From the Editor

First let me apologise for the length of time since I wrote the last UK Peatland News. There are several reasons.

One is I have been very busy as usual, participating in meetings in Bremen, Germany, Island of Vilm on the Baltic Coast, a field meeting of the Responsible Peat Production Certification Programme in Riga, Latvia, Wetscapes conference in Rostock and the Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association Annual Meeting in Toronto, Canada where I was a keynote speaker. I even had time for a two-weeks holiday in the Austrian and Italian Alps (no bogs!).

Unfortunately, I developed breathing difficulty at the end of August and I had to seek medical advice. It also meant I had to cancel a trip to Helsinki to attend a workshop on the IPS Concept 2050 Project on Sustainable Growing Media.

I am recovering slowly but it has made me realise it is time for others, younger than me, to take over the reins and manage the UK Peatland Society (UKPS) and input to the IPS internationally. I won’t be giving up overnight, but the change must be planned, with others rising to the challenge. This is very important especially since peatlands and peat have never had such a high profile and importance on national, regional and international agendas.

When I took over as Secretary of the UKPS in 2008 it was in a bad way with only a handful of members following several years of stressful dispute with NGOs over the extraction and use of peat in the UK. Now we are more than 50 members and reasonably healthy.

I shall be taking steps in 2020 to begin a dialogue with members on how to bring about this change and, if possible, hold a meeting to discuss this in more detail. In the meantime, I need volunteers who may be interested in planning for and participating in a UK Peatland Society and International Peatland Society fit for the next 10 years to contact me.

I am giving a deadline for the latest date I shall step down even if no one offers to take over. I shall remain a member of the IPS Executive Board until the Annual Assembly in 2022 when, after more than 20 years at the centre of IPS activity, I shall not offer myself for re-election. That seems a good time to depart also from the Secretary position in the UKPS.

I can’t end this editorial without reminding everyone that the 16th International Peatland Congress will be held in June 2025 in Tallinn, Estonia from 14-20 June. This is the quadrennial showpiece of the IPS that attracts hundreds of peatland and peat experts from all around the world. The UK is usually strongly represented, and I urge as many of you as possible to participate. Offer an oral or poster presentation, join in the many sessions, network with old friends and new colleagues and enjoy the unique experience.

Registration is open so don’t delay. More information can be found at https://www.ipc2020.com/

Editor: Professor Jack Rieley - The Pingle, 1 Closes Side Lane, East Bridgford, Nottingham NG13 8NA, UNITED KINGDOM Phone/fax: 01949 20920; Email: jack.rieley@btinternet.com
IPS UK Annual Subscriptions

Although the UK has not left the European Union yet, we are suffering from consequences of Brexit, especially devaluation of the pound sterling by around 20% compared to its value against the Euro several years ago. This is affecting the finances of the UK Peatland Society because we pay our annual subscription contribution to the IPS Secretariat in Finland in Euros. UK member subscriptions have been maintained at their current level for 2019 but they will need to be increased in 2020.

I suggest the following rates from 1st January 2020. Please let me know if you disagree.

Individual members: £50
Corporate and institutional members: £175
Student members: £30

To compensate our senior and honorary members I also suggest that subscriptions are waived for those over 70 years of age who have been members for at least 5 years.

A few members have not renewed their subscriptions for 2019 and this is disappointing. I hope that they will still do so. Every subscription unpaid means less can be done to support peatlands and peat and payment ensures that the IPS continues its important work.

Most of the money raised from subscriptions is transferred to IPS in Finland to help maintain the Secretariat that now has two full-time members of staff – Gilbert Ludwig, Secretary General from 1st January 2019 and Susann Warnecke, Communications Manager. A small amount from UK subscriptions is retained and put to good use for peatland projects in the UK. 2020 will be the fifth year we have contributed generously towards the IPS Allan Robertson Grants for early career peatland scientists and managers totalling €5000 an amount that has been matched by Allan’s family making the grand sum of €10,000, supporting 48 young peatlanders so far.

IPS Secretary General has settled in!

