INTERNATIONAL HUMIC SUBSTANCES SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Number 64
2024

Dear members of the IHSS, dear colleagues and friends:

It is my pleasure to send you the 64th Newsletter, and to share new information about recent and upcoming events and other important issues.

We are glad to announce the 23rd IHSS meeting, which will be held on Aug 23 - 28, 2026, in Brno, Czech Republic. We thank Prof. Miloslav Pekar and the Organizing Committee for their efforts to organize the IHSS2026. We would like to welcome all IHSS members to attend the IHSS2026 meeting.

Congratulations also to the Organizing committee of IHSS2024, which achieved to hold a marvelous and very successful Meeting.

We are also glad to present IHSS bylaws amendment which enables corporate members, in order to promote further the academia-enterprise collaborations on natural organic matter and humic substances.

Since IHSS2024 conference we have a new Board of directors. We would like to congratulate Dr. Heike Knicker, which is the newly elected Vice-President of the IHSS, Dr. Marios Drosos, that is re-elected Secretary of the IHSS and Dr. Claudio Zaccone that is re-elected Board Member of the IHSS. We would also like to congratulate Dr. Deborah P. Dick for being the active President of the IHSS and Dr. Irina V. Perminova, that continues to serve IHSS from the position of the Past President. We would also like to thank the former Past President Dr. Jose Maria Garcia Mina for the past six years of service to the Society.

We would also like to thank Dr. Sarah Fischer for staying as Chapter Coordinator for North America the last 4 years, and congratulate the new North American Chapter Coordinator, Dr. Angélica Vázquez-Ortega.

Humics are related to life sciences, but also to decay. So, life and death are intertwined events in the cycle of existence. We are extremely sad to announce the loss of Dr. Michael H.B. Hayes and Dr. James J. Alberts, past presidents of IHSS. Nevertheless, they left behind them such great work, that their memory will be immortal in our hearts and minds.

In order to not stay in grief and to move on, we are presenting new Training Awards and Young Investigator Research Grant, to allow young researchers to flourish.

And to finish with a happy ending, I am very glad to announce a new award in memory of Michael Hayes, and the nomination of Dr. Alessandro Piccolo as the new Honorary member of our Society. Congratulations to Dr. Piccolo. IHSS is grateful for his lifetime devotion to the humic substances.

Dear IHSS friends, let us keep in contact to share news and important issues. I am looking forward to hearing from you and seeing you in a near future. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Deborah P. Dick

President of the IHSS

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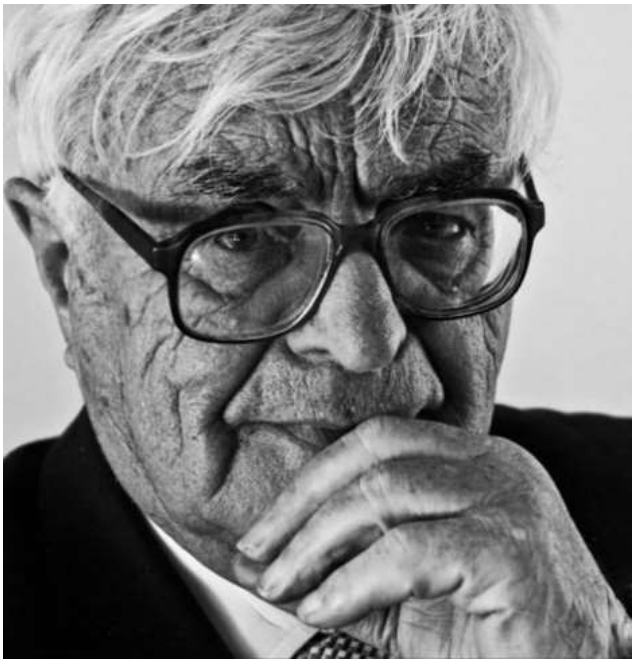
In memory of Dr. Michael Hilary Bermingham Hayes 14/01/1930 – 21/06/2024



