NEWSLETTER 4/2007

ESSC EUROPEAN SOCIETY for SOIL CONSERVATION

Visit the ESSC Website: http://www.essc.sk

Cover photo: The rice terraces of Yuanyang, Yunnan Province, China. These terraces may be as old as 2,000 years and were constructed and are still maintained by the Hani minority people. The rice cultivation system on the terraces is operated as a sustainable organic system (photo by Mike Fullen, Wolverhampton, UK).

E.S.S.C. NEWSLETTER 3/2007

The NEWSLETTER is published by the Editorial Board:

Editor-in-Chief: M. A. Fullen
School of Applied Sciences
The University of Wolverhampton
Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1SB, U.K.
m.fullen@wlv.ac.uk

Assistant Editor: C.A. Booth, Wolverhampton, U.K.
c.booth@wlv.ac.uk

Co-Editor: A. Rodríguez Rodríguez, La Laguna, Canary Islands, Spain

Produced and composed by the Editor-in-Chief at The University of Wolverhampton (U.K.)
Printed by The Soil Science and Conservation Research Institute „Vyskumny ustav podoznalectva a ochrany pody, Bratislava“ (Slovakia)

Contents

Introduction of Guest Editorials **3**
Conferment of the Hugh Hammond Bennett Award on David Sanders 3
Some reflections on receiving the H. H. Bennett Award 4
The Award of the ESSC Scholarships to attend the 5th ESSC Congress in Palermo, Italy, in June 2007 8
Ranjan Bhattacharyya 8
Endla Reintam 10
Péter Sipos 11
Metka Udovič 12
Soil degradation and the UK Parliament 14
NEW Ph.D. THESES **16**
The Newsletter and supporting Ph.D. research **17**
Supervising a Ph.D. researcher 17
BOOK REVIEWS **25**
Soil Erosion and Sediment Redistribution in River Catchments. Measurement, Modelling and Management. 25
BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS **26**
RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY ESSC MEMBERS **27**
PAPERS 27
ANNOUNCEMENTS **28**
Appointment of new Ph.D. research students 28
Institutional movements and promotions of ESSC members 28
ESSC membership list and contact details 28
FORTHCOMING DATES FOR YOUR DIARY **29**
FIRST ANNOUNCEMENTS **29**
GREEN5 International Conference Vilnius, Lithuania: 1-4 July 2008 29
SECOND ANNOUNCEMENTS **31**
Lithuanian Soil Science Society at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences 31
THIRD AND FOURTH ANNOUNCEMENTS **32**
15th International Congress of the International Soil Conservation Organization (ISCO): 'Soil and Water Conservation, Climate Change and Environmental Sensitivity' 18-23 May 2008, Budapest, Hungary 32
EUROSOIL 2008 25-29 August 2008, Vienna, Austria 34

International Conference on Flood Recovery Innovation and Response FRIAR 2008
2-3 July 2008 at the Institution of Civil Engineers, London, UK 34
2nd International Conference on Ground Bio- and Eco-engineering The Use of Vegetation
to Improve Slope Stability Beijing, China, 14-18 July 2008 42

This issue of the ESSC Newsletter presents the third of our 'Guest Editorials'. This is an opportunity for leading authorities in the soil science community to offer their perspectives on issues relating to soil conservation. The third in our series is from David Sanders (Bristol, UK). Eventually, we envisage this collection of essays developing into an authoritative book.

Conferment of the Hugh Hammond Bennett Award on David Sanders

Editor's note:

We are delighted to report that David Sanders (Bristol, UK) has received the 'Hugh Hammond Bennett Award' from the 'Soil and Water Conservation Society' (SWCS). The Conferment was made at the SWCS Conference in Tampa, Florida, USA and was presented to David on 24 July 2007. This is a prestigious single annual award made by the SWCS and David is one of only a few non-US nationals to receive this honour. Below we reproduce the citation made by the SWCS and a modified version of David's acceptance speech. David is a long-standing member of the ESSC and he has modified this welcome contribution to our Newsletter to express some of his suggestions as to how the ESSC might progress and develop. On behalf of the ESSC, we offer David our hearty congratulations on this great achievement!

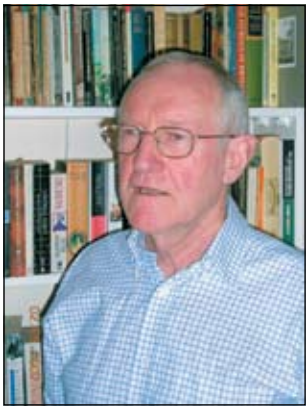
Citation for the conferment of the 'Hugh Hammond Bennett Award' to David Sanders by the Soil and Water Conservation Society on 24 July 2007

David Sanders has left his imprint on the landscape in many parts of the world. His career has ranged from implementing soil conservation practices in local watersheds in Australia to leading the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) soil conservation activities in Rome, Italy. He has been a life long advocate of conservation and has devoted his entire professional career to the management and wise use of soil, water and related natural resources. All of his efforts, including those as FAO Administrator, were undertaken with the objective of achieving sustainability. Most noteworthy among his accomplishments are his work in introducing modern agricultural techniques into the low rainfall areas of Jordan, addressing severe gully erosion in Lesotho and his presentations and visits to some 40 countries advising governments on soil conservation policies and programs. Mr. Sanders has edited and/or been a major contributor to 10 books, delivered several keynote presentations to ISCO Conferences, and has contributed significantly to many journals and other conservation publications. In addition, he was a principal in the establishment of the 'World Association of Soil and Water Conservation' (WASWC) and served as President of the WASWC from 1997 to 2002.

Some reflections on receiving the H. H. Bennett Award[1]

by David Sanders

E-mail: dsanders38@btinternet.com



Hugh Hammond Bennett (1881-1960) is regarded as the father of modern soil conservation. During the 'Dust Bowl' of the 1920s and 1930s, the United States suffered terribly from erosion and it was Bennett who led the soil conservation movement. He urged the nation to address this "national menace" (1). He was responsible for the establishment of a new Federal agency – the Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S.) – and served as its first chief until his retirement in 1951.

Bennett started his professional career as a soil surveyor for the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture). As he conducted his surveys and investigated declining yields, he became aware of the extent of erosion and realized that it was not just a problem for farmers, but for the whole national economy. But Bennett was more than just a soil surveyor; he was also an orator and a writer. In fact, he was described by a contemporary as a man who "combined science with showmanship".

It is said that Bennett's speeches inspired action for soil conservation around the country but my favourite story relates to the time that he was asked in spring 1935 to testify before a Congressional Committee on the Bill that would create the Soil Conservation Service. As he started to speak, he was passed a message that a dust storm was approaching from the Great Plains. Bennett, always the showman, continued to talk and to talk while the wind strengthened and eventually Washington was covered in dust. So thick was the dust storm that by early afternoon the lights had to be turned on, dramatically supporting his argument. Bennett had made his point, the Bill was passed and the Soil Conservation Service was created.

Bennett was also a prolific writer and a USDA bulletin that he co-authored in 1928 'Soil Erosion: a National Menace' was extremely influential at the time. Probably his best known book is his great tome 'Soil Conservation' and i believe no soil conservationist's library is complete without it. But a work of warning to those who do not know this book – it runs to nearly 1,000 pages and is not exactly light reading! Bennett received many honours during his long and illustrious career and, in short, he became an American hero.

The Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) was founded in 1943. It is a non-profit, scientific and educational organization "that serves as an advocate for conservation professionals and for science-based conservation practices, programs, and policies". The SWCS has over 5,000 members worldwide, although the bulk of its membership comes from North America. With 75 Chapters, a big annual conference, a regular journal and a multitude of other activities, it is the biggest and must be the most active voluntary conservation organization

[1]This article is based on an address given at the Soil and Water Conservation Society's Annual Conference, Tampa, Florida on 24 July 2007, on the occasion of the presentation of the H.H. Bennett Award for 2007.

of its type. The 'Hugh Hammond Bennett Award' is the highest honour bestowed on an individual by the Society and is given for "distinguished service in recognition of national and international accomplishments in the conservation of soil, water and related natural resources" (2). I therefore feel very honoured to be the recipient of this year's award.

My own involvement in soil conservation began over 50 years ago when i was brought up on a small, mixed farm in rural Australia. At agricultural college i was deeply impressed by the soil conservation staff that we met: by their enthusiasm, professionalism and obvious dedication to what they were doing. This fired me with enthusiasm and, immediately after graduating, i joined my state soil conservation service. I became a field officer and was thus able to work directly with farmers in the wheat and sheep growing areas of the State of Victoria.

In 1960, i was appointed to the planning team of the Eppalock Project: Australia's first large scale catchment scheme. This 2,200 square kilometre catchment was severely eroded and the project was set up to protect a newly constructed major dam. We had the technology to do what was required, but we quickly realized that we could only succeed if we had the trust and support of the farming community. We therefore had the opportunity to develop some new and innovative ways of effectively involving the farming community in the whole process of planning and implementing this major scheme. Over the years these ideas were further developed and refined and have been used in the much publicized Australian Landcare Programme. This experience stood me in great stead in future years, particular when i was working in developing countries, as i quickly learnt that farmers see their problems and react in much the same ways wherever they are.

In 1960, i was recruited by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, or FAO as it is known. I worked closely with farmers and graziers on field projects in the Middle East and Africa for 12 years before going into FAO's headquarters in Rome. Here i spent 17 years leading FAO's soil conservation activities. In this post i had the opportunity to travel extensively, advising governments on soil and water conservation technology and policy in Africa, Australasia, Asia, Latin America and Europe.

I have therefore been very fortunate, in fact, privileged, in my professional career as i have had opportunities that few others get. Not only have i been closely involved in a subject that has passionately interested me, but i have also been involved in conservation programmes all over the world. I have also had the good fortune to work with many of the world's leading soil conservationists, to learn from them and then, hopefully, to pass on the knowledge that i have gained.

I give this personal background so that readers will appreciate what has influenced my reflections and conclusions on the present state of soil and water conservation as i look back on my experiences: in particular, what have we achieved in the past and what are the challenges of the future? So, what has struck me most about the past? Over the last half century our understanding of the subject has, of course, greatly increased. We now know much more about our land resources, their extent, their ecology and their potential. We also know much more about the land degradation processes and, thanks to the introduction of computers and sophisticated modelling, we can now predict, with reasonable accuracy, how soils will react under different uses and conditions. We also have a much wider range of technologies to deal with the problems. Altogether, there have been great advances. For

example, conservation agriculture - the various forms of no till and minimum tillage – has become widely accepted and practised over millions of hectares and in many countries in a relatively short time. This technology has reduced costs and maintained yields, while dramatically reducing erosion and reducing the need for old fashioned mechanical erosion control structures. Earlier this year i visited one of the wheat growing areas in Australia where i worked some 40 years ago. It is a particularly erosion prone region and i can remember spending many months designing, surveying and then supervising the installation of artificial waterways and graded contour banks. These days most farmers are using minimum tillage techniques and, as a result, many of the old contour works have been removed without erosion recurring.