As announced previously, our full-time Secretary General Dr Gilbert Ludwig started work for the IPS on 1 January 2019. Since then he has travelled widely throughout Europe and from Canada to China, meeting IPS officials and members and learning about the large range of work that this society carries out. He has been particularly active in the international conventions and programmes arena where the input of the IPS is very important in presenting balanced information and views on the global importance of peatlands and peat. The IPS is benefitting from his knowledge and dedication.

Do not hesitate to contact him at gilbert.ludwig@peatlands.org. His IPS mobile number is +358 40 145 2267. More information can be obtained at www.peatsociety.org/about-us/secretariat.
IPS MEETINGS

Industry Strategy meeting in Amsterdam

The IPS Executive Board met in Amsterdam, The Netherlands on 29 January, for an industry strategy meeting at which options were discussed to improve IPS services for its commercial members without endangering the neutral character of the IPS. The IPS is a non-government organisation that combines the three pillars of Sustainable Development, and bridges economic, environment and social interests of peatlands and peat.

This meeting was kindly hosted by the Peat Art Gallery at Kerkstraat, Amsterdam. www.peatart.com

Successful Expert Groups Meeting in Tallinn

The IPS Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), Commission Chairs and Expert Group Coordinators held their second expert groups meeting in Tallinn, Estonia on 11 - 13 February 2019. During two and half days, the 11 participants discussed expert group activities, procedures and priorities, including a conceptual strategy for the IPS.

Detailed planning for the International Peatland Congress Tallinn 2020 was one of the key topics, and the participants had the opportunity to meet and discuss face-to-face with the Congress Organising Committee, as well as visit the conference venue in Tallinn city centre (see also www.ipc2020.com). In addition to resolutions made, the opportunity to meet many new people and to share ideas and information made this meeting very successful.

The three Commissions, Peatlands & Environment, Peatlands & Economy and Peatlands & Society, as well as their Expert Groups, in close collaboration with the Second Vice President, Samu Valpola, and the new full-time Secretary General, are the backbone of the Society’s scientific and knowledge-based activities.

Executive Board March Meeting in Brussels

The Executive Board of the IPS met in Brussels, Belgium on 20 - 21 March 2019. On the agenda were confirmation of the IPS Annual Accounts and Report for 2018 together with the plan of activities, budget and membership fees for 2019, as well as a meeting with Growing Media Europe. In addition, planning was started for a new IPS website, continued preparations for the Bremen and China symposia this year. Important decisions were taken affecting science, conservation, business and international affairs.

Lastly, the EB decided on the winners of the 2019 Allan Robertson Grants.
IPS Convention 2019 in Bremen: Economy meets Environment and Society

The 2019 Annual Meeting of the IPS was held in Bremen, Germany on 13-15 May 2019, hosted by IPS together with the German Peat Society (DGMT, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Moor- und Torfkunde).

The theme "Economy meets Environment" showcased the "Future Use of Peat and Substitutes in Horticulture", in which peat is still the most important growing media constituent. Some alternative substrates are being used and others sought, together with responsible extraction site selection, rewetting/restoration and certification efforts for peat and other growing media ingredients.

OTHER IPS INFORMATION

Sign up for the IPS Expert Groups!

Interested in turning your peat and peatland knowledge into action? Join one of our Expert Groups! The full list of Expert Groups under each IPS Commission is shown at www.peatlands.org/about-us/commissions-expert-groups-and-sab and in the table below.

Commission Peatlands and Economy: Chair Ingrida Krigere, ingrida@peat.lv
Expert Groups:
- Peatlands for agriculture: Dace Silina
- Peatlands for forestry: Sakari Sarkkola
- Peat for growing media and energy: Nina Kinnunen

Commission Peatlands and Environment: Chair Bernd Hofer, hofer@hofer-pautz.de
Expert Groups:
- Peatlands and Biodiversity (Ecology, Hydrology, Geology): Lydia Cole
- Tropical Peatlands Roundtable: Jack Rieley
- Peatlands and Restoration: Pete Whittington
- Peatlands and Climate Change: Gerald Jurasinski

Commission Peatlands and Society: Chair Marie Kofod-Hansen, marie.kofodhansen@gmail.com
Expert Groups:
- Peatlands Education, Communication and Publicity: Catherine O’Connell
- Peatland Conventions and International Affairs: Jack Rieley
- Peatlands and Culture: Ilze Ozola
- Peatlands and people, health and local livelihoods: Dian Novarina

