

PEAT NEWS



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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL PEAT SOCIETY

The International Peat Society (IPS) is an international, non-governmental and non-profit organization of scientific, industrial and regulatory stakeholders. 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.

/// Decisions of Executive Board Meeting No. 31

The IPS Executive Board met in Copenhagen on **18 November 2005** to review the strategic goals and objectives of IPS, to make its recommendation for the venue of the International Peat Congress 2012 and to discuss current issues of peatlands and climate change and the practical application of Wise Use of Peatlands. Additionally, the Board dealt with administrative issues, such as the financial status of IPS and the payment of membership fees. It welcomed the Irish Peat Society as National Committee, approved model statutes and an easy-to-use guide for National Committees as well as short guidelines for the organisation of IPS events. Last, but not least, the Board accepted the interim working program, plan of activities and budget for 2006. Future Board meetings are planned for St. Petersburg on **11 - 12 February**, Hanover on **4 May** and Amsterdam on **1 November 2006**. The IPS Convention, including the Annual Assembly, will be held on **4 - 7 May 2006** in Hanover, Germany. All IPS members will receive a summary of the Board's decisions by e-mail.

/// New IPS Strategic Plan and Action Plans

One of the most important tasks of the Executive Board in Copenhagen was to review the IPS Strategic Plan launched in Tampere in 2004 and to create additional action plans to reach the goals of the organisation. Among others, the activation of the newly established Working Group on Peatlands and Climate Change, the promotion of the Guidelines for Practical Application of Wise Use and an information campaign using the DVD on Wise Use of Peatlands were seen as important in the further promotion of Wise Use. Regarding the IPS membership, the structural development of the existing National Committees, strengthening of IPS activities in Asia and an increased cooperation with forest companies and scientific institutions are on the agenda for the next year. A scientific online forum on peat and peatland issues will be created in the near future to foster communication beyond meetings. The new Strategic Plan and Action Plans will be confirmed by the Board meeting in February and afterwards published at www.peatsociety.org.

/// Recommendation for the International Peat Congress 2012

The IPS Executive Board agreed in Copenhagen to recommend to the Annual Assembly 2006 that the Swedish National Committee would host the 14th International Peat Congress in Stockholm on **3 - 8 June 2012**. The decision was made taking into account the written applications received, the presentations of the applicants given separately at the meeting and the criteria set when opening the bidding process. These criteria included: 1) that the Congress would be held in a country active in research and utilisation of peat and peatlands as well as in the implementation of the Wise Use concept, and that the bids would comprise 2) a presentation of the congress venue, 3) a proposal for the theme and content structure of the event, 4) a draft budget and 5) a nomination for the IPS 1st Vice President 2008-2012 and President 2012-2016. Elve Lode, supported by Erki Niitlaan, made the presentation on behalf of the Estonian National Committee, Valerijs Kozlovs, supported by Niels Soe, spoke on behalf of the Latvian National Committee and Björn Hånell and Marie Kofod-Hansen, supported by Magnus Brandel, presented the application of the Swedish National Committee. The Board expressed to each of the applicants its appreciation of the high quality of

their presentations. Thereafter, the Board members discussed at length each of the proposals in relation to each of the criteria. After an extensive discussion, in which differing views were expressed, explained and debated, the Board reached a consensus to recommend to the Annual Assembly 2006 that the Swedish National Committee be asked to host the International Peat Congress 2012 in Stockholm. Mr Hedlund did not participate in this decision. In addition, the Board expressed the view that significant IPS events should be organised within the next few years in the Baltic States.

/// Decisions and Recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Board

The Chairman, six of the eight IPS Commission Chairs and a number of other participants attended the 3rd Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) meeting in Copenhagen on **17 November 2005**. The SAB exchanged information on the recent Commission activities, agreed on short guidelines for the organisation of IPS events, approved a number of official IPS conferences, and decided that the Commission Chairs would take over the task of approving updates to the electronic peat dictionary. Important steps were taken in the activation of the Peatlands and Climate Change Working Group and in further developing the Guidelines for the Application of Wise Use. The SAB also agreed to start collecting possible topics and speakers for the introductory session of the International Peat Congress in 2008. The next SAB meeting is scheduled for Hanover, Germany on **4 May 2006**.

/// Guidelines on the Application of Wise Use

Within the previous weeks, Mr. Donal Clarke has written a first draft of “Guidelines for the Practical Application of Wise Use”. The Guidelines are planned particularly for use by civil servants involved in such areas as land use planning but also other stakeholders who are, in practice, dealing with peatland matters. Following a recommendation by the Scientific Advisory Board in Copenhagen, further guidelines for the application of Wise Use of peat and peatlands in forestry, agriculture and possibly other fields will be developed by experts in these areas within the next few weeks. All documents will be made available for wide consultation on the IPS website.

/// Forum on the Sustainable Management of Estonian Mires

On **4 – 5 November 2005**, a forum on “Sustainable management of Estonian mires“ was held in Jämeda, Estonia. The meeting, organised by the Estonian Wetland Society with the support of the Environmental Investment Centre, was attended by 83 participants from science, the peat industry, non-government organisations and other bodies. The attendants discussed important issues regarding the regulation of peatland use in Estonia, among them the lack of uniform understanding of mires and terminology, e.g. in statistical data, the threat of forest melioration to pristine mires, organisational issues in rehabilitating abandoned peatlands and the role of the state in choosing peatlands for extraction and in setting production limits for peat as a renewable resource. On **4 November**, the Estonian Peat Society elected a new Board, including representatives from both the industry and science. Please contact erki.niitlaan@mail.ee for more detailed information.

/// Peatlands. Do you care? Launched by Ramsar CC-GAP

A new brochure entitled “Peatlands. Do you care?” was launched and distributed at Ramsar COP9 in Kampala, Uganda. The brochure had been prepared by Ramsar’s CC-GAP (Coordination Committee on Global Action for Peatlands) and funded by a number of IPS members including companies, industry associations and other organisations as well as a number of NGOs. The brochure can be downloaded at www.peatsociety.org and ordered from the IPS Secretariat.

/// New IPS Members

We warmly welcome Laura Crippa and Patrizia Zaccheo from Italy and Pettina Love from Australia as individual members as well as Dunhua Jixiang Peatmoss Develop Co Ltd., represented by H. Ping, as corporate member of IPS. All new memberships come into force as of **1 January 2006**.