It is with a great sadness that I have to report in the current newsletter the loss of Michael HB Hayes. One of the IHSS founding fathers. It was just 2 months before the IHSS Meeting in Rimini that we received these devastating news. He was almost 93 years old when for the last time we had the pleasure to meet him in person in the IHSS Meeting in Chile in August 2023. Always active, with a vivid scientific curiosity, always present in the oral presentations, he astonished all IHSS members with his strength and inspired all young scientists and students. Michael was born on a farm near Limerick, Ireland. Graduated of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Dublin, and continued on Ohio State University in USA for his PhD. He was Professor of Chemistry in Birmingham University, in UK, and he retired in 1998 to return to Ireland and become a visiting Professor at Limerick University. Michael was not only an enthusiastic scientist, but he loved sports too. He was a star runner in track and field and in Gaelic football and long-time coach of track and field teams. A pioneer researcher on humic substances, he was a president for IHSS (1993-1995), host of the 1984 IHSS Meeting and Honorary member of the IHSS. He devoted his entire life in search of the humic structures, especially to elucidate the unextractable humin. Michael knew that big challenges bear great gifts! IHSS will miss Michael. A father of our science!

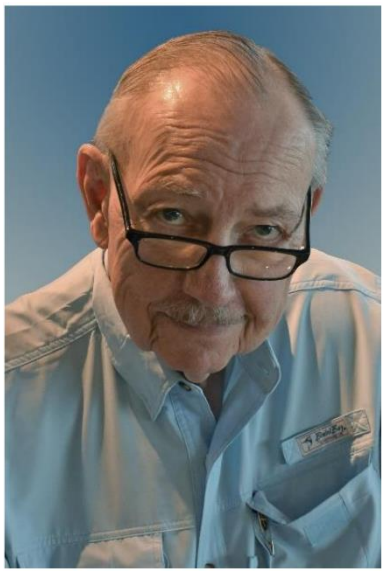
Deborah P. Dick
President of the IHSS

A Limerick in remembrance of Mike Hayes

There once was a scientist named Hayes
Who studied soil organic matter all of his days
On fulvic, on humic, and on humin
New insights he was hoping to glean
We'll miss him in so many ways

Raymond Hozalski
Treasurer of the IHSS

In memory of Dr. James J. Alberts



James J. Alberts was born in Chicago, Illinois, USA on May 23, 1943. He grew up in Cicero, a suburb of Chicago. At the age of 5 or 6, when asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, people were sometimes taken aback when he answered, “a marine biologist.” Jim attended J. Sterling Morton High School with a class of about 1100 students. While in high school, he took accelerated math and science classes, and he played on the football team. When Jim was 16 years old, his father passed away. After high school, Jim attended Cornell College, where he received Bachelor of Arts degrees in Biology and Chemistry in 1965. While at Cornell College, Jim played on the football team. The day after graduation from Cornell College, Jim married his high school sweetheart Lora and, in the Fall of 1965, he began his graduate studies at Dartmouth College. Jim’s family lived in a cottage at the top of a small mountain in Lyme, New Hampshire, where he tried to learn to ski on his own on some of the small hills near the cottage. While at Dartmouth, Jim became the proud father of his only child, a daughter named Jill. In the Spring of 1967, he received a Master of Science degree in Organic Chemistry. Although he had thus far pursued an education in the basic sciences of Biology and Chemistry, Jim’s instincts and lifelong interests were leading him toward the interdisciplinary field of Oceanography. He and his family moved to Tallahassee, Florida, where he earned his Ph.D. in Chemical Oceanography from Florida State University in 1970. Jim began his professional career as a summer Research Associate with the Kansas State Geologic Survey, University of Kansas in 1970. He was then a Research Associate for two years and an Assistant Professor for two years in the Department of Zoology at the University of Georgia. Here he worked with Dr. Lawrence Pomeroy, who was one of his mentors. Jim began to study complex ecological systems, seeking to place specific field and laboratory studies in the larger context of the ecosystem. This experience shaped his approach to his research for a lifetime. During this time, Jim participated in numerous research trips and spent unforgettable times with this group. His experience with this group on Eniwetok Atoll acquainted Jim with environments that had been compromised by radioactive contaminants. After this brief

