

# **ISTRO INFO**

**A Publication of the  
International Soil Tillage Research Organization**

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## ISTRO INFO – December 2010

The last 3 months seem to have been a time of upheaval in many parts of the world. Floods, earthquakes, tsunami's, civil unrest, war, and the overthrow of several governments have caused major loss of life and trauma to many. At first thought these tragic events may not seem relevant to ISTRO – but on deeper reflection their connection to issues of food security, climate change, and land management become all too clear. Our mission statement (from the website [www.istro.org](http://www.istro.org)) says “the goals of ISTRO are: to promote contacts among scientists undertaking research in soil tillage and field traffic and their relationship with the soil environment, land use and crop production, to stimulate scientific research in the domain of soil tillage and related fields, and to further the application of the results of such research into agricultural practice.” Hopefully by delivering on things such as crop production, improved land use and the application of research into improved agricultural practice we can each, in a small way, make a contribution to mitigate or ameliorate the effects of these disasters.

On a positive note I was very fortunate to attend the ISTRO Nigeria-branch conference in Ilorin in February. It was a great experience to meet many of the scientists and engineers that are powering a dynamic and growing ISTRO branch. It was also great to meet so many young, enthusiastic, questioning graduate and postgraduate students who, not only participated in the conference, but made a real effort to contribute to its smooth running. I take this opportunity to thank the organizing committee and all who welcomed and looked after me. It was a great experience. There were of course many highlights, interesting discussions, stimulating presentations and happy times. I will not here dwell on them all, but I want to mention what I saw as a great positive from the field trip. The new Nigerian farmers are a group, displaced from elsewhere in Africa, who have moved to Nigeria. They are establishing commercial farms the products of which are linked directly to food processing enterprises employing hundreds of local people. The new agricultural ventures being established have challenges but these are being faced with optimism. The challenges provide a great opportunity for the engineers and scientists of ISTRO Nigeria to deliver support and to apply the results of research to help agricultural production and food security in their region. There is a full report on the ISTRO Nigeria conference later in this issue.

Finally you will see in the following pages that there are a wide range of ISTRO activities coming up over the next few months – working group meetings, training courses and branch conferences. I urge each of you to consider whether you can actively participate in some of these.

Blair M. McKenzie

Assistant Secretary General

## **Meeting of Working Group F meeting – Applications of Visual Soil Evaluation 16-17 May 2011**

**Monday and Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May 2011, Research Centre Flakkebjerg, Denmark**

**With a follow-up day Knowledge Transfer day for advisors, farmers and policy makers on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

The deadline for submission of abstracts has now passed but there are still a few places available for those wanting to attend the VSEE workshop. Full details are at the workshop homepage ( [www.agrsci.au.dk/VSEE](http://www.agrsci.au.dk/VSEE) ). The first 2 days, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May, VSEE members, ISTRO members and colleagues are invited. A more general invitation to advisors, farmers, consultants etc. is made for the Knowledge Transfer meeting on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May. The programme for the 2-day session is now finalized. This working group meeting is truly becoming a global event! Day 1 morning will be devoted to subsoil methods and will include presentations from delegates from Australia, France, Iran, Ireland, and Britain. The afternoon will consider methods for topsoil assessment and their application. The international flavour continues with presentations and method descriptions from delegates from New Zealand, France, Denmark, Brazil and Germany. Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> sees field demonstrations and hands-on assessments with the aims of integrating approaches to find further commonality and to seek consensus on dealing with subsoils. Ample time is allowed for participation, practice and discussion. The KT day will work with local Danish organizers to make comparisons and consider applicability for advisors and farmers.

If you have not already made arrangements please can anyone wanting to attend register as soon as possible by following the link on the website. The website is easy to use and comprehensive, taking delegates step-by-step through arrangements, payment of the 200Euro registration fee for the 2-day meeting and clearly setting out options for accommodation. If there are any difficulties then asap contact [bruce.ball@sac.ac.uk](mailto:bruce.ball@sac.ac.uk) or [lars.munkholm@agrsci.dk](mailto:lars.munkholm@agrsci.dk) or [2033@tombatey.f2s.com](mailto:2033@tombatey.f2s.com) The registration fee for the KT day is 75 Euro.

## **Meeting of Working Group K – Controlled Traffic Farming 25-26 May 2011**

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2011, Bavarian State Research Center for Agriculture, Weißenstephan, Germany**

CONTROLLED TRAFFIC FARMING AND STRIP TILLAGE – combining precision farming technology with field traffic and tillage strategies.

Places are available but members are advised to register as soon as practical with Markus Demmel ([Markus.Demmel@lfl.bayern.de](mailto:Markus.Demmel@lfl.bayern.de)). Accommodation should be booked and confirmed prior to April 25<sup>th</sup>. The full programme including accommodation information can be found following the working group K link on the ISTRO website ([www.istro.org](http://www.istro.org)).

The programme is now finalized starting with a tour of the soil physics labs and agricultural engineering workshops. An introduction to the activities conducted by the host - the Bavarian State Research Center for Agriculture (BSRCA); their research is placed in the policy context of soil conservation regulation and practice. After lunch transfer to field sites south of Eichstätt and visit geo-konzept (<http://www.geo-konzept.de/de/>) and learn about its close association with the work at BSRCA. Demonstrations include automatic steering technology. Staying at the hotel Zum Hirschen the evening includes a sundowner at Willibald castle (with sunset at 9.02).

The Wednesday is based at the farm at Gut Wittenfeld and includes presentation, demonstrations and discussions. The CTF research centered at Freising is a three year programme which started in 2009. With the aim of adapting CTF and strip tillage practices to Bavarian conditions, it involves the investigation of soil water balance and plant growth and the technology needed for its realisation. Field experiments at three locations involve different CTF systems within five rotations growing sugar beet, maize, oilseed rape, rye and wheat. Specific measurements include yields and crop quality, labour and energy requirements and the operability of the different systems. Ample time is allocated for participants to discuss results and consider challenges and solutions, before returning to Munich airport, Freising railway station or other designated points.

Registration of Euro 50 covers lunches, coffee breaks etc and is payable in cash on arrival. Accommodation at Hotel Zum Hirschen for the night of 25/26<sup>th</sup> should be made individually by emailing [info@hirschenwirt.de](mailto:info@hirschenwirt.de) referring to ISTRO workshop. If you have any further questions about this CTF meeting please contact the organizers Markus Demmel ([Markus.Demmel@lfl.bayern.de](mailto:Markus.Demmel@lfl.bayern.de)) and Robert Brandhuber ([Robert.Brandhuber@lfl.bayern.de](mailto:Robert.Brandhuber@lfl.bayern.de)).

## **ISTRO Branch Czech Republic Conference 31 August – 2 Sept 2011 Crop Management Practices Adaptable to Soil Conditions and Climate Change**

ISTRO members and others are invited to this 6<sup>th</sup> conference organised by the Mendel University of Brno, the Research Institute for Fodder Crops, Troubsko, the Research Institute for Crop Production, Prague, the Research Institute of Agricultural Engineering, Prague and the Czech Academy of Agricultural Science. While many papers are already submitted and accepted there is still time to submit a paper or poster.

Sessions include:

**Changes of soil fertility** (soil quality, physical, chemical and biological aspects, erosion)

Keynote lecture: Kutilek, M. (CZ): Soil Physics and Climate Change

Keynote lecture: Gonet, S. (PL): Carbon sequestration in soils under different management

**The effect of different agronomic measures on biotic organisms** (occurrence, harmfulness of diseases, pests and weeds)

Keynote lecture: Smutny, V. (CZ): Weeds, fungi diseases and pest occurrence under different cropping systems

**Perspectives on soil tillage practices** (mechanization of agriculture, energy inputs, economy)

Keynote lecture: Weisskopf, P. (CH): Controlled Traffic farming as a strategy to reduce compaction risks

### **Crop production and climate change** (extreme events – drought and flood)

Keynote lecture: Várallyay, G. (HU): Soil as moderator of extreme hydrological events – drought and flood.

**Cropping systems** (modification crop management practices adapted to the soil conditions – crops and crop varieties, crop rotation, fertilization in conventional, organic and precision agriculture)

Keynote lecture: Birkás, M. (HU): Step-by-step adoption of adaptable soil tillage in Central Europe

### **Location**

The Conference will be held in Congress and Educational Centre FLORET in Pruhonice, Czech Republic ([www.floret.cz](http://www.floret.cz)). The village Pruhonice is situated close Prague (16 km far from centre) and close to the D1 motorway (Prague – Brno). For travel to Prague is possible to use plane, bus or train and combine with metro and bus to Pruhonice.