We ask Experts to provide feedback on documents, to help with writing pieces on behalf of the IPS and to inform us of research gaps, amongst other tasks, contributing as and when you have time. Please get in touch with the Commission Chair if you are interested on getting involved or have further questions on the role.
Allan Robertson Grant Winners 2019

The Executive Board of the IPS announced the recipients of 10 Allan Robertson Grants for young researchers and peat professionals during the "Alexander von Humboldt" dinner in Bremen Harbour. We warmly thank Allan Robertson’s family, as well as the UK, Estonian and Malaysian National Committees for their generous financial contributions. Here are the winners who were awarded €500 each:

1. Monika Aarniste (EST), Tallinn University of Technology: Digitalized database of Estonian peatlands
2. Luke Andrews (WAL), University of York: Peatlands and climate change: Using the past as a key to the future
3. Scott Davidson (SCO), University of Waterloo: Impact of wildfire on methane emissions from a continental boreal peatland
4. Ian Detrey (ENG), The University of the Highlands and Islands: Bog in a box; long term peat storage for rehabilitation
5. Abigail Gwynn (ENG), University of Exeter: Effects of Peatland Forest Fires on Orangutan Behaviour and Health
6. William Jessop (ENG), University of York: Creating Sustainably Wooded Peatlands
7. Claire McVeigh (IRL), Queen’s University Belfast: Weathering below blanket bogs and potential impacts on carbon dynamics
8. Christopher Schultze (GER), University of Alberta: Pathways of nitrogen in thawing permafrost peatlands in subarctic Canada
9. Amanda Sinclair (AUS), RMIT University: Physical and chemical properties of tropical peat informing peatland restoration
10. Lauren Thompson (CAN), University of Alberta: Mercury export from thawing permafrost peatlands

Gerfried Caspers new IPS Honorary Member

In Bremen, Dr Gerfried Caspers, former IPS Executive Board member from Germany, was appointed Honorary Member of the IPS. He has been extremely helpful in his role as Chair of the National Committee of Germany (DGMT), delivering valuable input to the work of the IPS in the EB and locally, organising many conferences, workshops and excursions, editing important brochures in German, developing both societies, and being a true friend to many of us. Well-deserved Gerfried!

On the same occasion, Nick van de Griendt, who was appointed Honorary Member last year, received his honorary certificate and, like Gerfried, a typical Finnish "kuksa" wooden cup. Congratulations and thank you, for many successful meetings, hundreds of photos and your input at the previous Commission II, Nick! All honorary members can be found at www.peatlands.org/about-us/honorary-members
Baltic Peat Producers Forum 2019
The Baltic Peat Producers Forum 2019 was held in Palanga, Lithuania on 4 - 6 September.

There was a wide range of presentations from expert speakers from Industry, finance, academia and regulation. Gilbert Ludwig, IPS Secretary General gave a presentation on “Facing and shaping the future of peat”.

Economic outlook: has the slowing eurozone economy already affected Lithuania? (Mr A. Izgorodin, SME Finance)
Challenges for the greenhouse sector (Mr M. Pupienis, “Kietavišku gausa”, Ltd.)
News from the IPS – Facing & shaping the future of peat (Dr G. Ludwig, IPS)
Golden Sponsor: ICL Group (Mr R. Leurs)
Reliable raw materials for growing media – Testing effective sanitation by using Bacillus globigii as a test organism (Mr H. Boon, RHP)
Peatland Fires – Experiences, Lessons Learned (Mr V. Kurkulis, Association of Fire Prevention Works)
Energy peat position in EU countries and alternative usage possibilities (Mr J. Silpola, Vapo Group)
Golden Sponsor: Premier Tech Chronos (Mr M. Péray)
The growing media sector in the EU – chances for sustainable horticulture in the political arena (Mr S. Vandaele, Mrs C. Luetgebrune, GME)
There is no row behind the door. The future labour market is here. Have the forecasts for 2030 come true? (Ms A. Grybauskiené, Talentor Lithuania, Ltd.)
Treasures under the peat– research of prehistoric settlements at Aukštumala peat-bog (Prof. Mr A. Girinininkas and Mr T. Rimkus, Klaipėda University)
The role of RPP for growing media and how to get started with RPP-certification (Ms M. Kuenen, RPP)
Peat production in Estonia 2019 (Mr E. Niitlaan, Estonian Peat Association)
Peat production in Latvia 2019 (Ms I. Krīgere, Latvian Peat Association)
Peat production in Lithuania 2019 (Mr G. Kavaliauskas, Lithuanian Peat Producers’ Association)

