

The International Peat Society (IPS) is an international, non-governmental and non-profit organisation 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.

## Website for International Peat Congress 2012 Launched!

The Organizing Committee of the 14<sup>th</sup> International Peat Congress in Sweden in 2012 has launched the website of its event. At [www.ipc2012.se](http://www.ipc2012.se) you can see the preliminary schedule of the Congress, get a first impression of the city of Stockholm and pre-register as a participant. Please feel free to share the contents among your professional contacts and friends. The 14th International Peat Congress will be held in Stockholm, Sweden on **3 - 8 June 2012** and organised by TorvForsk, the Swedish Peat Research Foundation, National Committee of IPS, in collaboration with a broad range of universities, research institutions and the peat industry. All members of the IPS have a special mission to care for the natural resources, peatlands and peat. The IPS vision – the management of peatlands for the benefit of humankind now and in the future – implies that we must learn both how to utilise and how to protect these resources to reach the status we desire: Peatlands in Balance. This will be the theme of the Congress and we look forward to meeting you and your colleagues!

## Life in Growing Media: Peat in Horticulture Symposium in October 2010

IPS Commission II on the industrial use of peat and peatlands and the Dutch National Committee of IPS have published the First Announcement and Call for Papers for the 6th International Symposium on Peat in Horticulture. The conference will be held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands on **11 October 2010**, traditionally one day before the International Horti Fair (12-15 October 2010). This time, the symposium will deal with “Life in Growing Media”. The organizers aim at getting together peat and growing media producers, microbiologists, growing media quality managers, researchers, suppliers of growing medium constituents and additives, experts from quality assurance organizations and growers interested in what life in growing media is all about. Physical and chemical characteristics of growing media have been studied by many in these past decades, but less attention has been given to biological and in particular microbiological properties although fungi, bacteria and other organisms in growing media may be beneficial, hazardous or indifferent to the crops grown. The complete Announcement and Call for Papers can be downloaded at the IPS website, [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=47](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=47).

## Deadline Approaching: IPS Executive Board Elections 2010

Please remember that, at the Annual Assembly of National Representatives in Finland on a day between **14 - 18 June 2010**, elections will be held for the posts of five Executive Board members of the IPS, including the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. All National Committees that have paid their membership fees up to 2009 are now asked to submit their nominations for candidates of the Executive Board. Applications must be sent by **31 January 2010** to the IPS Secretariat, including an application letter and a CV of the person concerned. Please see the IPS Statutes and Internal Regulations at [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=5](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=5) for more information on the requirements and details of the election procedure. The names and terms of office of the current Executive Board members were also made available in Peat News 10/2009.

## Award of Excellence 2010

The International Peat Society Award of Excellence will be presented at the Annual Assembly 2010 in Finland for the 5<sup>th</sup> time. All IPS members are kindly invited to submit their nominations for the award to the IPS Secretariat by **31 January 2010**. Please see the complete Terms of Reference, the CV template and the names of the laureates so far at [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=103](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=103).

## Peatland Reclamation and Restoration Conference in Canada March 2010

The First Announcement and Call for Papers for the symposium on “Reclamation and Restoration of Boreal Peatland and Forest Ecosystems: Toward a Sustainable Future” has been published. The event will be held in Edmonton, AB on **25 - 27 March 2010**. The three-day meeting includes special invited plenary presentations, posters, and presentations from registered participants. Disturbances in Canada’s boreal forest include those in both upland forests and in peatlands. These disturbances originate from both anthropogenic and natural causes, especially fire, and many are currently a concern of government, NGO’s, and industry. Techniques for the restoration, as well as the reclamation of peatlands and forests impacted by agriculture, urban development, or oil and gas activities, have made significant advancement over the last decade and these techniques need to be incorporated into the regulation and management of peatland and forest ecosystems. How this research and management is affected by climatic change will be an important 21st century concern. This symposium addresses these problems and the recent research that is being carried out in North America. Abstracts for the conference should be submitted to the Organizing Committee by **15 February 2010**, the deadline for early-bird registrations is **28 February 2010**. For more information please visit [www.peatnet.siu.edu](http://www.peatnet.siu.edu).

## New Study: Estimating Carbon Emissions from Fire in Tropical Peatland

Fires in tropical peatland, especially in Kalimantan and Sumatra in Indonesia, have been occurring with increasing frequency since the 1980s. The area of these can now be estimated with reasonable accuracy using remote sensed imagery, but determination of the thickness of peat burned away has presented a major problem. Relatively few measurements of fire burn depth have been made in the field owing to difficulty of access and rapid growth of secondary vegetation while satellite based techniques have not been sufficiently sensitive and cannot penetrate vegetation cover.

The recently published paper\* by Ballhorn et al is a major contribution to filling this data gap. They describe a method using light detection and ranging (LIDAR) aerial remote sensing that is based on the transmission of laser pulses towards the ground surface and the recording of the return signal. By analyzing the time delay for each pulse back to the sensor, relative and absolute surface heights were determined with an accuracy of several centimetres. Using a study area of 2.79 million hectares of peat dominated landscape in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, where in 2006 severe wildfires destroyed large tracts of peat swamp forest, they determined an average burn scar depth of 33±18 cm. From this they calculated that the equivalent of 180.38±98.39 megatons of carbon dioxide was released from an area equal to only 13% of Indonesia’s peatlands. Finally, the authors estimate that the total CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent emissions in that El Niño year were 0.84±0.51 billion tons, which is equal to 7-24% of all global emissions as a result of land use change.

\*Ballhorn, U., Siegert, F., Mason, M. and Limin, S. (2009) Derivation of burn scar depths and estimation of carbon emissions with LIDAR in Indonesian peatlands. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America (online). The paper can be read and downloaded at [www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.0906457106](http://www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.0906457106).