

New WRB developments

- ✓ *World Soil Congress - Bangkok*
- ✓ *Future leadership WRB*
- ✓ *Excursion South-Africa - Namib desert*
- ✓ *Classification pedons – WRB of pre- and post-congress tours World Congress of Soil Science*
- ✓ *European Andosol meeting - Iceland*

Annexes

- ✓ *Letter Prof. L. Van Huyssteen Excursion Namaqua – Namibia*

New WRB developments

- ✓ Many of us are preparing for the **World Soil Congress at Bangkok**. Important is that Suzanne Pazos is convening Symposium Nr. 21: 'Soil classification, accomplishments and future', where World Reference Base will be in focus among other soil classification systems. During that meeting we shall announce time and a venue for a WRB business meeting.

- ✓ During the WRB Business meeting I shall briefly report on our activities and outcome of the last four years. We shall then discuss the **future leadership** of the Working Group. As already mentioned in the previous WRB circular, Freddy Nachtergaele and myself indicated that we would welcome newcomers to take over. I am very glad to report that based on the reactions received the following will be proposed:

Chair: Prof. Dr. Erika Michelli, Hungary

Vice Chair: Prof. Dr. Peter Schad, Germany

Secretary: Dr. Otto Spaargaren, Netherlands

As mentioned in our letter Freddy Nachtergaele and myself will continue our full support to the working group by our presence in the WRB Task force and as much as possible active participation in future meetings.

The newcomers will have the opportunity to present themselves and their motivation.

I trust that we shall then be in a position to endorse this proposal. The new leadership will establish its plans and priorities for the next four years.

- ✓ One of the things which already is in the pipeline is the **excursion from South Africa to the Namib desert**, which is scheduled after the 50 anniversary congress of the South African Soil Science Society in January 2003. The initiative was taken by Prof. Andrei Rozanov and Prof. Freddy Ellis from Stellenbosch University. We now have the full endorsement from Prof. Leopoldt Van Huyssteen, President of the SSSSA. Included herewith is the letter of endorsement for your reference.

For the excursion Otto Spaargaren suggests to link up with other research groups in Namibia, in particular as Huyssteen indicates that apart from the Gypsisols they have little data of Namibian soils. He mentions the following groups:

a) BIOTA AFRICA (contact Dr. Mariam Akhtar-Schuster, Botanical Institute and Botanical Garden, University of Hamburg, Ohnhorststrasse 18, 22609 Hamburg, Germany, tel.: +49-(0)40-42816-533, fax: +49-(0)40-42816-539, email: makhtar-schuster@botanik.uni-hamburg.de, website: www.biota-africa.org); they carry out a botanical survey related to soils on a transect along the coast from Windhoek to Kaapstad.

b) Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (contact: Dr. Juliane Zeidler, PO Box 20232, Windhoek, Namibia, tel.: +264-61-229855, fax: +264-61-230172, email: julianez@drfn.org.na).

c) University of Namibia (contact: Dr. Schneider, Department of Crop Science and Natural Resources, Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Namibia, Private Bag 13301, 340 Mandume Ndemafayo Avenue, Pioneerspark, Windhoek, Namibia, (no tel, fax or email available).

d) Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development (contact: Marina Coetzee, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development, Private Bag 13184, Windhoek, Namibia, tel.: +264-61-2087077, fax: +264-61-2087068, email: mec@iway.na or agricaez@mweb.com.na).

This latter group has a wealth of data on soil profile information, including agro-ecological zoning and climatic info.

Furthermore ISRIC has a collection of 11 Namibian soils, which could serve as a basis of information on Namibian soils. They are momentarily screening the Southern African soil data we have and Namibia is on the list. Time is due to have a headcount of who is interested to join the party in South Africa. We would be grateful if you could inform Seppe Deckers by an e-mail message on your plans regarding the Namib Desert tour. We need your reply (by e-mail) by the end of July 2002, so as to allow the organisers sufficient time to make all the practical arrangements.

As the number of participants is limited to maximum 20, people will be enlisted on a first come first served basis.

