IMCG Bulletin: January 2016

INTERNATIONAL MIRE CONSERVATION GROUP

www.imcg.net

Word from the Chair

Dear mire friends

World Wetlands Day took place on 2 February. The theme "Sustainable Livelihoods" falls under Ramsar's multi-year banner of "Wetlands for our future". We want to encourage our members to give us feedback on events they have organised or attended. In South Africa the whole of February is set aside to raise wetland awareness with activities ranging from scientific seminars, training workshops and open days at peatlands with local communities and schools.

Globally more than 400 events have been registered on the World Wetlands Day event map. Please add your event. Please be advised that awareness materials to support your events are available at: www.worldwetlandsday.org.

Olivia Bragg reports in this issue about the great strides made with Mires and Peat: Besides publishing record numbers of articles, our journal now has an official impact factor! Olivia – we salute you for all this hard work!!

Tatiana brings us news from Russia, England and Indonesia; amongst others a planned IMCG excursion to Russian permafrost peatlands in 2017. Read more in this Bulletin about demonstration sites in Indonesia for peatland management, an incredible restoration effort in the moorlands of the UK and a breakthrough in wetland conservation in the Paramo.

Please send your February contribution by 3 March 2016 to Piet-Louis Grundling at peatland@mweb.co.za.

August 2016: will you be working or adventuring?

Peatland Restoration, Malaysia

Raja Musa Forest Reserve, Selangor, Malaysia (Photo: Tan Yi Han)

Join us and come see for yourself…….

IMCG FIELD SYMPOSIUM- MALAYSIA AND BRUNEI: 19 to 28 August 2016

Registration

Please block the date and make early registration to secure seats on internal flights and accommodation in small towns at: IMCG - Hans Joosten: joosten@uni-greifswald.de or GEC - Julia Lo: julialo@gec.org.my

Forms at http://www.imcg.net/pages/events/imcg2016.php

Mires and Peat

Mires and Peat is the open-access peer reviewed journal of IMCG and the International Peat Society (IPS). Find it online at http://mires-and-peat.net/ and in the *Thomson Master Journal List* (*Web of Science*).

January is always a month for reflection on how the journal is doing, as it is the time of year when the annual report for IMCG and IPS must be compiled. Besides publishing record numbers of articles (22) and pages (357) during 2015, *Mires and Peat* has passed another milestone that is particularly worthy of mention in the tenth Editor's Report (to 31 December 2015) and here.

That is, ***MIRES AND PEAT* HAS AN IMPACT FACTOR**. In the latter part of each year, Thomson Reuters publish the *Journal Citation Report* (JCR), which is the official list of Journal Impact Factors for the previous year. The latest metrics are the 2014 Impact Factors (IFs), and *Mires and Peat* is in the list for the first time, with a 2014 IF of 0.806.

The idea that was developed by IMCG and IPS back in 2004 was to collaborate in producing a free open-access international peer reviewed journal encompassing all research disciplines that are relevant to mires, peatlands and peat; which could provide publication opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to the international peatland research community; and which would also achieve a scientific classification in the ISI Thomson Master Journal List (i.e. it would have an IF). We now have such a journal, founded on an open access community publishing model - it is run by the community, for the community, and the whole of the global peatland research community can be involved. Perhaps another rather special achievement for IMCG and IPS.

Now it's up to our authors, readers, reviewers and editors to make the IF number grow year by year. You can contribute by submitting your manuscripts so we always have sufficient material to stay in *Web of Science* (for that we need to publish at least 20 articles per year), by citing articles from *Mires and Peat* in your papers for other *Web of Science* journals, by reviewing manuscripts in your own field of expertise, by volunteering to be a regular Editor or Associate Editor, and/or by helping to create one of our topical (and often highly citable) special volumes.

