

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.

## Decisions of Executive Board Meeting 52

The Executive Board (EB) of IPS met on **23 - 25 February** in Jyväskylä, Finland to discuss current IPS affairs and to plan the future activities of the Society. During the formal part of the meeting, the Board approved and signed the annual report, profit and loss account and balance sheet 2009 which will be published together with the reports of the IPS Commissions and National Committees in Peatlands International in June. In addition, the Executive Board accepted the work program, plan of activities, budget and membership fees 2010 as well as the budget frame and fee proposal 2011 for submission to the Annual Assembly.



The Board also dealt with the status of its National Committees and confirmed its invitation to all IPS members to attend the meetings and excursions connected to the Assembly in Jyväskylä, Finland on **14 - 18 June**. To enlarge the participation of different countries and expert areas in decision-making, the Board will propose to the Annual Assembly that the maximum number of ordinary Executive Board members would be raised from six to eight. More details on this will be sent out with the official invitation package at the end of April to all National Committees.

Moreover, the EB decided on the laureate of the IPS Award of Excellence 2009 (the secret will be revealed on 16 June!), dealt with the Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management and initiated a comprehensive re-organisation of the IPS website, aiming at providing large amounts of relevant information on peat and peatlands to its members as well as improving usability of the site and its networking opportunities.

The Executive Board also agreed to create a Business Plan for the future development of the IPS. This will include a review of membership services, an analysis of the perceived value, image and structure of the organisation, available networking and communication technologies as well as overall content development and improved exchange between members from different countries, professions and areas of interest. The Business Plan will be based on the general IPS strategy and input from the Executive and the Scientific Advisory Boards as well as the National Committees. It is planned to launch the Plan this summer and to implement the suggestions by Stockholm 2012.

Last, but not least, the Board was briefed on the preparations for the International Peat Congress 2012 in Stockholm [www.ipc2012.se](http://www.ipc2012.se) and welcomed the report of Editor Olivia Bragg on the recent development of the IPS-IMCG online journal Mires and Peat [www.mires-and-peat.net](http://www.mires-and-peat.net). The next EB meeting will be held in connection with the IPS Convention in Jyväskylä on **15 June 2010**. A summary of all decisions “in a nutshell” will be circulated to all IPS members shortly.

## New Draft for Responsible Peatland Management Strategy

On **8 February**, the IPS Secretariat circulated the revised draft of the Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management. All members and other stakeholders interested in the process are asked to review the improved document at [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=235](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=235) and come back to us with comments and suggestions by **15 March**. Please “track” or mark all changes in the document in your text editor programme and send the revised paper to susann.warnecke (at) peatsociety.org.

At the 3rd Workshop of the project in Brussels on **28 October 2009**, it was decided to review and reconsider all comments submitted for the different drafts of the Strategy during the course of the year, to improve the language of and to straighten the contents of the document. This was done by a smaller redrafting group coordinated by IPS President Donal Clarke and the Chair of the IPS Scientific Advisory Board, Professor Jack Rieley, during the last few months. As a result of this detailed reassessment and restructuring, a new Draft was prepared and circulated to all stakeholders in the process.

### *Remarks of the redrafting group, Jack Rieley and Donal Clarke:*

1. There was a strong opinion that the strategy should not contain requirements for more research and data. We agree. This should be a strategy for the present not the future when more information is available. There are more than enough data available already to put this strategy into practice and further data acquisition can only delay its implementation or at least weaken it by implying we do not yet know enough.
2. We changed the order of the ‘priorities’ into a more logical sequence. The ‘economic’ priority with its objectives and actions was too long compared to all others and contained some information that was better located under other priorities or omitted. Some members of the coordinating group feel there is still too much emphasis on economics of the peat industry. Some actions were listed under the wrong priority and we moved them to where we felt they were more appropriate. We created a new priority for ‘after use’ since this was mentioned under several others.
3. We removed most of the controversial terms and wouldn’t like to see them re-inserted.
4. Each priority in the strategy now has an introductory paragraph before ‘objectives’ to explain briefly why it is important and as a lead into objectives and actions.

