

Lars J. Munkholm

It is harvest time in Northern Europe. Farmers were busy preparing for harvest or harvesting everywhere when I was driving 1000 km north south in Northern and Central Europe last week. Along the road, there were fields in different stages of ripening/harvesting – blooming maize fields, wheat and barley fields ready for harvest, and hay fields being harvested in the Alps. Yields are expected to be at a normal level again after last year's severe drought-induced yield losses. We are "back to normal" in Northern Europe, which, unfortunately, is not the case many other places where extreme weather challenges farmers. The increased frequency of these extreme events call for new management solutions. No doubt an integrative approach is needed to find the best solution – an approach where knowledge gained in soil and tillage research will be vital. Fortunately, significant advancements are taking place in our field of research, as shown at e.g. the ISTRO conference last year in Paris. Many key publications from the conference are now being published in Soil & Tillage Research as described below. Thus, also for ISTRO it is harvest time. Even more importantly, it is time for seeding and supporting new seeds in terms of branch and working group activities, sponsoring membership for new PhD graduates etc. New ideas/suggestions for ISTRO activities are most welcome - just send an e-mail to me or any of the other ISTRO board members and we will look into the matter.

☞ Greetings from Secretary General

ISTRO conference 2021 in Dublin

President Nick Holden is developing plans for the 2021 conference in Dublin. If the dates and theme haven't yet been announced they should be shortly. I know Nick and his team are working hard to make sure that we can look forward to a great meeting.

ISTRO conference 2024 – moving to the USA

With the election of Ranjan Bhattacharyya to President-elect the intention was that the 2024 conference would be in Delhi, India. It was with considerable angst and only after considering all options that Ranjan has resigned from the post, based on several personal reasons. In discussion with Ranjan, the ISTRO board considered options as to whether it was still viable to hold the 2024 conference in Delhi. Again, after proper discussions the decision has been that without Ranjan's leadership a conference in Delhi was not viable. This posed the question for the board of who could step in to serve as President-elect and be willing to host the 2024 conference. One option came rapidly to the fore from someone who had previously expressed an interest in hosting an ISTRO conference.

After consulting the constitution, it was clear that the ISTRO President can, on the advice of the board, nominate a candidate to step into post made vacant by resignation. This is what has happened, and the board has unanimously endorsed Dr. Mark Reiter from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University to take over as President-elect with the intention to hold the 2024 ISTRO conference in the eastern USA. I will leave Mark to introduce himself later in this issue of ISTROINFO, but I know many of you will have met Mark as he has been to many ISTRO triennial conferences since Brisbane 2003! We know Mark has support for his new role from several other ISTRO members in his region.

The decision to move the 2024 conference location was not taken lightly – but only after considerable discussion amongst all board members. ISTRO has always sought to hold the triennial conferences in different locations to allow the widest access for members to attend. Moving the conference from India to the USA will obviously make attending easier for some members but more difficult for others. The last time the conference was in the USA was in Texas in 2000 – so it will be nearly a quarter of a century between North American conferences.

This is probably a good time to remind members that late in 2020 we will start the process seeking nominations for several board positions including the opportunity to host the 2027 conference.

News on Soil & Tillage Research

While impact factors are not the only feature that contribute to the esteem of a research journal, they can be a useful indicator. It is very pleasing to see that Soil & Tillage Research (the journal affiliated to ISTRO) has again increased its impact factor and S&TR now ranks 3 in soil science and number 1 for soil related journals that do not have “biology” in the title. At the Paris conference in September last year a decision was taken to have a special issue of S&TR based on papers submitted at the conference. Dr Elke Noellemeyer (one of the chief editors of S&TR and an ISTRO member) agreed to coordinate the special issue with the help of three guest editors, Prof Jean Roger-Estrade, Dr H Allen Torbert and myself. Papers were submitted in the normal manner and met all usual review criteria. As publishing is now on-line, papers in the special issue have been published as the review and editing tasks have been completed without needing to wait until all papers were ready. While there are still a few in late stage of revisions etc there have so-far been 24 papers published in the Paris conference special issue.

