

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.

IPS Convention 2011 in Québec – Register now!

We warmly welcome all IPS members to attend the IPS meetings in Québec, Canada, including the Annual Assembly of National Representatives, the National Committee Round Table and meetings of the IPS Commissions, the Executive Board and Scientific Advisory Board as well as the IPS Award of Excellence ceremony on **13 - 15 June 2011**. Detailed information on the meetings and a registration form can be found at www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=306.

Please register as soon as possible and remember to book your accommodation and other activities separately, following the instructions on the above mentioned website. All participants pay their own travel and accommodation costs if not otherwise agreed with the IPS Secretariat. The meeting documentation for the Annual Assembly will be sent to all National Committees this week by post.

The IPS Convention is held this year in connection to the **International Symposium on Responsible Peatland Management and Growing Media Production**, which is held at the same venue on **13 - 17 June**. So far, more than 200 participants from 22 countries have registered for the event. To attend the sessions, field trips and evening programme of the symposium, please see the full programme and register at www.peatlands2011.ulaval.ca. This is a must to attend in 2011 for every peatland expert – we look forward to seeing you!

Decisions of the IPS Executive Board and Scientific Advisory Board

The Executive Board and Scientific Advisory Board of the IPS held their regular meetings on **7 – 9 March** in Stockholm, Sweden, after which the EB continued discussions by email.

The Scientific Advisory Board followed-up the Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management and evaluated its use in different countries, gave feedback to the overall **IPS Strategy and Activity Plan** and the renewal of the Society's website and discussed in detail the planned changes to the **IPS Statutes and Internal Regulations**. The SAB also noted information on the sustainability report for Dutch horticulture and the content of press releases on tropical peatlands, dealt with the Defra consultation process in the UK for phasing-out peat in horticulture, the Canadian certification system for peatlands, the new Finnish Peatland Strategy and the projected international Best-Practice-Guidelines for After-Use. In addition, the Commission Chairs and the IPS Secretariat are planning to enhance knowledge on ecosystem services of peatlands, to improve scheduling of international events as well as to further investigate funding mechanisms for research projects.

The Executive Board of IPS approved the Annual Report, Income Statement and Balance Sheet for 2010 for submission to the Annual Assembly. The report will be published in Peatlands International 1/2011 and also include reports of the IPS Commissions, National Committees and the Editor of the Journal Mires and Peat. The EB also evaluated the payment of last year's membership

fees. In addition, new Internal Regulations were agreed and a set of changes to the IPS Statutes, the work programme, plan of activities, budget and membership fees 2011 were prepared for submission to the Annual Assembly. To further improve the services of the IPS Secretariat and to deal with organisational challenges, it is proposed to raise the National Committee fees in 2012 by 10% and industrial fees by 15%. This will be discussed with all stakeholders in detail during the following weeks.

The EB also decided on the winner of the IPS Award of Excellence 2011 – he or she will be revealed at the symposium banquet in Québec on 15 June. Three new members were confirmed, one released from membership and seven removed from our mailing lists as fees remained open. The Board noted that a seminar to introduce the **Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management** was held on **25 November 2010** in Helsinki and that afterwards the Strategy was distributed to all IPS members by post. Further copies are available for free at www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=80. During the next week, an international press release will raise further attraction to the Strategy and its message. We kindly ask all members; individuals, corporations and institutes, to use the Strategy actively in their work, to translate its contents, to hold seminars and contact the local media to further promote its statements.

The EB agreed, on proposal of the SAB, to transform IPS Commission X on Climate Change (previously Climate Change Working Group) to a new “**Cross-Commission Standing Committee on Peatlands and Climate Change**” The first work of this Committee is to prepare the climate change session at the International Peat Congress 2012. Furthermore, the EB shortly dealt with the Application of Wise Use, with the renewal of the IPS website, a new IPS brochure and the upcoming issue of **Peatlands International** and gave its logo rights to an IPS Commission VI workshop on humic substances in Germany. The next meeting of the Executive Board will be held on **13 June 2011** in Québec, Canada, the autumn meeting might be held in Belarus. A summary of the EB decisions “in a nutshell” will be sent out shortly.

