

# Cross-Institute Programme for Sustainable Soil Function

## SoilCIP

Newsletter for September 2011



### **Institute Assessment and Restructuring**

We have now received the reviews of the ISPGs and NCGs, responded to them, received what was effectively a science panel review (chaired by Chris Pollock) of all this and finally, last Thursday, had the Institute Assessment Panel's visit. The IAE Panel took a high-level view of the whole institute, including infrastructure and facilities (they saw a video of NW), human resources, knowledge exchange and public engagement. We will not get the written panel report for about a month, but the Director was given verbal feedback on Friday, which he passed on to the IEC.

Essentially the restructuring and science plans are supported, and so we would hope to be awarded the funding that we have asked for. We have to make some revisions of the ISPGs and NCGs, such as better access to the data and a business plan for the Long-Term Experiments, a clear indication of how we will work with socioeconomists to quantify and develop sustainable systems, a better pathways to impact statement for the DSS ISPG, and some indication of what success would look like! The Panel are eager for the Science Advisory Board and data management plans for the Farm Platform to be in place as soon as possible; so are we. None of these requirements are especially difficult, and I'll be in touch with you to contribute to these as necessary, but we don't yet know what form the responses should take (full Je-S resubmission; just some sections?) or have a deadline.

The Panel were very impressed by the staff they met informally at the end of the day – well done to those of you who were involved. Several Panel members said they wanted to visit the institute informally to spend more time hearing about the research.

With regard to the restructuring, the IEC meet in the presence of some of the Rothamsted Board members (at their request) next Tuesday (11<sup>th</sup> October) to make final decisions on VRs and CRs. Remember, though, that BBSRC and BIS have the absolute final say on these.

### **Nottingham-Reading-Rothamsted Tripartite Food Security Workshop**

The second of these was held at Rothamsted on 22-23 September. As before it consisted of short talks outlining current research areas (e.g. Andy Whitmore talking about sustainability and soil organic matter) and resources (me talking about the

Long-Term Experiments and the Farm Platform), and then workshop sessions to develop ideas for grant proposals, PhD studentships and further, focused workshops. I have no formal notes as yet, but Phil Murray and I had a very profitable discussion with Andrew Wade from Reading about 'lab on a chip' and other technologies that would be nice to see tested on the Farm Platform. There were also discussions about collaborative modelling of environmental goods and services and biogeochemical cycling across scales.

### **INRA 'long-term' experiments**

On 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> September I was on the other side of the reviewing desk, assessing INRA's 'Long-term manipulation observatory platforms in environmental research: Agro-ecosystem, biogeochemical cycles, and biodiversity (SOERE-ACBB)', headed by Abad Chabbi, who many of us know. The sites are at Theix Auvergne (Massif Central (900 m alt) and Lusignan (Poitou-Charentes), running since 2005, and Mons en Chaussée (Picardie region) functioning since spring 2009. They are part of EXPEER and proposed for ANAEE. See:

[http://www.international.inra.fr/research/scientific\\_resources/environmental\\_research\\_observatories](http://www.international.inra.fr/research/scientific_resources/environmental_research_observatories)

<http://www.expeer.fr/>

<http://www.anaee.com/>

It's early days for these but INRA has supported them with €2.5M p.a., 22 permanent staff, 10 PhD students and 20 Masters students, and the sites are fully equipped with micromet equipment to measure GHG fluxes and porous probes of various kinds to measure losses to water from the very deep and porous soils. We (the review group) were supportive of this research that, in many ways, mirrors the Farm Platform, suggesting better integration with modellers and a stronger management board and profile (sound familiar?). There should be some good opportunities for collaboration. If you want a contact please e-mail Abad, explaining how you came to hear about the experiments: [abad.chabbi@lusignan.inra.fr](mailto:abad.chabbi@lusignan.inra.fr)



# International Union of Soil Sciences

IUSS Alert **75** (September 2011)

## Call for Nominations

### 2012 Young Micromorphology Publication Awards

Commission 1.1: Soil Morphology and Micromorphology will award the Young Micromorphologist's Publication Award every 2 years: at each International Working Meeting on Micromorphology, and at each World Congress of Soil Science. The purpose of this award is to encourage and promote the use of soil micromorphology by young scientists. The Award will be given to one or more young scientist who has published research in the preceeding 4 years, that is an outstanding contribution to the principles, methodology, or application of micromorphology. The author must be less than 35 years old at the time of acceptance of the publication, and he/she must be the first author. The paper must be published in an international journal with wide distribution, but not necessarily a scientific journal. The award is not restricted to papers published in the English language only. The selection of the awardees will be the responsibility of the Kubienna Award Committee. Applicants should submit the following: (1) a pdf file of the paper(s) to be considered for the award, (2) proof of age for eligibility (ex: photocopy of ID or other document with birthdate), and (3) a cover letter explaining why they should be considered for this award. Letters of support from senior micromorphologists, outlining the qualities of the publication(s) are also welcome. Applications are due October 30, 2011. Send to: Dr. Rosa M Poch at [rosa.poch@macs.udl.cat](mailto:rosa.poch@macs.udl.cat)

