

Peatlands

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Welcome to Taizhou! Annual Report 2023

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News from the Ramsar STRP & FAO
IPS Executive Board Candidates 2024-2026
Secretary General's Review, Report of the Executive Board & Report of the Scientific Advisory Board
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Upcoming events 2024

17th International Peatland Congress

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your flights now!

Taizhou, China
4 - 9 August 2024
www.ipc2024.com

Editorial

Hail and Farewell

As I leave the Executive Board after 22 years I am taking the opportunity to reflect briefly. I started with the old Commission II in 1994 so this year marks my thirty years with the IPS. There is hardly a need to say that things have changed radically since then.

The bread-and-butter of the IPS used to be meetings and exchanges of papers. It was (and remains) the place where opinions of all types could be expressed and debated. The frequency of meetings has declined, because universities, institutes and companies no longer encourage employees to do work for the IPS, because of the internet, and because of virtual meeting technology. Maybe there are other reasons as well.

The IPS now stresses attendance at international convention meetings where it seeks to ensure outcomes are based on science, and reports back to members through 'Science Wire.' It is increasingly involved in international projects, and remains a medium of communication on peatlands for people all over the world. The IPS has some remarkable successes to its name;



- The Wise Use book, in collaboration with the IMCG. This book is still widely cited in scientific publications.
- The Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management.
- The book 'Peatlands and Climate Change.'
- The International Peatland Congresses held every four years.
- The magazine 'Peatlands International.' I am not aware of anything like it elsewhere.
- The Allan Robertson grants, which help young peatland researchers.

Unfortunately, the Society's finances have deteriorated. There has been a reduction in the number of National Committees, and industrial contributions have greatly decreased.

The Executive Board recently held a 'blue skies' meeting to discuss its future. The options discussed included closing the IPS and opening

Peatlands International is the global magazine of the International Peatland Society (IPS). It provides the more than 1,500 individual, institute and corporate members of the Society with up-to-date information on peat and peatland matters, reports and photos of conferences and workshops, background reports and publication reviews. To serve all of our members, we provide always a good balance between economic, social and environmental points of view. Opinions are those of the authors. To receive Peatlands International in your email every three months, visit **www.peatlands.org/join-us** and sign up as a member - or easily **subscribe** for € 59/year via our online shop.

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Are you interested? Contact us!

Cover: Garden joy by Holly Landkammer

a new global peatlands organisation, and changing from an organisation based on National Committees to one based on direct membership. There is no obvious new funding model apparent, but the funding problem is there.

I have loved my time on the Board of the IPS. It has brought me to parts of the world I would never otherwise have visited, a tribute to the global appeal of the Society. I have made many friends.

The IPS has been an organisation where multiple opinions have been put forward and debated, and I have valued that exchange, sometimes animated, always courteous. I feel strongly that the Society makes a great and positive contribution to all aspects of the peatland debate, and I hope a way is found to keep it doing its work.

I fully believe in the 'Wise Use' approach to peatlands, a framework which balance wants, needs and effects.

I wish the IPS and its Secretary General, Susann Warnecke, a successful future. The world is a better place for it.

Donal Clarke

Executive Board member
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Photo: Brian Kelly, Donegal, Ireland

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New address!

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Welcome to the 17th International Peatland Congress!

huānyíng
欢迎

The 17th International Peat Congress (IPC 2024) will be held in Taizhou, Zhejiang Province, China, from 4th to 9th August 2024. It will be hosted by the International Peatland Society and organized by Northeast Normal University, Chinese Academy of Forestry, China Humic Acid Industry Association, Taizhou University and the Taizhou Peat Research and Development Center.

The theme is “Peatlands in a Changing World”. The congress aims to provide a platform for peatland scientists, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders to stimulate the exchange of best practices, new ideas and knowledge about the multiple functions and biodiversity conservation of peatlands from a global perspective, advocate the responsible use of peat and peatland resources and recognize the values of peatlands in terms of their economic, environmental and social aspects from a sustainable perspective in a changing world.

We have an exciting and diverse programme planned, featuring a range of keynote speakers, symposia, workshops and oral and poster presentations that highlight collaboration between different peatland sectors and disciplines.

Attendees will have the opportunity to collaborate and discuss various topics, including but not limited to:

- Ecological functions, conservation, and management of peatlands
- Peatlands and human life
- Technical innovation in the peat industry
- Tropical peatlands and more

In addition to a variety of exciting sessions, we have also planned various networking events throughout the week.

We warmly welcome all the participants to China!



Early bird registration will close on 31 May. For more information, the programme and the keynote speakers, see <https://ipc2024.com>.

Planned sessions

- Ecological functions, conservation, and management of peatlands
- Biogeochemical processes in peatlands

- Peatland biodiversity and conservation
 - Peatland agriculture and forestry
 - Peatland restoration and water/land management
 - Carbon wetlands (special session)
-
- Peatlands and human life
 - Peatland nature reserves
 - Peatlands and the popularization of sciences
 - Peatlands for culture, education and leisure
-
- Technical innovation in the peat industry
 - Smart peat extraction, peat processing and the digital peat supply chain
 - Protected agriculture substrate seedlings and substrate cultivation techniques
 - Preparation and application technology of peat soil conditioners
 - Alternative materials to peat
 - Peat used for saline-alkali soil improvement and the ecological restoration of national land space
-
- Tropical peatlands (special session)
 - Agriculture and forestry on tropical peatlands
 - Restoration of tropical peatlands
 - Monitoring tropical peatlands
 - Tropical peatlands and climate change

Taizhou is named after Tiantai Mountain, “Shangying Tai Su”, which is located in its territory. The famous traveller Xu Xike of the Ming dynasty wrote about Tiantai Mountain in his opening travel notes and revisited it several times.

Taizhou has distinct cultural characteristics and is an important source of Chinese harmony culture. It is the hometown of the “Living Buddha Jigong”, the birthplace of the Tiantai Sect of Buddhism, the location of the establishment of the Southern Sect of Taoism and the destination of the Tang Poetry Road in eastern Zhejiang.

Taizhou is rich in natural resources, including East China Sea seafood such as yellow croaker, hairtail, pomfret, swimming crab and green crab. Fruits such as the Huangyan tangerine, Yuhuan Wendan, Xianju Yangmei and Yongquan tangerine are renowned throughout the country.

Taizhou Mountain and the scenic sea area currently boast three national 5A-level tourist attractions, including Tiantai Mountain, Shenzhan and Taizhou Fucheng, four national key scenic spots, four national forest parks and 17 national 4A-level tourist attractions.

Welcome to Taizhou!

Taizhou is located in the middle section of China’s golden coastline, adjacent to Ningbo to the north and Wenzhou to the south.

The city covers 9,411 square kilometres on land as well as a sea area of 80,000 square kilometres, with a total population of 6.15 million. It is one of the 27 cities in the Yangtze River Delta urban cluster and an important node city on the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road. It is a wealthy, harmonious and vibrant modern port.



How to fly to Taizhou.
Source: ipc2024.com



Thanks to its subtropical climate, the Taizhou region is ideal for growing vegetables. Photo: Tommao Wang

insights on the latest trends and practices. An engagement in Asia will definitely benefit your company's brand, corporate image and position in the market.

We also warmly welcome you to participate in the latest research and discussion of peat and peatlands issues. An industry summit will be part of the programme.

The 17th International Peatland Congress in 2024 welcomes you! For more detailed and

updated information, including sponsoring options and registration details, visit www.ipc2024.com.

The "Sanmen Festival for Winter" has been included in the United Nations Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and 15 elements including Taizhou Luanbu have been included in the national-level protection list of intangible cultural heritage.

The unique and charming tourist attractions of "mountains, seas, scriptures, Buddhas, cities, and caves" outline a magnificent picture of "mountains, seas, water cities, holy places of harmony, and manufacturing cities".

Sponsoring

Your road to China! Connecting approximately 500 attendees worldwide, the International Peatland Congress 2024 will give you excellent exposure to Chinese and international companies and scientists before, during and after the event.

We offer targeted marketing as well as scheduled meetings between attendees and sponsors and social networking activities at our top venues, in addition to opportunities to establish connections with influential industry figures and develop partnerships with local and international business leaders.

You will also have the possibility of renting a booth to showcase your expertise and to introduce your products or new market services in our country. We have excellent contacts with Chinese and global media and news departments, and will offer you the possibility to gain knowledge and

Excursions

Inter-conference excursions

7 August 2024

Trip FT-MID 1: Mid-subtropical mountain peatland landscape

Simingshan peatland is located in the upstream of the Xiashuihu Reservoir of Siming Mountain, Yuyao City. It has a total area of approximately 3,163 m². The terrain decreases from the southwest to the northeast, and the average altitude is 844 m. It has a typical mid-subtropical monsoon climate, with an average annual temperature of 13.85°C, a frost-free period of 203 days, an average annual precipitation of approximately 1,560 mm and an average annual relative humidity of 83%.

It developed from the mountain streams converging to the reservoirs of mountain ponds and consists of two neighbouring plots in the east and west, with standing water on the surface all year round. The depth of water on the surface is 5-10 cm. At present, the sphagnum has been seriously degraded, with only the upper half of the west side and the edge of the east side retaining a small amount. Low herbaceous plants (at a height of approximately 50-60 cm) dominate the area, such as *Arundinella anomala*, *Juncus diastrophanthus*, *Cyperus haspan*, *Eriocaulon*

buergerianum, *Isachne globose*, *Eleocharis tetraquetra* and others.

Trips FT-MID 2 and FT-MID 3: Application scenarios of peat agriculture

Details will be available soon at our website.

Post-conference excursions 10-11 August 2024

Trip FT-P1: Peatlands of the Zoige Plateau (five days)

Day 1: Depart from Taizhou to Chengdu by flight and arrive in Chengdu

Day 2: Zoige Wetland Ecology Research Station and Moon Bay

1. Visit to the Zoige Wetland Ecology Research Station on the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau

The Zoige Wetland Ecology Research Station (ZWERS) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences is located in Qiongxian Town, Hongyuan County, Ngawa Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province. It is affiliated with the Chengdu Institute of Biology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and is a member of the “High-cold Region Observation and Research Network for Land Surface Processes & Environment of China”.

Facing the major strategic needs of China’s ecological security and the frontiers of wetland study, the goal of ZWERS is to protect and restore wetlands through systematic positioning monitoring, scientific and applied research, demonstration and promotion and talent training for wetland biodiversity conservation, speciation and evolution, regional ecological restoration, sustainable development and ecosystem processes so as to provide a scientific basis, technical support and policy suggestions for regional ecological protection and sustainable economic and social development.

2. Visit to a peatland with degradation traces and some restoration projects

Moon Bay is located in Hongyuan County, Sichuan Province, where peat was in the past one of the



Mountain range in Xining, China. Photo: Gregory Hayes

main energy sources for the local residents for production and their livelihoods. In order to satisfy their needs for survival, local residents ditched and drained the peatland and exploited the peat. In addition, water erosion over a long period of time aggravated the degradation of the peatland. The local government has adopted the methods of filling ditches and planting grasses to restore and protect the peatland.

Day 3: Rigancho peatland and Huahu peatland

1. Animal husbandry peatland restoration practices in hydrological restoration

Rigancho peatland is located in Wache Township, Hongyuan County. In the 1970s, in order to expand the pastureland and develop the pastoral industry, the ditching and drainage of this peatland was carried out on a large scale. However, these activities have now been significantly reduced or prohibited, and restoration of the peatland has been initiated. The restoration measures are mainly based on typical hydrological restoration works such as the filling and blocking of drainage

ditches, supplemented by replanting of suitable cultivated forage grasses, combined with fencing and sealing measures in order to achieve the goal of increasing the vegetation cover.

2. Visit to a peatland tourist area

You will visit Huahu, known as “China’s most beautiful wetland”, and enjoy the beautiful alpine peatland landscape, which is located in the northern part of Zoige County, Sichuan Province. Huahu is an important area for many birds to reproduce and migrate, so you will have the opportunity to see the *Grus nigricollis* and other rare birds.

Day 4: Reer Dam and Langmu Temple

1. Visiting traces leading to peatland degradation and a town with ethnic characteristics

At the Reer Dam in Nengwa Township, west of Huahu, traces of peatland ditching and drainage still exist, and you can see large drainage ditches lined up in a fan shape across the vertical and north-south faces. In addition, you will visit Langmu Temple, a small site located at the junction of Gansu and Sichuan Provinces. Here the two civilizations of the Hui nationality and Tibetan are integrated, and people of different civilizations express their devotion to their beliefs in different ways.

Day 5: Gahai-Zecha National Nature Reserve and return trip

1. Gahai-Zecha National Nature Reserve (various restoration projects and wild birds in an alpine wetland meadow and stone forest)

Gahai-Zecha National Nature Reserve is located in Luqu County, Gansu Province. It is a nature reserve with the triple functions of wildlife forest, plateau wetland and plateau meadow. In the early days, the peatland of Gahai-Zecha National Nature Reserve was degraded due to long-term water erosion and human interference in some areas, but in recent years, it has been largely restored through the cleaning of the original aqueduct, the construction of check dams and the filling and sealing of ditches. In addition, the Gahai-Zecha National Nature Reserve is also a hotspot for observing migratory birds in Gansu Province, because many birds here migrate from the south to the north to live and breed. The reserve also offers a unique view of the stone forest.

2. Departure to Lanzhou Airport

Trip FT-P2: Changbai Mountain warm temperate mountain peatland (four days)

Day 1: Depart from Taizhou to Changchun by flight and arrive in Changchun

Day 2: Hani peatland and Jinchuan peatland

1. Hani peatland

The Hani peatland is located in the western regions of Changbai Mountains, northeastern China. The mean annual temperature ranges from -7.3°C to 4.8°C , and the mean annual precipitation from 700 to 1400 mm. The Hani peatland covers a total area of 1,678 ha with a west-east length of 5 km and a north-south width of 3 km. The basin substrate of Hani peatland is early Pleistocene basalt.

The sedimentary thickness of the peat in different areas of the Hani peatland varies. The maximum peat thickness is approximately 8.7 m. Nowadays, the Hani peatland is covered with different types of



Beautiful scenery in Lijiang, China. Photo: Sokoudom Ung

In Daocheng County, Garzê Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan, China.
Photo: Yang Pu



south spanning 700 m and east-west spanning 50 m. Field surveys have concluded that the base materials of this peatland include the tephra sourced from the Changbaishan Millennium eruption at 946 CE. The thicknesses of the peat deposits range from 37 cm to 118 cm.

2. Tianchi Lake

Changbai Mountain is a volcanic landform, with over 200 volcanoes of varying sizes. The most prominent feature

plants. *Sphagnum* spp. have widely formed large hummocks, indicating that some areas of Hani peatland have developed into a bog stage.

This field excursion will show you the following experimental setups:

- Field warming experiment
- Nitrogen and phosphorus addition experiments (>15 years)
- Plant functional type manipulation experiment
- Eddy covariance monitoring

2. Jinchuan peatland

The frequent volcanic activities of the middle Pleistocene provided sedimentary sag for the development of peatlands. The Jinchuan peatland is located in the Longgang volcanic field, which is in the western area of the Changbai Mountains in Northeast Asia. The maximum thickness of the peat layer is larger than 10 m.

The sedimentary period of the peat sediments lasted longer than 6000 years. Nowadays, the whole Jinchuan Basin is covered with different types of vegetation. There are three eddy covariance systems running in Jinchuan peatland.

Day 3: Yueliangwan peatland and Tianchi Lake

1. Yueliangwan peatland

The Yueliangwan peatland is located in the northeast of the Changbai Mountain. This peatland occupies an area of 7 ha, with its north-

is the Changbai Mountain volcano, which is the largest volcano in China and serves as the main peak of Changbai Mountain. The region showcases a diverse array of geological and geomorphic landscapes resulting from internal and external geological processes, including flowing water and glaciers. The area is home to the Changbai Mountain flora, characterized by a rich variety of plant species and abundant plant resources. During this field trip, you will have the opportunity to explore the vertical natural zone differentiation of Changbai Mountain as well as visit Tianchi Lake, both of which offer captivating experiences.

Day 4: Return to Changchun

Trip FT-P3: Shennongjia subtropical mountain peatland (four days)

Covering the virgin forest of Shennongjia, Dajiuhu peatland and the Three Gorges, this trip will start in Taizhou and finish in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei Province.

1. Dajiuhu peatland

Dajiuhu peatland is situated in the west of the Shennongjia Forestry District in Hubei Province, central China. It is located in a closed subalpine basin with a mean elevation of 1730 m and an area of 16 km². It is home to a variety of peat-forming plants such as *Sphagnum palustre*, sedge species and some herb species like *Rhynchospora chinensis* and *Sanguisorba officinalis*. This peatland is the source of the Du River, which flows into the Danjiangkou Reservoir. Due to its representation

You can also combine your trip with a stay in vibrant Shanghai.
Photo: Harrison Yu



glacial period”, with the result that many organisms were able to survive and reproduce. There are more than 1,000 species of trees and a large number of rare animals. In the southwestern part of Shennongjia, a nature reserve has been established with the golden monkey, hairy deer, dove tree and double shield wood as the main objects of protection.

