



Northcote Landfill

A very enjoyable field trip to the Northcote Landfill site was held in June. This is a 15 hectare site in the City of Darebin which is current being rehabilitated. It is an important new park in Darebin, and successfully incorporates contemporary urban park design with the regulatory requirements of waste management and containment. The success of this site has largely been due the multi-disciplinary team that has worked on the project from the planning stage. In keeping with this team approach, soil scientists and other professionals attended, including landscape architects, horticulturists and engineers. *see page 12*



In this Issue

- Accreditation
- Looking into the future - ASSSI
- Handbook of Soil Science
- Australian Journal of Soil Research

**AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF SOIL SCIENCE
INC.**

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The Australian Society of Soil Science Incorporated (ASSSI) was founded in 1955 to work towards the advancement of soil science in the professional, academic and technical fields. It comprises a Federal Council and seven branches (Qld, NSW, Riverina, ACT, Vic, SA and WA). Liability of members is limited.

Objectives

- To advance soil science
- To provide a link between soil scientists and members of kindred bodies within Australia and in other countries.

Specific Objectives

- To promote the field of soil science
- To further the expertise in soil science of members
- To be a forum for discussion on soil science
- To increase government and community awareness of soil science
- To liaise and cooperate with other organisations in support of mutual interests
- To encourage research and extension in soil science
- To promote wise management of the soil resource throughout Australia

Membership

For all Membership and CPSS application and renewals, subscription, queries and address changes contact Linda Bennison, ASSSI executive officer on telephone 03 5974 1758, facimile 03 5974 1141 or email asssi@gsv.com.au

ASSSI Website

<http://asssi.asn.au>

PROFILE

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Advertisements

Advertisements relevant to some aspect of soil science are welcome. Charges are full page \$220, half page \$110, quarter page \$55 (GST inclusive). Information about ASSSI conferences, courses, scholarships etc is published free.

Contents

4 Letters

6 Mineral Fertility

7 International Working Meeting on Micropedology

8 Looking to the Future

9 Profile on Graeme Tupper

10 Philip Smethurst

11 Branch News

12 Feature Article

13 Handbook of Soil Science

15 Federal Council Minutes 199th & 200th

20 AJSR Contents

21 AJSR Report

23 Conferences

All contributions are welcome, text preferably by email. Please send to the editor, Dan Murphy, Centre for Land Rehabilitation, The University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA 6907.

tel 08 9380 7083, fax 08 9380 1050, email dmurphy@agric.uwa.edu.au



From the President

There is no doubt about the importance of soil to Australian society, but this is not well recognised in the community. Knowledge of soil is crucial for effective land management for food and fibre production, housing development and waste disposal. A recognised accreditation scheme for professional soil scientists is essential if our profession is to be taken seriously and used by the community. There is great pressure on land use - decisions that take shortcuts can have long-lasting consequences. We must increase our professional standing if we are to be taken seriously when significant decisions are made at policy level and in practice.

ASSSI is in the process of creating a more unified national organization. It is seeking to address problems of poor communication among its members and to pay more attention to its core objectives. We are making decisions to improve the management of the accreditation scheme for members and we are developing a functional strategic plan to ensure focus remains on our most important tasks. Improved communication among members is now possible because the database has been updated, unfinancial past members have been removed and members with CPSS have been returned to the ASSSI database (this was previously administered by the AIAST). There is now scope for regular communication with members via mail and email, through Branches (rather than directly from the Federal Council). All members of Federal Council (including Branch Presidents) are actively participating in decisions-making and now have the opportunity to discuss issues with members widely and to provide rapid feedback at Federal Council meetings (held every two months).

During 2001, Federal Council introduced a strategic planning process to explore the extent to which we are meeting our objectives as an important Australian Society. It is essential that we do not direct our energy into unimportant activities. Branches have sought views from members and a lively discussion has taken place across Australia. If you have not taken part in these discussions, there could be a number of reasons. First, the databases for Branches have only recently been updated, attendance at Branch meetings has generally been limited (with some exceptions), some members are not members of a Branch (as in Tasmania), and other members live great distances from centres where meetings are held. For these reasons it is essential that we maintain an up-to-date database, that members respond to issues of concern and raise issues either through their Branches or directly with Federal Council and that each of us decides what we can best contribute so that ASSSI achieves its stated aims.

Lyn Abbott



From the Editor's Desk

Profile welcomes letters, particularly those which promote balanced discussion. Profile also welcomes, Feature articles, Branch News, soil descriptions, book reviews, interesting stories, member Profiles and anything else that contains the word soil in the article. Please also send pictures - the magazine is only as good as its contributions.

Also if you are computer-literate, then please subscribe to Profile electronically.

Thanks to all those society members who contribute to Profile.

Daniel Murphy



Letters

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16/10/01

The Editor,

Considerable time and effort at ASSSI executive level is going into changing the accreditation scheme. I am concerned that very little of this discussion is filtering down to ordinary members. This letter is to alert members that at least some of the options under discussion will prevent them from remaining members - or make it extremely expensive to do so. I urge all members to contact their branch executive and find out what is going on !

At least one of the scenarios under discussion will transform the ASSSI into an accreditation focussed business. Another would require that ALL members must be accredited and pay a much increased fee.

My position is that while I support the idea of accreditation and the efforts which have gone into accreditation standards, I do not support the idea of converting ASSSI into an industry focussed exclusive club. I am prepared to support formation of a subgroup of 'accredited members' who pay extra for additional services.

Who am I? I spent 35 years as a technician and researcher in CSIRO - much of it while serving as an executive member of ASSSI in SA. I am now a private consultant, accredited CPSS and CPAg, and federal vice president of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science & Technology

(AIAST). The AIAST have provided an accreditation service to their own members for many years and to ASSSI for the last 3 years.

I am aware that the service provided by AIAST to ASSSI was unsatisfactory - one reason I took on the job of vice president of AIAST is to help fix the problems that existed. But at least part of the lack of satisfaction was caused by unrealistic expectations. To provide accreditation and office services of a full professional body is hideously expensive. I do not believe that many understand just how expensive.

Many ASSSI members complained of the 'lack of services' provided for the 'large fee' charged by AIAST. The AIAST costs around \$500K/year, and this is spread over a membership base of 1500 fee paying members and provides an office, a glossy journal 4 times a year, one full time office staff, and a director who markets the CPAg scheme and is the contact point to deal with complaints against accredited members. I would remind those people that if the ASSSI decides to run a similar service, then that same total cost will have to be borne on a much smaller membership base. ASSSI membership is now around 500, which would mean a subscription of \$1000/year (assuming that we retain 500 members). At the moment, there are only 150 who pay for CPSS accreditation at \$250/year.

One group are suggesting that it should be 'compulsory' to have accreditation to work on soils - then the membership base would be larger and the costs less. Of course, this is silly. A compulsion like this is only generated slowly, and by massive expenditure on marketing. Certified practicing accountants (CPA's) have spent millions of dollars annually just to achieve a brand preference. Next time you see an advert for CPA's, remember that a 30 second TV advert costs \$100k to make and up to \$30k each time it is displayed on peak time TV.

