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THE 16th INTERNATIONAL PEATLAND CONGRESS

TALLINN 2020

Peatlands and Peat – Source of Ecosystem Services

14th – 20th June 2020
Alexela Concert Hall, Tallinn, Estonia

Second Announcement

International Peatland Society

European Union
European Regional Development Fund

Investing in your future

FIVE PILLARS OF THE IPC 2020 CONGRESS

1 **People**
2 **Content**
3 **Connectivity**
4 **Fun**
5 **Format**

5 REASONS TO ATTEND

1 Interact with peers and pave the way forward together **2 Master** the latest developments in the area of interest **3 Discuss** with the experts and innovative thinkers about Why vs Why Not? **4 Attend** dedicated tracks to maximise the learning experience **5 Share** your research and be selected for focused discussions

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

The target audience for this Congress includes all fields involved in peatland and peat integrated with ecosystem services. This includes but is not limited to:

- industry and business representatives
- policy and decision-makers
- peat product consumers
- friends of the peatlands
- conservationists
- scientists
- students

NEW AT #IPC2020

PEAT-Talks • Digital posters • "Meet the expert" sessions • "Meet-a-colleague" networking breaks • Movie programme and public lectures • Photo contest

AND MUCH MORE ON THE FORMAT:

Kick-off Get-together

Meet old and new colleagues and friends before the Congress even starts.

Midsummer's Eve

The chance to attend the unique Nordic Midsummer's Eve celebrations and experience the white night magic.

City Discovery

Get to know the destination while visiting the Congress photo exhibition and public lectures in the venue and throughout the city centre.

CONGRESS SECRETARIAT

PUBLICON

PCO Publicon • E: ipc2020@publicon.ee • T: +372 740 4095 • www.ipc2020.com

THE 16th INTERNATIONAL PEATLAND CONGRESS

Mires are inspiring!
Peatlands are challenging!
Peat, just great!

Where else to get the latest knowledge about mires, peatlands and peat if not from the 16th International Peatland Congress!? By coming to Congress, we intend to address all significant problems that humanity has to face in coming years – climate change, loss of biodiversity, water management, resource management, zero hunger, zero poverty etc. Yes, all of those questions are also related to peatlands and peat, and you too have a role to play in solving these problems.

Besides providing the floor for the most up-to-date discussions, we are proud to present you picturesque Estonian nature, versatile cultural life and the magical time of white nights.

Register now!

I'm looking forward
to seeing you in Estonia!

Sincerely yours,
Erki Niitlaan
Chair of the Congress

PEATLANDS AND PEAT – SOURCE OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES – HOW CAN WE INTERPRET THAT?

Peatland ecosystems are essential to people in several ways. The concept of ecosystem services is broad and covers all direct and indirect benefits people gain from ecosystems. Therefore, it enables to integrate human welfare with natural resources from peatlands, such as pure water and air, climate regulation through carbon sequestration, peat as a substrate or aesthetic enjoyment.

The International Peatland Society is a multidisciplinary organisation, bringing together scientists, peat corporations and practitioners of conservation and policies. Thus, ecosystem services seem to be a suitable approach to bridge these various views on peatlands. We encourage all the Congress delegates to communicate here in Tallinn with people who have a bit different experience of peatlands than they do – conservationists with industry, scientists with policymakers – by doing it through the view of peatland ecosystem services. Nevertheless, we have a common aim: the preservation and responsible use of peatlands.

Elve Lode
Chair
of the Scientific
Committee

Martin Küttim
Vice-Chair
of the Scientific
Committee

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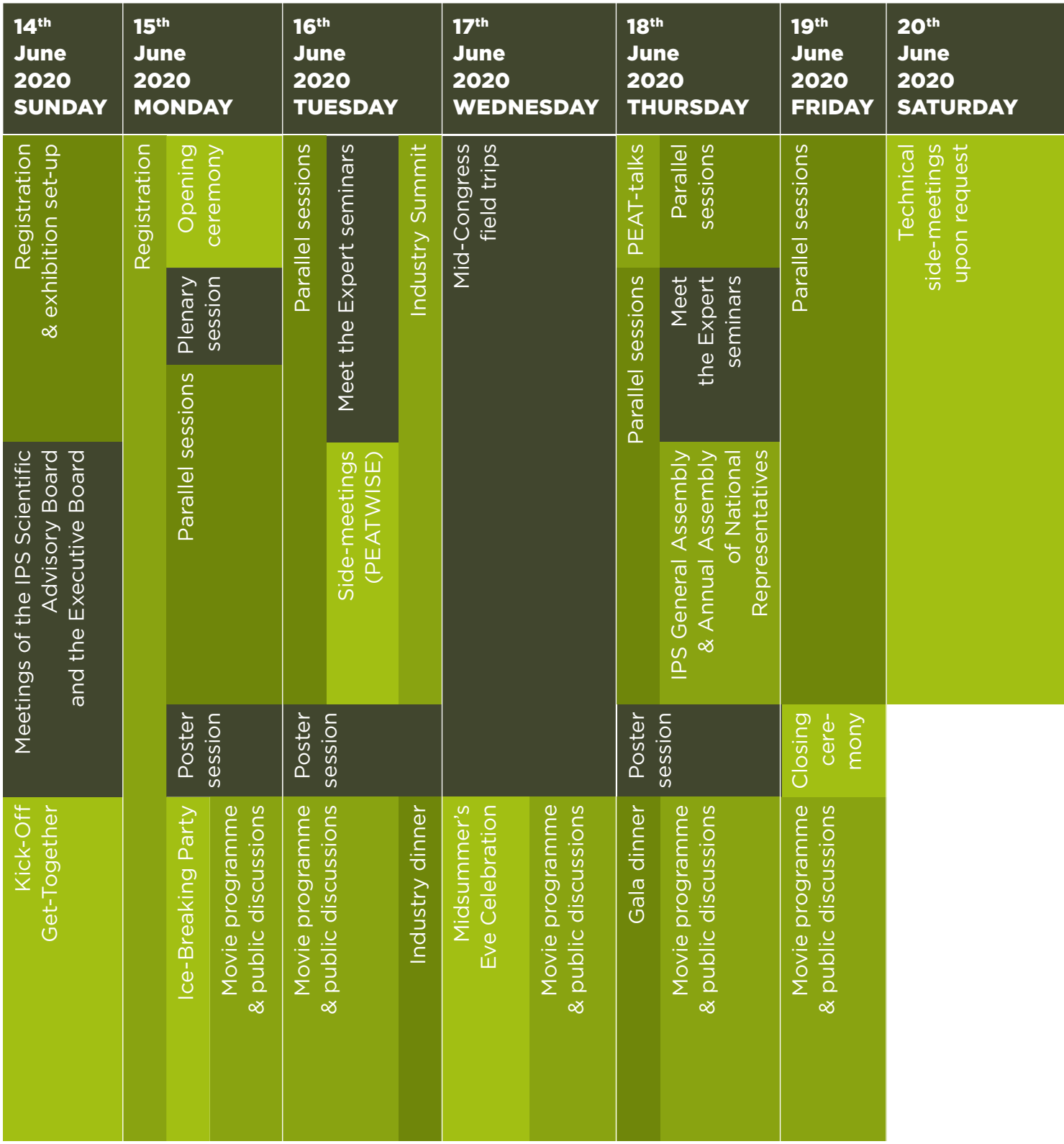
THE 16th INTERNATIONAL PEATLAND CONGRESS OFFERS:

IPS and Congress welcome and closing ceremony • Scientific programme • Industry summit • Practical "Meet the Expert" seminars • PEAT-talks inspired by the TEDx format • Pre-congress excursions and mid-congress field trips • Student programme • Movie programme and public discussions • Photo contest • Several social, cultural and networking events • Sponsor exhibition

Preliminary schedule



THE TOPICS

Peatland ecosystem services

I PROVISIONING SERVICES	II SUPPORTING SERVICES
I.1 - Food and food products	II.1 - Biodiversity
I.2 - Raw materials	II.2 - Primary production and peat formation
I.3 - Genetic resources	II.3 - Nutrient cycling
I.4 - Water supply	
I.5 - Medicinal resources	

III REGULATING SERVICES	IV CULTURAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES
III.1 - Carbon sequestration and climate regulation	IV.1 - Cultural services
III.2 - Hydrology and water quality	IV.2 - Peatlands for communities and society
III.3 - Natural hazard regulation	IV.3 - Recreation and tourism
III.4 - Pollution control	IV.4 - Science and education

Peatland management

V PEATLAND AND PEAT RELATED ECONOMIC SERVICES	VI PROTECTION AND RECLAMATION OF PEATLANDS
V.1 - Agriculture	VI.1 – Protection of peatlands
V.2 - Forestry	VI.2 – Restoration of peatlands
V.3 - Peat extraction	VI.3 – After-use of degraded peatlands
V.4 - Utilisation of peat	
V.5 - Other forms of peatland use	

VII EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND TECHNIQUES FOR PEATLAND AND PEAT RESEARCH
VII.1 – Fieldwork and laboratory equipment for research and monitoring
VII.2 – Tools for data analysis and modelling
VII.3 – Development and practice of fieldwork methods

THE CONGRESS FORMAT

The official language of the Congress is English. Simultaneous translation is possible upon request for specific language groups. An extra fee will be applied. In case of interest, please contact the Congress Secretariat.

Presentations can be given orally or by poster. The duration of the oral presentations will be 15+5 minutes. The presentations are organised subject-wise into Topics and sub-topic sessions (see "Topics").

Parallel sessions will take place strictly to time in different lecture rooms at the **Alexela Concert Hall and Solaris Cinema**. Poster presentations will be displayed in the Poster Exhibition area during the whole Congress. Poster authors will be given a special time slot for poster presentation and on-site discussions.

"Keynote speakers" are invited speakers that address the whole Congress, i.e. during the plenary session. "Invited papers" denote talks by invited speakers at the sub-plenary level, i.e. during a scientific session focussing on a particular Theme or Sub-theme. During the Congress, the various scientific and commercial aspects of peatlands and peat will be discussed in short debate sessions.

The Industry Summit is organised for practitioners and top executives of peatland and peat companies that rely upon peatland and/or peat products for a significant part of their business.

The focus is on discussing, changing ideas and presenting viewpoints on the key issues in the peat industry; however, not only the economy but also social and environmental aspects will be considered.

Among other topics, the following issues will be addressed: peat in the context of climate politics; global peat demand 2050 for energy and horticulture; social imapcts of peatland use; new production technologies and applications of peat; certification of peatland, peat and peat containing growing media; addressing UNFCCC greenhouse gas emissions targets for 2050, etc.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE*

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Pete Whittington Brandon University, Canada
Meng Xianmin Northeast Normal University, China Humic Acid Industry Association, China

*Provisional list of members of the Scientific Committee

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

The Congress Scientific Committee (CSC) invites submission of short abstracts (maximum 300 words) for oral and poster presentations. Authors must select one of the following options: oral presentation only; poster presentation only; either oral or poster presentation (no preference).

Please note that the number of papers that can be presented orally is limited, and authors may be asked to consider a poster presentation instead of an oral presentation. Please note that one individual may not be presenting as the first author on more than two oral contributions. A poster is considered equal in importance to an orally presented paper.

Abstracts will be submitted by the author via online submission form and evaluated by the Congress Scientific Committee. At first the authors are invited to submit a short abstract (up to 300 words) by 6 January 2020. All authors whose short abstract has been accepted for the Congress should submit an extended abstract (up to five pages of A4) by 15 March 2020. Both short and extended abstracts will be published in the Congress Proceedings and on the IPS website (6 months after the Congress). **"Mires and Peat"**.

Please note that the subtopics may be subject to change. Submitting an abstract to more than one topic is not allowed. Duplicates will be rejected. After successful submission, the author will receive an automatically generated e-mail confirmation.

In addition to extended abstracts authors have the opportunity to submit a full-length paper based upon it to the IPS/IMCG scientific journal "Mires and Peat" after the Congress. This internationally recognized journal dedicated to publishing information on all aspects of peatlands and peat is well-established, peer-reviewed, on-line, free to access and submit, with a respectable impact factor and citation capabilities.

Further information on submitting manuscripts to Mires and Peat will be provided in subsequent information and in the registration pack. In the meantime further information can be found on the journal website **www.mires-and-peat.net** or by contacting the Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Professor Jack Rieley at jack.rieley@peatlands.org.

The short abstract format

Language: English.

Title of the abstract:
maximum 20 words.

Abstract authors:
Full names – first and last name, and affiliations

Presenting author:
Full name and affiliations

Contact information:
E-mail of the presenting author

Main text of the abstract
(maximum 300 words)**:**
introduce topic, describe methods, main results and conclusions in plain writing. No figures or tables.

Review process

All abstracts will be reviewed and evaluated by members of the Congress Scientific Committee. Primary selection criteria are scientific quality, relevance for the Congress topics and clarity of expression. Unfortunately, the Scientific Committee does not have the capacity to correct language shortcomings. Abstracts that are e.g. ambiguous may for that reason be rejected. We urge authors to use an English proofreading service before submitting the abstract.

Notification of acceptance is scheduled for 2 March 2020. Please note that the presenting author of the abstract must have valid registration for the Congress by 15 March 2020 for the abstract to be included into the Congress Proceedings.

Extended abstracts

Following the acceptance of the short abstract, the author(s) will be requested to submit extended abstracts, i.e. a short article. These manuscripts must not exceed five pages in A4 format (including abstract, figures, tables and references), and should follow the conventional scientific writing style, format and English language up to the full scientific standard. Detailed instructions and template for extended abstracts will be issued by 6 January 2020 the Congress webpage. **Deadline for submission of extended abstracts is 15 March 2020.** After general, i.e., without comprehensive review by the Scientific Committee, accepted extended abstracts will be included in the Congress Proceedings. Congress Proceedings with papers which exceed the volume of extended abstracts will thus not be published, but theme/session organisers are encouraged to explore alternative publications (books, special issues of journals, etc.) for papers and/or posters presented in their sessions. Authors will be informed by the theme/session chairpersons if such an alternative publication can be offered.

The Organising Committee and the Congress Scientific Committee look very much forward to receiving your abstracts!

Click here for abstract submission!

Deadline for submission of short abstracts is 6 January 2020.

REGISTRATION

Registration is now open - www.ipc2020.com.

Fees and Congress packages

Taxes are included in the price.

Fee/ Ticket	14 June 2020	15 June 2020		16 June 2020					17 June 2020		18 June 2020		19 June 2020	Price (early fee until 15th March 2020)
	Kick-off Get-together	Opening Ceremony and Scientific Sessions	Ice-breaking Party	Scientific sessions	Industry summit sessions	Industry summit dinner	Public lectures and Movie programme		Mid-summer celebration party	Mid-Congress field-trips	Scientific session	Gala Dinner	Scientific session & Closing ceremony	
IPS members	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes		Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	**490 €**
Non-members	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes		Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	**550 €**
Delegates from low-income countries'	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes		Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	**290 €**
Industry summit 2-day ticket (Monday-Tuesday)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	No	No (additional fee will apply)	No	**350 €**
Industry summit 2-day ticket (Tuesday-Thursday)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	No	**350 €**
Industry summit 3-day ticket (Monday-Thursday)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	No	**450 €**
Students	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes		Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes	**240 €**
Accompanying persons	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No (additional fee will apply)	Yes		Yes	No (additional fee will apply)	No	No (additional fee will apply)	No	**150 €**

Lisf of Low-income and Lower-middle-income economies*:
Afganistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central Africal Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo Dem. Rep., Congo Rep., Cóte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Kiribati, Korea Dem. People's Rep., Kyrgys Republic, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Micronesia Fed. Sts., Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Rwanda, Sáo Tomé and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Vietnam, West Bank and Gaza, Yemen Rep., Zambia, Zimbabwe.

* World Bank list of economies (June 2019)

Industry summit**
ticket includes participation in the scientific programme and Kick-off Party on Monday, 15th June, Industry Summit sessions and industry dinner on Tuesday, 16th June 2020.

Please note that after 15th March 2020 the prices in all categories will rise.

Allan Robertson Grants

The IPS Allan Robertson Grants for Students and Young Professionals 2020 will cover up to 500€ of registration fees and travelling costs for at least 10 persons (typically under 30 years old).

Application and details via **https://peatlands.org/about-us/honoursgrants** from December until 31 January.

EXCURSIONS AND FIELD TRIPS

PRE-TOURS

I Baltic Peatlands pre-tour in Lithuania-Latvia-Estonia

Date: 11–14 June 2020

Contact: Kaie Kriiska, Estonian Peat Association, kaie@turbaliit.ee

Leaders: Nerijus Zableckis (Lithuanian Fund for Nature), Jūratė Sendžikaitė (Lithuanian Fund for Nature, Nature Research Centre), Anda Zālmane (Latvian Peat Association), Ingrīda Krīgere (Latvian Peat Association, IPS), Jüri-Ott Salm & Eerik Leibak (Estonian Fund for Nature)

Price: 450 € • Price includes 4-day full programme with expert guides, modern private coach, accommodation (3 nights), meals.

Start: morning 11 June 2020, Palanga, Lithuania

End: evening 14 June 2020, Tallinn, Estonia

During the tour, we will visit natural mires and other wetland complexes, peat extraction as well as peatland restoration and reclamation areas while driving through the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The tour will provide insight into different mire types in the Baltic States. Special attention will be given to the restoration efforts aiming to achieve a favourable conservation status of different mire habitats.

In Lithuania, the participants will be shown various restoration projects at Ramsar sites. First, the unique mires in the Nemunas Delta

will be visited. Restoration using Sphagnum farming approach in the Aukštumala peatland will be presented, followed by an enjoyable Klasmann-Deilmann Šilutė's train ride to the natural part of the bog.

Also, the Tyrai coastal fen, which is the most important vulnerable Aquatic Warbler breeding site in Lithuania, will be explored.

On the way to Latvia, a glimpse of a typical raised bog of Kamanos Strict Nature Reserve inhabited by golden plovers is caught. Kamanos is the largest raised bog in northern Lithuania with ridge-pool complexes and numerous small lakes surrounded by wet forests.

In Latvia, one of the largest peat mining companies in the country, Laflora Ltd. that is known for its responsible peatland management, is visited. Different reclamation efforts will be demonstrated in former peat extraction fields - from berry growing and afforestation to paludiculture and apiculture (bees, bumblebees) cultivation. Afterwards, the effect of peatlands on climate change will be discussed by the scientists of the Latvian State Forest Research Institute Silava and the measurements of greenhouse gas emissions will be demonstrated. The well-preserved mire of Cenas tīrelis will be explored by hiking with bog shoes.

The tour will end in Estonia where the pearl of the preserved natural wetland complex - Soomaa National Park is visited. "Soomaa" means the land of mires in Estonian and the National Park has been established for the protection of large bogs, flooded meadows, forests and cultural heritage in the south-western part of Central Estonia.

We will walk along the Ingatsi nature trail through a floodplain forest, followed by exploring the Kuresoo restoration area, which is the first holistic restoration project of degraded bog communities in Estonia.

On the way to Tallinn, a species-rich alkaline fen will be visited in mid-western Estonia.

Group size is limited to 25 people.
When travelling by plane, we recommend choosing
the Palanga International Airport (Lithuania) as your destination airport.

II IPS pre-tour in Finland

Date: 11–13 June 2020

Contact: Hannu Salo, Finnish Peatland Society – Suoseura, hannu.salo@bioenergia.fi

Leaders: Tapio Lindholm (Finnish Environment Institute SYKE), Harri Vasander (University of Helsinki), Raisa Mäkipää (Natural Resources Institute Finland LUKE), Tuula Larmola (Finnish Peatland Society), Hannu Salo (The Bioenergy Association of Finland)

Price: 290 € • Price includes 3-day full programme with expert guides, modern private coach, accommodation (2 nights), meals.

The tour will start at the Häme nature centre where an overview of peatlands in Finland is given, followed by visiting different sites of agricultural peatlands (used for growing willow, bilberry, cereals) while the paludiculture is introduced. The evening will be spent at the pristine raised bog complex of Torronsuo National Park.

During the next days, LUKE's peatland forestry experimental sites are visited, and the climate impact of these sites are discussed. At the Hyytiäla Forestry Field Station, located in the middle of forests and peatlands, several aspects of Earth system ranging from the depths of soil to atmospheric processes are covered. In addition, traditional Finnish sauna and swimming in the lake can be enjoyed.

At the Lakkasuo mire complex, including drained and undrained areas, carbon cycle and global climate change experiments and peatland forestry are introduced. Also, the topic of peat and novel peat products will be presented by the Bioenergy Association of Finland.

A short visit will be made to the Sammalistonsuo bird watching and game wetlands on a former peat extraction area at Riihimäki.

Group size is limited to 30 people.

STUDENT PROGRAMME

I Students' pre-tour in Estonia

Date: 11-14 June 2020

Contact: Marko Kohv, Estonian Wetlands Society, marko.kohv@gmail.com

Price: 100 € • Price includes 3-day full programme with expert guides and scientists, modern private coach, accommodation (3 nights), meals.

IPC2020 offers a special side-event for the students: a 3-day tour (11-13th June + drive back to Tallinn 14th June) in Central and Western Estonia.

Topics: peatland nutrient and carbon cycle; restoration and greenhouse gases; hertitage, recreation and tourism; peat production and agriculture on peatlands.

The participants will visit some of the most beautiful and famous wetlands and peatlands in Estonia and have the chance to learn from the top experts about various ecosystem services peatlands provide at the global, regional and local scale. You can enjoy the blooming orchids in Northern Estonian calcareous fens, see what makes the Soomaa ("land of mires") National Park so famous and highly valued among visitors and learn how former mires support food and timber production. The field trip will end in Tallinn just before Congress.

The group size is limited to 25 people, which ensures high-quality experience to all the participants.

Before registering, please provide a short letter of motivation (max 300 words) to Marko Kohv (marko.kohv@gmail.com) stating your academic background and motivation to take part in the programme.

MID-CONGRESS FIELD TRIPS

There is a wide choice of field trips that cover most of the Congress topics, ranging from tourism, research and restoration, agriculture and forestry on peatlands, city wetlands, visiting different peat industries etc. Please choose the field trip to attend during your online registration process.

The number of attendees for each trip is limited. Registrations will be handled on a first-come-first-served basis. Full descriptions of the mid-congress tours can be found on the Congress website **www.ipc2020.com/fieldtrips/**.

Field trips with too few participants (under 10) can be cancelled. If this happens, the delegates registered to such field trip will be offered to re-register another field trip.

Main topics	Topic related field trip programme
I PROVISIONING SERVICES	**TOUR 2:** Berry plantation on extracted peatlands
	TOUR 1: Peat extraction and forestry on extracted peatland
	TOUR 11: Industrial field trips
II REGULATING SERVICES	**TOUR 10:** Restoration of alkaline fens
	TOUR 5: Mire restoration area
	TOUR 8: Endla nature reserve
III SUPPORTING SERVICES	**TOUR 10:** Restoration of alkaline fens
	TOUR 5: Mire restoration area
	TOUR 8: Endla nature reserve
	TOUR 4: Mire restoration sites and cultural-educational programme
IV CULTURAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES	**TOUR 4:** Mire restoration sites and cultural-educational programme
	TOUR 9: Paljassaare coastal meadow bird conservation area and Pääsküla bog
	TOUR 6: Tourism on peatlands
V PEATLAND AND PEAT RELATED ECONOMIC SERVICES	**TOUR 2:** Berry plantation on extracted peatlands
	TOUR 1: Peat extraction and forestry on extracted peatland
	TOUR 11: Industrial field trips
VI PROTECTION AND RECLAMATION OF PEATLANDS	**TOUR 10:** Restoration of alkaline fens
	TOUR 5: 5: Mire restoration area
	TOUR 2: Berry plantation on extracted peatlands
	TOUR 1: Peat extraction and forestry on extracted peatland
	TOUR 8: Endla nature reserve
	TOUR 7: Peatland use and restoration
VII EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND TECHNIQUES FOR PEATLAND AND PEAT RESEARCH	**TOUR 10:** Restoration of alkaline fens
	TOUR 5: 5: Mire restoration area
	TOUR 4: Mire restoration sites and cultural-educational programme
	TOUR 11: Industrial field trips

TOUR 1. Peat extraction and forestry on extracted peatland

The 65-years old Norway spruce stand in the Rae experimental area fertilised with oil shale ash (20 t ha-1) in 1953 and with mineral fertilisers (8N2P1K) in 1964 • Photo by K. Ots

Large drainage operations peaked in Estonia in 1969–1975, when approximately 150,000 ha of forest land was drained. In total, ca 700,000 ha of forest land is affected by drainage in Estonia.

Rae peat extraction area and the exhausted peatlands are located 10 km from Tallinn. The experimental area on the Rae drained and fertilized peatland was established in the 1950s to study factors that affect forestation of peatlands and to investigate possibilities for afforesting of oligotrophic peat soils. The uniqueness of the experimental area lies in the fact that the virtually sterile peat soil has managed to grow stands (silver birch, Scots pine, Norway spruce) of 50–65 years.

The wastewater sludge of the Tallinn Wastewater Treatment Plant was applied to study the effect on afforestation. Different tree species (black alder, silver birch, Norway spruce, hybrid aspen) were planted in 2004. Today all species have grown into productive stands.

The excursion will continue to Aegviidu Nature Visitor Centre that is located in the heart of Kõrvemaa – an area of peatlands, large forests and unpopulated natural landscapes. On Sõõriksoo nature trail one can explore damp forests, bog landscapes, peatland with old peat pits, and signs of animal and bird activity. More than 100 years ago Sõõriksoo bog was one of the most productive peat-cutting areas in Estonia, where peat was cut manually and the bog provided nearly 50% of national peat production (fuel, thermal insulation material etc). Today, old peat pits have revegetated spontaneously.

Rubber boots or functional hiking boots are recommended. Total walking distance ca 4 km in natural and restored mire area and on a wooden nature trail.
Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** one group of 50 people.

TOUR 2. Berry plantation on extracted peatlands

Marjasoo blueberry plantation in autumn.

The attempts to cultivate cranberries on exhausted peatlands started in Estonia in the 1960–1970s when due to the drainage of peatlands natural areas suitable for growing mire berries decreased. At the beginning small-scale experimental plantations were established to test the suitability of growing native cranberries from different mires for cultivation, later the fields have been expanded to industrial cultivation on large areas.

Farm Marjasoo, translated the Berry Bog Farm, specializes in growing wild berries on extracted peatland (13 ha). The farm is situated in the middle of a pine forest near the largest lake in Estonia – Lake Võrtsjärv. The farm started in 1988 with the cultivation of cranberries, later blueberry fields were added, and experiments with cowberries have been made as well. All three species are suitable for cultivation; cranberry and cowberry, though, need larger investments to ensure stable crops. A unique know-how for choosing the plants and maintaining peat fields has been developed on-site. An excellent lowbush blueberry propagation collection and fine local cranberry sorts are growing in the farm Marjasoo with an annual production of 100–150 tons.

Participants will be introduced to what has been done on the farm in about 35 years followed by a visit to the plantation. Results of the experiments made in the plantations will be introduced and discussed, incl. common cranberry (Oxycoccus palustris) cultivation, low-bush blueberry (Vaccinium angustifolium) cultivation and the possibility of organic production of wild berries on extracted peat fields

Walking boots are recommended, total walking distance ca 1–2 km.
Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** two groups of 40 people.

Tour 3. Vegetable and other crop production on peatlands

Typically, peat soils are found in mires but are becoming increasingly prevalent in agriculture as they are being drained for production. Peat soils vary greatly in acidity and fertility, affecting their suitability for crop production. Peat soils that are less acidic will have larger amounts of plant available nutrients. The biochemical and microbiological properties of peat are highly suitable for the vital function of plants. Thanks to its structure, peat provides an extremely suitable environment for plant roots.

Estonian mires have been reclaimed for agriculture purposes: at present, 125 000 ha soils with peat horizon are in good agricultural condition in Estonia. The best way to preserve the carbon stock is to use agricultural peat soils as permanent grasslands. Studies confirm that almost one third of the drained peat soils used in Estonian agriculture may have been damaged to such an extent by today that they are no longer classified as peat soils.

During the excursion, an overview of amelioration and cultivation of agricultural peat soils in Estonia will be given and organic farming on peatlands, e.g. growing of vegetables (carrot) and oilseeds (rape, turnip rape) will be introduced.

Comfortable walking boots are recommended, total walking distance ca 1–2 km.
Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** one group of 25 people.

Tour 4. Mire restoration sites and cultural-educational programme in Sirtsi and Tudusoo bog Nature Conservation Areas, North-East Estonia

The Tudusoo mire Nature Conservation Area (NCA) is located in north-eastern Estonia on the eastern slope of the Pandivere Upland. The relatively intact raised bog areas are surrounded and partially degraded by forestry drainage system established in the 1970s. The EU LIFE MIRES ESTONIA project started restoration activities in 2018. Mire habitats and hydrology is being restored by closing the drainage network with various measures and implementing different forest cover manipulations. Special care is taken with forest manipulations because of numerous protected species' habitats within the drainage network. Participants will visit the newly renovated nature trail that leads to the Tudu bog lake where the educational program will be introduced, including an overview of mire related cultural values. Also, the transitional mire type will be visited nearby the Tudu Lake.

