

The International Peatland Society (IPS) is an organisation of corporate and individual members dedicated to the responsible management and Wise Use of peatlands and peat. Our mission is to serve all those involved in peatlands and peat through the promotion, gathering, exchange and communication of knowledge and experience, by means of events and projects which address key issues, including climate change, biodiversity, the need for responsible use and restoration. Currently the IPS has 1462 individual, corporate, student and institutional members from 43 countries.

## 1486 Members from 35 Countries!

As of **31 December 2015**, the IPS had 1486 members in 35 countries. These included 1185 individual and 270 corporate/institute members in 17 National Committees (NCs) and 18 other countries, plus 31 temporary members. The largest NC is Germany with 386 members, followed by Finland with 327, Indonesia with 105, Poland with 98 and the Netherlands with 73 members. The total membership of the IPS remains relatively stable although fluctuation within its national associations is relatively high. Most corporate members come from Germany, Canada, Latvia, Estonia and Sweden. Germany holds the highest individual and student membership. The country with the strongest growth is China with +25 members. See the contact details of all National Committees: [www.peatlands.org/about-us](http://www.peatlands.org/about-us).

## Early Bird Registration for Congress moved to 30 April!

Early registration for the International Peat Congress in Kuching, Malaysia, **15 - 19 August 2016**, has been moved to **30 April**. So far, 286 persons have registered for the Congress, 67 persons booking excursions, 100 booking the Gala Dinner, and 74 the ice-breaking party. Abstract submission amounted to 398, of which 246 were extended. You are very welcome to visit [www.ipc2016.com](http://www.ipc2016.com) and sign up still this month for a reduced member rate. Also remember to invite your colleagues and partners to attend. Note that the seats on the excursions are limited to 30 persons/trip. This is a great opportunity to learn and talk about all aspects of peatland management, including climate, horticulture, GHG emissions, soft soil engineering, nature conservation and peatland restoration in one spot with world-class experts. Full papers will be published in a special issue of the IPS-IMCG joint journal Mires and Peat. Come with us! Note that the IPS has scheduled the following business meetings for the Congress in Malaysia:  
**Sunday, 14 August: Scientific Advisory Board & Executive Board (EB) Meetings, National Committee Round Table**  
**Friday, 19 August: Annual Assembly of National Representatives and General Assembly – open to all interested**

## New Structure for the IPS

The EB decided on a new IPS structure involving the replacement of the existing ten commissions with three commissions on **environmental, economic and social topics**, and the appointment of a senior executive charged with acquiring funds for projects and representing the IPS at meetings of international bodies and conventions. The three commissions will be supported by **strong expert groups and project groups**, and chairs/coordinators will be appointed by the Executive Board in August. The transition period to a project-oriented Society will take approximately two years, including clear objectives and measurable deliverables in the context of a more pro-active and more visible organization. This is part of the actions to fulfill the IPS Strategy 2016-202 of the IPS, <http://ow.ly/10wuA>. You will hear from us in the near future with more exciting plans – make sure to get involved.

## Call for EB members and Expert Group Coordinators

New Executive Board members can now be nominated by the IPS National Committees. There will be six open positions on the Board and elections will be held at the Annual Assembly in Kuching, Malaysia on 19 August. The open positions include President, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and three ordinary members (2 four, and 1 two-year period). Nomination letters should be sent by the National Committee Chairs and Secretaries together with a CV of the proposed person to the IPS Secretariat, [ips@peatlands.org](mailto:ips@peatlands.org) until **1 June 2016**. Note that all applications need to contain the position(s) aimed at, in descending order. We would like to highlight that in the Executive Board, the traditional balance between industry and science should be safeguarded as far as possible. In addition, diverse backgrounds, personal characteristics and cultures are appreciated. Executive Board members should be able to pay

their own travel costs, if not otherwise agreed beforehand. In addition, all IPS members can propose topics, coordinators and funding sources for the new IPS expert and project groups to the Secretariat. For more details see the Statutes and Internal Regulations of the IPS, [www.peatlands.org/about-us](http://www.peatlands.org/about-us) or contact the IPS Secretariat.

## Other Outcomes of the EB Meeting in Helsinki

The Executive Board of the IPS met during **5 - 6 April** in Helsinki for their regular spring meeting. The Board members decided, among other items mentioned in this Peat News, on the winners of the Allan Robertson Grants 2016 (travel support to Kuching), noted a report on the Congress by Lulie Melling, the financial status of the IPS by 31 March, approved new members of the Society and checked progress on the Peat Dialogue, Sphagnum Farming and Global Peat Resources projects. The next EB meeting will be held on **18 May**, document deadline is **9 May 2016**.

## IPS Participation at Events 2016-2017

Representatives of the IPS will be present at the following events in 2016:

- Peatland in the EU regulatory environment, Brussels, Belgium, 19 April
- 11th Annual SWS European Chapter Meeting, Potsdam, Germany, 17 - 20 May 2016
- Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity, Trondheim, Norway, 31 May - 3 June 2016
- 10th European Conference on Ecological Restoration, Freising, Germany, 21 - 27 August 2016
- Baltic Peat Producers Forum, Kaunas, Lithuania, 14 - 16 September 2016
- German Peat and Humus Day, Bad Zwischenahn, Germany, 29 September 2016
- EUROPARCS 2016, Jura Vaudois, Switzerland, 19 - 23 October 2016

In 2017, the IPS Annual Meetings will be held in Scotland organized by the UK National Committee. The IPS will also cooperate in organizing the ISHS-IPS Horticulture Symposium in Portland, United States, **20 - 25 August 2017**. For more IPS and related peat and peatland events visit [www.peatlands.org/events](http://www.peatlands.org/events).

## Finnish Peatland Society visits Estonia in June

The Finnish Peatland Society organises its annual summer excursion to Estonia, including both pristine mires and peat extraction sites. During **2 - 3 June**, the group will visit Soomaa National Park under the leadership of experts from Tallinn University, and production sites near Pärnu with experienced company staff. Travelling costs amount to € 230 for Suoseura members and € 260 for other participants. Participation is limited to 30 persons. For more information and to sign up see <http://suoretki2016.blogspot.fi>. Registration by **19 April 2016**.

## CBD welcomes Canada / US Arctic Climate Partnership

The Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Mr. Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, applauded the Arctic Partnership by United States President Barack Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Focused mainly on climate action, the partnership has far-reaching consequences for biodiversity in the Arctic, including the role of indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge. Of particular relevance to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the two leaders called on all Arctic nations, including those with Arctic interests, to embrace a new future for Arctic leadership with four objectives: a) conserve Arctic biodiversity through science-based decision-making, b) incorporate indigenous science and traditional knowledge into decision-making, c) build a sustainable Arctic economy and d) supporting strong Arctic communities. For more information see [www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int) and [www.arcticbiodiversity.is](http://www.arcticbiodiversity.is).

## Sabbatical Opportunity in Indonesia

Michigan State University (MSU) is seeking applicants for a funded sabbatical in its initiative on university engagement for capacity building in low-carbon forest management and REDD+ in Indonesia. This is part of the large USAID LESTARI project focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and conserving biodiversity in carbon rich and biologically significant forest and mangrove systems in Indonesia. The successful candidate will facilitate capacity building with MSU, the University of Palangka Raya in Central Kalimantan and USAID Lestari, and likely pursue ecological or social science research related to forestlands and/or peatlands. Bahasa Indonesian language is necessary. Expected start is Fall 2016. Full details: <http://goes.msu.edu/uploads/publications/lestari-full.pdf>.