It would be nice to have our own accreditation scheme. But such a scheme is much more than just setting a standard. For the standard to mean something, there must be complaints procedures,

disciplinary mechanisms, and penalties. ANY activity dealing with peoples income and reputation would leave the ASSSI wide open to legal proceedings - so lawyers need to be retained. The huge cost of disciplinary mechanisms mean that such measures need to be avoided if possible by mediation - requiring big commitment from volunteer committees doing highly stressful work. AIAST experience has shown that 'going professional' requires more time from volunteers - not less.

Low cost professional indemnity (PI) insurance is a major attraction of any accreditation scheme - without it, the scheme is unlikely to succeed. To my knowledge ASSSI has not investigated PI insurance at all as yet.

Even a minimal business plan will quickly show that the operational costs of a 'go it alone' accreditation scheme and paid office staff, on our membership base do not work out.

What can we do? The total cost of operating an office and accreditation scheme does not change much with the size of the membership base. If ASSSI does not have enough members then the obvious thing to do is combine with one or more like minded organisations. This was the thinking behind the original approach to AIAST - and behind AIAST's acceptance - even though they were not ready for it and there were a lot of difficulties. AIAST has responded and a number of administrative changes have been made and structural changes are happening within the AIAST which will allow a much more flexible scheme than was legally possible three years ago. Specifically, it could leave the detail of accreditation process in the hands of ASSSI.

The AIAST still represents the best chance (maybe the only chance) of a successful low cost but wide ranging scheme. In my view ASSSI would be much better off to identify and fix the objections to that scheme rather than trying to independently learn all the costly lessons associated with running this sort of a business.

The purpose of accreditation is to provide a

widely recognised label so users of the skills can be assured that the person they hire is recognised by the industry concerned. Fragmentation of accreditation schemes will completely defeat this purpose.

As a long term member of ASSSI and vice president of the AIAST, I am in a position to be sympathetic to the views of both groups. I would be delighted to work with the ASSSI to come up with a workable, affordable, and satisfactory solution to all parties. Both organisations have much to gain from such an association.

Cliff Hignett CPSS CPAG
Member ASSSI and vice president AIAST

2002 NATIONAL SOILS CONFERENCE AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF SOIL SCIENCE INC

2 – 6 DECEMBER 2002
THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN
AUSTRALIA, PERTH

Future Soils : "Managing Soil Resources to Ensure Access to Markets for Future Generations"

Enclosed with this newsletter are copies of the Preliminary Announcement and Call for Abstracts. Please hand the second to a colleague who is not a member of the Society.

Abstracts on all disciplines related to soil science and management of our soil resources are welcome.

I look forward to seeing you in Perth, WA, in December 2002.

Keith Lindbeck

Chairman, Conference Organising Committee (lindbkya@ca.com.au)

web address - www.agric.uwa.edu.au/soils/futuress/index.html

Mineral Fertility

Two articles published in AJSR this year by CSIRO workers in tropical Queensland have reported on the application of minerals to highly weathered soils to change charge characteristics. Gillman et al. (2001) added basalt and Noble et al. (2001) added bentonite to highly weathered degraded soils where organic matter had been reduced due to cultivation. In both cases, loss of the variable charge characteristics of organic matter was compensated for by the permanent charge of these minerals.

Here in the Wild West, our soils are similarly subjected to the loss of organic matter through cultivation. Loss of nutrient cycling and decreasing CEC arise from loss of organic matter in WA soil and the addition of silicate minerals as both a fertiliser and soil amendment have been proposed. Rather than adding materials with high charge characteristics such as used in the Deep North, I have been researching methods of manipulating the properties of local silicate minerals, especially microcline with its relatively high and structurally contained K reserve. Undertaking my PhD at the Department of Soil Science and Plant Nutrition, University of Western Australia under the tutelage of Bob Gilkes, I have been blending a combination of engineering, geochemistry, mineralogy and plant nutrition into a truly cross-disciplined approach to improving a soils "mineral fertility".

Borrowing techniques from the nanoparticle boffins in engineering, I produced submicron powders with some surprising characteristics. Although x-ray amorphous, the particles are still crystalline, despite intensive milling. Contrary to other published work, TEM analysis showed only a small fraction of the mineral becoming amorphous as a result of milling. Despite measuring all kinds of mineralogical parameters, it appears that the specific surface area of the most important factor in mineral dissolution. A similar trend was shown in plant growth experiments. While being less effective than soluble fertilisers, ryegrass growth was sustained in a glasshouse in certain treatments for 10 months, and although an increase in exchangeable

nutrients attributed to some of the findings, changes in the soil chemistry associated with addition of milled silicates appears to have also played a crucial role.

There however is much speculation regarding both the practicality and economics of such an approach in agriculture. The application of silicate mineral fertilisers has many critics, and there is every indication that the costs associated with my research will have no practical implications on an agricultural or horticultural scale. It does draw out though, that a concept of "mineral fertility" stretches beyond simply the ability for soil minerals to supply exchangeable nutrients or retain soluble nutrients. As also suggested by Noble et al. (2001) compensating for the loss of organic matter through mineral additions may have an important role in agricultural sciences.

The mineral surface-soil solution interface is also gaining resurgence in the environmental field. I draw the reader's attention to a recent Colloquium of the United States Academy of Sciences on *Geology, Mineralogy, and Human Welfare* (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Vol 96, May 1999, pp 3348-3485) where the importance of soil minerals on a range of processes including contaminant transport, bioavailability and remediation were discussed. Similarly, *Mineralogical Magazine* devoted the latest issue (Vol 65, October 2001) to *The Mineralogy of Waste and Waste Disposal* covering a similar range of topics and a joint symposium at the recent Soil Science Society of America annual meeting in October between soil chemists and soil mineralogists covered the relationship between soil mineralogy and contaminant fate and transport. Although the application of some of the work regarding silicate mineral applications to agricultural land may appear limited at this point, studies in the relationship between soil chemistry and soil mineralogy has great implications in other areas of soil science.

Gillman, G.P., Burkett, D.C. and Coventry, R.J. (2001). A laboratory study of application of

basalt dust to highly weathered soils: effect on soil cation chemistry. *Australian Journal of Soil Research* **39**, 799-811.

Noble, A.D., Gillman, G.P., Nath, S. and Srivastava, R.J., (2001). Changes in the surface charge characteristics of degraded soils in the wet tropics through the addition of beneficiated bentonite. *Australian Journal of Soil Research* **39**, 991-1001.

(Article by Andrew Harley, PhD student, UWA)

International Working Meeting on Micropedology, Ghent 9-13 July 2001

This should have been the XI International Working Meeting on Soil Micromorphology that was to be held in 2000 and jointly organized by Dutch and Belgium chapters. For a variety of reasons it did not occur but the demands from the international community was such that Prof Georges Stoops decided to organize a replacement meeting. Unfortunately, not every one knew about this and I, for one, found out in mid-March. Fortunately, the organizers were very sympathetic to late registrants. Nevertheless, there were about 100 in attendance and about the same number of presentations, though there were few (14) attendees from outside Europe and adjacent regions. A choice of mid-conference field trips were on offer. I took one that addressed the Belgium loess belt. In many ways the highlight was the afternoon spent in the famous Zonian Forest. Detailed records of forest management and usage are kept in special ledgers, the Keurboecken, that date back to the 14th Century! Where else can such a record exist? The other field trip had a stronger agricultural focus, which I understand was also very good.

