

The IPS is an organisation of corporate and individual members dedicated to the responsible management and Wise Use of peatlands and peat. It promotes the gathering, exchange and communication of knowledge and experience. The Society serves all those interested in peat and peatlands including the scientific, industrial and commercial, and regulatory communities. It respects the economic, social and environmental values of the peatland resource. Currently the IPS has more than 1,400 individual and institutional members from 42 countries.

## New Mandate and Strategy for the IPS

The IPS Executive Board met last weekend, **26 - 27 January 2013** in Amsterdam to discuss a new strategy for the Society for the coming years. After detailed discussions on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, lead by facilitating IPS Board member Donal Clarke, and based on an analysis of proposals from the Scientific Advisory Board, the Board agreed on the following new identity and mandate/charter for the IPS:

*“The International Peat Society is an organisation of corporate and individual members dedicated to the responsible management and Wise Use of peatlands and peat.*

*It promotes the gathering, exchange and communication of knowledge and experience.*

*The Society serves all those interested in peat and peatlands including the scientific, industrial and commercial, and regulatory communities.*

*It respects the economic, social and environmental values of the peatland resource.”*

This replaces the old vision and mission statement and reflects better the actual aims and characteristics of the Society. We hope that our members can find themselves in this description and willingly contribute also in the future to the work of our association. In addition, the EB identified a long list of long- and short-term priorities to deal with during the next months and years. This will include, among others, a number of project proposals that will be carefully planned and further analyzed during the coming months. We will keep you informed! Please also see the public summary of the minutes (to be sent to all members by email) for further information.

## Peat Family of 1,412 Members!

According to recent membership and address updates that the IPS Secretariat has received from the majority of National Committees, the International Peat Society has currently **1,412 members from 42 countries**. These comprise the National Committees in 17 countries (Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom and USA) and, in addition, 41 individual, 15 corporate and 2 student members in countries without a National Committee. Altogether, IPS members live in 42 countries, mainly in Europe, Northern America and Southeast Asia, where the majority of peatlands are located. In total, we have 1,012 individual, 252 corporate, 43 research institute, 48 student, 41 honorary and 16 government institute members. With their employees (up to 6 per company/institute) that makes some 1,600 contacts on our mailing lists. **However, we believe that there are many more peatland researchers, peat users and company employees that could benefit from being a member of the IPS!** Have you

spoken with your colleagues whether they are interested to join? Do not hesitate to contact the Chair or Secretary of your National Committee to find out more about membership and meetings, investigate how to organise joint events, get to know new colleagues - and bring your own networks under the umbrella of our Society. There are many ways to cooperate, and of course you are also welcome to first try attending local IPS seminars or excursions, to write for IPS publications, or share something on e.g. our Facebook page, [www.fb.com/peatsociety](http://www.fb.com/peatsociety). All membership information and an application form for new members can be found at [www.peatsociety.org/join-us](http://www.peatsociety.org/join-us).

## IPS Convention 2013 at ISHS-IPS Conference in Leiden, NL

During **17 - 21 June 2013**, the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) will cooperate with the International Peat Society (IPS) in organising an International Symposium on Growing Media and Soilless Cultivation “Water Efficient Horticulture Word Wide” in Leiden, the Netherlands. Scientists and industry representatives are invited to share and expand their expertise on sustainable production, application and development of growing media, advances in composting, physical and chemical substrate properties, water and nutrient management, and many other topics. IPS will organise its **Annual Assembly**, the **National Committee Round Table**, **Commission meetings** as well as talks of the Executive Board and Scientific Advisory Board in this connection. More information and an exact timetable are coming soon. Please see also [www.grosci2013.wur.nl](http://www.grosci2013.wur.nl).

