

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.

Peatland Scientists Challenge Congress Press & Keynotes

Researchers and practitioners from different fields of science and business have published a letter in *Global Change Biology* to correct statements from the 16th International Peat Congress in Kuching, which were given by the press and during several key note speeches, supporting agricultural practices, such as oil palm plantations on tropical peatlands. The article has 139 authors, representing 115 government, academic, industry and non-governmental organisations from 20 countries, including the IPS President. IPS confirms that it works as a balanced forum to bring together all stakeholders involved in peatland matters, and publishes scientific and other information, among others at Congresses and other events, for the wise use and responsible management of peatlands, but does not support single views on peatland management in its members' countries. IPC2016 covered all aspects of peatlands and their management, with a strong focus on the environmental, societal and economic challenges associated with agricultural conversion of tropical peat. For the full letter, visit <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gcb.13516/abstract>

Scientific Advisory Board met in Hamburg

The Scientific Advisory Board of the IPS, consisting of the Chairs of the IPS Commissions on **Peatlands and Environment**, **Peatlands and Economy**, and **Peatlands and Society**, met with the Presidents and Communications Manager of the IPS on **11 - 12 October** in Hamburg, Germany. On the agenda were the establishment of the new Expert Groups of the IPS, including Vice-Chairs from Asia, Europe and America, planning work for the projects of the IPS, such as Peat Dialogue and Global Peat Resources, and plans for future involvement in Southeast-Asia. The SAB discussed also possible events in 2018-2020 and information exchange with the new industry associations. Bernd Hofer, Marie Kofod-Hansen and Guus van Berckel will also strive to attend the EB meeting in Rotterdam on **16 - 18 November** to intensify cooperation with the Executive Board. For their contact details and to express interest in the work of the new Commissions visit: www.peatlands.org/about-us/commissions-and-scientific-advisory-board.

Finnish Peatland Society (Suoseura) Seminar on 22 November

The Finnish Peatland Society will hold its traditional Autumn Seminar in Helsinki at Tieteiden talo on **22 November**. On the programme are seven presentations dealing with ash fertilization of forested peatlands in Finland and Sweden and their environmental and climate impacts. At the end of the seminar, IPS will hand over its gift from Malaysia to Professor emeritus Juhani Päivänen, the new Honorary President of the IPS. If you are interested to attend, contact Tuula Larmola at [suoseura49 \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:suoseura49@gmail.com). More information will be made available at www.suoseura.fi.

Peat Season below Average – Finland, Ireland and Lithuania

In Finland, the weather favoured peat extraction in May and until mid June throughout the country. The start of the season was predicting to exceed the average harvesting figures. However, towards the end of June, the weather changed for more rainy with showers almost every other day. In July and August, record rainfall was measured in many important peat extraction areas. According to the member survey of the Bioenergy Association of Finland (www.bionenergia.fi), the total peat extraction was 10.84 mill. m³ of which 1.42 mill. m³ was for "environmental purposes" i.e. used as animal bedding, composting, soil improvement and growing media. The amount of energy peat, 9.42 mill. m³ or roughly 3 mill. tn or 8.4 TWh consists of less than 10% sod peat, the rest being milled peat for larger CHP plants and industry. Due to the rapidly changing energy market there was no target figure for peat extraction. A high percentage of production fields is temporarily idle due to declining demand of energy peat during the past few

years, but the peat trade is likely to recover. It is planned to reduce the rather large energy peat stocks of previous years over the coming winter. Peat demand for horticultural and bedding purposes is strong. It is also delightful to have a great interest towards peat for other innovative purposes (*Hannu Salo, BE*)

Ireland's prime peat harvesting season (otherwise known as the "summer") was quite wet and broken from a weather point of view. There was an early and good start in May, but conditions suitable for harvesting milled peat were very poor in June and quite patchy thereafter. Despite that, and owing in particular to the good start, the final outturn was in the 80 - 85% range and the stock position is reasonably healthy. There are no regional differences as the peat industry in Ireland is substantially located in the midlands. (*Pat Fitzgerald, BnM*)

In Lithuania, the prognostic peat extraction for 2016 is estimated to be 1,935,000 m³. This is less than expected and volumes are 34 % lower than a previous year. Accordingly, the number of seasonal employees in peat industry has dropped from 830 to 745 whereas the number of permanent employees remained stable in 2016. This year season results are disappointing due to unfavorable weather conditions. Mean annual precipitation has reached the average of 65.3 mm per month in comparison to 46.8 mm per month in 2015. For instance, the rainfall in August peaked to 121 mm and was 55 % above the normal (1981-2010). (*Ugnė Radžiūnaitė, LPK*)

Biofuels in History: Workshop and Seminar in UK

The Biodiversity and Landscape History Research Institute, South Yorkshire Biodiversity Research Group, with Sheffield Hallam University, University of York, University of Stirling, JBA consulting and others organize a joint meeting on Biofuels in History - Issues of Energy, History, Landscape & Environmental Change during **17 - 18 November 2016**, at the Sheffield Showroom & Workstation. This event is a BES Peatlands SIG two-day, multi-disciplinary workshop & seminar to explore issues for peatlands & woodlands, for energy/fuel use. The event will draw together key researchers and thinkers on the subject to identify key emerging paradigms. Please contact Ian Rotherham if you wish to submit a proposal or to support the event in other ways. For more information, please email info (at) hallamec.plus.com or i.d.rotherham (at) shu.ac.uk and follow www.ukeconet.org/biofuelhistory.html.

International Conference on Climate Change in Sri Lanka

The International Conference on Climate Change 2017 (ICCC 2017) will be held on **16 - 17 February 2017** in Colombo, Sri Lanka under the theme "Climate Change, Facing the challenge beyond COP21". Key note speakers are Dr. Eleanor Milne, Editor in Chief, Environmental Development, University of Leicester, UK, and Dr. Scott Denning, Professor of Atmospheric Science, Colorado State University, USA. Abstracts can be submitted until **15 December**, early bird registration is open until **30 December 2016**. For more info and to sign up, visit <http://climatechangeconferences.com>.

US\$ 125 Million Support for Indonesian Peatland Restoration

According to press reports, Indonesia will receive assistance funds totaling US\$125 million to restore peatlands over the next three years. The Indonesian Peatland Restoration Agency said that significant funding will come from Norway, the United States, Japan, Germany, United Kingdom and other European countries, plus technology and expert support. Norway provided also help in mapping peatlands and related projects. It is estimated that the size of damaged peatlands has reached 700,000 ha, and restoring would cost US\$2,300/ha. For more information see e.g. <http://en.tempo.co/read/news/2016/10/19/206813494/Indonesia-Receives-US125mn-to-Restore-Peatlands>.

New Membership Application Form for the IPS

The IPS has launched a new online membership application in addition to the previous PDF document. If you want to invite your colleagues or friends as members, share this link: <http://tinyurl.com/ipsmemberform> or direct them to www.peatlands.org/join-us. If you live in a country with a National Committee, they will contact you within a few days. For countries without a National Committee, the IPS Secretariat takes care of all membership issues, including invoicing, address changes and member confirmations. IPS has National Committees currently in Canada, China, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. Membership benefits include significant discounts at IPS conferences, the Peat News/Peatland Snippets newsletter 12 times/year and the Peatlands International e-magazine 2-4/year.