A pleasing feature of the meeting were the number of younger researchers that are using micromorphology as part of an investigative toolkit rather than relying largely on one technique and this change is reflected, also, in the themes addressed by participants: agronomic (9), archaeological (16) environmental (11), genesis of soils/regolith (38), paleopedology

(13) and technical & classification issues (9). The astute observer will note that there has been a gradual change in popularity of research themes over the last decade or so such that, matters dealing with technique, the descriptive system and classification are now much less important. Presumably this trend reflects a maturity and/or a need to move-on and deal with problems.

It was also evident that micromorphology is being increasingly used by those requiring a thorough understanding of pedogenesis, especially the formation of the whole soil and not just various constituents or features. This is especially so for those involved in geoarchaeology, and investigating soil degradation, recovery and restoration. Indeed the archaeological group provided a substantive power block at the meeting.

The conference was well run and is a credit to Professor Georges Stoops and his team from the Laboratory of Mineralogy, Petrology and Micropedology, especially Vera Marcelino, Florias Mees, who were responsible for the practical and scientific aspects, and Profs. Roger Langohr and Eric Van Ranst and co-workers from the Laboratory of Soil Science who organised the mid-conference excursions.

A business meeting of Sub-Commission B, Soil Micromorphology, elected the following office bearers to continue until the new IUSS structure comes into effect: George Stoops (Chair, Belgium), S. Kapoor (1st Vice-chair Turkey), Fabio Terribile (2nd Vice-chair, Italy), Paul Goldberg (3rd Vice-chair, USA) and Geoff Humphreys (Secretary, Australia).

Geoff Humphreys
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LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE: 2002 SUBSCRIPTIONS MADE SIMPLE

Many members have expressed concern over the format of the membership renewal form. Layout and subscription options make the form time-consuming to complete and difficult to understand for some members, especially those that have recently joined the Society.

Proposals have been put forward to improve the renewal forms for next year. The major change under consideration is setting a standard fee for ASSSI subscriptions, which will include a standard levy for every branch. Currently there are eight subscription rates varying from \$77 to \$88. If one rate is struck then all branches will receive the same levy and the amount they receive will depend on the number of members they have in their branch.

As the cost of printing is high, a suggestion has been made that the default position for receiving Profile be electronic. If you wish to receive a paper copy you will have to indicate this on the renewal form. In the past, the default position has been paper.

Another regular query from members concerns the subscription period. ASSSI membership dues are based on a calendar year, January 1 to December 31. Membership subscription notices will be forwarded to members in late December. Options for ASSSI members include :

- ◆ Australian Journal of Soil Research subscription. Financial members of ASSSI can elect to receive the AJSR in either electronic or print format for 2002 at a reduced society rate. Costs are \$105 for the print format, which includes online access, and \$80 for online subscribers. There will be an increase in the number of journals printed in 2002 from six to eight. An added bonus is that online access also includes access to archived issues dating back to 1997. Normal subscription rates for non-members are \$150.
- ◆ International Union of Soil Science. In 2002, financial ASSSI members can elect to become members of IUSS. The options are for

members to pay around \$25, which will provide them with two issues of the handbook annually. From 2003 onwards, all members of ASSSI automatically become members of IUSS with a Society membership of around \$10. With this membership, no journal is provided and members wishing to receive the journal will need to subscribe for \$US25 annually for the two issues. The IUSS is working to provide more information online so that members can access the IUSS web page.

- ◆ CPSS is currently being reviewed. Members with CPSS should be aware that if they are financial at the end of 2002 they would be able to 'roll over' into the 2003 scheme.

Finally a warning on completing your membership form. The Society has been notified that errors in credit card payments (i.e. incorrect card number, incorrect name of cardholder, expired expiry date) causing the payment to be rejected will attract a \$25 fee. This fee will be passed on to members if they supplied the incorrect details so please take care when recording your details on to the subscription renewal form.

Any queries and suggestions please contact Executive Officer, Linda Bennison on telephone 03 5974 1758, facsimile 03 5974 1141 or email asssi@gsv.com.au.

FIRE! FIRE! FIRE!

Recently the Melbourne GPO was gutted by fire and around 20 000 letters were estimated to be destroyed. If you have forwarded any correspondence to the ASSSI office and not received a reply this may be why. All subscription payments are acknowledged with a tax invoice receipt. If you haven't received yours, please contact the ASSSI office.

Profile of Graeme Tupper, President ASSSI NSW Branch



- ◆ Agricultural Science Graduate and Post-Graduate of University of Melbourne.
- ◆ Post-Graduate Diploma in Education, University of Sydney.
- ◆ Fellowships and Sabbaticals at University of Fort Hare, South Africa – veld rehabilitation; and Colorado State University – Earth Science: remote sensing and renewable natural resource management.
- ◆ Member of ASSSI since 1966 – Riverina, Queensland and NSW Branches.
- ◆ Fellow of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology.
- ◆ Lecturer in Agronomy and associated sciences, Dookie Agricultural College, 1963 – 65.
- ◆ Rangeland Ecologist with CSIRO, 1966 – 81, investigating soil – plant – grazing animal systems, including the role of management and methods of monitoring the status of the system.
- ◆ From 1981 – 89, with the Papua New Guinea Department of Agriculture, firstly as Senior Research Pasture Agronomist, and later as Project Manager for integrated rural development, based on subsistence food and smallholder cash crop production.
- ◆ 1990 to present, with NSW Agriculture as Leader of the Resource Information Group.
- ◆ Graeme has a strong interest in the application of soil science to all aspects of agriculture and related natural resource management, and in helping the community to gain a better understanding of the role of soil as a fundamental resource for human well-being.

EcoLogic: creating sustainable future



Philip Smethurst,
ASSSI Contact in Tasmania.

Since 1992 I've been a Soil Scientist and Project Leader with CSIRO Forestry and Forest Products working in the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Production Forestry. Apart from some of the management and marketing roles, I thoroughly enjoy my work because I work with a diverse, friendly and productive team pursuing interesting and useful research in many facets of forestry. It might sound like a sales pitch, but it's true.

My main area of interest is in soil fertility research and management. The research runs from the very basic to the highly applied. For example, at the basic end I apply solute transport theory to predict nutrient uptake, where as at the other end I run fertilizer rate experiments to refine fertilizer prescriptions for forest managers. Although I've worked in forest nutrition research since 1979, my roots (no pun intended) and interests are in cropping systems and soil science generally, having come from a dairy farm and studied agriculture, botany and soils in Melbourne and overseas.

I've found Tasmania a very agreeable place to settle, and there have been plenty of soils issues in the state to capture my interest. Although we have only a small group of soil scientists in the state, it's been pleasing that the professional focus is still alive and well as demonstrated by keen participation in our occasional get-togethers.

EcoLogic is an exhibition that opened recently at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney about environmental agricultural sustainability. One component is about agricultural sustainability, and this is illustrated with two issues: management of dryland salinity and acid sulfate soils. The acid sulfate display features a video and a mounted soil profile from Jasper's Brush on the Shoalhaven flood plain. The undisturbed profile was one of several recently prepared at the Elizabeth Macarthur Institute, Menangle, by Roy Lawrie and Nawash Haddad. It has been made available on loan from NSW Agriculture for the duration of the exhibition, which will run for at least the next two years. The Museum expects that during the next 12 months up to 100,000 school students will view the display, which has been designed, in part, to meet the requirements for the Environmental Studies HSC course. Helen Scott-Orr (Executive Director Research, Advisory & Education, NSW Agriculture) and Roy Lawrie, (Soil Chemist, Richmond,) attended the opening of the display on the 31st July.

