GOETHEANUM COMMUNICATIONS

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**From deserts to living landscapes**

**Sustainable farming projects in desert regions present best practice examples at the Goetheanum**

**The spreading of deserts worldwide constitutes a challenge for the earth’s climate and therefore also for plants, animals and humans. Biodynamic initiatives in the Sahara region prove that even deserts can be transformed into living spaces.**

In ‘Living Farms’ 1/2025, the magazine of the Section for Agriculture at the Goetheanum, Ercilia Sahores, director of the Organic Consumers’ Association in Mexico points out that “desertification is not only a problem of the Global South. Worldwide 3.2 billion people are affected by degraded land.” Biodynamic projects in the Sahara region illustrate that this kind of development does not simply have to be accepted. The Hazoua Date Project, an oasis farming project in Tunisia, and the Sekem initiative in Egypt are examples of how things can be changed. Both initiatives are partners of the Section for Agriculture.

Since 1977, Sekem has regenerated 25,000 hectares of land in a large desert region, planted over a million trees and produced 26,000 tonnes of compost. The result is a fertile oasis with vegetables, fruit growing and livestock farming. In addition, 5,000 affiliated biodynamic farms have acquired carbon dioxide certificates, which means that they have sequestered around 130,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in the soil and created a sustainable livelihood for themselves.

Ueli Hurter, co-leader of the Section for Agriculture, says, “On 8 May 2025, the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment predicted that, because of climate change, periods of drought will also become more common in Switzerland. This awakens us to the fact that droughts are not only a problem in areas like the Sahara, even if Switzerland itself will not turn into a desert.”

With this in mind, the Section for Agriculture, Sekem, the cultural festival Culturescapes Sahara 2025 and the Swiss network Agroecology Works will join forces at the Greening the Desert Day at the Goetheanum. They want to support sustainable projects that bring social, artistic, agricultural and economic aspects together.

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**Greening the Desert Day** 29 October 2025, 10 am to 4 pm, Goetheanum **Web** goetheanum.ch/en/events/greeningthedesert

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