



Gardens help the climate

In terms of climate protection, the soil of the earth, not forests or oceans, provides the greatest carbon monoxide storage, and public opinion is in agreement. 100 square meters containing 1% humus can store a ton of CO₂, which is, after all, one fourth of the per capita consumption targeted in South Tirol for the year 2020.

2% humus would double this number, 3% would increase it threefold. Therefore, an increase of humus (through the mulching-, composting- or organic fertilizing processes of gardeners, for instance) would then be a fundamental contribution of human beings throughout the world. Gardens are ideally suited for this purpose, because part of the depleted carbon, used up by fossil fuels, will then be given back to the earth.

Gardens help the environment

The transport of vegetables and fruits across great distances can have disastrous consequences, such as greater fuel consumption, environmental pollution, noise, energy consumption through cooling and thus, it ultimately produces greater global warming.

But having a garden means greater self sufficiency, compared with an often industrialized and monoculturally administered agriculture. Gardens ensure biodiversity as well as the growing of organic seeds, whose quality is being threatened by the prevalence of a few dominant corporations. And to maintain a garden could also be called landscape conservation, except that it is lovingly done by hand.

Gardens improve health and food safety

The World Agricultural Report shows clearly that the surest way to provide food for humanity is through the promotion of small farms. A garden, especially in these times of landgrab and

industrialized monocultural enterprises, may well offer the only means of survival. In countries, where poverty in the population is prevalent, a garden is an indispensable means of survival.

Gardens revalue nutrition

The global world more and more is losing awareness of the natural dimensions of nutrition. Many people in the industrialized countries really don't know anymore where their food is coming from, how it is produced and what are the right seasons for its harvest. Now, nutrition is valued and appreciated less and less. However, those who have their own vegetable gardens must work in them if they want them to be productive and thus they relearn their gardens' value. Garden owners are less likely to throw away unwanted food and when they shop, they prefer food items of the present season, which were produced in their region and under sustainable conditions.

Gardens promote social and cultural encounters

All over the world the development of a new attitude about gardening is taking place. Especially those women who must live in cities want to fulfill their need for greater closeness to nature. Thus new ways of working together are being developed, those of harvesting, but also those of sharing. Communal gardens help develop new democratic experiments and serve to facilitate cultural encounters between female migrants and established residents. Thus sharing helps to promote cultural diversity, a bigger picture.

Gardens promote spirituality

Gardens have always had great meaning in human history. They have been mentioned in literature, art and religion. The paradise of the Christians, for instance, was the Garden of Eden, and in the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh, the garden plays a major role. Gardens can be places for meditation, for devotion to the divine. Here one can enjoy the flowering and ripening of the harvest and develop patience, observing regrowth and death. Therefore, a garden can be a place for insight and knowledge

Types of garden

Home garden, rural garden, allotment garden, condominium garden, roof garden, balcony garden, hanging garden, Gardens on parking spots, vertical garden, community garden, intercultural garden, elderly garden, school garden...

Human rights and how to achieve them

Other than the Declaration of Human Rights, dated December 10th, 1948, there already exist a number of internationally anchored contractual rights. The right to have a garden, or to garden, could be included in the International Covenant about Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1968) and would be part of human rights, like rights to individual grievances, free choice of job, career counseling, free education or the copyright law.

A petition "The garden as human right" has been created on the Avaaz platform with a multilingual homepage (www.gardenhumanright.org). Making contact with different parliaments could prompt other states or governments to ask the United Nations to include the "Right to have a Garden" in the International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The undersigned see themselves as carriers of this initiative and they are actively helping to move it forward in their spheres of influence.

An utopian dream?



Perhaps our initiative could be seen as an utopia. But we don't consider the initial irritation of others as obstacles, but rather as signs of impending change. Because we are convinced that just thoughts or discussions about a different relationship with nature, with food or our world can create a new order. Couldn't this perspective change or even revolutionize the current system, with all of its unjust and unhealthy aspects?

Our initiative goes along with the modest but universal expectation that as we sow, so shall it grow, or, borrowing the words of a great master gardener, "It keeps growing, because it was good".