



OFFICE INTERNATIONAL

du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux

association sans but lucratif

Regroupement des fédérations européennes des jardins familiaux
Statut participatif auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

Dear allotment gardeners

„If you want to build a boat, don't begin by collecting wood, cutting boards or assigning tasks, begin by awakening in the souls of your workers, a longing for the vast and boundless sea” (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry).

You have become members of our allotment garden movement because of your desire to get a garden plot and thereby have some exercise, a healthy diet, a pastime in the fresh air, all while surrounded by friends. Your behaviour on the plot also enables you to contribute to a healthy environment, a better quality of life in the cities and to respond to climate change.

To put this vision into action, we have to maximise the impact of our actions. For this, our organisation, both nationally and internationally, needs both a good health and the right means to achieve its goals.

We are a member organisation. In some places, the number of members is stagnating. So we must, first of all, deal with the problem of our membership, welcome new members, really include them and offer them services and help.

We have to attract young people, overcome the resistance of long-time members to change, challenge the alleged inadequacy of our sites and of our actions, react and become more attractive. We have to change our discretion, our frequent absence or less than optimal appearance on social media, to emphasise the benefits of our joined actions and our network, to organise projects and activities and offer training.

Not all our associations and federations, are sufficiently motivated to make an impact, know what other federations do, or know how they could participate in projects to become stronger while being united. They have, however, to position themselves in such a way that they can work effectively and become attractive in order to fit into the scheme of life of our members. They cannot compete with people's priorities: work, family, leisureOn the contrary, they have to “market” themselves in such a way that interested people feel attracted and that they can integrate them in their life scheme, their priorities.

Different federations have already changed; other federations and the Office have begun to change their statutes, so as to become more effective, to take into account today's necessities and to make our vision for the future known.

The irrevocable disappearance of plants and animals is well-known and it is increasingly becoming a concern for the citizens. We need to pick up this issue more and more at all levels and carry out projects to react. Allotments are refuges for animals and plants. We have to continue to make soil analyses and offer training concerning natural gardening.

So as to support all allotment gardeners, the Office is working on a brochure: “The soil is alive”. Thanks to the awarding of the Office diploma on natural gardening, we also have a data base that can be a stimulus and an example of good gardening practice for all.

Question your actions and give yourself the means to effectively put our allotment garden vision into practice during this new year.

For 2020 I wish you a good health as well as courage, ambition, perseverance and success.

Malou WEIRICH
Secretary general of the International Office du
Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux

