



Annual Report 2008



International Peat Society | IMTG MTO

International Peat Society
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Annual Report 2008
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Contributions by IPS National Committees and Commissions

Secretary General's Review



The main activity of IPS in 2008 was the International Peat Congress held under the theme "The Future of Peatlands" on 9 - 13 June in Tullamore, Ireland. The Tullamore Peat Congress set new records when 550 delegates from almost 30 countries participated in the event. About 200 presentations were given and 80 posters shown at the conference facilities of the Tullamore Court Hotel. In addition to the scientific sessions, the participants took part in field trips, numerous meetings and evening banquets. The Post-Congress tour was also well attended. The most broadly discussed topics at the Tullamore Congress were the climate change impact of peat and peatlands as well as the status of tropical peatlands.

On behalf of IPS, I would like to record my warmest thanks to the Irish National Committee, the Organizing Committee of the Congress, all volunteers, the sponsors, the municipality of Tullamore as well as the Government of Ireland and finally, all participants for providing all of us with such a wonderful event. Thank you!

The next Congress will be organized in Stockholm, Sweden in June 2012. The competition to host the 2016 Congress was opened at the end of 2008: all National Committees of the IPS may send an offer to host the Peat Congress 2016. The deadline for applications including appendices is Wednesday, 30 September 2009.

The International Peat Society held its 12th Annual Assembly of National Representatives on Friday, 13 June 2008 in Tullamore. The Assembly elected Donal Clarke new IPS President, Björn Hånell 1st Vice President and Tomasz Brandyk 2nd Vice President. In place of the retiring Executive Board members, Jack Rieley from the United Kingdom and Gerry Hood from Canada, the National Representatives elected Satu Helynen from Finland and Paul Short from Canada. Dmitriy Gogin was re-elected as Executive Board member for another term. On this occasion I want to thank outgoing President Markku Mäkelä for his excellent work for the IPS as well as Board members Jack Rieley and Gerry Hood for their remarkable contributions to our Society.

As a new project in 2008, IPS investigated the possibility of preparing a Certification Scheme for Sustainable Management of Peatlands. IPS prepared the Scheme in cooperation with the Finnish consultancy company Indufor Oy and the plan was presented at the Tullamore Congress. There is an increasing demand for information on the nature and origin of peat as well as the sustainable management of peatlands. Voluntary certification has been undertaken in other areas, such as forestry, and would greatly benefit authorities as well as all other bodies dealing with peatlands and peat. Of special concern in this matter are tropical peatlands which annually release enormous amounts of greenhouse gases due to peat fires, and also, apparently, due to the removal of the original peat swamp forest and afforestation with biofuel crops.

A certification scheme would set generally accepted criteria for ecological, social, economical, climate and other impacts on peatlands affected by human activities. At the end of 2008, IPS decided to start the first phase of the certification process - preparation of a Global Peatland Management Strategy together with various stakeholders. This work is aimed to be completed during 2009. After that, different peat and peatland stakeholders may

decide whether or not to proceed with peatland management certification and the creation of certification standards.

During the review year, the IPS Climate Change Working Group finalized its work on the book "Peatlands and Climate Change" which was launched at the International Peat Congress in Tullamore in June. The book offers a summary of currently available scientific knowledge and helps to understand the role of peatlands and peat within the context of global climate change. An executive summary, which forms the introduction of the book, was distributed to all IPS members and other important stakeholders. The 223-page printed publication has been very much in demand. IPS would like to thank all authors who made it possible to prepare this valuable book.

The Scientific Advisory Board of the IPS, formed by the Chairs of the IPS Commissions, has carried on its activities successfully. It is the SAB's primary task to act as a pool of scientific knowledge for IPS by exchanging ideas concerning the scientific work of the Commissions and to ensure a



better communication among its members and with the Executive Board. In June 2008, the new Commission IX on Tropical Peatlands was established.

The IPS Award of Excellence 2008 was conferred at the Tullamore Congress on Mrs. Riitta Korhonen for her outstanding engagement in the development and understanding of the Wise Use concept for peat and peatlands, especially in peat balneology in Finland and internationally.

The joint scientific journal of IPS and IMCG, "Mires and Peat", which was launched in 2006 as an online publication, carried on its activities to good effect, thanks to the Editors and the Editorial Board of the Journal. All IPS members are asked to submit their scientific papers to "Mires and Peat" to make the Journal even more active and more widely recognized.

The Profit and Loss Account of the IPS shows a profit of € 26,210.51 (2007: profit of € 43,221.93) for the financial year 2008. This is mainly due to the results of the International Peat Congress in Tullamore.

The total income of the IPS was € 202,603.12 (2007: € 183,725.19), with expenditure incl. depreciation amounting to € 176,392.61 (2007: € 140,503.26). The financial situation of the IPS is stable. The profits of the last two years will be used for the activities and projects of the IPS during the next few years to come.

As of 31 December 2008, the IPS membership comprised a total of 1,272 (2007: 1,285) members in 33 (35) countries. The IPS is represented by 20 (2007: 20) National Committees.

I want to give my warmest thanks to all IPS members and to all of you who have contributed to the work of IPS. Your input is usually based on voluntary efforts and therefore it must be highly respected. Once again I want to thank the members of our Executive Board for their good and smooth cooperation as well as the Scientific Advisory Board, the National Committees, Commissions and Working Groups.

And finally thanks to the IPS staff and the associate organizations at the IPS office. All of you have done very important work for the IPS and for peat and peatlands. It is a privilege to work and cooperate with you.

Jaakko Silpola
IPS Secretary General

Report of the Executive Board

Administration

Annual Assembly of National Representatives

The International Peat Society held its 12th Annual Assembly of National Representatives on Friday, 13 June 2008 in Tullamore, Ireland. The Assembly was attended by thirteen (13) representatives of the National Committees, coming from Canada, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine and the USA. Additionally, ninety-seven (97) observers were present.

The Assembly adopted the balance sheet, the annual report and the auditor's report for 2007, and approved the plan of activities, budget, affiliation and membership fees for 2008 as well as a framework for budget and membership fees 2009. Arto Saarinen from Deloitte & Touche Oy was elected as auditor and the company was authorized to nominate a substitute auditor for IPS.

The Assembly elected Donal Clarke new IPS President, Björn Hånell 1st Vice President and Tomasz Brandyk 2nd Vice President. In place of the retiring Executive Board members, Jack Rieley from the United Kingdom and Gerry Hood from Canada, the National Representatives elected Satu Helynen from Finland and Paul Short from Canada. Dmitriy Gogin was re-elected as Executive Board member for another term. The Assembly thanked outgoing President Markku Mäkelä for his excellent work for the IPS.

The tradition of holding a Round Table Discussion for National Committee Representatives was successfully continued on 12 June, the day

before the Annual Assembly. The Annual Assembly 2009 will be held in Belfast, Northern Ireland in April 2009.

Members of the Executive Board

According to the Statutes of the IPS, the Executive Board consists of the President, the 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents and from two to six ordinary members. The current members of the Executive Board and their terms of office are:

		Term of office
President Donal Clarke	Ireland	2008-2012
1st Vice President Björn Hånell	Sweden	2008-2012
2nd Vice President Tomasz Brandyk	Poland	2008-2012
Ordinary members		
Håkan Bjur	Sweden	2006-2010
Valerijs Kozlovs	Latvia	2006-2010
Jutta Zeitz	Germany	2006-2010
Dmitriy Gogin	Russia	2008-2012
Satu Helynen	Finland	2008-2012
Paul Short	Canada	2008-2012

Meetings of the Executive Board

In 2008, the IPS Executive Board held eight meetings: in Brussels in March, by E-mail in April, in Tullamore, Ireland in June three times, in August and October by E-mail and finally in Jyväskylä,



The IPS Executive Board in Tullamore. Left to right: Secretary General Jaakko Silpola, EB member Valerijs Kozlovs, 2nd Vice President Tomasz Brandyk, President Donal Clarke, EB members Håkan Bjur, Jutta Zeitz, Satu Helynen, 1st Vice President Björn Hånell, EB members Dmitriy Gogin and Paul Short. Photo: Susann Warnecke

Finland in November. The decisions of these meetings were communicated in Peat News and Peatlands International.

Members of the Scientific Advisory Board

The Scientific Advisory Board was chaired by IPS 2nd Vice President Tomasz Brandyk, Poland. The members of SAB are the Chairs of Comm I - IX:

- I Lars Lundin, Sweden
- II Gerald Schmilewski, Germany
- III Lech Szajdak, Poland
- IV Nikolay Bambalov, Belarus
- V Catherine Farrell, Ireland
- VI Riitta Korhonen, Finland
- VII Hannu Hökkä, Finland
- VIII Michiel Gerding, the Netherlands
- IX Jack Rieley, United Kingdom

Meetings of the Scientific Advisory Board

The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), a group consisting of the IPS Commission Chairs and the 2nd Vice President of IPS, was founded at the group's first meeting in Amsterdam, the Netherlands on 1 November 2004.

It is the SAB's primary task to act as a pool of scientific knowledge for IPS by exchanging ideas concerning the scientific work of the commissions and to ensure a better communication among its members and with the Executive Board.

The Scientific Advisory Board met twice in 2008, on 8 June 2008 in Tullamore, Ireland and on 20 and 21 November in Jyväskylä, Finland.

Members of the IPS

As of 31 December 2008, the IPS membership comprised a total of 1,272 (2007: 1,285) members in 33 (35) countries. The membership database is updated continuously through information from the National Committees and by direct contacts.

National Committees

The IPS is represented by 20 (2007: 20) National Committees with a total of 1,238 (2007: 1,255) members, of which 17 operate in Europe, two in North America, and one in Southeast Asia. A complete list can be found in the appendices.

Members in Countries Without a National Committee

As of 31 December 2008, the IPS had 28 (2007: 26) individual and 6 (2007: 4) corporate members in 13 (2006: 15) countries without National Committees. These comprise 6 European countries, 4 in Asia and the Middle East, one in South America and two in Africa. The complete list is posted in the appendices.

IPS Award of Excellence

On 13 June 2008 at the IPS General Assembly in Tullamore, Ireland, the Wim Tonnis - IPS Award of Excellence 2008 was conferred on Mrs. Riitta Korhonen for her outstanding engagement in the development and understanding of the 'Wise Use' concept for peat and peatlands, especially in peat balneology in Finland and internationally.



At the peatland certification workshop of Commission II in November in Helsinki. Photo: Susann Warnecke

The International Peat Society confers the Wim Tonnis - IPS Award of Excellence annually on an IPS member who has made a distinguished contribution to peat and peatland science or industry, especially in the promotion of Wise Use. The award consists of a framed scroll and a cash prize of € 1,000.

Honorary Members

In 2008, the IPS had the following Honorary Members:

Honorary President	
Mr. R. A. Robertson	UK
Honorary Members	
Mr. F. Baranyai	Hungary
Dr. A. K. Dergunov	Russia
Dr. R.S. Farnham	USA
Mr. H. van de Griendt	Netherlands
Mr. D.N. Grubich	USA
Mr. G. Hood	Canada
Mr. P. Hughes	Ireland
Prof.dr.hab. P. Ilnicki	Poland
Acad. I.I. Lishtvan	Belarus
Prof. Dr. G. Lüttig	Germany
Mr. P. McEvilly	Ireland
Prof. M. Mäkelä	Finland
Mr. H.M.S. Miller	Ireland
Dr. Y. Pessi	Finland
Mr. R. Pettersson	Sweden
Mr. B.N. Sokolov	Russia
Mr. R. Sopo	Finland
Mr. T.E. Tibbetts	Canada
Dr. A. Tóth	Hungary

Gerry Hood was conferred with the title of IPS Honorary member in March 2008. Prof. Markku Mäkelä and H.M.S. Miller received the same honour in June 2008.

