

Blair McKenzie

It has been an active 3 months for ISTRO. The newly rejuvenated working group A – Soil Structure has held a 2-day workshop in Nanjing. I'm sure Zhou Hu will be looking for some new volunteers in 2015 keen to host another event for that working group. The mid-term meeting of the ISTRO board was held to coincide with the Soil Structure meeting. Reports from Secretary General Doug Karlen follow as does calls for nominations to the ISTRO board. The Croatian branch has just finished their conference on Soil and Crop Management. News of this meeting will appear in the next issue.

The impetus created by the 2012 Triennial Conference means South American activities are moving ahead. The Uruguayan Branch in association with the national soil science society is holding a meeting in November. A joint meeting is planned combining the interests of the working groups on Visual Examination and Evaluation of Soil Structure with the Subsoil Compaction. This will be held in Brazil in May 2014. There are ISTRO members working diligently to establish ISTRO branches elsewhere in South America – more on this in future issues.

As China prepares for the 2015 Triennial conference President Xinhua Peng and his team are getting well into preparation mode. A venue in Nanjing has now been decided. So keep 14-18 September 2015 well marked for that.

☞ Opportunity



The call for the “Land and Soil Management Award” 2013/14 is now open!

Created by: The European Landowners' Organization (ELO) under the auspices of the European Commission (DG Environment and the Joint Research Centre) in association with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU) of Vienna, Syngenta International and the Centre for Soil and Environmental Sciences of the Ljubljana University

Aim: To encourage new concepts of protection and their implementation and to enhance awareness of the importance of land and soil in connection with good agriculture and environmental condition

Eligibility: This prize is intended to recognize quality instruments and management practices which contribute to the protection of land and the soil, by improving the quality of the environment.

Prize: With an amount of 5000 € and a diploma of recognition.

Deadline: 30 November 2013

How: Fill in the application form; send the application by post and by email to the contact details below.

[Please click here for download the application form!](#)

For any further queries contact

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Information and documents: <http://www.europeanlandowners.org/about/awards>



☞ ISTRO mid-congress board meeting

The ISTRO Board held a mid-congress meeting in Nanjing, China on September 11, 2013 following the workshop on "Soil Structure and Its Functions in Ecosystems." Minutes from the Board Meeting, General Assembly, and Closing Ceremony in Montevideo were approved. Treasurer Allen Torbert presented the ISTRO financial report which showed an ending balance as of July 31, 2013 of \$94,283. He encouraged all ISTRO members to be sure they were current on their dues and challenged them to get several of their colleagues to join our organization. Assistant Secretary General Blair McKenzie reported that he was having no problems getting ISTRO-INFO sent out on a quarterly basis and that he was getting input from various Branches, Working Groups, and ISTRO members for each issue. The Board also had a good discussion about the various Branches and where there was interest in forming new ones.

There are four active ISTRO Working Groups at this time. The focus areas are on Soil Structure, Visual Assessment of Soils, Subsoil Compaction, and Controlled Traffic Farming. The Board was informed that the Visual Assessment and Sub-soil Compaction Working Groups were going to hold a joint workshop in Brazil during 2014. Blair encouraged the Working Groups to continue using ISTRO-INFO as a communication tool and stated that it plus periodic workshops have been very effective methods for bringing Working Group members together between Triennial Conferences.

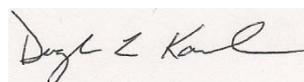
ISTRO President Xinhua Peng presented plans for the 20th Triennial Conference. The meeting will be held from Sunday through Friday, September 6 to 11, 2015 in Nanjing, China at the Zhongshan Hotel. Please be watching for information about the conference in every issue of ISTRO INFO and begin planning now to participate. The Board members were very pleased with the Nanjing venue and encourage your participation in the meeting.

The Board continued their discussions regarding revisions of the ISTRO Constitution and By-Laws that began in Montevideo. In a separate mailing, a copy of the revised document will be sent to all ISTRO members in good standing. Comments regarding the revised document will be accepted by the Secretary General for a period of approximately six months. The Board will then hold a web

conference to discuss the feedback and prepare a final version that will be voted upon at the 20th General Assembly Meeting in Nanjing.

Finally, please begin thinking about potential candidates for two ISTRO Board positions and a new Assistant Secretary General. Nomination procedures for these important positions are outlined in another article.