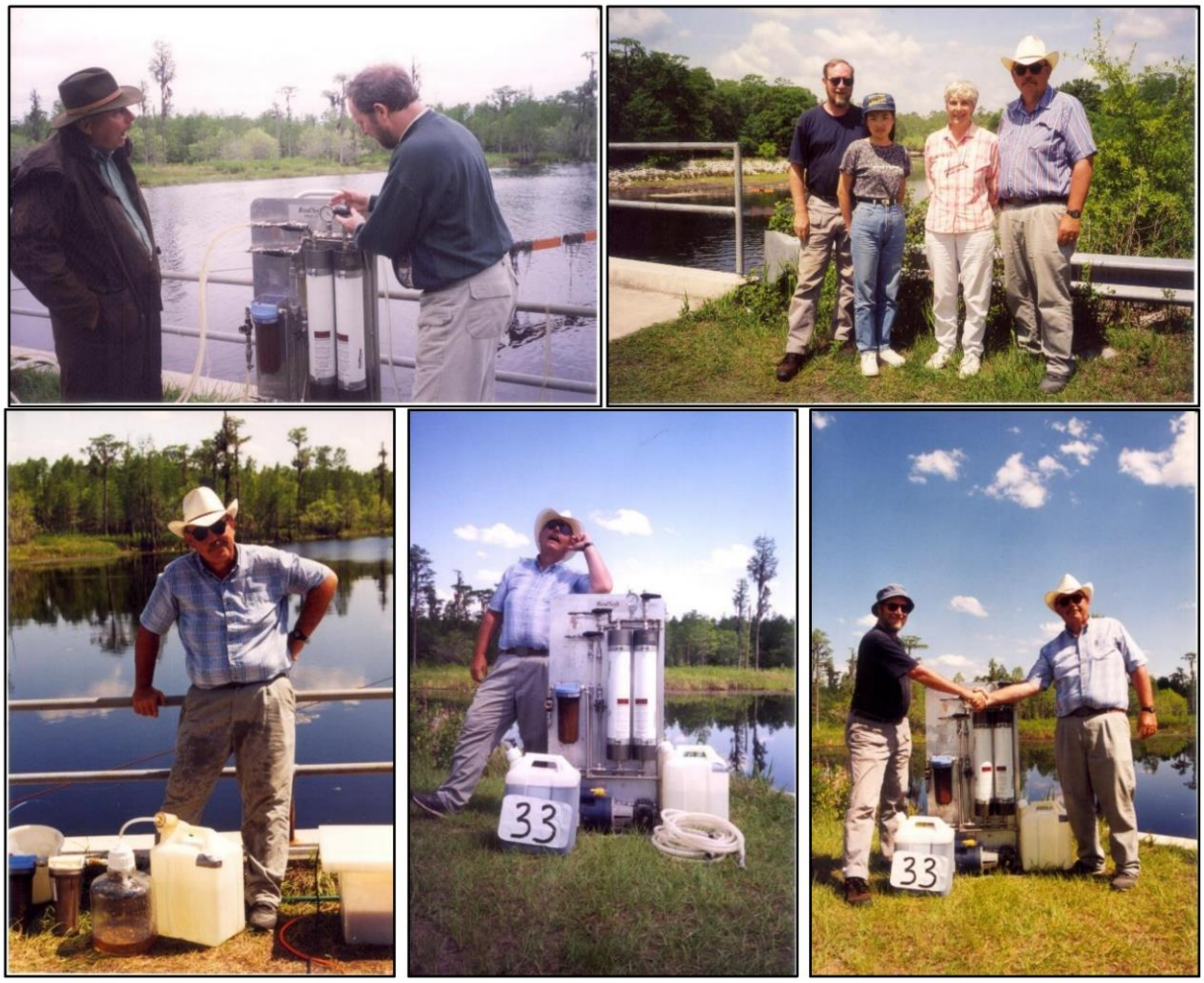
stint in academia, Jim took a position for three years as an Assistant Chemist in the Radiological and Environmental Research Division at Argonne National Laboratory, where he studied the distribution and behavior of transuranium elements in lakes and sediments. In 1977, Jim returned to the University of Georgia and held the position of Associate Research Ecologist at the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL) for seven years. SREL is located inside the U.S. Department of Energy's Savannah River Plant near Aiken, South Carolina. Here the focus of his research became the interactions between metals and humic substances. From this time on, Jim's primary research interest was natural organic matter and its interactions with other components of the environment. It was during his time at SREL that I first encountered Jim. We met in September, 1978 at a meeting of the American Chemical Society in Miami Beach, Florida. Jim and his colleague John Giesy had attended my lecture on solution calorimetry of humic substances. Naturally, Jim was at first somewhat skeptical of that work, but I finally won him over. He and John actually returned to SREL and bought a titration calorimetry system. My next encounter with Jim was in 1981 at the Symposium on Terrestrial and Aquatic Humic Materials in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. To my knowledge, this was the first joint meeting of scientists who studied terrestrial humic substances and those who studied aquatic humic substances, preceding by two years the first meeting of the International Humic Substances Society. The Chapel Hill meeting was organized by Russ Christman and Egil Gjessing, and among the influential scientists who presented their research at the meeting were Mike Thurman, Ron Malcolm, Mick Wilson, Pat Hatcher, Cornelius Steelink, Helmut Reuter, John Hedges, Simon Visser, Cooper Langford, Charlie O'Melia, Pat Brezonik, Jim Weber, Mark Shuman, Janusz Pempkoviak, and others. Jim was able to make numerous valuable professional (and personal) connections at the Chapel Hill meeting. I became aware of his presence at that meeting when he aggressively challenged the content of one of my posters. Although I probably failed to convince him that I was right and he was wrong, we somehow bonded, and I considered him to be a friend from that point forward. Jim left SREL in 1984 to accept the position of Director, University of Georgia Marine Institute at Sapelo Island, Georgia. This remote, sparsely inhabited island on the Georgia coast is only accessible via ferry. As Director, Jim's philosophy was to provide a high-quality research environment in which his scientific colleagues could conduct the best possible research. During his time on Sapelo Island, Jim's personal life changed

