

Blair McKenzie

I start this issue of ISTROINFO with a welcome to new members. When a new application for membership is approved I receive an email from "FormDeskResponse" providing me the name and contact details of the new member. I then add this information to the database I keep for emailing ISTROINFO. It seems that over the last 4 - 5 months there has been a steady stream of new members joining ISTRO. While I have not done any proper analysis there seems no one country or region or academic network that is powering this increase in members. Often I manage to get an individual email to the new members – but over the last couple of months I have not been able to do that. So let me say welcome to all the new members who are receiving ISTROINFO (our quarterly newsletter) for the first or second time. I hope that you find the ISTRO community useful and that at some stage we'll have a chance to meet up at one or more of the many ISTRO sponsored meetings that take place all around the world.

⌘ Abstract submission deadline extended Nanjing 20th Triennial Conference 14 – 18 September 2015

For those who have not yet submitted abstracts for the Triennial conference in Nanjing please note that the deadline for abstract submission has been extended to 31 May. For many of us budgets are tight – so to allow researchers time to secure funding for travel etc President Xinhua and his team have extended the deadlines. Notification of acceptance will be 15 June and the deadline for early registration is 30 June 2015.

There is an easy to follow registration form and very clear guidelines with example abstracts on the conference website at <http://istro2015.csp.escience.cn>. Simply click the Download **New!** tab on the right hand side. You will also find full details of the excellent line-up of key note speakers.

For those still haven't committed to attend, it is worth noting that in addition to the research reasons for attending the conference (including the great line up of key note speakers) Nanjing is one of the world's must see cities. Nanjing was the capital

of China for ten dynasty periods and is a city famed for its rich culture, long history and beautiful landscape. The famous attractions include the Confucius Temple, the ancient city wall, the World Heritage-listed Ming Tomb, Dr. Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum, Presidential Palace, Purple Mountain, and many, other places of cultural interest.

More information on how to obtain an invitation letter needed for visa applications on page 6.

⌘ New board members congratulated

The recent elections for board membership have been completed and the results confirmed. As usual the handover of the board will be at the conclusion of the Triennial conference. By acclamation Nicholas Holden will be President elect and Lars Munkholm will be Assistant Secretary General. Elected to the board are for 6 – year terms are Hubert Boizard and Joshua Oloyae and for a 3 – year term Ranjan Bhattacharyya. Also welcomed to the board will be Steve Prior as Treasurer. Steve has been understudying Allen Torbert for the last 3 years and provides very much needed continuity to this important post.

It is worth noting that the composition of the new board will be such that there will be representation from North and South America, from Asia, from Africa and from Europe. So it is great that virtually all geographic areas will be represented. Unfortunately, while our geographic credentials will be good, we still have considerable work to do to improve gender balance on the board.

Applications for the young researchers scholarships have been evaluated and after careful deliberations decisions made. All applicants have been notified and those successful will be announced at the triennial conference.

⌘ Constitutional updates coming

Who has actually read the ISTRO constitution? For me it was not until I considered standing for board membership that I felt I needed more than a general appreciation of the aims and objectives of ISTRO. It is available on the website just click the organisation tab on the website (www.istro.org) and you will see another tab that provides a pdf of the Constitution and Bylaws. Much of the

constitution was prepared before electronic communication and electronic publication of journals. Secretary-General Doug Karlen supported by all the board (with special mention of Allen Torbert and John Fielke) have been working to update the constitution to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose. A full list of amendments will be published on the website in May and announced to members. This will allow everyone the chance to consider proposed amendments and discuss them prior to the ISTRO General Assembly at the Nanjing conference. It is at the General Assembly that members will have the chance to approve (or not) the recommended changes.

As I implied at the start of this section I know constitutional matters may not be particularly exciting – but I urge you all to take the time to read the proposed changes when they become available and also to attend the General Assembly to ensure we operate in a professional manner.

🌀 Photos from the combined working group meeting in Brazil

The September issue of ISTROINFO carried a short report on the combined meeting of the Visual Soil Examination and Evaluation (Rachel Guimaraes) and Subsoil Compaction (Thomas Keller & Mathieu Lamande) working groups organised by in Brazil. Rachel has now provided several additional photos of activities at the meeting. If members want to see more of the images then please contact the organisers. I was unable to attend the meeting so I am not sure of names for all those in the photos.



