

Conferences and Events

Sixteenth Russian Conference on Soil Zoology

On 4-7 October 2011, the sixteenth Russian conference, "*Problems of Soil Biology*" was held in Azov town near Rostov-on-Don city, Rostov region, Russia. The Southern Federal University in cooperation with the Institute of Ecology and Evolution, Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) organized this conference. Prof. B. R. Striganova, the corresponding member of RAS, the chairman of organizing committee, and Prof. A. A. Kazadaev, vice-chairman, E. I. Simonovich and G. D. Shadrina, secretaries of the organizing committee were responsible for all organizing and social activities during the conference, and many soil zoologists who arrived from different regions of Russia and from abroad are participated in the conference.

More than 30 speeches have been discussed at the conference with addition of about 20 poster presentations. The proceedings of the conference were published by the KMK Scientific Press, which contained abstracts of all presented works, written mainly in Russian. Participants of the conference discussed various aspects of soil biota, including systematic, ecology, biogeography, bionomics etc. Next conference will be held in 2014, but the place and host will be designated later on. For additional information, please visit at <http://www.soilzoology.ru>

Forty-first Meeting of the Council of the Global Environment Facility

The forty-first meeting of the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) was held on 8-9 November 2011 in Washington, D.C., USA. The GEF Council approved the work program comprising 40 project concepts and nine programmatic approaches, with total resources amounting to US\$516.40 million, including two global enabling projects for assisting the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in the revision of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and development of fifth national report to the Convention.

In its decision on relations with conventions, the GEF Council requested the GEF Secretariat to organize a meeting of Biodiversity related conventions with the Secretariat of the

Convention on Biological Diversity to facilitate the coordination of their priorities for inclusion in the GEF- 6 programming strategy. More information -is available on CBD website at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2011/ntf-2011-216-financial-en.pdf>

Regional workshop for Central Asia on updating NBSAPs

Biodiversity experts and officials from across the Central Asia region are met to work towards implementing the Nagoya Biodiversity Compact at the Regional Workshop on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). The workshop, was held in Istanbul from 17 to 20 October 2011, is organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry and Water Works of the Republic of Turkey, with the financial support of the Government of Japan. Five countries, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan are participating in the workshop. Government representatives from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkmenistan were unable to attend the workshop. Representatives from indigenous and local communities, the Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization, WWF International, the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature, Zoinet, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) are also in attendance.

In an opening statement delivered by Mr. Atsuhiko Yoshinaka, Global Coordinator, Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary, thanked Turkey for co-organizing and hosting the workshop. Opening remarks were also made by Mr. Kenji Ashida, Deputy Consul-General of Japan in Istanbul, who highlighted the importance of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the associated Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

The Director General of Nature Conservation and National Parks for the Ministry of Forestry and Water Works of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Yasar Dostbil, recognized that the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity is the major responsibility of all to the future generations. He highlighted the fact that it is vital to keep

national biodiversity strategies and action plans updated and alive.

The workshop in Istanbul is one of the latest in a series of regional and sub-regional capacity-building workshops to strengthen national capacities for the development, implementation, reviewing, updating, and communication of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. It follows workshops for Southern Africa (held in Botswana), Europe (Germany), North Africa and the Middle East (Lebanon), East, South and South-East Asia (China), West Africa (Senegal), Central Africa (Congo), East Africa (Rwanda), South America (Ecuador), and the Pacific (Fiji). The workshop for countries of the Caribbean is currently taking place in Grenada. The next capacity-building workshop, for Central America, will be held in Costa Rica from 28 November to 2 December 2011. For additional information, please visit at <http://www.cbd.int/nbsap/workshops2.shtml>

International Symposium on Biodiversity Research in Mongolia

The International Symposium *Biodiversity Research in Mongolia*, which is dedicated to the 50 years of the Mongolian-German Biological Expeditions (1962-2012), will be held in Halle/Saale on 25-29 March 2012. The symposium is hosted by the Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg (Institute of Biology and Central Magazine of Natural Sciences Collections) in cooperation with the International Academy for Nature Conservation Isle of Vilm, Senckenberg Museum of Natural History, Goerlitz, Helmholtz Centre of Environmental Research UFZ, Magdeburg, Leibniz Institute of Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research, Gatersleben, National University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar and Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Ulaanbaatar.