The Sirtsi NCA consists of a range of mires in the NW–SE direction with a bog, rich in hollows and pools in the middle and quagmires on the edges. This mire complex is negatively influenced by peat extraction and the surrounding forest drainage system. The Sirtsi restoration area includes a former peat mining field with a dense drainage network and a completely destroyed vegetation and forest drainage area. Sphagnum fragments were spread, and experimental oil shale ash treatment was implemented in autumn 2018 on the former extraction field. During the excursion, participants will be introduced to different approaches related to infilling ditches or dam building on extracted peatlands, also an intact raised bog will be visited. Methodologies of monitoring will be introduced.

Rubber boots or functional hiking boots are recommended. The total walking distance is ca 4 km in a natural and restored mire area and on a wooden nature trail.
Distance from Tallinn approx. 2 hours.
Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** one group of 20 people.

Tour 5. Mire restoration area in Soosaare bog, Alam-Pedja Nature Reserve, Central Estonia

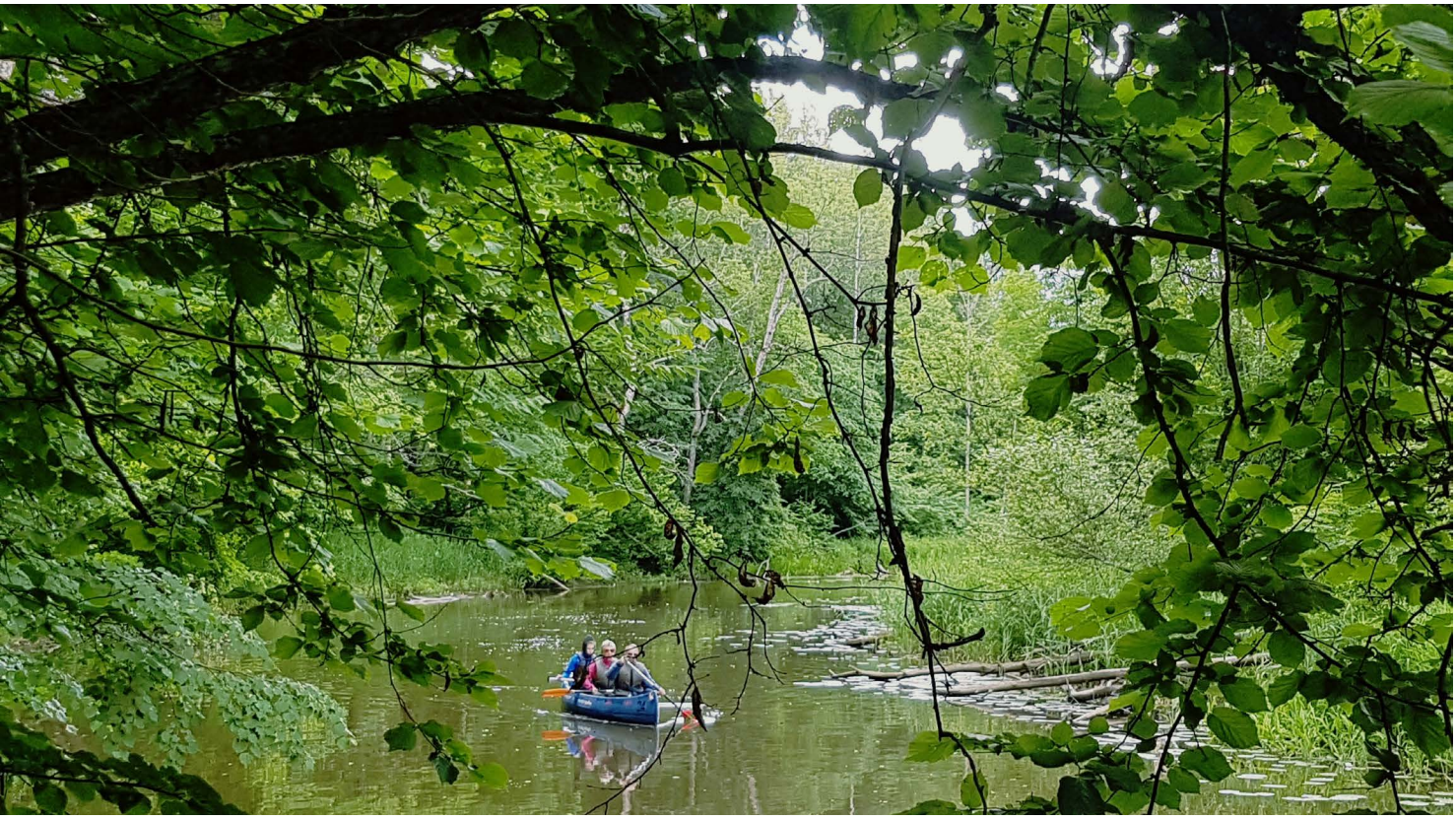
Restoration in Soosaare bog • Photo by Leevi Krumm

Alam-Pedja Nature Reserve is located in Central Estonia, northeast of Lake Võrtsjärv. It covers 34,490 ha and is a Natura 2000 site that is recognized as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. Wetlands (five large mire complexes, swamp forests, and floodplains) cover 82% of the nature reserve's territory. The restoration area (ca 120 ha) is a former peat extraction field at the edge of the large Soosaare bog. EU LIFE MIRES ESTONIA project financed restoration activities in 2017–2018. The monitoring of the water level, amphibians, birds, and butterflies is ongoing. Drones are used for monitoring changes in the vegetation cover in addition to traditional botanical observations. During the excursion, participants will be introduced to different restoration techniques of the damaged bog and an intact bog with lots of bog pools will be visited.

The excursion will be guided by a specialists from the Estonian Fund for Nature and the Univesity of Tartu.

Rubber boots or functional hiking boots are recommended. The total walking distance is ca 4 km in a natural and restored mire area. Distance from Tallinn approx. 2 hours.
Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** one group of 20 people.

Tour 6. Tourism on peatlands in the Soomaa National Park



Canoeing in Soomaa National Park • Photo by Aivar Ruukel

The Soomaa National Park was established in 1993 to protect intact bogs, meandering rivers, floodplain meadows, and a variety of forests. Participants will be able to experience all these nature values during the excursion. Part of this day is a slow and relaxing canoe trip (6 km) downstream of Raudna River with a stop in the Lemmjõgi floodplain forest – a periodically flooded alluvial forest with broad-leaved trees, such as elms, oaks, lindens, ashes, maples.

After a field lunch, the Ingatsi nature trail (3 km) will guide participants up the highest and steepest bog slope known in Europe, reaching up to 8 meters, to Kuresoo bog (11,000 ha). This is one of the largest bogs in Estonia, almost unaffected by human activities. The West-Estonian type of plateau bog is characterized by large open areas that serve as an ideal resting site for migratory geese and cranes. Discussions about nature tourism's impacts, both positive and negative, will conclude this day.

Functional walking boots are recommended.
Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** two groups of 45 people.

Tour 7. Peatland use and restoration

Photo by Priit Voolaid

Tolkuse bog (area 5,500 ha, max peat depth 5 m), located on the SW coast of Estonia, is formed due to a land uplift that separated shallow bays (lagoons) from the sea ca 8,000 years ago. As a remnant of ancient times, the formation of coastal sand dunes – one of the highest in Estonia – boarders Tolkuse bog from the west. The surrounding relief is causing the seepage of groundwater to the bog, the influence of which can be seen in the vegetation. It is assumed that the peculiarities of hydrology are also causing a faster than average peat accumulation rate in Tolkuse bog (1.6–1.9 mm yr^{-1}) as compared to other Estonian bogs (ca 1 mm yr^{-1}).