IPS Industry Stakeholder Workshop in Palanga
A very interesting workshop for IPS member and stakeholder company CEOs and industry association MDs was held in Palanga, Lithuania in connection to the Baltic Peat Producers Forum on 4 September 2019. After introductory presentations by Secretary General Gilbert Ludwig, and Bernd Hofer, who has developed a concept to deal with the discrepancy between supply and demand of peat for growing media in the coming decades, the invited guests worked together with IPS President Gerald Schmilewski and Scientific Advisory Board Members Samu Valpola and Bernd Hofer and Cecilia Luetgebrune (CEO of Growing Media Europe, to analyse challenges, discuss reasoning and identify actions that can be implemented by the industry and by IPS as a multi-stakeholder organisation.
Pete Whittington to lead IPS Peatland Restoration Experts

Dr Pete Whittington from Brandon University, Manitoba, Canada has taken over the lead of the expert group Peatland Restoration. Dr Whittington received his PhD in 2013 from the University of Waterloo (supervisor: Jonathan Price) where he looked at groundwater-surface water interactions at an open-pit diamond mine in northern Ontario in the middle of the world’s second largest peatland complex: the Hudson-James Bay Lowlands.

Prior to that, he spent much of his time during his Master’s degree at various PERG restoration sites in the St. Lawrence Lowlands, Québec. His current research in Manitoba is on fen restoration and ecotone creation. He can be contacted by email to whittingtonp@brandonu.ca but will also pick up the phone +1 204 727 9766.

Line Rochefort appointed Correspondent for Canada at Ramsar STRP

Line Rochefort was recently appointed National Correspondent for Canada of the Ramsar Convention’s Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP). The Ramsar convention’s mission is “the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world”.

As Canada’s national correspondent, Line will be part of a network of national focal points of the Ramsar Convention’s Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) appointed by Ramsar’s administrative authorities. National Focal Points directly advise the STRP on topics related to the environmental issues of the Convention and are responsible for establishing links between the STRP and the expert communities in their country.

The mandate begins this month and ends with the closing ceremonies of the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) to be held in 2021. Congratulations from the IPS!
IPS has published an updated version of the Strategy for Responsible Peatland Management (SRPM), re-edited by Jack Rieley and Donal Clarke. This is a joint document endorsed by many stakeholders involved in peat and peatland management, initiated by IPS in 2008 at the 13th International Peat Congress in Ireland. During 2008 - 2010, meetings of representatives of scientific institutes, industrial corporations and international non-government organisations were held in Helsinki, Amsterdam, Belfast, Brussels and Jyväskylä to finalize and further advance the Strategy. Each was followed by periods of consultation and reflection. The document was adopted at a workshop in Amsterdam in October 2010.

The 6th, edited edition was published in October 2019 after widespread further consultation at IPS Congresses in Stockholm (2012) and Kuching (2016) and by email. To download the new version, visit https://peatlands.org/peatlands/responsible-management. Printed copies (5€ including shipping) are available at the IPS online store: https://holvi.com/shop/peatlands/product/a7d38a8d5f99bffa77e0035ad59e0e22.

10% Member Discount to IPS online shop

IPS has introduced a new member benefit. Starting from November, IPS members can enjoy a 10% discount on all publications in our online shop. Visit https://holvi.com/shop/peatlands and enter IPSMEMBER when checking out. This will automatically update your shopping cart. The code applies to individual and student members as well as employees of IPS corporate members. Please do not share the code with outsiders.
CONVENTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

UN declares 2021 - 2030 Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, declared on 1 March 2019 by the UN General Assembly, aims to massively scale up the restoration of degraded and destroyed ecosystems as a measure to fight the climate crisis and enhance food security, water supply and biodiversity. UN Environment and FAO will lead the implementation.