dramatically. His marriage ended and his daughter survived a serious, life-threatening illness. Through this personal turmoil, Jim continued to lead the Marine Institute. A few years later, while he was attending the 1992 IHSS conference in Monopoli, Italy, Jim met and fell in love with Monika Takács, a Hungarian soil scientist whom he married in 1996. After Monika became his wife and moved to Sapelo Island, they worked together, published papers, gave presentations, and participated in many conferences and meetings. Their outstanding measurements of the fluorescence excitation-emission spectra of IHSS standard and reference samples can still be found on the IHSS website. While he served as Director of the Marine Institute until 2000, Jim also held an overlapping appointment as Senior Research Scientist, University of Georgia, Marine Institute and School of Marine Programs until his retirement in 2003. Jim was a strong and occasionally outspoken member of IHSS. He served during 1994-1996 as Southeastern Regional Coordinator for IHSS. In 1995-1996, he served on the Scientific Advisory Committee for the 8th Meeting of the International Humic Substances Society, which was held in Wroclaw, Poland in 1996. During 1996-2002, Jim was elected by the IHSS membership to serve three consecutive two-year terms as Vice-President, President, and Past-President of IHSS. During his Vice-Presidential term, Jim also served on the International Program Committee for the 9th Meeting of the International Humic Substances Society, which was held in Adelaide, Australia in 1998. He also participated in collaborative research with other IHSS colleagues. In 1990, Jim spent one year in the Germany as a Humboldt scholar working with Zdenec Filip. In 1997, he and Monika spent six months in Norway on his Fulbright scholarship working with Egil Gjessing. In academia, scientists are judged by their publications, presentations, grants, etc. Jim published 122 peer-reviewed papers, 2 books, and 32 book chapters. He gave 121 oral presentations, including five invited lectures and two keynote lectures. He received 38 grants and contracts for a total of $2.3M, and he participated in 42 research cruises for a total of 252 days at sea. I marvel at this last statistic, because in the one time I accompanied Jim in a small boat on the Georgia Intracoastal Waterway, he became seasick! Throughout his life, Jim was an avid hunter, focusing on small game while in high school, but eventually evolving into a deer hunter. Jim loved the water and was a good swimmer. He learned to SCUBA dive in the sinkholes of Florida and had the wonderful opportunity to snorkel on the Great Barrier Reef of Australia. In 1975, he and his family made a bicycle/backpacking trip from Windsor, Ontario, to Halifax, Nova

Scotia (a distance of more than 2000 km), where he presented a paper at a meeting of the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography. After retirement, Jim and Monika chose to remain in Athens, Georgia. He was at home there. He became active in Athens' life, did volunteer work in the Botanical Garden for more than a decade, at the local police office, and in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). He was a board member of the OLLI and gave several very well received, interesting lectures there. Jim also focused on his personal interests and hobbies. He was a skilled woodworker with a well-equipped workshop, where he made furniture for the homes in which his family lived, intricately designed Christmas ornaments, and other beautiful objects. He was a student of history and genealogy, through which he was able to search American military records for World War II to learn about his father's military service in the European Theatre. Jim and Monika traveled all over the world, attending most IHSS meetings, and visiting Monika's family in Budapest, Hungary twice each year. Jim was lovingly accepted into Monika's extended family, including her children and grandchildren.