The next volume to open will be the special volume arising from the SER Manchester conference session on:

Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Degraded and Restored Peatlands: Global Perspectives

There are articles from western Canada, Scotland and Finland ready to go; contributions from central/eastern Canada, Ireland and Sweden not far behind those; and at least four more 'in the pipeline' with a current latest submission deadline of 31 March 2016. The volume will close on 31 December 2016. However, its preparation is moving so fast that we reckon it is still feasible for us to consider newly proposed contributions to slightly later submission deadlines. So if your work is only now approaching publication-readiness, there is still time for you to 'make it' into this high-profile special volume of *Mires and Peat*. Please let us know if (and when) we can expect a manuscript from you by emailing David Wilson (david.wilson@earthymatters.ie) or Olivia Bragg

(o.m.bragg@dundee.ac.uk). To remind you about the objectives for the volume, the advertisement is repeated at the end of this *Bulletin* item.

The last piece of pressing news is that, to bring the journal closer to best publishing practice, we are currently in the process of registering with the agency that operates the global Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) system within Europe. This means that **all future *Mires and Peat* articles will have DOIs.** Although a less-than-ideal consequence is that there will be a few weeks' delay for setting-up before we can start publishing articles in 2016, we don't expect to publish any less material this year than in previous years. We continue to prepare articles for publication and they will all appear, with DOIs, when the DOI registration process is complete. Also, under our new subscription to the Portico permanent archiving service, which is a close relative of JSTOR, all past and future *Mires and Peat* copy will quite soon be deposited in a secure location from which it can be made available on an open access basis in perpetuity, should its own web hosting arrangements ever be drastically interrupted or cease altogether.

And now the information about scope of the next special volume:

Greenhouse Gas fluxes in degraded and restored peatlands: Global perspectives: Publish your work alongside invited papers from the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) 6th World Conference, held in Manchester (UK) in August 2015 - this volume is **open to all**.

Scope of the volume: a global overview of our current knowledge of GreenHouse Gas (GHG) dynamics along a land use gradient from degraded to restored/rewetted peatlands; studies that describe aquatic carbon losses, the development of country-specific emissions factors (e.g. for CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, DOC) and improved methods for determining activity data are particularly encouraged. Contact David Wilson (david.wilson@earthymatters.ie) to discuss.

Please send **ALL SUBMISSIONS**, whether for a special volume or a standard volume, to the Editor-in-Chief o.m.bragg@dundee.ac.uk in the first instance, for:

- friendly editorial management by eminent peatland specialists (O.M. Bragg, R.S. Clymo, S.N.P. Glatzel, A.P. Grootjans, P.M. Jones and J.O. Rieley);
- minimal publication delays (the average turnaround time from submission to publication is currently less than 230 days); and
- free global exposure of your work in an ISI/IF journal.

News from our regions

Tatiana Minayeva (tatiana.minaeva@wetlands.org) reports on the following:

Indonesia: The agency for peatland restoration:
The news on the development of a peatland restoration agency came from Global Environment Centre http://www.gec.org.my/:
" JAKARTA - Indonesian President Joko Widodo has set up a peatland restoration agency, which will start operating on a state budget this month (January 2016), Indonesian news agency Kompas.com reported on Wednesday (Jan 13). Environment and Forestry Minister Siti Nurbaya, at the same announcement, said the peatland restoration agency is a non-structural agency, responsible to the President. The agency's term will end on Dec 31, 2020, reported Kompas.com, and it will start peatland restoration in Pulang Pisau, Ogan Komering Ilir, Musi Manyuasin and Meranti regencies aiming to manage peatland ecosystems covering 2 million hectares."

This announcement is extremely exciting. Such an agency provides the guarantee of reliable funding and legacy and sustainable results (such as proper planning, follow up monitoring, maintenance, adaptive management). All these components are usually a problem in peatland restoration projects and quite often the original

investment is limited to the planning, design and implementation. The follow up activities are therefore assigned to the landowner. In many cases voluntary carbon market is the only incentive for the fulfilment of obligations towards restoration. In countries with developing economies where land ownership is still mixed such a special agency could play a crucial role in the sustainability of peatland restoration projects. Cordial congratulations therefore to our Indonesian colleagues!