3. The Three Gorges of the Yangtze River

The Three Gorges of the Yangtze River, located in the hinterland of China, refer to the three

of a subtropical peatland, especially for its sizable area of sphagnum in the middle latitudes, a national wetland park was established in Dajiuahu in 2006 and is now part of the Shennongjia National Park.

In 2013, it was also listed as an internationally important wetland by Ramsar. The peat in Dajiuahu began to accumulate in the late deglaciation, making it a valuable resource for reconstructing the regional hydroclimate and the relationship between hydroclimate and peatland carbon dynamics over a period of time. To this end, a wetland monitoring programme was initiated in 2014 by a research group from China University of Geosciences at Wuhan. The ultimate goal is to develop a model of the peatland critical zone, which can be used for wetland conservation and sustainable development.

2. Shennongjia

Shennongjia is located in the western part of Hubei Province, in the eastern part of the Daba Mountains, alongside the watersheds of the Yangtze River and the Han River in the western part of Hubei Province. The area is full of peaks as well as towering and curved ridges, with a total area of 3,253 square kilometres. Two and a half million years ago in the Quaternary Period, during the active glacial period, the areas of central China and Shennongjia were rarely affected and became a refuge for plants and animals at that time, referred to as “China’s Noah’s Ark for the

gorges of Qutang Gorge, Wu Gorge and Xiling Gorge. The length of this area is approximately 193 kilometres. The three gorges on the sides of the mountains face each other, the cliffs are steep and the peaks are usually 1000-1500 metres above the river.

The narrowest point is less than 100 metres. The Three Gorges belong to the subtropical monsoon climate zone, with generally low precipitation and high temperatures throughout the year. The Three Gorges were formed as a result of the rising crust of this area and the strong downcutting of the waters of the Yangtze River. During the orogenic era, the crust was uplifted by extrusion movements, forming a group of folded mountain ranges, the Wushan Mountains. During this period, water from the west of Sichuan, the north of the ancient Jinsha River, the ancient Yalong and Jialing rivers and other areas poured into the Sichuan Basin, so that its water level overflowed, along the lower east of the Wushan terrain.

Due to the river’s long years of flow and erosion, the riverbed is constantly undercut. With the development of crustal movement, the mountain range is slowly being uplifted. When the speed of the river’s downcutting exceeds that of the crust’s uplift, under the dual action of flowing water and tectonics, canyons are formed in the hard rock areas.

For photos of the field trip destinations, visit <https://ipc2024.com/field-trips>. Welcome!



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Xu Hanchao, satisfied customer and technical advisor at 'Nansha Jiajie Young Plant', China



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IPS Executive Board Candidates 2024-2026

Elections for a new IPS Executive Board (EB) will be held in person in Taizhou, China, during the Annual Assembly of National Representatives on 8 August. All National Committee representatives who can present a proxy for their organisation are allowed to vote. Other individuals are welcome to participate as observers. The following persons were nominated as candidates for the EB:

President:

- Hannu Salo (for two years) nominated by Finland

1st Vice President (legally important, deputy to above):

- Ilze Ozola nominated by Latvia

2nd Vice President (responsible for Scientific Advisory Board):

- Ilze Ozola nominated by Latvia
- Anna-Helena Purre nominated by Estonia

Ordinary members (4-5 seats), alphabetically

- Asha Hingorani nominated by Canada
- Lulie Melling nominated by Malaysia
- Ilze Ozola nominated by Latvia
- Päivi Peronius nominated by Finland
- Paddy Rowland nominated by Ireland
- Guus van Berckel nominated by the Netherlands

If Dr Ozola is elected 1st Vice President, her nomination for the latter positions expires. If Dr Purre is elected 2nd Vice President, her ordinary seat becomes available for two years, resulting in five open positions. For the selection of the shorter term, lots will be drawn between the incoming EB members (if there is no secret voting).

In addition, Commission Chairs will be elected by the Commissions themselves or appointed by the Executive Board:

Commission Peatlands and Economy:

Sabina Alta nominated by Latvia



Members of the EB and the Scientific Officer in Québec: Jack Rieley, Guus van Berckel, Marko Pomerants, Örjan Berglund, Asha Hingorani, Sabine Jordan, Tuija Vähäkuopus, Anna-Helena Purre and Meng Wang. Photo: Andreas Bauerochse

Commission Peatlands and Environment:	Anna-Helena Purre, Estonia (nominated for 2nd Vice President)
Bernd Hofer applied (for two years)	Meng Wang, China
Commission Peatlands and Society:	The following persons will leave the EB:
No nomination, please email ips@peatlands.org if you are interested.	Marko Pomerants, Estonia Donal Clarke, Ireland Jack Rieley, United Kingdom Tuija Vähäkuopus, Finland Giedrius Kavaliauskas, Lithuania
Invitations and documents for the Assembly, including CVs, will be sent to the National Committees 60-40 days before it takes place, most likely in week 24.	We warmly thank the EB for their dedicated work during 2020-2024 and look forward to continuing cooperation with you, one way or another.
The term of these individuals continues until 2026:	
Bernd Hofer, Germany Sabine Jordan, Sweden	All IPS members are also welcome to attend the General Assembly of the IPS on the same day.

New articles in Mires and Peat

More field-based carbon monitoring of tropical peatland restoration is urgently needed: findings from a systematic literature review by A.L. Sinclair, L.L.B. Graham, S.P. Grover

Geochemical and sedimentological analyses on the Romanian Sphagnum peat bog Tăul fără fund by T.Zs. Vári, P. Sümegi

What, when, who and how? A review of peatland research in Amazonia by C. Malpica-Piñeros, A. Barthelmes, H. Joosten

Assessing the effects of resource extraction and climate-related disturbances on the growth of *Picea mariana* (Mill.) B.S.P. (Pinaceae) in boreal peatlands in the Hudson Bay Lowland, Canada by M.C. Elmes, N.E. Balliston, E.L. Davis, J.S. Price

Land use change alters carbon composition and degree of decomposition of tropical peat soils by A. Kunarso, R. Farquharson, D. Rachmanadi, K. Hearn, E.W. Blanch, S. Grover

Vulnerability of communities living on peatlands to climate change and peatland degradation: A case study in Tumbang Nusa Village, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia by N. Sakuntaladewi, D.S. Mendham, Subarudi, Y. Rochmayanto, S.-M. Jalilov, D. Djaenudin, R. Effendi, S. Astana, A. Wibowo

Facilitating new livelihoods to promote peatland restoration in Indonesia - what are the challenges for ensuring sustainable and equitable livelihood transitions? by D.S. Mendham, N. Sakuntaladewi, Ramawati, T.W. Yuwati, K. Budiningsih, B.D. Prasetyo, Handoyo

Why is tropical peatland conservation so challenging? Findings from a livelihood assessment in Sumatra, Indonesia by S.-M. Jalilov, S. Lestari, B. Winarno, T.W. Yuwati, N. Sakuntaladewi, D. Mendham

Identifying a shared vision for peatland restoration: adapting the Delphi method to enhance collaboration by T.D. Toubmourou, S. Grover, V.B. Arifanti, K. Budiningsih, N.I. Idrus, S. Lestari, D. Rachmanadi, N. Sakuntaladewi, M. Salminah, S. Treby, B. Winarno, T.W. Yuwati, Ramawati, A. Rawluk

Community perceptions of peat rewetting in Tumbang Nusa Village, Indonesia by A. Fleming, D.S. Mendham, N. Sakuntaladewi, S. Grover, S.-M. Jalilov, B. Paul, A.H. Nasution, S. Lestari, A.L. Sinclair, D. Rachmanadi, T.W. Yuwati, B. Winarno

An IPS-IMCG journal: www.mires-and-peat.net

News from the Ramsar STRP

The second meeting of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands for the triennium 2023-2025 occurred in Gland at the beginning of February. STRP has five thematic work areas, and last year the IPS agreed to participate in four tasks:

Thematic Work Area 2: Tools for wetland assessment, mapping and monitoring, and development of inventories.

Task 2.1: Wetland mapping and inventories to catalyse greater use of available methodologies for wetland carbon assessments. The aim is to prepare guidance to support the further development and use of national wetland inventories (NWIs)

in national greenhouse gas (GHG) accounts and the inclusion of wetlands actions in nationally determined contributions (NDCs). A contractor will be hired to undertake the mapping, and the terms of reference were decided upon by the members of the working group of the task.

Thematic Work Area 3: Direct and climate change-related pressures on wetlands, their impacts, and responses.

Task 3.3: Agriculture and wetlands: maintaining and restoring the ecological character of wetlands in agricultural settings. The aim is to prepare guidelines for maintaining, restoring, or creating the ecosystem services of wetlands in agricultural landscapes.



Participants of the meeting. Photo: Ramsar

Task 3.4: The protection, conservation, restoration, sustainable use, and management of wetland ecosystems in addressing climate change. The aim is to synthesise successful nature-based solutions or ecosystem-based approaches for protecting, conserving, restoring, sustainably using, and managing wetland ecosystems to address climate change and achieve other co-benefits.

Thematic Work Area 5: Cross-cutting issues, supporting functions, and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Task 5.2: Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The aim is to provide advice and guidance to support the global implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) for wetlands. This task group managed to finalise its report, and it will be downloadable from the Ramsar STRP website in May.

During the week in Gland, we worked together with the participants in each task to deliver its aim. For Task 2.1, I plan to use my network of scientists to find suitable locations to find the ground truth to calibrate models based on remote sensing. Regarding Task 3.2, I will deliver two case studies, one from Sweden and one from Rwanda, describing the agriculture and wetland interactions.

We also had the opportunity to listen to two very interesting talks: Stuart Crane, Global Programme Coordinator on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), presented the Freshwater Ecosystems Explorer, used for reporting data on SDG indicator 6.6.1, and ongoing work on the future Global Wetland Watch by UNEP-DHI.

After that, Jennifer Kelleher, Equity, Rights and Diversity and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) Lead, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Protected and Conserved Areas Team, provided insights into the IUCN work on “Other

Work in progress. Photo: Ramsar



Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures” and its connection with the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA).

This triennium’s next and last meeting will be at the beginning of December.

Örjan Berglund

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Come And Join Us For The

 Connecting Communities with Peatlands

END OF PROJECT CONFERENCE

 24/05/2024

 **ATHLONE SPRINGS HOTEL**

Join us to mark the end of the Connecting Communities with Peatlands project. We'll hear from the communities that engaged with the project over the last three years and explore the challenges, opportunities and lessons learned from Just Transition.

CONFERENCE TIME : 9AM - 3PM

 Irish Rural Link
Nasc Tuaithe na hÉireann

 Community Wetlands Forum

 Supported by the Just Transition Fund & the Carbon Tax Fund

 Kesh na Míneann Government of Ireland

Annual Report 2023

Secretary General's Review

The year 2023 was very successful in terms of the development of the IPS, although there are some darker clouds on the horizon, as in many past years.

In accordance with our topic of the year, “Peatland Science Matters”, Dr Örjan Berglund started his work as the first Scientific Officer of the IPS in March. Together with the Principal Scientist and Second Vice President, Professor Jack Rieley, he will take care of the scientific work within the IPS and has already reached a good level of involvement during his first 10 months in office.

However, the funding of the position is still somewhat insecure as the IPS is still using much of its own previously accumulated funds to employ Örjan, despite the approval of the “IPS Position Paper 2022-2025: Embracing Change” and its financial commitments by our members.

The main meetings this year were the first full Executive Board (EB) meeting in person in Jyväskylä, Finland, which finally gave us the time to thoroughly discuss peat and peatland as well as administrative matters and to build team spirit between old and new EB members; and the Reclaim, Restore, Rewild (RE3) conference in

Québec in June, which was jointly organised with the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) and other organisations. I personally had the flu, but was told that the event was excellent!

Autumn was characterised by meetings in the Baltic states; the Baltic Peat Producers Forum in Tallinn, as well as research project meetings and another face-to-face EB session in Riga.

It was also at that meeting in Riga where we finalized the challenging IPS Strategy 2024-2028 which will be the guiding star for the new Executive Board that will be elected in 2024; and authorized the Latvian National Committee to host the International Peatland Congress 2028, subject to approval by the Annual Assembly .

Other important meetings were held virtually, which facilitated participation from all “corners” of the world without any additional costs, emissions or time.

The Secretariat continued organising Peat Update meetings for the main players of the industry community. Aside from that, the IPS community started preparing for the 17th International Peatland Congress in Taizhou, China.



IPS was represented at important international convention meetings, here at Ramsar STRP. Photo: Örjan Berglund

The IPS also continued its participation in the Mainstreaming Ecological Restoration of Freshwater-related Ecosystems in a Landscape Context: Innovation, Upscaling and Transformation (MERLIN) project, which seeks to mainstream restoration practices beyond the current case study and - in our case - degraded and cutover peatlands to the wider landscape.

At the end of the year, we launched the second edition of the Peatlands and Climate Change book, edited by Maria Strack, after long months of editing and improving all the chapters to present first-class research.

The book was partly funded by a crowdfunding campaign which will end in February 2024.

Last but not least, I would like to warmly thank all the people and the organisations that have contributed to our work on a voluntary basis in 2023: the National Committee Chairs and Secretaries, Commission Chairs and our Executive

Board, in addition to numerous other members and partners.

Special thanks go to Professor Jack Rieley, Örjan Berglund, Anna-Helena Purre and the President, Marko Pomerants, who are always ready to help and support. Their optimism and enthusiasm have set an example for many of us.

Susann Warnecke

Secretary General
susann.warnecke@peatlands.org

Report of the Executive Board

Membership

At the end of 2023, IPS membership totalled 1,595 members from 38 countries, of which 16 have National Committees (NCs). The Russian NC has been temporarily suspended in support of Ukraine. In other countries, 36 members are directly associated with the IPS Secretariat. During the course of 2023, the IPS gained 111 and lost 91 members. The IPS also introduced a new membership category for “juniors” under the age of 21 which is currently valid in countries without National Committees.

More detailed member statistics can be found in the appendices. Membership is open to all individuals and organisations interested in peatlands and peat: www.peatlands.org/join-us.

Science and Data

The IPS's first Scientific Officer, Dr Örjan Berglund, started his position on 1 March 2023, financed partly via the “Position Paper - Embracing Change” of 2022. He is working on a 50% time basis in addition to his position at the Swedish University of Agriculture. His main tasks are, among others,



Participants of the Annual Assembly in Québec. Photo: Nur Azima Binti Busman

The first larger meeting of the Executive Board after the pandemic was held in Jyväskylä in Finland in March. Left to right: Marko Pomerants, Örjan Berglund, Jack Rieley, Donal Clarke, Anna-Helena Purre, Giedrius Kavaliauskas, Tuija Vähäkuopus, Bernd Hofer and Susann Warnecke. Photo: Saija Vuorenmaa



In December, the second edition of the Peatlands and Climate Change book, edited by Maria Strack with a team of 52 authors since 2021, was published. The volume will partly be financed by a crowdfunding campaign, running from December 2023 to February 2024. Approximately 200 pre-orders were received during the editing period and sales continued in January.

An IPS-GME webinar on the EU Nature Restoration Law was

held on 7 December, hosted by Dr Berglund and Geoffrey Bennett.

communicating and collecting facts and figures, working with the IPS Commissions and giving advice to the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), Executive Board and Secretary General. Örjan also shares responsibility for the MERLIN project with Principal Scientist Jack Rieley.

The peer-reviewed IPS-International Mire Conservation Group (IMCG) scientific journal, Mires and Peat, has enjoyed continued success under the leadership of its editors, Dr Olivia Bragg and Dr Sabine Jordan.

The most important event for the IPS in 2023 was the “From Reclaiming to Restoring and Rewilding” RE3 conference organised by the Society for Ecological Restoration and its partners in Québec City on 11-15 June, which was also the venue for the Annual Assembly of National Representatives on 13 June.

In addition, we have continued selling proceedings of previous conferences and other peat and peatland books via our online shop. The page can be accessed via <https://holvi.com/shop/peatlands> (until mid June 2024). The IPS document database is available for free at <https://peatlands.org/publications/document-database>.

The conference was attended by more than 750 scientists and practitioners from all over the world. Besides an inspiring plethora of excellent restoration sessions and a broad range of interesting field trips, the event also included an International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS)-IPS symposium on growing media, both incorporating a total of 420 presentations. The IPS also celebrated its 55th anniversary with a special VIP dinner in Québec.

Executive Board

The IPS Executive Board traditionally consists of members from the science community and those with an industrial background. The members of the EB at the end of 2023 and their terms of office were/are as follows:

In addition, the Baltic Peat Producers Forum in August in Tallinn was well attended by IPS members. The IPS also participated in preparing seven research projects together with Growing Media Europe (GME) and the Peat Alliance, with meetings in Tallinn on 9 August, Riga on 26 September and Brussels on 25 October. During the course of the year, the IPS also issued several statements on issues of interest, often together with its partners.