The exhibit will hopefully raise public awareness, not only about the presence of acid sulfate soils but also on their remediation. The publication, earlier this year, of "Remediation of broad acre acid sulfate soils" (available for \$40 from NSW Agriculture, Wollongbar, telephone 02 6626 1200) will go some way to addressing critical aspects of the sustainable management of these interesting soils.

The home page for AJSR is now at
<<http://www.publish.csiro.au/journals/ajsr/index.cfm>> and
the contents page can be viewed at
<<http://www.publish.csiro.au/journals/ajsr/contents.cfm>>.



Branch News

Victorian News

This month the Victorian committee had the chance to meet with Linda Bennison, the new executive officer of the ASSSI. We were impressed with her experience and enthusiasm. Linda is a scientist herself, and has a good understanding of how professional organizations work, since she has been both a member and an administrator of these groups. We look forward to working with Linda in the future.

The annual memorial Leeper Lecture is fast approaching. Sponsored by the Victorian Branch of ASSSI and the Institute of Land and Food Resources, University of Melbourne, it will take place at 5 pm on Friday the 16th of November, in the Turner Theatre of the Botany School. The speaker this year will be Prof Robert Gilkes from the University of Western Australia. The current working title for Prof Gilkes presentation is 'Problems of old age: managing soils on our ancient continent'. As per usual, the Institute will provide drinks in the systems garden after the lecture, and a dinner will also take place later in the University Staff Club. More details will come to branch members in the not too distant future.

The Victorian branch profile correspondent is Karen Smith. You can email items to profile on ksmith@unimelb.edu.au, or you can call her on 0412 155 156.

Riverina News

The Riverina Branch of the ASSSI awards a prize each year for the best performed student in the introductory soil science course. The winner for the year 2000 was Mark Gabriel, who received a certificate and a cheque for \$200 from Riverina Branch old boys, Scott Black and Mark Conyers.

NSW News

Describing, Analysing and Managing Our Soil

(Eds. S.R. Cattle & B.H. George) is a newly-published book containing a set of 24 fully refereed papers arising from a Workshop of the same name jointly held by the Australian Soil Science Society Inc. (NSW Branch) and the The University of Sydney in late 1999. Reflecting the broad themes of each of the five days of the workshop, the papers cover aspects of soil description and properties, soil degradation, field measurement of soil properties, soil in urban environments, and technology in soil science. Authors of the chapters include soil science professionals from universities, NSW Agriculture, the NSW Department of Land & Water Conservation, State Forests of NSW, CSIRO, and soil science consultants. The full Table of Contents of this book can be viewed at the ASSSI website.

A copy of this book (416 pp., soft cover) can be purchased from the NSW Branch of ASSSI for \$65 (members) or \$ 80 (non-members), including GST. Packaging and postage is a further \$ 10.

New Members

Mr John Biasden Dept. Natural Resources & Mines	Dr Robert Edgecombe SARDI - Minnipa Agriculture Centre
Ms Emma Biddles GHD	Dr Mausoud Edraki CSIRO Land and Water
Mr Justin Claridge QLD Dept. of Natural Resources	Mr Darren Grant Uni of Ballarat
Mr John Cummings Uni of Tasmania	Dr John Hutson Flinders Uni
Mr Michael Donn Uni of Queensland	Mr Dru Marsh

Northcote Landfill Field Trip

continued from page 1

Mr Greg Tucker, City of Darebin, showed us over the site and was able to provide information on containment, monitoring of leachate and storm water, and other aspects of the site in accord with EPA guidelines. Mr Rob Cooper, Collie Landscape and Design, landscape architect for the project, talked about design issues and community consultation. Peter May and Karen Smith, University of Melbourne, consultants to the project, provided information on soil design and horticultural issues. The timing for the excursion was deliberately chosen during the construction phase, giving an opportunity to see the bare bones of the park and a work in progress. The construction of the lake was of particular interest, along with the EPA approved design guidelines that ensure containment is not compromised.

There was plenty of discussion while we were there. We covered issues such as soil design, specification and construction, as well as species selection for hostile sites such as this. The implications of minimum depth profiles on establishment and performance of woody species was also discussed. The lack of research into vegetation establishment and its impact on the clay cap was another point of interest, with geotechnical engineer Sam Yuen expressing his anxiety regarding plant roots being in close proximity to the clay containment layer.

This trip seemed to flush out a few members we don't often see on field trips. It also provided an opportunity to meet some new people and do some networking. We also had an enthusiastic group of post-graduate students attend, plus some interested undergraduates. Some of the non-soils folk regularly employ soils consultants and enjoyed the opportunity to meet new people in our society. They particularly enjoyed the robust dispute between Bruce Cockroft and Bob White on clay mineralogy and the stability of clay caps, with Sam Yuen sandwiched speechlessly in the

middle. As with all soils field trips, the more experts the merrier!

Thanks to Karen Smith and Peter May for organizing the afternoon, Greg Tucker for making the excursion possible and talking with us on the day, and Rob Cooper for being available to discuss design issues.

Invitation from the Editor of Vadose Zone Journal

The Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) is launching a new electronic journal called Vadose Zone Journal (VZJ). This new journal will provide an outlet for interdisciplinary research and assessment of the vadose zone, the mostly unsaturated zone between the soil surface and the permanent groundwater table. The scientific community has an increasing need for effective dissemination of information about the physical, chemical and biological processes operating in this zone. Currently no scientific journal focuses specifically on the vadose zone, and we trust that VZJ will fill this gap. The journal will provide a forum for vadose zone research and assessment using electronic procedures for manuscript submission, review and publication.

For more details contact
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subscription

HANDBOOK OF SOIL SCIENCE
Editor-in-Chief: Malcolm E. Sumner
CRC Press, Boca Raton, London, New
York, Washington D.C.

A Review by Pax Blamey
School of Land and Food Sciences
The University of Queensland

This comprehensive work addresses the whole spectrum of what is now regarded as soil science. There are many specialist areas in soil science, all addressed in this Handbook of over 2,000 pages. The eight main sections address soil physics, soil chemistry, soil biology and biochemistry, soil fertility and plant nutrition, pedology and soil mineralogy, along with soil interdisciplinary aspects and databases. Each of these sections is edited by specialists in their field - they have taken the responsibility of coordinating the contributions of almost 150 authors. Though most are from North America, this Handbook does not have a regional focus. Rather, each major area in the discipline addresses fundamental principles, along with measurements and their interpretation. This is illustrated by numerous examples.

Soil physics: The eight parts in this section initially address basic aspects of soils, especially soil solids, describing the matrix in a static and dynamic sense. Importantly, transport processes are emphasised – of water, solutes and gases. There is a major focus on measurements and their interpretation.

Soil chemistry: After an introduction to the chemical composition of soils, the following nine parts in this section address the many important chemical reactions in soils. These include kinetics and equilibria of chemical reactions, soil organic matter (interesting, in that there is a separate section on soil biology) and the soil solution, sorption and ion exchange, soil pH and redox phenomena. Soil colloids receive a special mention due to their importance.