According to the Assembly "the degradation of land and marine ecosystems undermines the well-being of 3.2 billion people and costs about 10% of the annual global gross product in loss of species and ecosystems services. Key ecosystems that deliver numerous services essential to food and agriculture, including supply of freshwater, protection against hazards and provision of habitat for species such as fish and pollinators, are declining rapidly. Restoration of 350 million hectares of degraded land between now and 2030 could generate USD 9 trillion in ecosystem services and take an additional 13-26 gigatons of greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere.

Ecosystem restoration is fundamental to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, mainly those on climate change, poverty eradication, food security, water and biodiversity conservation. It is also a pillar of international environmental conventions, such as the Ramsar Convention on wetlands and the Rio Conventions on Biodiversity, Desertification and climate Change."
(Source: FAO)

IPBES Global Biodiversity Assessment Report calls for cooperation of science, policy makers and the private sector

IPBES is an intergovernmental body which assesses the state of biodiversity and of the ecosystem services it provides to society, in response to requests from decision makers. According to a new report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), "The world needs transformative change if life on earth is to be safeguarded and people are to continue to receive the services and benefits that nature provides. Coming at a critical period for environmental action, the Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services is the first report of its kind in 14 years and provides indispensable scientific evidence on the health of the natural environment."

The IPBES Global Assessment findings in brief:

- Landmark Global Biodiversity Assessment shows alarming decline in nature and its vital contributions to people, a critical risk for the 21st century.
- Up to one million species currently face the threat of extinction, more than at any other time in human history.
- Report offers avenues for transformative change that tackle biodiversity, climate, oceans, health, economy, and sustainable development goals together.
- Also calls for the evolution of global financial and economic systems to build a sustainable economy within ecological and social boundaries.
- This seminal report provided the scientific basis for a new global biodiversity framework, adopted in China in October 2020 at the next Conference of Parties (COP15) of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.
• Transformation and systems transition approaches are emerging across the world and show that sustainable ecological pathways are part of possible solutions for future.

More information is available at: www.ipbes.net

IPS at Ramsar STRP in Gland

IPS has had Invited Observer Status on Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) since 1999, helping to develop work plans and advisory documents on peatland (Briefing Notes and Technical Reports) and implementing decisions taken by the triennial Conferences of the Parties (COP) to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. IPS also plays a role in the formulation of policy documents (especially on peatlands) that are submitted to COPs in the form of resolutions.

The 22nd meeting of STRP was held on 18-22 March 2019 in Gland, Switzerland. Around 35 members, technical experts and observers prepared a draft Work Plan for 2019-2021 that will be submitted to Ramsar Standing Committee for ratification. The IPS was represented by Professor Jack Rieley, member of the IPS Executive Board.

The meeting began with opening statements from David Stroud, Chair of STRP and Martha Rojas Urrega, Ramsar Secretary General, followed by a brief biography by each of the participants. Following a briefing on the Ramsar Convention and the STRP the Thematic Work Areas (TWA) mandated from COP13 were identified together with the procedure and expected outcomes for the week.

A key issue for this STRP is to review the Ramsar flagship report - Global Wetland Outlook – to determine if a second edition is required, and identify gaps, omissions and need for more detailed information. It was concluded that communication of the Outlook should be simplified, focussing on specific target audiences (Contracting Parties, other conventions, policy makers) and its messages should be short and to the point. This important report can be found at https://www.global-wetland-outlook.ramsar.org/

For most of the rest of the week participants split into Working Groups on:
1. Methodologies and tools for wetlands monitoring and inventory
2. Peatlands
3. Blue carbon (mangroves)
4. Urban and peri-urban wetlands and economic valuation of wetlands
5. Culture and gender issues

Of importance to IPS were discussions on the following peatland matters:
b. Peatland restoration tasks:
d. Elaborating on practical experiences of restoration methods for peatlands not covered by Ramsar guidance. (linked to updating IMCG manual on Peatland Restoration)
e. Consider developing guidance for the cost-benefit analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, and multiple criteria analysis of peatland restoration projects.
f. Consider developing templates to assist parties to report on peatland restoration.