Having completed the overview of Jim's life and career, I would like to add a few personal recollections that are based primarily on my collaborations with Jim on IHSS-related activities. I guess the first really serious interaction Jim and I had was in 1992. At virtually the last minute, IHSS asked us to submit a proposal to host an IHSS meeting in 1994. We worked together to prepare and submit a proposal to host the 1994 meeting at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Georgia. At the business session in the 1992 IHSS meeting, we learned that our proposal had been rejected and that the 1994 meeting would be held in Port of Spain, Trinidad. We heard disturbing rumors that there had never been any serious intent to accept our proposal. In the business session of the 1994 meeting, which has gone down in IHSS history as our most unforgettable meeting, members of the Board were debating the merits of IHSS starting its own scientific journal. I will never forget Jim's words when he addressed the audience and the members of the Board – "You people can't even organize a scientific conference! What the hell makes you think you could operate a scientific journal?" No one had a convincing answer to Jim's question, and the nascent IHSS Journal disappeared forever. Well, that's not the end of this particular story. Having already done all of the work to plan an IHSS Meeting and having lived through the actual 1994 IHSS Meeting in Trinidad, Jim and I decided to just organize our own meeting. The meeting was entitled "Humic

Substances in the Environment - New Challenges and Approaches", and it took place in 1995 at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Georgia. Although our meeting was strongly opposed by some members of the IHSS Board, most Board members actually came to the meeting. Feedback from many of the attendees indicated that our meeting was a success. Just a few years later in 1999, I asked Jim to assist me in using reverse osmosis (RO) to isolate the first of several IHSS samples of natural organic matter (NOM). We were joined at the Suwannee River by Jim's wife Monika Takács and Lili Ding. Here are a few photos from that memorable field trip.



In nine very long days of really intense field work, we had concentrated 14,990 liters of Suwannee River water to a final volume of 753 liters. After a bit more cleanup in my laboratory, the final sample was freeze-dried to obtain 1060 grams of Suwannee River NOM. By all accounts, IHSS was well pleased. Just a few years later, Jim and I were asked by IHSS to replenish the standard fulvic and humic acids that had been isolated 20 years earlier by Ron Malcolm and several other scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey. To reproduce the conditions of that earlier work, we had to use the very labor-

intensive XAD-8 resin adsorption methodology for this task, so other scientists were recruited to assist in the field work (Monika Takács, Norbert Hertkorn, Paul Bloom, Jason Ritchie, and Jean-Francois Koprivnjak). Jim and Monika were only able to assist for a portion of the 26 days of field work, during which we processed 16,896 liters of Suwannee River water to obtain 406 grams of humic acid and 1000 grams of fulvic acid. Here are two photos of Jim from that field trip.

Those of us who knew Jim well were the recipients of daily collections of humorous and political cartoons that he considered to be worth sharing. He wanted us to smile, laugh, and be happy. I started receiving these daily missives in 2012-2013, and they continued to arrive regularly until September 9, 2024. The collection of shared cartoons represents Jim's sense of humor, his carefully cultivated reputation as a grumpy old man, and his political preferences. All those who were among Jim's friends will miss this talented, humorous, highly intelligent colleague who enriched our world with his contagious sense of humor.