The IPS Secretariat

The Secretariat of the IPS has been located in Jyväskylä, Finland since January 1992. The current address is Vapaudenkatu 12, FIN-40100 Jyväskylä.

The Secretariat is managed by Mr. Jaakko Silpola, M. Sc. (Agriculture and Forestry), MBA, who has held the post of IPS Secretary General since 1 November 2004. Communications Manager Ms. Susann Warnecke (Diplom-Kauffrau, FH), has been working for IPS since January 2002 and returned from her maternity leave in June 2008.

From January to May 2008, Carolin Winter worked at the IPS Secretariat as Communications Assistant with support from Organization Manager Varpu



Finnish, Swedish and Estonian IPS members at the autumn excursion of the Finnish Peatland Society. Photo: Susann Warnecke

Savolainen from the Association of Finnish Peat Industries. Mrs. Birgit Hyyryläinen, Office Manager of the Association of Finnish Peat Industries, is responsible for the financial accounting of the IPS.

Cooperation

The IPS cooperates with the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS), the International Mire Conservation Group (IMCG), the Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS), the European Peat and Growing Media Association (EPAGMA), the Ramsar Convention and the Global Peatland Initiative (GPI).

Economic Survey

The Profit and Loss Account of the IPS shows a profit of EUR 26,210.51 (2007: profit of EUR 43,221.93) for the financial year 2008. This is mainly due to the results of the International Peat Congress in Tullamore which will be used during the years until the next Congress. The total income of the IPS was EUR 202,603.12 (2007: EUR 183,725.19), with expenditure amounting to EUR 176,392.61 (2007: EUR 140,503.26). Bad debts amounted to EUR 10,743.19 and the depreciation to EUR 329.23. Assets and liabilities increased to EUR 150,708.13 (2007: EUR 132,744.70).

Audit

The accounts and financial statements of the International Peat Society were audited by the Authorised Public Accountant Arto Saarinen from Deloitte & Touche Oy, an Authorised Public Accounting Firm.

Principal Operations

Congresses, symposia and other events

The International Peat Congress: The Future of Peatlands was held in Tullamore, Ireland on 9 - 13 June 2008.

Workshops and meetings

Several Commission meetings took place at the International Peat Congress in Tullamore. A Commission II workshop on Peatland Certification was held in Helsinki on 19 November 2008. For further scientific activities, please see the Commission reports on the following pages.



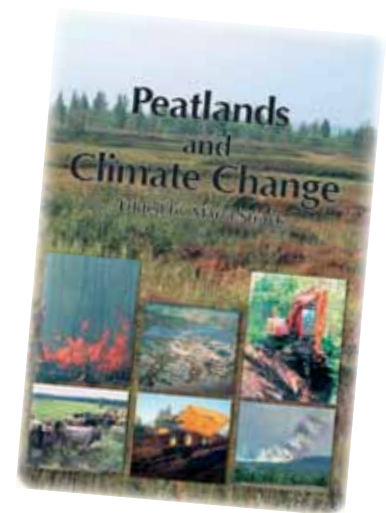
Outgoing President Markku Mäkelä opened the Tullamore Congress. Photo: Hannu Salo

Other activities of the IPS Secretariat

During the year, the IPS Climate Change Working Group finalized its work on the book "Peatlands and Climate Change" which was launched at the International Peat Congress in Tullamore in June. By 31 December 2008, 364 copies of the book were distributed.

As a new project, IPS investigated the possibility of starting a certification scheme for sustainable peatland management in cooperation with the Finnish company Indufor Oy.

According to the rules of IPS, no other symposia or conferences are held in the year of an international Peat Congress. However, our National Committees and Commissions carried out numerous additional activities during this period information on which is contained in the appendices of the Annual Report.



Publications

Scientific Journal

In July 2006, the joint scientific journal of IPS and IMCG, "Mires and Peat" was launched as an online publication, openly and freely accessible to all those interested in peat, peatland and mire research. The editor is Dr. Olivia Bragg.

In 2008, Volume 3 (2008) of the Journal was published with eleven articles. A special issue on Windfarms on Peatlands (Volume 4 2008/2009) was opened and currently comprises seven papers. All of them can be found at www.mires-and-peat.net.

All issues of the former International Peat Journal, the last issue of which was published in 2004, can still be ordered from the IPS Secretariat for EUR 16 including mailing costs.

Peat News

Peat News, the electronic newsletter of the IPS, is sent out monthly by e-mail to all members of the Society. The latest issue as well as a list of topics covered during 2002 - 2008 can also be read at the IPS website. In 2008, 9 issues were distributed.

Orders for Peat News can be directed to ips@peatsociety.org. IPS members are authorized to receive Peat News by e-mail. Since 2005, the newsletter has been distributed in PDF format and all advertisers in Peatlands International have been mentioned as official supporters of Peat News.

Peatlands International

Peatlands International is the half-yearly magazine for members of the IPS. Secretary General Jaakko Silpola is editor-in-chief, supported by Susann Warnecke. Peatlands International 1/2008 was edited by Communications Assistant Carolin Winter and contained a special feature on Peatlands in Ireland. Peatlands International 2/2008 was



Riitta Korhonen was the laureate of the IPS Award of Excellence 2008. Photo: Susann Warnecke



The Peatlands and Climate Change book was launched at a special session of the Tullamore Congress. Photo: Paddy Rowland

published in February 2009. Special attention has to be paid in the future to the quality, quantity and timetable of papers submitted as well as to the decreasing number of advertisements.

All previous issues of Peatlands International since 2004, further information on the magazine and a media kit are available at the IPS website.

IPS Online Shop

The IPS online shop, opened in 2005, has become a very popular tool for those ordering books from the IPS. Buyers can browse all publications online, fill their shopping basket and pay immediately by credit card or later on by bank transfer. This has made orders much quicker and easier to handle for the IPS Secretariat. Due to high service fees we accept cheque payments only in exceptional cases to be agreed beforehand with the IPS staff.



Commissions

In June 2008, Commission IX on Tropical Peatlands was established. Prof. Jack Rieley from the University of Nottingham was elected Chair. Further information on the work of the Commission can be found at the IPS website soon.

Members of the IPS

Table 1: Members of IPS National Committees.

	Individual members	Industrial Corporate Members	Research Institutes, Universities	Governmental Institutes	Honorary Members	Students	TOTAL
Belarus	0	6	3	0	1	0	10
Canada	9	39	1	0	4	3	56
Czech Republic	15	1	0	0	0	0	16
Estonia	0	34	1	2	0	0	37
Finland	399	4	1	1	9	0	414
France	7	9	0	0	0	0	16
Germany	238	51	6	3	12	27	337
Hungary	15	1	1	1	2	0	20
Indonesia	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
Ireland	8	6	2	0	3	0	19
Latvia	0	24	0	0	4	0	28
Lithuania	0	14	0	0	0	0	14
The Netherlands	55	14	2	3	3	0	77
Norway	4	5	1	0	0	0	10
Poland	0	3	24	0	1	0	28
Russia	7	19	4	0	2	0	32
Sweden	17	22	1	0	1	0	41
Ukraine	1	3	1	0	0	0	5
United Kingdom	30	9	1	2	1	0	43
USA	21	5	1	0	2	0	29
31 December 2008	832	269	50	12	45	30	1238
31 December 2007	857	259	52	16	43	28	1255
31 December 2006	829	264	45	11	40	32	1221

Table 2: IPS members in countries without National Committees.



Getting closer: IPS members are almost always on the hunt for a good shot. Photo: Hannu Salo

	Individual Members	Corporate Members	TOTAL
Belgium	2	2	4
Burundi	0	1	1
Chile	0	2	2
Denmark	2	1	3
Italy	4	0	4
Japan	10	0	10
Malaysia	2	0	2
Philippines	1	0	1
Romania	1	0	1
Slovenia	1	0	1
Spain	3	0	3
Swaziland	1	0	1
Vietnam	1	0	1
31 December 2008	28	6	34
31 December 2007	26	4	30
31 December 2006	34	6	40

Table 3: Development of the IPS membership from 2003 to 2008.

	December 2008	December 2007	December 2006	December 2005	December 2004	December 2003	Balance
NC members	1238	1255	1221	1234	1282	1230	-17
NoNC members	34	30	40	44	38	68	4
	1272	1285	1261	1278	1320	1298	-13

IPS National Committees

As of 31 December 2008, the International Peat Society had National Committees in the following countries:

BELARUS

Chairperson: Mr. Vitold Vorono

CANADA

Chairperson: Dr. Jean-Yves Daigle

CZECH REPUBLIC

Chairperson: Mr. Karel Brezina

ESTONIA

Chairperson: Mr. Erki Niitlaan

FINLAND

Chairperson: Mrs. Riitta Korhonen

FRANCE

Chairperson: Mr. Michel Ecobichon

GERMANY

Chairperson: Dr. Gerfried Caspers

HUNGARY

Chairperson: Mr. István Szábo

INDONESIA

Chairperson: Dr. Bambang Setiadi

IRELAND

Chairperson: Dr. Catherine O'Connell

LATVIA

Chairperson: Mr. Valerijs Kozlovs

LITHUANIA

Chairperson: Mr. Albinas Cernauskas

THE NETHERLANDS

Chairperson: Mr. Leo Schipper

NORWAY

Chairperson: Mr. Arne Nordviste

POLAND

Chairperson: Dr. Ing. Andrzej Lachacz

RUSSIA

Chairperson: Mr. Dmitriy Gogin

SWEDEN

Chairperson: Mr. Lennart Ryk

UKRAINE

Chairperson: Mr. Victor Yurchenko

UNITED KINGDOM

Chairperson: Mr. R. Allan Robertson

USA

Chairperson: Mr. Donald Grubich

The Malaysian Peat Society prepared for its application as National Committee in 2008 and joined IPS in early 2009.



National Representatives and observers at the Annual Assembly in Tullamore. Photo: Susann Warnecke

IPS Commissions and Working Groups

As of 31 December 2008, the International Peat Society had the following Commissions and Working Groups (WG):

WG on Peatlands and Climate Change
Chair: Prof. Jukka Laine, Finland
Coordinator: Maria Strack, Canada

COMMISSION I

Survey, stratigraphy, classification and conservation of peatlands
Chair: Dr. Lars Lundin, Sweden

Peatland Geology Working Group
Coordinators: Mrs. Mall Orru, Estonia
Mr. Kimmo Virtanen, Finland

Peatland Ecology Working Group
Coordinator: Mr. Mati Ilomets, Estonia

Peatland Hydrology Working Group
Coordinator: Dr. Elve Lode, Estonia/Sweden

COMMISSION II

Industrial utilisation of peat and peatlands for horticulture, energy, environmental protection and other purposes
Chair: Mr. Gerald Schmilewski, Germany

Energy Peat Working Group
Coordinator: Mr. Magnus Brandel, Sweden

Horticultural Peat Working Group

COMMISSION III

Utilisation of peat and peatlands in agriculture
Chair: Dod. dr.hab. Lech Szajdak, Poland

COMMISSION IV

Chemical, physical and biological characteristics of peat
Chair: Dr. Nikolay Bambalov, Belarus*

COMMISSION V

After-use of cut-over and disturbed peatlands
Chair: Dr. Catherine Farrell, Ireland

Sphagnum Biomass Cultivation

Forest Plantation on Cutover Peatlands
Coordinators: Lasse Aro, Finland; Florence Renou, Ireland

Cloudberry production in peatlands
Coordinators: Line Lapointe, Kristine Knaess, Canada; Heli Pirinen, Finland; Kaare Rapp, Norway

COMMISSION VI

Peat balneology, medicine and therapeutics
Chair: Mrs. Riitta Korhonen, Finland

COMMISSION VII

Ecology and management of forested peatlands
Chair: Dr. Hannu Hökkä, Finland

COMMISSION VIII

Cultural aspects of peat and peatlands
Chair: Dr. Michiel Gerding, the Netherlands

COMMISSION IX

Tropical peatlands
Chair: Prof. Jack Rieley, United Kingdom

*vacant since 06/2008

Reports of Commissions

Commission I: Stratigraphy, Inventory and Conservation Chair: Lars Lundin

Scope

The IPS Commission I embraces inventory, stratigraphy and conservation of peatlands. Included in this context are ecology, geology, hydrology, biology and terminology. Each of these subjects could constitute a working group. A perspective is to achieve new activities within the working groups, while keeping in mind collaboration with other Commissions.