If you have questions or suggestions contact jack.rieley@peatlands.org
CBD Framework Discussion Document

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has adopted a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

An initial discussion document summarizing and analysing the initial views of Parties and observers was sent out for review earlier this year. The document provided relevant decisions and poses several questions to stimulate the discussion. In addition, a supporting information document provided a comparative analysis of the initial views received. Further information is available at https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020

For further information on IPS' convention work, do not hesitate to contact jack.rieley@peatlands.org.

UNFCCC 25 relocated to Madrid

The twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 25), the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 15), and the second session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 2) have been moved to IFEMA in Madrid, Spain, from 2 to 13 December 2019. The move was necessary due to unrest in Chile.

The Conference will take place under the Presidency of the Government of Chile and will be held with logistical support from the Government of Spain. The President of the Conference is Ms. Carolina Schmidt Zaldivar, Minister of Environment of Chile.

The conference is designed to take the next crucial steps in the UN climate change process. Following agreement on the implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement at COP 24 in Poland last year, a key objective is to complete several matters with respect to the full operationalization of the Paris Climate Change Agreement. Much of the conference will be streamed online. For further information, visit https://unfccc.int/cop25.

IPS is participating in a joint side event on peatland management – “Peatlands as a Nature Based Solution (NBS), accelerating action and impact through Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA), collaboration and synergy”

There is a need to get the climate community more engaged. Peatlands are a priority ecosystem for climate change and provide a diverse set of ecosystem services while contributing to multiple MEAs. Exploring synergies will help accelerate action and impact. GPI partners and key MEAs will share plans to prioritize peatlands in line with the UNEA4 resolution. The session will also share examples from key countries including China, Costa Rica and Canada.

Speakers include
Gilbert Ludwig, Secretary General, International Peatland Society
Dianna Kopansky, Global Peatlands Coordinator, UNEP
Tobias Salathe, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
Representatives from China, Costa Rica and Canada
MORE INFORMATION

Have you noticed? New Website for the IPS launched!

Since June, the International Peatland Society has a new website at www.peatlands.org. With the technical support of Trimedia Oy we have launched a visually attractive set of information on the IPS as a member-based non-profit federation, with lots of basic knowledge on peat and peatlands, our events, publications and contacts.

We can now provide open access to our document database. There is no login needed anymore to read proceedings of many of our previous congresses and symposia, as well as all volumes of the former International Peat Journal, older issues of Peatlands International and Peat News. Have a look!

We also invite all IPS members to participate in sharing knowledge and opinions - via our blog, on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram. Be visible and show us what you are doing for peat and peatlands. Remember also to update your bookmarks and email address book!

Register now for the 16th International Peatland Congress!

Registration is now open for the International Peatland Congress 2020 in Tallinn, Estonia, 14 - 20 June 2020. Please visit www.ipc2020.com/registration to sign up for this huge and important event. We expect some 800 participants from all disciplines of peatland and peat science, peatland conservation and restoration, peat users and the extracting and processing industry. Of course, you should be there! In parallel with the sessions of the Peatland Congress, themed this time "Peatlands and peat - source of ecosystem services", a special industry summit, public open lectures, and an international movie festival
will be held. The organisers also offer an interesting photo contest. Abstract submission (proposals for presentations) is now open with a **deadline of 6 January 2020**.

**Why Estonia?** There is potentially no better scene for the discussion of peatland ecological services. Due to the suitable landscape and climatic conditions for paludification, approximately 22% of Estonian territory is covered with peatlands in various conditions. Peatlands are an integral part of the Estonian landscape and have governed the course of old roads and communication between different regions.

Venue is the Alexela Concert Hall located next to the famous Old Town and major hotels. Accommodation can be booked via [https://ipc2020hotels.publicon.ee](https://ipc2020hotels.publicon.ee). Travelling is easy via the international airports of e.g. Tallinn and Helsinki (ferry connection).

The registration fee for **IPS members** (you are a member if you receive this newsletter directly from the IPS) amounts to **EUR 490**. Students can register for a reduced fee of **EUR 240** and there are also lower fees for low-income countries (World Bank list) and accompanying persons. Payments can be made via bank transfer, by credit card or an Estonian direct bank link.