Soil biology and biochemistry: This relatively short section divides the organisms in soils into

microbiota (viruses, bacteria, fungi and mycorrhizae) and soil fauna, followed by microbially mediated processes. There is a separate part on nitrogen transformations – again, given its importance in biology.

Soil fertility and plant nutrition: Tying in with soil physics (solute movement) and soil chemistry (kinetics and equilibria of chemical reactions), plant nutrition has a major impact on plant growth and development in both natural and managed environments. The parts of this section include the availability of major nutrients and of micronutrients, their interactions and the efficiency with which they are taken up, methods of assessing the fertility of soils and of fertiliser application. This aspect is coming increasingly to the fore in our aims for a balance. An excess of nutrients removed over those returned to the paddock results in land degradation through nutrient decline. The opposite often results in off-site degradation, though some incidents of degradation occur also. Our failures make headlines: “Pesticides and inorganic fertilisers have made farming look like a 19th century smokestack industry” (New Scientist, 17 January 1998).

Pedology: This major section of the Handbook focuses on the geomorphology of landscapes and the processes of soil formation. As would be expected, the US Soil Taxonomy receives special treatment. Interestingly, for those not directly involved in this discipline, there is a chapter on the development of this classification system. Other systems, including the Australian soil classification, do get a mention.

Soil mineralogy: This relatively short section addresses weathering along with the main components of soils – phyllosilicates, oxide minerals and poorly crystalline alumino-silicate clays.

Interdisciplinary aspects: Often, soils are little considered by many biologists. In recent years, however, there has been an increasing recognition of the important roles that soils play in the whole of biology. In keeping with this trend, issues such

as salinity and sodicity, the hardsetting nature of many soils, wetlands and soil erosion by water and wind have been addressed in this section. The application of wastes – an unfortunate term – and of soil tillage address on-going problems in our treatment of the environment. In perusing this section, I was reminded of the treatment meted out in 1919 by a commission on land development to the University of Western Australia's first Professor of Agriculture who warned that much of the wheatbelt was unsuitable for clearing because of salt. The commission responded that it would not "allow scientific prejudice to get in the way of developing our mallee lands."

Soil databases: We live in an era in which the amount of information available to us is exploding. Soil scientists are generators of data. How to handle these data is the subject of the final section of the Handbook.

From a personal viewpoint, it is a pleasure to recommend this reference work. It was Professor Malcolm Sumner, along with Professor Jimmy Orchard, who first introduced me to soil science at the University of Natal, South Africa. In my opinion, all soil scientists, indeed agricultural and environmental scientists also, will benefit from the comprehensive nature of this Handbook. They will gain from reading in their specialist area, and from reading about other aspects of soil science that may not be as familiar to them. It is indeed correct to refer to soils, in all their complexity, as 'the base of life'. Hopefully, Professor Malcolm Sumner's efforts in the Handbook of Soil Science will redress Leonardo da Vinci's complaint (quoted on p. B-1) that "We know more about the movement of the celestial bodies than about the soil underfoot."

Read Profile First at
[http://
www.asssi.asn.au](http://www.asssi.asn.au)

Obituary

Jim Newell (James Waterhouse Newell)

Jim Newell, who died on July 5, 2001 aged 89, will be remembered with fondness and affection by all who knew him.

After graduating in Science from Melbourne University he went to England in 1938. Jim was a pacifist and dedicated to the Quaker movement and during the war he was a farm worker and a hospital worker. After returning to Australia in 1946 he taught at Longerenong Agricultural College and Burnley Gardens.

In 1956 he joined the Soils Section of the Victorian Department of Agriculture as a soil surveyor and before retiring in 1974 he had mapped the soils of most research farms in Victoria and large acreages of irrigated land in Northern Victoria and the Wimmera.

Jim was always interested in landscapes and geology and quite late in his career studied geomorphology at Melbourne University. This approach was used in his study of the Ovens and Buffalo Valleys and, together with Bruce Butler, Dick Blackburn, Jim Bowler, Charles Lawrence and Simon Pels, he helped compile "A Geomorphic Map of the Riverine Plain of South-eastern Australia".

Well done Jim, your genuine affection and capacity to give encouragement to your "younger" peers will be remembered. Jim's first wife predeceased him in 1988 and he is survived by his second wife, five children and four grandchildren.

Contributed by Ian Sargeant and John Martin, Victorian Branch.



Federal Council Minutes

Australian Society of Soil Science Inc. Minutes of the 199th Federal Council Meeting 1.30 pm, May 25, 2001 The University of Western Australia

1 Opening:

The meeting opened at 1.30 pm.

2 Attendance:

Lyn Abbott (Hon Federal President), Keith Lindbeck (Hon Federal Treasurer), Richard Harper (Hon Federal Secretary, after 2.00 pm), Daniel Murphy (Profile Editor), Andrew Rate (WA), Rachael Poulter (Riverina Proxy), Katherine Snars (Qld Proxy)
Phone: Graham Tupper (NSW), Tony Weatherley (Vic), Rob Bramley (SA)

3 Apologies:

Linda Bennison, John Field (ACT)

4 Business arising from 198th Federal Council minutes:

Matters arising.

a) Joint Australian/NZ Conference proceedings. Resolved to cover costs including postage (A\$40 set). Free to libraries.

b) Un-financial members. Branches to remind members. Policy on how to deal with these members discussed. Agenda item for next meeting. Minutes of the meeting of 198th meeting were approved.

5 President's Report

The President welcomed the new Executive Officer of ASSSI, Linda Bennison and thanked Alice Bass for the wonderful job she had performed, particularly with the introduction of the GST and BAS. The current and previous Federal Councils are most appreciative of her work. Linda Bennison has provided secretariat services to the Grassland Society of Victoria since 1994. The President considered that it was important to raise issues relating to the soil resource at every possible forum. This was a key component of the strategic planning process. Similarly, accreditation of soil scientists was integral to this. Judy Eastham has resigned as Federal Secretary and has been replaced by Richard Harper. Judy was thanked for assisting in setting up the Federal Executive in Perth in 2001.

6 Executive Officer's Report

Issue of whether EO should join was discussed. Keith Lindbeck will check rules and respond to the EO.

7 Secretaries Report

No report as Secretary had resigned.

8 Treasurer's Report

- a) 344 members are financial, 317 un-financial. 27 Retired members.
- b) General account had credit balance of \$27,170.34 on May 10. All other accounts unchanged from audit figures. Federal accounts to be transferred to the National Bank. Few St George Bank branches in WA.
- c) Insurance premium \$1805.20 for public liability associated with Society events.
- d) Matter of incorporation for Branches. Advice from Solicitors that each Branch should be Incorporated in own right. Further discussion for next Federal Council meeting.
- e) As required under By-laws of Society notice given of proposed amendment of By-Law 11 (d) by deleting the final words of that by-law – “the following fifteenth day” and replacing those words with the

following “the fifteenth day of December”.
This proposed amendment will be voted upon at the 200th Meeting of Council.

9 Newsletter Editor’s Report

Current issue is being compiled. Continual supply of articles required from members. Advertisements for Society functions would be inserted at no cost. Non-ASSSI advertisements will incur small cost.

10 Branch President’s Reports

The issue of tendering reports from the Branches at Federal Council meetings was discussed. Tony Weatherley, supported by Graham Tupper, considered this was a good idea.