New PhD graduate

As many of you know ISTRO sponsors membership for recent PhD graduates who have had an ISTRO member on their supervision team. Don't forget to send nomination information to Lars and details will be published on the ISTRO website.

It is also right that we celebrate PhD graduates who are already ISTRO members, having paid their own right. Maricke van Leeuwen (an ISTRO member) recently defended her PhD thesis at Wageningen University. Her thesis title Reading soils - Using easily obtainable soil information to assess soil functioning has resulted in several publications

including “Visual soil evaluation: reproducibility and correlation with standard measurements” in Soil & Tillage Research (2018) 178: 167-178. So, congratulations to Maricke!



Maricke van Leeuwen at her PhD defense. Photo: Blair M McKenzie

ISTRO website update

While on the topic of the ISTRO website (www.istro.org), for those who may have missed it, Erik van den Elsen has done a great job in updating our website and making it compatible for viewing on tablets, smart phones etc. It is now at a stage that it is ready for a nomination from each working group (WG) to be able to upload content directly to their WG page. The information will be open to all, but this should allow more direct information transfer about WG activities. If anyone has suggestions for further improvements the please email me.

Cover crop meeting in the US

I have just returned from the US Southern Cover Crop Council meeting and field visit in Auburn Alabama. A very well-run event with an interesting mix of scientists, extension workers, students and farmers attending.

☞ Mark Reiter – new President Elect



Demonstrating crimping system for cover crop management at the US Southern Cover Crop Council meeting. Photo: Blair M McKenzie



Dr. Mark Reiter is Associate Professor and Extension Specialist of Soils and Nutrient Management and located at the Virginia Tech Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center on the Delmarva Peninsula in Painter, VA. Dr. Reiter received his B.S. from Virginia Tech, M.S. from Auburn University, and Ph.D. from the University of Arkansas in Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences. In his current research and Extension program, Dr. Reiter has a wide interest with investigation of many different crops and nutrients that are important to growers, environmentalists, and other stakeholders on sandy loam soils in the mid-Atlantic USA. Currently, main research and Extension interests revolve around cover crop use for nutrient cycling and soil quality improvement along with viable options to efficiently redistribute phosphorus nutrients from poultry litter. Efficiently using nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus and sulfur nutrients from both inorganic and organic fertilizer sources is of paramount concern on the environmentally sensitive sandy loam soils where significant vegetable, oilseed, fiber, and grain crops are grown. Dr. Reiter attended his first ISTRO meeting in 2003 in Brisbane, Australia and looks forward to visitors to the eastern USA in 2024!

I know the recently formed WG on conservation agriculture will have people investigating the impacts of cover crops and I would be interested to hear from members of the WG or any ISTRO member doing research related to this topic.

Blair M McKenzie

ISTRO Secretary-General

⌘ Upcoming Meetings and Events

August 2019

Wageningen Soil Conference 2019 - Understanding soil functions. August 27–30, 2019 in Wageningen, the Netherlands. Webpage:

<https://wageningensoilconference.eu/2019/>

September 2019

BSSS 2019 Annual Conference 'Managing Soil Resources to Secure Our Future'. September 4–5, 2019 in Sheffield, United Kingdom. Webpage:

<https://www.soils.org.uk/event/1674>

15th European-African Regional Conference of the International Society for Terrain-Vehicle Systems (ISTVS). September 8–11, 2019 in Prague, Czech Republic. Webpage: <https://conference.istvs.org/>

October 2019

7th International Symposium on Soil Organic Matter. October 6–11, 2019 in Hilton Adelaide, Australia. Webpage: <http://som2019.org/>

XXII Latin American Congress of Soil Science (CLACS). October 7 – 11, 2019 in Montevideo, Uruguay. Webpage: <https://clacs.org/> (in Spanish)

Agro-Ecology and Crop Science (modern exploration technologies for crop production). October 9–10, 2019 in Dublin, Ireland. Webpage: <https://cropscience.agriconferences.com/>