E. Michael Perdue
Professor (retired)
Georgia Institute of Technology

Honorary Membership of Dr. Alessandro Piccolo

It is a privilege for me to nominate Alessandro Piccolo, Professor of Agricultural Analytical Chemistry at the Università of Napoli Federico II, for Honorary Membership of the International Humic Substances Society. Professor Piccolo is now retired from his position in the University of Napoli, but he remains as committed as ever to his involvements in the Humic Sciences. At the time of writing the Alessandro Piccolo *h-index* is at 83, and with over 26.000 citations. This reflects the impact that his work is having. It can be said that he initiated new thinking in many aspects of the humic sciences, and especially on the sizes, shapes, and functions of humic molecules when he introduced to the area over a generation ago the concept of supramolecular structures. The experimental procedures used in the early experiments caused initial rejection of the proposals, but he refined the techniques used to unravel the secondary binding forces that contribute to the molecular associations. Studies by the Hatcher Group provide evidence that oxidative transformations of lignin structures can also provide humic structures of medium to high molecular weight values. Fractionation processes that have been applied to humic assemblies in recent times, such as urea-amended base solutions, should allow a clearer picture to emerge that will finally resolve the distribution of the sizes and the shapes of the components in the humic 'families' of molecules. Piccolo's work has had focus on fundamental structures and reactivities of humic substances and of the processes leading to their formation, but he has always had a focus on the implications for soil health, productivity, and remediation, for recycling of organic residues and for the sustainability of soil structures. This has led in more recent times to a significant emphasis on the soil structural degradation effects of long-term cultivation in which organic amendments are not made to compensate for the losses of indigenous organic matter arising from biological degradation. Others who have shown little awareness of the mechanisms by which the losses occur, or of the transformation processes to amendments needed to stem the losses, have drawn attention to the catastrophic humanitarian problems that will be faced if conservation solutions are not generated. Alessandro Piccolo and his colleagues have shown how in situ polymerization of soil organic matter can be achieved by biomimetic photocatalysis using porphyrin amendments. The results obtained have indicated that the soil organic matter can be conserved and productivity maintained from the treatment. Because photocatalysis is fundamental for the process sunlight is essential, and annual spray treatments are required, and the predicted costs need not be greater than those that apply for weed/pest control.

That work by Piccolo and his colleagues is the beginning of studies that will show the essentiality of finding a solution that will conserve soils despite the increasing demands that will be made by the world population. It must be seen as a solvable problem that is as great as global warming. The Piccolo CV gives evidence of his impressive scholastic achievements, of his administrative and operational contributions to Soil Chemistry through his involvements with IUSS and his work in Africa under the auspices of FAO, and of his research involvements and collaborations with Academic and Research Institutions in Europe and in the USA. I consider that the interests and aspirations of the IHSS will be enhanced by the inclusion of Professor Piccolo among its active honorary membership.

Nomination of Professor Alessandro Piccolo
for Honorary Membership of the International Humic Substances Society
By
Michael HB Hayes Hon Member IHSS, SSSA, ASA

This astonishing nomination for Dr. Alessandro Piccolo, arrived by email from Dr. Michael HB Hayes on June 10th 2024, just 11 days before his tragic death. The IHSS Board of Directors has unanimously accepted Dr. Alessandro Piccolo's Nomination by decision on August 24th, 2024, in Rimini, Italy. Dr. Piccolo has served the IHSS for many decades introducing the supramolecular theory as a definition for the humic substances assembly. We are glad to have him among the Honorary Members of our Society.

Marios Drosos

Secretary of the IHSS

A few more words…

I have known Mike personally for nearly 40 years but I became acquainted with him as a scientist since 1978 of his book on the Chemistry of Soil Constituents, edited together with Dr. Greenland, which was one of my favorite guides in humus chemistry (Hayes, M. H. B., and R. S. Swift. 1978. The chemistry of soil organic colloids. *In* The chemistry of soil constituents. D. J. Greenland and M. H. B. Hayes, Eds. Wiley, New York, pp. 179-320). He spent two months in my laboratory in 1998 as a visiting Professor invited by the University of Naples Federico II, and he saw with his own eyes the unprecedented changes in humic conformations observed in my brand new HPSEC system from which the supramolecular theory originated. He lived in an apartment in Sorrento overlooking the bay of Naples, and near the small town where I used to live then on the Sorrento coast. Every day we travelled together back and forth together to the lab in Portici enjoying scientific discussions, historical counts and ideas of future humus research.

He has been always friendly and supportive of my research and consequent understanding of humus chemistry, but he always kept the door open to alternative interpretations of data. He always showed a remarkable enthusiasm for the importance of humus chemistry for the improvement of soil management, agricultural productivity and ultimate well-being of the mankind. In fact, his scientific passion was nurtured by his profound spirituality of a fully lived Catholic faith. It was his peculiar legacy between a devotion to understanding natural phenomena and a deep faith in a transcendent dimension that made him such a special human being, determined and kind at the same time. He will be irreplaceable as a fellow humic scientist, a scientific mentor, and a friend.