Mongolia involves a unique range of ecosystems from the taiga to the desert, and its large areas of more or less unspoiled nature attract the attention of the national and international conservation community. Despite the vast dimensions of the country shifts in agricultural methods, deployment of pesticides, unsustainable forest management, mining, illegal hunting and pest control, human-caused fires and huge infrastructure projects have triggered increasingly pronounced changes in the Mongolian ecosystems. The impact of land

use and global climate change puts new threats to Mongolian biodiversity and also poses new questions to the scientific community.

Mongolian and German scientists, together with colleagues from other countries, have strongly contributed to a better knowledge of the fauna and flora of Central Asia. Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the joint "Mongolian-German Biological Expeditions" it is now time to look back at the achievements that were made, and simultaneously envisage those new cooperation that are needed to face the new challenges.

The Martin-Luther-University of Halle, in conjunction with the Franckeschen Stiftungen of Halle, has a long tradition in the exploration of Siberia and Central Asia. Several well known explorers of the 18th century were once associated with the University of Halle, among them Georg Wilhelm Steller and Peter Simon Pallas. These special relationships to Central Asia have continued until today. The University of Halle, in cooperation with other leading biodiversity institutions of Germany, therefore invites you to an international symposium on "Biodiversity Research in Mongolia", celebrating 50 years of cooperation between Germany and Mongolia in this field. The symposium is also thought to be a scientific-strategic as well as political strategic event which we would like using to strengthen our communal partnerships, projects and collegial friendships for the next decade, with the aim of understanding the Mongolian ecosystems even better and conserving these unique habitats for future generations. For more information, please contact: annegret.stubbe@zoologie.uni-halle.de

Thirty-first General Assembly of the Union of Biological Sciences

The International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) will hold its thirty-first General Assembly (GA) on 5-9 July 2012 in Suzhou, China. The theme of the conference is "Promoting Biological Sciences for a Better Life". The co-hosts are the Bureau of Life Sciences and Biotechnology, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), China, the Bureau of International Cooperation, CAS, China, and the Department of International Affairs, China Association for Science and Technology, China.

The IUBS was founded in 1919 and it is

a non-governmental, non-profit organization that serves as an umbrella organization for a large number of scientific organizations. Currently, there are 44 ordinary members and 80 scientific members. The GA convenes every three years whereat, decisions on the priorities of the IUBS are made, recommendations to the scientific committee are put forward, and elections of executive committee (EC) members and administrative officers are held. The IUBS is the only international body that covers all disciplines of biological sciences. As a result, the IUBS will also host and organize international symposia in tandem with the GA so as to provide an opportunity for the international biological community to exchange information, discuss interdisciplinary studies, and promote international collaboration in scientific research programs.

In the 21st century, particularly in recent years, biological sciences and biotechnologies have played key roles in shaping the world's economy. Bioindustry is also emerging as a new driving force of the world's economic growth and recovery, especially after the recent world financial crisis. To a greater extent, the development of bioindustry is bringing new hope to initiatives in food safety, clean energy and healthy environments. With these circumstances in mind, the IUBS, during this GA, will endeavor to promote collaborations between institutions, companies and scientists, and to push forward the development of bioindustry and bioeconomy by organizing special sessions on bioindustry.

The hosts and organizing committee warmly invite you to attend this important international conference. Through your participation, the participants can not only exchange information and discuss interdisciplinary studies, but also begin or extend collaborations in scientific research programs and bioindustry development. This international event will be a defining moment in IUBS history, as well as for the world of biological sciences and bioindustry. For more information, please visit at <http://iubs.csp.escience.cn>

Twenty-first International Zoological Congress

After the Athens, Beijing and Paris meetings of the International Zoological Congress (IZC) you are kindly invited to the coming meeting that will be held at Mount Carmel

Campus of the University of Haifa, on 2-7 September 2012. The campus is situated at the edge of the Carmel National Park and has all facilities, including student dormitories, for accommodating international congresses as the IZC. Haifa is located on Mount Carmel and enjoys a magnificent view that combines sea and forests, and the city is one of the main ports of Israel. It is a modern city connected with highways and a railway to the Ben Gurion International airport located about 100 km away. Communities of different faiths, such as Jews, Christians, Moslems, Druze and Bahais coexist in Haifa, giving a special atmosphere to the city. The city offers hotels of various classes with a good transportation connection to the university campus.