President		
Marko Pomerants, Estonia	2020-2024	
marko.pomerants@peatlands.org		
First Vice President		
Guus van Berckel, the Netherlands	2020-2024	
g.vanberckel@griendtsveen.de		
Second Vice President		
Jack Rieley, United Kingdom	2020-2024	
jack.rieley@btinternet.com		

Ordinary Members	
Donal Clarke, Ireland	2020-2024
Asha Hingorani, Canada	2022-2024
Giedrius Kavaliauskas, Lithuania	2022-2024
Tuija Vähäkuopus, Finland	2020-2024

Bernd Hofer, Germany	2022-2026
Sabine Jordan, Sweden	2022-2026
Anna-Helena Purre, Estonia	2022-2026
Meng Wang, China	2022-2026

Honorary President professor emeritus, Juhani Päivänen, is permitted to attend all meetings. The next EB elections will be held in August 2024.

The administrative meetings of the IPS EB were held on 1 February, 26 April, 30 August and 12 December via MS Teams, and in person on 6-8 March in Jyväskylä, 10 June in Québec City and 7-9 November in Riga. We warmly thank the IPS Secretariat and the Canadian and Latvian NCs for their kind invitations.

The National Committee Round Table was held virtually on 27 March. On 28 August, a delegation of seven representatives of Taizhou City and Northeast Normal University in China visited the IPS President and Secretary General in Jyväskylä to prepare for the 2024 Congress and to sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

The decisions resulting from our meetings were disseminated through Peatland Snippets or Peatlands International, as well as on our blog, by email and on social media. The IPS also shared the results of its media follow-up as time allowed.

Commissions

The IPS Commissions and their Expert Groups foster information exchange, suggest projects and initiate international conferences and other events.

In 2023, Commission activities took place to some extent locally as well as online, within projects and via expert statements. The IPS is striving to re-activate its Economy Commission as a “home” for

its 200 corporate members. In this context, Peat Update meetings for industry members were held on 9 February, 4 April, 6 September and 5 December, initiated by the IPS Secretariat. The Commissions were also involved in the review of scientific abstracts for RE3.

Commission membership is informal and is open to all IPS members; contact should be made with the chairs. All Commission Chairs are members of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). Elections for the chairs will be held in 2024, with the deadline for nominations being 4 March. The SAB met on 14 February, 2 March, 11 April, 5 June and 2 October 2023, although most communications and meetings were carried out by email and virtually.

The Commissions and Expert Groups at the end of 2023 were as follows:

Peatlands and Environment

Chair: Bernd Hofer

Vice Chairs: Maria Strack, Bambang Setiadi (passed away in December)

Expert Groups:

Peatlands and Climate Change: Gerald Jurasinski

Peatlands and Biodiversity: Lydia Cole

Peatland Restoration: Pete Whittington

Tropical Peatland Round Table: Jack Rieley

Peatlands and Economy

Chair: Asha Hingorani

Vice Chairs: Guus van Berckel, Giedrius Kavaliauskas



The EB meeting in Jyväskylä included a visit to Viherlandia gardening centre including a talk on peat and alternatives. Photo: Susann Warnecke

IPS participated in the Ramsar STRP meeting in Gland, Switzerland in May. Photo: Ramsar



taken by IPS members for its publications.

Events

Abstract submission and registration for the 17th International Peatland Congress started on 1 November 2023.

The IPS Executive Board gave a recommendation in 2023 that the 18th International Peatland Congress be hosted by the Latvian National Committee in 2028. The Annual Convention

2026 will be held in Ireland.

The following events were of special interest to IPS members:

Expert Groups:

Peatlands for Agriculture: Jos Schouwenaars

Peatlands for Forestry: Sakari Sarkkola

Peat for Growing Media: Philip Testroet

Peatlands and Society

Chair: Marie Kofod-Hansen

Vice Chairs: Kirsi Laurén, Rachel Carmenta

IPS Executive Board Meeting

MS Teams

1 February 2023

Expert Groups:

Peatlands Culture, Education, Communication and Publicity: Ilze Ozola

Peatland Conventions and International Affairs: Jack Rieley

Scientific Advisory Board Meeting

MS Teams

14 February 2023

Communications

Four issues of the IPS magazine, *Peatlands International*, were published online in 2023. The *Peatland Snippets* newsletter was issued 11 times. The IPS actively uses its Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and X (Twitter) pages for quick updates.

Global Peatlands Initiative

Fourth Partners Meeting

Lima, Peru - Postponed

21-26 February 2023

www.globalpeatlands.org

IPS Executive Board Meeting

Jyväskylä, Finland

7-8 March 2023

Susann Warnecke is Editor-in-chief of these publications and is responsible for the editing and layout, as well as the updating of member and distribution lists. The IPS Presidents are fully responsible for media responses and official statements.

10th International Symposium on Land Subsidence (TISOLS)

Delft-Gouda, the Netherlands

17-21 April 2023

www.tisols.org

In autumn, the first two issues of a "Science Wire" were sent out by the Scientific Officer to inform members about developments in science and policy work.

MERLIN Work Package 4 Field Meeting

River Forth Catchment, Scotland, UK

17-21 April 2023

<https://project-merlin.eu>

In autumn, the IPS also initiated a photo vs chocolate campaign to obtain more pictures

Grow23 Festival: Future of Plant-Based Food Production Webinar

20 April 2023
<https://www.kekkila-bvb.com/growfestival-2023>

European Geosciences Union
EGU 2023
Vienna, Austria and Online
23-28 April 2023
www.egu23.eu

German National Committee
(DGMT)
Seminar and Excursion on Mires
and Peat
Zeven, Germany
24-25 April 2023
www.dgmt-ev.de



A field visit to the Merlin restoration case study site Komppasuo was organised in May. The Secretary General participated. Photo: Susann Warnecke

Off the Peat Path - Wood Fibres as an Alternative
to Peat in Substrates
Online Workshop
25 April 2023
<https://veranstaltungen.fnr.de/off-the-peat-path/welcome>

IPS Executive Board Meeting
MS Teams
26 April 2023

Horizon 2020 (H2020) MERLIN Second Peat
Extraction Round Table
Zoom/Webex
2 May 2023
<https://project-merlin.eu>

Suotrendi Final Seminar: Our Mutual Mires: The
Cultural Heritage and Future of Mires
Joensuu, Finland
12 May 2023
<https://bit.ly/41A9LYO>

Fourth World Peatlands Day
2 June 2023
[#worldpeatlandsday](https://twitter.com/worldpeatlandsday)

United Nations Climate Change Conference SB58
Bonn, Germany
5-15 June 2023
<https://unfccc.int/sb58>

IPS Executive Board Meeting
Québec City, Canada
10 June 2023

IPS Annual Assembly of National Representatives
Québec City, Canada
13 June 2023

RE3 Conference: Reclaim, Restore, Rewild
First International Symposium on Growing Media,
Compost Utilization and Substrate Analysis for
Soilless Cultivation
Québec City, Canada
11-15 June 2023
<https://re3-quebec.org/en>

Swamp Soccer
World Championship and Swamp Rock
Ukkohalla, Hyrynsalmi, Finland
14-15 July 2023
<https://suopotkupallo.fi/in-english>

Swamp Volley Championship
Haukivuori, Finland
28-29 July 2023
<https://swampvolley.com>

Baltic Peat Producers Forum
Tallinn, Estonia
9-11 August 2023
<https://balticpeatproducersforum.eu>

German National Committee
Prospects for Mire Protection in Lower Saxony
with Focus on Forest Peatlands
Uslar/Volpriehausen, Germany
17-18 August 2023
www.dgmt-ev.de

The Annual Assembly 2023 was held in Québec. Photo: Örjan Berglund



German and Swedish National Committees
Excursion: Svealand's Peatlands Along the
Limes Norrlandicus
25 August-1 September 2023
www.dgmtv.de
<https://svensktorv.se/torvforsk>

Executive Board Meeting 136
30 August 2023

Climate Resilient and Sustainable Forest
Management (with Focus on Peatlands)
Helsinki, Finland
28 August - 1 September 2023
www.ibfra2023.org

Power to the Peatlands
A European Peatland Conference
Antwerp, Belgium
19-21 September 2023
<https://bit.ly/41FPNMp>

H2020 MERLIN All-Partner Meeting
Virtual, Hosted in Germany
20-21 September 2023

German Peat and Humus Day
Bad Zwischenahn, Germany
21 September 2023
<https://ivg.org/veranstaltungen/deutscher-torf-und-humustag>

German National Committee
Ansprache von Moor- und weiteren organischen

Böden mit Hilfe der neuen Bodenkundlichen
Kartieranleitung (KA6)
Nuthe-Nieplitz Lowlands and Dahme-Heideseen
Area, Brandenburg, Germany
25-27 September 2023
www.dgmtv.de

International Union for Conservation of Nature UK
Peatlands Conference
Ely, Cambridgeshire, UK
3-5 October 2023
www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org

Lowland Agricultural Peat Workshop
Bridgwater, Somerset, UK
17 October 2023
www.paludiculture.org.uk

German National Committee
Peatland and Peat Seminar and Excursion
Zeven, Rotenburg/Wümme, Germany
19-20 October 2023
www.dgmtv.de

German National Committee
Moor Muss Nass, but How? Peatlands and
Landscape Hydrology
Lübbenau, Germany
20-21 Oktober 2023
www.dgmtv.de

Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association
Annual Meetings
Edmonton, Canada

6-8 November 2023
www.peatmoss.com

IPS Executive Board Meeting
Riga, Latvia
7-9 November 2023

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP28)
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
30 November - 12 December 2023
www.cop28.com/en

British Society of Soil Science and the Soil Science Society of Ireland - Joint Annual Conference
4-5 December 2023
Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK
<https://soils.org.uk>

American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting
San Francisco, USA
11-15 December 2023
www.agu.org

The activities of our National Committees can be found in the attachments. IPS representatives attended a large number of the virtual conferences arranged by other organizers. An updated list of IPS and related peat(land) events can be found at www.peatlands.org/events.

Conventions and Cooperation

Cooperation with international conventions has continued under the leadership of Professor Rieley, supported by Dr Berglund.

The IPS follows, in particular, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, in which the IPS is active in four tasks in the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD).

It is one of the tasks of the IPS to present science-based facts to its members and stakeholders. This is best conducted face to face and in a balanced manner.



The RE3 conference offered a broad variety of interesting excursions. Photo: Örjan Berglund

The IPS decided not to participate in person in the UNFCCC COP28 in Dubai, UAE, but followed the developments and press releases.

In addition, the IPS has cooperated successfully with the Global Peatlands Initiative (GPI), the Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association (CSPMA) and Growing Media Europe (GME).

Projects: MERLIN

The IPS continued to participate actively in the EU Horizon 2020 (H2020) "Mainstreaming Ecological Restoration of Freshwater-related Ecosystems in a Landscape Context: Innovation, Upscaling and Transformation" (MERLIN) project. This project is being led by the University of Duisburg-Essen and comprises 46 partners with a total budget of €21 million, of which the IPS's share is €55,550.

The work of the IPS is mainly related to Work Package 4 on Transformation. This includes organising round tables between MERLIN work package co-ordinators and peat industry stakeholders on the potential involvement of the peat extraction sector in Europe in upscaling peatland restoration from their extraction fields to the wider landscape, in addition to provision



Social events, coffee breaks and dinners were excellent for networking at RE3.
Photo: Paddy Rowland

6, 40720 Jyväskylä (until March 2024).

The accounting is conducted electronically by TietoAkseli, together with the IPS staff. Jenni Kovanen, authorized public accountant at Saimaa Audit Oy, was appointed auditor by the Annual Assembly.

Finances and Funding

The income statement of the IPS shows a deficit of €15,300 for the financial year. Receivables amounted to

€17,700 on 31 December. We hope that these will be paid in spring 2024. The National Committee fees for 2022 of Indonesia and Ukraine were removed as bad debts in December.

The deficit was mainly caused by a lack of industry fees compared to the original (interim, autumn) budget including recruitment, as well as higher investments for travelling, policy work, administration, etc., after the end of Covid. In addition, the costs of the Peatlands and Climate Change book occurred in 2023, while sales income and donations will materialise mainly in early 2024.

The EB proposes that the deficit should be covered by previously accumulated funds until stability in the funding is reached via further negotiations until full implementation of the 2022 position paper. If that is not successful by 2025, costs will have to be cut drastically, possibly including staff expenses.

The income from the MERLIN H2020 project is used gradually according to the work input of the Scientific Officer.

The total income of the IPS was €193,700, with expenditure amounting to €209,000. Assets and liabilities totalled €317,000 on 31 December.

The IPS is mainly financed by membership fees, of which the largest number are paid by corporate associations and NCs. In addition, the IPS collects a 15% commission when organising major events,

of expert advice on peatlands and peat from an international point of view to other MERLIN partners.

The annual MERLIN all-partner meeting was held virtually on 19-20 September, attended by Jack Rieley.

A pre-peat extraction sector round table was held on 17 January, followed by the official MERLIN peat sector round table on 2 May 2023, in which IPS members participated by commenting on the draft documents.

Professor Rieley and Dr Berglund also participated in the MERLIN field excursion and workshop to the River Forth catchment in Scotland on 17-21 April 2023. The Secretary General attended a visit to the Komppasuo case study site in Finland.

Secretariat and Staff

In 2023, the staff of the IPS Secretariat consisted of the Secretary General of the IPS, Susann Warnecke, working in Jyväskylä, Finland, and since March, Scientific Officer Örjan Berglund, who is located in Uppsala, Sweden.

The major tasks of the Secretariat include overall administration and the organisation of the EB, the SAB and other meetings, as well as conferences, communications and finances.

The IPS Secretariat continues to be based at the facilities of the Start Up Leipomo, Nisulankatu 78 B

such as International Peatland Congresses. The income from the RE3 conference amounted to €4,800. We warmly thank the organisers, especially Professor Line Rochefort, for their generosity.

Thanks to increased interest rates, the IPS was also able, for the first time in at least 20 years, to accumulate interest from short-term investments, which totalled €1,300 by the end of the year.

Allan Robertson Grants

The IPS awarded six Allan Robertson Grants to research students and young professionals last year. The winners were Robert McHenry, Raquel Fernandes, Antonia Hartmann, Aamir Shehzad Khan, Bethany Copsey and Anne Eberle.

Each grant amounts to €500 and the reports will be published in Peatlands International. The application period usually closes on 31 January. Funds are provided by the IPS, as well as voluntary NCs and individuals.

Honorary Members

The IPS currently has 18 honorary members. The new honorary members include Valerijs Kozlovs, Anne Jelle Schilstra and Paul Short.

It was with great sadness that we heard of the passing of our honorary members Ivan Lishtvan and Don Grubich. Our Finnish honorary members were invited to a dinner with the EB in Jyväskylä in March.

Honorary membership nominations can be sent to the EB via the Secretariat at any time.

National Committees

At the end of the year, the IPS was represented locally by the following NC Chairs and Secretaries (the Russian NC was embargoed as of March 2022).



IPS President Marko Pomerantz was glad to sign a cooperation agreement with Taizhou city and Northeast Normal University representatives in August, getting ready for IPC2024. Photo: Hannu Salo

The most up-to-date contact details are available at www.peatlands.org/about-us/national-committees.

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Prof. Fahmuddin Agus, fahmuddin_agus@yahoo.com
Prof. Budi Intra Setiawan, budindra@ipb.ac.id



One of the research project meetings of IPS, Growing Media Europe and the Peat Alliance was held in Riga in autumn. Photo: Susann Warnecke

Prof. Jack Rieley, jack.rieley@btinternet.com

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NC and Commission reports are published on the IPS website and in this report.

Outlook

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Sharon Yu Ling Lau, lauyuling@gmail.com
(Treasurer)

Sweden

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The Netherlands

Guus van Berckel, g.vanberckel@griendtsveen.de
Dr Michiel Gerding, secretaris@veengenootschap.nl (until December 2023)

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Volodymyr Hnieushev, volod-g@ukr.net

United Kingdom

Prof. Susan E. Page, sep5@le.ac.uk

Since the end of 2023, the activities of the IPS have continued normally. However, the unpaid membership fees and the ongoing uncertainty with regard to future industry fees continue to present certain challenges.

The IPS expects to increase NC fees by 3% to compensate for inflation. The IPS is proposing that industry fees be increased in line with the position paper. The budget for 2024 was written in accordance with the position paper.

However, as feedback from industry at the end of the year indicated, contributions from the latter might be smaller, which poses a risk for the IPS. Rolling budgets will be used to balance income and expenses throughout the year.

As of EB meeting 137 of November 2023, previously accumulated surpluses can be used to ensure the IPS's activities in the case that the fee income is lower than originally budgeted.

Attachments

Member Statistics
Scientific Advisory Board Report
Commission Reports (not yet received)
Expert Group Reports
National Committee Reports

Financial Report (signed separately)
Auditor's Statement

Approved by the EB on 13 February 2024, and to be approved by the Annual Assembly in August 2024. Official version in Finnish. Signed by the EB and the Auditor.