The registration fee includes admission to scientific sessions, the **industry exhibition, an Ice-breaking Party, the unique Midsummer’s Eve celebration;** as well as the congress delegate kit, digital congress programme and abstract book, a digital certificate of attendance, and daily catering on 15-19 June 2020. The three **Pre-Congress tours** (one for students, one in the Baltics and one in Finland) and the more than **eleven (!) Mid-Congress field trips**, as well as the **Gala Dinner** are not included in the Congress fee and can be booked on a first-come-first-serve basis. All are welcome to attend the General Assembly and Annual Assembly of the IPS.

The International Peatland Congress (IPC 2020) will be organised by the Estonian Peat Association in collaboration with the International Peatland Society (IPS), the Estonian Peat Roundtable, Tallinn University, the University of Tartu, the Estonian University of Life Sciences and the Tallinn University of Technology.

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**Join the Photo Contest for the International Peatland Congress 2020!**

The organising committee of IPC 2020 in Tallinn has opened the worldwide photo contest for their event. The aim of the competition is to highlight the versatility of peatlands, usage of peat, and issues related to peat extraction as well as peatland reclamation – peatlands perceived in their natural beauty, their human use and restoration.

The photo contest will be held in three categories: pictures taken with **photo cameras, smartphones or drones**. Everyone can upload up to three pictures and give them suitable captions. When uploading your work, please choose the category in which you would like to participate.
Pictures can be uploaded until May 2020 and the winners will be announced at the end of May 2020. All submitted pictures can be found in the photo contest gallery. The photo contest is organised in collaboration with National Geographic Estonia.

**International Peatland Congress 2024 goes to China!**

The Annual Assembly decided in Rotterdam that the 17th International Peatland Congress will be held in **Beijing, China on 22 - 25 July 2024**. The event will be hosted by the Chinese National Committee of the IPS, China Peat Industry Association, Northeast Normal University; and supported by Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, People’s Republic of China.

**Call for Articles for Peatlands International**

Do you have any reports or news to share with the peatland community? If yes, take your laptop or pen and write for the next issue of Peatlands International. Articles can be 500 to 2,000 words long, include photos or graphics and topics can concern horticulture, conservation, peatland restoration, events, field trips, research results, opinions or anything else that would be of interest to our 1,400 members.

Submission deadline is **20 November** and (very few) further instructions can be found at [www.peatlands.org/publications](http://www.peatlands.org/publications).

**Future Events**

**2019**

UNFCCC COP 25, CMP 15, CMA 2
2-13 December, Madrid Spain

Southern Hemisphere Regional Conference on Permafrost of the International Permafrost Association (IPA)
4-14 December 2019
Queenstown, New Zealand
[https://southcop19.com](https://southcop19.com)

**2020**

3rd Finnish Peatland Day
31 January 2020
Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP)
16-22 March 2020
Gland, Switzerland (IPS Observers only)

Flow Country Research Conference 6: Understanding Dynamics
17-19 March 2020
North Highland College, Thurso, Scotland, UK
https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/flow-country-research-conference-6-understanding-dynamics-registration-83152652823

IPS Executive Board
Between 23 March and 5 April (tbd)
Newbridge, Ireland (EB members only)

10th International Symposium on Land subsidence
20-24 April 2020
Delf-Gouda, The Netherlands
www.tisols2020.org

15th SWS Europe Meeting
26-27 May 2020
Wageningen, The Netherlands

First World Peatland Day
2 June 2020
International Peatland Society

Québec RE3 Conference 2020
Québec City, Canada
7-11 June 2020

16th International Peatland Congress
Tallinn, Estonia
14-20 June 2020

AsiaFlux Conference 2020
22-24 September 2020
Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

UNFCCC COP 26 CMP 16 CMA 3
9-20 November 2020
Glasgow, Scotland UK
2021

ISHS-IPS II International Symposium on Growing Media. Soil-less Cultivation, and Compost Utilisation in Horticulture
22-27 August 2021
Ghent, Belgium

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

• Please send me information to include in UK Peatland News 25

• Peatlands are now in the mainstream of Government policies across the world as their importance for biodiversity and in climate change processes is realised and accepted.

• Peatlands are now considered in an increasing number of international conventions, agencies, programmes and actions making the role of the IPS even more important.
• However, more informed experts need to take part in research on peatlands and peat, promoting their responsible management and contributing to policies based upon sound, verifiable science using modern technology.