But probably more important than these developments has been the slowly growing realization that land degradation is not just a physical problem – it is usually a man-made problem that can only be overcome if we take into consideration the very complex socio-economic and political factors that exist in all our societies. Land degradation usually occurs as a result of land being used or managed in a way that is not compatible with its potential. This, in fact, means that land degradation is predictable in most cases. With this understanding, new programmes and approaches to the planning and implementation of soil conservation programmes have been developed, whereby communities at large are now being involved far more than they were in the past. This has given land-users a far greater feeling of ownership of what is being done and this, in turn, has meant that conservation works are being respected and maintained far more that in the past when the approach was very much 'top-down'. The best example of this is the Australian Landcare Programme which has brought together government agencies, private enterprise, communities and individual land users, all working for a common cause.

Altogether, we as soil conservationists, have much to be proud of - our achievements since the days of that great pioneer, Hugh Howard Bennett, have been considerable. But we cannot be complacent. The challenge facing soil conservationists is as great today as it has ever been. Globally, we are still facing huge problems as in many places our land resources continue to decline. This is particularly so in developing countries, where populations continue to grow at an alarming rate. The world's population has now reached approximately six and a half billion, of which nearly one billion live in abject poverty. Much of my working life has been spent among these people. Most of the world's poor still depend upon agriculture and have to scratch a living from tiny plots of land or have to work as poorly paid rural labourers. More and more pressure is being placed upon the land in most developing countries. For these people there is just not enough land to go around. Their resources are being used beyond their potential and in many cases they are degrading badly. Meanwhile, the supply of water is perhaps an even greater problem – in much of China and India, where tens of millions of poor people live and depend on irrigation, the water tables are dropping at a frightening rate; frequently two metres or more a year.

Added to these problems, is something that is affecting us all wherever we live: climate change. There now seems little doubt that the climate is warming up. Changes can already be seen. For instance, where i now live in south-west England grapes are being grown and wine is being made – something that has not happened since Roman times some 2,000 years ago. But while some crops may be flourishing, some of the old, traditional crops and ways of farming are struggling. Species will die out and land degradation will become widespread, unless appropriate changes in land use and management are introduced. And

it is here that the challenge lies for people like us: as soil conservationists, can we come up with new technologies, new land uses and new management practices in time to prevent disasters? If present predictions prove to be correct, we will have to move quickly if we are to be in a position to advise land-users on new systems that are productive, economic and sustainable.

On the positive side, we are lucky that there is a fast growing interest in the environment in general and conservation in particular. This interest is something that we must all welcome and turn to advantage, but if we are to retain our credibility, we must be there with the answers when the questions are asked. Ironically, the public does not realize that we soil conservationists have been involved in protecting the environment for many years – long before it became a fashionable subject. Of course, until recently we did not use words like 'sustainability', but we have, for many years, like Bennett, talked about 'permanent agriculture' and meant the same thing – the sustainable use of our land resources.

The European Society of Soil Conservation has much to be proud of. It has been very effective in bringing together academics and research workers from all over Europe who are interested and involved in soil conservation. It has organized meetings and regularly produces excellent newsletters that keep its members informed and in touch. However, is this enough in itself? In spite of the ESSC's good work, not nearly enough is being done on the ground to overcome the growing problems of land degradation in Europe. Iceland has a well established and well regarded soil conservation service that has been operating for 100 years but, apart from this, few European countries provide a service worth the name to provide advice and assistance to land-users as they try to contend with the various problems of land degradation. The knowledge that ESSC members are generating will be of little use unless it can be applied in the field. Is it time for the ESSC to start actively lobbying for the establishment of soil conservation services throughout Europe? The research base is there, surely now it is time to put more of the knowledge and expertise into practice! What the great Hugh Hammond Bennett wrote about the USA in 1928 perhaps could now be said about most European countries today:

"There are national associations for the preservation of wild flowers and for the preservation and propagation of wildlife but none for the preservation of the soil. Conservation of this most fundamental and important of all resources is seldom seriously considered by anyone not directly or indirectly associated with the ownership or management of a farm, and it is too infrequently considered even by the farmers themselves."(3)

References

1. Hugh Hammond Bennett, United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/ABOUT/history/bennett.html
2. The Hugh Hammond Bennett Award: www.swcs.org Click onto site index. Under awards for members, click onto Hugh Hammond Bennett Award.
3. Quotes from Hugh Hammond Bennett, United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/ABOUT/history/quotes.html

Editor's note:

At the ESSC Council meeting in Lleida (Spain) in September 2006, the ESSC Council agreed to sponsor five young scientists to attend the ESSC Congress in Palermo. These were to be young scientists (under 35 years of age) who wished to attend and contribute to the ESSC Congress. Precise and transparent evaluation criteria were drawn up and advertised, both in the ESSC Newsletter and on the ESSC web site. In fact, there were 24 applications for the five places. This made evaluating such a large number of deserving applicants a particularly hard task and the evaluation panel was unable to offer sponsorship to many worthy applicants. The winners of the ESSC Scholarship to attend the Palermo Congress were Ranjan Bhattacharyya, Slobodan Mickovski, Endla Reintam, Péter Sipos and Metka Udovič. The successful applicants have been invited to tell us something about themselves, to share their perspectives on the Congress and tell us about their plans for the future. Below, four profiles are presented. We hope these young scientists will remain members of the ESSC and actively support the development of our Society. Given the success of this new venture by the ESSC, it is hoped further sponsorship can be arranged for future ESSC meetings.

Ranjan Bhattacharyya
School of Applied Sciences
The University of Wolverhampton
Wolverhampton WV1 1SB
UK.
E-mail: ranjan_vpkas@yahoo.com

Ranjan Bhattacharyya is currently a full time research student at The University of Wolverhampton, UK. Ranjan earned his B.Sc. degree in Agriculture (First Class Honours), awarded by the Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswa-Vidyalaya (Bidhan Chandra Agricultural University), Mohanpur, Nadia, West Bengal, India (1994) and m.Sc. degree in Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry (First Class; obtained 'A' grade in all subjects) awarded by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi, India (1998). Ranjan passed the National Eligibility Test (an Examination conducted by ICAR to qualify as an Assistant Professor in India) in two subjects. These were in 'Soil Chemistry and Fertility' (1998) and 'Soil Physics and Soil and Water Conservation' (1999). He has successfully completed three training programmes on 'Agricultural Research Management', India (4 months; obtained 'A' grade), 'Use of Modern Tools to increase On-farm Water Use Efficiency', India (21 days) and the 'Midlands Consortium for Graduate Training in Physical Geography', UK (7 days).

Ranjan is a Scientist (on study leave) of the Vivekananda Institute of Hill Agriculture (VIHA), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in the discipline of Soil Science /Soil Physics/ Soil and Water Conservation. His research activities are mainly concerned with conservation tillage, carbon sequestration and soil conservation and his fieldwork is mainly based in Asia and the UK. Ranjan has field-based research projects either completed or are in progress at Almora (India) and in the UK. He has published his research, having authored

one bulletin, five book chapters, nine refereed papers in international journals, nine referred papers in Indian national journals and eight conference papers. He is a referee for two international journals and two Indian national journals. Ranjan is currently a student member of ESSC, the British Society of Soil Science and the International Union of Soil Sciences and he is a life member of the Indian Society of Soil Science.

Ranjan obtained two merit scholarships and one national scholarship during the age of 11-18 years. He received both a University Fellowship and an ICAR (New Delhi) Fellowship during his B.Sc. (Agriculture) Programme and University and Junior Research Fellowships (from ICAR) during his m.Sc. Programme. Ranjan received research grants for running the Institute (VIHA) projects from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the BORASSUS Project. He received a grant to present his Ph.D. research at the British Society of Soil Science Young Scientist Meeting 7, in London on 29-30 March 2007.

Ranjan writes "I like the working atmosphere of the University of Wolverhampton very much. The facilities provided by our School (Applied Sciences) and the BORASSUS Project are impressive! i am really fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work in the prestigious BORASSUS Project".

About the experience of attending the 5th ESSC Conference, Ranjan writes "firstly, i am very grateful to the judging committee of the ESSC for choosing me as one of the grant recipients. It was an excellent opportunity to present our work (the BORASSUS Project) before the learned and the eminent scientists of the ESSC. In fact, this was my first experience to attend and present at an international conference. I was really impressed to see the ongoing research activities and the oral and poster presentations by the researchers who came from different high-rated universities and institutes of Europe and the world. I enjoyed many interesting sessions and learned many things. I am indeed grateful to Professor Mike Fullen (my Director of Studies) for his guidance and information about the programme; without his inspiration my dream would have never come true! Finally, i would like to dedicate the award to Dr Kathy Davies, whom we consider as the initiator and inspiration of our palm-mat geotextile research".

About his future plans: "Of late, i am working on the use of palm-mat geotextiles for soil conservation in the UK. I will try my best to contribute towards soil conservation in Europe during my three year stay in the UK and in India after that. After completing my Ph.D. work, i will continue to work as a member of our research team on conservation management practices, specifically zero and minimum tillage, balanced fertilization and intensification of organic manuring in the soils of the Indian Himalayas. Research on carbon sequestration, water stable aggregates and improvement in other soil physical conditions, as affected by different land use systems and manure additions, will be continued. I promise you that i will maintain a life-long interest and commitment to Soil Science/soil conservation and will maintain my links with the ESSC for many years to come".

Endla Reintam
Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
Estonian University of Life Sciences
Kreutzwaldi 1a
51014 Tartu
Estonia.

Tel.: 00 372 7313537
Fax: 00 372 7313539
E-mail: endla.reintam@emu.ee

Working place: Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Estonian University of Life Sciences.
Occupation: Associate Professor in Soil Science, since September 2007.
Degree: Ph.D.

I was born in the small village of Ohtu, located 30 km from our capital Tallinn, as the fourth daughter to my parents. I also have one younger brother. Our home is set in nice countryside surrounded by fields and forest. Living close to the nature made me love and respect it and i knew since i was quite young that i wanted to link my life with nature.