Both the SAB and EB met for one afternoon with the organising committee of the International Peat Congress 2012, as there is only one year left before the big event – have you pre-registered already?

IPS Honorary Membership for Matti Hilli

IPS honorary membership was conferred on Mr. Matti Hilli, Managing Director of Vapo Oy, Finland, at the spring meeting of the Association of Finnish Peat Industries (Turvetteollisuusliitto ry) in Jyväskylä on **24 March**. Matti Hilli has been a member of the IPS Executive Board from 2002 to 2006 and, in this function, strongly influenced the development of our Society and helped to promote IPS. We wish Mr. Hilli all the best on his retirement!

New Members of the IPS

We warmly welcome Green Energy T from the Ukraine as corporate members as of 1 January 2011 and wish them success for their work. To see our membership benefits and to join the IPS in countries without a National Committee, please visit www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=21.

Workshop on Peat and Humic Substances in Germany

IPS Commission IV, the German Peat Society and the Institute for Process Development, Peat and Natural Products (iTN) at Zittau/Görlitz University of Applied Sciences are organising an international workshop on “Peat and Humic Substances – Current research in chemical, physical

and biological characterisation of peat". The workshop is held in English in the town of Zittau, Saxonia, on **28 - 30 September 2011**. The attendees will discuss chemical and biological peat analysis, isolation and characterisation of peat ingredients, biocompatibility testing to evaluate peat quality, learn about the role of microbial enzymes in formation, degradation and transformation of humic substances and get familiar with interactions of peat and peat ingredients with impurities and xenobiotics. Proposals for presentations or posters can be sent until **30 June** to the organisers. The registration fee amounts to € 60 for members and € 80 for non-members of the Society, excursion tickets can be bought for additional € 20. The 1st circular can be downloaded at www.tiny.cc/zittau.

Final Call for Papers: Asian Wetland Convention in Sarawak, Malaysia

The Asia Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists warmly invites all experts on tropical peatlands to an Asian Wetland Convention and Workshop in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia on **13 - 15 September 2011**. Asian wetlands are under tremendous pressure from human activities including habitat modification for agriculture and aquaculture, poorly planned infrastructure development, land filling in tidal marshes and mangroves, and climate change that often amplifies other threats. Thus the need to better understand and manage wetlands has never been more urgent. The convention will include workshops on best management practices and wetland rehabilitation/restoration, a visit to the one and only Ramsar Site in Sarawak, the Semenggoh Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre and many other field trips. For more details, please visit www.sws2011.org. Early bird registration is open until **1 June 2011**. (*Isidro T. Savillo*)

International Bioenergy Conferences in Europe

The international pellet conference "Pellets for Bioenergy: The market takes off" will be held on **5 May 2011** in Cologne, Germany, organized by the European Biomass Association. As in the last two editions, the event will be held in parallel with the VICTAM International 2011 exhibition, the world's largest feed, grain and biomass industries. Further information on the event can be found at www.aebiom.org. At the same website, you can also register for the second "Annual AEBIOM European Bioenergy Conference and Renexpo Bioenergy Europe", to be organised on **29 - 30 June 2011** at the Albert Hall in Brussels, Belgium.

Peat Industry Activities in Lithuania

The Lithuanian Peat Industry Association started the year 2011 with a reporting and electoral meeting, where not only activities, aims and objectives were discussed, but interesting changes were implemented as well. Firstly, Executive Director Juozas Daukantas read the association's annual report of 2010 and mentioned the most important activities, including activities to reduce peat extraction fees, the possibility of wider usage of fuel peat in the national energy economy, and other items, which are important in everyday work of peat companies. The new peat industry economic validity study was presented and will be placed at the association's website, www.asocdurpes.lt. As most important agenda point, the association members elected a new Board for the next two years: K. Kaminskas, G. Kavaliauskas, A. Laužikas, G. Juozapavičius and V. Kirilka. The Board unanimously elected JSC "Klasmann Deilmann Ezerelis" Administration Manager Giedrius Kavaliauskas as President. At the end of the meeting, association members offered tentative activity goals for 2011, discussed possible problems of the peat industry and their solutions. The members discussed about preparation for the international forum of the Baltic countries, which will take place in Latvia this year. The members also rejoiced over an increasing number of members, as four new members were introduced. At the moment, about 95% of Lithuanian peat enterprises participate in the association's activities. (*Giedrius Kavaliauskas*)

