

Conferences and Events

Sixteenth Russian Conference on Soil Zoology

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

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

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

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

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

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

Regional workshop for Central Asia on updating NBSAPs

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

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

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