

PEAT NEWS



Monthly Newsletter of the International Peat Society

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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.

Reserve your flights and accommodation and register for the IPS Convention 2010!

All practical arrangements for this year's major Convention, to be held in Jyväskylä, Finland on **14 - 18 June 2010** are now finalised. At the IPS website on www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=263 you can find detailed information on the three-day **Seminars and Field Trips on Peat Technology** and the **After-Use of Cut-Over Peatlands** as well as the planned schedule for the business meetings, such as the Annual Assembly of National Representatives, the traditional National Committee Round Table and the Commission meetings.

In addition, the Convention includes the launch of the **Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management** and meetings of the IPS Commissions, the Executive Board and Scientific Advisory Board. The social programme offers a guided tour through the city of Jyväskylä, an enjoyable evening cruise on Lake Päijänne and a traditional dinner in a cosy restaurant close to nature. We kindly invite you to come and see the home city of IPS in summer, to meet your international colleagues and to study in practice how Finnish peatlands are managed.

The deadline for **early bird registration** is **30 April**; late registration for a higher fee will be open until 20 May. However, as hotel rooms and seats on the excursion buses are limited, we ask you to register as soon as possible. There is also a significant discount in registration fees for IPS members – if you are not a member of our Society yet, you can easily join by contacting the National Committee in your country or fill in the membership application form at www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=21.

P.S. We are still collecting presentations for the seminar. If you are interested in attending as a speaker, please send your abstract as soon as possible by email to ips (at) peatsociety.org. All speakers are also invited to write an article on their subject for Peatlands International 1/2010 – this will make your findings available to a broad audience of about 1,400 peat scientists and practitioners.



Seminar on Peatland Forestry in Norway

The Nordic seminar and a field trip on “Ditch network maintenance in peatland forests - updating our knowledge on timber production, environmental effects and newest adaptive practices” will be arranged in Honne, southeast Norway, on **13 - 15 September 2010**. More detailed information on the event, funded by the Nordic Forest Research Co-operation Committee (SNS), will be supplied in the near future. Together with your registration you can submit a voluntary poster title to present your studies at this seminar. Registrations (no costs involved) can be sent by email to hannu.hokka (at) metla.fi until **30 June 2010**. Dr. Hannu Hökkä of the Finnish Forest Research Institute (Metla) in Rovaniemi, Finland is Chair of IPS Commission VII on Ecology and Management on Forested Peatlands. More information on the work of the Commission and his full contact details can be found at www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=91.

Bogs and Biosphere in Tomsk in September 2010

The 7th All-Russian Scientific School of Young Scientists with International Participation “Bogs and Biosphere” will be hosted by the Tomsk State Pedagogical University in Tomsk, Russia on **13 - 15 September 2010**. For **16 September**, an excursion to Vasyugan mire is scheduled, and during four days on **16 - 19 September** the attendees will have the opportunity to see the mires of Gornyi Altaj. The scientific programme will focus on all aspects of peat in the environment as well as on its technological application. The Scientific School will include keynote lectures and presentations of young scientists, but also provide the opportunity for discussion and the exchange of ideas. The main topics to be dealt with include:

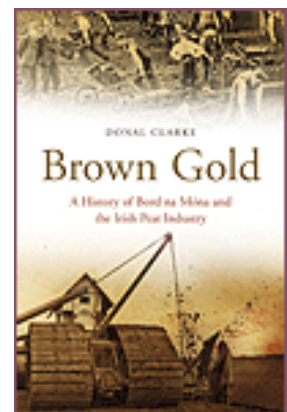
1. *Functioning of mire ecosystems*
2. *Biogeochemical processes of organic matter transformation in mire ecosystems*
3. *Physico-chemical and biological properties of mires*
4. *Directions of the use of mire resources*

In addition, the chronicle of the School will be presented; there will be an illustrated program of the scientific excursions, a photo exhibition of West Siberia’s mire landscapes and the Gornyi Altaj as well as an exhibition of publishers. Last but not least, the organising committee has planned a tour of the city, visits to museums, including a peat exhibition, and to the universities of Tomsk. Abstracts and application forms should be submitted by **30 April**, the early registration deadline is **5 May**. More information is available in Russian at www.tspu.edu.ru/ltorf/ and by email: agroecol (at) yandex.ru; the first announcement is posted in English at www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=4.