Member Statistics

Status 1.1.2024

	Individual members	Corporate Members	Research Institutes, Universities	Governmental Institutes	NGOs	Honorary Members (NC+IPS)	Students	TOTAL
Indonesia	429		1					430
Germany	297	51	6	10		14	30	408
Finland (Suoseura+Bery)	227	19				11	13	270
The Netherlands	36	13	4			2		55
Malaysia	41	5					1	47
Ireland	37	3		1	3	1		45
China	38		6					44
Japan	36	1				2		39
Estonia		38				1		39
United Kingdom	23	4	1	1	1	1	6	37
Canada (CSPMA+CSPP)	6	23				3	2	34
USA	21	2				2		25
Sweden	14	13						27
Latvia	16	3	1		2	2		24
Lithuania	2	18						20
Ukraine	10	3	1					14
1st January 2024	1233	196	20	12	6	39	52	1558
1st January 2023	1233	190	11	9	6	32	61	1542

	Individual Members	Corporate Members	Students	Honorary Members	NGOs	Research Institutes, Universities	Governmental Institutes	TOTAL
Norway	2	2	1			1		6
Denmark	1	2	1					4
Poland	2		1	1				4
Australia	2		1					3
Belgium	1	2						3
France	1	2						3
Hungary	2							2
Portugal			2					2
Spain	2							2
Bulgaria	1							1
Chile	1							1
Iceland	1							1
Italy	1							1
Peru			1					1
Rwanda		1						1
Singapore	1							1
South Korea	1							1
1st January 2024	19	9	7	1	0	1	0	37
1st January 2023	16	9	5	2	0	1	0	33

	Jan-24	Jan-23	Jan-22	Jan-21	Jan-20	Jan-19	Jan-18	Balance
NC members	1558	1542	1577	1676	1711	1363	1387	16
Non-NC members	37	33	31	37	44	44	50	4
	1595	1575	1608	1713	1755	1407	1437	20

Russia & Belarus
embargoed in
support for Ukraine.

International Peatland Society

Business ID: 1074181-4

Financial statement in accordance with the Accounting Ordinance for
small- and micro-sized enterprises
between 01.01.2023 - 31.12.2023

This financial statement is to be stored until 31.12.2033

Financial statement 01.01.2023 - 31.12.2023

Index

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The financial statement and accounting journals are to be stored for 10 years after the financial year.

Financial year's bookkeeping material is required to be stored for 6 years, beginning from the end of the year the financial year has ended.

This financial statement has been prepared by:
UHY TietoAkseli, authorized accounting firm
info@tietoakseli.fi

Contact information for International Peatland Society

Address: Nisulankatu 78, 40720 Jyväskylä

Business ID: 1074181-4

Domicile: Jyväskylä

1074181-4

Balance sheet

	31.12.2023	31.12.2022
ASSETS		
NON-CURRENT-ASSETS		
Tangible assets		
Machinery and equipment	285,92	381,22
Tangible assets in total	285,92	381,22
NON-CURRENT ASSETS TOTAL	285,92	381,22
CURRENT ASSETS		
Receivables		
Short term		
Trade debtors	17 673,00	17 618,05
Other receivables	399,37	399,37
Prepayments and accrued income	1 946,13	1 095,38
Short-term receivables in total	20 018,50	19 112,80
Total receivables	20 018,50	19 112,80
Investments		
Other investments	150 000,00	0,00
Investments in total	150 000,00	0,00
Cash in hand and at banks	146 676,73	331 003,68
CURRENT ASSETS TOTAL	316 695,23	350 116,48
ASSETS IN TOTAL	316 981,15	350 497,70
LIABILITIES		
CAPITAL AND RESERVES		
Retained earnings	289 323,91	269 771,63
Surplus (-deficits) for the financial year	-15 337,83	19 552,28
CAPITAL AND RESERVES TOTAL	273 986,08	289 323,91
CREDITORS		
Short term		
Accounts Payables	4 982,00	5 642,28
Other creditors	20 590,16	41 167,01
Accruals and deferred income	17 422,91	14 364,50
Short term creditors total	42 995,07	61 173,79
Creditors in total	42 995,07	61 173,79
LIABILITIES IN TOTAL	316 981,15	350 497,70

1074181-4

Income statement

	01.01.2023 - 31.12.2023	01.01.2022 - 31.12.2022
ACTUAL OPERATION		
PUBLISHING		
Income	5 553,51	6 087,86
Expenses	-11 066,18	-9 449,88
PUBLISHING TOTAL	-5 512,67	-3 362,02
CONFERENCES		
Income	4 817,31	0,00
Expenses	-624,30	-53,17
CONFERENCES TOTAL	4 193,01	-53,17
PROJECTS		
Income	6 947,23	2 735,22
Expenses	-2 497,55	-4 419,28
PROJECTS TOTAL	4 449,68	-1 684,06
OTHER ACTUAL OPERATION		
Income		
Income	3 160,00	2 500,00
Expenses		
Wages and salaries	-102 352,95	-70 253,79
Pensions	-13 795,41	-12 891,88
Other insurances required by law	-7 590,30	-1 479,85
Depreciations	-95,30	-127,07
Other expenses	-67 715,57	-41 577,13
OTHER ACTUAL OPERATION TOTAL	-188 389,53	-123 829,72
ACTUAL OPERATION TOTAL	-185 259,51	-128 928,97
SURPLUS-/OPERATING DEFICIT	-185 259,51	-128 928,97
MEMBERSHIP FEES		
Income	171 893,00	148 772,25
Expenses	-3 282,00	-291,00
MEMBERSHIP FEES TOTAL	168 611,00	148 481,25
SURPLUS-/TRADING DEFICIT	-16 648,51	19 552,28
INVESTMENT AND FINANCING ACTIVITY		
Income	1 310,68	0,00
Expenses	0,00	0,00
INVESTMENT AND FINANCING ACTIVITY TOTAL	1 310,68	0,00
SURPLUS-/OPERATING DEFICIT	-15 337,83	19 552,28
SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	-15 337,83	19 552,28

Income Statement / Budget

INCOME STATEMENT	Realised 2023	Budget 2023	Realised 2022
	As of 31 December 2023.	Approved 7 March 2023 EB; 10 June 2023 Annual Assembly	
INCOME			
Membership fees			
Membership fees total	171,893 €	173,996 €	148,772 €
Publishing			
Sales of magazines	59 €	60 €	59 €
Advertisement income	4,232 €	2,000 €	4,022 €
Sales of publications	1,066 €	3,000 €	2,007 €
Other publication income	196 €	0 €	0 €
Publishing total	5,554 €	5,060 €	6,088 €
Events			
Travelling and meeting income	0 €	0 €	0 €
Conference income (15% commission)	4,817 €	0 €	0 €
Events total	4,817 €	0 €	0 €
Other			
Grant contributions	2,000 €	2,000 €	2,500 €
Project income	6,947 €	26,825 €	2,102 €
Donations	1,160 €		
Interest income	1,311 €	0 €	0 €
Other income total	11,418 €	28,825 €	4,602 €
INCOME TOTAL	193,682 €	207,881 €	159,462 €
EXPENSES			
Staff and external services		SW + ÖB	SW only
Salaries	-102,353 €	-72,000 €	-71,136 €
Additional staff (SO, was Merlin)		-50,000 €	0 €
Auditing	-1,860 €	-2,000 €	-1,860 €
Accounting	-10,440 €	-10,000 €	-5,595 €
Social security	-6,763 €	-1,100 €	-973 €
Pension funds*	-13,795 €	-13,000 €	-12,892 €
Insurances required by law	-827 €	-700 €	-683 €
Healthcare	-489 €	-2,000 €	-1,643 €
Other social costs	-986 €	-600 €	-227 €
Training	-354 €	-500 €	-250 €
Staff and external services total	-137,867 €	-151,900 €	-95,258 €
Facilities and administration			
Rent	-7,309 €	-7,309 €	-5,990 €
Cleaning	-379 €	-200 €	-181 €
Office equipment	-3,924 €	-4,000 €	-100 €
Office materials	-128 €	-400 €	-151 €
Printing and copying	-1,053 €	-2,300 €	-712 €
Books and magazines	-574 €	-660 €	-470 €
Mailing	-812 €	-2,500 €	-628 €
Phone and internet	-409 €	-1,000 €	-450 €
IT and maintenance	-2,358 €	-2,000 €	-1,585 €
Office catering and staff occasions	-62 €	-200 €	0 €
Other insurances	-1,485 €	-3,000 €	-1,572 €
Other costs	-72 €	-1,000 €	-1,034 €
Facilities and administration total	-18,564 €	-24,569 €	-12,873 €
Travelling			
Domestic travelling and accommodation	-845 €	-1,000 €	-671 €
Domestic allowances	-581 €	-1,000 €	-225 €
Foreign allowances	-2,477 €	-2,000 €	-672 €
Mileage allowances	-70 €	-1,000 €	-92 €
Secretariat foreign travelling and accommoda	-1,910 €	-2,500 €	-2,551 €

EB travelling and accommodation	-3,301 €	-4,000 €	-1,900 €
SAB travelling and accommodation	-1,354 €	-2,000 €	0 €
SO travelling and accommodation	-5,701 €	-2,500 €	
Meeting costs/room rents/internal catering	-4,819 €	-4,000 €	-695 €
Representation/external catering	-2,645 €	-2,000 €	-856 €
Registration fees	-2,613 €	-3,000 €	-1,575 €
Convention travelling	-2,222 €	-10,000 €	-3,262 €
Tropical peatlands	0 €	-1,000 €	0 €
Other travelling costs	-3 €	-1,000 €	0 €
Travelling total	-28,539 €	-37,000 €	-12,497 €
Publishing			
Online journal Mires and Peat	-5,500 €	-5,500 €	-5,000 €
Proofreading + translations	-1,487 €	-2,500 €	-1,584 €
Other publication costs (CC book realised)	-2,145 €	-200 €	-169 €
Website and email	-1,934 €	-3,000 €	-2,603 €
Book scanning	0 €	-100 €	0 €
Publishing total	-11,066 €	-11,300 €	-9,356 €
Other			
Other costs	-1,180 €	-2,000 €	-1,103 €
Project expenses (CC-book budgeted)		-8,200 €	-1,800 €
Merlin (in and out until properly reported)	-2,498 €	-26,825 €	-1,561 €
Conference expenses	-624 €	-1,319 €	-53 €
Allan Robertson Grants	-3,000 €	-3,000 €	-3,500 €
Marketing	-704 €	-1,000 €	-191 €
Membership fees	-127 €	-1,000 €	-125 €
Others total	-8,133 €	-43,344 €	-8,333 €
Financial			
Credit losses	-3,282 €	-4,000 €	-291 €
Depreciations	-95 €	-100 €	-127 €
Banking fees	-1,184 €	-1,000 €	-772 €
Webshop/credit card fees	-222 €	-700 €	-533 €
Interest expenses	0 €	0 €	-16 €
Other financial expenses	-68 €	0 €	-163 €
Financial total	-4,851 €	-5,800 €	-1,902 €
EXPENSES TOTAL	-209,020 €	-273,913 €	-140,218 €
SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	-15,338 €	-66,032 €	19,244 €

* 5% pension still to be paid for ÖB in 2024, provider not identified yet



Notes on the financial statements

Notes on the preparation of the financial statements

The financial statement has been prepared by using the valuation and sequencing presumption of principles and procedures in accordance with the Accounting Ordinance for small and micro-sized enterprises.

Information Concerning the Nature and Business Purpose of the Essential Off-Balance Sheet Arrangements and the Total Amount of Financial Commitments

	31.12.2023	31.12.2022
Rental liability	632,57	609,09

Notes on employees and members of governing bodies

	31.12.2023	31.12.2022
Average number of employees per annum	1,5	1

Notes on capital and reserves

	31.12.2023	31.12.2022
Retained surplus	289 323,91	269 771,63
Surplus (-deficit) for the financial year	-15 337,83	19 552,28
Capital and reserves	273 986,08	289 323,91

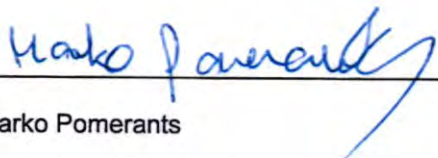
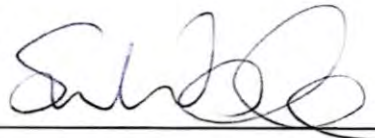
Total income



	31.12.2023	31.12.2022
Total income	193 681,73	160 095,33
Total expenditure	-208 924,26	-140 415,98
Depreciation	-95,30	-127,07
Surplus (-deficit) for the financial year	-15 337,83	19 552,28

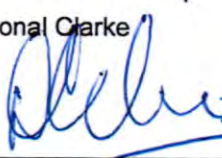
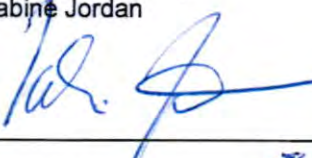
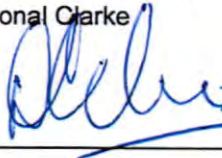
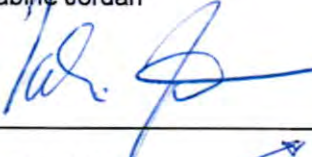
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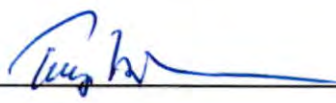
Date and signatures of the financial statement

Vantaa 11. April 2024

	
Marko Pomerants	Susann Warnecke
Chairman of the Board	Secretary General

	
Guus van Berckel	Jack Rieley

	
Donal Clarke	Sabine Jordan
	
Ashley Hingorani	Bernhard Hofer

	
Giedrius Kavaliauskas	Anna-Helena Purre
	
Meng Wang	Tuija Vähäkuopus

Auditor's note

Auditor report has been issued today.

Jyväskylä 26. April 2024


Auditor Mrs. Jenni Kovanen , authorized public accountant

List of accounting records and materials

Accounting records and materials and method of preserving

Financial statement

Financial statement	Digital archive
Balance sheet specifications	Digital archive

Chart of accounts and balance list

Account-specific income statement	Digital archive
Account-specific balance sheet	Digital archive
Account-specific balance sheet	Digital archive

Accounting records

Accounting journal	Digital archive
General ledger	Digital archive
Accounts receivable	Digital archive
Accounts payable	Digital archive
Payroll accounting	Digital archive
Salary/wage ledger	Digital archive

Receipts

Bank statements	Digital archive
Sales invoices	Digital archive
Purchase invoices	Digital archive
Salary statements and reports	Digital archive
Memo vouchers	Digital archive
Kausiveroilmoitukset	Digital archive
Note vouchers	Digital archive

All material is digitally archived.

Report of the Scientific Advisory Board

Overview of SAB activities in the Quadrennium 2020 - 2024

This quadrennium has probably been the most difficult one in the history of International Peatland Society, owing to Covid-19 pandemic, resignation of IPS Secretary General and IPS financial difficulties.

Covid-19 and its lockdown restrictions lasted from March 2019 until end of 2020. This put an end to face-to-face meetings, field excursions and conferences for the duration. Working patterns had to change in response and face to face events were replaced by virtual ones and conferences by webinars.

Gilbert Ludwig, IPS Secretary General resigned in February 2021 causing major inconvenience to IPS Secretariat. Much time was spent by Executive Board discussing the financial situation with the peat industry stakeholders and their funding concerns.

As an emergency measure Susann Warnecke was appointed by Executive Board as Acting Secretary General until a more durable solution could be found.

All of the Secretary General's environmental responsibilities and oversight of the work of IPS Commissions and Expert Groups became the

responsibility of Vice President 2 in his role of Chair of Scientific Advisory Board. These were regarded as temporary measures but in reality, lasted for almost three years when Susann Warnecke was promoted to Secretary General and Örjan Berglund was appointed Scientific Officer in March 2023 to deal with scientific issues and oversight of Commissions and Expert Groups for Scientific Advisory Board.

Role of Scientific Advisory Board

This is defined in Article 8 of IPS Statutes.

8.1: The Scientific Advisory Board advises the Executive Board on matters of scientific, technical and cultural importance.

8.2: The SAB consists of the Chairs of IPS Commissions and the Second Vice President of the IPS. Normally, VP2 is Chair of SAB providing a direct link between SAB and EB to ensure speedy flow of information between them.

SAB deals with all environmental, economic and societal matters on behalf of the Society. EB deals with all other matters including finance, governance, members interests, and stakeholder involvement.



One special highlight was Scientific Officer Örjan Berglund signing the employment contract with the IPS, here with Marko Pomerants and Jack Rieley in Jyväskylä. Photo: Susann Warnecke

SAB meetings 2020 - 2024

18 June 2020: Jack Rieley elected VP2 and Chair of SAB

22 September 2020; 16 November 2020;

9 February 2021; IPS Secretary General resigned;

6 June 2022; 14 December 2022; 14 February

2023; 2 March 2023; 11 March 2023; 5 June 2023;

2 October 2023; 15 January 2024.

PRINCIPAL SAB BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN 2020

Concept 2050

In early 2019, IPS decided to respond to challenges of the UNFCCC Paris Declaration 2015 on Climate Change Mitigation with a "Peat Concept 2050" for responsible management of peatland and peat globally. This 'Initiative Paper' is coordinated by IPS Commission Peatlands and Environment (CPE). The peat industry was asked to suggest priority objectives and issues that should be included in this document.

