

## Scotland's Soil Resource

Our research is designed to help Protect the Nation's Soil

**Scotland's soils are the foundation of our primary production industries –**

- An agricultural output of £1.75 billion (2005)
- World records for cereal yields
- Forest products worth £650 million each year

**Scotland's soils store and filter our water –**

- Scotland's soils hold 40 billion cubic metres of water when fully wet which is more than all our fresh water lochs
- Soil acts like a sponge helping to avoid flooding
- Soils also filter water, breaking down the hundreds of different acidifying, toxic contaminants and so protecting our water and food chain

**Scotland's soils store carbon that would otherwise increase global warming –**

- Scotland is only one third of the UK but contains 54% (3075 Mega tonnes Carbon) of the total UK soil carbon, equivalent to 186 years of our total carbon dioxide emissions
- Much of this carbon is in our peats which are on average 2 metres deep representing 2000 – 4000 years of accumulation
- Our deepest bogs extend to 12 metres = 7 times the height of an average Scot

There are many threats to our soil including climate change, erosion and contamination.

We are also losing soil sealed under buildings and roads. This has been estimated recently as 1,200 hectares per year, equivalent to a new town the size of Dunfermline being built each year.

As FD Roosevelt, former President of the United States said

*"The Nation that destroys its soil, destroys itself"*