### **Important deadlines**

Method: *On-line registration on website [www.istro.cz](http://www.istro.cz) included submission of abstract*  
30. 4. 2011 – full-text paper, payment of registration fee and accommodation payment  
(There is still time to submit you manuscript)

Method: *Send full-paper (max. 4 A4 pages) in electronic form to e-mail: [badalikova@vupt.cz](mailto:badalikova@vupt.cz)*

Papers will be published in reviewed journal “Obilnarske listy”.

### **Registration fee**

Rate of registration fees (in Euro) is mentioned in this table:

|                               | ISTRO member | Non-ISTRO member | Ph.D student | Field trip - all participants |
|-------------------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Payment in required time      | 300          | 330              | 250          | 50                            |
| Payment after April, 30, 2011 | 350          | 380              | 300          | 60                            |

Fees for participants include: participation in the scientific programme, conference proceedings, CD, welcome reception, lunches, coffee breaks. Participants will decide about field trip.

Method of payment: By bank transfer only. All banking fees should be covered by the registrants.

Bank contact:

**Account owner:** ISTRO – Ceska republika, Vyzkumny ustav picninarsky, spol. s r.o.,  
664 41, Troubsko u Brna

**Name of bank:** UniCredit Bank Czech Republic a.s., Lidická 59, 602 00Brno

**Account number:** 2033987031/2700

**IBAN:** CZ40 2700 0000 0020 3398 7031

**Remarks:** „ISTRO CZ” and indicate your name.

**Field trip** and excursion (preliminary program):

Visit of agricultural enterprise in Bohemia region (growing of maize under different soil tillage systems, maize hybrids, biogas station). Visit of some castle and Czech Brewery.

#### **Accommodation**

The accommodation is available in the hotel FLORET or hotel MAGNOLIA. The conference venue is the FLORET, but hotel MAGNOLIA is only 200m away. The price is the same in both hotels.

Price per room and night:

| Single | Double | Triple |
|--------|--------|--------|
| 50 Eur | 64 Eur | 78 Eur |

Price is depending on the exchange rate (CZK-EURO).

Every participant should book and pay for their own accommodation! Deadline is 30. 4. 2011. It is necessary to mentioned, that you are participants of ISTRO CZ Conference.

Contacts:

FLORET educational and infomation centre

Květnové náměstí 391

252 43 Průhonice

Tel: 00420 296 528 401

fax: 00420 296 528 403

[www.floret.cz](http://www.floret.cz) e-mail: [kcp@floret.cz](mailto:kcp@floret.cz)

Hotel MAGNOLIA

Květnové nám. 53

252 43 Průhonice

Tel: 00420 267 750 351-2

Fax: 00420 267 990 518

[www.magnolia.cz](http://www.magnolia.cz), e-mail: [info@magnolia.cz](mailto:info@magnolia.cz)

Contact on organizers

If you have any questions, please, do not hesitate and contact bellow mentioned persons.

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## **Working Group B – Subsoil Compaction**

### **Training course Soil Deformation: Modelling, Measurements and Visualization September 26 – October 2 2011**

To be held at Aarhus University, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, research Centre Foulum, Tjele, Denmark

**Course content:** The course will present classical and new approaches for measurement, modelling, and visualization of soil deformation due to mechanical stress application. The concepts and theory classically used in agricultural soil mechanics and adopted from geomechanics (analytical solutions for stress propagation in soil, soil compressive strength, Finite Element Model (FEM)) have limitations that will be

illustrated with hands-on modelling and measurements in the lab and in the field. As a new modelling approach for soil deformation, Discrete Element Models (DEM) will be used to understand particle-particle contact problems, stress propagation and displacement behaviour of granular media. Both approaches (i.e. DEM and FEM) will be compared to explore the mechanical behaviour of agricultural soils at the macroscale (DEM) and at the microscale (FEM). As an alternative to the classical laboratory methods for soil stress-strain characterisation, the potential of non-destructive techniques to characterise soil strength *in situ* (seismic methods) will be presented.