November 2019

14th International Conference of the East and Southeast Asia Federation of Soil Science Societies. November 2–8, 2019 in Taipei, Taiwan. Webpage: <http://esafs2019.cssfs.org.tw/>

ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meeting. November 10–13, 2019 in San Antonio, Texas, USA. Webpage: <https://www.acsmeetings.org/>

15th Annual conference on Crop science and Agriculture. November 18–19, 2019, Bali, Indonesia. Webpage: <https://crops-agri.foodtechconferences.com/>

December 2019

World Soil day 2019, December 5. Worldwide.

March 2020

Global Symposium on Soil Biodiversity (GSOBI20). March 10–12, 2020 in Rome, Italy (FAO Headquarters).

Webpage: <http://www.fao.org/global-soil-partnership/resources/highlights/detail/en/c/1183872/>

April 2020

International Soil Classification Congress, April 16–24, 2020, México. Webpage: <http://iscc2020.org/>

August 2020

Eurosoil. 24–28 AUGUST 2020 in Geneva, Switzerland. Webpage: <http://eurosoil2020.com/>

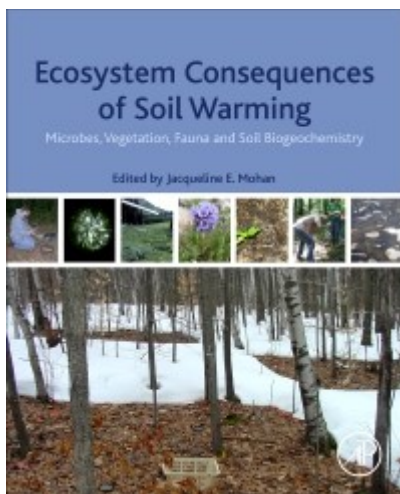
September 2020

13th Agriculture in Nature and Environment Protection. 8-10 September 2020 in Osijek, Croatia.

🌀 New Books

Ecosystem Consequences of Soil Warming, 1st Edition - Microbes, Vegetation, Fauna and Soil Biogeochemistry

Editors: Jacqueline Mohan



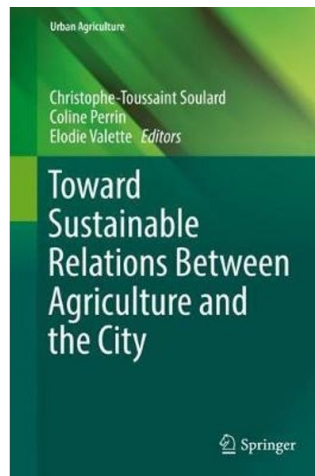
Ecosystem Consequences of Soil Warming integrates multiple natural science disciplines and provides a holistic, integrative approach to help understand and forecast future planet wide responses to soil warming in all polar, alpine, tropical, temperate and dryland ecosystems.

More information on this book:

<https://www.elsevier.com/books/ecosystem-consequences-of-soil-warming/mohan/978-0-12-813493-1>

Toward Sustainable Relations Between Agriculture and the City

Editors: Christophe-Toussaint Soulard, Coline Perrin, Elodie Valette



Urbanization can lead to accentuation of agricultural diversity, while the rise of food issues in cities changes the importance, functions and challenges of (peri-)urban agriculture. This book provides an overview of frameworks, methods and case studies of the relation between agriculture and cities in Europe and the Mediterranean.

More information on this book:

<https://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783319710358#aboutBook>

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

All information contained in this newsletter are © ISTRO and may not be distributed without written permission of the Secretary General, Dr. Blair McKenzie (blair.mckenzie@hutton.ac.uk) or the Assistant Secretary General, Dr. Lars J. Munkholm (lars.munkholm@agro.au.dk).

For more information, please contact: Dr. Lars J. Munkholm, Assistant Secretary General, ISTRO, Aarhus University, Agroecology, P.O. Box 50, DK-8830 Tjele, Denmark.