



## Editorial

The bulletin has been the main newsletter of the ISSS and successively the IUSS. The first bulletin appeared in 1952 and was produced at the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam where the ISSS Secretary-General, Prof. F.A. van Baren, was working. The foreword of the first bulletin was by Prof. R. Tavernier:

*"..the bulletin aims to pass on official information about all important events concerning the life and activity of the Society to its members and to National Societies and Regional Groupings as well as to Research Institutes.....members had expressly shown their desire to be informed about these activities and about the development of Soil Science in the diverse countries of the world."*

The first issue started with information on the next congress that was to be held in the Congo in 1954. It was followed by activities of commissions, information on national societies, miscellaneous news, activities of FAO in the field of Soil Science, upcoming meetings, new publications, obituaries, letters to the editor, and a list of addresses. Does that sound a little bit familiar, 54 years later?

For more than 20 years the Bulletin was produced by Prof. F.A. van Baren in Amsterdam, then it moved to Rome (Prof. R. Dudal), to Wageningen (Dr. W.G. Sombroek), Vienna (Prof. W. Blum) and has been put together in Wageningen since 2002. Since the late 1960s, Drs Hans van Baren has reviewed books for the Bulletin and he continues to do so. In all those years the main purposes of this newsletter has not changed: informing the global soil science community about past, current and future activities. No doubt it has helped to create some sort of corporate soil science feeling in the diverse countries of the world (as Tavernier called it).

One wonders whether in this current world of internet, RSS feed and e-mail alerts a bulletin with often more than of 80 to 90 pages still has any merit. I think it does. The global soil science information stream is continuous but the IUSS Bulletin is a twice per year returning piece of information prompting both readers and writers to reflect on the IUSS and its activities. And as long as each Bulletin is downloaded over 10,000 times from the IUSS website we must assume that it has a role in the global soil science community. We shall continue to enhance that role which may be more opportune now given the rapid changes in our discipline and society at large.

This Bulletin 109 starts with a brief report on the IUSS council meeting in July by the Secretary General Stephen Nortcliff followed by an introduction of the new IUSS President and Vice President and some notes on the next World Congress of Soil Science. There is a short description of the activities and aims of all divisions and commissions which may be of use for all new officers (who are also listed at the end of the bulletin). There are contributions from Benno Warkentin, Edoardo Costantini and Jaume Bech and please send us more of those! The Bulletin is not so much about soil science as about soil scientists so we continue with the *Five Questions* section, and there is an extensive overview of all awards and prizes that have been given in the past months. Congratulations to all! I had asked colleagues from Brazil, Syria, China, Tanzania, USA whom attended the World Congress of Soil Science to write about the congress – their reports are included in this Bulletin. There are also reports of other meetings and a list of Upcoming Meetings. At last, there is the text of the IUSS song (MP3 is on the IUSS website) and a list of all Honorary members.

Although the setup of the IUSS bulletin has not really changed over the past 50 years, the Bulletin can only be as good and diverse as its contributions. Therefore, if you have ideas, short articles, pictures or anything you would like to share with the global soil science community, please send it.

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