The CPE agreed in principle with the peat industry proposals made at the Workshop held in Vantaa, Finland in August 2019, but will also contribute information and workable solutions from its own sources and knowledge, together with input from IPS Expert Groups and other Stakeholders. If the goals of the Paris Declaration 2015 are to be achieved, "Peat Concept 2050" should be based on the IPS documents "Wise Use of Peatlands", Peatlands and Climate Change, and "Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management", but go beyond these to identify possible solutions to problems confronting peatland and peat managers and regulators, concrete framework conditions

and implementation actions. Much work has been done on this document under the leadership of Bernd Hofer, Chair of CPE, but has stalled because of the restrictions mentioned in the 'overview'.

Update of Peatlands and Climate Change book

Following recommendation from SAB, EB authorized an update of the Peatlands and Climate Change book, published in 2008 to take into account developments since that time. Maria Strack was commissioned as Editor. She was authorized to put together a panel of distinguished peatland experts to prepare this update. The first meeting of editors was held virtually on 17 August 2020. The updated book was published at the end of 2023.

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance

IPS continued to have Invited Observer Status (IOS) of Ramsar Convention Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) and participated in its meetings and work tasks.

The Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) was established by Resolution 5.5 in 1993 to provide scientific and technical guidance to the Ramsar Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands. Around 50 per cent of wetlands are peatlands.

The STRP's Work Plan for each triennium is built around the priority tasks approved by the Standing Committee, which are based upon requests from the Conference of the Parties by means of its Strategic Plan, COP Resolutions and Recommendations.



Global Peatlands Initiative

The Global Peatlands Initiative (GPI) is an effort by leading experts and institutions formed at the UNFCCC COP in Marrakech, Morocco in 2016 to save peatlands as the world's largest terrestrial organic carbon stock and to prevent it being emitted into the atmosphere. The current

greenhouse gas emissions from drained or burned peatlands are estimated to be up to five percent of the global carbon budget - in the range of two billion tonnes CO₂ per year.

GPI is hosted and funded by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Members of the Initiative are working together within their respective areas of expertise to improve the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of peatlands. In this way the Initiative is contributing to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, maintaining ecosystem services and securing lives and livelihoods through improved adaptive capacity.

IPS has been a partner in GPI since 2016 and currently is a member of the GPI Steering Committee.

IPS Strategic Plan

Since 2004 IPS has prepared Strategic Plans to identify priorities and implement actions for each quadrennium. 2020 - 2024 is the fourth Strategic Plan and much of its implementation tasks fall within the remit of SAB and its Commissions and Expert Groups. SAB also has a key role to play in preparing subsequent plans.

PRINCIPAL BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN 2021

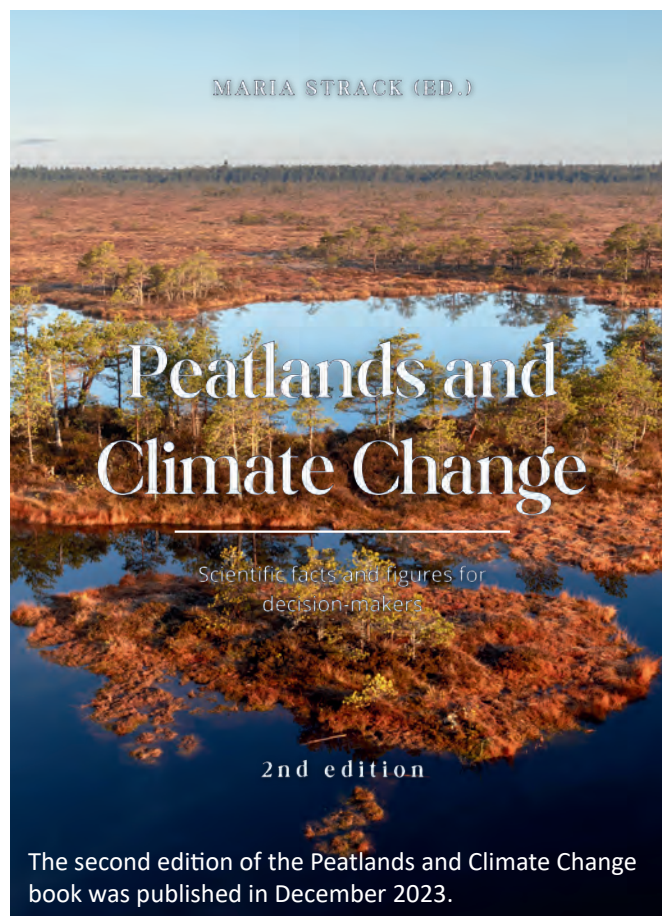
Covid-19 had a major effect on IPS activities, especially preventing face-to-face meetings. It was difficult to stimulate member interest. In this emergency, it was impossible to operate SAB in a 'business as usual' manner. Activities initiated in previous years that continued in 2021 included:

- Strategic Plan 2020 - 2024 implementation;
- Concept 2050 preparation;

Additional activities that came online in 2021 included:

EU Horizon 2020 MERLIN Project

MERLIN is a multi-stakeholder EU project under the Green Deal Horizon 2020 Programme. The acronym stands for: Mainstreaming Ecological Restoration of freshwater-related ecosystems in a Landscape context: INnovation, upscaling and



transformation. MERLIN is a consortium of 46 partners from 17 countries (research institutes on biophysical and socio-economic aspects of water management; NGOs; water boards and companies representing best practice case studies). The IPS is a partner.

The total budget is over €21 million over 4 years. The IPS budget is only €55,000 plus overhead. MERLIN is a set of innovation actions rather than a strict research project, more directed towards mainstreamed and upscaled products and practical restoration, something between a LIFE+ project and a research project.

UNFCCC COP26 Glasgow

As a member of UNEP/GPI IPS was entitled to host a session in the IUCN/GPI Peatland Pavilion at UNFCCC COP26 that was held in Glasgow, Scotland in November 2021. Following a recommendation from SAB, IPS EB agreed that IPS should submit a proposal to GPI for a session on Peatland Partnerships in Climate Change Mitigation and Nature Recovery. This was accepted and SAB Chair, Jack Rieley, was authorised to prepare and submit a proposal. This was accepted by GPI for a session of 60 - 90 minutes on a date to be agreed.

Potential contribution:

This would consist of face-to-face and virtual presentations of international research, and examples of responsible peatland management by presentations, visual aids, and interactive discussions. It would showcase to the world what peatlands are, which (ecosystem) services they provide, and what can be done to mitigate GHG emissions, in environment, economy and society. It would also be an opportunity to promote the IPS Peatlands and Climate Change Book, 2nd Edition.

Outcome:

IPS was allocated a 60-90-minute session on 11th November 2021. JR led the IPS team putting together the programme for this event. He contacted numerous members, partners, and stakeholders to determine who might be willing and able to participate. The general approach agreed by EB was to focus on the three Pillars of the IPS - Economy, Environment and Society. In view of this a tentative programme was prepared to fill the slot.

Programme: Peatland Partnerships in Climate Change Mitigation and Nature Recovery:

Chair of event: Professor Jack Rieley, IPS Vice President 2

Welcome by Dr Alue Dohong,
Deputy Minister of Environment and Forestry
Republic of Indonesia

1. Introduction to the revised IPS 'Peatlands and Climate Change' book - Maria Strack, Canada

2. Environment Pillar

a. Peatland Restoration - Case of Canada - Pete Whittington and Line Rochefort, Canada

b. Peatlands Internationally - case of Peru - Dr Lydia Cole, UK

c. Conservation of tropical peatland from the air and on the ground - Darmae Nasir and Mark Harrison, Indonesia and UK

3. Society Pillar

d. From facts to policies - Peatland fire management in Indonesia - Rachel Carmenta
Economy Pillar, UK

4. Economy Pillar

e. Peat - an important natural resource for food security and climate change mitigation - Guus van Berckel, Germany

f. Responsible Peat Production - Maureen Kuenen, Netherlands

g. German Peat Strategy: an assessment - Dr Bernd Hofer, Germany

5. Monitoring

i. Natural capital in Eco-management of tropical peatland - Mitsuru Osaki, Japan

j. Monitoring peatlands and restoration by remote sensing - Dr Florian Siegert, Germany

6. New Partnership

k. MERLIN - mainstreaming ecological restoration of freshwater-related ecosystems in a landscape context: innovation, upscaling and transformation



Q&A and Network Panel
Discussion - Chair Jack Rieley,
UK

PRINCIPAL BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN 2022

By the middle of 2022 work had resumed on most SAB activities and projects including:

- Concept 2050
- Strategic Plan 2020 - 2024 implementation
- Climate Change book

Additional activities that came online in 2022 included:

Position Paper

The Canadian IPS National Committee submitted a Position Paper on the scientific research that should be prioritised by IPS with suggestions for structural and staff changes.

This has implications for SAB. The Chair of SAB will also be referred to as 'Principal Scientist' to distinguish him/her from the 'Scientific Officer' that is a paid position.

Global Peatlands Initiative Steering Committee

A meeting of the GPI Steering Committee was held at Mar Lodge in Aberdeenshire, Scotland in May 2022, represented by Jack Rieley. The meeting discussed a wide range of peatland issues globally, terms of reference, and plans for the future.

Thünen Institute Germany

A report was received prepared by the Thünen Institute in Germany on an assessment of the availability of peat replacement ingredients for peat in growing media used in horticulture. This was assessed by SAB and IPS partners. Its conclusion that were sufficient quantities of a range of GM ingredients to replace peat was rejected.

EU MERLIN Project

Planning started for the first MERLIN Peat Extraction Sector Round Table that would be held on 25th April 2022. SAB selected the peat industry participants that would be involved. The meeting was a success and a Briefing Paper summarising the proceedings was prepared and circulated for comment.

PRINCIPAL BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN 2023

In February 2023 notice was received that the Scottish Government was holding a consultation on stopping the use of peat in horticulture,



following the lead taken in England. Following a recommendation from SAB IPS EB decided that IPS should contribute to this consultation. A special SAB meeting was held on 2nd March 2023 to decide upon a course of action.

It was agreed to follow the IPS 'Standard Operating Procedure' that was adopted at the meeting of IPS Expert Groups in Amsterdam in 2019. A small team of experts was formed led by Jack Rieley, including colleagues from peat industry partners Growing Media Europe (GME), Industrieverband Garten (IVG -German Garden Industry Association), and Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association (CSPMA). Four meetings of the expert team were held during March to May 2023. Work started by reading the consultation documentation.

The deadline for the consultation was 12th May 2023 and as a result of the Working group three individual submissions were made and a combined one representing IPS and industry partners.

RE3 Conference in Quebec City, Canada

IPS was a joint organiser of this important conference on ecosystem restoration. A paper about the work of IPS was prepared by Jack Rieley and Örjan Berglund and presented by the latter.

EU MERLIN Project continues

Besides numerous online meetings, Jack Rieley and Örjan Berglund participated in the MERLIN Work Package 4 field meeting to the River Forth catchment in Central Scotland. Jack Rieley

organised a visit to the peat extraction site that is being worked by Westland Horticulture Ltd, a member of IPS.

Other activities:

- SAB will provide advice to the organisers of the 17th International Peatland Congress in China in August 2024;
- Jack Rieley and Örjan Berglund attended a meeting in Riga, Latvia of the Peat Alliance to discuss the research priorities proposal.
- Input to the MERLIN Project continued with the Second Peat Extraction Sector Round Table on 2nd May. A pre-round table meeting of participants was organised by IPS. Jack Rieley and Örjan Berglund participated in the MERLIN All Partners Meeting that was held virtually in September.
- Concept 2050 is currently on hold owing to lack of resources.
- The Scientific Officer will take over co-ordination of the Commissions and Expert Groups from the Principal Scientist and prepare action plans up to August 2024.
- There will be more frequent meetings of SAB in future.

THE FUTURE?

- Jack Rieley will stand down from IPS Executive Board at the 2024 Annual Assembly that will be held during IPC2024 in China.

- The positions of Vice President 2 and Chair of Scientific Advisory Board will become vacant.
- Whoever is elected must be a scientist with wide knowledge of peatlands and peat.
- They must work closely with and co-ordinate the activities of the IPS Scientific Officer.
- SAB must respond to current and emerging affecting peatlands and peat globally and not wait for instruction from Executive Board.
- The future should be bright!

Jack Rieley
Chair SAB
8th March 2024

Commission Reports

No commission reports received (economy, environment, society).

Expert Group Reports

Peatlands and Agriculture

The Expert Group (EG) started in 2021 and has conducted several surveys to gain an overview of the most important questions and challenges related to the agricultural use of peatlands in different regions/countries.

We have obtained a global picture of regional differences and similarities in (1) regulations

and policies for responsible peatland use, as well as the related challenges and incentives for transitions in land use, and (2) the corresponding challenges and perspectives for agricultural enterprises, farmers and local communities. The results have been reported in Peatlands International.

In addition, we are working on a survey on national emission reduction targets for peatlands used for agriculture. Thanks to our members, we were able to collect data from about ten countries in Europe and Asia.



Towards 2028. Latvian National Committee and IPS representatives in Riga, Latvia in November 2023. Photo: IPS

What we have observed is that national targets set for a given year (e.g., 2030) vary from figures indicating the ambitions in lowering emissions in volume (Mton CO₂e per year) to indications on the percentage (%) of the total area of peatland in agricultural use that will be rewetted. Some countries express their ambitions in the total area (Mha) that needs rewetting and extensification.

There seems to be little alignment and coordination in the (political) choices made by the respective countries. This may be explained by the fact that until now, there has been very little practical experience in implementing these policies and hardly any evaluation of the feasibility and costs.

Further surveys and comparative studies are essential and offer opportunities for IPS to become a respected partner in the challenging transition that agriculture on peatlands is facing. Therefore, the EG - which mainly consists of scientists - would profit from contributions by farmers and their associations. In 2024 we aim to establish contacts with several agricultural organisations.

The following individuals are active members of the Expert Group: Jan van den Akker (Wageningen University, Netherlands), Christoph Buschmann (Thünen Institute, Germany), Chris Evans (Institute for Hydrology and Ecology, UK), Megan Hudson (Fenland SOIL, UK), Susan Page (University of Leicester, UK), Marcel Silvius (Global Green Growth Institute, Indonesia), Bidhya Sharma (McGill University, Canada), Hesti Tata (Forest Research and Development Center, Indonesia), Bärbel Tiemeyer (Thünen Institute, Germany), Barbara Kalisz (University of Warmia and Mazury, Poland), Sonja Paul (Agroscope, Switzerland), Douglas McMillan (Green Restoration Ireland Cooperative Society Ltd, Ireland), Örjan Berglund (Uppsala University, Sweden; IPS Scientific Officer) and Jos Schouwenars (Coordinator, Netherlands), with support from Susann Warnecke (IPS Secretary General).

Jos Schouwenars



National Committee Reports

Canada

This year the Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association (CSPMA) Team, with the support of the Board of Directors, made some serious impressions nationally and internationally.

With the leadership of CSPMA's Science Director, Stéphanie Boudreau, the association continues to collaborate with researchers on programs focused on Responsible Management and Ecological Restoration of Peatlands; Carbon Emissions during Peat Production, Use and End-use; and Fen Restoration and Ecotone Creation in Southeast Manitoba. All these programs are funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and the CSPMA members.

Contributing to a better understanding of peatland ecosystems and their management is a pride for our industry. The outcome of this research guides our decisions and actions to ensure that our industry approaches the future as responsibly as possible, based on the latest science.

For the majority of 2023, Stéphanie supported the academic researchers team in submitting an Alliance Program titled Nature-based Solutions: Restoration of peatlands for biodiversity recovery and climate change mitigation. Once approved, the program will be a significant investment made by industry and the continuation of the long



CSPMA President Asha Hingorani with IPS Executive Board members Tuija Vähäkuopus, Anna-Helena Purre, IPS President Marko Pomerants, Scientific Officer Örjan Berglund and EB member Meng Wang in Québec. Photo: Guus van Berckel

partnership history between CSPMA, academia and other scientific partners.

Further, in 2023 CSPMA announced the securement of funding for a pan-Canadian, five-year project aiming at restoring legacy horticultural peat extraction sites. The CanRePeat project is realized in partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) under the Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund, which aims to restore and secure carbon-rich ecosystems across Canada. The CanRePeat project is led by Daniel Campbell and 2023 marked some hard work which included the inventory and characterization of peatlands in Québec and New Brunswick. In 2024, the project will gaze West, and we hope to see the first sites being restored back to peat-accumulating ecosystems.

It goes without saying the RE3 Conference held in Québec City, in June 2023, was a highlight and a major success of the year. With the leadership of CSPMA's Peatland Affairs and Communications Manager, Marie-Claire LeBlanc, CSPMA was front and centre during the entire event as the main sponsor of the event including the development of a Peat hub, a collaborative peat industry booth, and well-executed excursions to peat

extracted and restored sites. RE3 brought in over 700 participants from 28 countries and we're still receiving positive outputs from the work done here.

