



IUSS Council Meeting July 2006 - A brief report -

The IUSS Council Meetings are held at each World Congress of Soil Science and also at the Inter-Congress meeting (normally held at the mid point between two consecutive World Congresses). In Philadelphia the Council met twice, on July 9 and July 14

Participants

At the first meeting there were some 50 Council Members present, comprising the Executive Committee (12) National Member representatives (35), Honorary Member representatives (3), Members of the US 18th WCSS Organising Committee, and observers from the Commissions, Sub-Commissions and Working Groups.

The second meeting was somewhat better attended with some 63 Council Members present, comprising the Executive Committee (13), National Representatives (47), Representatives of the Honorary Members (3). Members of the US 18th WCSS Organising Committee (4) were also present. At both meetings there were a number of observers from Commissions and National Bodies (20 at the second meeting).

Welcome

The Meetings were chaired by the IUSS President, Donald Sparks who welcomed all present at the meeting, outlined the voting procedures and the rules of the meeting (only accredited members had a vote) and thanked all for their attendance.

Minutes of the Inter-Congress Meeting

The Secretary General (Stephen Nortcliff) requested comments on the Minutes of the Inter-Congress Council Meeting held here in Philadelphia in April 2004 ♦ No comments were received and the Minutes were accepted as a correct record

President's Report

The President (Don Sparks) presented a brief report of activities since the Inter-Congress Meeting, in particular he thanked the Organising Committee for the 18th WCSS under the leadership of Larry Wilding and Lee Sommers, and the considerable work of the Divisional and Commission Officers and Symposia Convenors in producing the exceptionally full and diverse programme for the coming week.

He noted that when he took over as President in 2002 a decision was taken to spread the load of responsibilities amongst members of the Bureau (President, Vice-President, Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General). This had proved to be a success.

A feature of the last four years had been the increased level of collaboration between IUSS and other members of the ICSU (International Council of Science) Family. This was particularly strong in relation to the International Year of Planet Earth.

He noted that one of the features of our increased activity was a concerted effort on ♦outreach♦, under this broad theme, he thanked Alfred Hartemink (DSG) for his considerable efforts in bringing together the booklet entitled ♦Future of Soil Science♦. He also noted the success of the booklet within the framework IYPE entitled ♦Soil ♦ The Earth's Living Skin♦ written jointly by David Dent, John Kimble and Alfred Hartemink. Given the increased need to promote the subject of soil science and the importance of soils in many environmental contexts, contributions such as these are most important and the plan for the future is to increase this type of outreach activity.

Whilst there has been some excellent work amongst the Divisions and Commissions, the President suggested that greater effort must be directed towards ensuring that there are strong activities in all Divisions, Commissions and Working Groups between Congresses and increased collaboration both between Divisions and Commissions

within IUSS and with other Unions.

A key feature during the last four years had been the Establishment of our two IUSS prizes: The Dokuchaev Prize and The Liebig Prize

It is important that Members are aware of these prizes and that quality nominations are presented to the Standing Committee on Prizes and Awards when the call is made.

Secretary General's Report

The Secretary General presented his report, summarising activities during the two year period since the InterCongress Council Meeting in Philadelphia, stressing the need for all member bodies to ensure that contact was maintained with the SG to ensure that the members were fully informed of IUSS activities and involved in all the wide range of activities. There had been moves since Bangkok in 2002 to promote December 5th as World Soil Day. Our aim was to do this with the support of the King of Thailand and this is still our aim, but progress has been exceptionally slow. There are events in some Member Countries where World Soil Day is actively supported and indeed celebrated.

As part of the Bureau Initiatives we have proposed to produce a small number of 2 side documents presenting information on key themes in Soil Science for a non-technical audience. The Secretary General has received copy for three of these brochures, but considers that further work must be done to finalise them in a form suitable for publication. Finally the Secretary General recorded his thanks for the support of Alfred Hartemink the Deputy Secretary General.

18th WCSS Report

Larry Wilding and Lee Sommers (joint Chairs of the 18th WCSS Organising Committee) presented a brief illustrated report on the current programme and participants. They later presented some observations concerning the key features involved in planning a world Congress



Serious business for the benefit of our discipline

Elections 2006

The Secretary General presented the results of the elections. He noted that this was the first time we had endeavoured to organise the elections amongst the whole membership rather than simply those who attended the WCSS. The process had not been as smooth as it would have been hoped for, with only 27 countries returning results, and amongst these there was considerable variability in how the voting was managed nationally.

In future it is necessary to encourage more National Members to conduct ballots amongst their membership and return the results of the ballot by the identified deadline. It is also important that the number of votes cast be returned to the Secretary General (in his role as Returning Officer).

Following some lively discussion on the election process, alterations to the Bye Laws

aimed at improving the process were developed and these were approved at the second meeting of Council.

As part of the Election process it is necessary to confirm the following Officers:-

Secretary General Stephen Nortcliff

Deputy Secretary General Alfred Hartemink

Treasurer Jim Gauld

The Election Results including the appointment of Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General and Treasurer were endorsed by Council.

The next round of elections will run in 2007 so that the process is in line with our Statutes and Bye-Laws. Nominations will be requested in 2007.