The signs of human activity are apparent in different places in the Tolkuse bog. A canal dividing the bog to Northern and Southern parts was dug already in 1856 after that bog pools in the middle of the bog were drained. A peat quarry (block mining by hand) was operating in the Southern part of the bog already at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1967, another peat mine was opened in the Eastern part of the bog where peat was milled until 1995. By that time, the Tolkuse bog was already strictly protected and the preparations to open a new peat mine in the Western part of the bog were canceled. In 2018, a restoration project was launched aiming to close the ditches and to raise the water level in the Tolkuse bog.

During the tour, participants are going to see the coastal sand dunes on the Western side of the Tolkuse bog and will then walk along a boardwalk to the middle-part of the bog to see what has been left off the drained pools. Next, you will see the area where preparations were made for peat extraction and where tree coverage has recently been removed and ditches blocked as restoration measures (walking will be on wet ground). There will be a short bus ride to the Eastern side of the bog to see the extracted peat mine and the canal dug through the bog in the 19th century (walking on wet ground). Different restoration methods will be seen and discussed.

Rubber boots or functional hiking boots are required.
The total walking distance is ca 4 km.
Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** two groups of 45 people.

Tour 8. Endla Nature Reserve

Männikjärve bog • Photo by Edgar Karofeld

The Endla Nature Reserve is located in Central Estonia. Peatland studies started here in 1910 when the Experimental Mire Research Station was founded. The main assets of the nature reserve (established in 1985, an area covering 10,161 ha) is the diverse wetland habitats, representing bogs, overgrowing lakes and the karst springs on the SW slope of the Pandivere Upland. There are several lakes, relicts of an ancient lake, the largest of which is Lake Endla. There are eight raised bog massifs separated by rivers, boggy forests and lakes. The average thickness of the peat layer is 3–4 m, while in Männikjärve bog the thickness of the peat and lake sediments layer can reach up to 9.4 m. The convex bogs have well established hollow-ridge-pool systems. Since 1997, the nature reserve belongs to the Ramsar sites and since 2004 to the EU Natura network of protected areas. The center of the nature reserve is located in the Tooma village where the old mire school hosts a small museum.

There are several hiking trails that give the visitors the opportunity to get acquainted with forest communities, wooded meadows, and bogs, to watch birds and learn about local plants. The Männikjärve hiking trail takes participants to a 1–1.5-hour walk around Lake Männikjärv, through the coniferous forest and finally follows a 1.4 km-long boardwalk across the treed ridge-hollow-pool bog to a watchtower. There are more than 130 protected species of animals, plants, and fungi recorded here.

Participants will visit the spring giving the beginning to the Varangu River. The mainspring is nearly 300 m long and over 100 m wide, with over 30 m of various sources. Some smaller springs are in 4–15 m wide funnels and some tiny springs are covered with moss. The water pH in springs is 7.3–8.0, the discharge of springs is 250–760 l/s.

Travel time from Tallinn ca 2 h, walking distance ca 2–3 km, comfortable walking shoes are recommended.
Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** one group of 40 people.

Tour 9. Paljassaare coastal meadow bird conservation area and Pääsküla bog

City wetland • Photo by Meelis Uustal

Although most of the coastal zone of the capital city Tallinn has been urbanized, there are some semi-natural peatland areas left within the city boundaries. Man, the sea and post-glacial rebound have shaped the Paljassaare area, which is now the best birdwatching site inside Tallinn, only 15 min from the city center. The core of the area is a 70-ha large wetland with coastal lagoon lakes, wet coastal meadows, marshes and reedbeds that attract birds during migration and breeding. However, the military activities in the past have resulted in eutrophication that negatively affects the local biodiversity. In 2018–2024, an EU funded restoration project CoastNet LIFE is undergoing with the aim to restore the habitats of protected bird and amphibian species. The total walking distance of the excursion is 4 km and it takes 3 hours with visits to birdwatching towers. Bringing binoculars is encouraged.

The tour will continue with visiting the Pääsküla bog (~9 km2, max peat depth 5.4 m), located on the western edge of Tallinn. The Pääsküla bog developed from infilling and overgrowing of the coastal lagoon ca 8,000 years ago, however, it has been drained since the 19th century. Historically, peat was extracted manually and since the 1920s with machines from trenches on bog edges for domestic heating. The former peat extraction area was used as Tallinn's main waste disposal site in 1974–2003, thereafter closed and recultivated in 2007. Horticultural peat extraction is still continuing on a small scale. During the walk on the nature path (2–4 km), you can see the effect of drainage, old peat trenches and bog forest recovery from several burnings in 2002.

More information: **www.citynature.eu**

Both paths are easily walkable, no rubber boots are required.
Price: 30 € per person • **Availability:** two groups of 25 people.

Tour 10. Restoration of alkaline fens

Photo by Raimo Pajula

The status and activities carried out on the Läänemaa-Suursoo alkaline fen site under the LIFE Peat Restore project "Reduction of CO_2-emissions by restoring degraded peatlands in Northern European Lowland" and Paraspõllu fen will be explored.

The aim of the LIFE project is to restore degraded peatland sites; measure the change in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from peatlands before and after restoration and model fluxes using the Greenhouse Gas Emission Site Types (GEST) approach; and provide guidelines for decision-makers and conservationists with best practice scenarios for peatland restoration and use in relation to the European Union climate policy and legislation.

Läänemaa-Suursoo with total area of about 3500 ha is a sedge-dominated alkaline fen that was drained at the end of 19th century and was used as a pasture for cattle and for hay mowing. It was abandoned after the World War II, but drainage system was left to the site. Nowadays the Läänemaa-Suursoo is under protection and also belongs to Natura 2000 network to protect several peatland habitat types: transitional mires and quaking bogs (7140), active raised bogs (7110*), alkaline fens (7230). During the LIFE project the water level is raised by infilling ditches and building dams. The objective of rewetting is to stop peat decomposition and afforestation on that huge disturbed fen ecosystem, and to maintain the complex of open fen, transitional mire and some fen and transitional mire forests. Comprehensive monitoring is also conducted on site in addition to restoration works. Georadar is used to study the spatial pattern of peat depth over the site. Plant species composition, coverage of vascular species is analysed. For water level monitoring divers are used. Samples for water and topmost part of the peat deposit are taken for their further chemical analyses. GHG fluxes are monitored with chamber method monthly during the growing season. Simultaneously with C flux measurements drone flights are performed according to which normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI) is calculated. During this excursion, the first results concerning plant cover, water and peat chemistry, water level, carbon balance and NDVI will be presented.

Paraspõllu is an open calcareous-rich spring fen with a tufa ($CaCO_3$) precipitation, the fen is among the rarest and most endangered wetland types worldwide. The fen is located in the Paraspõllu Nature Reserve (253 ha), which is a Natura 2000 site. Different activities are introduced with the aim to restore the water regime and achieve favourable environmental condition for the recovery of natural vegetation.

Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** one group of 20 people.