## Last Chance: Award of Excellence 2013!

Until **31 January** you have time to apply or nominate someone for the IPS Award of Excellence 2013. Individual persons, projects and groups carrying out peat and peatland activities can be suggested by letter, email or on the IPS website at [www.peatsociety.org/about-us/award-excellence](http://www.peatsociety.org/about-us/award-excellence). This is possible for both IPS members and non-members. The Award consists of a framed scroll and € 1,000 as a bank transfer. Applications should contain the contact details of the applying person and the nominee plus an explanation why the Award should be given to that special person, group or project. This can be sent to the IPS Secretariat or be submitted via the website of the IPS at [www.peatsociety.org/webform/nomination-ipsaward-2013](http://www.peatsociety.org/webform/nomination-ipsaward-2013). All proposals are reviewed by the IPS Executive Board in early March and the Award is presented at the Annual Assembly in June.

## Prof. Supiandi Sabiham New Chair of IPS in Indonesia

The Indonesian Peat Association (IPA), National Committee of the IPS in Indonesia, has elected a new President and contact persons. They can be reached at: President Prof. Supiandi Sabiham, Indonesian Peat Association, Bogor Agricultural University, Wing 12 Level 5, Jl. Meranti, Kampus Dramaga, Bogor 16680, Indonesia, phone: +62 251 8629360, fax: + 62 251 8629358, email: [supiandisabiham \(at\) yahoo.com](mailto:supiandisabiham@yahoo.com); and contact person/representative of IPA: Prof. Fahmuddin Agus, Indonesian Soil Research Institute, Indonesian Center for Agricultural Land Resources Research and Development, Jl. Tentara Pelajar No. 12, Bogor 16114, Indonesia, phone: +62 251 8336757, fax: +62 251 8321608, email: [fahmuddin\\_agus \(at\) yahoo.com](mailto:fahmuddin_agus@yahoo.com). The IPS has 102 members in Indonesia, and we thank Prof. Bambang Setiadi for his dedicated work as National Committee Chair for many years. More information on the IPS National Committee can be seen at [www.peatsociety.org/about-us/national-committees/indonesia](http://www.peatsociety.org/about-us/national-committees/indonesia). (*Husnain Rudy*)

## News from the Lithuanian Peat Producers Association

Although the year 2012 was not very successful for peat producers due to the wet season and increased taxes for natural resources, the year was good for the association. The association was

joined by a number of peat production companies, so now the association unifies about 95% of all Lithuanian peat producers. At the same time, the association has become much more active. Fire rules for peat bogs, which were very outdated and prepared even in the Soviet times, have been amended and coordinated with state institutions on the initiative of its members. The study on broader use of fuel peat in Lithuania has been prepared together with the scientists, which was favourably estimated by the governmental institutions. At the same time, a wider use of fuel peat in the energy sector was provided with priority status by the government in its programme of activities for the year 2013. The association joined the ranks of EPAGMA (European Peat and Growing Media Association) at the end of the year. Interesting and important challenges have been raised for the association's activities in the year 2013. We hope that during the Forum of the peat producers of Baltic countries, which will be held in **Vilnius on 4 - 6 September 2013**, we will be able to discuss everything live, as well as to share our experiences. (*Juozas Daukantas*)

## New Peatland Forestry and Ecology book available via IPS

The new book "Peatland Ecology and Forestry – a Sound Approach" by Juhani Päivänen and Björn Hånell can now be ordered for € 40 including mailing costs from the IPS webstore at [www.peatsociety.org/shop](http://www.peatsociety.org/shop). The book (ISBN 9778-952-10-4531-8) was published by the University of Helsinki, Department of Forest Sciences together with Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Department of Forest Ecology and Management, in connection with the IPS Congress in Stockholm in June 2012. The publication contains 267 pages with full colour photographs in 9 chapters, from general mire information to forestry management and even other peatland uses, an extensive reference list and an alphabetical subject index. For more information on the book and its contents, please see [www.helsinki.fi/forestsciences/news/120618\\_peatland.html](http://www.helsinki.fi/forestsciences/news/120618_peatland.html) and read Sakari Sarkkola's book review in Peatlands International 2/2012 (in print).