The Lindow moss – cultural and natural heritage under threat

We previously reported on the poor status of the Lindow moss peatland which we had observed with colleagues during the field excursion organised for participants of the SER 2015 world symposium in Manchester (see Newsletter September 2015). We are pleased to note the public interest expressed in BBC regional news as reported in the IUCN UK Peatland Programme bulletin. Two articles by Phil McCann are available on http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-manchester-35168899 ("Lindow Moss: Calls for investigation into sinking Cheshire bog") and http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-manchester-35257075 ("Lindow Moss: Environmentalists back ancient bog homes plan"). Additional negotiations with peat extraction company, which owns the license are now of high priority to protect the high natural and cultural value of this site.

The largest mire in the World "Vasyuganye" again failed to be awarded the status of a nature reserve in Russia

Various attempts to gazette "Vasyuganye" as a protected area of high national or international status have been undertaken already for 25 years by different role-players. Currently the only success had been achieved by the approval of so called "zakazniks" – the area of limited land use of regional status. The regional zakaznik status for Vasyuganski had been approved in 2006 with the protected area 510 034 ha in Tomsk-oblast. The Novosibirsk part of Vasyuganye was proclaimed as a landscape zakaznik in 2003 with an area of 289 937 ha. However, this proclamation was not gazetted properly in accordance with legislation and the status is therefore uncertain.

Hence the Vaszuganye mire is still not really protected. A positive step was taken in 2014 when the area had been included into the statutory list of prospect Federal protected areas to be gazetted as dedicated nature reserves. The work had been started, documentation prepared and in October 2015 there were public hearings on the issue. Recently in January 2016 we got the reference to the Tomsk news lines informing that the processes were completed: http://www.tvtomsk.ru/vesti/company/13000-minprirody-utverdilo-sozdanie-vasyuganskogo-zapovednika-v-tomskoy-oblasti.html We checked with the Federal Ministry recently - unfortunately no formal protection status yet!! But we still keep our fingers crossed for the largest mire in the world……

Finalization workshop or the project: Restoring peatlands of Russia for fire prevention and GHG reduction (PeatRus)

This project is coming to an end and was funded by the German Ministry of Environment (BMUB) via the International Climate Initiative with KFW and implemented by partners: Wetlands International, Michael Succow Foundation, Russian Academy of Sciences and Greifswald University. We invite IMCG members to discuss the outcomes during the finalisation workshop to be held 29 September to 2 October 2016 in Moscow and Vladimir Province (300 km east of Moscow) with field days 30 September and 2 October. Please consider in your time planning need for visa application (minimum month) and the fact that 300 km in Russia is different from 300 km by German autobahn or European speed train. Please direct any inquiries to Tatiana (tatiana.minaeva@wetlands.org)

IMCG excursion to Russian permafrost peatlands

Finally, the preliminary consultations on the 2017 IMCG excursion to the Russian Arctic are over. The final agreed route focus on the European part of Russia and starts in Syktyvkar (Komi Republic) and ends up in Naryan-Mar (Nenets Autonomus okrug). We plan to visit peatlands from northern taiga to coastal tundra. The workshops will be held both in Syktyvkar (more science based) and Naryan-Mar (conservation and restoration

based). The excursion sites will include peatlands near Syktyvkar, Usinsk, Ust-Tsylma (the largest European peatland "ocean"); as well as destinations around Naryan-Mar and Pechora Delta. One of the segments includes travel by helicopter and boat.

The proposed dates are 20 July to 5 August 2017.

The organisations involved are: The Institute of Biology Komi of Ural Research Centre of Russian Academy of Sciences; The Institute of Forest Sciences RAS; Nenets Autonomous Okrug administration (Russia); Care for Ecosystems UG (Germany).

The key people involved: Nadezhda Goncharova (Syktyvkar); Rusaln Bolshakov (Naryan Mar); Andrey Sirin (Moscow Province); Tatiana Minayeva (Minajewa) (CfE) (tatiana.minaeva@wetlands.org).

Detailed information with maps and preliminary logistics will be in the next bulletin. Please diarise these dates!!

