

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.

## Your Copy of Peatlands International 2/2012

The IPS Secretariat is currently designing Peatlands International 2/2012 and we estimate that the magazine will be ready to be sent out in January. If you are a member of the IPS you will receive your copy by post either from the IPS Secretariat directly or via your National Committee office (see exact list at [www.peatsociety.org/publications/peatlands-international](http://www.peatsociety.org/publications/peatlands-international)). We look forward to another bright and interesting magazine full of at least the following peat and peatland matters:

- *Editorial: The International Peat Congress in Stockholm was a success! Jaakko Silpola*
- *From the President's Desk, Björn Hånell*
- *A Fabulous Week in Stockholm - Looking back at the 14<sup>th</sup> International Peat Congress, Susann Warnecke*
- *Summaries of Congress Themes and Conclusions - From Geology to Horticulture and Peatland Restoration, Congress Chairs*
- *615 Visitors - A brief view to Congress Statistics and Feedback, Celia Zanin and Susann Warnecke*
- *IPS Award of Excellence 2012 to Professor Piotr Ilnicki, Lech Szajdak*
- *Managing the Western Peatlands - Irish Peat Society Annual Meeting, Study Tour and Seminar, Irish National Committee*
- *Humic lakes of Wigry National Park (NE Poland) – development and expectations for the future, Danuta Drzymulska, Mirosława Kupryjanowicz*
- *The Finnish Peat Society visiting Eastern Lapland - Ruska and much more, Susann Warnecke*
- *Report on the seminar „Rewetting of raised bogs – a model of success?“, Gerfried Caspers*
- *Notes from a German peatland symposium - International Congress “GeoHannover 2012”, Raimo Sopo*
- *English Growing Media Task Force Issues its Final Report - A personal view by Jack Rieley*
- *Inefficiency banished, peat plant increases capacity - Peltracom case history, Premier Tech*
- *Lehtopeat – the Legend of Peat Continues, Heikki Ruha & Hannu Kolunsarka*
- *Steep Increase in Oil Palm Plantations on Peat in Southeast Asia, Jack Rieley*
- *Technical Meeting on Integrated Management Plan for Peatlands Management in Southeast Asia, Noor Azura Ahmad*
- *International Symposium on Wild Fire and Carbon Management in Peat-Forest in Indonesia, Jack Rieley*
- *Peat and peatlands events, new IPS members, IPS insider information...*

*Book reviews:*

- *Soundly about peatland forestry, Sakari Sarkkola*
- *Peat and peatland resources in Central and Eastern Europe, Juhani Päivänen & Björn Hännell*
- *The Encyclopedia of Agrophysics - some aspects of peat and peatlands, Ryszard Oleszczuk*
- *In memoriam: Leo Schipper (1949-2012)*

The magazine will also be available at the publications database of the IPS website as a PDF file. We kindly ask you to contact the IPS Secretariat during the first week of January in case you have any news to add to the above content. In addition, we still **welcome advertisements** from our corporate partners – just send an email to [susann.warnecke \(at\) peatsociety.org](mailto:susann.warnecke@peatsociety.org) or download our media kit at [www.peatsociety.org/sites/default/files/pimediakit2012.pdf](http://www.peatsociety.org/sites/default/files/pimediakit2012.pdf).

## Vapo to Raise Environmental Responsibility to a New Level

The Board of Directors of Vapo Oy has approved new guidelines for the company which will raise environmental responsibility in peat production well above the legal requirements for environmental permits. The company's new environmental responsibility commitments for peat production are as follows:

- In line with its strategy for bogs and peatlands, the company will in future apply for environmental permits and open new production areas only for peatlands where the natural state has been altered, generally meaning ditched peatlands.
- New production bogs reduce the suspended solid and humus load leaching to downstream watercourses compared to the initial situation prior to the commencement of peat production.
- All production bogs are subject to emissions monitoring during the production season and half of production areas are subject to year-round emissions monitoring.

