

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.

## Annual Assembly 2009 in Belfast, Northern Ireland

At its 46<sup>th</sup> meeting in Jyväskylä, Finland on 21 November 2008, the IPS Executive Board accepted the invitation of the National Committee of the United Kingdom in cooperation with the Irish National Committee to hold the next IPS Annual Assembly in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The 2009 IPS Convention will take place from **24 - 26 April 2009** and include the Annual Assembly of National Representatives, the traditional Round Table for National Committees, an excursion to peat and peatland sites as well as meetings of the Executive Board, Scientific Advisory Board and the IPS Commissions. Further details will be made available to all IPS members early next year. Please mark these dates in your calendar – we look forward to seeing you.

## IPS Award of Excellence 2009

All IPS members are encouraged now to submit their proposals for the IPS Award of Excellence 2009. Applications should include a cover letter detailing the accomplishments of the nominee, his or her CV and three letters of reference and be sent to the IPS Secretariat until **31 January 2009**. All complete applications for 2007 and 2008 remain valid. The Award amounting to € 1,000 will be conferred at the Annual Assembly of IPS in Belfast on **26 April 2009**. Please visit [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=103](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=103) for the terms of reference and the names of laureates so far.

## Call for Applications: International Peat Congress 2016

We are glad to announce that the IPS Executive Board has officially opened the competition process for the 15<sup>th</sup> International Peat Congress 2016. All National Committees are welcome to submit their invitations to host the event in their country and thereby show the world their knowledge and competence in peatland management. We kindly ask you to see the [IPS Internal Regulations](#) and the [Guidelines for Organizing an IPS Event](#) as references for your application. More information on the competition procedure can also be obtained from the IPS Secretariat. The decision making process will, similar to previous years, consist of the following steps:

Opening of Competition:	21 November 2008
Deadline for applications including appendices:	31 September 2009
Proposal of the Executive Board:	November 2009
Approval by the Annual Assembly:	May 2010

International Peat Congresses are the main events of the International Peat Society, being held in May or June every 4<sup>th</sup> year. They consist of oral and poster sessions on all matters concerning peat and peatlands, excursions, a social programme as well as a number of administrative meetings and festive get-togethers and are attended by around 500 scientists, business representatives and students. The previous host cities were Dublin (1954), Leningrad (1963), Québec (1968), Otaniemi (1972), Poznan (1976), Duluth (1980), Dublin (1984), Leningrad (1988), Uppsala (1992), Bremen (1996), Québec (2000), Tampere (2004) and Tullamore (2008). We look forward to hearing from you!

## Helsinki Workshop on Peatland Certification

The Commission II meeting on **19 November 2008** was held as a workshop at Helsinki Airport and dealt mainly with details of the certification of peatland management. Mr. Auvo Kaivola of the Finnish Forest Certification Council (PEFC, Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes) as invited speaker gave a detailed introduction on the early days of today's forest certification systems and was ready to answer all questions from the about 40 attendees. A lively discussion took place on the pros and contras of certification in general and on its meaning for peatlands. Many participants felt that the issue remained very complex and costly but steps in this direction might be necessary in view of the global situation of wetlands and the raising awareness for sustainability in many countries. In addition, it was stated that the Wise Use process and the structure of IPS as a functioning international organisation would provide a good basis for introducing peatland certification. Further comments on the Certification Plan by Indufor are appreciated. To download the document, please visit [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=239](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=239).

## Final Consultation Draft: Practical Application of Wise Use

The final consultation draft of "Mires and Peatlands: Guidelines for the Practical Application of Wise Use" is now available at [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=40](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=40). During the previous months, the single chapters of the Guidelines were combined into one document, edited by Donal Clarke and Jack Rieley, taking into consideration all comments received so far. The topics covered are:

1. Introduction
2. The Role of Public Policy
3. Decision Framework regarding the Wise Use of peat in Horticulture
4. Decision Framework regarding the Wise Use of peat in Energy
5. Decision Framework regarding the Wise Use of peatlands for agriculture
6. Decision Framework regarding the Wise Use of peatlands for forestry
7. Decision Framework regarding the Wise Use of tropical peatlands
8. Guidelines for the application of Wise Use to land use planning decisions
9. Guidelines for the application of Wise Use to decisions on protecting or preserving peatlands
10. Conclusion

The Executive Board of IPS hereby opens the discussion on the complete draft. We ask all members and related parties to study the document and come back to us with any additional comments or other feedback by **31 January 2009**. Please contact Donal Clarke, donalcke (at) indigo.ie, or Jack Rieley, jack.rieley (at) nottingham.ac.uk for further information.

## Call for Papers: International Symposium for Horticultural Growing Media

The ISHS "International Symposium for Horticultural Growing Media" will be held on **1 - 5 June 2009** in Charlotte, North Carolina, USA. During the event, it is planned to arrange a **special session on peat** in cooperation with the IPS HOPE Working Group. In addition to this, the meeting will consist of oral papers and posters dealing with the latest research in substrate components diagnostics and developments, but also excursions and an accompanying person programme. Titles for papers should be submitted by **15 December 2008** to Prof. William C. Fonteno, e-mail: bill\_fonteno (at) ncsu.edu. Please indicate if you would like to hold an oral or poster presentation. All contributions can be peer reviewed, if required, and will later be published in Acta Horticulturae. The symposium is hosted by the Horticultural Science Department at North Carolina State University as a joint event of the ISHS Working Group on Substrates and the Working Group on Composting for Substrates. More information can be found at <http://substratesymposium.ncsu.edu>.

## IPS Commission on Tropical Peatlands Approved

On recommendation of the Scientific Advisory Board, the IPS Executive Board has given its final approval for the newly founded Commission IX on “Tropical peatlands”. The Commission was initiated in summer 2008 and will be chaired by Dr. Jack Rieley, Centre for Environmental Management, School of Geography, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD, United Kingdom, phone: +44 115 951 5449, fax: +44 115 951 5249, e-mail: jack.rieley (at) nottingham.ac.uk. Its main topics are carbon-climate-human interactions in tropical peatlands: natural resource functions, impacts, carbon pools, fire, restoration and Wise Use. More information on future activities will be available soon at [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=237](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=237).

## Jack Rieley New Secretary of UK National Committee

The National Committee of the United Kingdom has appointed Dr. Jack Rieley as its new Secretary. His contact details can be found above and at [www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=28](http://www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=28). We congratulate Jack on his new post and thank Alan Shaw for his good work during many years.

## New IPS Members

We are glad to welcome Prof. Mitsuru Osaki of Hokkaido University, Japan as individual and Natural Products Southern S.A. from Chile (Mr. Pablo Velasco Weber) as new corporate members. Their applications were approved in November by the Executive Board. In addition, many persons and organisations have joined our National Committees within the last few months. A detailed list of new members will be published in Peatlands International 2/2008. Welcome to the “peat family” and we look forward to hearing from you!

## Season's Greetings

The staff of the IPS Secretariat wishes you peaceful holidays, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year! All of us will be at the office with the exception of 24 -28 and 31 December as well as 1 and 6 January 2009. Thank you very much for your cooperation and we look forward to working together with you in the year to come!