Respectfully submitted,



Douglas L. Karlen
Secretary General

☞ ISTRO board nominations

Nominations for two Board positions and for Assistant Secretary General are now being accepted from all ISTRO members in good standing. If a member wishes to nominate a colleague or even themselves, please send the name, a brief biographical statement outlining the candidate's qualifications for an ISTRO Board position, and an affirmation that the candidate is willing to be on the ballot and to serve if elected to Secretary General Doug Karlen on or before 30 June 2014. Please use the email address Doug.Karlen@gmail.com for this communication. Depending upon the number of nominations received, the current ISTRO Board members will identify two to four potential Board candidates and two Assistant Secretary General candidates. A ballot will be prepared and distributed to members in good standing around October 1, 2014. ISTRO members elected to these positions will assume their new positions following the 20th Triennial Conference in Nanjing, China in September 2015.

General requirements for Board members are to serve for a period of six years (2015 – 2021), to be available to attend pre- and post-conference Board meetings as well as a mid-congress Board meeting at the location of the 2018 and 2021 Triennial

conference sites, to serve in various liaison positions to ISTRO Branch and/or Working Groups, and to actively participate in discussions and email exchanges associated with ISTRO business. Although funds for travel to ISTRO Board meetings are available, it really helps the Organization if the candidate has some mechanism to help cover a portion of their travel expenses so that ISTRO dues can remain at their very modest level.

For those interested in the Assistant Secretary General position, it is helpful but not necessary to have some prior experience in dealing with ISTRO activities. This can be in the form of a former Board member, Working Group or Branch officer, past-President, or any other role that would have given the candidate a working knowledge of ISTRO. These experiences should be part of the qualifications statement submitted with the nomination. Candidates for Assistant Secretary General should also realize that under current By-Laws it is expected that after a period of six years (2015 – 2021) the individual will assume the role of Secretary General for another six years (2021 – 2027). This may seem daunting, but as someone in my 10th year of service, I must admit the time really has gone by very rapidly. Finally, in addition to assisting the Secretary General with ISTRO operations, the Assistant Secretary General will be responsible for preparing and distributing ISTRO-INFO and working with the webmaster to update the ISTRO webpage. Again, these activities do take some time, but they are also a very rewarding way to serve our Organization and to help our colleagues throughout the world.

If you have any questions about any of these opportunities, please contact Doug Karlen (doug.karlen@gmail.com) or Blair McKenzie (Blair.McKenzie@hutton.ac.uk).

☞ International Workshop on “Soil Structure and its Functions in Ecosystems”

September 8-10, 2013, the international workshop on “Soil Structure and its Functions in Ecosystems” was held in the Institute of Soil Science, CAS, Nanjing, China. This workshop attracted over 200 participants including 30 international guests from 14 countries. The Chinese participants were from over 20 different universities and institutes. The issue of soil structure is very attractive and wide.

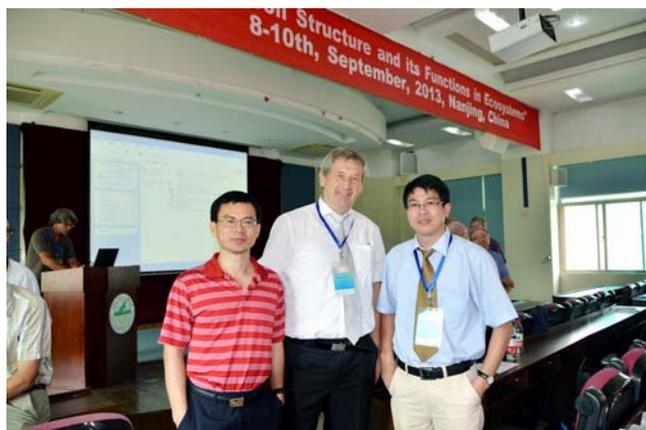


Facilities within the Institute of Soil Science.

Soil structure is a fundamental property of soil fertility with its ability to transport water, nutrients and gas, and to provide habitat for microorganisms and fauna. Aggregated soil structure can improve agronomic productivity and increase the resistance to soil erosion. The formation of soil structure (or aggregates) is the result of biotic (i.e., microorganisms, fauna, roots) and abiotic (i.e., tillage, wetting and drying, freezing and thawing, clay, ion) factors and their interaction. The relation between soil structure and biotic agents may be the key mechanism to sequester C in soil. Recently, to mitigate global change and to secure food safety, soil structure has received much attention. However, the manifold of interactions between soil structure and factors is still hardly quantified. On the other hand, soil structure and its stability are dynamics with these environmental factors. Although aggregate formation and stability have been investigated in numerous studies, aggregate is not a surrogate of soil structure. With new technology (i.e., micro CT, NEXAFS), the natural heterogeneity of the soil as a three-dimension porous system can be characterized possibly. It may provide us with a chance to fully understand soil structure formation,

stability and its functions on C sequestration, water transport, and soil erosion.