Lowland Peatland Systems in England and Wales – Evaluating Greenhouse Gas Fluxes and Carbon Balances

A tender has been issued by the UK Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs for an evaluation of greenhouse gas fluxes and carbon balance of lowland peatlands in England and Wales under different land uses and management practices. It will address the following key questions:

- *What are the annual GHG emissions associated with different land use/management techniques of lowland peat in England and Wales?*
- *How do different land use / management techniques on lowland peat in England and Wales compare in their storage and outputs of C and GHGs?*
- *Do specific land uses/management techniques on lowland peat in England and Wales have distinct storage and outputs of C and GHGs?*
- *How does the C storage ability and GHG emissions from lowland peatlands in England and Wales compare to that from upland peats?*

The information obtained should aim to answer the following questions:

- *What are the annual GHG emissions associated with each of the land use/management techniques of lowland peat at the sites investigated? Can this data be extrapolated to other sites in England and Wales, and what would this suggest are the national annual GHG emissions associated with each land use/management technique examined?*
- *How do the different land use/management techniques compare in their storage and outputs of C and GHGs?*
- *Do specific land uses/management techniques have distinct storage and outputs of C and GHGs?*
- *How does the C storage ability and GHG emissions from lowland peatlands compare to that from upland peats (using existing data in the literature on upland peats)?*

The closing date for tender proposals is **6 May 2011** at 16.00 and the project is expected to start in June 2011 and last for 4 years. Further information: www.tiny.cc/vpayx (Jack Rieley)

LIFE Active Blanket Bog in Wales Project Finished

The LIFE Active blanket bog in Wales Project has spent the past 4 ½ years carrying out practical restoration on a blanket bog in mid Wales, UK. The original target for the project was to block 110 km of drains and remove non-native plants across 5,000 hectares. The project actually blocked 480 km of drains and cleared trees from 7,500 hectares. The project has also communicated with over 4,000 people, including more than 1,000 local school children to spread the importance of this habitat. The work carried out in partnership between the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency and Forestry Commission Wales, and co-funded by the EU LIFE-Nature programme was celebrated at the “Restoring Welsh blanket bog” conference on **8 - 9 March 2011** at Lake Vyrnwy, Powys, Wales. A report on the project will be published in Peatlands International 1/2011. (*Mike Morris*)

BES Annual Meeting on Peatland Ecosystems in Sheffield, UK

The Annual Meeting 2011 of the British Ecological Society will be held on **12 - 14 September** at the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom under the topic of “Peatland Ecosystems”. Peatlands form a globally and nationally important natural capital. However, much of the resource is in a damaged or deteriorating state. Strong drivers of change include pressures from climate change, land use change as well as threats and opportunities from policy and economy. There is an urgent requirement to address these losses and to restore the peatlands to fully functioning ecosystems with their component biodiversity. To help deliver this, better ecological understanding of ecosystem services, particularly in terms of how and where peatland ecosystem services are supplied and consumed at a regional or national scale, are needed. Invited speakers are Prof Hans Joosten, Universität Greifswald, International Mire Conservation Group, Dr Steve Chapman, Macaulay Institute, Dr Joanna Clark, University of Reading, Prof Phil Ineson, University of York, Dr Bjorn JM Robroek, Utrecht University and Prof Bryan Wheeler, University of Sheffield. Abstracts can be submitted until **22 May 2011**. More information can be found at www.britishecologicalsociety.org.