### *Overall schedule from now on:*

- The deadline for comments of this Draft will be **15 March 2010**.
- A final document will be drawn and presented by **22 April 2010**. In the event of profound disagreement over wording and/or interpretation of the final revised draft strategy the NGO representative would meet with the IPS co-ordinator to identify the problems and try to find a solution.
- The final Strategy to be completed by **15 May 2010**.
- A process of endorsement would then be initiated. Those stakeholders who can endorse the Strategy will proceed to do so.

### *Short Background to the Responsible Peatland Management Strategy:*

In 2007, a number of partners indentified the need for a peatland certification system. The IPS put forward a proposal for a system which would be externally accredited and would be developed in conjunction with all stakeholders. Following discussions with potential stakeholders it was decided to proceed with the first part of the proposal - the development of a Responsible Peatland

Management Strategy. This first project was developed as a stand-alone exercise because it was agreed that such a Strategy would have value in itself. The Strategy was developed at two meetings involving a wide range of stakeholders in Amsterdam and Belfast during the year 2009. Between the meetings and after the Belfast meeting further consultations took place by e-mail.

This process resulted in the Strategy which was proposed for signature during a special Seminar in Brussels on **28 October 2009**. During the autumn 2009 IPS received much support for the Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management when altogether 25 organisations agreed to sign the document. However, IPS received also critical feedback, especially from conservation groups. Also the language of the document had to be improved. After thorough discussion, IPS decided to put the planned signing ceremony for the Strategy in Brussels in October 2009 on hold. Instead a new commenting round was seen to be valuable. All comments and suggestions submitted during 2009 were reviewed and evaluated one more time during December and January, resulting in the currently circulated paper. We look forward to hearing from you.

Jaakko Silpola  
IPS Secretary General

### **The IPS has 1,412 members – plus two!**

At the Jyväskylä meeting, the Executive Board accepted two new members from countries without a National Committee: Ahmad Khan from Wetlands International Pakistan as individual and Sivanthi Joe Substrates Ltd. (Dunston Joseph) from India as corporate member. Altogether the International Peat Society has **1,412 members** as of 31 December 2009, comprising 1,384 members in its 19 National Committees and 28 members in 10 other countries. Please visit [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=21](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=21) for more information on IPS membership and to join.

### **Call for Articles and Advertisements: Peatlands International 1/2010**

Peatlands International 1/2010 will be published in connection with the IPS Convention in June. The main topics of the magazine will be technology, after-use alternatives as well as the agricultural use of peatlands. If you would like to contribute to this issue as an author, please submit your article by **15 March** to [susann.warnecke \(at\) peatsociety.org](mailto:susann.warnecke@peatsociety.org). Texts should be written in plain text, Arial pt. 10 with single spacing and pictures can be accepted only when they are sent as separate files with high resolution. We also need captions and the names of the copyright holders for all illustrations. Please try to have your articles reviewed by a native English speaker before submission. The Editorial Board reserves its right to chose, edit and shorten the material where necessary. **Advertising space** is also still freely available – if you are working for one of our corporate members and would like to promote your products and services, please download the Media Kit 2010 at [www.tiny.cc/mdkit](http://www.tiny.cc/mdkit) and book your space by contacting Susann Warnecke.

### **Peat Medicine and Balneology Round Table in Finland in September 2010**

The “18th Bad Neydharting Round Table Conference on the Use of Peat in Balneology, Medicine and Therapeutics” will be organised by IPS Commission VI and the Finnish National Committee at Reinon Tupa in Kurikka, Finland on **2 - 4 September 2010**. If you are interested in attending, please contact Riitta Korhonen at [riitta.korhonen \(at\) gtk.fi](mailto:riitta.korhonen@gtk.fi) for more information on the event. We will keep you updated! More activities of Commission VI and its annual reports can be found at [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=90](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=90). For the complete event calendar of the IPS and a list of related symposia please visit [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=4](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=4).

## New contact details for Swedish National Committee

PhD Lena Dahlman, Chair of the IPS Swedish National Committee TorvForsk, has announced that she has started working for the Swedish Bioenergy Association (Svebio). She can be contacted now by e-mail at lena.dahlman (at) svebio.se and her postal address has changed to Svebio, Torsgatan 12 plan 3, 111 23 Stockholm, Sweden, phone: +46 8 441 7080, fax: +46 8 441 7089, mobile: +46 706 211 955. The National Committee's Secretariat and the office of the Swedish Peat Producers Association are also located at the same address. More information: [www.torvforsk.se](http://www.torvforsk.se).