Deputy Secretary General's Report

The Deputy Secretary General (Alfred Hartemink) presented his report to Council. He highlighted the following broad areas:

a. The Bulletin ♦ There has been a reduction in the number of paper copies produced, with many copies being dispatched electronically. All Bulletins are available on the IUSS website and are downloaded on a very substantial basis. Given the costs involved in the production and mailing of the Bulletin for the two editions produced annually, it is proposed to reduce further the number of printed copies. To be successful the Bulletin requires contributions from as many members as possible, and whilst this has improved in recent years, the Deputy Secretary General would welcome more contributions from both Officers and members.

b. The website (www.iuss.org) is progressing very well. In October 2005 the website has been changed and developed and annually there are more than 100,000 visitors to the IUSS website. Reports from members are that the website is considered to be a very valuable IUSS asset. It is hoped to develop this website in to a more interactive format in the near future.

Yearly visitors to the IUSS website

c. IUSS Alerts ♦ The DSG had introduced the monthly IUSS Alerts with current news and information. This initiative has proved exceptionally popular amongst the membership, and the number of subscribers has increased dramatically in recent months and continues to increase to over 12,000 members.

d. Following discussions the DSG took the initiative and agreed to co-ordinate the small publication of contributions entitled ♦The Future of Soil Science♦. This was a new initiative amongst IUSS members and the booklet was part of the overall delegate pack at WCSS.

e. Together with John Kimble and David Dent the DSG had produced the ♦Soil ♦ Earth♦s Living Skin♦ booklet as part of the IUSS contribution to the International Year of Planet Earth. Again this was included in the delegate pack and had been well received.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer (Jim Gauld), firstly introduced himself to Council Members presented his report and the Audited Accounts for 2004 and 2005 to Council. He outlined the broad Accounting Procedures involved in terms of ♦year ends♦ and timing of payments in relation to the accounting year.

Following the presentation the Treasurer was congratulated on the clarity of the accounts as presented. Boris Jansen (Netherlands) asked about the efficacy of keeping the reserve at its current level. In response the President pointed out that the reserve provided the IUSS with the ability to take initiatives in support of its Members and Soil Science in general. During the last four years we had begun to increase the activities of IUSS beyond the day to day activities of running the Union and working towards the World Congress. These type of activities required funds, and it was our intention to continue and develop further initiatives. The accounts were accepted by the meeting.

Awards and Prizes Standing Committee Report

The Chair of the Awards and Prizes Standing Committee (Winfried Blum) presented his report to Council. The successful Prize winners are:-

Dokuchaev Prize ♦ Victor Targulian (Russia)

Liebig Prize ♦ Rattan Lal (USA).

Winfried Blum highlighted the need for the membership to nominate candidates for this award.

Budget and Finance Standing Committee Report

Robin Harris (Chair of Budget and Finance Standing Committee) presented his report which was tabled. In addition to informing Council of the outcome of recent negotiations with the National Academy of Sciences, which averaged over the next four years was likely to see an increase in the current subscription of \$50000, he also presented two scenarios, both anticipated increased spending on outreach (c. \$20000 per annum), the first was based on no subscription increase the second on a 25% subscription increase. Both scenarios indicated a reduction in the net worth of IUSS, the former resulting in a rapid decline of net worth if all current activities and planned future activities are maintained. On his analysis Robin Harris recommended a subscription increase of 25% and a change in Bye Law 7.3 to accommodate this. This recommendation was endorsed by the Executive Committee. The recommendation was accepted by the meeting without dissent.

Report of the 19th WCSS

Roger Swift (President Elect) presented a brief ♦state of play♦ report on the 19th WCSS in Brisbane, August 2010.

The choice of location of the 20th WCSS

The Secretary General had received to invitations for the 20th WCSS:-

- a. Brazilian Soil Science Society
- b. Korean Society of Soil Science and Fertilisers

The President invited representatives from each of these two Societies to make short presentations

Mateus Rosas Ribeiro President of the BSSS presented two DVD presentations in support of the bid from Brazil and answered questions from Members of Council concerning the proposed location of the Congress and the level of financial and government support. It was also stressed that this proposal had been endorsed by the Latin American Congress of Soil Science. Jai-Joung Kim made a PowerPoint presentation outlining the bid from KSSSF and answered a small number of questions. Following a secret ballot it was announced that the 20th World Congress of Soil Science will be held in Seoul, Korea.

The President-elect Roger Swift

As President Elect Roger Swift made a brief presentation on his future Presidency and thanked Don Sparks for his excellent leadership.

Links with ISTRO

The Secretary General reported on discussions he had held with the Chair of ISTRO (International Soil Tillage Research Organisation) concerning establishing closer ties between ISTRO and IUSS. ISTRO had separated from IUSS in the past, in part because of clashes of personality, but with the increased dynamism and activity of IUSS it seemed appropriate that closer ties be established. The Secretary General indicated he would attend the ISTRO meeting in Kiel in late August 2006. The meeting welcomed this approach from ISTRO and agreed that closer ties should be established.

Closing remarks

The President Don Sparks closed the meeting thanking the Secretary General, Gary Petersen and other members of the Executive Committee who had provided such helpful and valuable support during his Presidency.

Stephen Nortcliff
Secretary General



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