

**AAEE 2016 conference Theme 4 Reconnecting with Nature  
Tomorrow Making – our present, for the future  
Workshop 4G Reconnecting with Soils Wed Oct 5 3.20 pm Room 128**



# **Reconnecting with Soils-**

## **Soil Selfies and other simple activities for the classroom**

# **Preliminary activity**

Why should we reconnect with soils?

Please put your reply on the sheet of paper with:

- Who you are.
- Your role eg teacher, academic, etc
- Where (town, city or region) you are from.
- A contact email address



And at the end, I will ask for some feedback on what you gained from this workshop.



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# Snooping into Soils



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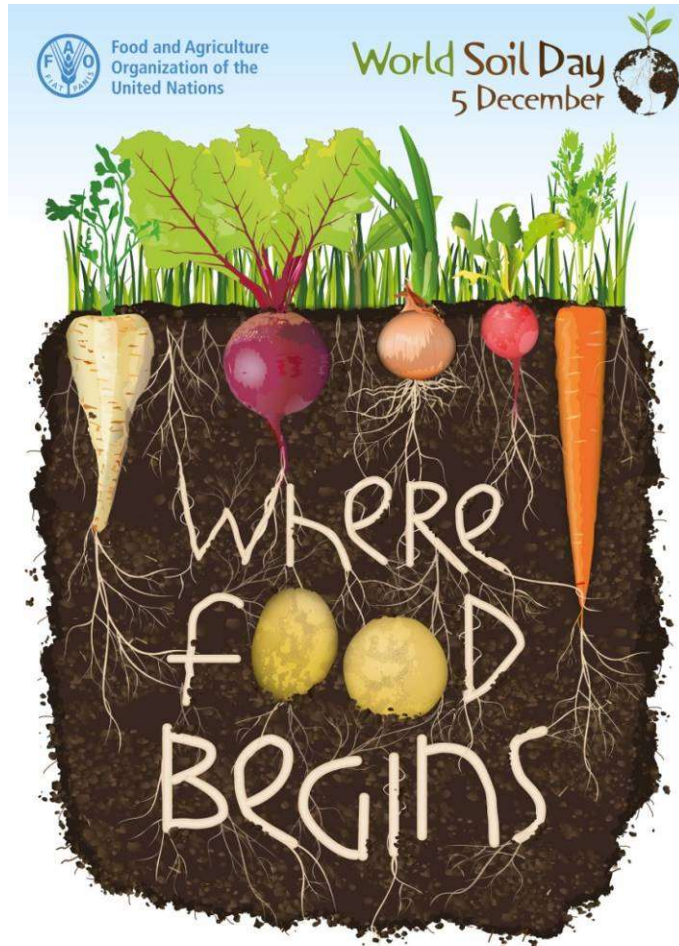


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# Why soils?

**Most food and fibre begins in soil.  
Most food and fibre depends on soil.**

**If food and fibre matters – soil matters.  
If learning is about food and fibre matters –  
then one of these matters is soil.**

**2015 = International Year of Soils  
*Healthy soils for a healthy life*  
Healthy soils – healthy food and fibre-healthy life.**

**2016 = International Year of Pulses  
*Nutritious seeds for a sustainable future.*  
Nutritious seeds – healthy food and fibre- sustainable soils**



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"Where food begins" FAO, WSD 2014

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# Soils fit the AC Curriculum

eg 2016 IY Soils Wimmera Soil Education Primary Schools Program  
for rural schools with composite classes and a focus on science.

**Learning about soils can fit into each level F-y6 of AC Science:**

**Understanding** – as a human endeavour- farmers’ use of soil  
biology – soils is a need for living things  
chemistry – soils make-up, reversible/changes?  
earth science – soil = a food/fibre resource  
physics – gravity has its effects in soil

**Skills** - questioning, conducting, recording, analysing,  
communicating

**Other domains** that may be covered depending on the activities are :

Geography, Arts, IT, Numeracy, Communications  
Literacy – speaking, listening, reading , writing



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# **“Soil Selfies” web resource:**

## **Sharing soils from around the nation/world**

### **- What about adding yours?**



Each “Soil Selfies” has 3 photos of soil at the contributor’s place and notes on it:

- 1 **close-up** –shows colour and texture,
- 2 **in use** – as well as many types of food uses in the collection, there are recreation, health, infrastructure, Nature, industrial and environmental services uses.
- 3 **issues** – challenges and how they are managed, so that soils are as healthy as possible into the future to grow food and fibre and maintain our other uses.