In the beginning of primary school i was quite sensitive to criticism and bad grades. So the teacher let me do my work again and again instead of accepting bad grades (my handwriting was terrible). I did my work again and again… From that period i got into the habit to not give up and try and try again until the target is achieved. I finished secondary school with 'cum laude'. Even if it opened many doors for me at universities, i chose agriculture, the specialty closest to my soul. So i started my studies at Estonian Agricultural University in 1992. Due to the major changes in agricultural policy, it was almost impossible to find good work in my specialty in time when if finished my studies in 1996. The logical thing to do was to follow the studies at Master's level in the topic of soil compaction. It took from me four years to finish it, as i did not know what i really wanted to do with my life in that time. I started to work as a laboratory assistant at the University and also to teach. The time to think about my place in this world came in year 2000, when my son (Karl-Erik) was born. I realized that the things what i really want to do is teaching and research. I finished my Master's thesis, resigned as a laboratory assistant and started to teach as a lecturer. My Ph.D. studies started in 2001 with a firm wish to study plant nutrition related to soil compaction. Working as full time lecturer took a lot of time and four years for Ph.D. study (common in our country) was too short and i finished my Ph.D. in December 2006.

The topic of soil compaction has been my main research focus during recent years. The main attention has been paid on plant nutrition related to soil compaction (see abstract of my thesis in ESSC Newsletter 2007/1). In complex field experiments, in addition to studies of the direct effect of soil compaction on plant growth, the effect of deep-rooted plants on soil properties was investigated. The topic of my presentation at the 5th ESSC Congress 'Changes in soil physical properties depending on Canada thistle occurrence on Estonian arable soils and its after-effects on crop growth' was one part of our complex study. The main species

investigated in our experiments are spring barley and with its related weed species, wheat, yellow and narrow-leafed lupine, red clover, lucerne, oil rape, bird's-foot trefoil, mugwort and Canada thistle.

What was my perspective in Palermo? For young people it is most important at such events to introduce their study area, receive feedback and see what others are doing and to get new or better ideas on how to continue the study. As i finished just one important part of my research, the main idea was to get new information about different study projects to find some new perspectives to follow in the future. What i got? i got new ideas, new contacts and friends and updated links with old ones.

But whatever the main goal in visiting international meetings, one goal is to see new places, nature and culture of the host country. And i saw beautiful nature and the kind people of Sicily and i felt a very warm welcome there.

Due to the change of generations in Soil Science in Estonia, there is much work for my young colleagues and me. So i will continue my work with teaching students and trying to intrigue them in such interesting topics as soil. In science, i will focus more on grassland compaction, which is a subject not well studied in Estonia and in the World.

I would like thank the ESSC for the support and for the opportunity to participate in the Congress. I would like to give my greatest thanks to the Organizers of 5th ESSC Congress for this very well organized meeting.

Péter Sipos
Research Fellow
Institute for Geochemical Research
Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Budaörsi út 45.
H-1112 Budapest
Hungary.

E-mail: sipos@geochem.hu

I am a geologist and i have worked at the Institute for Geochemical Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences since 1998 as a Research Fellow. My research interest is focused on environmental geochemistry, and i also take part in the operation and development of the X-ray fluorescence spectrometer analytical technique. During my work i have been initiated in projects on soil-metal interaction, on soil magnetic properties and their relation to their heavy metal content, on radioactive and communal waste deposition, as well as monitoring of atmospheric 137Cs deposition. I am a member of the 'Hungarian Geological Society', the 'Hungarian Soil Science Society', the 'Society for Environmental Geochemistry and Health' and the 'European Clay Group Association'. The main findings of my research work have been published in 15 scientific papers and at 13 international conferences. In 2005, my scientific work was recognized by the award of the 'Young Scientist Prize of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences', and by a geological award the 'Szádeczky-Kardoss Elemér Award'.

I defended my Ph.D. thesis on 'Geochemical factors controlling the migration and immobilization of heavy metals as reflected by the study of soil profiles from the Cserhát Mountains' in 2005. In this project the distribution and potential mobilization conditions of several heavy metals (Cr, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn and Pb) in unpolluted forest soil profiles were studied. In addition, laboratory experiments have been accomplished to study the adsorption and desorption characteristics of the same elements in soil samples with different buffering capacities.

After successfully defending my Ph.D. thesis, i have continued the experimental laboratory work in a team, and we have performed competitive adsorption and desorption experiments on soils to model the interaction between heavy metals potentially released due to sewage sludge application and soils with different buffering capacities. The most important heavy metal immobilization processes were studied as a function of sample composition, and data were provided for the strength of this immobilization. The effect of geochemical characteristics of soils on the adsorption capacity of soil mineral particles was also studied. The metal adsorption capacities of individual soil mineral particles were determined using the novel method of analytical electron microscopy.

These latter results were presented at the 5th ESSC Congress in Palermo in the 'Soil Pollution and Contamination' topic. This Congress assured an excellent opportunity for the presentation and discussion of my most recent results on soil-metal interaction. As a geochemist dealing with soils, i have been always interested in opportunities of learning about other aspects of Soil Science and meeting soil scientists working in different fields, as such occasions can enlarge my scientific view, giving new inspiration and ideas for my work. I would like to express again my thanks to the ESSC and the Congress organizers to make my participation possible at the Congress by providing an ESSC grant.

In the future, i plan to continue the modelling of soil-metal interaction by experimental work, completed with the study of remediation possibilities of metal polluted soils. I am focusing my studies on metal adsorption characteristics of soil mineral particles. I also would like to extend my research on different environmental media contaminated by heavy metals.

Metka Udovič
Biotechnical Faculty
University of Ljubljana
Department of Agronomy
Center for Soil and Environmental Sciences
Jamnikarjeva 101
1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia.

Tel.: 00 386 1 4236611
E-mail: metka.udovic@bf.uni-lj.si

The interest in environmental sciences was always present in me and it is constantly increasing. After graduating at the Slovenian Scientific Lyceum France

Prešeren in Trieste (Italy), i studied Biology (morphology – physiology course) at the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), Biotechnical Faculty, Department of Biology. During the study i accumulated heterogeneous experience by means of student work at various institutions, e.g. at the Biotechnical Faculty itself, at the Botanical Garden of Ljubljana and at the National Institute of Biology. In 2004 i presented my thesis in plant physiology entitled: "**Mycotrophic status of some halophytes in the marine salt works at Sečovlje (Sečoveljske soline)"** (obtained mark 9/10).

Afterwards i started my Ph.D. study at the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana, firstly at the Department of Biology, then at the Department of Agronomy, Center for Soil and Environmental Sciences, where i worked as a Ph.D. young researcher. This was supported by the Slovenian Ministry for Education, Science and Sport and was supervised by Professor Domen Lestan. I collaborate as a researcher in an ongoing project on new soil remediation techniques and on their impact on soil functionality (Slovenian Ministry for Education, Science and Sport, Grant J4-9277-0481-06). Beside my research work, i am actively involved in the undergraduate study of Agronomy as assistant in Ecopedology, where i run the practical component. At the moment i am the working supervisor of four graduate theses in Ecopedology.

My research is focused on heavy metal polluted soil remediation and biological evaluation of such remediated soil, that still contain residual heavy metals. Novel approaches in soil remediation studied by the research group at the Center for Soil and Environmental Sciences need an upgrade from the point of view of the time and the succession's impact on the residual heavy metal fraction present in the remediated soil. Currently, i am focusing my study on the impact of earthworms, as the most diagnostic representatives of the soil fauna. I am using different extraction and fractionation techniques simulating natural processes that could affect the residual heavy metal fraction, mostly unavailable to organisms, but changing through time.

In the future i would like to consider the microbial populations present in the soil: how does remediation affect them, their functionality, how they affect the availability/mobility of residual heavy metals in soil after remediation. In this field it is necessary to consider also the effect of abiotic as well as biotic aging factors on the dynamics of the residual heavy metal remains in the soil. To date, i have presented my work at the Summer School IP Socrates 2006 'Soil-Plant-Microbe interactions: fundamentals and applications' held in Vienna (Austria) (EuroLeague in University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences (BOKU)), at the '5th International Congress of the European Society for Soil Conservation' held in Palermo (Italy) in June 2007, at the '2nd International Symposium on Environmental Management' held in Zagreb (Croatia) in September 2007 and at the '1st International ERM Conference' held in Celje (Slovenia) in September 2007. The results have been published so far in three articles; a fourth article is being reviewed:

References

1. Udovic, m. and Lestan, D. (2007). EDTA leaching of Cu contaminated soils using ozone/UV for treatment and reuse of washing solution in a closed loop. Water Air and Soil Pollution 181, 319-327.
2. Udovic, M. and Lestan, D. (2007). The effect of earthworms on the fractionation and bioavailability of heavy metals before and after soil remediation. Environmental Pollution 148, 663-668.

3. Udovic, M., Plavc, Z. and Lestan, D. The effect of earthworms on the fractionation, mobility and bioaccessibility of Pb, Zn and Cd metals before and after soil leaching with EDTA. Chemosphere. doi: 10.1016/j.chemosphere.2007.06.044.

Soil degradation and the UK Parliament

Dr Jonathan Butler
14 The Paddock
Harston
Cambridge CB2 7PR
UK.

E-mail: jonathanjbutler@yahoo.co.uk

How is environmental research translated into policy? Are Parliamentarians interested in soil degradation? What can be done on a political level to combat the causes of diffuse pollution, flooding and environmental decline? These were some of the questions and concerns i had as i approached my first day at the 'Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology' (POST), a body of the House of Commons and House of Lords (Lower House and Upper House, respectively, of the UK Parliament) charged with providing independent and balanced analysis of public policy issues that have a basis in science and technology. Having been selected to take part in a joint Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)/POST Fellowship scheme working for three months in the UK Parliament, i was to produce a briefing note on the challenges of soil degradation in Britain[1]. The three months in Westminster were to prove an engaging and challenging time away from my Ph.D. research, and provide a useful insight into how the research community, government departments and land users interact in policy making and implementation in the Earth Sciences.

It will come as no surprise to readers of the ESSC Newsletter that soil degradation is one of the most pressing environmental concerns in many parts of the world, and the UK is no exception. Around 2.2 million tonnes of topsoil are eroded annually in the UK and over 17% of arable land shows signs of erosion[2]. On-site costs of soil degradation from loss of productive soil and nutrients, as well as off-site costs of flooding from muddy runoff, have been estimated at £264 million (€387 million) a year, while the costs of treating water contaminated with agricultural pollutants are £203 million (€298 million) a year[3]. Add to that the challenges of climate change (wetter, stormier winters and drier summers) and possible feedbacks as carbon is released from drier soils, and soil degradation is a significant problem now and will be in the future. Soil degradation is not just a rural problem: urban soils can be degraded by pollution, removal, burial or sealing of the surface which can exacerbate flooding.