This workshop includes 6 sessions, 36 oral presentations plus 10 posters. The participants enjoyed discussion and shared the ideas on the workshop. In a brief, the workshop was very successful and fruitful.



Professors three. Henry Lin from Penn state who presented a talk on Soil Architecture and Preferential Flow. Rainer Horn (former ISTRO President and President-elect of IUSS) who gave a presentation on Soils as sensitive reactors and ISTRO President Xinhua Peng who presented on the Dynamics of Soil Cracking.

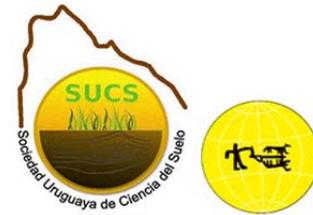
Editors note:

The Institute of Soil Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences has an impressive array of staff and facilities. There are 222 professional staff including 40 Professors covering all aspects of soil science related to agriculture and the environment. There were some excellent lab and field facilities on display.

⌘ 2nd Soil and Crop Management: Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change. Osijek, Croatia 26-28th September 2013

Look out for a meeting report in the next issue of ISTROINFO.

⌘ Soil & Water Conservation: Actions and challenges of today



ISTRO Uruguay in association with 5th SUCS MEETING

NOV. 28-29, 2013 / PALMAR, SORIANO, URUGUAY

OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING:

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the problems we have today in relation to our natural resources, and the challenges associated with their protection, thinking in their future.

Thursday 28:	Friday November 29, 2013
2:00 PM - 2:30 PM Reception	8:30 AM - 1:00 PM Conferences
2:30 PM - 3:00 PM Welcome	1:30 PM - 2:30 PM Lunch
3:00 PM - 7:00 PM Conferences	2:30 PM - 7:00 PM Conferences
Topics:	
- Plans of Use and Soil Conservation: Assessing the first stage of implementation and adjustments for the next periods (Quality of the plans submitted). MGAP.	- Intensive animal production: dairy and feed lots. Why deserves attention? (V. Ciganda / A. Lamanna).
- New soil mapping: update the description of soils in a format for the needs of different users. MGAP.	- Watershed quality: Status of watersheds. Measures to reduce the risk of contamination. (C. Perdomo / P. Barreto).
	- Nutrient balances.

(A. del Pino).

- **Soil Characterization Laboratory:** update and scope. (Prof. J. Zamalvide).

- **Private laboratories:** Analytical quality for the soil testing and plant analysis.

- **Other threats:** soil degradation. Measures to protect against threats soil compaction (A. Quincke), carbon loss (S.Mazzilli , O.Ernst / L. Salvo) and nutrients.

- **Watering:** Water management: needs and risks.

- **Biofuels.** Production opportunities and risks. (G. Siri).

- **Forestry.** Changes in soil chemical properties under forest use. (J. Hernandez)

☞ Announcement of ISTRO Working Groups F and B, Visual Soil Examination and Evaluation and Subsoil Compaction joint meeting

Soil structural quality of tropical soils: Visual evaluation methods and soil compaction prevention strategies

To be held between the 26-30 May 2014 in Maringá, Paraná, Brazil

Draft Outline Programme:

Two days of talks, with two follow-up knowledge transfer field days

Background:

Following on from productive meetings during the Montevideo conference, the ISTRO working groups F and B are announcing the first joint meeting of these two complimentary groups. The workshop will be held [in Maringá](#), Brazil, where we can access clayey and sandy tropical soil under no tillage, producing annual crops (soya bean and corn) and mechanically harvested sugarcane. This will allow the work groups to explore the use of both topsoil and subsoil methods for visual assessment and investigate subsoil compaction prevention strategies in tropical soils.

Work group members, ISTRO members and colleagues who wish to contribute are invited to offer presentations in the form of one page abstracts, which should be sent to the organisers by January 31st 2014. If you would like to demonstrate a method during the field days, please send details of the method and how you intend to demonstrate it by January 31st 2014. We aim to publish presentations and descriptions of demonstrated techniques in a special issue.