## Final Programme: Peatland Restoration Conference in Edmonton

The "Symposium on Reclamation and Restoration of Boreal Peatland and Forest Ecosystems: Toward a Sustainable Future" organized by PeatNet will be held on **25 - 27 March 2010** at the Matrix Hotel in Edmonton, Canada. The final programme includes the following sessions:

- Reclaiming forests and forest soils impacted by oil and gas production.
- Influence of oil sands development on forest communities
- Reclaiming wetlands on mined oil sands tailings.
- Disturbance in peatlands.
- Restoration and management of harvested peatlands.

The complete programme and schedules of all presentations can be found at [www.peatnet.siu.edu](http://www.peatnet.siu.edu), the registration fee amounts to USD/CAD \$150. 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. The symposium addresses these problems and the recent research being carried out in North America.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Announcement for Symposium on Responsible Peatland Management and Growing Media Production in Québec in 2011

The organizing committee of the "Symposium on Responsible Peatland Management and Growing Media Production" has published the 2<sup>nd</sup> Announcement for the event, to be held in Québec City, Canada on **13 - 17 June 2011**. The conference aims to provide an opportunity to learn more about responsible peatland management, including environmental, social and economic values, peat usage and growing media practices. With the background of increasing pressures of productivity, efficiency and responsibility, peat producers and government agencies are embracing business models to achieve long-term viability and sustainability of their resources and products. The symposium meets public, grower and retail demand for objective science based information addressing reduced peat use, peat alternative products and compost. It is intended to provide a forum for presentation of state-of-the-art results of experiments on growing performances of various media in greenhouse and nursery studies. Additionally, information on the life-cycle of peat, reduced peat and peat free products will be provided. Responsible peatland management respects the balanced stewardship of the environmental, social and economic values of peatlands involving local, regional and global aspirations. All stakeholders having an interest in responsible peatland management are welcome to participate. More information: [www.peatlands2011.ulaval.ca](http://www.peatlands2011.ulaval.ca).

**Welcome to the IPS Convention in Jyväskylä on 14 - 18 June 2010!**

We kindly invite all IPS members to attend the Annual Assembly of National Representatives and its associated meetings in Jyväskylä, Finland on **14 - 18 June**. Preparations promise an exciting week with peat-related seminars, excursions and cultural events:

*Monday, 14 June*

- Arrival of Executive Board members and Commission Chairs

*Tuesday, 15 June*

- Executive Board Meeting
- Scientific Advisory Board Meeting
- Arrival of National representatives and seminar participants
- Commission meetings
- City tour and get-together evening for all participants

*Wednesday, 16 June*

- National Committee Round Table
- Annual Assembly of National Representatives
- Lunch
- Parallel Seminars:
  - \* Seminar on Peat Technology
  - \* Seminar of After-Use of Cut-Over Peatlands
- Cruise on Lake Päijänne
- Joint Dinner

*Thursday, 17 June*

- Parallel Seminars continue
- Lunch
- Parallel Excursions:
  - \* Peat Technology Excursion: Valtra tractor factory, peat harvesting, peat utilisation and other technology sites, etc; accommodation in Jyväskylä
  - \* After Use Excursion: after-use destinations, forests, mires, peat museum, etc. accommodation near Jämijärvi, Satakunta region

*Friday, 18 June*

- Excursions continue
- Arrival at Tampere airport and railway station around 18 hrs, arrival in Jyväskylä 21 hrs; connection from both Tampere and Jyväskylä by plane, train or bus to Helsinki and other cities possible, depending on your flight schedule, alternatively a longer stay in Finland.

**IMPORTANT:** We are also still collecting presentations for the seminars on Peat Technology and the After-Use of Peatlands. Please submit your topic, abstract and contact details immediately to [susann.warnecke \(at\) peatsociety.org](mailto:susann.warnecke@peatsociety.org) in case you are interested in attending the Convention as a speaker. The organising committee will inform you on acceptance at the end of this month.

Regular updates of the programme and travel advice can be found at the IPS website, please visit [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=263](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=263). More information on accommodation, registration and costs involved will be provided later in March. We kindly ask you to mark these days in your calendar and to book your flights to Jyväskylä, Tampere or Helsinki accordingly. Tervetuloa!

