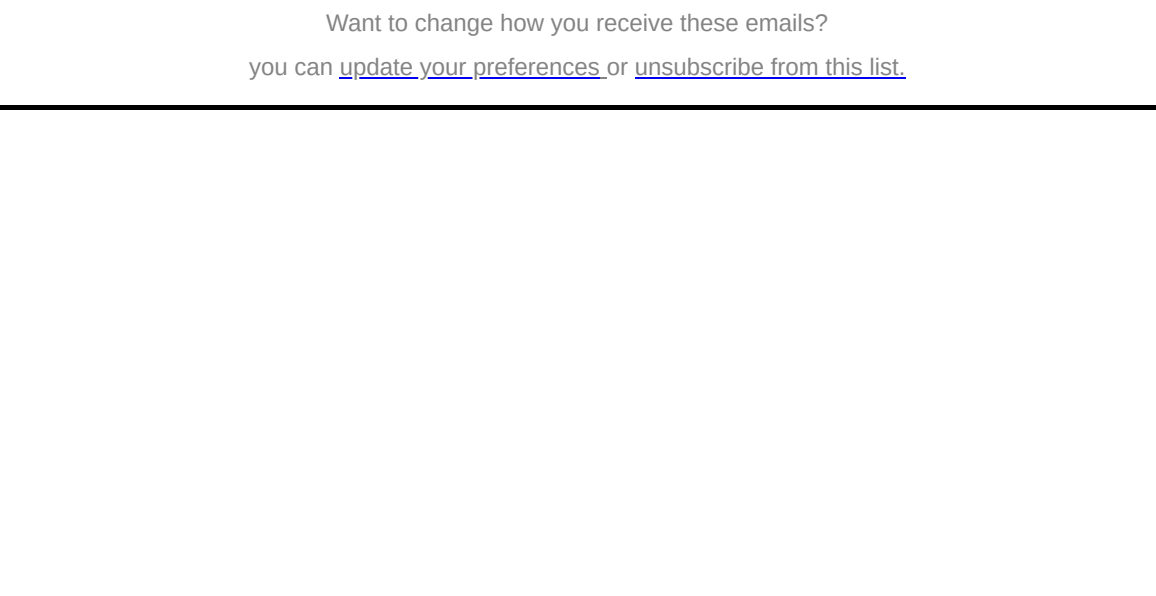
LaSalle Bogota in Colombia, to celebrate International Agricultural Cooperatives Day. During her visit, she will have the opportunity to tour an agri-food company specializing in potatoes and lentils, a flax agricultural cooperative, and finally, an experimental farm operated by another agricultural cooperative. A valuable outside perspective on cooperative models rooted in their local communities.

stabilization of organic matter in agricultural soils. Written by Anouk Lyver, Jean-Bernard Cliquet, Isabelle Trinsouttrot-Gattin, and Murilo Veloso.

The biochemical composition and quantity of plant residues, as well as initial soil properties, determine the pathways of carbon and nitrogen stabilization. Targeted residue management can thus optimize the sustainable storage of soil organic matter.

Read the article

Presentation of the Chair in Mexico



On May 7 and 8, 2026, researcher Andrés Cruz Hernández from Lasalle Bajío University (a partner of the Chair) participated in the event “The Challenges of Agricultural Production in the Bajío.” As part of his presentation titled “Biotechnology for the Prickly Pear and Other Local Species,” he introduced the Chair and its objectives to scientists and stakeholders in the Mexican agricultural sector.

Read the article

SAVE THE DATE : World Soil Day, 1st Edition

Friday, December 4, 2026: World Soil Day at UniLaSalle Rouen “Between Traditional Knowledge and Innovations for Living Soils: Multidisciplinary Approaches.”

Join us for the first edition of this landmark event organized by UniLaSalle and the UNESCO Chair. Don’t miss this major event. We look forward to seeing many of you there!

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