

Cross-Institute Programme for Sustainable Soil Function

SoilCIP

Newsletter for February 2009



I had not expected to be able to prepare a Newsletter this month, having been away for 3 weeks in New Zealand and Kenya. However, I picked up a few items this week that might be of interest, and I thought you would like to see a photograph of the difficult conditions under which I had to work while away!



Abel Tasman National Park, New Zealand

ISPG Reviews

I am pleased to say that the recent review of Rothamsted's ISPGs did not include the SoilCIP. Clearly the earlier review and our response to it was considered sufficient. We can therefore continue to work towards our current objectives. It would be helpful, however, to have an informed review of progress, so I will try and arrange such a review with our SoilCIP external reviewers: Peter Gregory, Mark Bailey and Ken Killham. My aim is to do that towards the end of the summer/early autumn, and to use the outcomes from that as material for our next Rothamsted ISPG review on 16th November 2009. Any comments?

BSSS/SSSI meeting in Ireland

I hope to attend this meeting, details below. We should consider offering some papers. Phil Brookes is submitting an abstract.



Soil Science Society of Ireland



BSSS/TEAGASC Joint Autumn Conference
Castle Johnson, Co. Wexford, Ireland
9-11 September 2009

[Conference programme and further details](#)

Call for papers

Abstracts can now be submitted to the [Conference administrator](#)

Conference registration

On-line registration form will be available here soon

Selected items from BioScience Federation news

1) Launch of new website about the IoB/BSF unification.

The BSF and IoB have created a new website to act as a conduit for information and discussion about the BSF/IoB unification. IoB and BSF members are invited to comment on the latest information and documents, via the site and via a blog. See: www.newbio.info.

2) A BSF Task Force will meet to discuss the EPSRC's international review of chemistry.

EPSRC are conducting an international review of chemistry over the coming months and are keen to hear the views of the widest possible audience. The main

components of the review are data analysis, a public consultation and a visit by a panel of International experts from 19th – 24th April 2009. During that visit the panel will meet with approximately [20 leading institutions](#) and each of these will be asked to provide evidence directly, as will [a number of other stakeholders](#).

6) *The International Liaison Committee is developing initiatives to support capacity building in Africa.*

The Group is meeting with Dr Vicki Wilde, director of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the Nairobi-based "African Women in Agricultural Research and Development", a \$13 million pan-African initiative to increase the role of women scientists in agriculture.

11) *IoB/BSF EAS Committee preparing a briefing note on climate change.*

The note, which will be a short, intelligible summary of the very complex data reported by IPCC, aims to present the biological impacts of climate change (on health, agriculture and ecosystems).



The CGIAR Science Council, The Alliance and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) are in partnership organizing The Science Forum 2009. The Science Forum will be co-sponsored and hosted by Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR) in The Netherlands, on 16-17 June 2009.

The Science Forum 2009 will be the first in a series of biennial science fora to be organized as part of the Science Council's drive to catalyze the mobilization of science towards CGIAR goals and objectives. The 2009 Forum will focus on innovative science and the arrangements that can help to mobilize it more effectively to address poverty alleviation and sustainable natural resource management.

Science Forum 2009 Program

The program will feature leading practitioners introducing a forward looking perspective on research needs to increase the resilience and productivity of agricultural and natural resource systems. During the first day, discussion in parallel workshops will focus on research that is still at the advanced research stage, but has potential to deliver significant impact in 15 years and beyond; the second day will consider a 5-10 year timeframe, focusing on promising research that needs greater investment and essential partnerships to deliver impact.

The 6 Parallel workshops can be found below:

1. [Resilient natural resource systems](#)

2. [The future of food: developing more nutritious diets and safer food](#)
3. [Changing the Emperor: ICTs transforming agricultural science, research and technology generation](#)
4. [Beyond the yield curve: exerting the power of genetics, genomics and synthetic biology](#)
5. [Eco-efficiencies in agro-ecosystems](#)
6. [Agriculture beyond food science for a biobased economy](#)

Should you wish to know more about the upcoming Science Forum 2009, please click [here](#).

Keith Goulding, 26th February 2009