Of course, the UK has nothing like the scale of erosion seen in other parts of the world, including southern Africa where i carried out my Ph.D. research, or in the south western

United States where dust storms can be a significant economic and human health hazard. Nor does the UK suffer from saline incursion into soil, as seen in the Middle East and other semi-arid regions. Nonetheless, the UK faces challenges of erosion as well as nutrient decline and contamination, with attendant problems for flooding, pollution, agriculture and the urban environment - the very things that concern Parliamentarians. Communicating these issues effectively to busy Parliamentarians is no mean task, but i found that most Members of Parliament (MPs) and peers are extremely receptive to Earth Science issues that have wide ranging societal consequences. Although many parliamentarians are not themselves scientists, a great deal of respect is accorded to scientific evidence in the policy-making process, especially that coming from bodies such as POST that exist to inform debate, rather than make specific recommendations.

Much of my work at POST involved working closely with the scientific community in synthesizing existing and forthcoming research on soil degradation in the UK. With the policy and stakeholder communities, i researched what policies and initiatives are being used to address soil issues and where this may still be lacking. In a policy sense, soil degradation is becoming a 'hot issue', with the UK Environment Agency, the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the EU all working on policies to protect rural soils. The single payment scheme, an initiative which replaced the old Common Agricultural Policy, provides subsidies on the basis that land is maintained in good agricultural and environmental condition, and includes a soil protection review. Under voluntary agreements such as Environmental Stewardship, around 40% of the 20,000 participants to date have chosen to complete a soil management plan which protects soil from physical erosion. Part of the EU Water Framework Directive involves controlling diffuse pollution from soil, including nitrate and phosphate from agricultural sources, on an individual river basin scale. Urban soil protection generally lags behind, but policies to address urban soil degradation are now being developed, for instance in the planning system, where sustainability appraisal and environmental impact assessment explicitly require consideration of impacts on soils. Proposed changes to the planning system, unveiled in the 2007 Planning White Paper, may have implications for the sustainable use of soils, particularly where large infrastructure projects are concerned, although at present these implications are unclear.

At EU level, the European Commission adopted the 'Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection' in September 2006, which contains proposals for an EU Soil Framework Directive. The Soil Thematic Strategy seeks to establish common principles for the protection and sustainable use of soils, prevent and mitigate threats to soils, preserve soil functions and restore degraded and contaminated soils. This proposed Directive could have substantial implications for UK policy on soils, although several aspects of the legislation are likely to be subsumed into existing national laws under the principle of subsidiarity. Defra, the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government have run a public consultation exercise on the Thematic Strategy, which was due to close in October 2007. Whilst the official UK position depends on the outcome of the consultation exercise, the initial UK line regarding the draft Directive recognizes the need to address soil issues in the context of the wider environmental and climate change agenda. The UK position also aims to build on existing UK and EU legislation, while raising concerns about regulations on soil sealing by urbanization and contamination. At the time of writing, it appeared that many EU governments wished to weaken proposals in the draft Framework Directive, removing all references to 'risk areas' and making other management requirements non-binding. It remains to be seen whether this promising pan-European strategy will make it into law and what it will mean for UK soils.

One of the key insights from my time in Westminster was that while policies, backed by incentives, are beginning to address degradation, our lack of knowledge of the interactions between soil, water, air and climate change makes it difficult to assess their success. The work being carried out by ESSC members and other organizations is helping to bridge this knowledge gap. Continued investment in soil research is essential to help inform policy. There is growing consensus among land users, government departments and researchers that protection of soil needs to be carried out as part of a holistic approach that includes protecting other parts of the environment from the effects of soil degradation. This is beginning to be done not only in the UK but across the EU, as seen with the proposed Soil Framework Directive.

How is environmental research translated into policy? By some very good hard work that goes on behind the scenes between scientists, government bodies, local authorities and land users. Are Parliamentarians interested in soil degradation? Most definitely, yes, especially when it can be demonstrated that it has a real-world impact on resources, infrastructure, the environment and quality of life. We live in a time when the environmental debate is being taken seriously by policymakers as never before. It is important that scientists, and soil scientists especially, play a full role in informing that debate.

References

1. Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (2006). UK Soil Degradation' POSTnote 265: www.parliament.uk/documents/upload/postpn265.pdf
2. Environment Agency (2004). The State of Soils in England and Wales: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/commondata/acrobat/stateofsoils_1747056.pdf
3. Environment Agency (2002). Agriculture and Natural Resources: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/commondata/acrobat/natrespt3_673531.pdf

Dr Jonathan Butler worked at the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) in 2006 as a Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) Fellow and wishes to thank both NERC and POST for his Fellowship. Jonathan completed his Ph.D. in 2006 on the long term erosion history of southern Africa using cosmogenic nuclides at the University of Edinburgh. He now works with a major FTSE 100 company as a market analyst specializing in the energy and environment spheres. Jonathan can be contacted at: jonathanjbutler@yahoo.co.uk

NEW Ph.D. THESES

Editor's note:

The citation details of Ph.D. theses by ESSC members since and including 2004 have been added as an additional page to the ESSC web site. To date, 36 Ph.D. theses are quoted. On the ESSC web site, please look under 'Publications'. Please forward the citation details of any additional Ph.D. thesis completed since the year 2000 by an ESSC member to any of the Editorial team. We will then add the thesis citation details to the web site.

No additional Ph.D. theses have been reported to the Editorial team for this issue.

Editor's note:

At the ESSC Council meeting in Lleida (Spain) in September 2006, the interactions between the ESSC and younger soil scientists were discussed (see Newsletter 2006/3, p. 5-8). It was decided that the ESSC should be more proactive in its support of younger scientists. As part of that initiative, we would welcome articles from both Ph.D. researchers and supervisors. We would like to hear from recent Ph.D. graduates; what advice and experience do you have which you would like to share with your colleagues in earlier stages of their research? We would also like to hear from current Ph.D. researchers; what are the factors which both encourage and limit progress? What are the particular challenges facing part-time Ph.D. researchers? We also invite contributions from experienced Ph.D. supervisors. What experience would you like to share with less experienced colleagues? If you are a less experienced Ph.D. supervisor, what supervisory issues do you find challenging? In short, please tell us "what i know now, which i wish i knew then!" As a third contribution to these themes, Mike Fullen (Wolverhampton) shares some of his perspectives.

Supervising a Ph.D. researcher

Mike Fullen
School of Applied Sciences
The University of Wolverhampton WV1 1SB
UK.

E-mail: m.fullen@wlv.ac.uk

"Learn extensively, expound in detail and explain the cardinal principles briefly on the basis of mastery of knowledge."
The Chinese Sage Mencius (Meng Tzu) (372-289 BC).

Introduction

I would like to share some perspectives relating to my experience of supervising Ph.D. students. This is based on being on the supervisory team of 18 completed Ph.D. theses and having been examiner for 13 Ph.D. theses. I do not claim to have all the answers, but there are some experiences which some readers may find helpful. Certainly, it is an extremely rewarding process, seeing a researcher mature, usually from a rather uncertain postgraduate to a Ph.D. graduate. However, the process is full of challenges, difficulties and obstacles. At the same time, it can be highly enjoyable, informative and contributes to the learning and development of all concerned.

The Researcher

To succeed, the research student needs certain characteristics. These include the intellectual capacity to complete the Ph.D. programme. They also need a genuine interest and commitment to their research topic. The researcher must be a genuine seeker of scientific truth. There are some common misconceptions. Many researchers start with the belief they must revolutionize science. As i explain to them, they are not required to add

a new element to the Periodic Table or discover a new planet! The common thread in most Ph.D. awards is that they should "make a significant and identifiable contribution to human knowledge". That is, they must be able to identify some 'little gem' of knowledge they are adding to the corpus of human intelligence. Another misconception is that for the results to be worthy of a doctorate, outcomes from all experiments must be highly informative and statistically significant. However, it is equally valid to find an experiment does not work, or to reject a hypothesis. Such findings are valuable in guiding others in their future research.

Plate 1. The Truth (1905) by the Lithuanian artist Mikalojus Konstantinas Ciurlionis (1875-1911).

The researcher then embarks on his/her research project. Of course, it is important to provide much support at this stage. There are many practical issues to deal with besides academic matters. On the academic front, the researcher needs to engage in much reading, develop research hypotheses and acquire practical skills. Developing a clear, focused and identifiable topic is essential. A common danger is to become confused and thus lack clarity and focus. A clear one-sentence working hypothesis is advisable. At this stage, a weekly meeting seems appropriate.

Once the working hypothesis is defined, a good method of progressing is to define the most suitable topic for a literature review. Of course, a 'state-of-the-art' literature review is essential in any Ph.D. thesis and there could be the laudable aim to evolve the review

into a published literature review. Since such a review could be completed within a year of starting research, there is the distinct possibility of inserting the published paper into the final thesis. This step is guaranteed to impress any thesis examiner!

The researcher will increasingly take ownership of the research project and progressively and seamlessly the role of the supervisor in project development will decrease, while the role of the researcher will correspondingly increase. A meeting every two or three weeks is advisable. We find a one-hour meeting particularly helpful. Shorter meetings give insufficient time to develop and debate concepts and plans. In longer meetings, the focus begins to progressively wane after about one-hour. I find it useful to write notes on project meetings in a hard-back book, with a separate book for each researcher. The notes progressively develop into a valuable log and archive of information detailing project progress and development. Such a book is likely to be retained, while loose sheets of notes are often lost! It is important for both supervisor and supervisee to have a clear notion of the tasks and milestones to be achieved by the next meeting.

The researcher is then on a long, uphill and often lonely journey (Plate 2). The researcher will encounter several challenges and difficulties. A recurrent problem is that the researcher often perceives their problems as unique; that no other researcher has had to overcome their obstacles to progress. This issue is best tackled by encouraging the researcher to be part of a research community; the more vibrant and dynamic the better. This can be partially achieved within an institution, with active participation in a postgraduate society and a regular and interesting programme of seminars and guest lectures. The researcher should also be encouraged to join and engage in relevant learned societies and professional organizations and attend selected conferences.

Another recurrent problem is the arduous nature of research. Experiments tend to be highly time consuming and, to merit publication in international refereed journals, they require proper replication. This often involves repeating quite dull and repetitive tasks many times. The researcher needs to understand this less enviable part of the research process and have the personality and determination to see these repetitive tasks through to completion.