Welcome drink to share



Delegates at the discussion sessions.



Methods explained at the surface



Line up for inspection



On close inspection



Meeting dinner



The organizers from left Thomas, Mathieu and Rachel

☞ VISA and travel information for the Nanjing 20th Triennial Conference

Attendees from most countries will require a visa to enter the People's Republic of China. Attendees should apply for a Chinese visa through a travel agency or directly at the nearest Chinese embassy.

If attendees apply for a tourist visa, which will allow you attend the conference and sight-seeing, an official visa invitation letter will not be needed from 20th ISTRO Conference. No visa is required for ordinary passport holders from Singapore, Brunei and Japan to visit China for up to 15 days for business, sightseeing, visiting relatives and friends or transit.

If you do require an invitation letter for visa application, please email Dr ZHOU Hu (details below) and provide the following information:

Your full name (exactly as in your passport)
Your gender (male/female) and date of birth
Your nationality
Your passport number, issue and expiry date
The institute/university or other affiliation
The details of your address
The tentative title to be presented at 20th ISTRO Conference

An invitation letter will be issued which you can use to get a visa in the nearest Chinese Embassy/Consulate.

Please note that processing times for visas may vary between countries and at worst may take a few months in your country. General visa information should be obtained from your local China Consulate.

Contact details:

Dr. ZHOU Hu

Institute of Soil Science, CAS

71 Beijing East Road, Nanjing, China

Tel: +86 25 8688 1221 Fax: +86 25 8688 1000

E-mail: istro2015@issas.ac.cn

If in any doubt check with your travel agent or the conference contact. ACT SOON!

⌘ Agriculture in Nature and Environment Protection Vukovar Croatia 1st – 3rd June 2015



"Agriculture in Nature and Environment Protection" is the topic of this International Scientific & Professional Conference which, for the 8th time, will be held in **Vukovar, Croatia**. The Conference was initiated by "Agroglas", a biweekly journal for agriculture, and throughout the years, our Conference has profiled into forum in which academics, scientists and experts from Croatia and surrounding countries exchange knowledge, experiences, and present results of recent research. Through communication with producers, experts and scientists, new paths and directions for future research are profiled.

Registration fee is compulsory for all conference participants. Registration fee is 80 EUR (600 HRK). Registration fee covers the attendance, conference booklet and CD, trip and a welcome cocktail.

For more information contact Mirjana Baban, Editor and President of the scientific committee on Mirjana.Baban@pfos.hr or Roberta Soric at roberta.soric@agrogas.hr

⌘ 2nd International CTF conference

Note changes from earlier announcements

All ISTRO members and particularly those interested in Controlled Traffic Farming please note the 2nd International CTF conference will be **17 – 19 June 2015** at the Czech University of Life Sciences in **Prague, Czech Republic**.

More information at <http://www.smartagriplatform.com/CTF2015programme>

Authors are invited to submit an abstract by 1 May 2015 to: jana.galambosova@uniag.sk Please put as subject of email message: CTF2015.

The programme will include sessions on Farmer experiences with CTF, Experiences from different countries, Farm economy and environmental impact, and How to get started with CTF. 19th June is the conference tour.

For those who want to know more please email Hans Henrick Pederson at hhp2010ctf@gmail.com

⌘ Soil Functions and Climate Change – do we underestimate the consequences of the new disequilibria in soil properties - SUSTAIN.



You are invited to the **International Congress - SUSTAIN - on the occasion of the International Year of Soils 2015**, supported by the **IUSS** and in combination with the celebrations of the 350th. Anniversary of the Christian Albrechts University zu Kiel. The congress will take place in **Kiel, Germany** from **September 23-26, 2015**. For further detailed information see <http://www.soils.uni-kiel.de/de/sustain-2015>

Take advantage of the opportunity to complete our conference program with your current research. We kindly request your active support by submitting your scientific contributions to the following main topics, which will be further subdivided according to the submitted contributions.

Topics include: Soil structure and pore rigidity effects as prerequisites for quantification of physicochemical processes: Effects of (limited) pore rigidity and soil resilience: Innovative approaches to predict climate change induced affected sinks and sources and Modelling approaches to quantify effects of (limited) soil rigidity on mass flow and diffusion at various scales- from the micro- to macroscale.