11 General Business

11.1 ASSSI Strategic Plan

Support for Strategic plan from meeting. Will be compiled by the President. Rob Bramley suggested preparation of first draft and comments on this draft. Circulate between now and next Federal Council meeting, with adequate time for response. Issue of possible merger with NZ Soil Science Society will be canvassed in the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic plan will include various options and alternatives for the Society. Will refer back to the Branches for views.

11.2 CPSS

Rob Loch is preparing a document, which will discuss certification. As certification is an important issue it was discussed mailing this direct to members. Will be circulated to Branches for comments first. In the interim members still covered by AIAST.

11.3 Australian Geoscience Council

Considered a good idea to pursue this, to give the Society a better profile in Canberra. Previous Federal Council minutes will be inspected to check on previous membership of FAST.

11.4 Collaboration on poster with Dept. Land and Water Conservation (NSW)

This was referred back to the NSW Branch for

discussion in the first instance. This could be followed by a formal proposal to the Federal Council. Federal Council suggested that the target audience of this poster be described. Agenda item for next meeting.

11.5 Future Soil Conference (Perth, 2002)

Hon Federal Treasurer reported. UWA Extension nominated organizer, with opening by WA Premier.

11.6 Joint NZ/Australian Soil Conference (2004)

Hon Federal Treasurer suggested that branches tender to hold this conference by August 31. Requested to write out some general guidelines for this process, including issue of the Federal Council underwriting the costs of the meeting.

11.7 IUSS Meeting in Thailand (2002)

Abstracts still being accepted.

11.8 Website

Feedback to Derek Yates on website.

11.9 Other issues

Secretary-General IUSS position: members encouraged to nominate. World Congress 2006. Prof. Bob Gilkes, UWA (08 9380 2509) needs nominations for committee for IUSS Congress 2010.

12 Close

Meeting closed at 2.55 pm.

MAKE SURE YOU ARE PROTECTED

If you or your branch are organising an event you **MUST** notify the federal executive, to guarantee insurance cover. An event is an activity other than ordinary meetings - workshops, training sessions, and **ESPECIALLY** field trips.

Send an outline of activities involved, the time, date and venue of the event to:

Keith Lindbeck

PO Box 144, Bull Creek, WA 6149

Tel: 08 9332 0671 Fax: 08 9332 0671

lindbkya@ca.com.au

Please notify Keith at last one week before the event.

**Australian Society of Soil
Science Inc.
Minutes of the 200th Federal
Council Meeting
July 27, 2001
The University of Western
Australia**

1 Opening:

The meeting opened at 1.39 pm.

2 Attendance:

Lyn Abbott (Hon Federal President), Keith Lindbeck (Hon Federal Treasurer), Richard Harper (Hon Federal Secretary), Daniel Murphy (Profile Editor), Linda Bennison (Executive Officer), Rachael Poulter (Riverina Proxy), Katherine Snars (Qld Proxy)
Phone: Graham Tupper (NSW), Tony Weatherley (Vic), Graham Merrington (SA)

3 Apologies:

John Field (ACT), Andrew Rate (WA)

4 Business arising from 199th Federal Council minutes:

Minutes of the meeting of the 199th meeting were approved, without amendment.

5 President's Report

The President requested that reports be provided by the Monday preceding the meeting, so that a single, compiled document could be circulated. Agreed.

Lyn had identified several key issues in the Strategic planning process and sought guidance on how to proceed with this. Membership and the overall budget were key issues in this, if the Society was to participate at the national level. Lyn requested that comments on the draft be returned from Branches within two weeks, and this was agreed.

6 Executive Officers Report

Linda discussed administrative arrangements. She suggested that Branch fees be standardised across the Society. This was supported in

principle by Graham Tupper and Keith Lindbeck. Tony Weatherley pointed out that any change would need to be endorsed by a Branch meeting. Lyn noted that this wouldn't need to be decided until the next notices were circulated in December. Keith Lindbeck suggested that the standardized fee be \$11 including GST. Graham Tupper suggested that the proposal of having an ASSSI information kit was useful. Linda was asked to organize this. Accounting software was discussed. Graham Tupper asked whether there needed to be a standard software package across Branches. Keith Lindbeck suggested that this wasn't required for Branches, as Branch accounts were relatively simple. Graham Tupper asked about auditing of Branch finances. Keith suggested that this was the role of the Branch and was in the interests of Branch Treasurers.

7 Secretary's Report

A brief overview was given of the Society's awards and the action needed to progress these. Prescott Medal: The 2000 Prescott Award was made to Maurice Mulcahy with the committee chaired by Bill Bowden (WA) with Kep Coughlan and Leigh Sullivan. Under the by-laws, Kep Coughlan would be the new chairperson and Leigh Sullivan would remain on the committee. A replacement is needed for Bill Bowden (not from Qld or NSW). Publications Medal: The last (1999) Publication Committee was chaired by Phil Moody (Qld). John Freney (ACT) and Nick Uren (VIC) were first appointed 1999. A replacement for Phil Moody is required. JK Taylor Medal: This committee hasn't met since 1998 and will be re-instituted, with the aim of presenting a medal at the 2002 Future Soils Conference. Life Membership: There are 25 vacancies for this (By-law 7(b)), with 20 currently admitted. Listing in Profile 126. Committee needed comprising the President, Vice-President and immediate past-President, if there are any nominations. Nominations close 30 September, with no more than four new members in one calendar year.

At the 201st Federal Council Meeting Councillors will be asked to:

1. Nominate a new member for the Prescott

-
- Medal committee (not from Qld or NSW)
2. Nominate a new member for the Publication Medal committee.
 3. Make and consider nominations for a new JK Taylor Medal Committee. See by-law 29 (k) re constitution – members from 3 disciplines of soil science, 2 ASSSI Branches and the NZSSS.
 4. Canvas nominations for Life Membership.

An updated list of Medalists and awards will be listed in the next issue of Profile.

8 Treasurer's Report

8.1 Financials

Totals at this stage for the period 1st January to 30th June 2001.

Total Income	\$37,762.51
Total Expenses	\$23,814.60
NET INCOME	\$13,947.83

The statements have not been reconciled with the bank statements. However, at 30th June 2001, the business account balance was:

Balance as per Bank Statement \$35,153.56

Less Unpresented Cheque #413 – CSIRO Publishing \$3,375.00

Balance in Business Cheque Account 30th June 2001 \$31,778.56

8.2 Retired members –

Keith suggested that if retired members apply for CPSS it was likely that they haven't really retired. Linda suggested that CPSS should only apply to Ordinary members. Keith will prepare some notes and discuss the issue at the next meeting.

8.3 Proposals for 2004 Conference.

It had been suggested that this meeting be organized by a Branch, but by-Law 31 (b) states: *"It shall be organised by the Federal Council with the support of the branch which holds Federal Council offices when the conference falls due."* Notice that this by-law be amended next meeting to allow the 2004 Conference to be organized by a Branch. Need to know by August 31 the intentions from Branches. Likely that proposals will come from SA and NSW.

9 Newsletter Editor's Report

Current issue is on the web. Next edition is on way, deadline August 15. Need profiles from each President. Graham Merrington suggested electronic distribution. Daniel noted that we currently have electronic notification with a subsequent hard copy.