State

The Commission addresses all IPS members interested in Commission I activities from all

countries to sign up and join the Commission. So far there are members from 13 countries; Belarus, Canada, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Ireland, Russia, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States. An invitation has been sent out from the IPS Secretariat for all IPS members to sign up for different Commissions. Activities of the Working groups (WG) on Geology, Ecology and Hydrology have been low during 2008.

Activities and Plans

The priorities of Commission I remain with Inventory, Stratigraphy and Conservation of mires and peatlands with special relation to the working groups of geology, hydrology and ecology.

Two Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) meetings have been held. The first was in Tullamore, Ireland on



First snow in Jyväskylä, excursion during the Executive and Scientific Advisory Board meetings in Finland in November. Left to right: Paul Short from Canada, Björn Hånell from Sweden, Gerald Schmilewski from Germany, Jack Rieley from the United Kingdom, Lars Lundin from Sweden, Allan Robertson from the United Kingdom, Tomasz Brandyk from Poland, Riitta Korhonen from Finland, Jutta Zeitz from Germany, Satu Helynen from Finland, Donal Clarke, IPS President, Susann Warnecke, IPS Communications Manager, Valerij Kozlovs from Latvia, Michiel Gerding from the Netherlands and Catherine Farrell from Ireland. Photo: Jaakko Silpola



Commission II Chair Gerald Schmilewski, Honorary President Allan Robertson and Commission I Chair Lars Lundin at the joint EB SAB meeting in Jyväskylä. Photo: Susann Warnecke

8 June 2008 and the other in Jyväskylä, Finland on 20 - 21 November 2008. There has also been a meeting of the working group on Terminology in Tullamore, Ireland in June 2008. Further work on publications has continued by e-mail.

In June 2008, the International Peat Congress took place and Commission I members participated in the scientific work and reviewed a large number of contributions. During the Congress, the quadrennial meeting of the Commission was held, including the election of the steering group which is recorded in the minutes.

There should also be future discussion and consideration on the role of the Commission for considering inventory, biodiversity and peat as a natural resource. An overview of various projects and excursions that Commission members have participated in was also presented.

The Swedish National Committee nominated Lars Lundin to continue as Chair of Commission I. The proposal was carried. It was also agreed that a Vice Chair should be appointed. Maria Strack from Canada was proposed and elected for this post.

Commission I was also active in contributing to the "Peatlands and Climate Change" book. It also participated in the organisation of the annual IMCG - IPS meeting, held in June 2008. The Commission Chair attended the 6th European Ramsar meeting in Stockholm, Sweden on 3 - 7 May 2008.

In the Working Group on Geology, Mall Orru continued her work on harmonisation of peat geological methods. It is important to develop

peatland survey technology, the comparison of peat type characteristics, including humification determinations and other physical and chemical properties. In addition, a review and presentations of the UN classifications and the standardisation of industrial and other systems would be beneficial. A report is expected on this work.

Durable decisions

Regarding ideas for a new inventory of mires and peatlands, it was found best to keep updated with ongoing work rather than to start new inventories. There is a lot of new information on webpages such as those of IMCG and GLOBWET. Also work on the ALTER-Net project "Peat Bank" should be considered.

Intentions of the Ecology Working Group on possible activities refer to biodiversity and assessment with plans for a seminar or workshop in the coming years. The Commission has contacts with the NoE ALTER-Net regarding biodiversity and ecosystem services that also include wetlands. Plans for a review and indicator work have been made.

In the Hydrology Working Group, intentions are focused on current initiatives for reference sites, partly catchments, in an international network in collaboration with existing sites. No further progress was made in 2008.

The EC statement that, on the whole, peat is not a renewable natural resource was discussed from various points of view in different countries. IPCC has classified peat as "PEAT" which however, according to the EC classification, rejects its recognition as a biofuel and places it in one group together with oil and coal. However, each country may decide to resolve this problem from their own point of view. There are costs for emission trading and the question of sustainability will, however, be an ongoing issue.

Further, ideas on ecology/biodiversity development for mires and peatlands were brought up and it was mentioned that contacts should be made with Ramsar, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Wildlife Fund, among others.

The Commission also follows activities within the other Commissions of IPS.

The arrangements of activities and meetings beyond conferences and other co-arrangements are still rather problematic to carry out due to a lack of financing.

Commission II: Industrial Utilisation of Peat and Peatlands for Energy, Horticulture, Environmental Protection and Other Purposes Chair: Gerald Schmilewski

As in the past, peat production and its use for horticultural and energy purposes comprise the main subjects of activity for Commission II. Discussions on peat production, environmental issues and a certification system for peatland management have been the main topics in 2008.

Commission II held two meetings in the course of the year, one in Tullamore, the other in Helsinki. The work conducted by the Commission and other achievements made in 2008 are summarized below.

Commission II meeting in Tullamore 10 June

Over 50 attendees participated in discussions and decisions taken during the International Peat Congress in Tullamore. The Commission nominated Gerald Schmilewski for a second term as Chairman of the Commission. At the meeting, the current Secretary of Commission II, Nick van de Griendt, was reappointed for another year. At the EB meeting later on that week Gerald Schmilewski was confirmed as Chairman of Commission II.

The final Commission II Peat Production Survey was sent out prior to the Tullamore meeting. This survey questionnaire will be distributed every year after the production season. It will be the basis for industrial fees in the future.

As a tradition at Commission II meetings, one national representative volunteers to give a presentation on the peat industry in her/his country. In Tullamore, Anna Sycheva-Mikhailova reflected on the status of the peat industry in Russia.

With the support of its own and with the help of many Commission II members, CoConcept was able to finalize its study on the "Socio-economic impact of the peat and growing media industry on horticulture in the EU". The complete study, commissioned by EPAGMA, the European Peat and Growing Media Association, can be downloaded at www.epagma.org.

In March 2008, IPS and EPAGMA agreed to go ahead with the preparation of a "Project Plan for the Development of an International Certification Scheme for Sustainable Peatland Management". The Finnish company INDUFOR was commissioned by IPS to carry out this task.

The Project Plan was then presented during the Peat Congress in Tullamore prior to the Commission II meeting. The presentation of the Project Plan led to intense debate within Commission II. This resulted in the Commission II proposal to organize a workshop on certification. This workshop was held in Helsinki on 19 November.

Commission II meeting in Helsinki, 19 November

Due to the significance and possible consequences of such a certification system for all stakeholders, and the industry in particular, the IPS Executive Board and the IPS Scientific Advisory Board participated in the workshop. The intense discussions during the workshop as well as the subsequent EB and SAB meetings in Jyväskylä on 20 and 21 November resulted in an "IPS Proposal regarding the Certification of Peatlands". Based on this proposal it is basically up to the industry to decide on and subsequently finance such a project if agreed.

Other business

Supporting the members of the Terminology WG set up by IPS and IMCG in 2007 some individual members of Commission II are involved in helping



Congress attendees at the Edenderry Power Plant. Photo: Hannu Salo

to define selected terms and concepts – a task which has proven not to be easy.

The events calendar of Commission II shows also an ISHS/IPS Symposium on Growing Media and Composting which will take place in Charlotte, USA, from 1 - 5 June 2009. IPS Commission II is a co-sponsor of the event.

The Dutch SympoPeat/IPS Commission II Symposium 'Peat in Horticulture - Life in Growing Media' (working title) was postponed by one year and will take place in the Netherlands in June 2010.

Commissions II and V have been asked by the local Canadian Organizing Committee of the symposium on "Sustainability of peatland management and growing media production" to join in the committee's efforts by supporting this event, to be held in 2011.

Commission III: Utilisation of Peat and Peatlands in Agriculture Chair: Lech Szajdak

Micro meetings

There have been four micro meetings of Commission III since the last report was published. The first one was held in Ukraine. Its aim was to identify and evaluate natural phytohormones - auxine in peats, moorshes and sapropels and in substrates for agriculture, horticulture, pomology, and floriculture. Phytohormones are responsible for the physiological activity of plants. These organic



The venue of the 13th International Peat Congress. Photo: Mika Pasanen

compounds in low concentrations move within the plant from a site of production to a site of action.

These compounds are involved in a variety of diverse plant growth and developmental responses. A principal feature of plant hormones is their ability to impact on the development and health of plants. These substances are also created during natural conditions in compost and in inorganic and organic soils under different cultivated plants. Therefore, the investigation of auxines is very important.

During the meeting, attention was focused on achieving a good yield by reducing plant hormone losses. This process includes enzymatic cleavage of the auxines' structures and several pathways of their degradations. The application of organic fertilizers prepared on the basis of peat and sapropels were also discussed.

During this meeting, some aspects of the effects of biologically active substances extracted from peat organic matter on the activity of the hydrolytic enzymes in the germination of barley seeds were revealed.

The next meeting took place in Estonia. The goal of the discussion was to explain the general ecological characterization of peat soils and their mutual relationship with the plant cover. It was postulated that the dominant natural ecosystems formed on peatlands are (i) mixed birch, alder, spruce and pine forests on well decomposed eutrophic fen soils, and (ii) sparse pine forests and hummock-ridge-hollow raised bogs sparsely covered by pine on slightly decomposed oligotrophic bog soils.

It was shown that the general properties and functioning of the peat soil cover, and especially its epipedon layer, are, to a great extent, due to variations in soil conditions compared with those of peats in deeper horizons. Therefore the peat soil or the superficial part of peatlands should be treated separately from that stored in the deeper peat layers. It was postulated that the biological diversity of plant cover on spring and quaking mire soils is exceptionally high and therefore they need careful protection.

The next meetings took place in Belarus. The main aim of the discussion was to develop analytical methods for the investigation of biologically active substances in soils. Several very important groups of chemical substances were selected. These compounds participate in chemical, biochemical and biological pathways in peat. They also have real physiological activity and are responsible for

many significant physicochemical properties.

The last meeting took place in Russia. The purpose of this meeting was to evaluate the changes of organic matter in meliorated and ameliorated peatlands. The melioration of peatlands led to biotic and abiotic changes, which implicated the degradation of organic matter and organic compounds. The decrease of the water table in peat led to the differentiation of peptides and amino acids from hydrophilic to hydrophobic. Additionally, degradation and conversion of biologically active substances is observed. As a result of draining and due to a number of factors, including oscillation of ground water level, changes of aerobic conditions, different plant communities, root exudates and the products of the degradation of the rest of the plant remains, peat-muck soils may undergo a process of secondary transformation.