Europe

Hans Joosten: joosten@uni-greifswald.de

On 27th January 2016 the first Certificates for Responsibly Produced Peat have been issued to the companies Griendtsveen AG and Torf- und Humuswerke Gnarrenburg in Germany: http://www.responsiblyproducedpeat.org/news/1453983816/first-certificates-for-responsibly-produced-peat Responsibly Produced Peat is a cooperation between the European Peat and Growing Media Association (EPAGMA), International Peat Society (IPS), German Association for the Garden Industry (IVG) and Dutch Growing Media Producers Organisation (VPN).

The Foundation, Responsibly Produced Peat, was established on 19 August 2013. **IMCG has refused to join, because** – although IMCG supports the movement to less harmful peat extraction sites – the initiative gives the wrong impression that 'responsibly produced peat' can exist.

Southeast Asia

Noor Azura Ahmad (azura@gec.org.my)

Indonesia

The government has stopped issuing concession permits for oil palm and pulpwood plantations on peat and more than 50 companies are being punished for causing the haze, including one foreign-owned company and a supplier to one of the world's biggest pulp and paper producers. New laws are being discussed, some old laws are being reviewed and a forest restoration plan is in the pipeline. Civil Society groups are also voicing out their concerns and taking positive action to end the annual menace that is affecting them and their loved ones. On the other hand, companies who have often been blamed for the fires are also starting to show commitment to save peatlands.

Peatland Best Mgmt Practices - Demonstration Sites –
Under the ASEAN Peatland Forests Project (APFP), 15 sites were nominated as demonstration sites for peatland management (refer to map below) . To see each site's details, visit www.aseanpeat.net or https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=zx5NIuqe1YF4.k8wY5qZNIuJc&usp=sharing

News snippets

Colombia bans mining in country's vast moorlands by Cecilia Jamasmie (received from Simon Thibault: Simon.Thibault@nemaskalithium.com)

Colombia has officially banned all mining activities in its paramo regions (moorlands) after the country's Constitutional Court revoked a regulation that had allowed mineral exploitation in the area.

Mining in the paramo — the area of the Andes mountains covered with subalpine forests above the continuous tree line, but below the permanent snow mark — had been prohibited since 2011, but concessions granted before such ban had continued to date. The court said such exemption was invalid and ordered all extraction activities to be suspended, which will affect about 347 mining concessions, local paper *El País* reported (in Spanish). It argued that mining for gold and oil in the fragile ecosystem could cause irreversible damage.

The ruling is good news for Colombia's major cities, which rely on paramos as a source of water. These areas are believed to store water for around 70% the country's population. The Chingaza paramo alone, located just outside of Bogota, serves around 20% of Colombians, *El Espectador* reports. The "paramos" are mainly found between an altitude of 3,000m (9,850ft) and 5,000m. Covered by grass and shrubs, they act like massive sponges, storing water in the rainy season and releasing it in the dry season.
http://www.mining.com/colombia-bans-mining-in-countrys-vast-alpine-tundra/?utm_source=digest-en-mining-160209&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=digest

United Kingdom

A staggering 10,000 dams created on moorland (IUCN UK Peatland Programme Newsletter)
Moors for the Future Partnership (http://www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk/) is marking a significant achievement in their work to bring life back to eroded peat moorlands in the Peak District and South Pennines. They have just seen work completed on their 10,000th dam, which will block eroding channels within the blanket bog and

raise the water table. This gully blocking work helps to address hydrological issues which are fundamental to a healthy moorland habitat.
http://us3.campaign-archive1.com/?u=f1bc6fee95849ff37dcbae3b4&id=06383b007e

