

Cross-Institute Programme for Sustainable Soil Function



SoilCIP

Newsletter for March 2009

Successful PhD

Congratulations to Panagiotis Nikolopoulos ('Panos') who was awarded his Doctor of Philosophy at the University Of Cambridge for his thesis, 'Non-aqueous phase liquid pollutant in natural soils and its long-term risk after remediation'.

Environment Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Committee visit

The Government's EFRA Committee, which watches over Defra, visited Rothamsted on 11th March to follow up on our submission to its current review. Information about the Committee is at:

http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/environment_food_and_rural_affairs.cfm

Click on 'Current Inquiries' and then 'Defra Science'. Please ask if you would like a copy of Rothamsted's submission.

Review of SoilCIP paper in



Editors' Picks - March/April 2009

Christopher (Kit) Macleod, Kirsty L. Blackstock, and Phil M. Haygarth, "**Mechanisms to Improve Integrative Research at the Science-Policy Interface for Sustainable Catchment Management,**" *Ecology and Society* 13, no. 2 (2008): article 48. A complementary review by Lorrae van Kerkhoff (ANU, Canberra). A couple of extracts:

"In a recent article in *Ecology and Society*, U.K.-based researchers Kit Macleod (of North Wyke Research), Kirsty Blackstock (of the Macaulay Institute), and Phil Haygarth (of the Centre for Sustainable Water Management) take some of the prevailing ideas about research-policy integration and assess how real-world applications can achieve more sustainable land and water management. They draw on their own research and policy experiences of two contrasting functions science can perform in relation to policy: opening up and closing down."

"The simple theoretical concepts Macleod, Blackstock, and Haygarth present offer some guidance that can help researchers and policymakers negotiate more effectively and support each other to achieve better outcomes. A key part of understanding sustainability involves understanding the processes and mechanisms that can help all players work together, and this article provides insight on where to start."

Read it all at:

<http://www.environmentmagazine.org/Editors%20Picks/editors-picks-index.html>

Cross-Institute and international links

Lots of SoilCIP staff attended the workshop in Brazil this month. I hope that at least one of them will write and tell us about it for next month's newsletter.

New Environmental Change Network booklet

The new ECN booklet 'Climate change impacts: evidence from ECN sites', edited by A. Sier and A. Scott, highlights some of the findings from ECN monitoring and research which provide evidence of the sensitivity of natural ecosystems in the UK to variability and change in climate. These include assessments of population dynamics, responses to extreme events (drought), changes to the timing of lifecycle events (phenological changes) and biological responses affecting the carbon cycle. The booklet can be downloaded from:

http://www.ecn.ac.uk/ecnnews/CCI_publications.html

I have some hard copies if anyone would prefer one of those.

Release of EU report on soils and climate change

From the BBC's new blog on Climate Change – 'Bloom':

"Soil could play an important role in tackling climate change, according to a European Commission report published this week. The study says that we need to stop clearing forests and grassland to grow crops if we want to ensure that the huge amount of carbon it contains isn't released into the atmosphere. The report says: 'Europe's soils are an enormous carbon reservoir, containing around 75 billion tonnes [of CO₂], and poor management can have serious consequences: a failure to protect Europe's remaining peat bogs, for example, would release the same amount of carbon as an additional 40 million cars on Europe's roads.' "

The report is at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/review_en.htm

'Bloom' is at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/climatechange/>



New Agriculturist article 'Points of view: Saving African soils: grounds for hope?'

Read the article at:

<http://www.new-ag.info/09/02/pov.php>

Click [here](#) for the on-line version of this Alert



IUSS Alert 47 (March 2009) Information for and from the global soil science community

New IUSS Secretary General and Deputy



At the Council Meeting in Brisbane I indicated that, after two terms in office, I would step down as Secretary General in 2010. The President, Roger Swift has established, under the Chairmanship of former President Don Sparks, a Search Committee for a new Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General. Brief outlines of the posts are available at the IUSS website, click [here](#). Colleagues wishing to be considered for the position or to suggest possible candidates should contact Don Sparks at dlsparks@udel.edu

*Stephen Nortcliff
Secretary General*

GlobalSoilMap.net – a new digital soil map of the world



GlobalSoilMap.net is a new global project that aims to make a new digital soil map of the world using state-of-the-art and emerging technologies for soil mapping and predicting soil properties. It was launched in New York in February. The new digital map will consist of primary functional soil properties at a grid resolution of 90 by 90 m. It will be freely available, web-accessible and widely distributed. *GlobalSoilMap.net* was initiated by the IUSS Working Group on Digital Soil Mapping in 2006. The consortium, which is led by ISRIC - World Soil Information (Wageningen, Netherlands), includes the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (Ispra, Italy), the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (Canberra, Australia), the University of Sydney (Sydney, Australia), the Chinese Academy of Sciences (Nanjing, China), the Earth Institute at Columbia University (New York, USA), the US Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (Morgantown, USA), IRD (Montpellier, France), the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa, Rio de Janeiro) and CIAT-TSBF (Nairobi, Kenya). For more information visit www.globalsoilmap.net which also has a press release.

I'm attending the BSSS Young Scientists' Meeting at Reading tomorrow and Wednesday.
Keith Goulding, 30th March 2009