13th International Peat Congress Tullamore

Commission III organized the session on "Agriculture on Peatlands" during the 13th International Peat Congress in Tullamore. Papers presented dealt with the problem of the field water regime in a deformable sub-irrigated peat-moors soil profile. The observed values for pressure head, moisture content and groundwater level revealed that the required water conditions were present in the root zone of grasslands even during dry periods with low amounts of precipitation in June and July 2006. Changes in the soil surface level of up to 42 mm were also observed during the period considered.

Some investigations showed the impact of different organic fertilizers based on peat, sapropel and brown coal on amino acid organic nitrogen compounds in the soil. It is commonly known that amino acids represent a form of organic nitrogen which is easily hydrolysable by chemical compounds and enzymes and is readily available for plants and soil microorganisms. The highest increase in bound amino acids in the soil was observed for fertilizer based on brown coal. Soil treated with this fertilizer supplied 93.7% more amino acid nitrogen than the reference soil. Two other fertilizers based on peat and sapropel supplied 64.1% and 56.3% more amino acid nitrogen, respectively, than the reference soil. Neutral amino acid predominated in all plots receiving different organic fertilizers, while acidic amino acids were present in the lowest concentrations.



David Bellamy, one of the keynote speakers (second from right), together with some members of staff of the Congress. Photo: Paddy Rowland

Some investigations showed results on the function of peatlands located on secondary transformed peat-moors soils with regard to the decrease of different forms of nitrogen and carbon in ground water passing through the peatlands.

During the 13th International Peat Congress in Tullamore, the members of Commission III elected Lech Szajdak as Chairperson, Kerstin Berglund as Vice Chairperson and Ryszard Oleszczuk as the Secretary for the period 2008 - 2012. They also proposed to continue to deal as a working group with the problem of histic soils under the chair of Prof. Parent. IPS Commission III will organize a session on "Organic soils: impact of land-use change on peatland degradation" in the debate - Soil System Sciences during the European Geosciences Union, General Assembly which will take place in Vienna, Austria on 19 - 24 April 2009. The members of IPS Commission III will also participate in several projects supported by different international organizations.

Publishing activity

Impacts of agricultural utilization of peat soils on greenhouse gas balance

In 2008 Dr. R. Oleszczuk, Secretary of Commission III, was involved in the Working Group on Peatlands and Climate Change organized by the International Peat Society. Its main objective was to prepare the book "Peatlands and Climate Change", consisting of 9 chapters and addressed to researchers, students, journalists and policymakers. Dr. R. Oleszczuk was appointed to the post of Co-

ordinator of the chapter on “Impacts of agricultural utilization of peat soils on greenhouse gas balance”. Additionally, Prof. L. Szajdak, Chair of Commission III, was involved in the work on this chapter. The book on “Peatlands and Climate Change” was published at the 13th International Peat Congress in Tullamore in 2008.

Special issue in Agronomy Research

A special issue on the “Restoration of Peatland Soils for Agricultural Use” was edited by Lech Szajdak and published in *Agronomy Research*. It contains selected papers dealing with some aspects of organic soils. They were presented during the session on “Restoration of Peatland Soils for Agricultural Use” at the 5th European Conference on Ecological Restoration held in Greifswald, Germany on 21 - 25 August 2006.

This volume contains papers on the impact of long-term intensive cultivation and agricultural use of peatlands on the degradation and mineralization of peat organic matter and the moorshing process. These practices result in subsidence and soil compaction as well as in peat losses through biochemical breakdown. This causes changes in peat structure and nutrient dynamics.

However, the rate of this process depends on several factors: the type of peat, degree of peat decomposition, density and thickness of the peat layer, drainage depth as well as climate and drainage duration. It was observed that long-term intensive use of former fen areas resulted in changes in biochemical and physical properties as well as in the chemical composition and molecular structure



In November 2008, former IPS Secretary General Raimo Sopo and the City of Jyväskylä invited the Executive Board and Scientific Advisory Board for a festive lunch to the City Hall of Jyväskylä. Photo: Susann Warnecke

of the humic substances. However, the main cause of this process is the lowering of the groundwater level to permit intensive utilization.

Special issue in Plant and Soil

A special issue on the “Processes, Mechanisms and Utilization of Organic Soils” in the journal *Plant and Soil* edited by Lech Szajdak and Teodoro Miano was published. It contains selected papers presented at a special session at the European Geosciences Union (EGU) General Assembly held in Vienna, Austria in April 2007. The goal of this session was to discuss natural organic soils and sediments, peatlands (fens and raised bogs), mires, gyttja, as well as mucks, their main physico-chemical processes and their utilization.

The papers that emerged from the meeting in Vienna reveal that peat comprises either relatively unstable substances, whose reactivity contributes to its usefulness, or highly stable, recalcitrant fractions, both involved in the fate of organic and inorganic pollutants.

Some investigations described that the physiological activity of peat is observed in stimulating and promoting plant growth. Among other topics raised and discussed were changes of the carbon cycle in oligotrophic bogs in Western Siberia due to climate change and histosols as ecologically active constituent of peatlands.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the results presented are expected to provide a better insight into chemical and physical properties and processes occurring in particular environments and to provide a stimulating background for future studies on this topic.

This year many members of Commission III carried out researches, the results of which were published in the following scientific journals: *Archives of Agronomy and Soil Science*, *Agronomy Research*, *Agrophysics International*, *Biology and Fertility of Soils*, *Geoderma*, *Plant and Soil*, *Soil Biology and Biochemistry* and others.

Prof. Lech Szajdak would like to express his gratitude towards the members who participated in the meetings and all the people who have worked voluntary for Commission III.

Commission V: After-use of Cut-over and Disturbed Peatlands

Chair: Catherine Farrell

Mission

To promote the Wise Use management of peatlands and restoration and rehabilitation practices after human use of the habitat or resources.

Goals

1. To promote the best restoration and rehabilitation practices according to the residual peat substrate conditions and according to the biodiversity and preservation priorities of the country.
2. To facilitate discussions on the development of self-imposed restoration and reclamation policies at each industrial company level.
3. To encourage the development of field operations and site management that will reduce the impact on peatland environments.

Wind Farms on Peatland Symposium, Santiago de Compostela, 27 - 30 April

A meeting about Wind Farms on Peatlands was co-ordinated by IMCG through the University of Santiago de Compostela in April. The main themes of the meeting were how best to plan and design wind farms and mitigate against environmental impacts on peatlands, and following from development - how best to rehabilitate and to promote recovery of these fragile ecosystems.

Extensive areas of upland peatland systems have been developed for wind farms in Galicia and the efforts carried out to rehabilitate around these areas following construction were reviewed, as well as a number of contributions from other regions of Spain, the UK and Ireland. While all who were present are in favour of renewable energy projects, the discussions highlighted the need for good planning and pre-development consultation with peatland engineers and ecologists, particularly in the light of the vulnerability of peat soils and the catastrophic peat-slides that occurred in Ireland in recent years.

Each proposed development should be considered on a site-specific basis, to allow for the variability in peat strength, slopes and potential for regeneration based on prevailing climatic conditions. A summary of necessary guidelines as recommended by the team of experts present was prepared and a



Rewetted peatlands at Turraun, Ireland. Photo: Susann Warnecke

copy can be downloaded from: <http://xepecnet.environmentalchange.net/xwiki/bin/download/WFPS/Conclusions/OutcomesWFPL.doc>.

International Peat Congress, Tullamore

Scientific Sessions: After-use of cut-over and disturbed peatlands

A total of 24 oral papers were presented on topics ranging from restoration following horticultural peat extraction in Canadian provinces and rehabilitation following complete removal of peat, such as the case in some of the industrial cutaways in Finland and Ireland. There was good attendance at these sessions and lively debate in relation to the value of cutaway peatlands in areas where biodiversity has been largely marginalised, particularly the efforts made in Ireland to manage cutaways for enhancement of wildlife corridors for rare species and habitats. There were 9 poster presentations dealing with a wide range of aspects from restoration and carbon sequestration to issues relating to after uses for renewable energy and nature conservation.

Special session on Irish peatlands

This was a particularly interesting session as it addressed the degradation of the Raised Bog Natura 2000 sites which continue to be heavily impacted upon by turf-cutting in Ireland. There is an urgent need for restoration of these sites, and yet turf-cutting continues to lead to subsidence and loss of active raised bog communities. The issue was raised as to the potential role of cutover and industrial cutaway bogs where deep peat remains



The Post-Congress Tour helped to understand the situation of Irish peatlands.
Photo: Silke Kumar

and how these may be restored to re-create peat-forming conditions.

Prof. Dr. Matthijs G.C. Schouten gave an excellent overview of the past 30 years of conservation of Raised Bogs in Ireland, and highlighted the continued and rapid decline of the resources despite international recognition of their value. This special session led to a workshop and seminar to be convened by the Irish branch of IPS in October 2008 with representations from the EU Commission on Environment (Nature and Biodiversity), Irish government and turf-cutting bodies. A summary of the seminar outcomes can be obtained from pat.fitzgerald@bnm.ie.

Mid-Congress and Post-Congress tours

There was a strong focus on the role of restoration and rehabilitation in the mid-Congress tours including: a tour of some of the best examples of the Irish Raised Bogs (Raheenmore and Clara Bog) and peatland restoration methods; an overview of the extensive industrial cutaway rehabilitation management at the Lough Boora Parklands; and a tour to a EU-Life funded project where commercial forestry has been removed from Raised Bog SACs to restore active bog communities.

The post-congress tour focussed on management of peatlands and the various starting conditions for restoration and rehabilitation projects that have been carried out in the North West of Ireland. These included projects to reverse the effects of overgrazing, afforestation, industrial and domestic cutting, and climatic effects. Details of each of the sites visited are included within the congress tour guides, available from catherine.farrell@bnm.ie.

Overview of Commission V meeting, Tullamore

SAB, Tullamore: Prof. Line Rochefort provided an overview of the matters discussed at the IPS SAB meeting in Tullamore. These included the following issues: terminology, certification, membership and planning within Commission V and other Commissions.

Terminology Group:

To date seven terms were agreed to work on including “sustainable peatland management” etc. These will be circulated to members for use and should avoid confusion between different organisations - both conservation and industry alike.

IPS Peatland Certification programme: Discussions followed about the certification of peat products. Work has already been undertaken by the IPS to explore different approaches to develop a certification system that will be applicable in peatlands globally. It is a substantial undertaking and all members are invited to make submissions.

Membership: There was discussion on how to clarify IPS membership in Commissions. It was agreed that there is a need to produce an action plan for Commission V that will be reviewed every four years to assess achievements and progress.

Peatland Restoration Manual: Some ideas about developing a practical instruction manual on peatland restoration were discussed. For example, how to bring into wider use knowledge of building dams in peatlands from a wide range of countries and the practical application of different methods. This could be developed as a website interface in conjunction with the restoration manual already drafted and available from the IMCG website.

Election of the Commission chair: Dr. Catherine Farrell, Peatland Rehabilitation Ecologist with Bord na Móna was elected to take the role of Chair of Commission V for the term 2008 - 2012. Professor Line Rochefort of the University of Laval

stepped down following two terms as Chair and is to be commended on her outstanding work. Line established a wide network of international contacts and organised a range of useful meetings and workshops to share knowledge on restoration practices, particularly within Canada but also through Europe, South America and Indonesia.

Restoration Network Ireland

Restoration ecology is a growing discipline in Ireland and there are a number of long-established projects that have provided an insight as how best to restore and/or rehabilitate as the need arises. Following discussion with a number of colleagues it was decided to establish a restoration network in Ireland, with links to the wider international networks of restoration ecologists and ecological restoration practitioners, in particular, members of the International Peat Society (www.peatociety.org) who are active in peatland restoration and members of the Society of Ecological Restoration (www.ser.org) who operate in a wider context.