TOUR 11. Industry field trips

There will be many parallel industrial field trips to choose from (please make your final selection during online registration for the Congress) both for those who are interested in horticultural or energy peat industry. Industrial excursions will concentrate mainly on the following Congress topics: 5.3 peat extraction; 5.4 utilisation of peat; 5.5 other forms of peatland use and 6.2 restorations of peatlands, but also logistics, local regulations and social aspects. In more detail, peat production for different purposes, substrate factories and package plants, powerplants, ports and shipping, peatland restoration, production regulation (certification) and safety, EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment), Estonian peat production licensing system, responsible peatland management and balancing different aspects and stakeholders' interests will be introduced.

Every proposed route will focus on some of the abovementioned aspects; however, every route will include visiting a peat production site. Please also pay attention to the duration of the excursion you choose, some of them are shorter and some longer – a detailed schedule will be disclosed later, tours in the Pärnu and Haapsalu region are full-day trips. None of the routes necessarily require rubber boots (if not stated otherwise), but during every industrial field trip, some distances will be covered on foot.

You may choose between three main regions of destination:

- Pärnu region – biggest peat production area in Estonia where both horticultural and energy peat production are represented;
- Haapsalu region – smaller production areas with its specialities;
- Tallinn region – shortest driving distances, a bit less attention to horticultural peat aspects.

Please visit the Congress website for a detailed list of sites to be visited in each region.
www.ipc2020.com/industry-excursions/

Price: 40 € per person • **Availability:** five groups of 25 people.

SOCIAL EVENTS

KICK-OFF GET-TOGETHER

Sunday 14th June 2020
Rae Meierei in Tallinn Old Town

With the unique industrial concept, the 250-seat restaurant and cheese factory is a great place to get together after arriving to Estonia and before the official opening of the Congress to meet your old and new friends and colleagues. Light snacks and drinks are served during the evening.

ICE-BREAKING PARTY

Monday 15th June 2020
Congress Venue – the Alexela Concert Hall

At the end of the first official Congress day, you get the chance to relax and network at the Congress venue with local delicacies and light drinks being served. You will have the time to visit the Congress exhibition booths, make new contacts and enjoy a versatile cultural programme to get to know Estonians a little bit more.

Ice-Breaking Party is sponsored by:

NURME TURVAS

MIDSUMMER'S EVE CELEBRATION

Wednesday 17th June 2020
Külavilla

At the end of the exciting day of field trips, we will invite all delegates to gather in a beautiful setting of countryside near Tallinn to get a glimpse of what's the white nights and Midsummer's Eve in the Nordics are about.

The Midsummer or St. John's Day (Jaanipäev as it is known in Estonia), is one of the oldest local celebrations. Due to its northern location, Estonia experiences the summertime "White Nights" phenomenon, when the sun sets late and the nights are dusk at most. Midsummer coincides closely with the longest day of the year in the northern hemisphere – the summer solstice. This year the solstice occurs on June 21st. Just a few days before it, when we gather to celebrate the white nights, you shall be prepared to witness how the dusk meets dawn.

Midsummer's Eve is intertwined with many folk beliefs. Children stay up until dawn, while young lovers wander through the forest looking for a lucky fern flower said to bloom only at this time of the year. If you are lucky enough to spot a glow-worm, you may expect a great fortune. The more adventurous boys and girls are known to swing as high as possible on the village's wooden swing or take a jump over the bonfire in hopes of achieving prosperity. More moderate traditions include singing, dancing and telling old folk tales.

CONGRESS GALA DINNER

Thursday 18th June 2020
Maarjamäe Castle & History Centre

To remind you that Tallinn is on the coast of the Baltic Sea we will take the dinner guests to the newly restored Maarjamäe History Centre. For centuries, the place we now know as Maarjamäe was one of the many places in Tallinn where people flocked to enjoy the summer season. The outdoor exhibition "My Free Country" unfolds over 100 years, making it possible to discuss both the past and the future. A 4-course dinner will be served and complimented with an exciting cultural programme.

The Gala Dinner is available for all delegates. Please register your participation during your online registration. An additional fee will apply.

Congress Gala Dinner is sponsored by:

MOVIE PROGRAMME AND PUBLIC LECTURES

15th to 19th June 2020
Artis Cinema movie halls in the Congress venue

ACCOMPANYING PERSONS´ PROGRAMME

We welcome the accompanying persons of our delegates to join the social events of the Congress. During the time the delegates are actively participating in the scientific sessions, accompanying persons are invited to discover the beautiful city of Tallinn.

Accompanying person's package includes:

- Kick-off Get-together on 14th June 2020
- Ice-breaking Party on 15th June 2020 and a 2-hour guided city tour by bus
- Special programme on 16th June (guided food tour in the city centre, a trendy souvenir workshop at the Telliskivi Creative district or degustation in Junimperium gin distillery)
- Lahemaa National Park Day tour and Midsummer's Eve celebrations on 17th June 2020
- PEAT talks on 18th June 2020

For more information and registration for accompanying persons, please visit the Congress website **www.ipc2020.com/accompanying/**

THE CONGRESS VENUE - ALEXELA CONCERT HALL

Alexela Concert Hall is a part of the Solaris Complex located at the heart of Tallinn next to the Old Town and major hotels. The Alexela Concert Hall was opened to the public in 2009 with a vision to offer exceptional possibilities for various events and conferences. The large hall of the Concert Hall has 1,800 seats on three levels. The most important keyword for the whole centre is "multifunctionality." In addition to the wide range of possibilities offered by the Concert Hall, the Solaris Centre has an additional 12 theatre-style halls available. The lobby of the Concert Hall is divided across five floors, with a total space of 3,300 square meters, which can be used for exhibitions or offering food services to customers. Solaris also has a shopping centre together with a pharmacy, car park, cinema and restaurants.

Photo by Tallinna Kontserdimaja AS

PHOTO CONTEST

The photo contest aims to highlight the versatility of peatlands, usage of peat and issues related to peat extraction as well as peatland reclamation – peatlands perceived in their natural beauty, exploitation, and restoration.

We hope that you will capture the seasons in the world's peatlands or other types of wetlands and share your photos with the worldwide audience by submitting your photos to the contest.

How to participate?

Go to the website of the Congress: **ipc2020.com/photocontest** and upload 1-3 photos. After a short period, your photos will be reviewed by the administrators of the web, and after approval, they will be published on the Congress website.

The worldwide audience is invited to "like" the submitted photos, and of course, there will be awards for the most breath-taking photos!

Deadline for uploading your photos to the contest: 15 May 2020.

THE MAIN PRIZE IS THE FUJIFILM HYBRID CAMERA X-T30

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PRACTICALITIES

Arriving to Estonia

Tallinn is easy to reach by plane, ferry, train and bus (Baltic region). The core value for most of the visitors is that the main international transportation hubs are within a short taxi or public transportation ride from the city centre. It takes only 10-15 minutes to commute from the Tallinn International Airport to the hotels in the central area and the Congress venue.

Free complimentary public transportation is offered to the delegates of the Congress by the Tallinn City Government to welcome you and to help us to minimize the ecological footprint of the Congress.

Welcome desk at the airport

The Congress welcome desk is open at the Tallinn International Airport on 14th June and in the morning of 15th June. You are welcome to collect your Congress badge and delegate kit shortly after your landing to have all the practicalities and information in your hands before heading to the city. With your badge, you will receive the QR code that allows you to use public transportation for free from the moment you are leaving the airport.