- ✓ I trust that during the **pre- and post-congress tours of the World Congress of Soil Science** we all will assist in the **classification of the pedons in WRB**. I was sorry to learn that the Australia tour was cancelled, because a cross- Australia tour would have been a rewarding test for WRB.
- ✓ Another meeting that we would like to draw your attention to, is the COST Action 622 **European Andosol meeting in Iceland** next year June. Spaargaren will attend to collect some soil monoliths. It is not an open meeting but maybe one or two interested WRB members can attend as well (Quantin and Delvaux are already members of COST Action 622).
- ✓ As the IUSS Working Group has no access to financial resources it is not possible to sponsor any of the scientists who wish to participate in the excursions. We are most grateful for the South-African colleagues for keeping the prices low by expediting local sponsorships.

Looking forward to get your news by e-mail or meet you at Bangkok.

Yours sincerely,

Seppe Deckers

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Annex: Letter of Prof. Leopoldt Van Huyssteen

EXCURSION NAMAQUA-NAMIBIA (NAMIB DESERT) AFTER SSSSA JUBILEE CONGRESS JANUARY 2003

Dear Prof. Deckers,

Your email letter to me of 8 April 2002 refers.

The excursion you mentioned is on! Freddie Ellis, Jan Lambrechts and Andrei Rozanov of the Department of Soil Science here and Theo Dohse of ISCW Pretoria and Marina Coetzee of the "Ministry of Agriculture, Water & Rural Development", Windhoek, Namibia, are planning the excursion. It will be organised under the auspices of the SSSSA. Further details are given below:

- Seven days long, starting in Stellenbosch on Saturday 25 January 2003 and officially ending about 2000 km later in Windhoek, Namibia, on Friday afternoon 31 January 2003. Kombis will return to Cape Town (or Johannesburg, if needed) to arrive there during the afternoon of 2 February 2003. If there is enough interest (minimum of 7 participants) to fill at least one kombi, consideration will be given to extend the excursion to Etosha Game Reserve in Namibia for foreigners wanting to see the game (and the soils!).
- The route through South Africa is planned to include seeing excellent examples of duricrusts, especially petroduric horizons ("dorbank"), silcrete and petrocalcic horizons. Another unique feature to see is the ancient landscape with termite mounds on them and their influence on the soil distribution. In Southern Namibia we have data on gypsisols. Otherwise we have a fair amount of data on the soils up to the Namibian border (first 4 days) but not much in Namibia itself. In Namibia we will do a traverse through the Namib Desert.
- We plan to limit the size of the group to 30 people – 20 foreigners and 10 locals and places will be allocated on a first come, first serve basis
- Costs: US\$ 600 per person. This price will be all-inclusive for accommodation (sharing), travel (air-conditioned kombis) and food (some we will prepare ourselves!) but excluding medical insurance's and any other possible expenses. Persons wanting to go further to Etosha will pay \$ 200 extra, which will include entrance fees, travel, accommodation and meals and a return to Windhoek (or Cape Town).
- If you can let us know as soon as possible whether you think there will be enough interest from foreigners and if positive, we will then prepare an excursion document for distribution to possible participants and to serve as an advertisement. This will then be sending out as soon as possible to have the first reaction of intent of participating in the excursion back by the end of June 2002. At the World Congress in Thailand in August 2002 we will further advertise the excursion and then set the following deadline for end of August for payment of a deposit of \$ 100 for those who have reserved their places. Final payment of the balance scheduled for end of November 2002.
- Theo Dohse suggested that we reserve the Friday immediately after the Congress in Stellenbosch (24 January) for WRB business and if necessary, to continue with outstanding matters during some of the evenings on the excursion.

Lastly, we are looking forward to show pedologists the unique spread of arid soils of the Namib, Namibian highlands and Namaqualand (South Africa). It is midsummer that time of the year but we believe that those who want to come are used to such conditions! Some of the areas along the coast are also restricted areas due to diamond mining and for entrance permits have to be organised.

Should you have any queries or need any more information, please contact Freddie Ellis at fe@sun.ac.za

Kind regards,



PROF LEOPOLDT VAN HUYSTEEEN
President SSSSA