The CSPMA Task Forces helped to move and shake up policy for the better throughout Canada. Task Forces in Alberta, Manitoba and New Brunswick were extremely active this year and have all had strong successes. The Alberta Task Force was successful in moving the Timber Damage Assessment Fee file with consultations expected to happen with industry in early 2024. The Manitoba Task Force was extremely active on various files through 2023 but of note, we were successful with hosting the Minister of Natural Resources, along



The RE3 conference field trips were of interest for many IPS members. Photo: Örjan Berglund

with various department officials at the Elma bog, where they received a deep dive into industry operations and peatland restoration.

The CSPMA's New Brunswick Task Force has picked up full speed in 2023 and has taken on the Duty to Consult file head-on. We're working very collaboratively with the government and will continue to do so in 2024 to ensure we have a clear path for the future.

At the federal level, CSPMA had meaningful engagement with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Natural Resources Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food. CSPMA also appeared before the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry to speak on the industry's contribution to food security and well-being. This federal engagement will continue with a CSPMA Board lobby day in early 2024.

Our influence continues to be felt internationally with strong collaboration with both the IPS and with Growing Media Europe. Following Canada's influence, this year the IPS has hired a Scientific Officer to help deliver on what the IPS does best, scientific collaboration and influence on the international stage.

These successes only scratch the surface but highlight that 2023 has been a year of change, growth, and strong engagement for the CSPMA.

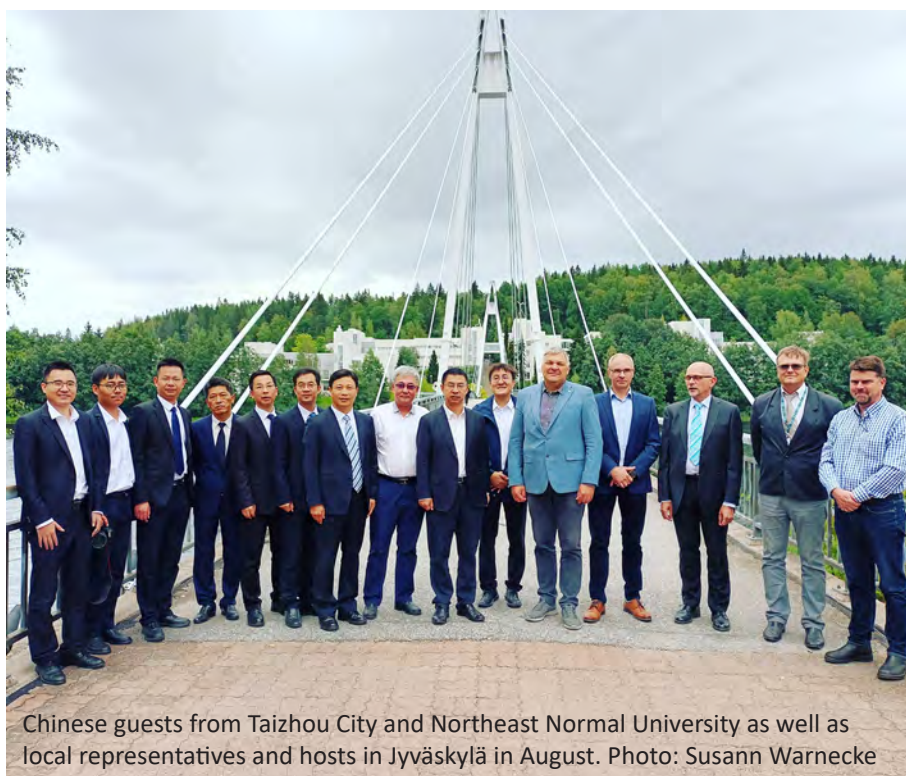
China

In 2023, the China National Committee witnessed an increase in membership from the original 33 individuals to 50. In addition to attracting researchers from universities and research institutes, we successfully engaged industry professionals. While conducting research on peatland conservation and sustainable development, we also prioritized providing technical support to peat-related industries.

The year 2023 marked the beginning of the post-pandemic era. The China National Committee actively supported domestic organizations involved in peat research and development, facilitating the completion of significant activities and promoting peatland research. Our primary focus in 2023 was preparing for the 17th International Peatland Congress scheduled for 2024. The venue, programme and themes for the Congress have been finalized, and we have launched the congress website, enabling participant registration.

Moreover, we undertook extensive efforts to advance peatland conservation research in China. For instance, our National Committee actively assisted in organizing the second Wetland Environment and Ecology Forum, which included a dedicated session on peatland research.

Furthermore, we supported the growth of peat enterprises and facilitated visits by organizations such as Taizhou Urban Construction and Investment Development Co., Ltd. to the Netherlands and Finland for research into the peat industry. Collaborations with relevant companies were established, and high-ranking officials from the Taizhou municipal government, including the Vice Mayor and directors of major government departments, visited the IPS headquarters in Jyväskylä to discuss cooperation for the 17th International Peatland Congress.



Chinese guests from Taizhou City and Northeast Normal University as well as local representatives and hosts in Jyväskylä in August. Photo: Susann Warnecke

Professor Meng Wang, one of the Executive Board members of the IPS, attended the Reclaim, Restore, Rewild (RE3) conference in Québec City, Canada, where he presented his latest research findings.

In 2024, our National Committee's primary focus will be the successful organization of the 17th International Peatland Congress. Additionally, while continuing to assist domestic research institutions in peatland conservation research, we will rely on the newly initiated Taizhou Peat Research Institute Co., Ltd. to conduct peat industry research and support companies in the development of peat-based products.

Estonia

The Estonian Peat Association represents 38 companies in the field of substrate and peat production in Estonia. In 2023, there was no change in the membership number.

Statistics

In Estonia, the amount of extracted peat in 2023 was approximately 834 kt from an area of 20,855 hectares; 12,149 hectares of which is in active use. Due to a rainy July and August, the production volume decreased slightly, from approximately 1,010 kt the year before.

More than 90% of peat products are exported, mostly as a constituent of growing media.

For many years the reclamation of cutover peatlands not in active use has been a high priority. The reclamation process is ongoing on 1,403 hectares of exhausted sites. By 2030, we aim to restore 5,000 hectares of cutover peatlands. The main target of reclamation is ecological restoration where possible. This creates the conditions for carbon accumulation and supports biodiversity.

Projects

The Estonian Peat Association signed a contract with the Estonian University of Life Sciences to conduct a study titled "Peat carbon cycle in soil", the aim of which is to model the effect of peat introduction on the soil carbon stock change using the internationally recognized Rothamsted carbon model (RothC) for soil carbon prediction.

In different scenarios, the model forecast estimates how much of the carbon transferred to the peat soil is bound into the permanent part of the soil organic matter and to what extent the carbon stock of the soil increases as a result. The effect of peat on the soil carbon stock is predicted by testing different amounts of peat in soils with different properties.

The Estonian Peat Association and the Estonian Environmental Investment Centre, in collaboration with Tallinn University and Tartu University, are continuing to conduct a study examining the circular economy principles of the horticultural peat products produced in Estonia to reduce

greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector. The research should be completed in 2024.

The aim of this study is to:

- investigate and take into account the dynamics of peat decomposition during its use;
- learn more about the carbon cycle of plants during growth on peat-based substrates (short carbon cycle);
- think more about the end-of-life process of peat substrates - circular economy



The Baltic Peat Producers Forum 2023 was hosted in Tallinn by the Estonian National Committee. Photo: Susann Warnecke

- and the carbon circle (back to soil or compost);
- find out the actual percentage of carbon emitted during the life span of peat-based substrates;
- improve the national emission calculation methodology.

Topic of the Year

Last year the central focus was on the European Union and national issues related to climate policy and greenhouse gas emissions. The European Commission's "Target 55" target level for Estonia in the LULUCF category for the year 2030 is -2.5 t CO₂eq. The main emphasis was on initiating the process of creating the climate law in Estonia that should come into effect in 2025. The key objective has been participation in various working groups to defend the peat sector's interests in the context of the future climate law.

In order to ensure continuity for the peat industry, we must conduct a study in Estonia to quantify actual CO₂ emissions from peat production sites, as well as restored and abandoned areas. This will help us to reduce GHG emissions from sites in production areas.

It is also important to determine the peat's chemical compounds in order to gain data on the carbon content and take these into account when calculating the annual results.

Events

The Estonian Peat Association participated in a number of events during 2023. In August, the Baltic Peat Producers Forum took place in Tallinn where we discussed five major topics: innovation, modern entrepreneurship, peat science, regional policy and European initiatives.

In addition, our national peat roundtable was coordinated by the Estonian Ministry of Climate and we attended a meeting to introduce the peat sector to the minister.

In November we participated in the annual meeting of the Estonian Peat Association. We enjoyed a great conference with interesting topics and discussions on the future challenges to maintaining a healthy relationship between environmental impact and economic well-being.



Erki Niitlaan handing over the BPPF baton to Giedrius Kavaliauskas from Lithuania. Photo: Susann Warnecke

Finland

The year 2023 was the society's 74th year of operation. The regular activities of the spring and autumn meetings and seminars were organized online. The 74th volume of the journal *Suo - Mires and Peat* was published. The IPS Annual Assembly was held on 10 June in Québec City, with Tuija Vähäkuopus representing the Finnish Peatland Society.

Meetings and Seminars

The statutory spring assembly and the spring seminar were held on 17 April online. Professor Maarit Middleton (Geological Survey of Finland) introduced a new Finland-wide database covering different peatland types, nutrient statuses and the use of peatlands. Dr Aleksi Räsänen (Natural Resources Institute Finland) presented the EU's Restoration Act and Dr Lauri Ikkala (University of Oulu) discussed the use of drones in following up peatland restoration processes. The spring seminar was attended by 34 participants.

The statutory autumn assembly and seminar (webinar) were held on 11 December. In the



On 7 September, the Leivonmäki bird wetland was opened by Neova Oy in Central Finland. Photo: Susann Warnecke

and Peat” in Zeven as a training course for laypeople, employees from the peat industry, administrations, non-governmental organizations and students, which took place with international participation on 24 and 25 April and 19 and 20 October.

Many thanks are due to Gerfried Caspers, Joachim Blankenburg, Eckhard Schmatzler and Andreas Bauerochse.

seminar, the results of the “Hiilestä kiinni - Catch the carbon” research and innovation programme by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland were presented. The outcomes of six projects were described by Annalea Lohila (Forests on peatlands - solutions for reducing emissions and increasing of carbon sinks, TURNEE), Risto Lauhanen (Uusisuo), Antti Miettinen (Kasvua), Liisa Maanavilja (JälkiHiili), Aleksi Räsänen (SysteemiHiili) and Asmo Hyvärinen (Merlin). The autumn seminar was attended by 44 participants. The society also actively participated in topical public discussions and in stakeholder cooperation related to the use of peatlands.

The fifth National Peatland Day symposium, Suopäivä, was actively planned to take place on 2 February 2024 in Helsinki (postponed to 5 April 2024). The year 2024 is the society’s 75th jubilee year, which will be celebrated by, e.g., excursions.

Germany

Covering such a wide range of topics on peat and peatlands across eight events in 2023 was only possible with the help of the German Peatland Society (DGMT) section chairs, cooperation partners and organisers. We would like to express our greatest appreciation to them.

The second part of the event on the topic of peatland education, entitled “Peatland climate education is future education”, ran from 24 to 26 March in Groß Hesepe and was jointly organised by the Emsland Moormuseum, the DGMT (Section 7) and the Succow Foundation, Janna Gerkens and Tabea Feldmann. This was followed by the first of two seminars on “Peatlands

Under the title “Perspectives for peatland protection in Lower Saxony: focus on forest peatlands” we have, together with the Lower Saxony Nature Conservation Academy (NNA), after a break of four years, revived the joint series of events for the exchange of the experiences of practitioners in peatland protection. Over 40 participants from all over Germany travelled to Volpriehausen on the edge of the Solling on 17 and 18 August.

From 25 to 27 September, the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin hosted a joint conference organised by the DGMT (Section 1) and the German Soil Science Society (DBG), and chaired by Niko Roßkopf, Albrecht Bauriegel and Stefan Frank, titled “Addressing of peatlands and other organic soils with the help of the new pedological mapping guide (KA6)”. This event, which consisted of a “theory” day and a field one, will take place again next year in a different region.

From 20 to 21 October, at an event jointly organised by Michael Trepel and Greta Gaudig, the DGMT (Section 5) and the Greifswald Mire Centre, colleagues met in Lübbenau (Spreewald) to discuss the topic “Peatland must be wet, but how? Peatlands in the landscape water balance” and the problem of rewetting and the rewettability of peatlands despite the challenges of climate change and water availability.

The series of events concluded with a repeat of the peat moss identification course at the MoorInformationsZentrum (MoorIZ) Ahlenmoor, from 2 to 5 November. This course, organised by Karin Fäcke and her team from the MoorIZ and run

by Dierk Michaels (Greifswald University), has now become a permanent feature of the joint events programme.

Andreas Bauerochse (DGMT) and Sabine Jordan (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Uppsala) organised the excursion “The peatlands of Svealand along the Limes Norrlandicus (Sweden)”. Together with colleagues from SLU, Uppsala University and the University of Lund, the excursion took place from 25 August to 1 September and discovered natural, semi-natural, degraded and rewetted peatlands along this prominent botanical and cultural-historical border area.

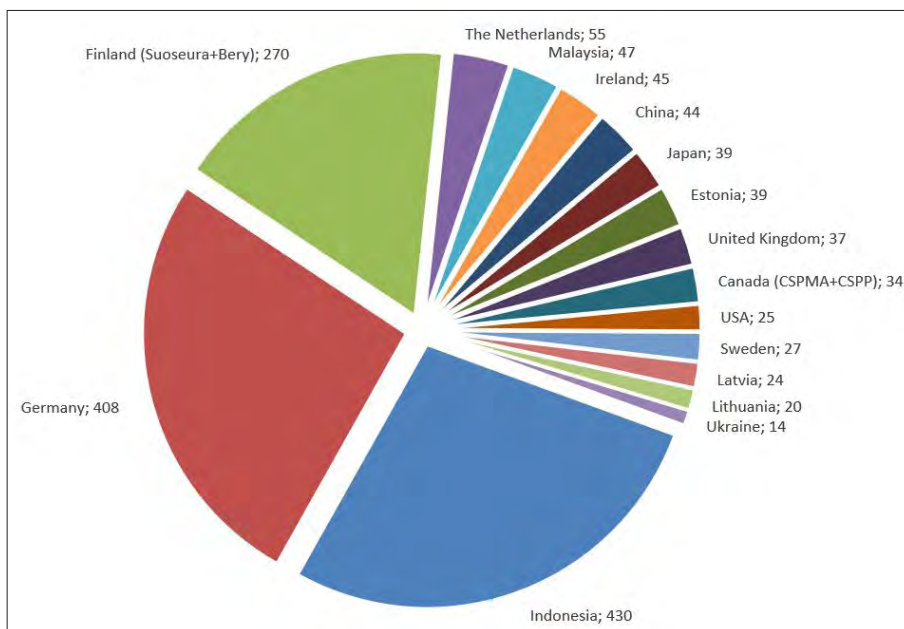
Many members of the DGMT have been involved in various working groups on the subject of peatland and peat at local, state and national levels and have contributed their expertise to various discussions.

On 26 July 2023, our honorary member and long-standing editor of TELMA, Prof. Dr Volker Schweikle, passed away unexpectedly. Prof. Dr Schweikle was the editor of our publication series for over 25 years, during which he constructively assisted a large number of authors with their publications. We mourn him deeply.

TELMA 53, our annually published national journal with articles and reports relating to peat and peatlands, can be ordered at <https://www.dgmt-ev.de> or can be found online at <https://e-docs.geo-leo.de/handle/11858/6421>.

The annual conference of the DGMT, held from 6 to 8 June, at the Emsland Moormuseum in Groß Hesepe, will be one of the highlights in 2024.

Over the course of three days, there will be a varied agenda of lectures, as well as interesting excursions and an extensive supporting programme. Check out Jahrestagung 2024 at www.dgmt-ev.de and join us!



Distribution of IPS membership as of December 2023.

Ireland

The principal activity in the year under review was the Road Trip event that took place in October, the essential purpose of which was to explore the history and heritage of what lies within our peatlands. Centered on the midlands of Ireland, the study tour programme included visits to five sites: Corlea Bog Co. Longford; the Celtic Roots bog oak studio in Co. Westmeath; Clonnydonnin Bog Co. Westmeath; Lemanaghan Bog Co. Offaly and Mongan Bog Co. Offaly. The road trip took place on the 11th and 12th October 2023.

The sites were chosen to provide insights into the importance of the peat deposits in the peatlands and what these can tell us about the country's history and heritage and the valuable stores of carbon contained within them.

