

The International Peat Society (IPS) is a non-governmental, non-profit multidisciplinary organisation of scientific, industrial and regulatory members both individual and institutional. The mission of the IPS is to bring people and organisations together to foster the advancement, exchange and communication of scientific, technical and social knowledge and understanding for the wise use of peatlands and peat.

ISHS-IPS Conference GroSci 2013 in Leiden, Netherlands

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 in Leiden, the Netherlands. The conference is themed “Water Efficient Horticulture Word Wide” and will attract a large number of specialists in horticulture, growing media and related specialist areas. Scientists and industry representatives are invited to share and expand their expertise and to form synergic conglomerates aimed at clarifying and serving the goals of the international public and subsequent policies on the following topics:

- Worldwide impact of systems for soilless culture on growing media
- Emission reduction of nutrients and plant protection products to the environment and efficient use of water
- Aquaponics: the combination of soilless plant production and aquaculture
- Sustainable production, application and development of (new) growing media
- Advances in composting
- Physical and chemical substrate properties
- Water and nutrient management
- New analytical methods
- Measuring, control and automation
- Micro biological diversity, resilience and disease suppression
- Control of soil-borne pests and diseases

Keynote speeches will be given by, among others, Dr. Johannes Welsch from Germany and Prof. Dr. Jean Caron from Canada. Potential speakers are invited to submit an abstract of less than 200 words on the conference website by **1 January 2013**. Please note that early bird registration for lower rates closes already on **15 December 2012** (ISHS/IPS members €575/625). Leiden is located 20 km from Amsterdam Schiphol Airport and can easily be reached by train. The official language of the conference is English. For more information, please visit www.grosci2013.wur.nl.

Award of Excellence – Deadline 31 January 2013

There are just a few weeks left to apply for the IPS Award of Excellence 2013. Individual persons, projects and groups carrying out peat and peatland activities can be nominated for the Award by letter, email or on the IPS website until **31 January 2013**. Neither the winner nor the applicants have to be IPS members. As in previous years, the Award consists of a framed scroll and €1,000 to your account – this is a good opportunity to receive funding for your work. 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 by email or post (address below), or be submitted via the website of the IPS at www.peatsociety.org/webform/nomination-ipsaward-2013. All proposals are reviewed by the IPS

Executive Board in February/March and the Award is presented at the Annual Assembly in May/June. For details, please see www.peatsociety.org/about-us/award-excellence.

Book on Necessity of Peatlands Protection

The Polish National Committee of the IPS has published a monograph on “Necessity of Peatlands Protection” as a hard cover book. The quality of the paper, the figures and photos present the highest quality of editorial work. The monograph is dedicated to Tomasz Brandyk, former Chair of the Polish National Committee and IPS Executive Board member. The book is available at www.isrl.poznan.pl/en/departments/environmental-chemistry/2-uncategorised/153-publications-department-of-environmental-chemistry. (Szajdak L.W., Gaca W., Meysner T., Styła K., Szczepański M. (Eds). Necessity of Peatlands Protection. Prodruck, Poznań 2012) (*Lech Szajdak*)

Side Event on Ecosystems Based Mitigation

A side event dealing with “Ecosystems Bases Mitigation: From Incentives to Practice - Opportunities and progress in reducing emissions from peatlands” was hosted by Wetlands International and FAO, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, on **6 December 2012** at UNFCCC’s COP 18 in Doha, Qatar. The event discussed progress in reducing emissions from peatlands in practice, linked to opportunities under REDD+, LULUCF and NAMAs schemes. In addition, the side event highlighted approaches to REDD+ that would benefit the livelihoods of ecosystem dependent communities. Speakers at the meeting included representatives from FAO, Michael Succow Foundation, IUCN Netherlands, Greifswald University and Wetlands International. For more information please see www.fao.org/climatechange/micca/peat/en/.

Peat Production at Chat Moss to Stop, United Kingdom

Following a Public Inquiry, the UK Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has backed Salford Council and Wigan Council in refusing William Sinclair Horticulture a licence for a further fifteen years of peat production on land at Chat Moss, Lancashire, UK. The decision follows years of protest. The Moss has been an ecological battle ground during the last few years, with protest walks featuring politicians from all parties and campaigners from Earth First chaining themselves to diggers on the site. In a decision based on climate change rather than commercial needs the Secretary of State rejected an appeal by William Sinclair Horticulture to extend its peat production licence. Another reason given for the extraction refusal was that "the release of peat resources in Chat Moss would frustrate the Government’s policy to move from peat to non-peat growing media and discourage the development and take up of peat substitutes." Salford Council is now looking to restore the site. The UK Government policy is to phase out the use of peat in horticulture in England by 2015 in the public sector, 2020 for amateur gardeners and 2030 for commercial growers. More info: www.tiny.cc/bsrapw (*Jack Rieley*)

Peatlands at EGU 2013 in Vienna in April

The European Geosciences Union (EGU) is holding their General Assembly 2013 in Vienna, Austria on **7 - 12 April 2013**. This event will again contain plenty of presentations dealing with peat and peatlands. Currently at least fourteen sessions should be of interest to our members: http://meetingorganizer.copernicus.org/EGU2013/sessionprogramme/search_peat. In addition, please visit www.egu2013.eu for general data on the conference. The abstract submission deadline is **9 January 2013** and visitors can register for a discount rate until **13 March 2013**. For additional updates and events, please see www.peatsociety.org/events and [www.fb.com/peatsociety](https://www.facebook.com/peatsociety).