

Issue: June/July 2012

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Since the last issue of ISTROINFO there have been several ISTRO relevant announcements and policy releases. First, the World Food Prize 2012 has been awarded to the renowned soil physicist and advocate for soil management Daniel Hillel. The full announcement and related information are at: (<http://www.worldfoodprize.org/index.cfm?noDeID=47890&audiencID=1>). I'm sure that even if ISTRO members do not know Prof Hillel in person, virtually all will be familiar with his books on soil physics. The 2006 prize was awarded to Edison Lobato, Alysso Paolinelli and Colin McClung agronomists and engineers for their role in developing and expanding food production in Cerrado region of Brazil. This is not a topic that I really know much about – so I'm looking forward to seeing talks and posters related to the topic from Brazilian colleagues at the conference in Montevideo.

In 2011 the chief scientific adviser to the UK government released a commissioned report titled "The Future of Food and Farming: Challenges and choices for global sustainability" (<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/foresight/docs/food-and-farming/11-546-future-of-food-and-farming-report.pdf>). This document of over 200 pages is intended for policy makers and a wide range of professionals and researchers clearly acknowledged the case for urgent action on global food production and supply. My understanding has been that the document has been widely seen as well prepared. The document noted early on that "scientific and technological advances in soil science and related fields had been relatively neglected in recent years and that these offer the prospect for a better understanding of constraints to crop production and better management of soil to preserve their ecosystem functions, improve and stabilise output, reduce pollutant run-off and cut greenhouse gas emissions. I know however that the agricultural engineering community felt that the report did not sufficiently recognise the role that agricultural engineering can and should have in facing the global issues of food security. A status report developed by IAgrE in response the Future of Food and farming has been prepared "Agricultural Engineering: a key discipline enabling agriculture to

deliver global food security": ([http://www.iagre.org/sites/iagre.org/files/repository/IAgrEGlobal Food Security WEB.pdf](http://www.iagre.org/sites/iagre.org/files/repository/IAgrEGlobal_Food_Security_WEB.pdf))

This report contains several clear recommendations and provides key messages with practical actions that can be taken to ensure recognition of the role of agricultural engineering. While the examples given are from the UK, I believe they will have resonance with all ISTRO members and particularly agricultural engineers across the globe. Many of the case studies could be used to draw the attention of policy makers to our disciplines. Both documents are freely available.

⌘ ISTRO Board election results

From Secretary-General Doug Karlen

Thank you to all of the candidates who were willing to be nominated for election to either the ISTRO Board, as in-coming ISTRO President, or Treasurer-elect. Thank you also to the 20% of our membership who chose to participate in the voting. The two members elected to serve 6-year terms on the ISTRO Board are Dr. Jose A. Terra from Uruguay and Dr. Lars J. Munkholm from Denmark. Dr. John Fielke from Australia was approved for an additional 3-year term on the Board so that we could regain the desired rotation with two members being replace every three years. Dr. Stephen A. Prior was approved as our Treasurer elect. He will work with our current Treasurer (Alan Torbert) for the next three years and assume his official duties following the 20th Triennial Conference in Nanjing, China in 2015. Finally, Professor Jean Roger-Estrade was affirmed as the in-coming ISTRO President. After completing his Board term in 2015, Jean will turn his full attention to organizing the 21st ISTRO Conference which will be held in France in 2018. Congratulations again to everyone who participated in this important part of ISTRO business.

☞ 19th ISTRO Conference Montevideo Uruguay

<http://www.congresos-rohr.com/istro2012/>



24 - 28 September, 2012 Radisson Victoria Plaza Hotel in Montevideo, Uruguay. For information about the conference itself (excluding accommodation and tours) the conference secretariat can be contacted at istro2012@congresos-rohr.com

Current status: We are approaching 250 delegates registered from nearly 40 countries, with numbers continuing to increase. Registration is still open. To help the organizing committee, please **book your accommodation soon** to ensure that early bird booking rates apply and economies of scale can be achieved. The conference is being held at the Radisson Hotel where accommodation is available.

On the conference website there are a range of hotels and other accommodation options provided – something to suit every budget. For help with accommodation or with booking the pre and post conference tours please contact: hotel-tours@congresos-rohr.com

Keep checking the conference website for updates on the scientific and social programme.

FIELD TRIPS: We have to announce that the advertised pre and post Conference field trips have been cancelled due to insufficient participants. Nevertheless, a new post-Conference tour is offered around Uruguay covering 5 nights with the last night in Montevideo. Running from Sat 29th Sept to Thurs 4th Oct it will visit different areas such as:

Northwest to Soriano and Paysandú – typical agriculture region in the country, continuous no tillage in double cropping systems, Soil erosion control and precision farming strategies. No tillage system management in crop-pasture rotation.