The course will last seven days. Each day will begin with a lecture session. The second half of the day will involve hands-on modelling and measurement activities. On the 7<sup>th</sup> day we call on the Ph.D. students to participate in a young scientist forum, where the aim is exchange of knowledge, experience, and ideas. There will also be a possibility of individual consultancy concerning experimental problems.

**Material to be covered includes**

General Aspects of the Mechanical Behaviour of soils (stress theory, strain theory, stress-strain relations).

Traditional Soil Mechanics Modelling (Elastic stress-strain relationships - analytical solutions, Elasto-plastic stress-strain relationships - FEM).

Traditional Soil Mechanics Measurement Methods including compressive behaviour, shear strength, tensile strength and penetrometer resistance

New Approaches to Infer Soil Mechanical Models (non-destructive field methods to measure soil strength, particle arrangements measurements using three-dimensional imaging techniques)

New Approaches to Model Soil Mechanical Behaviour (Distinct Element Modelling)

Further information and inscription <http://stair.agrsci.dk> and follow the link to PhD courses.

## **19th ISTRO Conference Uruguay 24-28 September 2012**

Do check the website <http://www.congresos-rohr.com/istro2012/>

We would like to invite you to Uruguay to attend the **19TH ISTRO CONFERENCE (International Soil Tillage Research Organization)** and the **IV SUCS Meeting (Uruguayan Soil Science Society)**, to be held from 24 to 28th September, 2012 at the Radisson Victoria Plaza Hotel in Montevideo, Uruguay in South America.

It would be an honor for Uruguay and our region to host these events. We would like our colleagues from around the world to see our land, pastures and crops, visit our neighboring countries (Argentina and Brazil), and experience the culture and hospitality in this part of the world. We envision this Conference will gather top specialists in the field from all around the world to present and discuss their research.

The Conference will be locally organized by the URUGUAY ISTRO Branch, the Uruguay Soil Science Society (SUCS), the Department of Agriculture of the University of Uruguay and the National Institute of Agriculture Research (INIA-Uruguay). The Conference is highly supported by the Uruguayan Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Tourism of Uruguay, the Department of Agriculture of the University of Uruguay, the Buenos Aires University of Agriculture, the Argentinean Soil Science Association, and the International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI).

September is springtime in the Southern Hemisphere and temperatures range from 12 to 21°C. During Spring, days are longer, and crops, pastures and forests are at their best.

We expect to see you in Uruguay in 2012, and we thank you for the promotion of this important meeting amongst your colleagues..

### **TOPICS**

#### **1) SOIL PROPERTIES DYNAMICS**

##### **1a. TILLAGE AND SOIL PHYSICAL PROPERTIES**

Optimizing the use of limited water

Dynamics of Soil Structure as a Function of Mechanical and Hydraulic Stress

Soil compaction under agricultural land use

##### **1b. TILLAGE AND SOIL CHEMICAL PROPERTIES**

Organic matter as soil quality indicator, Dynamics of organic carbon pools in soils

Dynamics of mineral nutrients

### **1c. TILLAGE AND SOIL BIOLOGY**

Microbial community dynamics and soil enzyme activities

Macro- and meso fauna assessment and functionality

Soil microbial processes in relation with soil physical/chemical properties

The soil-root interface

### **2) DEVELOPMENTS IN SOIL DYNAMICS, MODELLING OF TILLAGE & TRACTION.**

Design and development of tillage and seeding equipment

Modeling of Soil-Tool Interaction in Tillage

### **3) SOIL TILLAGE, AGROECOSYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENT**

#### **3a. CONSERVATION TILLAGE AND SOIL MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE FARMING SYSTEMS**

Cropping systems, Forest production systems, Vegetable production systems

Integrating livestock in agricultural systems, Best management practices to control soil erosion and degradation, Bioenergy production in agricultural systems

Policies for sustainable soil management adoption

#### **3b. PRECISION AGRICULTURE**

Precision techniques for land use and management

#### **3c. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND SOIL CARBON SEQUESTRATION**

Vulnerability and adaptability of agricultural systems to climate change

Management practices for improved soil carbon sequestration

Modeling soil organic carbon and greenhouse gas emissions

### **IMPORTANT DEADLINES**

#### **10th December 2011**

Submission of Abstracts

#### **31st March 2012**

Complete papers' submission

#### **31st March 2012**

Early Bird Registrations

#### **30th June 2012**

2nd Date with Preferred Registrations Fees

## **Report on the ISTRO-Nigerian Symposium and branch meeting at the University of Ilorin, Kwara state 21-24 February 2011**