Soil Selfies come from **Australia, Europe, Pacific and Africa.**

My aim is to continue to grow this resource, as contributions received

What’s in it for schools as contributors? **English, Photographic Arts, and IT.**



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# “Soil Selfies” web resource:



## Linked index list of the Soil Selfies by place.

This index list is alphabetical within its sections: global - by regions and countries; **Australia** by states; and **Wimmera-Mallee**, by towns, where this project originates). You can also access the collection by **drop-down menus** from 'Soil Selfies' then 'locations'.

**Direct links** are added as each Soil Selfies is completed with its close-up, in use and challenges/managements photos and notes. Use **direct links 'list'** or **drop down menus** to go to section lists. These have **summaries** for each Soil Selfies, with key photo **icons** and **short descriptions**, so you can choose where you would like to visit. Click on the link to go there. This collection has **70 Soil Selfies** now, and is still growing. **Please return!**

Soil Selfies cover:

- Wimmera – Mallee, other Victoria – urban and rural
- NSW, Qld, SA, Tas.... Would love some from WA!
- Africa – Kenya
- Europe – England, Denmark, France, Germany, Slovenia, Switzerland

And hoping to continue to grow this over this International Decade of Soils.



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# Snooping into Soils

## -basic record sheet

### *Snooping into Soils*

with samples from children's backyards and simple experiments.

eg Circle results.

✓ X suitability for intended use

Numerical result for older levels

#### • Colour match?

black      brown      grey

orange      red      white      yellow

#### • Close-up?

... Grains one colour / more than one

≈ Clods

↑↑ Bits of living things (plants/animals)

≈ Living things (eg worms)

#### • pH colours?

Yellow      Green      Purple

#### • Soil Shake!

Thanks to gravity we can see the :

	Air
	Organic matter lying on the top
	Clay as murky water
	Silt as a dark layer on top of
	Sand with the biggest grains.

#### • Water love?

- ◆ Droplets soak in soil
- ◆ Droplets sit on top of soil
- ◆ Droplets slip off soil
- ◆ Soil grains ride on top of droplet!



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# **Snooping into Soils -workshop activities**

From **Soil Selfies** collection at <http://soils.enviroed4all.com.au/soil-selfies/locations/>

*1 Soil Selfies display* close-up - colour, texture,  
uses,  
challenges- issues and managements

On-line eggs of 'food and fibre matters'- Wimmera/Mallee grains farms, urban backyard gardens (family farms);  
permaculture from Apollo Bay, Mt Waverley and Kenya, Dimboola (xericulture) and Savoie (alpino permaculture)

From **Snooping into Soils National Science Week** activities at <http://soils.enviroed4all.com.au/soils-in-stories/> spread  
through this section: PEIFA conference, Wimmera Soil Education project, National Science Week, and *Otherways* sections.

*2 Odd One Out* thinking –oral Sc communication skills, right v best answer  
*3 Looking into soils* observation, modelling  
*4 Magnify soil* observe soil under a magnifier as 'rain' drops  
*5 Soil Shakes* observe gravity's effect, layers, changes/reversibility simulates?



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# Snooping into Soils

## - Acting to reconnect?

our present for the future

**World Soil Day 2016 Dec 5**  
*“Soils and pulses, a symbiosis for life”*

What could you and your students do?  
Eg. reconnect with the soil  
by sowing a couple of pulse seeds (eg. lentils, chick peas)  
in personal pots and caring for them til they can be  
planted out ... what comes from this by Dec 5?

What benefit for the future?



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# Snooping into Soils -continuing to share

Would you like to contribute your personal or school soil  
to the Soil Selfies resource?

Then please send me an email [enviroed4all@gmail.com](mailto:enviroed4all@gmail.com)  
(and make this email an allowed sender)

I send out an (irregular) e-news about updates to the Soil Selfies collection.

If you are interested, ditto to the above contact.

Or connect with enviroed4all on Twitter, Linked-in or Facebook webpage.

Thanks for your participation today.

**Please leave your response sheet .....**



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