A combination of feelings of isolation and boredom can lead to researchers becoming quite depressed. This can occur at various times in their Ph.D. research career, but seems most frequent at the end of the first year of study. In personal development counselling, this phase is sometimes referred to as 'the pit'. It is a time for patient and considered advice and reflection. Some gentle encouragement is needed. However, it should be recognized that a research career may not be the best option for the student and it may be best for the researcher to stop their programme and search for something more suited to them. Most University regulations have a 'let-out' system here and the researcher can often at least receive a Masters degree for their work.

If the researcher can get through this difficult phase and climb out of the 'pit', then usually it is a clear track to project completion. A combination of regular meetings and encouragement usually provide a good supervisory platform to completion.

A recurrent problem in the latter phases of the programme is a nagging worry by the researcher that they have insufficient research material for a Ph.D. I usually find this concern

to be unfounded. There is a belief that the thesis work must be an absolutely complete package, with all hypotheses fully tested and answered. However, to a large extent, the doctoral programme is a research training exercise, equipping the researcher for future professional work. This uncertainty is often reflected in an unwillingness to stop experiments and to start writing up their thesis.

Plate 2. Funeral Symphony (1903) by M. K. Ciurlionis.

The writing up phase requires careful planning and forethought. The crucial issue is to allow sufficient time. As the Greek Stoic philosopher Epictetus (341-271 BC), said:

"Nothing great is suddenly created, any more than a bunch of grapes or a fig.
If you tell me that you desire a fig,
I answer there must be time.
Let it first blossom, then bear fruit, then ripen."

In developing a time-map to completion, i believe the last six months of the programme should be devoted exclusively to the drafting and preparation of the thesis. Often the researcher tries to postpone writing up. After all, it is a massive and daunting undertaking. A useful step is to advise the researcher to construct a thesis plan at the beginning of their final year of study. This should consist of a series of chapter headings and sub-headings. Then, the supervisory team and researcher can work together to develop an agreed thesis plan. However, this plan will inevitably change as the researcher embarks on writing their thesis and all involved should maintain reasonable flexibility.

In the six month writing up phase, it is recommended that the student write a chapter at a time and then hand this to their supervisor(s) for review. Usually, the 'Materials and Methods' chapter is a good place to start, as it usually consists of a fairly mechanical review of field and/or laboratory protocols and statistical procedures. An analogy is starting to write a research paper on a blank sheet of paper. Just getting started is the most difficult task! However, once the researcher has overcome the initial hurdle of their first chapter, they tend to get into the rhythm of the process and can then proceed quite quickly and efficiently.

At about the same time as the initiation of the writing up process, it is necessary to make practical arrangements for thesis examination. It is often surprising how many colleagues activate the necessary administrative procedures quite late, which can lead to major and unnecessary delays in thesis examination. Examination procedures vary internationally. For instance, in the UK the examination is usually by two examiners. One is an External Examiner, who is an authority on the thesis subject matter from another institution. The other is the Internal Examiner, someone from the home institution who is knowledgeable about the thesis topic, but who is not necessarily an expert on it. In continental Europe, an Examination Panel of experts, usually both internal and external, are appointed.

After several drafts and supervisory meetings, a completed thesis evolves. This is often a trying time for both the supervisory team and the researcher. In particular, the researcher is under considerable stress, probably heightened by their constant search for new employment and the associated uncertainty. Often the researcher is not at their emotional best and the supervisor(s) needs to understand this and, perhaps, be more forgiving and tolerant than usual!

The day for thesis examination arrives. I believe an essential procedure is to have a practice rehearsal of the examination process. This usually consists of the supervisory team pretending to be the examiners and asking appropriate questions and developing an informed discussion on the thesis. The examination should simulate the examination scenario as much as realistically possible. For instance, in the UK a typical verbal examination (viva voce, or viva for short) is about two hours (although it does vary considerably) and so a practice viva should be about one to two hours. I recommend this about one-week before the actual exam. After a longer time, the candidate may have forgotten much of the discussed material. However, a shorter time may be insufficient for the candidate to think through and reflect on their responses to the questions and issues raised in the 'mock viva'.

There are many different examination formats. In Continental Europe, the candidate makes a public presentation to an audience, which can have a large number of attendees. This audience includes an invited panel of Examiners, who have already studied and evaluated the thesis. After the presentation by the candidate, the Examiners usually ask their series of questions. After that, the general audience can ask questions. Most people find public speaking rather daunting. However, much of the examination process has been completed before the Public Defence. Examiners would have already forwarded critical evaluations to the candidate and her/her supervisory team, along with detailed advice on corrections to the text.

In the UK, the examination procedure is very different. An External and Internal Examiner hold a closed examination session with the candidate. Usually, a Chair is present to see the process is fair, impartial and conducted in accordance with the regulations of the specific University. However, a Chair is not always present, depending on the specific

University regulations. The examination usually revolves around a critical evaluation and discussion of the thesis. A recurrent theme is for the Examiners to invite the candidate to discuss the relative merits and limitations of their research and to critically evaluate alternative approaches. Certainly, the 'closed door' approach is not as stressful as the Public Defence. On the other hand, usually the candidate has received no prior critical comments on the thesis and therefore cannot foretell the outcome.

For the candidate, the examination session is stressful, whatever the format. It is important the candidate tries to remain calm, cool and collected. They should speak clearly and at a proper pace. A temptation is to speak too quickly, when under pressure. If the candidate does not understand a question, then he/she should politely ask for the question to be repeated. It is useful for the candidate to have a notepad, so he/she can immediately write down ideas as they emerge. The candidate should not be a passive receiver of critical comments. Sometimes Examiners are deliberately provocative, in an attempt to encourage debate. The candidate should engage in genuine dialogue and discussion and give their honest views on the issues discussed. Therefore, a 'middle path' is advisable, being neither extremely defensive nor easily conceding all points to the Examiners. Rather, the candidate needs to engage in a calm, reasoned, logical, professional and well-focused discussion and debate.

Hopefully, the thesis examination will be a success. This is a time to congratulate and celebrate the achievements of the new doctoral graduate. Inevitably, the new doctor will feel a glow of satisfaction (Plate 3). It is also be time for the supervisory team to congratulate themselves. They have contributed to the progress of the next generation of scientists. Hopefully, they will also have a new postdoctoral colleague who they can work with for long into the future.

Plate 3. The Thought (1905) by m.K. Ciurlionis.

The Supervisor

"You can't make the grass grow by pulling at it."

(Ancient Chinese proverb)

The supervisor plays a crucial role in the whole Ph.D. process. Of course, the supervisor must be active in the research field and have a genuine interest in the subject matter. However, the supervisor must also be a guide, advisor and source of encouragement and knowledge to the researcher. In effect the supervisor is nurturing a new researcher and must take a positive role. Regretfully, i have witnessed cases of outright negative criticism of researchers, with concomitant negative impacts. Such a counter-productive approach can damage the confidence of the Ph.D. student and lead to despondency and a poor personal relationship between the supervisor and the student. This can lead to a spiral of negativity, which is damaging to all involved.

In the early stages of the research programme, the researcher often expects a series of instructions. That is, they often perceive research as a series of tasks allocated to them by their supervisor(s). It is important to develop the ethos that the research project is mainly the responsibility of the researcher. It is imperative that the student gives his/her input and views on how the project should progress and develop. This approach encourages confidence and growing maturity in the researcher and can lay an important foundation for their research career. Of course, debate, discussion and, in some cases, disagreement, are all integral components of the whole process. What is important is that such discussions should be friendly and professional and take place in the context of a genuine interest in optimizing the performance of both the researcher and the research project.

There are decisions to be made regarding the nature and composition of any potential supervisory team. Some prefer to be the sole supervisor. Others prefer to supervise within a team framework. Personally, i prefer the latter strategy. No one individual is the source of all knowledge, wisdom and information; we can all learn from each other. Increasingly, projects are multidisciplinary and so the perspectives of colleagues with different specialisms may be appropriate. I have found this approach extremely informative, learning much from colleagues with different expertise. This should be a 'win-win' strategy for all involved. It is advisable that one supervisor takes the lead role, often described as the 'Director of Studies.' However, too many supervisors will be confusing. I recall one researcher with a relatively large number of supervisors complaining of being "gang supervised!" The optimum number of supervisors seems to be two or three.

The words of the great Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu, written some 2,500 years ago, expresses many relevant concepts in the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. Verse 17 of the Tao Te Ching comments on the nature of leadership and can be transposed to many roles in life. In this context, 'the leader' is the supervisor and "the people" the researcher(s).

"With the greatest leader above them,
people barely know one exists.
Next comes one who they love and praise.
Next comes one whom they fear.
Next comes one whom they despise and defy.

When a leader trusts no one,
No one trusts him.

The great leader speaks little.
He never speaks carelessly.
He works without self-interest
and leaves no trace.
When all is finished, the people say,
"We did it ourselves."

In conclusion, the words of Theodore Rooseveldt accurately portray the challenges and triumphs of the entire Ph.D. experience:

"It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood: who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, but there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement; and who at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory or defeat."

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the researchers and colleagues i have worked with for their contributions to the expressed ideas. My thanks go to Dr Colin Booth, Dr Madhu Subedi and Professor Ian Trueman (all at The University of Wolverhampton) and Professor Antonio Guerra (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper. The paintings were reproduced with the kind permission of the Mikalojus Konstantinas Ciurlionis National Art Museum, Kaunas, Lithuania.

References

1. Parsons, A. and Knight, P.G. (1995). How To Do Your Dissertation in Geography and Related Disciplines. Chapman & Hall, London, 151 pp.
2. [Although this book focuses on undergraduate projects, many of the issues and material discussed are very relevant to postgraduate study].

CONFERENCE REPORTS

None received.

Soil Erosion and Sediment Redistribution in River Catchments. Measurement, Modelling and Management.

Philip N. Owens and Alison J. Collins (Editors), (2006). Published by CABI, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK, 320 pp. (ISBN 0 85199 722 8). (Price £75, US$150)

This very timely Book integrates two prevailing and crucial paradigms in Environmental Science: the issues of soil erosion and sediment dynamics within catchment systems. The Editors and Contributors are to be congratulated in identifying and targeting a 'niche' area at the interface between Soil Science and Geomorphology. Soil erosion studies tend to be the prerogative of pedologists, while catchment sediment dynamics tend to be in the realm of fluvial geomorphologists. This book successfully bridges these disciplines and presents a coherent and holistic overview of sediment dynamics within the framework of catchment systems. As the Editors commented "in all the three themes, measurement, modelling and management, the appropriate mantra is integration" (page 5). Thus, the Book succeeds in its aims and contributes to our understanding of "the movement of soil and sediment particles from source to sink" (Preface, page xiii).