10 Branch President's Reports

Qld – considering starting their own web-site and sought feedback on this idea. Linda asked whether it would be more efficient to have a single web-master with pages for each site, rather than individual sites. Tony suggested that this proposal was OK as long as the national site was updated rapidly. Meeting agreed that the most efficient process would be to link from the national site to the Branch sites, with these updated locally. Linda indicated that it was important that the Society avoided fragmentation as much as possible. Graham Tupper noted the production of a book "Describing, Analysing & Managing Our Soil" Eds. SR Cattle & BH George. Daniel suggested that a review be organized for Profile.

11 General Business

11.1 ASSSI Strategic Planning Process Discussed in the President's report.

11.2 CPSS

Rob Loch has advised that the CPSS sub-committee has almost finalized work, and this will be circulated prior to the next meeting.

11.3 Branch incorporation

Riverina and Queensland Branches – no support for separate incorporation. Keith will discuss implications with solicitor. Linda indicated that although the different branches didn't have a separate identity, they had ABNs for GST. Thus one entity (ASSSI) had in effect several ABNs. NSW had registered for ABN and GST and have quarterly reports. Lyn will prepare discussion document on these issues.

11.4 Future Soil Conference (Perth, 2002)

Report and brochure circulated. Keith asked for comments – this was not for circulation due to wrong dates. SA requested that some broad accommodation be organized such as in a

University college. Keith indicated that the conference committee has decided to have nothing to do with accommodation.

11.5 IUSS Meeting in Thailand (2002)

Abstracts are still being accepted. Early-bird registrations close on December 31.

11.6 IUSSS Committee for 2010 Conference
Nominations needed for the IUSSS Committee from Branches to Prof. Bob Gilkes.

11.7 Joint NZ/Australian Soil Conference (2004)

See Treasurer's report

11.8 Bylaw amendment

As required under By-laws of Society notice was given at the 199th Meeting of proposed amendment of By-Law 11 (d) by deleting the final words of that by-law "the following fifteenth day" and replacing those words with the following "the fifteenth day of December. This relates to the nomination process for the Vice-President and thus President. Passed unanimously.

11.9 Non-financial members

Recommendation that:

"two months after the subs due date, the "member" be deemed "non-financial" and that they no longer receive Profile and other society "benefits" and that six months after the subs due date, they be deemed no-longer members of the Society and, in the event that they be CPSS, they lose this accreditation."

Rachel requested that lists of un-financial members be sent to each Branch. Linda will do this. This is covered by §16 of the Constitution – will revisit this at the next meeting.

11.10 Collaboration on poster with Dept. Land and Water Conservation (NSW)

Further discussion. Lyn suggested that poster be circulated to Branches.

11.11 Field Trip Guides

Field trips organized by Branches. Graham Tupper suggested that the information from these be put into a guide that can be followed by other interested parties. In many cases the guides described soils and landscapes are were a useful tool for a broader audience. This will need to be put together by someone Nationally. No resolution on this issue.

13 Close

Meeting closed at 3.00 pm.

5th World Acid Sulfate Soils Conference

When: 25th-30th of August 2002

Where: Tweed Heads NSW Australia

Website: <http://www.out.at/acidsoil>

Closing date for abstracts: 1 December 2001

CONFERENCE THEME

Researchers, land managers and legislators have become very aware of the potential environment degradation from the unsustainable use of acid sulfate soils. The conference embraces four broad themes that are important in achieving sustainable management of acid sulfate soils. The conveners invite investigators from all fields of acid sulfate soil research to submit an abstract(s) that fit within the scope of this conference:

Characteristic of acid sulfate soil hazards
Management of Acid sulfate soils
Planning, Legislation and Regulation
Acid Sulfate Soil Education and Communication

More New Members

Mrs Michelle Martens QLD Dept. Natural Resources	Mr Noel Schoknecht Agriculture WA
Mr Adam Pratt Uni of Western Australia	Mr Dwi Setyawan Uni of Western Australia
Mrs Deborah Pritchard Curtin Uni	Dr Ron Smernik Adelaide Uni
Mr Dan Rattray Dept. of Natural Resources	Mr Neil Sutherland Gilbert & Sutherland PL
Pro Carlos Schaefer Uni Federal de Vicosa	Mr Steven Williams Uni of Queensland
	Mr Malcolm Wright Traeger Valley Pty

AJSR CONTENTS

AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF SOIL RESEARCH

Contents Volume 39, No.3 2001

- Brazilian latosols and their B horizon microstructure as long-term biotic constructs.
Carlos E. R. Schaefer 909
- Application of mineral magnesium to describe profile development of toposequences of a sedimentary soil in South-Eastern Australia.
R. H. Crockford, I. R. Willett 927
- Fractionation of cobalt and manganese in New Zealand soils.
Z. Li, R. G. McLaren, A. K. Metherell 951
- Carbon and phosphorus losses from dairy pasture in South Australia.
N. K. Fleming, J. W. Cox 969
- Effect of application of bauxite residue (red mud) to very sandy soil on submediterranean clover yield and P response.
N. K. Summers, M. D. A. Bolland, M. F. Clarke 979
- Changes in the surface charge characteristics of degradable soils in the wet tropics through the addition of beneficiated bentonite.
A. D. Noble, G. P. Gillman, S. Nath, R. J. Srivastava 991
- Effects of grassland afforestation on exchangeable soil and soil solution aluminium.
M. L. Adams, M. R. Davis, K. J. Powell 1003
- Validation of the GLEAMS simulation model for estimating net nitrogen mineralisation and nitrate leaching under cropping in Canterbury, New Zealand.
T. H. Webb, L. R. Lilburne, G. S. Francis 1015
- Root effects on soil carbon and nitrate cycling in a *Pinus radiata* D. Don plantation on a coastal sand.
D. J. Ross, N. A. Scott, K. R. Tate, N. J. Rodda, J. A. Townsend 1027
- Application of VARLEACH and LEACHM models to experimental data on leaching of a non-reactive tracer and three sulfonylurea herbicides.
A. K. Sarmah, R. S. Kookana, A. M. Alston 1041
- Effects of electrolyte composition on chromium desorption in soils contaminated by tannery waste.
S. Avudainayagam, R. Naidu, R. S. Kookana, A. M. Alston, S. McClure, L. H. Smith 1077
- Retention and plant availability of chromium in soils as affected by lime and organic matter amendments.
N. S. Bolan, S. Thiagarajan 1091
- Surface reactivity of A horizons towards polar compounds estimated from water adsorption and water content.
R. L. Parfitt, J. S. Whitton, B. K. G. Theng 1105
- Effects of rundown in soil hydraulic condition on crop productivity in south-eastern Queensland—a simulation study.
R. D. Connolly, D. M. Freebairn, M. J. Bell, G. Thomas 1111
- Evaluation of WEPP from run off and soil loss prediction at Gunnedah, NSW, Australia.
B. Yu, C. J. Rosewell 1131
- Routine measurement of the soil water potential gradient near saturation using a pair of tube tensiometers.
P. A. Hutchinson, W. J. Bond 1147
- Cotton root growth in compacted Vertisol (Grey Vertisol). I. Prediction using strength measurements and 'limiting water ranges'.
D. C. McKenzie, A. B. McBratney 1157
- Cotton Root growth in a compacted Vertisol (Grey Vertisol). II. Correlation with image analysis parameters.
D. C. McKenzie, S. E. Greenhalgh, A. J. Koppi, D. A. MacLeod, A. B. McBratney 1169
- Corrigendum to: A comparison using the cesium-137 technique of the relative importance of cultivation and overflow on soil erosion in steep semi-tropical sub-catchment.
A. S. Wiranatha, C. W. Rose, M. S. Salama 1183

 AJSR is available on the web
www.publish.csiro.au/journal/ajsr/index.html

AJSR

In the July 1999 issue of Profile, Brent Clothier, Chair of the Editorial Advisory Committee of the Australian Journal of Soil Research (AJSR) outlined the challenges then facing AJSR. Some of these challenges were the result of the rapid pace of change being experienced globally in scientific publishing e.g. electronic delivery of papers, and changes in the nature of subscription to scientific journals such as the collection of formerly individual subscribers into a consortium. Other challenges for AJSR that were outlined are almost perennial issues for scientific journals and include increasing the journal's scientific impact and the maintenance of its subscription base. In addition, changes to the levels of external funding to CSIRO Publishing at that time required AJSR to be a successful business enterprise (i.e. self-funding).