The International Soil Tillage Research Organisation (ISTRO) – Nigeria Branch organized the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Symposium in Nigeria between 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2011. The Symposium took place at the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria at the University Main Auditorium. The symposium attracted participants from within and outside Nigeria. The 4-day programme featured Opening Ceremony, Keynote Address, Lead Paper Presentations, Scientific and Technical Sessions, Annual General Meeting, Technical Tour and other social activities.

The opening activities commenced with the Welcome Address delivered by the President, ISTRO-Nigeria Branch, Engr. Prof. K. C. Oni and this was followed by another Welcome Address by the Chief Host, the Vice-Chancellor, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Prof. Is-haq O. Oloyede.

The ISTRO International Board was represented by Assistant Secretary General, Dr Blair McKenzie and branch mentor Prof. John E. Morrison. They presented Goodwill messages and brief information on ISTRO activities, particularly on the forthcoming 19<sup>th</sup> ISTRO International Conference holding in Uruguay in 2012.

Mrs. G. M. Bamidele represented the Special Guest of Honour, Executive Governor of Kwara State, His Excellency, Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki, who declared open the 2011 ISTRO-Nigeria Symposium. Thereafter, the Keynote Address was presented by the former National President of the Nigerian Institution of Agricultural Engineers (NIAE), Engr. Prof. John Olu of the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Resources Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria titled "Tillage for Environmental Sustainability". The photo below shows the special guests, University of Ilorin Vice-Chancellor and Registrar, members of the local ISTRO committee including Prof KC Oni and other senior academics from Nigerian Universities and Institutes.



Four Lead Papers were presented on the selected sub-themes for the symposium. “Tillage in Nigerian Agriculture” by Engr. Prof. K. C. Oni, Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, University of Ilorin, Ilorin; Prof. S. O. Ojeniyi, Department of Crop, Soil and Pest Management, Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria titled “Appropriate Bush Clearing and Tillage (Soil Cultivation) for Environmental Conservation in the Tropics”; Prof. A. P. Onwualu, Director General, Raw Materials Research and Development Council, Abuja, Nigeria on “Soil Dynamics in Tillage”; Prof. C. I. Ijioma, Department of Agricultural Engineering, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria on “Soil and Tillage Equipment”.

Sixty four participants registered for the Symposium. Forty five manuscripts covering different aspects of the main and sub-themes earlier received and reviewed were presented during the Technical Sessions. The three Technical Sessions were Soil

and Water Engineering, Farm Power and Machinery/Renewable Energy and Agronomy / Soil Sciences. The photo below shows a some of the delegates seated in the main auditorium.



Nine new members were registered during the Symposium. Their details and membership dues had been forwarded to the ISTRO Headquarters through Branch Mentor, Prof John E. Morrison.

The Technical Tour to a Commercial Farm located at Shonga, Kwara State, was well attended. The Tour offered the participants the opportunity of seeing the efforts of the State Executive Governor in transforming Kwara into a Food Self-Sufficient State. The photo below shows delegates listening to one of the new Nigerian farmers. The farmer has a 300 cow Jersey herd that are fed on maize and soybean silage grown on the property. Some of the milk is turned on-site into yoghurt while the rest is processed for milk powder. All is done to international quality standards and the enterprise employs more than 100 people.



The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of ISTRO-Nigeria Branch was held immediately after the Technical Session on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2011. The AGM resolved as follows:

i) that the offices of Vice-President, as well as Technical Secretary were found needful for effective operation of the branch activities and were therefore ratified.

ii) that the current Executive Committee of ISTRO-Nigeria should continue to hold their various offices for the next two years, thereafter election of new executive members will come up in 2013.

iii) that the ISTRO-Nigeria Branch should consolidate on her current achievements by taking advantage of the privileged location of Ilorin with its various agricultural-based institutions to continue to host ISTRO activities in Ilorin.

iv) that ISTRO-Nigeria Symposium should now be held biannually. Hence, the next ISTRO-Nigeria Symposium is expected to come up in 2013.

v) members were reminded and encouraged to participate actively in the upcoming 2012 ISTRO Conference and Technical-Tours. ISTRO-Nigeria Branch was encouraged to nominate a member for a Young Researcher scholarship to the Conference.

vi) members were informed of the availability of 3-year free ISTRO-Membership to newly-graduated PhDs in the soil-and-tillage field while further details on this can be found on the ISTRO website.