The Book consists of a series of peer-reviewed papers contributed to a Conference held at the National Soil Resources Institute (NSRI) at the Silsoe Campus of Cranfield University (UK) between 9-11 September 2003. The Book consists of 28 chapters and is divided into five parts:

I: 'Introduction' (one chapter).
II: 'Measurement' (11 chapters).
III: 'Modelling' (eight chapters).
IV: 'Management' (seven chapters).
V: 'Summary and Outlook' (one chapter).

The book is impressive and scholarly. The Editors have integrated the diverse work of 66 contributing scientists, based in 15 countries across the globe. The chapters cover a variety of spatial scales (national, catchment, field and plot scales). Furthermore, reports are from diverse bioclimatic regimes (semi-arid, Mediterranean, temperate, humid tropical and subtropical) in the continents of Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and North and Central America. The book collates much of the 'state-of-the-art' and provides a valuable compendium of data, with 84 tables. The book is richly illustrated, with 82 Figures and 13 photographs. The comprehensive references, quoting 619 publications, offer valuable pathways to more advanced reading.

In the introductory chapter, P.N. Owens and A.J. Collins place the subject matter of the book within a contextural framework. The main focus of Part II (Measurement) is comparative analyses of the relative strengths and limitations of different approaches to the evaluation, measurement and monitoring of sediment dynamics within catchment systems. In Part III (Modelling) there are commendable attempts to link the outputs from models to field-based observations of sediment dynamics. In Part IV (Management), understanding of the dynamic processes of sediment transfer is applied to real management issues and problems

at multiple scales (from field to catchment) and in diverse field settings. The concluding chapter by P.N. Owens and A.J. Collins identifies and makes constructive suggestions for future research on soil-water-sediment systems. They emphasize that future studies need to enable catchment managers and policy makers to make informed decisions. To achieve this, these end-users need to be provided with appropriate information and tools (both analytical and modelling).

A recurrent theme embedded within the Book is the importance of dynamic interactions between soils/sediments and biological systems. Case studies are presented of these interactions on slopes (R.A. Shakesby et al., W.H. Blake et al., R.P.D. Walsh et al.), within rivers (D.J. Evans and C.E. Gibson, E.L. Petticrew), in lakes (I.G. Droppo et al.) and in marine (I.G. Droppo et al.) environments.

A minor criticism is that, given the large amount of information to digest, chapter abstracts would have been useful. However, most chapters do present a helpful summary or conclusions section.

This is a valuable and informative Book and will especially benefit both the research community and students at an advanced stage of study (final year undergraduates and m. Sc. and Ph.D. students).

Mike Fullen
The University of Wolverhampton, UK.

BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS

None received.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY ESSC MEMBERS

Included are the citation details of papers and books produced by ESSC members. These provide a growing resource for exchange of valuable information to both research and teaching. The cumulative citation list is being added to and updated on the ESSC web site. Students of ESSC members (both undergraduate and postgraduate) are increasingly accessing this facility in their literature searches. Currently, the number of quoted publications cited on the web page is 313. Please e-mail the citation details of papers in international refereed journals since and including the year 2000 to any member of the Editorial team.

As mentioned in the report on recent Ph.D. theses, the citation details of Ph.D. theses by ESSC members since and including 2000 have been added as an additional page to the ESSC web site. To date, 36 Ph.D. theses are quoted. On the ESSC web site, please look under 'Publications'. Please forward the citation details of any additional Ph.D. thesis completed since 2000 by an ESSC member to any of the Editorial team. We will then add the thesis citation details to the web site.

PAPERS

Fullen, M.A., Booth, C.A., Sarsby, R.W., Davies, K., Kurgan, R., Bhattacharyya, R., Subedi, M., Luckhurst, D.A., Poesen, J., Smets, T., Kertesz, A., Toth, A., Szalai, Z., Jakab, G., Kozma, K., Jankauskas, B., Jankauskiene, G., Bühmann, C., Paterson, G., Mulibana, E., Nell, J.P., van der Merwe, G.M.E., Guerra, A.J.T., Mendonça, J.K.S., Guerra, T.T., Sathler, R., Bezerra, J.F.R., Peres, S.M., Zheng Yi, Li Yongmei, Tang Li, Panomtarachichigul, m., Peukrai, S., Dao Chau Thu, Tran Huu Cuong, Truong Thi Toan, Jonsyn-Ellis, F., Jallow, S., Cole, A., Mulholland, B., Dearlove m. and Corkill, C. (2007). The contribution of biogeotextiles to sustainable development and soil conservation in developing countries: The BORASSUS Project, p. 123-141 In: E. Tiezzi, J.C. Marques, C.A. Brebbia and S.E. Jørgensen (Eds) Sustainable Development VI. Wessex Institute of Technology Press, Southampton.

Smets, T., Poesen, J., Fullen, M.A. and Booth, C.A. (2007). Effectiveness of palm and simulated geotextiles in reducing run-off and inter-rill erosion on medium and steep slopes. Soil Use and Management 23, 306-316.

Udovic, M. and Lestan, D. (2007). EDTA leaching of Cu contaminated soils using ozone/UV for treatment and reuse of washing solution in a closed loop. Water Air and Soil Pollution 181, 319-327.

Udovic, M. and Lestan, D. (2007). The effect of earthworms on the fractionation and bioavailability of heavy metals before and after soil remediation. Environmental Pollution 148, 663-668.

Web Based Bulletin Board

The ESSC wishes to rapidly disseminate information to its members. Please forward information to the ESSC web site to be placed on our ESSC Bulletin Board. These could include searches for potential collaborators for research proposals, calls for research proposals, job opportunities, research studentship opportunities, impending conferences and other items of important information for rapid dissemination. Of course, we will also continue the regular circulation of information via our Newsletter. The ESSC web site is:
http://www.essc.sk

Appointment of new Ph.D. research students

None reported.

Institutional movements and promotions of ESSC members

None reported.

ESSC membership list and contact details

The full ESSC membership list is held on the ESSC web site. Under 'members' you can get a full listing. Also under 'members' you can click on any member country and find a listing of members in the selected country.

We are trying to keep the membership list on the web site up-to-date. Please check your details and let us know if there are any necessary correction(s). If your details change, also please let us know. Some members have requested that we do not add their e-mail addresses to the web site, to avoid uninvited 'spam' e-mails. Of course, we respect this request. Therefore, while we retain a list of the e-mail addresses of ESSC Members, this list will not be available on the web site. Please send updated information to Professor Pavol Bielek at:
E-mail: bielek@vupu.sk

Please also use and refer to the '**Directory of European Organizations and Persons Working on Soil Protection'** as a reference source for European colleagues, both members and non-members of the ESSC. This publication does contain the e-mail addresses of most ESSC members and will be subject to periodic updates. The reference citation is:

Rubio, J.L., Imeson, A.C., Bielek, P., Fullen, M.A., Pascual, J.A., Andreu, V., Recatala, L. and Ano, C. (2006). **Directory of European Organizations and Persons Working on Soil Protection.** Soil Science and Conservation Research Institute, Bratislava, 190 pp. (plus CD-Rom).

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREEN5 International Conference
Vilnius, Lithuania: 1-4 July 2008

'Construction for a sustainable environment'

CALL FOR PAPERS

Construction and the environment.
Whole Life Cycle Analysis and Environmental Assessment.
Design for sustainability.
Municipal, commercial and industrial waste streams.
Waste management and disposal.
Use of waste materials in construction.
Landfills, tips and tailings facilities.
Derelict and contaminated land.
Erosion control and ground stabilization.
Influence of climate change.
Coping with extreme weather events.
Policy and regulation.
Quality Control and Assurance.
Case histories.

Please submit abstracts (not more than 400 words) by 14 January 2008

Contact:
Professor R.W. Sarsby (Civil Engineering Section, SEBE)
University of Wolverhampton,
Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1SB, UK.

Tel: 00 44 1902 322263
Fax: 00 44 1902 322743
E-mail: R.Sarsby@wlv.ac.uk
Website: www.GREEN5.co.uk

GREEN5 International Conference

Vilnius, Lithuania: 1-4 July 2008

'Construction for a sustainable environment'

Preliminary registration of interest:

Please complete this form and return to Professor R.W. Sarsby

Name:.....

Institution:.....

.....

Address for correspondence:.....

.....

.....

Tel:.....

Fax:.....

e-mail:.....

Topics of interest:.....

.....

Lithuanian Soil Science Society at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences

On behalf of the Board of the Lithuanian Soil Science Society (LSSS), we hereby cordially invite you to attend the International Scientific Conference Celebrating the 50th Jubilee of the Lithuanian Soil Science Society to be organized about October-November 2008 at the Lithuanian University of Agriculture (in Kaunas). We are pleased to announce the possibility to publish original research papers in the journal 'Agricultural Sciences', which is the periodical publication (four issues per year) of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. The scientific standard of all papers is maintained by the Editorial Board, which comprise scientists of the highest qualification: professors, habilitated doctors and academicians. Currently, the journal 'Agricultural Sciences' is indexed in CABI Publishing:
http://www.cabi.org/

In this connection, we ask those who might be interested in the above-mentioned publication to give us some simple initial information as soon as possible. This should include **name(s) of the author(s)** and **title of the article** (not exceeding 10 words). For the purpose of further planning, it would serve us as a useful indicator of your wish and willingness to prepare the paper for the journal.

In case you got interested, please, submit the requested information to us by e-mail to the LSSS Secretary:
rimantas.vaisvalavicius@lzuu.lt

Professor Dr Habil. A. Motuzas
Secretary of the Editorial Board of 'Agricultural Sciences' and President of the Lithuanian Soil Science Society.

Associate Professor Dr R. Vaisvalavičius
Secretary of the Lithuanian Soil Science Society.

15TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOIL CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION (ISCO): 'SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY' 18-23 MAY 2008, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

Invitation

The Organizing Committee is pleased to invite you to attend the 15th Conference of the 'International Soil Conservation Organization' (ISCO) to be held in Budapest, Hungary, from 18-23 May 2008. The theme of the 15th Conference of ISCO is **'Soil and Water Conservation, Climate Change and Environmental Sensitivity'.**

This topic will attract a wide range of experts, including scientists, university lecturers, policy makers and stakeholders from public and private institutions and non-governmental organizations throughout the world.

Hungary has a long and rich history of soil conservation, mainly because of salinization problems on the Great Hungarian Plain. The Country belongs to Eastern-Central Europe, where the change of regime after 1989 had serious implications for soil and water conservation. The central part of Hungary is very sensitive to environmental change, especially to extreme events like drought and flooding. Therefore, it provides excellent case studies for the theme of the Conference. Climate change is manifested in the growing frequency and greater amplitude of extreme events. Hungary provides good examples for a range of soil conservation problems and practices, including soil erosion by water and wind, salinization, compaction and water management problems of heavy soils. Research institutes, university departments and the soil conservation service network have been dealing with soil and water conservation problems for many decades, offering and ensuring solutions for these problems. Four days of oral and poster presentations and a mid-conference excursion will make the Conference an event always to be remembered for participants making contributions as presenters or participants in the discussions.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Budapest in May 2008 at the 15th ISCO Conference!