Brown Gold – A History of Bord na Móna and the Irish Peat Industry

Ireland is known for its bogs and as Bord na Móna’s today’s Chairman Fergus McArdle said “the bogs were there and it was felt that something should be done with them in the natural interest.”

It was a long time dream that the vast peatlands of the green island could be developed for the economic benefit of the people - especially with regard to their importance as native fuel after the 2nd World War - and that is why the Turf Development Board was originally established in 1934, now 76 years ago. Bord na Móna, how the Department was named in 1946, has since that developed into a versatile company with a turnover of over €400 million and 2,000 employees, having a major social and economic impact nationally and internationally. The eight-decade history of this organisation is now summarized by Donal Clarke, IPS President and long-time senior management member of Bord na Móna, in an extensive book. On 417 pages Donal Clarke reviews



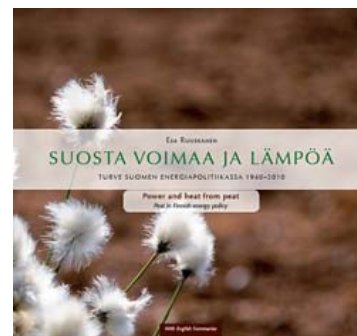
the changes in technology and management over time, gives an insight into decision-making, policies and strategies, but also the life of employees and customers, highlighting the importance of peat and the peatlands for his country and its people, but also mentioning the impact that professionals from other countries have had on the company and vice versa.

The book is of interest for those interested in peat production matters, but also history, science and corporate leadership in general. Many old and new illustrations and tables help to understand the contexts and there are also biographies of important personalities, a list of relevant ministers, detailed references and sources, a glossary of terms and a very useful index. We warmly thank Donal for this extremely valuable work! More info: www.heartland.ie and www.gillmacmillan.ie.

Power and Heat from Peat – 70 Years of Peat in the Finnish Energy Policy

Vapo Oy is the leading supplier of local and renewable fuels, bioelectricity and bioheat, and environmental business solutions in the Baltic Sea region. The history of the company is strongly connected to peat and peatlands – and now on the occasion of Vapo's 70th Anniversary in 2010, Esa Ruuskanen, a professional historian, has compiled a summary of the role of peat in the Finnish energy policy from 1940 to 2010.

Similar to Ireland, the history of Vapo started with ensuring national fuel supplies during the 2nd World War, which was at that time providing firewood for government facilities. The then-called Finnish State Railways Fuel Office was changed in 1945 to Finnish State Fuel Office (Vapo) taking care of liquid fuel reserves. During the 1970's global energy crisis it became the task of Vapo to develop peat as local, economic and self-sufficient energy source for the country, almost starting from scratch. Since then peat has played an important role in power and heat production, as local fuel in remote areas, as source of employment, and especially in recent years in combined use with wood as biofuel. Modern production and management technologies were applied, environmental protection measures were developed over time, and in recent years the climate change and carbon storage debate have made an impact on how peat is dealt with in the Finnish energy policy.



The 223-pages book “Suosta Voimaa ja Lämpöä, Power and Heat from Peat” is not intended to be a history of Vapo as a company, but it describes the long and colourful history of the use of peat for energy and the development of public attitude between confidence and criticism over the years, often based on a vague understanding of how peat can be utilised. The book takes the reader through yet unexplored paths of history and describes how and why peat has become an important part of Finland's energy supply. It also describes the internal development of energy policies, dialogues between various interest groups, the development of environmental protection methods, and in general the internationalisation of the peat debate. A detailed picture of Finland's energy policy is drawn, influenced by security, economic and environmental considerations during many decades. The hardcover book is based on extensive archival research material and on interviews of a broad range of decision makers. It is beautifully illustrated with large pictures, graphs and tables in colour and provides overall a very good view into Finnish peat history.

Esa Ruuskanen is Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Jyväskylä, who carried out his research with the help of the current and former staff of Vapo Oy, his colleagues and students as well as many volunteers who readily shared their knowledge. The main language of the book is Finnish, but each chapter contains a summary in English. Please contact leena.hakulinen (at) vapo.fi to purchase your own copy or downloaded its PDF file at www.vapo.fi/filebank/4715-vapo_70_juhlakirja.pdf.