

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.

Update on Responsible Peatland Management Strategy

Dear Madam or Sir, dear colleagues,

During the previous weeks we have received much support for the Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management. So far altogether 25 organisations have agreed to sign the Strategy which was developed during two workshops and by e-mail in the following months. However, we received also critical feedback, especially from conservation groups. Also the language of the document could be improved.

After thorough discussion, we have therefore decided to put the planned signing ceremony for the Strategy in Brussels next week on hold and to arrange a seminar and round table discussion instead on the same day, 28 October, to review and discuss the proposals received, to plan further actions and the timetable of how and when to finalize the Strategy, as well as to deal with the possible peatland certification system in general.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and look forward to seeing you in Brussels. More information on the Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management can be found at www.peatsociety.org.

Kind regards

Jaakko Silpola

IPS Secretary General

Short Background to the Responsible Peatland Management Strategy

In 2007, a number of partners identified 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. Between the meetings and after the Belfast meeting further consultations took place by e-mail.

This process has resulted in the Strategy which was proposed for signature during a special Seminar in Brussels on 28 October 2009 and will now be further improved. The Strategy defines key

elements and strategic objectives for peatland management and lists actions to be taken to achieve these objectives. The Strategy includes a Vision which states that responsible peatland management involves a balanced stewardship of the environmental, social and economic values of peatlands and respects local, regional and global aspirations.

The full Strategy is contained in a document which has been circulated in preparation for the Brussels seminar and is available at the IPS website.

Following the completion of the Strategy development project it remains to be decided what further steps might be taken towards a full certification system.

Donal Clarke

IPS President

Executive Board Elections 2010

At the Annual Assembly of National Representatives in May 2010, there will be elections of the 2nd Vice President of IPS as well as of four ordinary members of the IPS Executive Board for the terms 2010-2012 and 2010-2014, respectively. We would like to draw your attention already now to the fact that all applications for these positions have to be submitted to the IPS Secretariat not later than 4 months before the Assembly, practically already in **early January 2010**. Please see the extract from the IPS Statutes and Internal Regulations for more details (main items underlined) or download the complete set of rules at www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=5. We will distribute more information on the election process to all National Committees in early November.

Extract from IPS Statutes

Article 4 Executive Board

The Society shall be managed by the Executive Board which shall consist of the chairman, who is called the President of the Society, of the 1st and 2nd Vice President and of 2 to 6 permanent members.

The Secretary General of the IPS will also be the secretary of the Executive Board.

The term of office of the President and Vice-Presidents shall be the four years between International Peat Congresses. The term of office of the permanent members of the Executive Board shall be four years so that 50 % of the members will change every two years. If a member is replaced during his or her term of office, the new member will be appointed for the balance of the term. Executive Board members shall be eligible for re-election, subject to the restrictions on the re-election of the Presidency contained in Article 5.

The Executive Board shall assemble by invitation of the President or, if he cannot act, by invitation of a Vice President or two (2) Executive Board members.

The Executive Board shall have a quorum when at least half of its members are present. The quorum shall not be constituted unless the President or one of the Vice Presidents is present.

All decisions will be made on a simple majority basis. In the event of votes being equal, the President will be entitled to a casting vote except in the case of an election, where a tie will be decided by drawing lots. In the voting every Executive Board member has one vote.

Article 5 Presidency

The President and the Vice Presidents of the Society shall be nominated by the Annual Assembly of national representatives which shall be held in the year of the quadrennial International Peat Congress.

The term of office of the President and of the Vice Presidents shall be four (4) years. With the unanimous approval of the Annual Assembly of national representatives, the term of office of the President can be extended by one more quadrennial period.

In the event that the President is unable to remain in office during the term of his/her appointment, the 1st Vice President will preside over the Society until the next regular meeting of the Annual Assembly, at which a new President will be appointed for the balance of the term of office.

Article 9 Assemblies of the Society

Annual Assembly

The Annual Assembly of national representatives shall be held once a year but not later than on 30th June, on the date and place determined by the Executive Board. The agenda for the meeting shall be sent to National Committees not later than 40 days and not earlier than 60 days before the Annual Assembly by the Executive Board.

Each National Committee has the right to send one official representative to the Annual Assembly, where he or she is obliged to present a due proxy. Each official representative has one vote at an Annual Assembly. Supporting corporate members, supporting individual members, Honorary Presidents and Honorary Members have no vote at the Annual Assembly.

In addition to their official representative, National Committees can send to the Annual Assembly one or more non-voting observers.

All decisions in the Annual Assembly are made by a simple majority of votes. In the event of votes being equal, the chairman of the assembly will be entitled to a casting vote except in the case of an election, where a tie will be decided by drawing lots. If any of the official National Committee representatives attending the Annual Assembly so demands, voting in an election shall be by secret ballot.

Extract from IPS Internal Regulations

2.6. The Society shall be managed by the Executive Board, which shall consist of the President, the 1st and 2nd Vice President and 2 to 6 ordinary members. Because the Secretary General is not an elected member of the Executive Board, he has a non-voting position and acts thus only with consultative voice.

2.7. The number of ordinary members can be changed by the decision of the Annual Assembly within the limits set by the Statutes and taking into account the system of rotation of the ordinary

members.

2.8. So as to safeguard an equitable distribution of national representation, there can be only one ordinary member from any one National Committee on the Executive Board at any given time. When circumstances offer no alternative, the President and 1st Vice President can be from the same National Committee as one ordinary member. Nominations for the Executive Board must come from the National Committees at least four months prior to the Annual Assembly and the nominee must be an IPS member residing in that country in which the National Committee is located. When proposing a candidate for the Executive Board, the National Committee shall take into account that the nominee shall ensure that his travel expenses are covered.

2.9. At the Annual Assembly in the year of an International Peat Congress, the President, the 1st Vice President and the 2nd Vice President of the Society are elected. The President shall be nominated by the National Committee that organises the quadrennial International Peat Congress in the beginning of the period of the Presidency, and the 1st Vice President shall be nominated by the National Committee, which will organise the next quadrennial International Peat Congress. After new Executive Board members are elected, the 2nd Vice President is elected by the Annual Assembly by secret ballot (simple majority) among all Executive Board members for a period of 4 years and is eligible for re-election.

8.5. In case that Executive Board member(s) are to be elected, the Executive Board shall ask the National Committees to submit their proposals for candidates at least four (4) months prior to the Annual Assembly so that all application documents, standardized by the IPS Secretariat, can be sent out together with the invitation to the Annual Assembly.

8.6. The voting for Executive Board members shall be carried out as a secret ballot. Each national representative writes the names of as many candidates as there are free places on the Executive Board on his/her ballot. The votes are counted independently from the order they are written in and those candidates with the highest total number of votes will be new ordinary Executive Board members. In case of equal votes, another secret voting is carried out between the remaining candidates. If the second voting remains equal, lots shall be drawn.

upcoming events:

www.peatsociety.org/index.php?id=4