The Executive Committee of ISTRO-Nigeria was able to come up with sufficient funds to host the Symposium, hence, request for funds for the Symposium was not needed.

ISTRO-Nigeria expresses profound appreciation to participants and the Board of ISTRO for the encouragement and support, particularly towards the hosting of the Symposium.

## **Report on ISTRO Uruguay and SUCS workshop on Land Use and Soil management**

3 December 2010,

The workshop “Land use and soil management” was in held at Facultad de Agronomía in Montevideo last December 3<sup>rd</sup>. It was organized by the Uruguayan Soil Science Society and Uruguay ISTRO branch. More than 40 attendees were part of this activity. The workshop had three oral presentations. Mariana Hill (Director of the Natural Resources Service), presented mission, vision and objectives of the Natural Resources Service for the period 2010-2015. She also presented the new soil management plan that the producers should present to accomplish what is established in the Soil Conservation Law. Alfredo Altamirano (Soil Specialist of the Natural Resources Service) presented the new advances and update of the soil cartography that the Natural Resource Service is carrying out. Artigas Duran (Professor (retired) Soil Pedology) talked about the new Uruguayan soil taxonomy. This information as well as the advances of soil cartography will be available on-line in the near future. All this new information will help agronomist, and producers to elaborate the soil management plan. Oral presentations were followed by an open discussion among attendees.

## Snippets

The following was sent to me by Marinus/René Brouwers a soil scientist and member of ISTRO for 35 years. He has recently returned from Madagascar and his text and photos show the problems facing soil management in that country. Soils of a part of Madagascar - a big island in the Indian Ocean, near Africa, created during the precontinental drift of Gondwana, some 180 Ma ago, and uplifted - suffer of severe degradation due to wrong land use practices (i.e. overgrazing and end dry season burning of the land by Zebu owners, forest vegetation used for construction and charcoal production) as shown below.

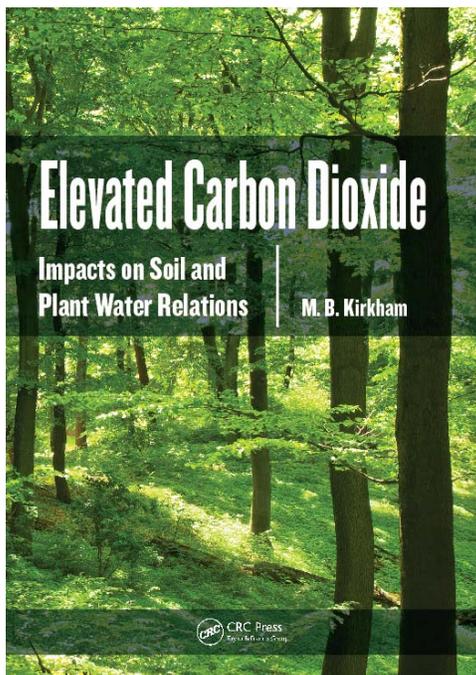




Consequences: Loss of wooded land, less infiltration of rain water, increased runoff, erosion, mass movements of soil, the thickness of the A horizon eroded to sometimes only a few centimetres, and, rivers often red because transporting much earth.

## New book

The Kirkham, M.B. 2011. Elevated Carbon Dioxide: Impacts on Soil and Plant Water Relations. CRC Press, Taylor and Francis Group, Boca Raton, Florida. 399 pages. ISBN: 978-1-4398-5504-1.



### Product Description from Amazon.com

Between 1958 and 2008, the CO<sub>2</sub> concentration in the atmosphere increased from 316 to 385 ppm. Continued increases in CO<sub>2</sub> concentration will significantly affect long-term climate change, including variations in agricultural yields. Focusing on this critical issue, **Elevated Carbon Dioxide: Impacts on Soil and Plant Water Relations** presents research conducted on field-grown sorghum, winter wheat, and rangeland plants under elevated CO<sub>2</sub>. It describes specific results from pioneering experiments performed over a seven-year period in the Evapotranspiration Laboratory at Kansas State University, along with experiments appearing in peer-reviewed journal articles.