International speakers confirmed include Prof. Dr. Donald Sparks (USA) Prof. Dr. José Dörner (Chile) Prof. Dr. Dani Or (Switzerland) Prof. Dr. Jirka Simunek (USA) Prof. Dr. Xinhua Peng (China) PD Dr. Hans Gerke (Germany) Prof. Dr. Rattan Lal (USA) Dr. Luca Montanarella (Italy) Prof. Dr. Paul Hallett (UK) Prof. Dr. Henry Lin (USA)

For more information contact: Christian - Albrechts - University zu Kiel, Institute for Plant Nutrition and Soil Science, Hermann- Rodewald- Str. 2, D-24118 Kiel. Mrs. Pia Lüttich Phone: +49 431 880 - 2573

⌘ Other upcoming meetings.

June 2015

Inaugural Global Workshop on Digital Soil Morphometrics. 1-4 June 2015, Madison, USA.. For more information and expression of interest click [here](#)

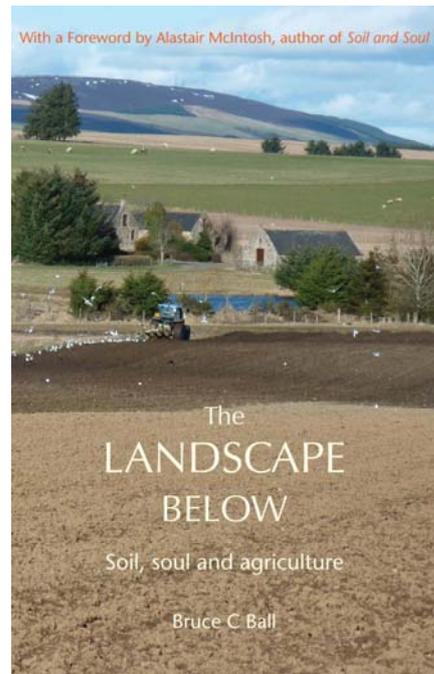
July 2015

7th International Symposium of Soil Minerals with Organic Components and Microorganism (ISMOM) Montreal Canada 5-10 July 2015 visit <http://ismom2015.conference.mcgill.ca/index0f50.html?p=home>

September 2015

LuWQ2015 2nd International Interdisciplinary Conference on Land Use and Water Quality: Agricultural Production and the Environment. Vienna Australia 21-24 September 2015 <http://web.natur.cuni.cz/luwq2015/>
5th International Symposium on SOIL ORGANIC MATTER. September 20-24, 2015, Göttingen, Germany. www.som2015.org

⌘ New Book by ISTRO member



ISTRO member Bruce Ball has recently published a book that is an autobiographical account of his experiences with soil, soil care and agriculture. He shows how principles of soil care (including tillage) and soil awareness can lead us to living happier and more sustainable lives by integrating with and being enriched by the communities and the environment around us.

⌘ Soil Atlas.

International Year of Soils 2015 – Soil Atlas: Facts and figures about earth, land and fields

The international community has set itself three important goals: to stop the loss of biodiversity, keep global warming to 2° Celsius, and ensure everyone has the right to adequate food. Without fertile soil, none of these objectives will be achieved. In fact, the soil can do its job only if the life it contains is intact, the humus layer is healthy, and land rights are protected.



⌘ Final comments

When the draft of updated constitution is uploaded to the website I will email all members (titled ISTROextra) with the information

I urge all who have not yet submitted their abstracts for the 20th Triennial conference in Nanjing to take advantage of the extended deadline and make sure that you do so by 31May. This will enable the Nanjing team to slot all talks and posters into the most appropriate sessions and to link the presentations to the key note talks. I look forward to seeing you there.

2015 is the International Year of Soils, a special opportunity for us all to further the goal of soil protection. This Soil Atlas shows why soils should concern us all and what can be successfully achieved by determined people and organisations.

The Atlas is published by the *Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung*. It is available in [English](#) and [German](#) (including graphic download). It will also be made available at the [European Commission's soil webpage](#), promoting the sustainability of this limited and life sustaining natural resource.

Within the context of the International Year of Soils we kindly remind you of the opportunity to share information on any educational and outreach activities you plan to carry out in the course of the year by writing to env-iys-2015@ec.europa.eu - to be published at our [IYS webpage](#).

ISTRO INFO is the newsletter of the **International Soil Tillage Research Organisation**. (www.istro.org).

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