• Volunteer to help through the United Kingdom Peatland Society of the IPS

• It is time to find a replacement for me as Secretary of the UK Peatland Society. I took up this position in 2008 when the UK National Committee was moribund and inactive. However, 10 years is probably long enough, and it is time for the post to be filled by someone much younger than me. I hope to hand over no later than 2022.

• I also intend to cease other IPS activities on Executive Board, Representing IPS on Ramsar STRP and Deputy Editor in chief of Mires and Peat.

Peatland Snippets

*Peatland Snippets is sent to members and friends of the IPS once or twice a month. To contribute to the newsletter, please email info@peatlands.org. Enjoy reading!*

Write for Peatlands International

*If you are interested in writing for Peatlands International please send your article and photos (jpg + captions) to susann.warnecke@peatlands.org. The Editors reserve the right to edit, shorten and choose articles for publication, native speaker proof reading will be carried out on behalf of IPS.*
LATE NEWS!!!

Flow Country Research Conference 6: Understanding Dynamics

The 6th Flow Country Research Conference will explore peatland processes, resilience & dynamics under climate and land use change

Date and Time
Tue, 17 Mar 2020, 11:00 – Thu, 19 Mar 2020, 16:00 GMT

With fast-changing landscapes under large-scale restoration and increased exposure to climate extremes, it is more important than ever to understand dynamics in peatlands.
What are the key eco-hydrological thresholds in blanket bog landscapes?
How do blanket bogs under restoration respond to droughts or wildfire events?
How can we measure those responses over such large scales?
What are the key ecological indicators of recovery?
How can we maximise resilience through restoration interventions?
These are some of the topics we hope to explore over the three days of the conference.

Some highlights of the programme:

**Tuesday 17th of March:**
Field trip to the site affected by the May 2019 wildfire

**Wednesday 18th of March:**
Full programme of Oral and Poster presentations
Moved reading of a peatland-inspired play written by local author George Gunn
Conference dinner

**Thursday 19th of March:**
Special session on restoration and wildfire including presentations
Workshop funded by NERC

**Confirmed keynote speakers include Prof Mike Waddington (U. MacMaster, Canada) and Dr Pete Whittington (Brandon University, Canada)**

For any enquiries, please email conference.flows@uhi.ac.uk

Reserve a place at: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/flow-country-research-conference-6-understanding-dynamics-registration-83152652823

Photos Jack Rieley and Roxane Andersen
VERY IMPORTANT!!

United Kingdom, in partnership with Italy, to host COP 26 / CMP 16 / CMA 3

The UK has been chosen to host the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), known as COP26, in a partnership with Italy. Up to 30,000 delegates are expected to attend the event at Glasgow's Scottish Events Campus (SEC) at the end of next year on 9 – 20 November 2020.

The UK will host the main COP summit while Italy will host preparatory events and a significant youth event. The UK has nominated Claire Louise Perry O’Neill to be president for COP26. She was a Conservative member in the United Kingdom Parliament, representing the Devizes Constituency from 2010 to 2019. She was appointed as Minister of State at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy by Prime Minister Theresa May, after the June 2017 reshuffle. She is not standing in the current general election.

The Scottish Government’s Climate Change Secretary Roseanna Cunningham said the decision to host COP26 in Scotland was right “given our leadership on climate action”. "Scotland was one of the first countries in the world to acknowledge the global climate emergency and the Scottish Government has introduced the toughest targets in the UK to ensure our action matches the scale of our climate ambitions. We look forward to working collaboratively with partners to deliver an ambitious and effective conference that ensures Scotland plays a leading role to help promote the increased global effort to tackle climate change."

The conference has been described as the most important gathering on climate change since the Paris agreement was signed in 2015. Lasting for two weeks, it will be the largest summit the UK has ever hosted, with up to 200 world leaders expected to attend for the final weekend.

This UNFCCC COP is also an important event for the IPS that will undoubtedly be involved in one or more side events. It is also a challenge for the UK Peatland Society and all of you as members. This is an important shop window not only for the IPS but peatlands and peat globally and we must rise to the occasion because it is being held on our patch! Planning must start now so that by the time of the International Peatland Congress in Tallinn in June 2020 plans are in place and key speakers identified. Join in this exciting journey!