



**Cross-Institute
Programme for
Sustainable Soil
Function
SoilCIP**



**2008 Christmas and
New Year Newsletter**

Website

In case you hadn't noticed, the SoilCIP website has been updated. The revision, based on the ISPG, that you've seen and had the chance to comment on is now live. Have a look at it. Comments to Kevin Coleman or me.

<http://www.sustainablesoilcip.org.uk/>

BSSS President

I take over from David Rimmer as President of the British Society of Soil Science on 1 January 2009. My tenure is for 2 years, so I have the pleasant task of representing BSSS (and the SoilCIP) at the World Congress of Soil Science in Brisbane, Australia, in 2010. I am involved with the current BSSS President, David Rimmer, Dick Thompson (NSRI), Mark Kibblewhite (NSRI), Hazel Norman (BEC), Nick Reeves (CIWEM), Chris Murphy (CIWM), Alan Malcolm (IoB) and Peter Loveland (EU Working Group on Soil Monitoring) in writing to Hilary Benn, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to encourage him to support the Soil Framework Directive. I am also working with IPSS on a response to the recent Royal Agricultural Society of England's report 'The Current Status of Soil and Water Management in England'. The report presents the soils community with an opportunity for promoting soil science that we should not miss. Finally, of course, I hope that my presidency will further raise the profile of the SoilCIP.

British Society of Soil Science (BSSS) Institute of Professional Soil Scientists (IPSS) Administrator and Policy Officer

My first task as President has already begun: the difficult job of replacing our almost irreplaceable Administrator, Jim Gauld. Jim, Malcolm Reeve, IPSS, and I interviewed four candidates for the upgraded, full-time post of BSSS/IPSS Administrator and Policy Officer on 27th November. We were unanimous in our selection and are in the process of negotiating terms and conditions with the chosen candidate, who will probably be based at Cranfield. More news when a formal offer has been made and accepted.



ISPG/Centre reviews

BBSRC Council reviewed the ISPGs on 5th December. We have had no formal feedback yet, but Ian Crute told us that there will be only a few minor queries. I heard from another source that the Rothamsted ISPGs were very well received.

The first internal review of the new Rothamsted Centres, that for the Centre for Soils and Ecosystem Function including the SoilCIP, took place on 15th December. Again there is likely to be no formal feedback, but Brian Kerry and I noted a few action points and issues that will be discussed in a centre Strategy meeting next year.

Cross-Institute visits and links

Les Firbank and I took part in a Scottish Government Mid-Programme review of Programme 3, Environment – Land Use and Rural Stewardship'. This programme brings together research that includes soil science at Macaulay Institute, SCRI and SAC. The results of the review are, of course, confidential. I can say, though, that I enjoyed the experience of being on the other side of the desk and hearing about the work being done in Scotland. The SoilCIP has strong links with Macaulay and SCRI in several areas presented and those links were noted.

JANET Talk

JANET Talk is a desktop based video conferencing system with file sharing, instant messaging, live editing of documents etc. It is primarily aimed at 1:1 conferences but can be used for multi point but you only see the active speaker. Full details are at:

<http://www.ja.net/development/talk.html>

RRes computing is exploring its usefulness. I've asked to be kept informed as it might be good for RRes-NWRes links.

Research Assessment Exercise

The RAE scores have been published. See:

<http://submissions.rae.ac.uk/results/default.aspx>

BIOSCIENCES FEDERATION

December 2008 Newsletter

Update on discussions between BSF and IoB BSF EGM. 1st December 2008 Following a discussion and questions about the draft Business Plan, a vote for the enabling resolution, proposing the dissolution of the Biosciences Federation in parallel with the dissolution of the Institute of Biology and the creation of a new single 'Voice for Biology' in the United Kingdom,



was taken by a show of hands. The results were as follows: of the 45 Member Organisations of the Biosciences Federation eligible to vote:

23 were present and all voted in favour;
5 votes in favour were given by proxy;
1 abstention was given by proxy;

The full version of the resolution can be found here: [enabling resolution](#).

IoB EGM. 4th December 2008 The IoB held an EGM in London on the 4th December. Voting was 49:1 in favour. The IoB also report, on their website, having had scores of letters, emails and items on their blog site supportive of this initiative. More information can be found on the IoB and BSF websites:

- Biosciences Federation website: <http://www.bsf.ac.uk/Media/NewOrg.htm>
- Institute of Biology website: <http://www.iob.org/?project=general&imagefolder=&article=newcoFAQ.xml> and http://www.iob.org/Default.asp?section=news&article=Newco_lives.xml

I aim to be on leave from 24 December until 2 January, inclusive. With Season's Greetings – have a good holiday!

Keith Goulding, 22nd December 2008



Rothamsted Manor