In 2001, the issues facing AJSR are similar; for example the rate of change in scientific publishing has not diminished. Electronic scientific publishing continues to develop rapidly with vertical integration of the whole publication process (including e-submission, e-review as well as e-delivery of papers) becoming a common practice. In addition maintenance of both the subscription base and the impact factor of scientific journals continue to be core goals of AJSR.

So how is AJSR performing? In terms of scientific impact AJSR has continued to improve and is clearly in the top tier of the international soil science journals. The chief indicator of this ranking is the Impact Factor. This indicator is widely acknowledged as a key indicator of a journal's excellence as it provides a measure of the impact that a journal's papers have had on the published work of others. The Impact Factor is the ratio of papers published by a journal in any given year to the number of citations of those articles. AJSR's Impact Factor increased from 0.763 in 1995 to 0.868 in 1998. AJSR's Impact Factor has continued to increase to 1.078 in 2000. This strong Impact Factor assures scientists publishing in AJSR that their papers will continue

to strongly influence the research of other soil scientists around the globe. Analysis of the source of papers published in AJSR Volume 39 (2001) shows some interesting trends. Only 9% of the papers published in Vol. 39 were from CSIRO (down from 24% in 1998). 37% of the papers published in Vol. 39 were from government institutes in Australia and New Zealand. 33% of the papers published in Vol. 39 were from universities in Australia and New Zealand. 16% of the papers published in Vol. 39 were sourced from overseas (up from 12.7% in 1998). Of particular interest is the steady decline in recent years in the number of papers published from CSIRO. The other noteworthy trend is the proportion of papers published in AJSR sourced from overseas continues to increase steadily. In Vol. 39, the 16 papers published in AJSR from overseas sources will have been from France (3), Israel (3), Brazil (2), USA (2) and India (2), with single papers coming from Germany, Argentina, Indonesia and New Caledonia. It should be remembered that for every single subscription to AJSR in Australia that there are 2.5 subscriptions overseas: clearly, AJSR is an international journal whose profile and impact is steadily increasing around the globe. The promotion of soil science in Australia and New Zealand is to the mutual benefit of AJSR and the ASSSI and NZSSS societies, and closer ties between these parties have developed in recent years. Evidence of this includes the publication of special editions related to activities of the societies, and the scientific seminars and writing workshops, convened by the editors of AJSR (Jenny Fegent and Saumitra Banerjee), that have recently held at society conferences and branch functions. Another very good example of the benefits of closer ties between the societies and AJSR is that members of ASSSI enjoy substantially discounted subscription rates to AJSR. For AJSR the current personal subscription (with both print and electronic versions being available) is AU\$150, whereas ASSSI members can access the electronic version for only AU\$80, or both the print and electronic versions for \$AU105. The new discounted subscription rates have proven

to be popular with many ASSSI members in 2001.

A recent AJSR subscription innovation for members of ASSSI is the choice of subscribing to the electronic AJSR version via online access only, or of subscribing jointly for the both the print and electronic versions of AJSR. Indeed, 2001 was the first year that all personal subscribers have had the full electronic access to AJSR. Data on the 'hits' to the electronic version of AJSR show that this service is rapidly increasing in popularity. AJSR is continuing to investigate changes that will promote soil science in the region. For example, AJSR has archived its on-line editions back to 1997 and is investigating options that will allow it to place the entire archives of AJSR on-line. Obviously this will provide an even better service for AJSR

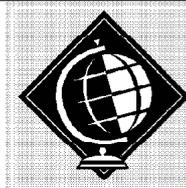
The timeliness of publication of papers at AJSR is being further improved. The median time from manuscript submission to acceptance was 25 weeks in 2000 (this is similar to previous years) Extra pages have been allocated to Vol. 39 (2001) and this will result in the time taken from acceptance to publication to be around 2-3 months. You can be assured of your papers being dealt with in a timely fashion when submitted to AJSR.

One area that AJSR has been steadily moving into is the publishing of critical review articles on 'hot topic' issues. Review articles can be very successful when they provide accessible distillations of 'state-of-the-art' information on relevant issues in soil science. The Editorial Advisory Committee strongly encourages members of both ASSSI and NZSSS (and others) to submit 'state-of-the-art' critical review articles in their areas of expertise for publication. If you are unsure as to whether the intended area for your review article is satisfactory for publication in AJSR then you may contact the Managing Editor of AJSR for guidance.

As mentioned previously, the promotion of soil science in Australia and New Zealand is to the mutual benefit of AJSR and the ASSSI and NZSSS societies. The closer ties that have

developed in recent years between AJSR and the societies will be to the benefit of all who are concerned with having a strong soil science presence in our region. AJSR is more than just a highly-regarded international soil science journal: it is OUR highly-regarded international soil science journal. Continue to support AJSR and make Australian and New Zealand soil science even stronger!

Article by Leigh Sullivan



Conferences

18-20 Nov 2001

**Chemical Bioavailability
in the Terrestrial**

Environment Workshop.

[http://www.clw.csiro.au/
conferences/
bioavailability](http://www.clw.csiro.au/conferences/bioavailability)

28-30 Nov 2001

**Australian
Geomechanics Society
Conference:**

Geoenvironment 2001

Tel 02 92903366

Fax 02 92902444

[www.icms.com.au/
geoenvironment](http://www.icms.com.au/geoenvironment)

14-21 Aug 2002

**17th World Congress of
Soil Science Confronting
New**

**Realities in the 21st
Century Bangkok
Thailand**

www.17wcss.ku.ac.th

29 April - 1 May 2002

**Clay Mineral Society
Canberra**

2-6 Dec 2002

**National Soils
Conference Australia
Soc. Soil Sci INC.**

Future Soils

[www.agric.uwa.edu.au/
soils/futuress/index.html](http://www.agric.uwa.edu.au/soils/futuress/index.html)

Jan 2003

**Soil Science Society
South Africa - 50th
Anniversary Congress**
www.soils.org.za

July 2003

**International Soil
Tillage Research
Organisation,
Queensland**

Tel (07) 5460 1354

Fax (07) 5460 1367

j.tullberg@mailbox.uq.edu.a

**Any conferences, courses, seminars
or workshops coming up?
Send *Profile* the details and we'll
feature them here.**

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