

Side Event | November 17 | Ukrainian Pavilion

Security from the Ground Up: Soils and the Foundations of Resilience

Hosts	Ministry of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine IKEM IFZO Greifswald Mire Centre Kernel Stellenbosch University University of Graz
When	17 November, 11.00–12.30
Format	One-hour moderated panel discussion, 30 min Q&A

About

As the world faces overlapping crises—climate disruption, ecosystem collapse, wars, economic volatility, and social fragmentation—the concept of security must be redefined. **Today’s food, energy, and security crises share a common root: the degradation of natural systems.** As soils erode, water cycles break down, and ecosystems are pushed beyond their limits, instability spreads through economies, supply chains, and military systems. Restoring the environment is therefore not peripheral to security — it is its foundation.

In Ukraine, where the devastation of war meets the accelerating impacts of climate change, vast areas of land, millions of hectares of farmland, forests, and peatlands, remain mined, contaminated, or waterlogged, threatening ecosystems, livelihoods, and future recovery. Restoring these landscapes is not only an environmental duty but a strategic act of resilience, stability, and peacebuilding.

Healthy soils and rewetted peatlands underpin multiple dimensions of security:

- **Food security**, by sustaining productive and safe agricultural land;
- **Water and energy security**, by regulating hydrological cycles and stabilizing local microclimates;
- **Climate security**, by storing carbon and preventing emissions from degraded soils; and
- **Geopolitical and defence security**, by creating natural barriers that strengthen territorial resilience.

Recent research from the **Greifswald Mire Centre** has highlighted the role of “*defence mires*”—rewetted peatlands that can function as natural fortifications while providing vast co-benefits for climate and biodiversity.. At the same time, Ukraine’s reforms under the **EU Soil Monitoring Directive** and its integration into the European Green Deal showcase how soil protection and restoration can become the backbone of sustainable recovery

This high-level session will explore how **land restoration, soil governance, and ecosystem recovery (e.g. peatland rewetting) can advance climate resilience, post-war reconstruction, and regional stability** — building security from the ground up.

Key Themes:

- **Soil and Ecosystems as Security Assets:** How land-based systems contribute to climate, food, and geopolitical stability.
- **Defence Mires and Ecological Infrastructure:** Integrating rewetting into national and regional security planning in Europe and Ukraine
- **Governance and Legal Frameworks:** Strengthening soil and land governance through EU integration, the Soil Monitoring Directive, and Paris Agreement linkages
- **Finance and Incentives:** Mobilizing investment via Article 6.2 cooperation and the EU Carbon Removal Certification Framework (CRCF) for peatland and soil projects
- **Post-War Land Recovery:** Addressing contamination, erosion, and degradation while enabling safe cultivation and livelihoods.
- **Regional Learning:** How post-conflict environmental governance can inform Ukraine's reconstruction and integration into the EU Green Deal.
- **Just and Inclusive Transition:** Empowering local communities, farmers, and veterans in land restoration and climate-smart agriculture.

Speakers

- **Pavlo Kartashov**, Deputy Minister of Economy, Environment and Agriculture (Ukraine)
- **Michael Rodi**, IKEM (Germany)
- **Dr. Franziska Tanneberger**, Greifswald Mire Centre (Germany)
- **Till Reinholz**, University of Greifswald / IFZO/ IKEM (Greifswald)
- **TBD**, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
- **Marta Trofimova**, Kernel (Ukraine)
- **Prof. Oliver C. Ruppel**, Development and Rule of Law Programme (DROP), Stellenbosch University (South Africa)/Research Center for Climate Law, University of Graz (Austria)

Moderator

- **Dr. Ievgeniia Kopytsia**, MSCA4Ukraine/Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University (Ukraine)/University of Genoa (Italy)/IKEM (Germany)

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