



## Editorial

This is IUSS bulletin 110. Several of my colleagues have wondered whether there is still a need for a Bulletin – we are living in an era in which most information is only a few clicks away. That is: from the newest soil science publications to the upcoming soil science meetings. Most – if not all - of our active IUSS members can locate and access this information for free. So what is then the use and meaning of this Bulletin?

We are still having newspapers and magazines despite the overwhelming news available on the internet which is almost real-time with all the handheld cameraphones. Some people only read the BBC or CNN website to stay informed on world affairs. Fewer people have a newspaper subscription but do pick up local or international news from the internet or through free newspapers that are paid for by advertisements. Although that model may work perfectly for the information need of world citizens, it is different for members of a scientific union like the IUSS. Our newsletter is meant to brief us on our common goals and interests: the soil, and this Bulletin is primarily intended for our members, it informs about activities (past and upcoming) and glues our members to the union. This Bulletin is not quite real-time - just like much of our soil information – but with the monthly IUSS Alerts and planned changes in our website we strive to make it better.

At a recent IUSS Bureau meeting it has been decided that we shall no longer print copies of the IUSS Bulletin. Currently, 300 copies are printed of each issue and the cost is high whereas we serve only a small portion of our membership. Instead, the money that we save by not printing and mailing the IUSS bulletin can be used to make our website more professional (for example, introducing RSS feed and making it more interactive). The great majority of our members will benefit from such investments. The IUSS Bulletin will not disappear and it continues to be freely available as PDF and as HTMLs.

This Bulletin has a detailed report on the 18<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Soil Science and the breakdown of registrants and authors shows that there were people from all over the globe. There is information on the next World Congress to be held in Brisbane, Australia, and the summary minutes of the IUSS bureau meeting and reports of all four divisions. The IUSS is a founding partner of the UN proclaimed International Year of Planet Earth and Stephen Nortcliff, our Secretary General, has a seat on the management board. There is a soil science programme committee of which A. McBratney (Australia), J. Boettinger (USA), A. Bationo (Kenya), E. Frossard (Switzerland), L. Mendonça-Santos (Brazil), S. Nortcliff (UK), F.S. Zhang (China) and myself are members. We intend to develop and promote soil science activities that fall within the scope of the UN year. In this Bulletin there is a report on activities in many countries of the world. Please check the website [www.esfs.org](http://www.esfs.org) to see what activities are planned in your country.

Also in this Bulletin: some comments on the Future of Soil Science book and suggestions from Dan Yaalon on frontiers of pedogenetic research. We very much welcome such contributions! Furthermore: the “Five questions to a soil scientist” asked to three colleagues and the favourite soil science books of three others. Hans van Baren continues to review new books and reports and another 26 reviews are included (the other 549 reviews from 1999 to 2006 are on our website). There is much more to read in this IUSS Bulletin and if you have information or ideas to share we will happily include them in the next IUSS Bulletin!

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