Highlights of the road trip were the prehistoric Iron Age oak trackway on peatland at Corlea in Co. Longford; the Celtic Roots bog oak art studio in Co. Westmeath; a practical demonstration of how to calculate the carbon stocks present in bog peat from a peat core taken on site at Clonnydonnin Bog Co. Westmeath; a visit to Lemanaghan Bog in Co. Offaly, said to be the location of the highest density of peatland archaeological sites in the world; and Mongan Bog Co. Offaly, one of the most intact midland raised bogs in Ireland with a high proportion of Sphagnum moss-dominated peat forming vegetation.

Peatlands have been forming in Ireland for 10,000 years. They are a major feature of our landscape and culture. The peat deposits in the Midland peatlands can be as much as 10m deep. As they grow, they preserve a record of their own formation in the peat layers of partially decomposed plant remains making it possible to reconstruct the stages in their own formation. The lack of oxygen in the waterlogged peat provides perfect conditions for the preservation of organic artefacts and structures. The depth of peat within them represents a “carbon sink” making them ideal for helping to tackle climate change.

Acknowledgement and gratitude are due to Bord na Móna, NPWS and RPS for their sponsorship of the event as well as to all who participated. Apart from the event outlined above, the Society was represented at the 2023 IPS Annual Assembly that took place in Québec and was also represented at IPS meetings in Estonia where a plan was discussed for the IrPS to host an international conference in 2026 as a prelude to the 2028 International Peatland Congress provisionally scheduled for Latvia.

The IrPS is also pleased to report that a number of new members joined during the year.

Malaysia

Celebrating the Significance of Tropical Peatland

We are pleased to share with you the exciting experiences and vital insights from the recent event organised by the Malaysian Peat Society (MPS) in collaboration with the Sarawak Tropical Peat Research Institute (TROPI) on 23 September

2023. Aptly titled “Discover the Hidden Treasure: The Tropical Peatlands of Sarawak”, it represented an important milestone in promoting the understanding and appreciation of tropical peatlands.

The event, which was attended by over 200 people, including key representatives from government agencies, non-governmental organisations and the private sector, underlined the crucial role of tropical peatlands in protecting the environment. A special highlight was the insightful presentation by Dr Lulie Melling, a recognised authority on peatland research with over two decades of experience. She explained the role of peatlands in mitigating climate change and conserving biodiversity and addressed the challenges faced by researchers in this field.

Often humorously dubbed “sexy soil”, tropical peatlands are characterised by their unique qualities. These ecosystems are not only rich in biodiversity, but also play a crucial role in combatting climate change thanks to their water-saturated and acidic conditions.

Dr Melling’s expertise was evident as she delved into topics such as natural carbon sequestration in the peatlands of Sarawak and the intricacies of their conservation. She emphasised the importance of understanding and protecting these remarkable ecosystems because they provide important ecological services such as carbon storage, water regulation and habitat provision.

One of the key messages of the event was the importance of effective scientific communication.

She pointed out the frequent challenges that scientists face in terms of making complex concepts understandable and appealing to a wider audience. She argued in favour of science communication that is both engaging and credible, ensuring accuracy without sacrificing appeal.

The event also featured an exhibition highlighting the ecological and cultural importance of peatlands and a short tour of the TROPI



During the opening speech of the MPS-TROPI Peat Talk 2023.
Photo: Sarawak TROPI

laboratory, in addition to poster presentations and exhibitions at the facility. The participants were invited to immerse themselves in the beauty and importance of these ecosystems through interactive and educational exhibits.

This event successfully highlighted the invaluable role of tropical peatlands and celebrated their ecological and aesthetic importance. The MPS-TROPI initiative has undoubtedly promoted public understanding and appreciation of these unique natural wonders.

As we face the challenges of climate change, initiatives like this remind us of the vital natural treasures we need to protect. By advocating for the conservation and sustainable management of tropical peatlands, we are contributing to a healthier, more resilient planet for future generations. Let's work together to value and safeguard these "sexy" ecosystems, whose importance extends far beyond their immediate visual appeal.

The Netherlands

In 2023 the Dutch IPS committee tried to establish closer relations with other national organisations related to soil science and land use.

On 12 May we organised a seminar in Zegveld (Utrecht) on "Agricultural peatland use and options to reduce GHG emissions" together with the Dutch Soil Science Society and the Network Land and Water. Contributions were provided by scientists, farmers and politicians from province and water authorities. The successful seminar was attended by about 60 participants.

Over the next few years, our aim is to organise more events in collaboration with other peatland-related organisations. This will increase both the potential quality and quantity of participants. We have invested to strengthen our contacts with members from the industrial sector to guarantee their commitment and IPS membership for the future. In addition, we have made inquiries amongst our members to find out what they



The participants posed for a group photo at the MPS-TROPI Peat Talk 2023.
Photo: Sarawak TROPI

think about our activities and how these could be improved.

From 1 January 2024 onwards, Dr Michiel Gerding will hand over his role as Secretary to Dr Jos Schouwenaaars.

Sweden

The year 2023 was used to reorganise the Swedish Peat Research Foundation (TorvForsk) and to recruit new members. It was also characterised by intensive scientific outreach to the media by individual TorvForsk members regarding the actions of the climate activists "Återställ Våtmarker" (Restore Wetlands) and the Swedish programme for drained peatland rewetting.

Many events about peatlands and peat organised by other organisations were attended and scientifically supported by TorvForsk members. These included several workshops on greenhouse gas emissions and climate reporting as well as the rewetting of drained peatlands, in addition to Sustainable Development Goals within the Environmental Objectives Committee in the Swedish parliament and an excursion titled "The peatlands of Svealand along the Limes Norrlandicus" organised by the German Peat and Peatland Society (DGMT), where natural, semi-natural, degraded and rewetted peatlands along this prominent botanical and cultural-historical border area have been discovered.

United Kingdom

The year two thousand and twenty three was a difficult one for the IPS UK National Committee owing to the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic

and resignation of the IPS Secretary General in 2021. This put additional responsibility onto Jack Rieley, IPS Vice President 2 and Chair of IPS Scientific Board who also acts as Secretary and Treasurer of the UK National Committee. This is an unsustainable situation that needs to be addressed. As a result, membership numbers have declined by about one third and the three long-time industry members have not renewed their corporate subscriptions.

In spite of this the UKNC has been active through its secretary/treasurer in several important activities including EU Horizon 2020 MERLIN Project that focusses on upscaling wetland (including peatland) restoration, Steering committee of the Global Peatlands Initiative of United Nations Environment Programme, responding to the Scottish Government's consultation on phasing out the use of peat in horticulture in Scotland, and on supporting the IPS-funded Allan Robertson Grants for early career researchers and managers.

IPS is one of 46 partners in MERLIN with a responsibility to provide an interface with the European peat extraction and growing media industries to find if it would be possible for industry to use their expertise, experience and machinery to contribute to upscaling peatland restoration beyond the restricted limits of their normal operations.

As part of this EU project the IPS UK National Committee team contacted Westland Horticulture Ltd, a major UK peat extraction, growing media,

and garden equipment company to permit a MERLIN team to have access on 20th April 2023 to Whim Moss, one of their extraction sites, in the Scottish borders. There they viewed the scientific work being conducted and the peatland restoration successes. Jack Rieley gave a presentation at the associated workshop.

Professor Rieley, a member of the IPS UK National Committee, and a member of the Steering Committee of the Global Peatlands Initiative, also represented the Society at the meeting organised by IUCN and GPI at the Marr Estate in the Highlands of Scotland in May 2023.

As usual, the IPS UK National Committee made a major contribution to the IPS Allan Robertson Grants to early career researchers and managers. In 2023 six awards of €500 were made. Over the ten years of the grant 85 have been awarded. This is a major achievement and is greatly valued by the recipients.

This is my final Annual Report to Annual Assembly since I am retiring from my roles on the Executive Board of the International Peatland Society at 17th International Peatland Congress in Tanzhou, China in August 2024.

At that time there will also need to be major changes to the operation of the UK Peatland Society to ensure its sustainability. This means others from the UK membership must step forward and take over responsibilities for member management, newsletter and other jobs. The future of this Society is in your hands, not mine.

Jack Rieley

USA

The US NC Member Meeting was held on 5 October 2023, attended by 6 of 24 current members. The US National Committee is considering several options to raise membership and operational funds. Meetings with the Canadian IPS are planned for early 2024 to investigate how peat retail sellers can benefit from IPS and in-turn contribute to IPS financial goals.

Further reports of National Committees can be found at the IPS website as soon as they arrive.



IPS stand at a local fair in Jyväskylä in May 2023.
Photo: Susann Warnecke

Scan for more
information



15TH INTERNATIONAL SAGO SYMPOSIUM

Unlocking the Potential of Sago Palm: Towards Sustainable
Food Systems and Environmental Restoration

23rd - 26th September 2024

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In Memoriam: Bambang Setiadi

23 May 1952 - 15 December 2023



Friend and colleague Bambang Setiadi. All photos provided by Jack Rieley

It is with great regret we record the passing of our colleague and dear friend Bambang Setiadi after a sudden stroke. He was not only a colleague of ours and others in the study of peatland and peat in Southeast Asia but a personal friend of myself and my family.

We first met at an international conference on 'Tropical Peatland' that was held in Kuching, Sarawak in 1991. He found something interesting in a paper I presented so we had a meeting to discuss, following which we agreed to work together, and the rest is history. At that time Bambang was a junior research officer in "Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi"

(BPPT - Indonesian Government Agency for the Assessment and Implementation of Technology). He was also studying for a Ph.D. at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) in Yogyakarta, East Java. Our partnership helped shape our research activities in Indonesia for the ensuing thirty years.

Early Years

Bambang was born in Magelang, Central Java on 23rd May 1952 and passed away in Jakarta on 15th December 2023, age 71. His father was a retired police officer and his mother a member of the Magelang Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) that is elected by the citizens of each region of Indonesia. He leaves behind his wife WiWiek and daughter Hanning who are in our thoughts and to whom we send the condolences of the entire peatland family across the world. Bambang was a strong man in his personal, religious and scientific beliefs, his dedication to the importance of peatland and peat, especially in his home country of Indonesia, was unshakable.

He developed an interest in peatland and the properties of peat soils from an early age. He started work as a peatland research agronomist, and the topic of his doctorate was the potential of adding volcanic ash as a mineral supplement to promote the growth of crop plants on peat soils. The premise behind his research was that on the one hand Indonesia had a very large area of peatland that was very acidic and toxic

to plant growth, and on the other, Indonesia was a centre of considerable volcanic activity the ash from which produced fertile soil, so by combining the two it might be possible to increase food production for Indonesia's rapidly increasing population.

His parents supported him to obtain his doctorate while also working in BPPT (Ministry of Technology) where he became part of a research team focussing on peatland and peat. Under his influence BPPT established the first tropical peat research centre (PURIGATRO) in the Rasau Jaya district of West Kalimantan where he conducted field trials on the effect of various levels of volcanic ash added to peat soil on growth of a range of food plants.

Dr Peat

As his knowledge and expertise grew, he became known as 'Dr Peat'. In 1987 he was involved as a translator in the International Peat Society (IPS) symposium on "Tropical Peat and Peatlands for Development" that was held in Yogyakarta, East Java. Around the same time, he invited several people to join him in forming the Indonesia Peat Society (Hutan Gambut Indonesia - HGI) which later became the Indonesia National Committee of IPS.

His determination and enthusiasm grew to the point of putting his own life at risk. Tropical peatland in its natural condition is difficult to access as it occurs in very remote places under conditions of considerable wetness and presence of many hazards. He was once adrift for eleven days in peatland between the city of Palembang and a transmigration settlement in South Sumatra. On another occasion he was caught in the middle of a peat fire, and on yet another he had an accident on a logging railway. For him it was not enough to focus on agriculture problems on tropical peatland, but he had to get to the source of the problem.

As time progressed Bambang became concerned about the wisdom and motive behind deforesting, draining and developing peatland in Indonesia, especially when this scaled up

in the 1990s to include plantations of oil palm and Acacia paper pulp trees.

When we first met in 1991 these socio-economic changes were just beginning and we did not realise how terrible, futile and disastrous they were to become, especially the ill-fated Mega Rice Project (MRP) in Central Kalimantan that was implemented in the 1990s.



Young Bambang.

Under President Soeharto, Indonesia had undergone a period of rapid economic development based on exploitation of the country's natural resources, especially coal, oil, forests and rice production. For Indonesia's success in achieving self-sufficiency in rice cultivation Soeharto was awarded the prestigious gold 'Ceres' medal by United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in 1986. In the 1990s, however, economic development changed emphasis to industrial and urban development, building on land that was formerly rice padi, and leading to a decline in rice production and loss of the country's former self-sufficiency.

Over a period of ten years or so since the medal was awarded it was estimated that Indonesia had lost around one million hectares of fertile rice padi, mostly in Java. President Soeharto decided this one million hectares of 'lost' rice padi would be compensated for by developing a similarly large area of forest and wetland, mostly peatland, in Central Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo). Formerly, peatland development in Indonesia had been mostly for transmigration to provide homes and income for some of the poorest people from over-populated regions such as Bali, Java and Madura. Developing natural peatland for rice cultivation turned out to be a disaster because of the high acidity and toxicity of the peat and

water. It also happened to be in the area I had chosen to conduct my field research.

Deforestation and construction of drainage and irrigation channels commenced in January 1996, and almost immediately it became obvious that the project was ill thought out, inappropriate, and would encounter many problems. Bambang saw that the MRP could not achieve its targets, and in fact the project was so unsuccessful it never grew any rice and was abandoned in 1999 by President Habibie. Bambang contributed much of the evidence to the President why it should be stopped, based on information obtained in the field by my research teams. As a result, President Soeharto lost his FAO medal.

CIMTROP and the Natural Laboratory

To understand the problems of managing tropical peat swamp forest Bambang and I decided we had to obtain official recognition of the importance of our field research base in the catchment of the Sabangau River in Central Kalimantan. We did this, in 1998, by persuading Nasution, then Indonesian Minister of Forestry to transfer management of a 500 square kilometre section of peat swamp forest to the BPPT Division of the Ministry of Research and Technology, under the direction of Dr Bambang Setiadi and designate it the “Natural Laboratory

for Sustainable Management of Tropical Peat Swamp Forest”. This was the first scientific research station for tropical peat swamp forest and its day to day management was vested in the “Centre for International Cooperation in Management of Tropical Peatland” (CIMTROP) of the University of Palangka Raya, under the directorship of Suwido Limin.

Perhaps it was fate, or maybe our research had ‘come of age’, or more likely we happened to be in the right place at the right time because subsequent funding proposals to both the UK Darwin Initiative and the EU (EUTROP) were successful and tropical peat research collaboration went forward for the next fifteen years with the collaboration of many scientists from Europe and South East Asia and the unstinting support of Bambang and his team. Bambang through BPPT was a partner in four major EU Funded international, multidisciplinary scientific research project on tropical peatland and peat - EUTROP, STRAPEAT, RESTORPEAT, and CARBOPEAT - over a period of fifteen years.

Bambang’s career

Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi (BPPT)

Bambang had a long and successful career within BPPT, the Indonesian Government



Agency for the Assessment and Implementation of Technology of the Ministry of Technology. Over forty four years he had responsibilities not only for peatland and peat but also disaster and risk management in maritime and terrestrial areas of Indonesia.

His knowledge and ability to get things done led Bambang to achieve positions of importance and influence within the Indonesian Government administrative structure. This is exemplified when he was appointed a Deputy to the Indonesia Minister of Research and Technology, Professor B.J. Habibie (later President of Indonesia after Soeharto fell from power), a position he held for many years.

One of the responsibilities given to him by President Yudhoyono following the abandonment of the Mega Rice Project was to chair the Ad Hoc Committee established by the President to “Accelerate the Rehabilitation and Restoration on the Ex-peat Area Development in Central Kalimantan. The aims and targets of this Expert Group were to produce guidelines for Government institutions at national and local levels, and other stakeholders, in their efforts to rehabilitate the one million hectare Ex-peat Area Development (Proyek Lahan Gambut satu juta hektar, PLG) through the following activities:

1. Evaluate the handling of the Ex-Mega Rice Project
2. Develop the rehabilitation concept for the Ex-PLG Project
3. Suggest a mechanism for the management of the Ex-PLG Project through co-ordination among the institutions involved, and
4. Prepare an alternative recommendation for the rehabilitation of the Ex-PLG Project.



Closing of the IPS Tropical Peatland Round Table in Jakarta in November 2017: IPS President Gerald Schmilewski, Harris Gunawan, Bambang Setiadi and Mitsuru Osaki.

Deputy Minister of Research and Technology

As Deputy Minister Bambang was responsible for the preparation and co-ordination of national research programmes building international research co-operation and co-ordinating seven research institutes. He was a member of the team evaluating national research proposals.