The congress will include plenary lectures, symposia (oral and poster presentations) and general presentations that will be fitted into selected topics, as will be detailed in the second announcement. Ideas for symposia or workshops are welcome together with willingness to organize them. In addition, the social events and a half-day tour to historical sites close to Haifa are planned. A special program will be offered to accompanying persons. Israel as a part of the Levant, a cross bridge between several biogeographical regions, is a paradise for zoologists due to its biodiversity relative to its small area. The rich history of the country and archeological sites going back thousands of years, as well as the interesting pre-historical sites, some of them on Mount Carmel, will be exposed in pre-conference and post-conference tours. To receive the second announcement, please visit at <http://iszskon2012.haifa.ac.il>

Twenty-fourth International Congress of Entomology

The Council for International Congresses of Entomology extends its cordial invitation to all fellow entomologists to participate in the 24th International Congress of Entomology, being hosted by the Entomological Society of Korea, to be held on 18-25 August 2012 at Daegu city, Korea. The Entomology Congress will be a great opportunity to learn about the advances made in the science of entomology in the recent past, and promote dialogue and establish collaboration between the entomologists from different continents. The Entomology Congress will also

provide a unique opportunity to learn about the advances made in the science of entomology in Korea, and visit the Institute of Industrial Entomology, Yecheon, and the Hampyeong Butterfly and Insect Exhibition.

The deliberations during the entomology congress, comprising of invited lectures by the leading entomologists in different disciplines and over 17 concurrent sessions, will provide a unique opportunity to listen to, and interact with the pioneers from different branches of entomology, and a platform for interaction between the young and the experienced entomologists. The deliberations during the Entomology Congress will also create an awareness of the challenges that need to address for sustainability of the environment and food security. There will also be ample opportunities for interaction between the scientists from public and private institutions, which will accelerate the pace of translating innovations into action for the welfare of mankind.

The congress will provide ample opportunities to discuss the use of genetically modified organisms such as plants, natural enemies, and microbes for pest management and their non-target effects on the environment. Another important topic that warrants urgent attention is the issue of global warming and its effect on geographic distribution of insect pest, effects on bio-control agents, and effectiveness of synthetic insecticides for insect control. Critical issues related to invasive species, bio-security, insecticide residues in food and food products, and development of resistance to insecticides and genetically engineered plants will also be addressed in relation to sustainable crop protection. For more information, please visit at <http://www.ice2012.org>

Seventh World Congress of Herpetology

The University of British Columbia, the University of Victoria, and the city of Vancouver will host the 7th World Congress of Herpetology (WCH) in beautiful British Columbia on 8-14 August 2012. While at the 25th meeting of the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles (SSAR), international representatives from herpetology societies around the world founded the World Congress of Herpetology (WCH) on August 2, 1982.

The objectives of the congress are to

promote international interest, collaboration and co-operation in herpetology. These are to be achieved by holding periodic international congresses of herpetology, by establishing specialist committees, by serving as the Section of Herpetology of the International Union of Biological Sciences, and by undertaking or encouraging such other activities as will promote these objectives. For more information, please visit at <http://www.worldcongressofherpetology.org>

Eleventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

The eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will be held on 8 - 19 October 2012 in Hyderabad, India. Further to notification concerning the meeting, provisional agenda and annotated agenda for the meeting, as approved by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, are can be accessed on the CBD website at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=COP-11>

2011-2020 United Nations Decade on Biodiversity Launched in Kanazawa City, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan

On December 22, 2010, building on the International Year of Biodiversity (2010) and the goal of significantly reducing biodiversity loss, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2011-2020 the *United Nations Decade on Biodiversity* (Resolution 65/161). The UN Decade on Biodiversity serves to support and promote implementation of the objectives of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, with the goal of significantly reducing biodiversity loss.

The United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (UNDB) was launched in Kanazawa, Japan, on 17 December 2011, in a ceremony organized by the United Nations University, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment of Japan, Ishikawa Prefecture and Kanazawa City, and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The global launch of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity counted on the participation of United Nations agencies, Parties to the CBD, and representatives of all levels of government in Japan. The three-day event included a workshop on national

biodiversity strategies and action plans.

The United Nations Decade on Biodiversity builds on the achievements of the successful celebration of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity. It aims at implementing the first Aichi Biodiversity Target of the Strategic Plan on Biodiversity 2011-2020, namely to ensure that by

2020 all the people of the world will be aware of biodiversity and its value.

The international launch of the Decade was preceded by regional launches in the Republic of Korea, India, the Philippines, Cuba, Ethiopia, Ecuador and Costa Rica. For more information please visit at <http://www.cbd.int>.