Peatland conservation relevant papers January 2016

Collected by Hans Joosten: joosten@uni-greifswald.de

1. Annual sulfate budgets for Dutch lowland peat polders: The soil is a major sulfate source through peat and pyrite oxidation: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022169415009865
2. Hydrogeological controls on post-fire moss recovery in peatlands: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022169415007581
3. Analyzing peatland discharge to streams in an Alaskan watershed: An integration of end-member mixing analysis and a water balance approach: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022169415007556
4. Dynamics of dissolved organic carbon release from a permafrost wetland catchment in northeast China: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022169415007672
5. Near-neutral carbon dioxide balance at a semi-natural, temperate bog ecosystem: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2015JG003195/abstract?campaign=wolacceptedarticle
6. Regulation of methane production, oxidation, and emission by vascular plants and bryophytes in ponds of the northeast Siberian polygonal tundra: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2015JG003053/abstract?campaign=woletoc
7. Tracking global change in ecosystem area: The Wetland Extent Trends index: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320715301476
8. Evaluating conservation tools in Polish grasslands: The occurrence of birds in relation to agri-environment schemes and Natura 2000 areas: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320715301865
9. Vegetation burning for game management in the UK uplands is increasing and overlaps spatially with soil carbon and protected areas: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320715002372
10. Russian boreal peatlands dominate the natural European methane budget: http://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/11/1/014004/meta;jsessionid=D05B1AC855078209B05827326A2A6C0F.c3.iopscience.cld.iop.org
11. Carex vaginata – a new relict species in the Romanian flora: http://reviste.ubbcluj.ro/contributii_botanice/volume_cuprins.php?id=2015
12. Generating multi-proxy Holocene palaeoenvironmental records from blanket peatlands: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S003101821500718X
13. Boreal peatland water table depth and carbon accumulation during the Holocene thermal maximum, Roman Warm Period, and Medieval Climate Anomaly: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0031018215007051
14. Enhanced winter soil frost reduces methane emission during the subsequent growing season in a boreal peatland: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gcb.13119/abstract?campaign=woletoc
15. Decoupling of greenhouse gas emissions from global agricultural production: 1970–2050: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gcb.13120/abstract?campaign=woletoc
16. Contrasting Holocene environmental histories may explain patterns of species richness and rarity in a Central European landscape: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277379115301931
17. Classification of vegetative lagg types and hydrogeomorphic lagg forms in bogs of coastal British Columbia, Canada: www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cag.12241/abstract
18. Prescribed moorland burning meets good practice guidelines: A monitoring case study using aerial photography in the Peak District, UK: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1470160X15006627
19. Floodplain management: reducing flood risks and restoring healthy ecosystems: http://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/floodplain-management-reducing-flood-risks

20. Methane and carbon dioxide fluxes from a European alpine fen over the snow-free period: http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs13157-015-0702-y
21. Reclamation criteria for wellsites and associated facilities for peatlands: http://aep.alberta.ca/lands-forests/land-industrial/programs-and-services/reclamation-and-remediation/upstream-oil-and-gas-reclamation-and-remediation-program/documents/ReclamationCriteriaPeatlands-Oct2015.pdf
22. ASEAN Guidelines on peatland fire management: http://environment.asean.org/download/Guidelines_Peatland_Fire_Management.pdf
23. Metoder for å beregne endring i klimagassutslipp ved restaurering av myr: https://www.ntnu.no/documents/10476/1262347829/2015-10+Rapport+Klimagassutslipp.pdf/c83fab53-b626-4c6e-988e-efcc675e8ff2
24. Soil threats in Europe: http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC98673/lb-na-27607-en-n%20modified.pdf
25. 8000 years of vegetation dynamics and environmental changes of a unique inland peat ecosystem of the Jambi Province in Central Sumatra, Indonesia: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0031018215005581
26. Regional variation in the biogeochemical and physical characteristics of natural peatland pools: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969715312572
27. Carbon exchange fluxes over peatlands in Western Siberia: Possible feedback between land-use change and climate change: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969715312274
28. Storage and release of road-salt contamination from a calcareous lake-basin fen, western Massachusetts, USA: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S004896971531216X
29. Mosses in Ohio wetlands respond to indices of disturbance andvascular plant integrity: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1470160X15006792
30. Moss and vascular plant indices in Ohio wetlands have similar environmental predictors: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1470160X15006688
31. Long-distance dispersal and barriers shape genetic structure of peatmosses (*Sphagnum*) across the Northern Hemisphere: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jbi.12716/abstract?campaign=wolearlyview

Books

1. Tropical Peatland Ecosystems book published: www.springer.com/gp/book/9784431556800

Quiz: This photo was send in from one of our African members – can you guess from which part of Africa?