Accommodation

As the summertime in Tallinn is very popular among tourists from all over the world and several conferences and international events are taking place - the Congress Secretariat has pre-booked a sufficient number of rooms in different hotels in the central area of Tallinn. This is to ensure that all the delegates can book a hotel via Congress website with the special discounted IPC2020 price.

www.ipc2020.com/accommodation/

Please follow the information on the Congress website and do not forget to book the accommodation right after the registration to ensure your comfortable stay in Tallinn. Please note that the special discounted prices are only valid for bookings via Congress Website. If you contact the hotels directly, you are likely to be charged a much higher price.

Visa information

Estonia is part of the Schengen area, so nationals of the European Union, the European Economic Area and any third-country national holding a residence permit of a Schengen State do not need a visa to enter Estonia. In addition, there are over 60 states whose citizens are welcome to visit Estonia for stays no longer than 90 days in any 180 days without applying for a visa. The list and terms for visa applications can be conveniently found on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia.

vm.ee/en/who-does-not-need-visa-visit-estonia

IMPORTANT DATES

Registration opening: 1 November 2019

Deadline for submission of short abstracts: 6 January 2020

Notification of presentation acceptance: 2 March 2020

Deadline for submission of extended abstracts: 15 March 2020

Early bird registration: 15 March 2020

Late registration: 14 May 2020

On-site registration: 15 May 2020 onwards

Final programme: April 2020

Photo contest closing: 15 May 2020

The Congress: 14 June – 20 June 2020

SPONSORSHIP AND EXHIBITION

Marketing Opportunities

The sponsor options of IPC 2020 offer great benefits for your company:

- Connecting with approximately 800 attendees worldwide
- Excellent exposure both before and during the Congress
- Targeted marketing and scheduled meetings between attendees and sponsors
- Social-networking events at top venues
- Networking with influential people in the industry internationally
- Develop collaborative partnerships and business leads
- Possibility to take an exhibition stand to display your expertise
- Being promoted to media and press outlets in conjunction with the Congress
- Gaining knowledge and insight in the latest trends and practices
- Introducing organizations products or services to new markets
- Enhancing company's brand and position in the market
- Raising corporate profile
- Being a part of the latest research and discussion of the issues

Please find the most suitable option for your company or organisation on **the Congress website**.

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Connect with IPC2020

TALLINN AND ESTONIA

One of Europe's emerging and most dynamic conference destinations, Estonia rarely fails to impress delegates with its combination of centuries-old charm and amazingly modern, high-quality facilities.

First-time visitors are sure to be surprised by Estonia's medieval ambience and captivated by the beauty of its rugged coastlines and pristine natural environment. It is the third country in the world after Finland and Canada to have the maximum area covered under natural mires. According to the data by the World Health Organisation, Estonia is among the countries with the cleanest air and according to the European Food Safety Authority, Estonia has the 2nd cleanest food in Europe. As much as it values its environment and rich history, Estonia is one of the most technologically minded countries in Europe, with free wireless internet coverage available practically everywhere.

Tallinn, the capital city in Estonia, is located in the northern part of the country, on the shore of the Gulf of Finland of the Baltic Sea, it has a population of approximately 400 000. Tallinn's Old Town is one of the best-preserved medieval cities in Europe and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Tallinn has the highest number of start-ups per person among European countries and is a birthplace of many international high technology companies, including Skype and Transferwise.

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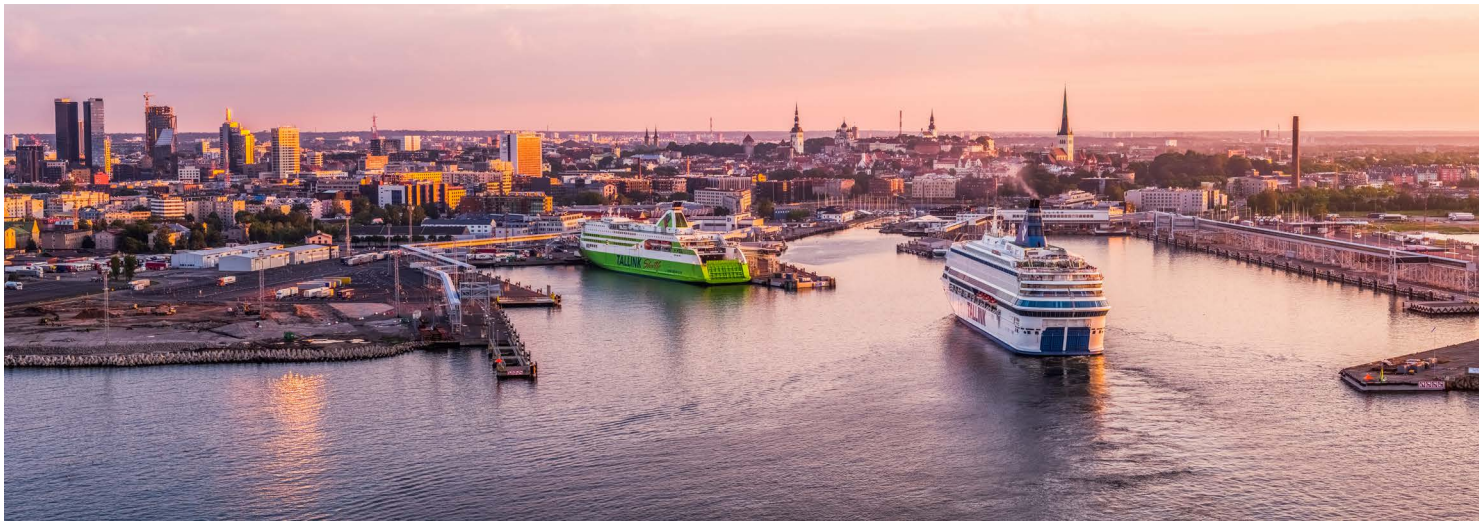

WHY THE INTERNATIONAL PEATLAND SOCIETY?

The IPS is a unique network of peat and peatland researchers, professionals, corporate and institutional members worldwide. IPS was established in Québec, Canada in 1968 and has today almost 300 corporate and 1200 research, student and individual members in 39 countries, organised into 16 National Committees, from Europe, America and Asia. This provides an important mix of views and knowledge which challenges all of us to consider peatlands and peat from different perspectives.

IPS members are united in their belief in Responsible Management and Wise Use of peatlands and peat, by addressing the three pillars of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals namely, economy, environment and society. Only the IPS can provide reasonable solutions to today's pressing issues regarding whether and how peatlands can help support future human needs and values.

The main aims of the IPS are to promote, gather, exchange and communicate peatland and peat information, knowledge and experiences. In practice, the IPS organises events, including conferences, symposia, and workshops. In addition, IPS publishes reports on peatland and peat activities, collaborates in international projects and participates in the work of major international conventions that recognise the global importance of peatlands and peat, for example, Ramsar, CBD and UNFCCC.

Currently the main issues are climate change, biodiversity, the need for responsible use, and restoration of degraded peatlands. IPS, via its experts, provides balanced and credible inputs to international conventions and agreements that develop policies that are implemented by decision-takers.

IPS scientists assess divergent views, for conservation, but also horticulture, for example, and counterbalance divergent opinions with facts. This is extremely important for international, national and regional policies and legislation.

Another example of IPS efforts is the quadrennial International Peatland Congress, which will be held in Tallinn, Estonia in 2020. You are very welcome to attend and report on your recent activities - in industry or science – or just renew acquaintances with peat family colleagues and friends.

Continue to support the IPS, encourage others to join, and together we can spread the word.

You will find more information about the IPS at **www.peatlands.org**