A website interface was agreed as the best method at this time. The website of Restoration Network Ireland will provide an on-line database with information and contact details for project managers, as well as providing a forum for discussions relevant to all aspects of restoration. Please contact catherine.farrell@bnm.ie if you would like to be included in the mailing lists for information and updates on the initiative. The website will be launched in spring 2009.

Society of Ecological Restoration Meeting in Ghent, Belgium, September

Commission V members are encouraged to join the Society of Ecological Restoration. The annual meeting held in Ghent in September 2008 generated lively debate on the future of Natura 2000 network sites and biodiversity, and how to proceed with restoration practices to ensure sustainable ecosystems, habitats and species populations in the next decade.

Some interesting articles and details can be accessed online at the following websites:
www.ser.org/europe/ppt_keynote_speakers.asp
www.ser2008.be/
www.ser.org/europe/pdf/Irish_Times_SER2008_13-09-2008.pdf

Scientific Advisory Board Meeting, Jyväskylä, November

An initial meeting was convened in Helsinki to debate the certification of peatlands followed by the SAB and EB meetings in Jyväskylä. The SAB

meetings focused on a review of the proposals for the certification process. Other topics included the joint meeting with Commission II in 2011 which signals the potential for other joint ventures between IPS Commissions, particularly the restoration and rehabilitation aspects which can form an important aspect of the environmental management programmes within the commercial peat industry. The new Commission IX on Tropical Peatlands will provide further scope for overlap within Commissions.

Outlook for 2008 to 2012

All suggestions from members of Commission V and wider member groups are welcome as to activities for the next four years in order to build on the knowledge base of peatland restoration and rehabilitation already existing to promote wise after-use of peatlands, within the Wise Use framework. At this point in time, there are a number of events for your diaries and these will be added to over the coming year:

Peatland Restoration Seminar and Workshop, Belfast, 24 - 25 April 2009

This workshop is a joint venture between the National Committee of IPS in the United Kingdom and Restoration Network Ireland. It has been organised to coincide with the Annual Assembly, EB and SAB meetings of the IPS and will focus on the role of restoration in conservation management of peatlands. The topics include management and restoration of peatlands in the UK, Republic of Ireland and Indonesia with a fieldtrip to peatland sites in Northern Ireland. The meeting is being organised through our Northern Ireland colleagues and the UK IPS members, with support from the Irish IPS National Committee, Commission V and the newly formed IPS Commission IX on Tropical Peatlands, chaired by Professor Jack Rieley.

Quebec 2011

There is intent to organise an IPS symposium between Commission V (After-use) and Commission II (Industrial Use of Peatlands, e.g. for Horticulture) for 2011 in Quebec, Canada on "Sustainable peatland management". More details will follow.

Working Groups within Commission V

Sphagnum Biomass Cultivation WG

Research on Sphagnum culture is currently being carried out in Germany, Finland, Canada and Chile. Activities at the University of Greifswald in 2008 included continuation of the following established research projects:

- Sphagnum farming on floating vegetation mats for cultivation on flooded cut-over bogs and/other open cast mining areas. Contact: gaudig@uni-greifswald.de

- Perspectives of Sphagnum farming in the Kolkheti lowland in Georgia for cultivation in a warm-temperate wet climate, favourable for Sphagnum growth. Contact: matkrebs@gmx.de

These projects will continue into 2009 and a new project is being proposed entitled "Sphagnum farming on bog grasslands". It should be noted that at the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) held in Changwon, Republic of Korea in 2008, a new resolution was adopted which highlights that the cultivation of biomass on rewetted peatlands (paludiculture) should be encouraged in a bid to mitigate any adverse impacts of bio-fuel production. This includes cultivation of Sphagnum: www.ramsar.org/res/key_res_x_25_e.doc.

Other research is ongoing in Canada, with links to Chilean producers. A Sphagnum cultivation workshop was organised by Dr. Christel Oberpaur for November in Chile. An overview of the outcome of this workshop will be available at a later date.

Working Group on Cloudberry Production on Peatlands WG

The goals of this working group are to promote and experiment on the cultivation of cloudberry on peatlands. Work in 2008 at the Centre de Recherche Les Buissons (University of Laval) focused on several cloudberry projects: these included examining the effects of windbreaks and snow trapping on fruit production in the wild.

The research team successfully increased fruit production through the use of honeybees for cloudberry pollination and in collaboration with Line Lapointe at University Laval, the use of a biological fertilizer made from crab residues on cloudberry production in the field is currently being examined. Other ongoing work involves field trials of cloudberry selections; these selections are being introduced into in vitro culture in order to speed up the development of plant materials for future plantings.

Relevant publications:

Bellemare, M., Rochefort, L. & Lapointe, L. (2009). Rhizome sectioning and fertilization increase the productivity of cloudberry in natural peatlands. *Canadian Journal of Plant Science*. In press (May edition). (This paper presents positive results of a combined treatment of mineral fertilisation and

rhizome sectioning on cloudberry fruit yield. A larger scale experiment will be set up in 2009 to determine the feasibility of this approach at the scale of a field).

Gauci, R. (2008). Étude de certains facteurs influençant la production de fruits et de ramets floraux chez la chicouté (*Rubus chamaemorus*). Unpublished PhD. thesis, www.theses.ulaval.ca/. (The three main chapters are written in English; the research focuses on identification of limiting physiological factors on fruit yield of cloudberry).

Production of berries in peatlands: this guide was published in French in 2007 and an English version is being printed and will also be available online: www.gret-perg.ulaval.ca/en_publications.html

Further information

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Forest plantation on cutover peatlands WG

There were no specific events organised by the WG in 2008 apart from the International Peat Congress, Tullamore 2008 mid-congress tour, which was led by Dr. Florence Renou-Wilson and Mr. Gerry McNally of Bord na Móna with Dr. Michael Keane of Coillte. The tour visited a number of cutaway peatland sites with forest trials, and the issues relating to the Irish context were discussed.

Participants of the excursion were each given a copy of the publication "Developing a forest resource on industrial cutaway peatland - The BOGFOR Programme". Further copies can be obtained via the web-link below.

Discussions within the WG will continue into 2009, especially on the use of industrial cutaways for short-term forest crops. www.coford.ie/iopen24/product_info.php?cPath=1175&products_id=966620.

Further information

Finland: lasse.aro@metla.fi
Ireland: florence.renou@ucd.ie



A peat sauna belonged to the fun parts of the Kymenlaakso excursion of the Finnish National Committee of IPS. Photo: Riitta Korhonen

Commission VI: Peat Balneology, Medicine and Therapeutics Chair: Riitta Korhonen

During the course of 2008, Commission VI organized a meeting at the Tullamore Congress on 10 June 2008, attended by 10 participants. Activities of the Commission were discussed and it was resolved that organizations and arrangements for the Bad Neydharting Conferences will continue.

The next Neydharting meetings will be held in 2009 and 2011. In 2010, the balneological symposium will be organized in Finland with the possibility of a post symposium excursion to Estonia. This could be arranged as a joint symposium with Commission VIII and possibly also with Commission IV.

At the International Peat Congress, seven papers were presented on Peat Balneology. Professor emeritus Gerd Lüttig gave a keynote speech on "The Touch of Peat – Inherent Healing Power of Nature". Geologist Mall Orru's paper concerned "The properties of Estonian balneological peat" and gynaecologist Leena Larva spoke on "A pilot research into the influence of the Finnish peat sauna to the climacteric symptoms of women".

Professor Renate Klöcking's topic was "In-vitro investigations on the effect of peat humic substances on inflammation" and Professor Hans Peter Klöcking spoke about the "Influence of humic substances on the cytotoxicity of surfactants". Luciane Romao talked about "Extraction

and exchange behavior of metal species in therapeutically applied peat characterized by competitive extractants". Commission Chair Riitta Korhonen's topic was "Research, quality guidelines and use of balneological peat in Finland".

Commission VII: Ecology and Management on Forested Peatlands Chair: Hannu Hökkä

Membership information

Commission VII is open to all members of IPS who are interested in discussing peatland forest as a renewable natural resource. The approach is both to understand the functioning of a pristine mire ecosystem and to discuss alternatives when using peatlands for wood production on a sustainable basis. The number of members now totals 55 from 7 different countries. Hannu Hökkä of the Finnish Forest Research Institute, Rovaniemi Research Unit has been the Chairperson since 2004. Commissions VII and V have a common Working Group – Forest plantation on cutaway peatlands.

Activities

At the 13th International Peat Congress five sessions were organized by Commission VII. Two of them had a special theme related to forest ecohydrology. Altogether, 19 oral presentations were given including a key note address by Prof. Wayne Skaggs of North Carolina State University. Additionally, 8 posters described different studies concerning peatland forestry. An excellent in-congress field trip was arranged by Gerry McNally, Florence Renou-Wilson and Mick Keane to demonstrate afforestation trials in abandoned peat cutting areas in central Ireland as well as the Glenlahan blanket bog.

Commission VII also held a business meeting on Tuesday, 10 June. The meeting nominated Dr. Florence Renou-Wilson from Ireland as Vice Chair of Commission VII. Hannu Hökkä will continue as the Chairperson for another four-year term. The meeting also discussed the possibilities of arranging an international meeting during the coming four years.

During 2008, the Commission members received three information letters from the Chairperson by e-mail. As a member of the IPS Scientific Advisory Board, Hannu Hökkä attended the SAB meeting in Tullamore. Subjects discussed at the SAB meetings have been reported in IPS publications during the course of the year.



The awareness for tropical peatlands and their importance has grown a lot during previous years. Photo: Jaakko Silpola

In 2008 former Commission VII Chair, Professor emeritus Juhani Päivänen has been preparing *Wise Use Practical Guidelines for peatland forestry*. This work is related to the application of the *Wise Use* principle in different Commissions of IPS.

The EU COST action FP 0601 “Forest Management and the Water Cycle (FORMAN)” continued in 2008. The COST action aims at the enhancement of knowledge on forest-water interactions in Europe, and the elaboration of science-based guidelines for the improvement of the management of forests predominantly designated for the production and storage of water. Four Commission VII members are engaged in different working groups of this COST action.

In the Finnish Forest Research Institute, the research program “Production forestry on peatlands” continues for the second year. The main concern is in the efficient use of peatland forest resources. The program leader is Professor Jukka Laine.

Several new hydrological projects have been active since 2006 and tentative results of some projects were presented at the Tullamore Congress.

New books

Several members of Commission VII have written articles for the new book “Finland - Fenland. Research and sustainable utilisation of mires and peat”, edited by Riitta Korhonen, Leila Korpela and Sakari Sarkkola and published in June 2008 by the Finnish Peatland Society & Maahenki Ltd. The book can be purchased at the IPS online shop for € 58 including mailing costs.

A new book describing forestry potential of Irish cutaway peatlands is also available: Renou-Wilson, F., Keane, M., McNally, G., O’Sullivan, J., Farrell, E.P. 2008. BOGFOR Project Final Report: A research programme to develop a forest resource on industrial cutaway peatlands in the Irish midlands. Coford, Dublin. 176pp.

You can download this book from www.coford.ie/iopen24/developing-forest-resource-industrial-cutaway-peatland-p-966620.html. Alternatively you can contact Florence Renou-Wilson at florence.renou@ucd.ie.