National Standardisation Agency of Indonesia

From 2008 to 2012 Bambang was appointed by the President to be Chairman of the National Standardisation Agency of Indonesia (Badan Standardisasi Nasional; BSN), the International Organization for Standardisation (ISO) member body for Indonesia. BSN is a non-ministerial Indonesian government agency with the main objective of carrying out governmental tasks in the field of standardisation and conformity assessment in Indonesia. The agency also has the responsibility to develop and maintain Indonesian National Standards. He was responsible for 300 administrative staff and scientists setting national standards and accrediting laboratories. He led Indonesian delegations to international meetings of the ISO



Cheerful Bambang with Jack Rieley and Susan Page.

for discussions and formulation of international standards. For this work he received a special commendation for his achievement in leading 137 developing countries to implement an Action Plan for ISO during 2010-2012. He also received an ISO Technical Committee commendation for initiating standards for deforestation and promoted co-operation with thirty universities on providing education about standardisation at international and national meetings on the theme of scientific and professional co-operation.

National Research Council of Indonesia

In 2015 Bambang was appointed chair of the National Research Council of Indonesia, a position he held until his untimely death. During his time as chair Bambang was highly active attending meetings, speaking and advising throughout Indonesia and internationally, too many to itemise in this obituary. I shall just provide a few examples:

At a meeting of the World Resources Institute Indonesia (WRI) Bambang gave a speech about his government's policy to achieve universal electrification throughout the country without increasing GHG emissions, maintain accountable land use, and enforcing sustainable land use

practices. He stressed that innovation must go hand in hand with commercialisation.

Member of the Expert Advisory Team of the Indonesia Peatland Restoration Agency

When President Joko Widodo established the Indonesia Peatland Restoration Agency (Badan Gambut Restorasi, BRG) on 2016 Bambang was appointed a member of its expert Advisory Team for his knowledge of peatland and peat. An interview for the East Kalimantan newspaper *Berita Kaltim* Bambang stressed that the future of our planet was water, not oil or energy, and it should be understood that peat is a natural way to store water. He mentioned that when humans mishandle and mismanage peat, things happen such as river water receding and river width narrowing. There are two things essential for peatland restoration. The first is vegetation restoration, using locally available peatland plants, and second is water restoration by blocking channels and drains.

Indonesia Peat Prize

In 2018 Bambang led a team of scientists from Indonesia, Germany and the Netherlands that won an international competition to produce a fast, accurate and cost-effective way to map Indonesia's vast tropical peatlands that are an important carbon sink and store. The winners received a prize of one million US dollars funded by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation on 2nd February 2018 to coincide with World Wetlands Day.

Representing Indonesia at International Level

As Deputy to the Indonesia Minister of Research and Technology Bambang led high-level delegations to many countries across the world. Here is an example of one to Japan in 2018:

"A delegation from the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education of Indonesia and the National Research Councils of Indonesia, headed by Dr Bambang Setiadi visited Kyoto University on May 16, 2018. They met with Prof. Yausuyuki, Vice President for International Strategy, Prof. Mamoru Kanzai of



Bambang with his colleague Mitsuru Osaki from Japan.

recipient of two awards from the President of the Republic of Indonesia for his pioneering research on tropical peat and peatland, co-founder of the Natural Laboratory for Peat Swamp Forest. In addition, he was founder and leader of two national organisations related to peat and natural resources, and a Commissioner on the Board of the State Owned Enterprises related to the defence industry. On top of this he was studying for his Research Professorship.

Graduate School of Agriculture, and Dr Muneo Takatani, Senior Adviser for International Affairs in the Office of Society-Academia Collaboration for Innovation. After discussing the Indonesian Government Centre of Excellence Project, the group explored the possibility for collaboration between Kyoto University and Indonesia, including industry-academia cooperation initiatives.

Other activities and honours

These include Member of the Board of Experts of the Indonesia Insinyur (Engineer) Association,

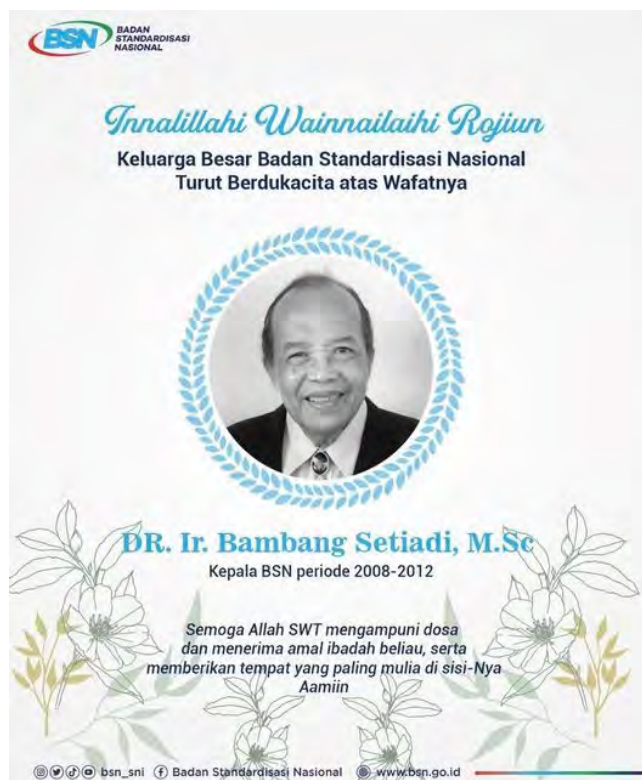
Throughout his career Bambang Setiadi was a member of the International Peatland Society. He was a founder member of the Indonesia Peat Society (HGI) and its President for many years. At the time of his death, he was an active member of the IPS Environment Commission and one of its Vice Chairs. He will be sadly missed.

On behalf of the international peat family and all of the students and international researchers to whom Bambang functioned as mentor, we extend our deepest sympathy to WiWiek and Hanning, his wife and daughter. Farewell our colleague, friend and brother. We hope you have gone to a good place and that you will find peace there.

Kata-kata sudah berlalu,
Tinggal Kenangan tentang engkau yang sangat mendalam,
Dan, kami akan terus mengenangmu, selalu
(The words have already passed, memories of you are profound, and we shall continue to remember you, always.)

This dedication was prepared by Professor Jack Rieley, IPS Vice President 2, and Professor Susan Page, of the University of Leicester, UK on behalf of all Bambang's former colleagues and friends in the IPS and around the world.

A longer article on Professor Setiadi's work, "Principles of Management & Rehabilitation of Tropical Peatland" will be published in Peatlands International 2.2024.



New Members of the IPS

New members (or new contact persons for organisations, in brackets) are mainly approved by our sixteen National Committees. For all other countries, the approval is made by the Executive Board of the IPS.

Each National Committee is asked to compare their membership list to that of the IPS at least once a year (status below as of 1 January). In some countries, IPS has both a National Committee and an industry association as a member.

In countries without a National Committee, member applications can be sent directly to the IPS Secretariat or online via www.peatlands.org/join-us.

Members are currently not accepted from Belarus and Russia. Membership fees are invoiced for the first year immediately, after that in June/July, this year in August. Beware of scam emails.

Corporate members, research & government institutes

Canada: Laura Harvey (Aurora Peat Products)

China: Jianliang Liu (Chengdu Institute of Biology, Chinese Academy of Sciences), Manying Zhang (Institute of Wetland Research, Chinese Academy of Forestry), Xiaoxin Sun (Northeast Forestry University)

Finland: Pekka Tennilä (new CEO Neova Group)

Germany (DGMT): Agnes Lauko (Bayerische Landesanstalt für Landwirtschaft), Sanja Schophuis (Kekkilä-Brill Substrate GmbH)

Ireland: Emma Keys, Stephen Nolan (Bord na Móna), Conor English (Coillte)

Individual members & students

China: Zhong Cai, Junlin Chen, Lijuan Cui, Zhendong Guan, Juping Hu, Xiangfu Huang, Chao Song, Weikang Tao, Zhifang Wang, Bin Zhang, Yanling Zheng

Finland (Suoseura): Sonja Granqvist, Roosa Hautala, Lauri Ikkala, Nina Kumpulainen, Emilia Tuomaala

Germany (DGMT): Carl Barnick, Cristian Estop Aragones, Jean Nicolas Haas, Nicole Jüngling, Dietmar Mehl, Lara Moldenhauer, Anke Nordt, Saskia Rupp, Barbara Schmatzler, Sara Wegrzyk, Veronika Wenz

Sweden: Antonia Hartmann, Mattias Lundblad

United Kingdom: James Banks, Scott Davidson, Megan Hudson

USA: Desra Arriyadi

More info and membership form:

www.peatlands.org/join-us

Membership benefits:

4 issues of Peatlands International / year | 10-12 issues of Peatland Snippets / year | Significant discounts at IPS events, congresses and symposia & IPS online store. | Excellent networking possibilities with peatland science and peat-related industry. Supporting the only peatland organisation worldwide that involves members from all sectors. Welcome!

FAO launches inaugural field project in Congo Basin to advance sustainable peatland management for climate action

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has launched its first-ever peatlands field project in the Congo Basin, supporting climate action and sustainable livelihoods in the region.

The project, Global approaches to securing carbon, water, and biodiversity in peatlands, focus on the Congo Basin, leverages best practices on sustainable peatland management and state-of-the-art technology, including FAO's SEPAL platform and a suite of monitoring tools, to promote evidence-based decision-making on peatlands and actively support the people who depend on them.

The project has field activities in the Lac Télé-Lac Tumba landscape, a cross-border Ramsar site situated in both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo. The area encompasses at least 165 000 square kilometers of peatlands, holding around 29 gigatons of carbon - equivalent to two years of global emissions - making it a crucial freshwater biodiversity hotspot in Africa that sustains local livelihoods.

The tools and approaches developed together with partners will serve as inspiration for other countries with forested, tropical peatlands, through innovative knowledge exchange efforts.

FAO's first official activity is the national consultative workshop "Water, climate and peatland monitoring tools" that took place in Brazzaville (18-19 March 2024) and Kinshasa (21-22 March). Co-organized by FAO, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UNEP-DHI Center on Water and Environment, the workshop aims to foster collaboration and

strengthen the transformative dialogue between stakeholders regarding water-related challenges and peatland monitoring needs to stimulate impactful climate action in the region.

"FAO's commitment to fostering sustainable livelihoods in peatland landscapes is centered on a collaborative approach, effectively engaging with local communities," said Maria Nuutinen, FAO Forestry Officer, who is leading the technical work at FAO.

The project is implemented in close collaboration with UNEP, the main grantee of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety as part of the International Climate Initiative (IKI) and executed in close collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and the Congo Basin of the Republic of the Congo.

Other project partners include GRID-Geneva, the UNEP-DHI Center on Water and Environment, the University of Leeds, the Wildlife Conservation Society, and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature. For the full press release, visit <https://bit.ly/congofao>.

Zoie Jones

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Twitter: @FAOAfrica

Premier Tech and MG Tech join expertise in the packaging industry

Premier Tech and MG Tech are pleased to announce a strategic and promising partnership that will shape the future of both companies. Drawing on their respective expertise, they will meet the evolving needs of manufacturers - in the nutrition, industrial, fast-moving consumer goods and parapharmacy industry - for packaging technologies with high-performance and innovative solutions.

The addition of Premier Tech to MG Tech's capital will allow the French group to fully leverage the global ecosystem of Premier Tech Systems and Automation and access an extensive network of products, services and technologies to support its growth in the American and international markets. "With the integration of Premier Tech Systems and Automation to the MG Tech ecosystem, we will expand our footprint and further open ourselves

to the world. We have built this partnership with a group sharing the values of MG Tech, with teams close to their customers. The establishment of our subsidiary in Canada confirmed that our end-of-line packaging equipment is perfectly designed for the North American market. We will come up, alongside Premier Tech, with new services and continue our international expansion," says Eric Gautier, President of the MG Tech group.

"Right from the start, we saw that our companies' markets and territories complement each other, as well as our human approach. Following extensive discussions, we have agreed to collaborate closely over the coming years. The addition of Premier Tech to MG Tech's capital underscores a shared commitment to an ambitious, long-term vision and development plan. I am very pleased that our discussions have led to this partnership," says Xavier Lucas, General Manager of the MG Tech group.



Xavier Lucas (General Director at MG Tech), André Noreau (President and Chief Executive Officer at Premier Tech Systems and Automation), Eric Gautier (President at MG Tech), Simon Roy (President and Chief Operating at Premier Tech Systems and Automation), and Jean Bélanger (President and Chief Executive Officer at Premier Tech). Photo: Premier Tech 2024

It will also allow Premier Tech to expand its technological platform portfolio as well as its North American and global offer, while strengthening its European footprint. "With this strategic

partnership, our group Premier Tech Systems and Automation lays strong foundations for its expansion in France. It gives us access to leading-edge technologies, strengthening our position as global leader,” says Jean Bélanger, President and Chief Executive Officer of Premier Tech.

“This partnership opens the door to the global expansion of our secondary packaging operations, previously centred in North America. It sets the development of market segments with a broader range of products such as leading-edge case erectors and robotic case packers. Joining forces allows us to harness complementary strategic skills, delivering more value to our clients,” says Simon Roy, President and Chief Operating Officer of Premier Tech Systems and Automation.

About MG Tech

The MG Tech Group is specialized in the design and production of complete end-of-line packaging equipment: from case shaping to automated palletizing machinery, including automated product packaging and intelligent logistics.

Our robotic know-how allows us to provide packaging equipment with built-in functions and industrial robots. The group, labelled “Showcase Industry of the Future”, is committed to providing its industrial clients with long-term support and reliable, evolving equipment for greater productivity, agility and comfort.

The MG Tech Group has more than 200 employees spread into three production sites in France - an unmatched expertise in leading-edge technologies and a guarantee of quality and trust.

For more information about MG Tech, visit:
www.mgtech-group.com

About Premier Tech

At Premier Tech, we are all about making a difference by connecting People and Technologies for over 100 years. One team driven by a shared will to deliver sustainable solutions that help feed, protect and improve our world. Premier Tech has a wide range of products, services, brands and technologies allowing to increase crop yields, bring

beautiful gardens to life, automate the handling and packaging operations of many manufacturing facilities, treat and recycle water, support companies in their digital transformation and offer bio-ingredients for the well-being of humans and animals.

Premier Tech today records sales of more than one billion dollars and is growing internationally, driven by its 5,200 team members in 28 countries. This is our time as we move Beyond 100.

For more information about Premier Tech, contact:

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Peat and Peatland Events

Functioning and rehabilitation of European
mountain peatlands
Bois-d'Amont, France
15 - 17 May 2024
<https://bit.ly/3OOLIBu>

Connecting Communities with Peatland
End of Project Conference
Athlone, Ireland
24 May 2024
<https://communitywetlandsforum.ie>

Executive Board meeting 141
MS Teams
28 May 2024

World Peatlands Day
2 June 2024
#worldpeatlandsday

German National Committee (DGMT)
Annual Meeting
5 - 8 June 2024
Geeste, Germany
www.dgmt-ev.de

IUFRO World Congress 2024
Stockholm, Sweden
23 - 29 June 2024
<https://iufro2024.com>

IMCG Field Symposium and General Assembly
Freising to Greifswald, Germany
26 July - 9 August 2024
www.imcg.net/pages/events.php

17th International Peatland Congress
Peatlands in a Changing World
IPS Annual Assembly & General Assembly
Executive Board meetings 142 and 143
Taizhou, China
4 - 9 August 2024
<https://ipc2024.com>

14th European Conference on Ecological
Restoration
Tartu, Estonia

26 - 30 August 2024
<https://sere2024.org>

Baltic Peat Producers Forum
Birstonas, Lithuania
18 - 20 September 2024
www.balticpeatproducersforum.eu

Peatlands and Ecosystem Functions
Freising, Germany
18 - 21 September 2024
<https://www.hswt.de/en/newsroom/event-calendar>

DGMT Forest Peatlands Conference
Laußnitz, Bautzen, Germany
20 - 22 September 2024
www.dgmt-ev.de

15th International Sago Symposium
Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia
23 - 26 September 2024
<https://sagosymposium.com>

UN Biodiversity Conference #COP16
Cali, Colombia
21 October - 1 November 2024
<https://www.cbd.int>

UNFCCC COP29
Baku, Azerbaijan
11 - 22 November 2024
<https://unfccc.int/cop29>

IVG Sector Day Soils & Substrates
Bad Zwischenahn, Germany
21 November 2024
<https://ivg.org/veranstaltungen>

Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel
(STRP) 27th Meeting
2 - 5 December 2024
Gland, Switzerland
www.ramsar.org

Send your events to the IPS Secretariat,
susann.warnecke@peatlands.org!

Next issue...

A few instructions for authors

Articles should be sent as text file (500-2,000 words, no pdfs, no full cap lines, no embedded links) with author contact details; photos and illustrations (jpg files with the names of the photographers, you need to have copyrights & persons' consent) and advertisements (pdf, prices according to Media Kit) to susann.warnecke@peatlands.org. Proofreading will be carried out via www.englishproofread.com

Submission deadline: PI 2.2024: 1 June

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Changing the funding model?
Results of the IPS member survey
spring 2024

Spring Excursion to Liesjärvi
National Park in Finland



Your article here?
Contact us at
ips@peatlands.org.