The programme is still under development but the date and place have been set, with subscription costs expected to be approximately US\$300. The deadline for registration is the 28th February 2014. However, the number of participants is limited, so we advice early subscription. Details and updates will be released in further editions of ISTROinfo and on the event website: www.pb.utfpr.edu.br/vsee-sc

ACCOMMODATION

Participants wishing to stay will have to make reservations at the telephone (598) 2156 4530 Palmar.

REGISTRATION: Participants must fill out a form by sending your details to: sucs.directiva@gmail.com.

Registration fees:

No registration fees for SUCS_ISTRO members.

The SUCS covers the expenses of the meals. Participants must be members of the

Non-members: \$ Uru1,000 (becoming SUCS members for one year).

Objectives:

To discuss top and subsoil visual methods, with special focus on soil compaction

To exchange experiences in using different visual methods

To refine and to relate the visual methods to tropical soils

To discuss compaction prevention strategies with special focus on tropical soils

To identify ways of combining visual methods with soil compaction research and compaction prevention tools

Contact

VSEE

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Subsoil Compaction

Thomas Keller (chair)
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Mathieu.Lamande@agrsci.dk

The 20th World Congress of Soil Science (20WCSS)

While ISTRO is not directly part of the IUSS many members are. For that reason and to stress the importance of understanding and managing soils I think it is worth alerting ISTRO members to the upcoming world congress.

It is great honor and pleasure to inform that the 20th World Congress of Soil Science (20WCSS) will be held at the ICC JEJU, Korea, from June 8-13, 2014.

WCSS has been held quadrennially since 1927 as a scientific meeting in the field of soil science. As the most highly acclaimed meeting of its field, the 20WCSS will gather a large number of scientists and industries together with over 2,500 expected participants from more than 100 countries from around the world.

Under the theme of "Soils Embrace Life and Universe", all the participants from around the world will discuss up-to-date knowledge, recent research results and technological advances in the broad areas of soils sciences. During the congress, various scientific programs will be organized, and participants will have a great networking opportunity with internationally prominent scholars, specialists and researchers through diverse social activities.

We look forward to your interest and active participation.

Title	20th World Congress of Soil Science (20WCSS)
Theme	Soils Embrace Life and Universe
Period	June 8(Sun)-13(Fri), 2014
Venue	ICC JEJU, Korea
Host	Korean Society of Soil Science and Fertilizer, Rural Development Administration, International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS)
Support	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Homepage	www.20wcscs.org
Scale	No. of Participants: 2,500 attendees from more than 100 countries No. of Booths: 40 booths
Program	Opening & Closing Ceremony, Symposia, Poster Presentations, Exhibition, Welcome Reception, Gala Dinner, Technical Tour, Pre & Post Tour
Key Dates	- Deadline for Abstract Submission: October 31, 2013 - Notification of Abstract Acceptance: January 15, 2014 - Deadline for Early Registration: March 20, 2014 - Deadline for Regular Registration: May 20, 2014
Secretariat	20WCSS Secretariat 1F Haeoreum Bldg., 748-5 Yeoksam-dong, Gangnam-gu Tel +82-2-566-5058, +82-2-557-8422~3 Fax +82-2-566-6087 E-mail wcscs@20wcscs.org

***Sign up for 20WCSS to get the latest updates in www.20wcscs.org.**

☞ 20th Triennial ISTRO Conference. Nanjing, China 14-18th September 2015

Start Planning NOW!

Following the successful working group A meeting the focus in Nanjing is now clearly on getting ready for 2015. A venue in Nanjing has been decided so – keep space in your calendars to attend the 20th conference from **14-18 September 2015**.

Some major sponsors are in place but good attendance is key to making any event a success.



The date has been chosen to avoid the extreme heat of summer, the cold of winter and provide a time of intense agricultural activity. By announcing these dates early the organising team are hoping that ISTRO members will have time to plan activities.

Practical matters

Travel: There are numerous direct flights into Nanjing e.g. from Frankfurt, Seoul, Tokyo, Hong Kong with more routes opening each year. Connections to and from Beijing are frequent. There are also high speed trains from the Shanghai to Nanjing.

Accommodation: Nanjing has a wide range of international standard hotels with over 40 rated at 5-star and over 60 rated at 4-star. Many of these are located close to the Institute.

