

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 1486 individual, corporate, student and institutional members from 35 countries.

## New Executive Board Members needed

All IPS National Committees can nominate new Executive Board members until **1 June 2016**. 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, 1st and 2nd 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 (at) peatlands. 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. 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.

## The Allan Robertson Grants 2016 go to...

The Executive Board of the IPS has decided to give the Allan Robertson Grants for research students and young professionals 2016 for travel and registration fee support to attend the 15th International Peat Congress in Kuching, Malaysia in August 2016 to the following researchers and/or employees:

€ 500

- André Vicente Liz, Universidade Santiago de Compostela
- Dhandapani Selvakumar, University of Nottingham
- Mizuki Morishita, Department of Geography, Tokyo Metropolitan University
- Ariane Blier-Langdeau, PERG/Université Laval/CEN
- Alison Hoyt, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

€ 250

- Chloe Brown, University of Nottingham
- Nicholas Girkin, University of Nottingham
- Emma Brown, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, UK
- Kartika Hapsari, University of Goettingen
- Mari Parkkari, Natural Resources Institute Finland
- Hanifah Nurul Atilia Shafienaz, Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute
- Herman Maraden, APRIL Asia
- Norliyana Zin Zawawi, University of Aberdeen
- Meli Fitriani Saragi, Bogor Agricultural University (IPB), CIFOR
- Nisa Novita, Oregon State University
- Sara Thornton, University of Leicester
- Randi Ade Candra, Universitas Tanjungpura, Indonesia

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all contributors and applicants! The IPS launched the Grants in memory of Allan Robertson, First Honorary President of the IPS, in 2015. They are awarded to young peatland and peat researchers carrying out research or practical work or young professionals in early stages of their career in managing peatlands or peat industry. Grant recipients are normally be under the age of 30, and undergraduates are ineligible. Successful applicants must agree to provide a report on their project or work that will be published in the IPS

magazine Peatlands International and/or give a presentation of it at an international IPS event at the latest 12 months after the grant funding has been paid to them. More info: [www.peatlands.org/about-us/allan-robertson-grants](http://www.peatlands.org/about-us/allan-robertson-grants).

## Growing Media and the Future of Horticulture in Kuching

We are pleased to announce a workshop on "The use of growing media in today's and future horticulture in Asia, Oceania and other parts of the world" at the International Peat Congress 2016 in Kuching, Malaysia. Economic, environmental and societal aspects will be equally regarded as they are the pillars of sustainable development of growing media production and use. Responsible growing media production and horticultural application must be acceptable, feasible and appropriate for all stakeholders. In this session, scientific progress as well as advances in practice and business endeavors will be presented and discussed between researchers, industry and end-users. Convenor is Gerald Schmilewski, Klasmann-Deilmann GmbH, Germany. More information can be obtained from [www.ipc2016.com/topics.php](http://www.ipc2016.com/topics.php). You are also welcome to attend the Congress with your company, services and products as a sponsor or for the exhibition: [www.ipc2016.com/sponsors.php](http://www.ipc2016.com/sponsors.php), to meet potential customers from Southeast-Asia, Japan, China, Europe, North America and globally.

## Register for the Baltic Peat Producers Forum in Kaunas

Now all relevant information on the Baltic Peat Producers Forum 2016 is available on the website <http://bppf2016.eu>. You can find recommendations on accommodation, information on the programme, sponsorship offers and other matters of interest. Registration to the Forum will start on **1 June 2016**. (*Ugne Radziunaite*)

## €16 Million Moorland Project in the UK launched

A €16 million project that will help protect and transform moorlands across the South Pennines and the Peak District National Park has been officially launched by UK Environment Minister Rory Stewart. The five-year project, hosted by the Peak District National Park Authority, will enable the team at Moors for the Future to continue the progress that has been made over the past 12 years, protecting huge areas of the internationally important South Pennine Moors. The funding for MoorLIFE 2020 includes €12 million from the EU's LIFE fund, as well as significant contributions from three major utility companies, Severn Trent Water, United Utilities and Yorkshire Water. The funding will enable the partnership to expand its work hugely, protecting the integrity of 9,500 hectares of active blanket bog through re-vegetating bare peat, improving hydrology and diversifying existing vegetation. For more details and the full press release go to [www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk](http://www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk). (*Debra Wilson*)

## Progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Targets

The 20th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 20) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) came to a close on **30 April** with the adoption of a number of key recommendations that provide the scientific basis for enhanced implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 - 2020 and achievement of its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Parties agreed e.g. to a short-term action plan to promote restoration of natural and semi-natural ecosystems as a contribution to halting biodiversity loss, improving ecosystem resilience, enhancing the provision of ecosystem services, mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, combating desertification and land degradation, and improving human well-being while reducing environmental risks and scarcities. Parties are encouraged to use a variety of approaches, according to national circumstances, including quantitative indicators, expert opinion, stakeholder consultation and case studies and clear documentation. Final report: [www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBSTTA](http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBSTTA).

## IPBES Assessment on Land Degradation

The external First Order Draft review by experts of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration and of the four regional assessments (Africa, Asia Pacific, Americas, Europe and Central Asia) on biodiversity and ecosystem services will run during **30 May - 11 July**. IPBES invites all prospective expert reviewers with relevant knowledge and/or experience to fill the registration form that will be made available on **30 May**. More info to come soon: [www.ipbes.net](http://www.ipbes.net).