Future plans

As outlined at the Commission meeting in Tullamore, the arrangement of an international meeting on hydrology and management of wetlands/peatlands, or ecology and economy related to peatland forest management will be planned during the coming four years.

Commission IX: Tropical Peatlands Chair: Jack Rieley

A meeting, attended by 35 persons, to discuss the formation of this new IPS Commission was held in the Hilton Hotel, Kuching Sarawak, Malaysia on Friday 22 August 2008 following the International Symposium and Workshop on Tropical Peatland: Peatland development - Wise Use and Impact Management. A Steering Committee was established to oversee the activities of Commission 9 and to prepare a work plan and programme of activities and events for the period up to the next International Peat Congress in Sweden in 2012, consisting of:

Professor Jack Rieley (UK) Chairman
 Professor Bostang Radjagukguk (Indonesia) Vice Chairman
 Dr. Susan Page (UK) Secretary
 Professor Murtedza Mohamed (Malaysia, Chairman of the Malaysian Peat Society)
 Hon Dato James Dawos Mamit (Malaysia)
 Dr. Bambang Setiadi (Indonesia, Chairman of the Indonesian Peat Association)
 Professor Harri Vasander (Finland)

The following priority areas were identified: biodiversity, fire, poverty, water management, industry - Wise Use, restoration, spatial planning, and climate change. Climate change was recognized to be the most important area.

Activities of members of this Commission were well represented at the 13th International Peat Congress in Tullamore at which there were 24 oral and 7 poster presentations – 31 in total! A large number of participants were present representing Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam.

We now have two IPS National Committees in Southeast Asia, one in Indonesia and the other, recently formed in Malaysia. The Malaysian Peat

Society has been approved as the Malaysian National Committee of IPS with Professor Wan Sulaiman as Chairman in early 2009. The Society has currently 49 individual members and one institutional member.

Activities for 2009/2010 are being planned and members of Commission IX will be kept informed.

Reports of National Committees

Finland

The activities of the Finnish Peatland Society - Suoseura in 2008 have been many. Suoseura arranged two regular meetings for its members, traditionally in spring and autumn. Connected to every meeting there were presentations or lectures about current topics concerning mires and peatlands. The meetings were open to anyone interested.

This year, an autumn excursion was arranged to the mires of South-East Finland. Because so many members of the Finnish Peatland Society, about forty, participated in the Tullamore Congress, the number of our own excursions and meetings was one less than usual.

Meetings and seminars

*Annual spring meeting, 11 March 2008, Finnish Forest Research Institute (METLA), Vantaa (20 attendants), lectures on the after-use of cut-over peatlands:

- Managing director Hannu Salo (Ecotrac Oy), Presenting the new book, "Guide of after-use methods for cut-away peatlands"
- Ph.D. (For.) Niko Silvan (Metla, Parkano Research Unit), Production of Sphagnum biomass in cut-away peatlands - a new annexation!

* Annual autumn meeting, 18 November 2008, Finnish Forest Research Institute (METLA), Vantaa (34 attendants), presentations on:

- Assessment of the threatened habitat types of Finland (Finnish Environment Institute, SYKE), special part on threatened mire habitat types of Finland
- M.Sc., Senior researcher, Aira Kokko (SYKE), background and methods

- Lic. Phil., Managing director of nature conservation, Eero Kaakinen (The Environment Center of Northern Ostrobothnia), Results
- M.Sc., Senior researcher, Kaisu Aapala (SYKE), Spruce mires as an example of threatened mire habitat types

Excursion to Kymenlaakso

The traditional autumn excursion of the Finnish Peat Society took place from 16 to 17 September 2008 and visited the mires of South-East Finland in the areas of Kouvola, Hamina, Lappeenranta and Lake Saimaa.

Altogether 42 members of Suoseura took part in this excursion. The peatland researchers of the Geological Survey of Southern Finland, Dr. Markku Mäkilä and Mr. Ale Grundström were the main guides and organizers. In addition to the members of Suoseura, Mrs. Marie Kofod-Hansen (TorvForsk), Mr. Magnus Brandel (Swedish Peat Producers' Association), Mr. Stefan Östlund (Neova Ltd.) from Sweden and Mr. Erki Niitlaan (Estonian Peat Association) from Estonia also took part in this excursion.

The first day started with a visit to the Mustila arboretum in Elimäki municipality. Over 100 years old, it is the largest arboretum in Scandinavia. The next sites were the mires of Valkmusa National Park, comprising the largest natural mires of the littoral zone of Southern Finland.

Afterwards, Jari Jääskeläinen from Vapo Oy guided us through a new peat production area at Vehkaoja, which was in the preparation phase - the area had been drained first for forestry - to an old peat production area at Haukkasuo mire, where peat production had started already in the 1940s and



Catherine O'Connell, new Chair of the Irish National Committee, meeting Congress participants. Photo: Mika Pasanen

will soon be finished. For overnight, we travelled to the shores of Lake Saimaa, to the holiday center Saimaanranta in Taipalsaari.

On the second excursion day, we first visited the sub area of the city of Lappeenranta, where we saw a very old peat layer formed over 10,200 years ago. This was found in connection with construction works. The next place visited was something other than soft peat - a museum of jewels in Ylämaa municipality and a granite quarry of Palin Granit Ltd. The war history became familiar at Miehkälä where we visited the defence line of Salpalinja. In the Ruokolammensuo mire, near the town of Hamina, the peat layer transgression of the Litorina Sea and the method of taking peat samples with a peat drill became familiar.

Just before we started on the way back home, we heard a presentation by forest ecology Ph.D. student Paavo Ojanen from the University of Helsinki on his research in co-operation with the Finnish Forest Research Institute, where the CO₂ gas exchange on peatlands drained for forestry is measured and simulated. A travel report, written by Iida Kämäri is available in Finnish: Suoseuran syysretki Kaakkois-Suomen soille. Suo 59(3): 89-93.

Publications

In the year 2008 the Finnish Peatland Society published the 59th volume of the quarterly journal SUO, comprising altogether 146 pages and printed in 600 copies.

The Society has also published a new book: Korhonen, R., Korpela L. and Sarkkola, S. (eds.), Finland - Fenland, Research and sustainable utilisation of mires and peat. The book was published at the same time also in Finnish as "Suomi-Suomaa". The book comprises 14 main

themes and 38 different sub-themes of recent knowledge in all different fields concerning the peatlands and mires of Finland, written by 42 experts in their own fields. The official publication day of the books was the 10 September 2008. The price of the English version is € 58 including mailing costs and it can be easily ordered at the IPS website.

Activities in IPS and its commissions

About 40 members of Finnish National Committee participated in the 13th International Peat Congress in Tullamore, Ireland in June. The Finnish members have also actively taken part in other IPS meetings and as national members in IPS Commissions and Working Groups in 2008.

More information on activities and publications can be found at www.suoseura.fi.

Ireland

As in recent years, the activities of the Irish Peat Society last year again focused mainly on preparatory work for Congress-08 that culminated in a very successful Congress in Tullamore in June. Almost 600 people attended the event from 30 different countries spanning each of the continents except Antarctica. Using the sporting analogy we believe that the Tullamore Congress "raised the bar" for the next Congress in four years time. We received numerous messages of thanks and congratulations and everyone involved should feel good and proud at such a satisfactory outcome.

The positive feedback on content and organisation was very pleasing to the Organising Committee. The reaction to the memory-stick proceedings was generally good and Field trips, Accompanying Persons' tours and the Post Congress tour were very well received. A number of social and cultural events were also included in the rather full programme for the week. Due in particular to the very generous level of sponsorship received towards the financing of the Congress, the Organising Committee was in a position to cover its costs and produce a surplus for the Irish Peat Society.

On behalf of the Irish Peat Society I wish to express our sincerest gratitude to all who helped to make the 13th International Peat Congress held in Tullamore last June so successful and memorable. Your support was very helpful. In particular our thanks must go to the IPS Secretariat as well as to all those colleagues who participated in the Scientific Committee and reviewed submitted presentations and posters and finally to the people who took on the often challenging role of chairing a session. Whereas it would have been very difficult to stage

the Congress without the financial assistance of our many generous sponsors, it would have been impossible to run the activities and proceedings without your good selves. The Irish Organising Committee is forever grateful.

At the IPS Annual Assembly held in Tullamore on the final day of the Congress, the outgoing Chairman of the Irish Peat Society Donal Clarke was elected President of the International Peat Society. This is a signal honour for Ireland's peat community and the Irish Peat Society wish to congratulate Donal and wish him well in his stewardship of the IPS over the next four years.

Also at the Annual Assembly Catherine Farrell was elected as Chair of Commission V. The Irish Peat Society is also honoured by this event and extends its good wishes to Catherine in her endeavours on peatland after-use on behalf of the IPS.

The 3rd Annual General Meeting of the Irish Peat Society was held in the Radisson Royal Hotel Dublin on Tuesday 21 October 2008. The moderate attendance was given a report on the Society's activities during the year, in particular in relation to the staging of the 13th International Peat Congress in Tullamore in June.

The AGM was immediately followed by a seminar, the theme of which was "Turf-cutting on Natura 2000 sites - problems and solutions". The programme of presentations included the EU perspective, the farmer/landholder viewpoint and a rather stark outline of the Irish situation in relation to the conservation management of raised bogs given by National Parks and Wildlife.

A new Executive Committee was elected for a four-year term. The Officers are: Chairman, Catherine O'Connell; Vice-Chairman, Catherine Farrell; Secretary-Treasurer, Pat Fitzgerald. The other members are: Caitrona Douglas, Roy Tomlinson and Donal Clarke. John Feehan decided not to go forward for re-election to the Executive Committee and the Irish Peat Society wishes to record its appreciation of the service rendered by both Donal Clarke and John Feehan who are stepping down from the positions of Chairman and Vice-chairman respectively.

Latvia

Currently there are 24 members in the Latvian Peat Producers Association; two of them are associate members, and five honorary members. The members of the Latvian Peat Producers Association extract 74% of all extracted peat in Latvia. One of the members has left the Latvian Peat Producers Association, but at the end of 2008 one new



Latvian and Ukrainian IPS members confirmed their cooperation also in Tullamore. Photo: Susann Warnecke

associate member joined - Laimdota Kalnina, professor from the University of Latvia, Faculty of Geography and Earth Sciences. She is researching formation and development of mires and is involving students in these activities, such as our project manager Ilze Gorovneva.

There have been some changes in the structure of LPPA. Up to finishing her Master's thesis, "Reconstruction of palaeovegetation at the North Eastern area of Ancient Burtnieks Lake", Ilze Gorovneva was working as Secretary, but after graduating she has been working as Project Manager. At the moment she is finalizing her Doctoral thesis "Natural and human induced Holocene environmental and climate change recorded in lake and bog sediments of Northern Latvia". In early December Ilze gave birth to her first son. Uldis Ozols took care of her duties during the maternity leave.

The Annual Meeting of the Latvian Peat Producers Association was held on 28 March in the guest house "Aitinlauvas". In the general meeting, four topics were discussed, including the Board's report, the revised Commission report, a welcome to new members and the approval of income and expenditure estimates for 2008.

The Latvian Peat Producers Association held its 6th Sport Games on 27 - 28 July 2008 in the Madona district, this time organized by "Livanu Kudras fabrika". Besides the usual sports, fishing and street ball, there were several very interesting sports - blind volleyball, blind orienteering, rolling of a horse cart wheel etc. For the first time, the Association administration attended with their own team. In the team rankings the first place was taken by "Pindstrup Latvia". This company will organize the next Games on the coast of the Gulf of Riga at



Ms. Carolin Winter worked as efficient IPS Communications Assistant from August 2008 to May 2009. Photo: Carolin Winter

the sports complex „Dzintarkrasts” on 10 - 12 July 2009.