### Guy Smith Medal Award

The IUSS Guy Smith Medal Award Committee, is pleased to invite you to propose nominees for the forthcoming Guy Smith award. The next award will be handed over at the event of the Soil Classification Meeting, to be held from June 11-14, 2012, in Lincoln, Nebraska, USA ([http://clic.cses.vt.edu/IUSS1.4/Conf\\_Soil\\_Classification\\_2012/](http://clic.cses.vt.edu/IUSS1.4/Conf_Soil_Classification_2012/)). The awardee should have the following qualifications: She/he must either have made a significant scientific contribution that has advanced the field of soil classification. Be an active member, honorary member, or formerly active member of a national or international soil science professional society; and the medal is not invested posthumously. Present officers of the Commission and related Working Groups of IUSS cannot be nominated. The proposal for nomination should comprise a short text, including the main steps of the scientific career of the nominee, her/his most relevant scientific publications and major contribution to the development of soil classification. We look forward to receive your proposals by November 30<sup>th</sup> 2011 by e-mail to: [seppe.deckers@ees.kuleuven.be](mailto:seppe.deckers@ees.kuleuven.be); [lanjos@ufrj.br](mailto:lanjos@ufrj.br); [etingof@glasnet.ru](mailto:etingof@glasnet.ru)

## Institute of Professional Soil Scientists launch Working with Soil

The UK Government Department of Environment Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra) Deputy Chief Scientific Advisor, Dr Miles Parker, helped launch *Working with Soil on the 20th July in London*. Devised by the Institute of Professional Soil Scientists (IPSS), this new professional competency scheme identifies minimum qualifications, skills and knowledge for practising soils scientists carrying out a range of key tasks. IPSS aims to establish the scheme as the *de facto* standard for identifying competent contractors in the field of soil science. Miles stated that 'Defra welcomes initiatives, such as the IPSS Working with Soils Competency Statements, that aim to improve the quality of professional soils advice'. What was launched is the first phase of IPSS's *Working with Soil* initiative. The Institute plans to expand the scheme and to develop a tailored training programme for those wishing to achieve the various standards. Says Dr Lascelles, "This is a new venture for us and we are very keen to hear back from users of the scheme on how *Working with Soil* can be developed to better fit their needs. We are pretty sure the scheme will evolve over time but we are also absolutely certain that it is needed. We need urgently to attract more young scientists into a career in soil science. It must be a more rewarding and worthwhile choice for our graduates and postgraduates and we need to identify clear career paths for those wishing to become professional soil scientists. Success in achieving a sustainable professional community and greater societal and industry recognition of the value of soil science will help deliver a well managed and sustainable soil resource to support current and future generations. That, ultimately, is what *Working with Soil* is all about."

## World Association of Soil & Water Conservation (WASWAC)

WASWAC invites you to join "Our Gift to the Earth" project. The World Association of Soil and Water Conservation (WASWAC) is producing LANDCON e-LIBRARY: Our Gift to the Earth, a set of 6 DVDs offering a collection of technical papers/documents that will serve *research* and *implementation* in the fields of land, soil & water degradation, management, care, restoration, conservation, and improvement. The goal is to preserve valuable works for the long term and to enhance the visibility of works, authors, organizations and publishers. We invite you to submit digital works, including: (1) papers/articles from meetings, proceedings, books, magazines, bulletins; (2) whole books, reports, journals, magazines, bulletins, newsletters, MSc & PhD dissertations; (3) PowerPoint presentations and (4) posters, brochures, flyers, paintings and other forms of art, calendars, maps, pictures and info about soil museums, video-movies, audios (e.g. songs related to land, soil, water, river, forest, mountain), poems, photographs etc. Contributors will receive one complimentary set of DVDs and co-publishers will have their logos printed on the box. Deadline for receiving your stuff: July 31, 2011. It is expected that each set will contain close to 10,000 pieces of work. Contact Samran Sombatpanit at [samran\\_sombatpanit@yahoo.com](mailto:samran_sombatpanit@yahoo.com).

Translation of the No-Till Farming Systems book to other languages. It was the first time that more than 60 authors had collected information about no tillage from 20 countries to put under one cover, hence the book No-Till Farming Systems, which was published by the World Association of Soil and Water Conservation (WASWAC) in 2008. The book became

one of the best-selling agricultural technology books, with a total number of prints up to 10,000 copies. The book has been translated to Chinese and French already and is under the translation to the following languages: Spanish, Urdu, Tamil, Persian, Arabic, Armenian and Turkish. If you want to translate to any language that has not been cited, to publish and distribute among the language users, please write to Dr Samran Sombatpanit [samran\\_sombatpanit@yahoo.com](mailto:samran_sombatpanit@yahoo.com). He can furnish you with the digital format (PUB files) that you can translate into the same files directly. As 'no tillage' is a form of effective soil and water conservation that WASWAC promotes to use widely throughout the world, the association offers the translation right at no cost.