Conference topics

- Climate change and environmental sensitivity.
- Land use change.
- Water management.
- Soil erosion.
- Salinization.

- Desertification.
- Other land degradation processes.
- Soil rehabilitation and management.
- Socio-economic aspects of land degradation.
- Legislative and institutional aspects of soil and water conservation.

Abstract submission

All interested persons are invited to give oral or poster presentations. In order for presentations to be included in the programme, it is required that at least one of the authors is registered at the Congress by the pre-registration deadline of 30 November 2007.

Venue

Budapest Congress and World Trade Centre (H-1123 Budapest, Jagelló út 1-3):
http://www.bcc.hu

Conference languages: English, French

Conference fees

Registration fee

- Pre-registration until 30 November 2007 **€390**
- Normal Registration from 01 December 2007 **€490**

Conference dinner **€60**

Conference dinner for your accompanying person can be ordered and paid on site.
Participation fees of the **pre- and post conference tours** will be given soon.

Deadlines

Deadline for receipt of abstracts	30 September 2007
Deadline for registration at reduced fee	30 November 2007
Deadline for receipt of papers	30 November 2007
Deadline for registration	30 November 2007
Publication of preliminary programme	15 March 2008

For further detailed information, please see the ISCO 2008 web page:
http://www.isco2008.com

EUROSOIL 2008
25-29 August 2008, Vienna, Austria

This is a co-operative venture between the 'European Confederation of Soil Science Societies' (ECSSS) and the Soil Science Societies of Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland.

EUROSOIL 2008 will comprise about 30 Symposia, four Workshops and numerous 1 to 3 day excursions in:

Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Europe.

More information can be obtained from the website of the European Confederation of Soil Science Societies (ECSSS):

http://www.ecsss.net

or e-mail: winfried.blum@boku.ac.at

International Conference
on Flood Recovery Innovation and Response FRIAR 2008
2-3 July 2008
at the Institution of Civil Engineers, London, UK

ORGANIZED BY: The University of Wolverhampton (UK) and Wessex Institute of Technology (WIT), UK.

SPONSORED BY: WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment.

INTRODUCTION

The UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) funded 'Flood Repair Network' is an independent forum involving major stakeholders in the repair, reinstatement and resilience of flood-damaged property. The network's objectives include:

- Identification and dissemination of good practice in flood repair / reinstatement and flood claims management.

- Supporting in-depth collaborative research into appropriate flooding and property issues.
- Critically examine developments in flood resilient repair uses.
- Developing critical perspectives on the impact of flooding on property owners.
- Creating an information depository for collation of relevant flood repair publications and literature.

AIMS AND CONFERENCE KEY THEMES

Scientific and technical sessions will provide an opportunity for the international community to share experiences and best practice.

THEME 1: RISK MANAGEMENT IN RELATION TO FLOOD EVENTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Within the overall hazard of flooding are encapsulated a variety of specific risk situations. To the obvious risk of fatalities from drowning must be added the economic damage to businesses and the emotional implications for individuals. The increasing likelihood of occurrence of flood events is now subject to the impacts of climate change, which gives rise to a host of wider implications, such as sewer flooding, infrastructure damage and concerns as to the effectiveness of existing flood defences. The use of floodplains for building purposes also exposes an ever-increasing number of people to flood danger. Cost reduction strategies to address these issues currently include flood resilient design and construction; retrofitting of flood resilience measures and improvements to flood mapping techniques.

THEME 2: PRE-EVENT PLANNING AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Strategies are required to address the issues that will face a flood-risk community in both the short and long-term. This involves international, national, regional and local governments and agencies, as well as those living and working within the at-risk communities themselves. The relevant issues here therefore extend from disaster management at strategic level, to business continuity planning for commercial and public organizations of all sizes and, of course, flood plans for individual households in flood risk areas. Underpinning all the foregoing is the need to raise awareness amongst the at-risk community worldwide without causing unnecessary alarm.

THEME 3: MANAGEMENT OF MAJOR EVENTS

Both during and after a flood event many organizations and agencies may need to interface with each other as well as engaging with the victims. Input will be from flood-warning agencies, local authorities, emergency services, insurers, loss adjusters and specialist restoration companies through to local community leaders. From the victims' point of view the ideal approach lies in a coherent and seamless framework of support providing help in the most effective and efficient manner.

THEME 4: POST DAMAGE RESTORATION AND RECOVERY

When the flood waters have receded, the owners and occupiers of affected buildings face the prospect of drying out, cleaning, restoring and where necessary rebuilding their properties. The issues here revolve around the most effective methods of tackling the immediate aftermath; the development of new drying technologies and, crucially, the standards of repair affected.

THEME 5: VICTIMS OF FLOODING

Whether their businesses or their homes are inundated, it is the people directly affected by floods who are victims of the water that invaded their property. There are increasing concerns over a variety of health risks, both physiological and psychological, which can arise from flood events. These can encompass the discovery of asbestos during the course of restoration; moulds and fungi developing in properties which have not been fully dried; and, in recent events, a disturbing incidence of depression, anxiety and other emotional impacts arising during and after the flood recovery period. The latter effects are currently poorly understood and in need of in-depth investigation. Many of these health risks also extend to practitioners (repairers, inspectors) with employers having a duty of care to their employees.

THEME 6: INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT POLICY

Flooding is, of course, a global problem and different governments have developed their own strategies for approaching the issues. The fundamental need for appropriate cost/benefit analysis inevitably affect all nations, but the factors defining 'cost' and 'benefit' can vary. Sustainability issues may be higher on the agenda for some countries, purely economic factors may be the key drivers for others. Policy decisions relating to planning guidelines, the use of innovative techniques such as temporary flood defence barriers or the construction of homes on floating pontoons can have implications for risk as well as response to flood events.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This two-day Conference will provide a unique opportunity for Practitioners and Researchers and all others interested in the topic of flooding to meet in order to exchange experience and ideas.

CONFERENCE CHAIRMEN

D. Proverbs, University of Wolverhampton, UK.
C.A. Brebbia, Wessex Institute of Technology, UK.
E. Penning-Rowsell, Flood Hazard Research Centre, University of Middlesex, UK.

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

K. Alhussan, King Abdulaziz City, Sci. & Tech., Saudi Arabia.
C.A. Booth, University of Wolverhampton, UK.
D. De Wrachien, University of Milan, Italy.
H. Hashimoto, Kyushu University, Japan.
M. Holicky, CTU Prague, Czech Republic.
G. Holzinger, Torrent and Avalanche Control, Austria.
G. Jager, Forest Technology Service, Austria.
F.C.B. Mascarenhas, UFRJ-COPPE, Brazil.
M. Moser, Forest Technology Service, Austria.
A. Sole, University of Basilicata, Italy.
M. Takezawa, Nihon University, Japan.
A. Thieken, GeoForschungsZentrum Potsdam, Germany.
K. Toda, Kyoto University, Japan.
F. Vinet, University Paul Valery, France.
C. Zevenbergen, DuraVermeer Group NV, The Netherlands.

LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

T. Boobier, UK Flooding Expert, UK.
J. Davison, Director BDMA, UK.
M. Dhonau, Consultant, UK.
M.A. Fullen, University of Wolverhampton, UK.
P. May, Environment Agency Wales, UK.
C. Netherton, The National Flood School, UK.
R.W. Sarsby, University of Wolverhampton, UK.
A. Saul, University of Sheffield, UK.
R. Woodhead, Rameses Associates, UK.

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- Keep up-to-date on the latest advances in the field.
- Present your research within a unique forum.
- Collaborate with experts from around the world.
- Your conference paper will be reviewed by members of the International Scientific Committee and other colleagues and processed for prompt publication in book form.
- In addition, all papers in the conference book will be permanently archived in the Transactions of the Wessex Institute on our e-Library site, where they will be available to the international scientific community.

INDEXING AND ARCHIVING OF PAPERS

Papers presented at Wessex Institute Conferences are referenced by Crossref and regularly appear in notable reviews, publications and databases, including Elsevier's referencing and abstract services (Scopus and Compendex); Cambridge Scientific Abstracts; Thomson (Index to Scientific & Technical Proceedings, and Index to Scientific Book Contents); Scitech Book News; Interdok (Directory of Published Proceedings); American Library Association (Choice). Papers continue to be added to new databases regularly. In addition the Conference papers will be:

- Published by WIT Press in a volume of WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment (ISSN: 1743-3541).
- Available to conference delegates at the time of registration at the Conference as a hardcover volume.
- Publicized directly to researchers and institutional libraries.
- Distributed widely through the international book trade.
- Archived online in the Transactions of the Wessex Institute Collection, which provides the international scientific community with immediate and permanent access to individual papers.

WIT Press is committed to making all its material OPEN ACCESS. This option is available to all authors. View the Transactions of the Wessex Institute Collection at:
http://www.library.witpress.com

VENUE

The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) is a charity that exists to promote and progress civil engineering. Its award-winning event venue at One Great George Street provides conference facilities at a location in the very heart of London's cultural and political life, a short distance from the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey. The facilities are spacious, stylish

and have the latest presentation technology discreetly deployed throughout. Further details regarding local attractions, accommodation booking and travel directions will be available closer to the time of the Conference.

CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

Rachel Swinburn: FRIAR 2008 Conference Secretariat
Wessex Institute of Technology
Ashurst Lodge
Ashurst
Southampton SO40 7AA
UK.

Tel: 00 44 238 029 3223
Fax: 00 44 238 029 2853
E-mail: rswinburn@wessex.ac.uk

CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers are invited on the topics outlined and others falling within the scope of the meeting. Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted as soon as possible. We strongly encourage the submission of abstracts electronically. Abstracts should clearly state the purpose, results and conclusions of the work to be described in the final paper. Final acceptance will be based on the full-length paper, which if accepted for publication, must be presented at the Conference. To be fair to all participants, each registered delegate will only be able to submit one paper. The language of the conference will be English.

CONFERENCE KEY THEMES

- Risk Management in Relation to Flood Events and Climate Change.
- Pre-event Planning and Business Continuity.
- Management of Major Events.
- Post Damage Restoration and Recovery.
- Victims of Flooding.
- International and National Government Policy.