If you are in any doubt about the facilities talk to any of those who attended the working group meeting!

⌘ Other upcoming meetings

6th African Soil Science Society and 27th Soil Science Society of East Africa Conference 20-25 October 2013 Nakuru Kenya

Transforming Rural Livelihoods in Africa: How can land and water management contribute to enhanced food security and address climate change adaptation and mitigation?

Sub-Themes

- Enhancing applications of adaptation and mitigation to climate variability and change
- Enhancing the status of human nutrition and food security in Africa through Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM), and small scale irrigation
- Exploring options for sustainable intensification and diversification of crop soil livestock systems
- Land use planning for sustainable food security and climate change adaptation in Africa
- Commercialization aspects in land and water management: Markets and private sector engagement
- Scaling, socio-economic and policy options in land and water management
- Capacity building in land and water management within the Agricultural Product Value Chains (APVC) approach
- Adaptation to climate change: Lessons learned and challenges ahead

Policy Forum:

The conference will integrate a policy forum linking scientists and policy makers with the specific objectives of:

- Brief review of existing policies with respect to soil management in the ASARECA member countries and AU/NEPAD/CAADP initiatives.
- Review with decision makers and/or their advisors impediments (at policy, institutional, market level) for scaling up technologies.
- Required actions to improve the situation.

It is expected that representatives from African Union and regional and national research and policy bodies will attend.

Payment and Registration

Early Scientist USD\$ 120 : Late Scientist \$170
Early Students USD \$ 50 : Late Student \$70
Early Registration closes 31 August

The Secretariat, SSSEA/ASSS Conference,
P O Box 14733 – 00800 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: 254--20-444029/30/31/32 or
444256/4444144/137

Fax: 254--20-4443926/444251

E-mail: soilseakenya@gmail.com.

All cheques to be paid to Soil Science Society of East Africa (SSSEA)



We are pleased to announce the first edition of the International Conference on *Engineering and Applied Sciences Optimization (OPTI 2014)* to be held in Kos Island, Greece on 4-6 June 2014.

The purpose of **OPTI 2014** is to bring together the scientific community working in the broader field of Engineering and Applied Sciences Optimization including problems formulation, computational methods and software development. OPTI 2014 will facilitate the exchange of ideas in topics of mutual interests and will serve as a platform for establishing links between research groups with complementary activities.

OPTI 2014 is organized under the auspices of the International Society for Structural and Multidisciplinary Optimization (ISSMO), Transportation Research Board (TRB), European Community on Computational Methods in Applied Sciences (ECCOMAS), Hellenic Institute of Transportation Engineers (HITE), Greek Association for Computational Mechanics (GRACM) and John

Key Date: Deadline for presenting a one page abstract is October 31, 2013

Further information is available at URL:

www.opti2014.org

The Proceedings of the conference will be indexed by ScienceDirect and SCOPUS of Elsevier.

Issue: June 2013

20-22 November 2013

6th International Symposium 'Management of Farm Machinery and Processes in Sustainable Agriculture
Lublin, Poland

<http://www.kemiz.up.lublin.pl/index.php?id=konferencje>

25-28 February 2014

42nd Actual Tasks on Agricultural Engineering
Opatija, Croatia

<http://atae.agr.hr/>

18-20 March 2014

4th International Conference on Machine Control
and Guidance

Braunschweig, Germany

www.mcg2014@tu-braunschweig.de

21-23 May 2014

2nd International Conference on Robotics and
associated high-technologies and equipment for
agriculture and forestry. Madrid, Spain

<http://www.rhea-conference.eu/2014/>

ELS 2014 - the Earth Living Skin: Soil, Life and Climate Changes - the first Conference of a Series organized under the auspices of the Soil System Sciences Division of the European Geosciences Union. ELS 2014 will be held next 21 – 25 September 2014 in Nova Yardinia, Castellaneta Marina (TA), Italy.

The scientific program will be structured according to the proposed sessions, open to contribution till October 2013. In November the call for abstracts will be launched till February 2014. Please visit our web site at www.els2014.eu

Latin America Soil Science Congress, Cuzco Peru 9-15 November 2014 www.slsc.org.mx

⌘ Final comments

A gentle reminder from Treasurer Allen Torbert to please ensure that your membership dues are up-to-date. If you are unsure please contact Allen by email on: Allen.Torbert@ARS.USDA.GOV

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

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