Also in 2008, the LPPA Board decided to make some changes to the existing Certification system of the Latvian Peat Producers Association (KRASS) and confirmed a new Certification Commission that consists of the following specialists: A.Snore (Chair), Z.Jurass, S.Viss and A.Lacis.

KRASS was developed and is operating in Latvia, or more precisely, its first phase was developed in detail and it is now operating in Latvia. The objective of introducing a certification system is to improve the quality of peat products and ensure environment-friendly and sustainable use of peatlands in Latvia. The KRASS certificate acknowledges the philosophy of the certified company to work at a high technical level, following the regulations of environmental protection. LPPA received a request for a certificate from Ltd. Laflora in November 2008 which was approved after inspecting Kaigu Bog.

The LPPA Board had a meeting with JSC Latvijas valsts meži, LVM - State forests of Latvia in February 2009. During this meeting several very important questions were discussed:

1. Improving cooperation of LPPA with LVM;
2. LVM long term strategy in peatland management;
3. Principles of rental charges for peatlands provided for extraction;
4. Lease agreements with peat extractors, LPPA members

Conclusions were:

1. LVM will organize the Salenieku mire auction;
2. LVM representatives will inform LPPA about auction rules before sale.

The traditional forum of representatives of Baltic peat producers was held on 3 - 5 September 2008 in Jurmala, Latvia. The issue of this year's Forum was "Peat in Life". Besides participants from the Baltic States, delegates from Ukraine, Belarus, Germany, Russia and the Netherlands attended the seminar, totalling 97 participants.

Mr. Valerijs Kozlovs, Chairman of the Board of the Latvian Peat Producers Association opened the Forum. All the participants had a chance to hear several very interesting presentations. Mr. Edmunds Belskis, representative of the Ministry of Economics, spoke about the business environment in Latvia. Dr. Norbert Siebels, Vice Chairman of the European Peat and Growing Media Association (EPAGMA) reported on the socioeconomic impact of the peat and growing media industry on horticulture in the EU, Mr. Albinas Cernauskas, Director of the Lithuanian Peat Producers Association, and Mr. Erki Niitlaan, Director of the Estonian Peat Association, reported on current peat industry activities and the main tasks for the next year. Mr. Agris Lacis, Managing Director of the Latvian Peat Producers Association, discussed mires and peat in Latvia and last, but not least, Ms. Triin Triisberg gave the presentation "Cut-over peatlands, needs for their restoration and experience". Delegates from the Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus gave presentations about the peat industry in their countries. A joint field trip was organized to Kaigu Bog.

Four delegates from Latvia, Valerijs Kozlovs, Andis Gredzens, Peteris Romanovskis and Ilze Gorovneva attended the 13th International Peat Congress in Tullamore and gave two presentations: "Mire stratigraphy and resources in Latvia" (authors: L.Kalnina, A.Lacis, V.Kozlovs) and "Stone Age settlements on peatlands in Latvia" (authors: L.Kalnina, A.Cerina, I.Gorovneva, V.Berzins).

The Association is continuing its collaboration with Belarus. Chairman of the Board, Valerijs Kozlovs attended a Belarus - Latvia Intergovernmental Commission sitting that was held on 16 - 17 October 2008 in Minsk. During this meeting questions on economic and scientific-economic cooperation were discussed. The Commission recommended organizing a Latvian specialist training at Belarusian universities with regard to peat extraction. Later in individual meetings, V.Kozlovs discussed organizing summer practice in our companies for students of the Technical University of Belarus.

Lithuania

The Lithuanian Peat Producers' Association Lithuanian Peat held a number of important meetings in 2008. In March, the general meeting of the members of the Association was held. The President Mr. Albinas Cernauskas presented the Annual Report of activities of the Association. The attendants also approved the budget, re-elected the members of the council, discussed the topicality and elected the auditor.

The second meeting of the Association was organized in June 2008. Dr. Remigijus Simasius,

Director of the Free Market Institute, introduced activities, goals and cooperation possibilities with the Lithuanian Peat Association. The Institute offered scientific research and the introduction of Lithuanian Peat to different governmental institutions. This step is very important in solving the problem of subsidising diesel fuel for the Association members. Business development consultant Mr. Mykolas Trunce, introduced a labour training project funded by the EU.

Members also discussed EPAGMA (European Peat and Growing Media Association) activities in Brussels and its cooperation with Lithuanian peat producers. Moreover, a new company, JSC Rekyva joined the Association.

Finally, every Tuesday the President and the Director of Lithuanian Peat participated, generally with other industries' associations, in lobby meetings, where governmental, parliamentarians and other competent state officers are invited to discuss particular laws and appeals to the government on various topics important for the industry.

The most important plan for the Lithuanian Peat Producers' Association 2009 is to discuss with the government how to improve the business environment for fuel peat. Fuel peat, large amounts of which are imported from Belarus to Lithuania, is currently not regarded as a renewable fuel.

The Netherlands

The Dutch National Committee of IPS met three times in 2008 and organised two occasions where members could meet. Firstly, Alterra of Wageningen University hosted the annual meeting where the Board of the Netherlands Veengenootschap reported on their activities and plans to its members.

Both the report of activities and the financial reports were recorded. After the meeting, those present were fascinated by four presentations on the relation between hydrology and ecology in tropical peatlands, the history of landscape development of the province of Drenthe in the last 1,000 years, the effects of climate change on bogs, and finally on an experiment about the influence of birches on the development of peatlands.

In the autumn, a so-called study-day was held in Griendtsveen, a village named after an ancestor of our honorary member Henk van de Griendt. The program included presentations on the economics of peat production in the past and the interwoven history of Griendtsveen and its local peat production.

Members of the Board of the Nederlands Veengenootschap participated in negotiations with three other organisations in the Dutch peat business, aiming at combined meetings that would reinforce their interest and increase the number of attendants at these events. The Board repeated its proposal for its candidate for the "Wim Tonnis Peat Award". The candidate was, however, not selected.

Many Dutch members participated in the Tullamore Congress, also with oral and poster presentations. The Tullamore Commission VIII meeting with interested Congress participants selected a successor for Dr. Anne Jelle Schilstra. Out of three candidates that were proposed by their respective national committees. Dr. Michiel Gerding, historian of the Dutch province of Drenthe, was chosen.

A small number of members ended their membership at the end of 2008, although with new members joining, membership was seen to have increased at the turn of the year to 78.

Poland

The Polish National Committee of IPS held its annual meeting on 11 February 2008. During this meeting the Chairpersons of the Commissions presented their reports on activities during the previous year. After discussion, the action plan for 2008 was accepted. Furthermore the membership issues were analysed, e.g. how to attract young scientists to join the Polish National Committee of IPS. During this meeting some problems related to



IPS Communications Manager Susann Warnecke returned from her maternity leave right to the Tullamore Congress. Photo: Mika Pasanen

peatland utilization for agriculture and peatland protection within the pan-European ecological network Natura 2000 were also discussed.

The members of the Executive Board of the Polish NC participated in many meetings and scientific events where various aspects of peat and peatlands were raised. The Polish scientists are represented in IPS by 25 universities and research institutes. The members are active in many fields related to peat properties and peatlands utilization and protection. The majority of them are focused on activities within two Commissions, namely on the utilization of peat and peatlands in agriculture, and the chemical, physical and biological characteristics of peat.

During the last year many important research projects have been carried out by Polish IPS members. Lately the project entitled "Geographical information system on the Polish wetlands" was completed at the Institute for Land Reclamation and Grassland Farming in Falenty. The data base comprises information on the distribution and general characteristics of wetlands, including peatlands.

In 2008, a series of lectures open to students, university teachers as well as to the general public began at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn. The scope of the presentations is the environment but a great number of presentations actually concern peatlands. This activity will continue in 2009.

Sweden

International Peat Congress 2012

Organising the 2012 International Peat Congress in Sweden "Peatlands in Balance" has entered the next phase. We have established our organisation, continued work on the budget and established a road map. We are also intensifying our efforts to establish sponsorship.

At the Tullamore Congress, we introduced the coming Swedish Congress with a presentation filled with music and songs. This offered a foretaste of our expectations for the meeting in Stockholm in 2012. In general, we experienced the Congress in Tullamore as a very significant and inspiring event. We gathered plenty of ideas that we have brought into our organising efforts for the coming Congress. We will also meet the Organising Committee for the Tullamore Congress to check our planning efforts - this is seen as a very important part for our work in organising the coming Congress.

Our regular activities at TorvForsk

Many important research projects are going on in a number of fields, including biological diversity, co-combustion and particle emissions. We are producing a book on cultivation substrates, as well as conducting further studies on the health effects that peat litter has on domestic animals. A complete list of all our projects can be seen at www.torvforsk.se.

Co-operation across borders

Several of us also had the chance to take part in the Finnish National Committee's excursion to peatlands in their home country. We saw many beautiful areas, including sites that didn't have to do with peat, like a quarry. I also gained insight into how Suoseura, the Finnish Peatland Society, functions, and got inspiration for ideas on how we can attract more individual members to TorvForsk and how we can then take care of them best. As a result, we plan an excursion for the TorvForsk members in early fall 2009. We produced a new folder to introduce our activities at TorvForsk and we will use it in our efforts to attract new members.

The day before the excursion in Finland, representatives from Finland, Sweden and Estonia gathered to discuss co-ordinating our research activities. This was the first step in our efforts to organise a Nordic/Baltic seminar and will also include looking into the availability of EU funding for the meeting. We agreed that we face similar issues in the Nordic and Baltic areas.

Seminars

TorvForsk works closely with Svebio, which participated in the Nordic Bioenergy Conference in Jönköping in June 2008. TorvForsk hosted a side event about peat, including presentations such as

- Practical experiences of the use of peat in a heating plant
- New methods for peat production,
- Peat pellets for small scale use
- Sustainable peat production and use - environmental sustainability criteria for peat.

Working groups

The Working Committees that TorvForsk has started in collaboration with the Swedish Peat Producers Association are functioning well. These Committees are intended to help find platforms for discussions, studying important issues, and initiating new research projects.



Marief Kofod-Hansen and Björn Hånell warmly invite all IPS members to the next International Peat Congress in Stockholm in 2012. Photo: Susann Warnecke

The Committees will track research and development in their specific fields. Members are representatives from companies in the peat and energy industries, the research community, as well as public authorities and other interested stakeholders. We see these Committees as essential to continue long-term development in the peat sector. The Commissions are:

- Energy: corrosion problems, using pellets, emissions as well as biodiesel from peat, including joint activities between Sweden and Finland.
- Cultivation and litter: topics related to peat litter, such as its effect on animal health. This is a very active group that has met at least once a month. We have conducted several studies, compiled a folder describing the advantages and disadvantages of using peat litter and we have started a new project related to using peat litter for horses. There have already been several studies of this kind in Finland, so we plan to invite a Finnish research team to Sweden this spring. We had also planned, with IPS Holland, to bring in Dutch farmers to study the use of peat litter in Sweden. Various problems related to Swedish quarantine regulations for foreign visits to Swedish farms created obstacles to these plans. But we anticipate that this proposal will lead to other joint activities with the IPS Dutch National Committee and possibly with the Dutch Agricultural University.
- In close co-operation with our TorvForsk user groups, the Swedish Peat Producers Association formed a Production Committee to address legislation and issues related to the legal climate and to monitor R&D in the field. Members include representatives from businesses in the peat sector,

the research community and public authorities. TorvForsk's activities are partly financed by membership fees, but funding is limited. Much time is spent seeking joint funding for TorvForsk projects. These activities have brought success in 2008 so that several projects are currently jointly funded by industry businesses and authorities.

