

Cross-Institute Programme for Sustainable Soil Function



SoilCIP

Newsletter for June 2009

NERC grant proposals

Goetz Richter had a very successful time at the recent NERC sandpit and is involved in discussions for two new NERC-funded projects: (1) Delivering carbon benefits to the UK landscape (CABUL); (2) Impacts of spatio-climatic variability on environment-hosted land-based renewables. Well done Goetz! The 5 days was worth it after all.

'Soil Organic Matters'

SoilCIP staff were well represented at last week's 'Soil Organic Matters' meeting to celebrate the research of Dr David Jenkinson. David Powlson, Phil Brookes, Andy Whitmore, Jenni Dungait and Saran Sohi presented oral papers, and there were a number of posters by SoilCIP authors; Kevin Coleman was co-author on several posters for his work with Roth-C. We are encouraging authors to offer papers for a special edition of the *European Journal of Soil Science*.

New PhD studentships

SoilCIP staff have done well in winning new PhD studentships this year. Fangjie Zhao is involved in two new BBSRC Quota studentships:

Supervisor(s)	Project title	Student
Shewry/Zhao/Neal	Optimising the amount and availability of iron in bread wheat cultivars to prevent global iron deficiency	Tristan Eagling
Zhao/Miller/McGrath	Decreasing arsenic accumulation in rice to reduce health risk	Charlotte Lomax

and Penny Hirsch has won Nottingham and Reading Lawes Trust sponsored studentships (although these are not strictly soil science projects):

Hirsch	Is immunity of the non-target insect <i>Scathophaga stercoraria</i> enhanced by use of veterinary pharmaceuticals?	James Greig
Hirsch	Analysis of Escherichia Coli O157 colonisation of the plant environment	Glyn Barrett

New Chair for BBSRC appointed

The formal appointment of Professor Sir Tom Blundell FRS FMedSci as the new Chair of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) has been announced by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Sir Tom succeeds Dr Peter Ringrose from 1 July 2009 and has been appointed for four years. Sir Tom was the last Director-General of the Agriculture and Food Research Council, one of BBSRC's predecessor bodies, and the founding Chief Executive of BBSRC when the Council was formed in 1994. Until recently he was a Director of the Lawes Agricultural Trust.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills press notice can be read at: <http://nds.coi.gov.uk/clientmicrosite/Content/Detail.aspx?ClientId=431&NewsAreaId=2&ReleaseID=403598&SubjectId=36>



IUSS Alert – 50 (June 2009)

Information for and from the global soil science community

Soils for kids



There are many initiatives to popularise soils for school kids. Henry Ferguson, a soil scientist at the National Geospatial Development Center in the USA, has a website with ideas, interesting suggestions and a couple of simple experiments illustrating some soil processes. There is also lesson plan suitable for elementary or secondary educators which includes materials and preparation, background information, student procedure and a student worksheet. Click [here](#) to visit his website.

UK Climate Projections launched on 18 June

The UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) are being launched on Thursday 18 June. UKCP09 provides the latest information on how continued emissions of greenhouse gases may change the UK's climate over 21st century. The information provided by UKCP09 will be valuable to anyone with responsibility for forward planning in the public, private and voluntary sectors. UKCP09 comprises a package of information including, publications, key findings, user support and customisable output. This is primarily available on-line. Please note that the sites will not go live until the

Secretary of State has finished his announcement to the House, sometime around 12.30.

* For access to the main technical information about UKCP09, and the full range of information and support, go to <http://ukclimateprojections.defra.gov.uk>.

* A gentler introduction is available at <http://ukcp09.defra.gov.uk>.

UKCP09 is accompanied by a training programme – Projections in Practice (PiP) – and more information can be found at www.ukcip.org.uk/training.

Oxford launch of UKCP09, 2 July (4-7 pm)

UKCIP is organising an introduction to UKCP09, primarily for Oxford-based organisations and individuals. There will be presentations outlining the key findings from UKCP09, and exploring the science that underpins them. A panel session will take questions from participants on any aspect of the Projections and its potential uses.

While this event is intended for those local to the Oxford area, we expect that there will be wider interest. If you would like to register your interest, please go to www.tinyurl.com/UKCIP09.

Westminster Food & Nutrition Forum

Full information on all Forum events can be found at:

<http://www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/foodandnutritionforum/home.html>

Food Security

Timing: 8th July 2009

Guest of Honour: Dame Suzi Leather, Chair, Council of Food Policy Advisers

As the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee prepares to release its report *Securing food supplies up to 2050: the challenges for the UK*, this seminar will examine how the UK can respond to future challenges to the availability, affordability and sustainability of food supplies. Sessions will discuss urgent issues of sustainable food production, distribution and consumption; the role of innovation and biotechnologies; and reducing food waste and securing food supplies from abroad.

21st Century Farming in the UK

Timing: 5th November 2009

Guest of Honour: Professor Sir John Beddington, Chief Scientific Adviser to HM Government and Head of the Government Office for Science This seminar will focus on key issues for the future of the farming industry, especially in terms of developing sustainable systems of production and distribution. Delegates from the farming sector and wider stakeholder groups will discuss issues identified by the Sustainable Food and Farming Strategy and being delivered through the SFFS Action Plan. The seminar will look closely at the role of agriculture in the UK, how future policy can address current challenges facing the sector, and ultimately how farming can move towards a sustainable future.

The Carbon Footprint of Food

Timing: Q3/4 2009

This seminar will look at how markets are evolving to meet consumers' concerns over food prices, their requirement for local sourcing and out-of-season produce, and the demands of

the Government's carbon reduction budgets. As the debate moves beyond 'food miles' to the wider 'life cycle carbon footprint', sessions will address the many issues which determine the environmental impact of our food, including packaging, waste, storage and processing. Discussion will also look forward at approaches that the food industry can take to address the range of factors that determine the carbon footprint of food, whilst balancing demands from consumers for the availability of products they have grown accustomed to.

I shall be on leave from 3-19 July so there is unlikely to be a July Newsletter unless someone else wants to volunteer to produce it. Anyone interested?

Keith Goulding, 30th June 2009