CONFERENCE TOPICS

- Flood Defence Methods.
- Financial and Insurance Issues.
- Coping Strategies.
- Adaptive Capacity.
- Rural versus Urban community approaches.

Please indicate your intention below:

I intend to submit a paper and present it.
I intend to participate in the conference, but will not be submitting a paper.
I intend to submit a Poster Presentation.

ABSTRACT/PAPER SUBMISSION

Abstract (300 words): Submit to the Conference Secretariat as indicated on the Enquiry Form.

Camera Ready Paper Submission: Date to be advised after submission of abstracts.

OPEN-ACCESS

WIT Press is committed to Open-Access. We strongly believe that removing barriers to research published online will greatly aid progress in many scientific and technical disciplines.

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

E-mail submission to: krobberts@wessex.ac.uk

Please submit your abstract with FRIAR 2008 in the subject line. Include your name, full address and conference topics.

Web Submission: www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2008/friar08

Fax Submission: 00 44 238 029 2853

Fax one copy of your abstract with this completed Enquiry Form.

Mail Submission: Rachel Swinburn, Conference Secretariat, FRIAR 2008, Wessex Institute of Technology, Ashurst Lodge, Ashurst, Southampton, SO40 7AA, UK.

Please mail a copy of your abstract with this completed Enquiry Form.

Telephone: 00 44 238 029 3223.

Wherever possible information about this Conference will be sent to you by e-mail.

International Conference on Flood Recovery Innovation and Response FRIAR 2008
2-3 July 2008 at the Institution of Civil Engineers, London, UK.

Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) .....

Initials ..... Surname .....

Organization .....

Address .....

Postcode/Zip .....

Country .....

Telephone .....

Fax .....

E-Mail .....

I suggest this announcement should also be sent to:

Title: ..... Initials ..... Surname ..... e-mail .....

By completing this form, we understand that you are agreeable to receiving further information on this event and other activities which we believe will interest you. We will not disclose this information to third parties.

EPSRC

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

2nd International Conference on Ground Bio- and Eco-engineering
The Use of Vegetation to Improve Slope Stability
Beijing, China, 14-18 July 2008

This Conference is the second in the series **'The Use of Vegetation to Improve Slope Stability.'** The first Congress was held at Thessaloniki, Greece, from 13-17 September 2004. In an era where more natural hazards are occurring; soil erosion, landslides and other catastrophic events cause loss of lives and infrastructure and major environmental damage. The aim of these meetings, therefore, is to bring together scientific researchers, practitioners, geotechnical and civil engineers, biologists, ecologists and foresters to discuss current problems in slope stability research and how to address those problems using ground bio- and eco-engineering techniques.

Ground bioengineering methods integrate civil engineering techniques with natural materials to obtain fast, effective and economic methods of protecting, restoring and maintaining the environment. Eco-engineering has been defined as a long-term ecological strategy to manage a site with regard to natural or man-made hazards. Conference sessions will focus on an area where such engineering techniques are used increasingly frequently (i.e. natural and man-made slopes). Papers will be presented on slope instability, erosion, soil hydrology, mountain ecology, land use and restoration and how to mitigate these problems using vegetation. The mechanics of root-soil interaction are of utmost importance, along with the modelling of root reinforcement and the development of decision-support systems, areas where significant advances have been made in recent years. Proceedings will be published in a special edition of an international journal. We hope that you will be able to join us at this meeting, to be held in exciting Beijing, the 2008 Olympic City!

Organizing Committee:
T. FOURCAUD, CIRAD, Montpellier, France / LIAMA-CASIA, Beijing, China.
L. JOUNEAU, INRA Jouy / LIAMA-CASIA, Beijing, China.
H. LU, WASWC, Beijing, China.
Y. LU, Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing, China.
T. LUO, Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research CAS, Beijing, China.
J. NORRIS, Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, UK.
I. SPANOS, NAGREF, Thessaloniki, Greece.
*A. STOKES, INRA, Montpellier, France / LIAMA-CASIA, Beijing, China.
X. ZHANG, LIAMA-CASIA Beijing, China.

***Conference Chair and for further information, please contact:**
Alexia Stokes
LIAMA-CASIA
PO Box 2728
Zhonguancun Dong Lu 95, Hadian,
Beijing 100080
P.R. China
E-mail: stokes@liama.ia.ac.cn
Tel: 00 86 10 82614528
Fax: 00 86 10 62647458.

Reminder for the next issue:

Articles, reports, letters, views or comments on any aspect of soil erosion and conservation in Europe are always welcome.

We invite proposals for special thematic issues of the Newsletter. We also welcome any comments on the ESSC Newsletter and suggestions on how it can be improved and developed.

Do not forget to send in your details of the following information:

(i) Reviews of recent conferences.
(ii) Recent grant awards.
(iii) The citation details and abstracts of completed Ph.D. and m.Sc. theses.
(iv) Newly enrolled Ph.D. research students, title of their research topic and names of research supervisors.
(v) Recent staff institutional movements/promotions.
(iv) A reference list of your 'new' international refereed scientific journal papers, which have been published recently (since and including the year 2000).

Send these details to either:
Professor Mike Fullen: m.fullen@wlv.ac.uk
or
Dr Colin Booth: c.booth@wlv.ac.uk
and they will include this information in the next issue.

PLEASE NOTE:
We publish four Newsletter issues per year. The deadlines for 2007 onwards are:
10 January
01 April
01 July
01 October.

Some Closing Thoughts:

"The earth is nobler than the world we have put upon it"
(John Boynton Priestley, 1894-1984, written in 1939).

"I go through the things which happen according to nature until i shall fall and rest, breathing out my breath into that element out of which i daily drew it in, and falling upon that earth out of which my father collected the seed, and my mother the blood, and my nurse the milk; out of which during so many years i have been supplied with food and drink; which bears me when i tread on it and abuse it for so many purposes."
(Emperor Marcus Aurelius, 121-180 AD.
The Mediations of Marcus Aurelius, Book 5, Verse 4).

"People who say it cannot be done are often interrupted by the person doing it"
(Chinese proverb).

"Minds are like parachutes. They only function when they are open"
(Sir James Dewar, 1842-1923).

AIMS OF THE SOCIETY

The ESSC is an interdisciplinary, non-political association, which is dedicated to investigating and realizing soil conservation in Europe. The ESSC pursues its aims in the scientific, educational and applied sectors by:

Supporting investigations on soil degradation, soil erosion and soil conservation in Europe,

Informing the public about major questions of soil conservation in Europe,

Collaborating with institutions and persons involved in practical conservation work in Europe.

The ESSC aims at co-ordinating the efforts of all parties involved in the above cited subjects: research institutions; teachers and students of geosciences, agriculture and ecology; farmers; agricultural planning and advisory boards; industries and government institutions.

ZWECK DER VEREINIGUNG

Die ESSC ist einer interdisziplinäre, nicht politische Vereinigung. Ihr Ziel ist die Erforschung und Durchführung des Schutzes der Böden in Europa. Die ESSC verfolgt dieses Ziel auf wissenschaftlichem, erzieherischen und angewandtem Gebiet:

durch Unterstützung der Forschung auf den Gebieten der Boden-Degradierung, der Bodenerosion und des Bodenschutzes in Europa,

durch Information der Öffenlichkeit über wichtige Fragen des Bodenschutzes in Europa,

durch Zusammenarbeit mit Institutionen und Personen, die an der Praxis des Bodenschutzes in Europa beteiligt sind.

Die ESSC will alle Personen und Institutionen zusammenführen, die sich für die genannten Ziele einsetzen: Forschungsinstitutionen, Lehrer und Studenten der Geowissenschaften, der Landwirtschaftswissenschaften und der Ökologie, Bauern, landwirtschaftliche Planungs- und Beratungsstellen, Industrieunternehmen und Einrichtungen der öffentlichen Hand.

BUTS DE L'ASSOCIATION

L'ESSC est une association interdisciplinaire et non politique. Le but de l'association est la recherche et les réalisations concernant la conservation du sol en Europe. L'ESSC poursuit cette finalité dans les domaines de la recherche scientifique, de l'éducation et de l'application:

en encourageant la recherche sur la dégradation, l'érosion et la conservation du sol en Europe,

en informant le public des problemes majeurs de la conservation du sol en Europe,

par la collaboration avec des institutions et des personnes impliquées dans la pratique de la conservation du sol en Europe.

L'ESSC souhaite favoriser la collaboration de toutes les personnes et institutions poursuivant les buts définis ci-dessus, en particulier: institutions de recherche, professeurs et étudiants en géosciences, des agriculteurs, des institutions de planification et des conseil agricole, de l'industrie, et des institutions gouvernementales.

OBJECTIVOS DE LA SOCIEDAD

La ESSC es una asociación interdisciplinar, no-politica, dedicada a la investigación y a la realización de acciones orientadas a la conservación del suelo en Europa. La ESSC persigue sus objectivos en los sectores cientificos, educacionales y aplicados, en al ámbito europeo:

promocionando la investigación sobre degradación, erosión y conservación de suelos,

informanto al público sobre los principales aspectos de conservación de suelos,

colaborando con instituciones y personas implicadas en la práctica de la conservación de suelos.

La ESSC aspira a coordinar los esfuerzos, en los temas arriba mencionados, de todas las partes implicadas: centros de investigación, profesores y estudiantes de geo-ciencias, agricultura, selvicultura y ecología, agricultores, servicios de extensión agraria, industrias e instituciones gubernamentales.

Visit the ESSC Website: http://www.essc.sk

MEMBERSHIP FEES

I wish to (please mark appropriate box):

- Join the ESSC
- Renew my membership of the ESSC
- Know whether I have outstanding membership contributions to pay

Membership rates:

Standard Rates:

- One year € 25.00
- Three years € 70.00

Members in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine:

- One year € 10.00
- Three years € 25.00

Students:

50 % reduction on above rates for three years
Your supervisor must provide written confirmation of student status

I wish to pay my membership contribution by (please mark appropriate box):

- Eurocard / Mastercard
- Visa Card
- American Express Card
- Bank Transfer

Branch address: Fortis Bank, Zonnestraat 2, B-9000 Gent, Belgium;
International transaction codes:
IBAN - BE29 0014 5139 8064 and BIC - GEBABEBB;
Account name: European Society for Soil Conservation;
Account number 001-4513980-64

CARD NO. ..... EXPIRY .....

Amount: € ..... Date: ..... Signature: .....

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

.....

E-MAIL: .....

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER (if known): M0 .....

Please send this form to: ESSC Treasurer, Dr Wim Cornelis, Department of Soil Management and Soil Care, Coupure links 653, B-9000 Gent, BELGIUM.

wim.cornelis@UGent.be