

The International Peatland Society (IPS) is an organisation of corporate and individual members dedicated to the responsible management and Wise Use of peatlands and peat. Our mission is to serve all those involved in peatlands and peat through the promotion, gathering, exchange and communication of knowledge and experience, by means of events and projects which address key issues, including climate change, biodiversity, the need for responsible use and restoration. Currently the IPS has 1486 individual, corporate, student and institutional members from 35 countries.

IPS Annual Meetings 2017 in Aberdeen

The organizing committee of the 2017 Annual Convention of the IPS has launched an own website for their event. Please visit www.peatlands2017.net for more information on the programme and venue. We kindly invite all IPS members and their colleagues to attend the “Responsible Management of Drained Peatlands” Workshop and Seminar at the Marriott Hotel in Aberdeen Scotland on **28 - 31 May 2017**. The event will embrace the most recent scientific research, technical developments and practical activities on agriculture and forestry on peatland, responsible peat production and peatland restoration. This will be completed by interesting excursions, social events in the evening and an attractive accompanying person’s programme, plus business meetings of the IPS. The organizers are also still welcoming sponsors and other cooperation partners. Please contact jack.rieley (at) btinternet.com if you are interested in showcasing your products or services. We will keep you informed.

Secretary General Tasks to be carried out by Presidents

IPS part-time Secretary General (SG) Hannu Salo will fully return to his tasks as Regional Manager of the Finnish Bioenergy Association as of **1 January 2017**. His tasks will be taken over by the IPS President Gerald Schmilewski from Germany, [gerald.schmilewski \(at\) klasmann-deilmann.com](mailto:gerald.schmilewski@klasmann-deilmann.com) and 2nd Vice President Samu Valpola in Finland, [samu.valpola \(at\) gtk.fi](mailto:samu.valpola@gtk.fi). Please update your address books accordingly. The IPS is considering to recruit a full-time SG to fully implement its Strategy if funding can be obtained in 2017. Full contact details: www.peatlands.org/about-us.

Appeal for Funds Allan Robertson Grants 2017

The Executive Board of the IPS will open the application process for the Allan Robertson Grants 2017 in January next year. If you want to be one of the contributors to this great opportunity to support young scientists and young professionals, please contact Professor Jack Rieley and/or the IPS Secretariat for more information and indicate the amount you are ready to provide. The Grants of EUR 250-500 each have been given every year since 2014 to young peatland and peat researchers carrying out research or practical work or young professionals in early stages of their career in managing peatlands or peat industry. Grant recipients are normally under the age of 30. IPS itself will provide a core amount of € 1,000. For more information see www.peatlands.org/about-us/allan-robertson-grants.

IPS Commissions establish Expert Groups

The Executive Board agreed, at its **16 - 18 November** meeting in Naaldwijk, the Netherlands, to establish the following Expert Groups under the new three Commissions:

Peatlands and Economics (Chair Guus van Berckel):

- Peatlands for agriculture and forestry
- Peat extracting techniques and technology
- Peat for growing media and energy

Peatlands and Society (Chair Marie Kofod-Hansen):

- Peatlands education, communication and publicity
- Peatlands culture, human well-being and balneology
- Peatlands and governance

Peatlands and Environment (Chair Bernd Hofer):

- Peatlands and climate
- Peatland biodiversity (ecology, hydrology and geology)
- Peatland restoration

All IPS members are encouraged to propose Vice Chairs for the Commissions, and leaders for the new Expert Groups. Please contact [samu.valpola \(at\) gtk.fi](mailto:samu.valpola@gtk.fi) or the Commission Chairs above (full contact information at www.peatlands.org/about-us/commissions-and-scientific-advisory-board) to be nominated or obtain more information. In addition, IPS will held its Annual Assembly in conjunction with a seminar or other event linked to one of the three Commissions each year between Congresses, beginning with the Environment in Scotland in 2017.

Declaration of the 1st Asian Conference on Biocultural Diversity

The 1st Asian Conference on Biocultural Diversity, held from **27 - 29 October** in Nanao City, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, produced a regional Declaration on Biocultural Diversity and an annex of practical actions to strengthen the links between biological and cultural diversity for a sustainable future living in harmony with nature. In Asia, many local communities use resources provided by ecosystems for their distinct local cultures. It is essential that such resources are regarded as assets to be protected and preserved, and furthermore, utilized appropriately and wisely for the vitalization of communities. In the conference Declaration, participants committed to further exploring and implementing integrated approaches to conservation, sustainable and equitable use and the equitable sharing of benefits arising from nature. The Declaration will be presented to the UN Biodiversity Conference in Cancun, Mexico, **2 - 17 December 2016**. For more info see <http://bcd2016.jp/english/index.html> and www.cbd.int. (source: CBD)

UK Peatland Strategy Consultation Open

IUCN UK is inviting comments to its work on a UK peatland strategy "Secure Peatland Future: A vision and strategy for the protection, restoration and sustainable management of UK peatlands". Aim is to have the document agreed by a wide range of partners within the Peatland Programme, including statutory bodies, environmental and land managing NGOs, peatland landscape partnerships and private land managers. IUCN UK PP partners consider that in the current political climate it is crucial to have the peatland story clearly set out to support developing strategy and policy, and to provide ongoing momentum, synergy and cooperation across the four UK countries as Britain prepares to leave the EU. Please read and comment at www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org/uk-peatland-strategy by **20 January 2017**.

Oulu Peatland Symposium in May – Call for Papers

The 2nd Peatland Symposium will be held at the University of Oulu during **18 - 19 May 2017**. The event will include scientific sessions and a symposium dinner on Thursday, and an excursion to a peat survey site, peat extraction areas, after-use areas and a peat power plant on Friday. The conference is organized by the Oulu Mining School, the Institute of Water Resources and Environmental Engineering at the University of Oulu, and Oulun Energia Oy. There is no participation fee and the event will be open to students and the public. Topics for oral presentations in English or Finnish can be announced to [harry.uosukainen \(at\) turveruukki.fi](mailto:harry.uosukainen@turveruukki.fi) until **28 February 2017**. This will also be a farewell event for Harry who will retire from his duties as Research Manager at Turveruukki Oy/Oulun Energia after 36 years of service, having started his first peat surveys as research assistant in 1973. (submitted by H. Uosukainen)

Results of the Cumbria BogLIFE Conference

The Cumbria BogLIFE Conference was held in Penrith, Cumbria, UK during **4 - 6 October 2016** under the title "Restoring Peatlands, The Development of Best Practice Techniques". The conference comprised a mix of presentations, workshops and site visits highlighting the issues involved in planning and managing restoration work on peatlands. Topics covered included: removal of forestry; raising and stabilising water levels using peat cell bunding and other techniques; removal of invasive species; re-establishing bog vegetation on previously harvested surfaces and the creation of valuable bog-edge habitat. Fourteen speakers presented details of their own experiences in UK, Sweden, Estonia and Lithuania. Field trips visited Bolton Fell, Witherslack, South Solway and Roundsea Woods Mosses. On the final day, attendees split into working groups dealing with specific elements of restoration. The organizers thank all participants and speakers for their contributions. (submitted by Pat Byrne)