## Other conferences and events

**6<sup>th</sup> International Congress of the European Society for Soil Conservation** in Thessaloniki, Greece titled “Innovative strategies and policies for soil conservation”, 9-14 May 2011.

**Land quality and Land Use Information** in the EU, 26-27 May 2011 Keszthely, Hungary (<http://landq2011.uni-pannon.hu/> )

**Agrophysics for Quality of Life** 31 May – 3 June 2011 in Lublin, Poland  
( <http://aql.ipan.lublin.pl/> )

**Protection of agricultural soils against joint stress of natural and anthropogenic factors** 13 – 16 June 2011 in Pulawy, Poland

Confirmed Plenary speakers include Rob Comans, Anthony Dexter, Joop Harmsen, Martin Holmstrup, Ryszard Laskowski, Lothar Mueller, Joerg Rombke, & Kirk Semple.

Submission of abstracts to Rafal Galazka [rgalazka@iung.pulawy.pl](mailto:rgalazka@iung.pulawy.pl) Abstract submission by 10 April 2011.

**Soil interfaces in a changing world** 26 June to 1 July 2011 Montpellier, France  
ISMOM is the Inter-congress symposium of Commission 2.5 (Soil chemical, physical and biological interfacial reactions) of the IUSS (International Union of Soil Sciences). The web site is now open for submission of abstracts. In 2011 emphasis will be given to

changing climate and the effects on biogeochemical cycles and microbial activity in soils

changing demands on soil and the environment in terms of agricultural production and pollution standards

emerging pollutants, including nanoparticles, pathogens, new pesticides and pharmaceutical products and genetically modified plants

new developments in advanced analytical and research tools

Contact Dr Siobhán Staunt, ph 33(0)4 99 61 23 31  
( <http://www1.montpellier.inra.fr/ISMOM2011/> )

**World Congress of Conservation Agriculture** in Brisbane in September 2011.  
For more information see <http://www.wcca2011.org/index.htm> .

**2<sup>nd</sup> Human Impacts on Soil Quality Attributes** in (Semi-) Arid Regions”HISQA2”  
at Isfahan University of Technology in May 2012. This meeting will have substantial  
contribution from the Iranian ISTRO Branch and their branch Chair, Mohammad  
Hajabbasi is taking the opportunity to invite ISTRO members from around the world to  
participate and meet their Iranian colleagues. Topics relating to soil physical, chemical  
and biological degradation including salinization, nutrient depletion, desertification will  
be addressed.

**International Society for Root Research** 26 – 29 June 2012 Dundee UK (note  
the date change from that previously advertised. UK Keynote speakers include  
Jonathan Lynch, Malcolm Bennett Michelle watt, Philippe Hinsinger, Bob Sharp, Fusuo  
Zhang, Heljä-Sisko Helmisaari and Peter Gregory. Updates and more information on  
the ISRR website ( [www.rootresearch.org/](http://www.rootresearch.org/) ).

**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) The Congress to be held at the  
University of Bari, 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. Any interested person should see the congress website  
([www.eurosoil2012.eu](http://www.eurosoil2012.eu))

Joint **ASSSI and NZSSS Soil Science Conference**, Wrest Point Hotel and Convention Centre, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 2-7 December 2012  
([www.soilscience2012.com](http://www.soilscience2012.com))

## **Final Comments**

The very observant amongst you may have noticed that my affiliation given on the front page of this issue has changed from previous issues, but my address has not! As of April 1 the Scottish Crop Research Institute (my previous employer) and the Macaulay land Use Research Institute have merged to become The James Hutton Institute ([www.hutton.ac.uk](http://www.hutton.ac.uk)). The two main sites some 80km apart will both continue to operate. My email address becomes [blair.mckenzie@hutton.ac.uk](mailto:blair.mckenzie@hutton.ac.uk) , although the old email will continue to work for some considerable time. At some stage I am likely to be given a new phone number.

Blair M. McKenzie  
Assistant Secretary General