Up northwest, visit to Dr. Mario A. Cassinoni Research Center of College of Agronomy in Paysandú. Crop-pasture rotation and tillage systems, cover crops. Integrating alternatives such as bio-ethanol production into cropping systems.

National Institute of Agricultural Research Station (INIA) in Tacuarembó in the center of Uruguay - forest production systems. watershed management; Soil management systems: effects on wood production and soil quality.

National Institute of Agricultural Research Station (INIA) in Treinta y Tres (north east of the country) - Paso de la Laguna Research Station. Irrigated rice: Crop and soil management. Palo a Pique Research Station: No till systems for summer crops. Crop- pasture rotation. Cover crop management.

Return to Montevideo via the Atlantic coast – night stay in Fort San Miguel hotel in Rocha – and night stay in seaside resort of Punta del Este on the Atlantic Coast, seeing the touristic summer areas of Uruguay.

Costs and full itinerary will be announced and placed in the website soon.

⌘ Report on the CTF working group meeting in Sweden

The CTF working group held a very successful workshop in Sweden 24-25 May 2012. The full report covering almost 20 pages with lots of pictures and easily accessible information (all properly acknowledged), is available at : www.controlledtraffickingfarming.com/downloads/secure/Skone-Workshop-May-2012.pdf

The workshop organised by Hans Henrik Pederson with help from Johan Arvidsson ranged from soil microstructure evidenced by CT scanning to on-farm practical cropping. Topics include an Introduction to Controlled Traffic Farming; Principles and experiences with direct drilling; Experiences with minimum tillage and direct drilling including particular crops such as cereals, sugar beet, and maize; options for strip tillage and CTF on 9m spacings. Also included are yield data and comments from individual farmers using CTF.

Rather than repeat the report which is available at the address above I simply commend it to you. The next CTF working group meeting will be held during the Montevideo conference.

⌘ Report on International Society for Root Research conference in Dundee

Roots to the future was held in Dundee 26-29 March, 2012. Many of the key papers from the meeting are available as a special issue of Annals of Botany published on line on 8 June 2012. These range from molecular function of roots to how roots respond to their environment (i.e. soil conditions).

⌘ 2011 Impact factor for Soil & Tillage Research Rises

ISTRO's journal – Soil and Tillage Research – published by Elsevier saw a slight increase in the impact factor between 2010 and 2011. Secretary General Doug Karlen was recently informed that the impact factor for 2011 was 2.425 compared to 2.1 for 2010. The Impact Factor (IF) is a measure of the frequency with which the average article in a journal has been cited in a particular year. For example, the 2011 Impact Factor is citations received in 2011 to all articles published in 2010 and 2009, divided by the number of papers published in 2010 and 2009.

The IF is generally affected by subject field, number of authors, content type, and the size of the journal. However, it can be a useful way of comparing citability of journals, if the comparison is limited to a given subject field and the type of journals being compared (review, original research, letters) are similar. For more information about “impact factors” please see the Elsevier website: www.elsevier.com/wps/find/editorshome.editors/joumeasures

⌘ ISTRO sponsored and other related meetings forthcoming

Joint ASSSI and NZSSS Soil Science Conference



Wrest Point Hotel and
Convention Centre, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 2-7
December 2012 (www.soilscience2012.com)

Preconference tour

Conference topics

Soil philosophy, soil education and the future of
soil

Soil carbon and climate change

Pedology, soil stratigraphy and Quaternary
landscape history

New techniques in soil spatial analysis

Soils and infrastructure developments

Soil fertility and soil contaminants

The living soil

Soil and land degradation

The physical soil

Forensic soil science

Biohydrology Conference 2012

Bio meets Hydrology

21 - 24 May Landau/Pfalz, Germany

<http://www.biohydrology2013.de/index.html>

The Nordic Association of Agricultural Scientists (<http://www.njf.nu>) has a number of seminars forthcoming.

These include an October 2012 seminar on the Testing and certification of agricultural machinery in Riga, Latvia and the 2nd Nordic Biochar seminar in Finland in February 2013.

See also information about the 17th EGF symposium The role of grasslands in a green future – threats and perspectives in less favoured areas, 23-26 June 2013 in Akureyri, Iceland.

⌘ Final comments for this issue

I guess like many of you, 2012 is even busier than 2011 was. I am however steadily finalising plans for travel and accommodation for the 19th ISTRO conference. I am looking forward to the opportunity to meet again friends that I have not seen for some time and to make new friends. Also I am looking forward to hearing about how agricultural science and engineering are powering the agricultural modernisations that are occurring in South America and to learning about the most recent developments. See you in Montevideo!

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