IUSS Stimulus Fund

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As the new IUSS website has a subpage presenting the activities of national soil science societies in the IYS 2015, we would like to thank those who have already responded and kindly remind all other national soil science societies to send us their contributions. The contributions can follow the structure outlined below and should be sent to iuss@umweltbundesamt.at

**Who**
Description of division, commission, working group or national society (max 500 characters)
**What**
Description of activity, idea, topic or event (max 1,500 characters)
**When & Where**
When and where will the activity or event take place, when & where should the idea be implemented (max 300 characters)
**Soil message of the week**
Summary of the activity, idea, topic, event for the main webpage (max 300 characters)

[If you have problems reading this content - please follow this link to the IUSS page](http://iuss.boku.ac.at/index.php?article_id=477)

**IUSS Alert 116 (February 2015)**

**Launch of new IUSS website**

In January 2015 the new IUSS Secretariat and the new IUSS webmastertook up their new duties. After a transition phase of two months the IUSS website will be transferred from a server in Australia to a server in Austria, but the internet domain will remain the same. With this transition we took the opportunity to set up a new website with a modern content management system and design. The contents from the current IUSS website will be transferred to the extent possible to the new website, albeit partly rearranged. Very large documents from the last century were compressed as much as possible, but some of them will be only listed on the website without download option. Those documents can be requested from the IUSS Secretariat.
As the new IUSS website has a subpage presenting the activities of national soil science societies in the IYS 2015, we would like to thank those who have already responded and kindly remind all other national soil science societies to send us their contributions. The contributions can follow the structure outlined below and should be sent to iuss@umweltbundesamt.at

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**IUSS Bulletin 126**

IUSS plans to publish its next Bulletin in April 2015. Please send all contributions including activity and meeting reports as well as book reviews before March 22 to iuss@umweltbundesamt.at

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**Meeting of the IUSS Executive Committee**

On January 16 the IUSS Executive Committee met in Vienna to discuss the operational implementation of the new structure of the IUSS, in particular the tasks and actions the Secretariat, the Presidents, the Treasurer, the Division chairs and the Standing Comittees will provide in the year 2015. Further topics on the agenda of this fruitful meeting at the new IUSS headquarters were international cooperations as well as the new IUSS website and publications.

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**IUSS Stimulus Fund**

IUSS has established an annual Stimulus Fund principally to support activities within the Commission and Working Groups, but where appropriate will support activities to assist the development of Soil Science in regions of the world where activities are limited through lack of resource.
IUSS has set aside a sum of $12,500 annually to help fund these activities, but this funding may be increased if the quality of applications is particularly high. The normal maximum award will be $2,500, but larger awards may be considered.
The initial application process requires a short written proposal of no more than 500 words plus a budget indicating how the funds awarded are to be spent. There are three submission dates for applications each year: 15 March, 15 June and 15 September. Urgent applications may be considered outside these times with the approval of the President. Applications should be sent to[iuss@umweltbundesamt.at](http://mailtoiuss@umweltbundesamt.at/)

The funds can be used for a wide range of activities; the principal aim is the promotion of Soil Science. In 2015 activities might include events related to the International Year of Soils. Other activities might include the support of meetings, assistance with travel, website development, travel matching funds and indeed any other soil science-related undertaking that stimulates work of a Commission or Working Group. Where funds for meetings or travel are requested, monies from theIUSS Stimulus Fund shall normally be used to match funds raised locally. The relation betweenIUSS money and local funds shall depend on the local economic circumstances.

The IUSS Executive Committee shall evaluate the proposals and make recommendation to the President. Final approval will be given by the IUSS President or delegate within one month after the submission dates given above.
Because of the strict auditing regime that IUSS operates under, full accounting of all expenditure must be provided to the Treasurer. All expenditure must be accompanied by appropriate receipts. Under normal circumstances approximately 50 % of the allocated funds will be paid in advance, with the balance paid on receipt of a summary of expenditure with accompanying receipts. These conditions may be varied at the discretion of the President.
On completion of the activity a full financial statement with invoices/receipts for all expenses must be submitted to the Executive Committee within 2 months. A short (500-1000 words) report of the activity must be presented for inclusion in the IUSS Bulletin within 2 months of completion.