## Book on History of the Estonian Peat Industry

The Estonian Peat Association has published a book called „History of the Estonian peat industry“, being already the third publication by the Association. In previous years, the Estonian Peat Association has published two books – one dedicated to its' 15th anniversary and the second being a "Handbook for Re-cultivation of Cut-over Peatlands". The latest book is a thorough overview of more than 150 years of peat production in Estonia. The book captures the evolution of the technologies, machinery and know-how used in the early years up until nowadays. This professional outline is mixed with various amusing stories and recollections, making the book suitable for a variety of readers! The book is published in Estonian. However, captions and a summary are also provided in English. In addition, every copy has a CD containing selection of audio interviews and photographs. The publication was co-financed by Environmental Investment Centre. For further information or ordering the book please contact the Estonian Peat Association via email [info \(at\) turbaliit.ee](mailto:info@turbaliit.ee). (*Olga Kaju*)

## New Fuel Peat Production Technology Book

The University of Applied Sciences Jyväskylä has published a new book on fuel peat production technologies, edited by Eija Alakangas, Pekka Hölttä, Mari Juntunen and Tero Vesisenaho (ISBN: 978-951-830-245-5). The training material has been produced by experts in the field of Finnish peat production. The book is a practical reference source for teachers and educators, but also suitable as a manual for any bio energy sector expert, peat producer and as a self-study material for students. The handbook covers different phases in milled and sod peat production chains, starting from the bog preparation and extending to the peat storage phase. In addition, the most common machinery

and methods are presented, taking into account also environmental aspects. The book also includes a chapter of energy peat properties and quality requirements, and the significance of peat in the fuel mixture. You can order the 102-page publication for €37.50 including mailing costs by sending an email with your contact details to [julkaisut \(at\) jamk.fi](mailto:julkaisut@jamk.fi). More information is also available at [www.jamk.fi/kirjasto/julkaisut/julkaisu/2/0/140\\_2012\\_fuel\\_peat\\_production\\_technology](http://www.jamk.fi/kirjasto/julkaisut/julkaisu/2/0/140_2012_fuel_peat_production_technology).

## UK Government Response to the Sustainable Growing Media Task Force announces a £1.1 million package to support the phasing out of the use of peat in English horticulture

The Response addresses key issues on:

1. The implications for Government policy;
2. The support Government will provide to the industry; and
3. How the Government will show leadership.

The Response accepts most of the 'consensus points' laid out in the Task Force's Final Report of July 2012 and sets out the Government's actions to support the roadmap and reduce the horticulture industry's dependence on the use of peat. ([www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13867-towards-sustainable-growing-media.pdf](http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13867-towards-sustainable-growing-media.pdf)). It deals with these under several headings:

- Policy
- Government support for the horticulture sector and supply chain
- Demonstrating leadership in the public sector
- Task Force consensus points
- Goals and success criteria

The Response states there is a role for Government, in collaboration with industry, to fund research on the use of peat alternatives, to demonstrate their successful use and to encourage knowledge transfer. Towards this end Defra will establish a new match-funded 5 year research programme (starting in 2013) with a total value of £1m in partnership with the Horticultural Development Company. In addition, £100k will be made available over 2 years to support Local Authorities, in partnership with community groups and companies within the procurement chain, to establish sustainable growing media planting schemes.

The Response contains a number of proposed actions that will be welcomed by the horticulture industry but it also contains some confusion and contradiction. The UK Government makes it clear that:

1. It agrees that all materials used in growing media should be assessed against the same sustainability criteria (not only peat)
2. The most important criterion for sustainability is renewability
3. The work on defining what makes growing media ingredients sustainable needs to be completed and agreed
4. Without this any reframing of the policy and targets around the use of sustainable growing media would not work in practice
5. This lack of agreed definition also means that short term actions within the roadmap will continue to be described in terms of achieving both the transition to sustainable growing media and continued peat reduction
6. Retailers will be required to introduce 'choice editing' to prevent the purchase of non-sustainable growing media products by gardeners and others in the amateur horticulture market.

See: [www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2013/01/17/pb13834-sustainable-growing-media](http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2013/01/17/pb13834-sustainable-growing-media) (Jack Rieley)