Vapo has conducted a survey of attitudes to peat production among decision-makers and the general public. In both groups the main concerns are the threats posed by peat production to bogs in the natural state and the watercourse impacts of peat production. Another view widely expressed in public is that there is inadequate statutory emissions monitoring of peat production areas.

Vapo announced a responsibility programme in December 2011, in which the company undertook to install best available technology water treatment at all peat production areas by the end of 2014. At the same time the company announced the introduction of a voluntary inspection procedure to check the water treatment structures of all production bogs at two-week intervals. A further new practice is that the monitoring data and contact details of the persons responsible for production areas are published on our website. The responsibility programme also set a target that bogs of significant natural value owned by the company should either be sold off for conservation purposes or exchanged for ditched peatlands. The company also undertook to install and trial continuous water monitoring equipment at several production areas throughout Finland.

According to CEO Tomi Yli-Kyyny, implementation of the actions to enhance environmental and social responsibility announced in December 2011 has in many respects exceeded the plan. According to Yli-Kyyny, the company is on schedule in installing water treatment systems at peat production areas, the sale of bogs of natural value for conservation purposes has advanced very well and contractors have been very proficient at carrying out monitoring of water treatment systems.

Development of reliable continuous metering is an ongoing challenge. The reliability and accuracy of the meters has not been adequate, but here too we are advancing according to plan.

New commitments to respond to the concerns of the general public.

According to Yli-Kyyny, Vapo wants to show the way in responsible peat production. For this reason we are defining our new responsibility commitments in the aspects of peat production which are of concern to the general public, Yli-Kyyny says. In future Vapo will not apply for environmental permits for bogs in categories 4 and 5, in line with the strategy on sustainable and responsible usage of bogs and peatlands. Vapo will produce peat only at peatlands where the natural state has been altered, generally meaning forest-ditched peatlands. The other significant commitment is that the commencement of peat production should not increase the suspended solid and humus load leaching to downstream watercourses. This commitment applies to bogs where production is started from 2016.

We measure the background load at future production areas for several years before production is started and we undertake that once peat production has started the load in area is lower than in the beginning, taking into account the natural fluctuation between years. In order to keep our promise, we will if necessary extend the scope of our water treatment systems beyond peat production areas, Yli-Kyyny says.

The third promise has to do with emissions monitoring of production bogs. In future all bogs will be monitored regularly. This move will be phased in gradually. Our objective is to have all of our bogs monitored by 2014 at the latest, Yli-Kyyny says.

The costs of the responsibility programme announced previously total around EUR 30 million. The commitments announced now will raise peat production costs by an estimated EUR 3 – 5 million per annum. Our new, transparent approach is designed to demonstrate that the harmful impacts of peat production can be eliminated, ensuring that our domestic peat resources, which provide jobs and are very important for the economy, can continue to be part of the Finnish energy mix and enjoy the support of decision-makers and the general public. Source: [www.vapo.fi/en](http://www.vapo.fi/en)

## Audio Trails at Peak District's Peatlands, United Kingdom

Walkers can now add a fascinating new dimension to their experience of two of the Peak District's most dramatic and iconic locations – Bleaklow and Black Hill – with two new Audio Trails created by Moors for the Future Partnership, experts in moorland restoration. The Trails can be downloaded onto iPods, MP3 Players or mobile phones and listened to as walkers follow the spectacular routes using a map. Funded by MoorLIFE, an EU LIFE+ project, the Trails offer a lively soundtrack featuring birdsong, natural and social history and folklore. They also provide an insight into conservation works currently being undertaken by Moors for the Future Partnership.

Large swathes of Peak District and South Pennine upland have suffered damage as a result of wildfires and 150 years of industrial pollution and the Trail routes skirt a number of locations where major landscape scale restoration works are underway to help save our moors. Much of the land covered by the new Trails is important for gathering drinking water and is owned by MoorLIFE partner United Utilities. The two new Trails add to Moors for the Future's growing family of countryside guides. All 15 Audio Trails are downloadable at [www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk/audio-trails](http://www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk/audio-trails) and will also soon be available on iTunes. (Louise Turner)

*Merry Christmas to you and your family and friends!*