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**Special exhibition at ISRIC World Soil Museum**

The ISRIC World Soil Museum (WSM) is a unique museum with 80 soil profiles on display from all over the world. The total ISRIC soil profile collection contains over 1000 profiles. To be openend soon in the WSM: a special exhibition on the soils of Australia. More about the ISRIC World Soil Museum at <http://www.isric.org/services/world-soil-museum>

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**Scientists seeking soil bacteria from all around the world**

Could the microbial key to the world’s next big drug discovery be lying in the soil in your backyard? A citizen science project led by researchers at Rockefeller University in New York is interested in mapping the genetic riches of soil from all around the world. The objective is to discover new bacteria in unexpected (and hard to reach) places, which could lead to the development of new types of antibiotics and other drugs. The Drugs from Dirt project was started by microbiologist Sean Brady. More details at <http://www.sciencealert.com/scientists-seeking-soil-from-your-backyard>

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**Soil blog of the World Agroforestry Centre in Nairobi**

The most recent blog entry by Keith Shepherd, a principal soil scientist, is about how the simplicity of light is revolutionising the measurement of soil health. Marking the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies and the International Year of Soils, the Soil-Plant Spectral Diagnostics Laboratory of the World Agroforestry Centre in Nairobi, Kenya, explicates how the simplicity of light is used to revolutionise the measurement of soil health. Light technology in the visible, near infrared or mid-infrared ranges provides a spectrum that relates to many soil properties measured the conventional way. The spectral signatures characterise the basic mineral and organic matter composition of the soil, which in turn determine a soil’s functional properties. This provides hard evidence for decision makers to prioritize on soil health or to formulate appropriate policy and a ction.

Links: <http://blog.worldagroforestry.org/index.php/category/soil/>

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**Rainfall Erosivity in Europe**

The erosive force of rainfall is called rainfall erosivity. Rainfall erosivity considers amount and intensity of the rainfall, and is most commonly expressed as the R-factor in the (R-)USLE models. The purpose of this study is to assess rainfall erosivity in Europe in the form of the RUSLE R-factor. Data have been collected from 1,541 precipitation stations in all European Union(EU) Member States and Switzerland, with temporal resolutions of 5 to 60 minutes. The R-factor values calculated from precipitation data of different temporal resolutions were normalised to R-factor values with temporal resolution of 30 minutes using linear regression functions. These data were stored in the Rainfall Erosivity Database on the European Scale (REDES). Precipitation time series ranged from a minimum of 5 years to a maximum of 40 years, mostly covering the last decade. Data from REDES were interpolated with the Gaussian Process Regression (GPR) model resulting in the European rainfall erosivity map at 500m resolution. The data are available for download:<http://eusoils.jrc.ec.europa.eu/library/themes/erosion/RainfallErosivity/>

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**Conferences, Meetings and Workshops**

**Doctor honoris causa Awards and Symposium “New paradigms for food security and natural resources”**

UCL, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, March 30-31, 2015. In order to celebrate the international year of the soils, the Université catholique de Louvain will award the title of Doctor honoris causa to two distinguished professors which are visionary fellows in the soil science and agro-ecological science domains: Pr. Miguel A. Altieri, University of California, Berkeley (USA) and Pr. Oliver A. Chadwick, University of California, Santa Barbara (USA). The Award ceremony will take place on Monday 30th March 2015, and a symposium on “New paradigms for food security and natural resources” is organized by the Earth and Life Institute on Tuesday 31th March 2015. Award ceremony: 30th March 2015, 15h, Scientific symposium: 31th March 2015, 9h. Program and free registration available at: <http://www.uclouvain.be/eli.html>

**Workshop ‘Soil – An Essential Resource’**

Island Frauenchiemsee, Bavaria, Germany, April 16-17, 2015. The 2-day workshop aims at providing a platform for discussing the challenges of implementing strategies for the sustainable management and protection of soil resources. Major topics to be addressed are erosion, land take, climate change and soil management challenges. These soil threats are recognized and discussed together with new approaches for managing healthy soils, the relevance of infrastructures for soil research, and global and regional soil partnership concepts. For details visit <http://www.iesp.de/soil>

**SUBSOM Symposium 2015 “Organic matter storage and turnover in subsoils”**

Raesfeld, Germany, April 28 to May 1, 2015. The international meeting at the secluded 18th century Raesfeld Castle will be dedicated to presenting and discussing the most recent results and progress made in the study of this poorly understood soil compartment. All contributions covering innovative methodological and modelling approaches or considering microbial activities, the magnitude, chemical and isotopic composition or 14C content of C pools, fluxes and fractions in subsoils are highly welcome. Among the four topical sessions, spatial heterogeneity from the nm to the m scale will also be of major interest. The four topical sessions will be:

1. Organic matter properties and storage in subsoils
2. Inputs and fluxes of SOM in subsoils
3. Microbial activity and SOM degradation in subsoils
4. Modelling SOM fluxes and turnover in subsoils

More details are available at: <http://www.subsom.de/index.php?id=69>

**International Conference ‘Soils sustain life: too slow to form, too quick to lose’**

Tirana, Albania, May 4-7, 2015. Main topics of the conference are Soil ecosystem goods and services in support of human needs; Interaction between natural ecosystem components (land, water, biodiversity) and socio-economic indicators affecting soil quality; Impacts of human mismanagement on soil resources and examples of best management practices in reducing soil degradation effects; Promotion and enhancement of crop production systems that support sustainable soil management and increase productivity; Valorisation of indigenous knowledge in ecosystem based soil management; Harmonised rural development, expansion of the tourism sector, environmental protection and soil management; Identification of major threats to soil resources at various levels; Livestock production and its impacts on both soil and water quality; Forestry, agro-forestry, renewable energies and their relations to soil quality; Cropping systems, nutrient management and cycling. For details visit http://icos.org.al/

**ISMOM 2015 – Soil interfaces for sustainable development**

Montréal, Québec, Canada, July 5-10, 2015. Joint international conference of International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS), Canadian Society of Soil Science (CSSS) and Association québécoise de spécialistes en sciences du sol (AQSSS) celebrating the International Year of Soils. Soil interfaces for sustainable development is the cross-cutting theme that encompasses the interests and scope of attendees affiliated with the ISMOM, CSSS and AQSSS groups. To encourage interaction and networking, conference attendees will be able to submit presentations to, and attend, any scientific sessions sponsored by these groups. The language of the meeting will be English, but presentations in French will also be accepted. Deadline for abstract submission is March 14, 2015. For more details about the conference, please visit the website http://ismom2015.conference.mcgill.ca/index0f50.html?p=home

**Intensive Training Course on Soil Micromorphology**

Zagreb, Croatia, August 17 -28, 2015. The lecturers are experienced professors and researchers from the University of Lleida, University of Ghent and Croatian Geological Survey. Since there is a need for interdisciplinary research of soil scientists, archeologists, environmental scientists, geographers and geologists, it is necessary to train scientists in the application of affordable methods. We invited lecturers who are the world’s top authorities in this field: Prof. Georges Stoops, Prof. Rosa Maria Poch and Prof. Vera Marcelino; scientists from the Croatian Geological Survey will hold lectures, too. The course will be all-day, interactive, and participants could discuss their own thin sections, too. Application deadline: May 1, 2015. Maximum number of participants: 30, Fee: approximately 350 Euro. Contact: lgalovic@hgi-cgs.hr

**Soil Science in a Changing World**

Wageningen, the Netherlands, August 23-27, 2015. The Wageningen Soil Meetings aim to provide a platform for sharing knowledge of soils across the world and across science, engaging in interdisciplinary exchanges of ideas, thoughts, and opinions as well as thinking out of the box and being innovative and creative. Main topics of the conference are climate change, food security, water resources, biodiversity and land functions. The focus is on the contributions of soil scientists to these themes, which will be addressed in a dynamic way by top key-note speeches, challenging debates, inspiring workshops and master classes as well as oral and poster presentations by participants. Deadline for abstract submission is March 23, 2015. For more details visit<http://www.wageningenur.nl/wageningensoilconference2015>

**Soil Functions and Climate Change – do we underestimate the consequences of new disequilibria in soil properties? –SUSTAIN 2015**

Kiel, Germany, September 23-26, 2015. Please note: early bird registration ends March 31, 2015. For further detailed information see <http://www.soils.uni-kiel.de/de/sustain-2015>

**International Symposium on Forest Soils 2015 (ISFS2015)**

Fuzhou, China, October 24-28, 2015. The theme of the Symposium is ‘Linking Soil Processes to Forest Productivity and Water Protection under Global Change’. The major objective of this symposium is to facilitate the development of international cooperations, scientific exchanges and strategic alliances in forest soil issues, leading to fully realised, collaborative research programmes that face the realities of the effects of forest management and climate change on forest productivity and water supply. Abstract submission deadline: June 4, 2015. For more details visit<http://isfs2015.com/index.asp> or contact Zhiqunhuang@fjnu.edu.cn