## Conferences, Symposia, Meetings

### **5th Global Workshop on Digital Soil Mapping 10-13 April 2012, Sydney, Australia**

The IUSS Working Group on Digital Soil Mapping invites you to its 5th Global Workshop that will be held at the University of Sydney, Australia, 10-13 April 2012, with a theme Digital Soil Assessments and Beyond. For more information, visit [www.pedometrics.org/dsm\\_oz/](http://www.pedometrics.org/dsm_oz/)

### **Managing soils for food security and climate change adaptation and mitigation, 23-26, 2012, Vienna, Austria**

The FAO/IAEA International Symposium on "Managing soils for food security and climate change adaptation and mitigation" will be held in Vienna, Austria from July 23-26, 2012, in co-operation with IUSS. The Symposium, the first to be hosted by the Soil and Water Management & Crop Nutrition Subprogramme of the Joint FAO/IAEA Division since 2000, will focus on the development and advances in the application of nuclear and isotopic techniques in assessing soil degradation and the dynamics and storage of carbon, nutrients and water in agroecosystems. For detailed information on registration, submission of a paper, etc. please visit our website at <http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/Meetings/Announcements.asp?ConfID=41176>

### **EUROSOIL 2012, 2-6 July 2012, Bari, Italy**

EUROSOIL 2012, the 4th International Congress of the European Confederation of Soil Science Societies (ECSSS) will be held in Bari, Italy, from 2 to 6 July 2012, organized by the Italian Society of Soil Science (SISS) and presided by Prof. Nicola Senesi of the University of Bari, Bari, Italy. The Congress will focus on and develop the various aspects of fundamental and applied soil science and technology, field approaches and social, economical and political implications in relation to the present and future needs and emergencies of mankind and environment, and is based on a bottom-up approach. More than 100 symposia, workshops and other events are scheduled. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Circular is now in circulation and all information can be found in the Congress website ([www.eurosoil2012.eu](http://www.eurosoil2012.eu)), including the Call for Abstracts, Registration fees and procedure, Hotel Accommodation, Pre- and Post-Congress Tours, Accompanying Persons Programme, Call for Exhibitors, and much more. Any interested person is cordially invited to visit the EUROSOIL 2012 website, and encouraged to submit Abstract(s) (deadline 10 October 2011) to one or more of the symposia and/or workshops and/or any other event through the appropriate form available in the Congress website.

### **Second International Conference on Hydropedology, 22-27 July 2012, Leipzig, Germany**

The emerging field of Hydropedology is being developed from the need to improve our quantitative understanding of mass and energy fluxes within terrestrial systems, also

denoted as the "Critical Zone", and to recognize their feedbacks to soil-forming processes. The conference is intended to stimulate scientific advances by the coupling of various disciplines that historically have been separated. Specifically, soil science, including pedology, soil physics and soil biogeochemistry, is linked to hydrology across spatial scales, from the pore to catchment scale. Also recent scientific developments in the fields of Geophysics and Remote Sensing is discussed to catalyze integration of the scientific fields. See: [www.ufz.de/hydropedology2012](http://www.ufz.de/hydropedology2012)

## New Publications

**Soil Management: Building a Stable Base for Agriculture.** Edited by Jerry L. Hatfield and Thomas J. Sauer, both of USDA-ARS National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment, Ames, IA. Unique because of its treatment of soil management based on principles—the physical, chemical, and biological processes and how together they form the foundation for soil management—this book pulls it all together. Whether new to soil science or needing a concise reference, readers will learn to integrate the science of soils with management issues and long-term conservation. Degradation of soils colliding with increasing climate variation will eventually create a local, regional, or even global crisis, but it's not too late if we implement our ever-expanding scientific understanding of soils. Hardcover, 430 pages. 2011. ASA and SSSA. ISBN: 978-0-89118-853-7.

**European Journal of Soil Science, PEDOMETRICS Special Issue, June 2011.** Commissioned in honour of Richard Webster, a former Editor in Chief of EJSS and a leading figure in the development of Pedometrics and the formation of the Pedometrics Commission. There are thirteen papers on a wide range of topics including soil geostatistics, Bayesian methods, sampling, sensors, digital soil mapping and wavelets. Website: [wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/ejss](http://wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/ejss)

**Soil Use and Management.** Topics covered include Soil and nutrient management, gaseous emissions from soils, significance and management of soil organic matter, impact of land management on soils, soil assessment and degradation, soil physical properties. Special Issue on Soil Quality, September 2010. Virtual Issues: Key Papers in Soil Use and Management, March 2011; Soils and Nitrous Oxide Research, May 2010. Website: [wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/sum](http://wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/sum)

Keith Goulding, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011