United Kingdom

Most of this year's activities have been focused on re-establishing the UK National Committee and consolidating its membership. The Secretary for many years resigned without handing over any of the membership or financial information and as an interim measure the IPS Executive Board at its meeting in Jyväskylä, Finland in November 2008 appointed Jack Rieley as Secretary/Treasurer and Allan Robertson as Chairman to run the affairs of the NC until a meeting of members can be held to elect officers and Executive Committee members.

It has taken almost 9 months to gain access to the bank account and transfer the mandate to the interim Chairman and Secretary/Treasurer. This has now been accomplished but the financial situation is poor because membership fees have not been collected from many members for several years. Members have been informed and they are mostly very supportive. Things are now being placed on a more efficient footing and plans are being made for future meetings and events.

Individual members are mostly renewing their subscriptions and even paying some arrears of fees but unfortunately, we seem to have lost contact with a number of our corporate industry members who were allied to the IPS through the Peat Producers Association of the UK and Ireland until its demise around 2004. All have been contacted and a few have now paid subscriptions for 2009 but others have not responded to frequent E-mails and information sent to them. I hope this will change over the next few months.

In our attempts to regroup and reactivate the UKNC we have taken on the organization of the IPS 2009 Convention in Belfast, Northern Ireland on 24 - 26 April and especially the seminar, workshop and excursion that are being held jointly with the Irish Peat Society. We are already ensured of a large audience for the seminar/workshop and a full excursion bus. In Belfast we shall also hold the AGM of the UKNC, elect office bearers and a committee and make plans for the future. On the agenda is an exciting proposal to formally re-establish the UK National Committee of IPS as a platform to coordinate all those in the UK with interests in peat and peatlands. We intend to go from strength to strength.

Expenses and revenue

	Total 1.1.-31.12.2008		Budget 2008		Total 1.1.-31.12.2007	
ORDINARY OPERATIONS,						
PUBLICATIONS						
Income	6,440.00		9,500		10,786.00	
Expenses						
Staff expenses	-300.00		-300		0.00	
Other expenses	-11,062.95	-4,922.95	-18,700	-9,500	-16,235.07	-5,449.07
CONFERENCE						
Income	32,831.65		41,000		0.00	
Expenses						
Staff expenses	0.00		0		0.00	
Other expenses	0.00	32,831.65	0	41,000	0.00	0.00
PROJECTS						
Income	18,196.00		1,000		38,654.00	
Expenses						
Staff expenses	0.00		0		0.00	
Other expenses	-45,280.90	-27,084.90	-2,400	-1,400	-6,496.94	32,157.06
OTHER OPERATIONS						
Income	1,301.00		2,000		1,399.00	
Expenses						
Staff expenses	-31,689.42		-41,500		-41,010.10	
Depreciation equipment	-329.23		-600		-409.00	
Other Expenses	-76,234.92	-106,952.57	-83,500	-123,600	-71,080.64	-111,100.74
SURPLUS / DEFICIT		-106,128.77		-93,500		-84,392.75
FUND RAISING						
Income	142,267.00		135,000		126,656.00	
Expenses	-10,743.19	131,523.81	-500	134,500	-336.00	126,320.00
SURPLUS / DEFICIT		25,395.04		41,000		41,927.25
INVESTMENTS AND FINANCIAL						
Income	815.47		0	0	1,294.68	
Expenses	0.00	815.47	0	0	0.00	1,294.68
RESULT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR		26,210.51		41,000		43,221.93
OTHER INCOME						
Income	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00
Provisions and reserves		0.00		-41,000		0.00
PROFIT OF THE PERIOD	Eur	26,210.51	Eur	0	Eur	43,221.93

Notes to the accounts

	Eur 2008	Eur 2007
TOTAL INCOME AND EXPENCES		
Total income	202,603.12	183,725.19
Total expenses	-176,063.38	-140,094.26
./. Depreciation	-329.23	-409.00
PROFIT(+)/ LOSS (-) OF THE PERIOD	26,210.51	43,221.93
 STAFF EXPENSES	 1 person	 1 person
Salaries with holiday pay	19,569.29	22,178.21
Pension insurance (TyeL)	3,242.22	3,333.59
Statutory social insurance contributions and other social security fees	1,552.27	2,267.66
	24,363.78	27,779.46
 DEPRECIATION		
Equipment 1.1.	1,227.92	1,636.92
Acquisition 1.1.-31.12.	89.00	0.00
Subtotal	1,316.92	1,636.92
Depreciation 25%	-329.23	-409.00
VALUE OF THE EQUIPMENT AFTER DEPRECIATION	987.69	1,227.92
 Accrued income		
Health; government subsidy	159.74	0.00
IPS Congress 2008 income	32,831.65	0.00
	32,991.39	0.00
 PROJECTS		
Climate Change Working Group		
Income	0.00	38,500.00
Expenses	0.00	-6,496.94
	0.00	32,003.06
 CCWG 2008 Book		
Income	3,030.00	
Expenses	-14,187.90	
	-11,157.90	
 CERTIFICATION		
Income	15,000.00	
Expenses	-30,988.00	
	-15,988.00	
 RESERVATIONS		
Holiday pay reserve and social contributions 2006	0.00	3,729.50
Holiday pay reserve and social contributions 2007	0.00	3,815.00
Holiday pay reserve and social contributions 2008	3,549.65	
Credit TyeL	284.19	
Credit IMCG	105.00	
Credit Mire and Peat Journal	500.00	0.00
	4,438.84	7,544.50
 LEASING EXPENSIS		
Paid leasing expenses in 2008	0.00	1,164.14
Later occurring leasing fees	0.00	0.00
	0.00	1,164.14

Balance sheet

	31/12/2008		31/12/2007	
ASSETS				
NON-CURRENT ASSETS				
Tangible assets				
Machinery and equipment		987.69		1,227.92
Other shares and similar rights of ownership				
Participating interests		84.09		84.09
	TOTAL	<u>1,071.78</u>		<u>1,312.01</u>
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors				
Trade debtors		675.20		8,895.86
Prepayments and accrued income		32,991.39		745.92
Other debtors		32,514.00	66,180.59	24,771.00
				34,412.78
Cash in hand and at banks				
Bank accounts		83,320.96		96,991.79
Cash		134.80	83,455.76	28.12
				97,019.91
	TOTAL	<u>149,636.35</u>		<u>131,432.69</u>
ASSETS TOTAL		<u>€ 150,708.13</u>		<u>€ 132,744.70</u>
LIABILITIES				
CAPITAL AND RESERVES				
Retained earnings/loss		111,766.20		68,544.27
Profit/loss for the financial year		26,210.51		43,221.93
	TOTAL	<u>137,976.71</u>		<u>111,766.20</u>
CREDITORS				
Advances received		809.00		0.00
Trade creditors		6,901.63		13,422.95
Accruals and deferred income		4,438.84		7,544.50
Other creditors		581.95		11.05
	TOTAL	<u>12,731.42</u>		<u>20,978.50</u>
LIABILITES TOTAL		<u>€ 150,708.13</u>		<u>€ 132,744.70</u>

List of Accounting Books Used

The following accounting books have been used during the financial year:

Balance Sheet Book,
Normal Ledger,
General Journal and
Fixed Assets Book.

Date and signatures (in english)



Date and Signatures

Stockholm 4.3.2009

Donal Clarke
President

Björn Hånell
1st Vice-President

Tomasz Brandyk
2nd Vice-President

Håkan Bjur
Member

Dmitriy Gogin
Member

Paul Short
Member

Valerijs Kozlovs
Member

Satu Helynen
Member

Jutta Zeitz
Member

Jaakko Sipilä
Secretary General

Auditor's Notation

Our auditor's report has been issued today.

In Jyväskylä on

Deloitte & Touche Oy
Authorised Public Accounting Firm

Arto Saarinen
KHT

Date and signatures (in Finnish)



Päiväys ja allekirjoitukset

Tukholma 4.3.2009

Donal Clarke
President

Björn Hånell
1st Vice-President

Tomasz Brandyk
2nd Vice-President

Håkan Bjur
Member

Dmitriy Gogin
Member

Paul Short
Member

Valerij Kozlov
Member

Satu Helynen
Member

Jutta Zeitz
Member

Jaakko Sipilä
Secretary General

Tilinpäätösmerkintä

Suoritetusta tilintarkastuksesta on tänään annettu kertomus.

Jyväskylässä 11. maaliskuuta 2009

Deloitte & Touche Oy
KHT-yhteisö

Arto Saarinen
KHT

Auditor's statement

Deloitte

Deloitte & Touche Oy
Puistokatu 2 B
40100 Jyväskylä

Puh: 020 755 5200
Fax: 020 755 5201
Y-tunnus: 0989771-5
Kotipaikka: Helsinki
www.deloitte.fi

AUDITOR'S REPORT

Translated from Finnish original

To the members of Kansainvälinen Turveyhdistys ry

We have audited the accounting records, the financial statements, the report of the Board of Directors, and the administration of Kansainvälinen Turveyhdistys ry for the period 1.1.-31.12.2008. The financial statements comprise the balance sheet, the income statement and notes to the financial statements.

The responsibility of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements and the report of the Board of Directors in accordance with the laws and regulations governing the preparation of the financial statements and the report of the Board of Directors in Finland. The Board of Directors is responsible for the appropriate arrangement of the control of the company's accounts and finances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to perform the audit in accordance with good auditing practice in Finland and to express an opinion on these financial statements and on the report of the Board of Directors based on our audit. Good auditing practise requires that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements and the report of the Board of Directors are free from material misstatements and whether the members of the Board of Directors have complied with the Association Act.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements and the report of the Board of Directors. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risk of material misstatements of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements and the report of the Board of Directors.

The audit was performed in accordance with good auditing practice in Finland. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements and the report of the Board of Directors give a true and fair view of the financial performance and financial position of the association in accordance with the laws and regulations governing the preparation of the financial statements and the report of the Board of Directors in Finland. The information in the report of the Board of Directors is consistent with the information in the financial statements.

Jyväskylä, 11. March 2009

Deloitte & Touche Oy
Authorized Public Audit Firm



Arto Saarinen
APA

Member of
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu



part of it

Welcome to the Annual Convention of the International Peat Society

24 - 26 April 2009

**Seminar on Peatland
Restoration in the British
Isles and South East Asia:
Local and Global Challenges**

IPS Annual Assembly of National Representatives
One-Day Peat and Peatland Excursion
Meeting of UK National Committee
IPS Commission Meetings
Social Programme
... and much more

Please visit www.peatsociety.org for detailed information.

Belfast



International Peat Society | IMTG MTG

Big Fish by John Kindness. Photo: Belfast Visitor & Convention Bureau

We warmly thank all
IPS members and
partners for their
fruitful cooperation,
excellent work and
good company in 2008.



The International Peat Society (IPS) is an international, non-governmental and non-profit organization with approximately 1,300 members from 35 countries.

It is dedicated to fostering the advancement, exchange and communication of scientific, technical and social knowledge and understanding for the wise use of peatlands and peat.

Scientific, industrial and regulatory stakeholders of all areas related to peat and peatlands are represented in its Commissions, National Committees and other bodies.

To achieve its goals, the IPS regularly organizes conferences, symposia and workshops, publishes finding from science and industry and serves in general as a forum to bring together experts from different fields of business, science, culture and regulatory bodies dealing with peat and peatlands.