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**New publications**

**Remote Sensing of Soils: Project report from the Federal Office of the Environment 2015**

By Hendrik Wulf, Michael Schaepman, and Philip Jörg (NPOC/RSL) in close cooperation with Titia Mulder (INRA) and Armin Keller (Agroscope). In this study, a number of scientific publications have been reviewed and summarized. In addition to existing limitations, the multifaceted potential of remote sensing to assess information on soil properties and contents are highlighted in the report. The report presents various remote sensing methologies providing new approaches for systematic environmental monitoring and soil mapping in Switzerland. Established techniques within active, passive, optical and microwave remote sensing are considered as well as proximal sensing that use key soil properties as proxies for soil conditions and characteristics. In addition, opportunities, progress and limitations of remote and proximal sensing data in support of digital soil mapping are discussed, followed by a gap analysis of current remote sensi ng technologies and products. Available online: <http://www.geo.uzh.ch/en/units/rsl/news>

**Understanding Vineyard Soils**

By Robert E. White, second edition, hardcover, 280 pages, February 2015, Oxford University Press ([oup.com/us](http://oup.com/us)). This new edition of Robert White’s influential book presents the latest updates on topics such as measuring soil variability, managing soil water, the possible effects of climate change, rootstock breeding and selection, monitoring sustainability, and improving grape quality. The promotion of organic and biodynamic practices has raised a general awareness of ‘soil health’, often associated with a soil’s biology, but which, to be properly assessed, must be based on a soil’s physical, chemical, and biological properties. This book is a practical guide for winegrowers, and the lay reader who is interested in the concept of terroir and wants to discover more about the influence of different soil types on vine performance and wine character.

**No ordinary matter: conserving, restoring and enhancing Africa’s soils**

The Montpellier Panel, December 2014. This report was authored by Agriculture for Impact with advice and inputs from members of the Panel. The primary author, Dr Katrin Glatzel, was supported by Professor SIr Gordon Conway, Emily Alpert and Stephanie Brittain. The authors also acknowledge valuable inputs from Professor Rattan Lal of Ohio State University (IUSS President Elect). The report can be downloaded from <http://ag4impact.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/MP_0106_Soil_Report_LR.pdf>

**Soil Signals**

During the International Year of Soils agricultural publisher Roodbont Publishers wants to publish the new book Soil Signals, a practical guide to a fertile soil. This book provides tools for optimising your soil management. It contains plenty of practical advice and many techniques that are directly applicable for farmers. Furthermore, it will help you to get your soil management off the ground successfully! Roodbont Publishers is looking for companies and organisations that would like to collaborate in publishing the book in 2015. The books have been proven to be an excellent marketing tool for educating farmers and farm advisors in soil management. Especially for companies we offer customised editions. Want to now more about the options? Please take a look at [http://www.roodbont.com](http://www.roodbont.com/) or send an e-mail to info@roodbont.com

**Agricultural Prairies: Natural Resources and Crop Productivity**

By K. R. Krishna. CRC Press, January 28, 2015, by Apple Academic Press Reference – 514 Pages, ISBN 978177188053. Price £82. This book is a comprehensive volume that brings together vast knowledge about agricultural prairies in one place, providing concise descriptions of natural resources and their influence on crop productivity. It provides detailed descriptions about natural settings as well as lucid discussions on soil fertility and crop production trends for various agricultural prairies distributed all around the world.

**The Soils of Iceland.**

Edited by Arnalds Olafur. World Soils Book Series, 2015. 183 p., 186 illus., 169 illus. in color, ISBN978-94-017-9621-7. Price (hardcover) 109,99 Euro. In this new volume in the World Soil series, the various types of Icelandic soils, their different characteristics, their formation, degradation and erosion are reviewed. At the same time, the book also deals with the agriculture and land use in general to give a complete view of Icelandic soils. Hence it offers a guideline for better understanding the unique natural characteristics of Iceland.

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IUSS Alerts are e-mailed to nearly 10,000 people in over 100 countries. Please forward the IUSSAlerts to your friends and colleagues. Send information for IUSS Alerts toiuss@umweltbundesamt.at”:iuss@umweltbundesamt.at