Alessandro Piccolo

MICHAEL HAYES BEST POSTER AWARD

In memory of Dr. Michael H.B. Hayes, the Board of Directors of the IHSS has unanimously decided at the IHSS Meeting in Rimini, Italy, to devote a special award of 250 USD for the best poster in every biannual Meeting of the IHSS. This award would be given to the winner along with a certificate at the Gala Dinner of each Meeting. We should mention that this award cannot be given to the winner of the Malcolm Award.

We would like to congratulate Chen Huang, for receiving the first Michael Hayes best poster award in the history of IHSS, for his poster entitled: 'Dissolved organic matter dynamic in subsurface soil seepage in forest and grassland during snowmelt presented ecosystem-specific response in a case study in Hainich Critical Zone'.

Changes to the IHSS Bylaws applied

Dear IHSS Members,

Changes to 2 articles of the IHSS Bylaws were recently approved by vote of the membership - Article II and Article V. The Board saw a need to respond to the desire for creation of a category of corporate membership in Article II. Moreover, the membership meetings have never been used to enact policies by voting on issues and it is often very difficult obtain a quorum. Therefore, the board has suggested changes in Article V that bring the bylaws in line with actual practice of membership meetings. The meetings are where the board presents reports of activities and decisions made and obtains input from members and enters into a discussion with members. Resolution of questions of amending the bylaws required a vote of the membership. The notification was send 90 days prior to the ballot opening that was held from August 10th to August 20th, 2024. 59 members voted, of which 57 agreed with the changes (96.6%). Therefore, the amended bylaws can be found online in https://humic-substances.org/bylaws/.

Marios Drosos

Secretary of the IHSS

PAST MEETINGS 2024

French Chapter (Inter)national Meeting (May 14-15, 2024)

Organic matter in its environments: Air-Land-Sea
Bordaux, Espace Beaulieu

The conference demonstrated high-level works of 14 presenters, 2 of which were awarded.

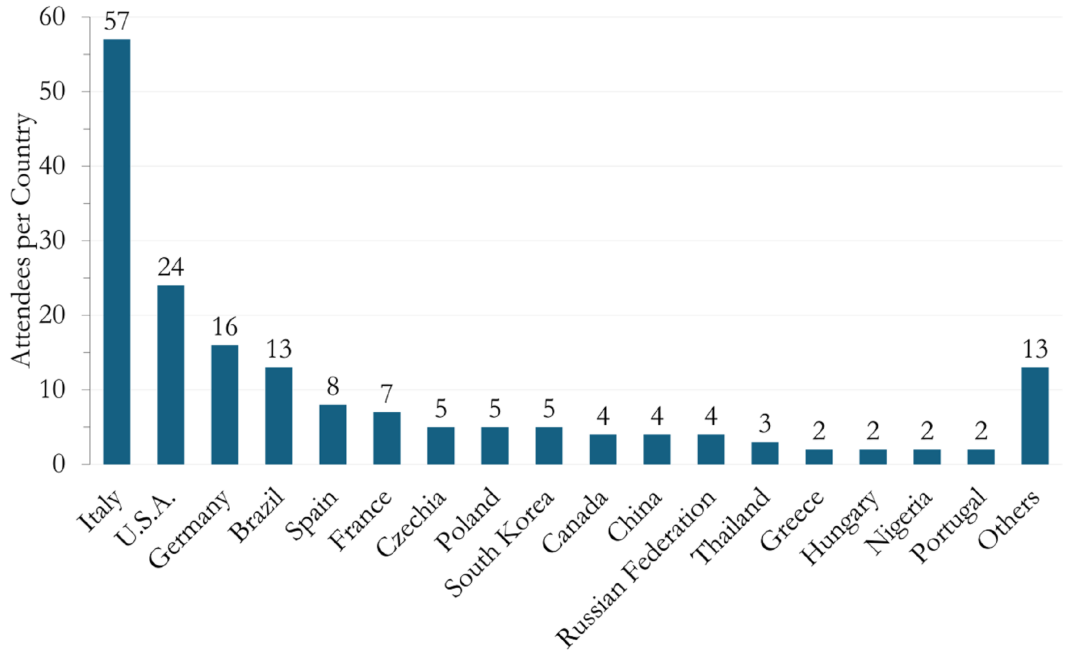
Organizing committee:
Frédéric Coppin, Stéphane Mounier, Marie-Noëlle Pons, Frédéric Théraulaz, Florence Vouvé, Pascale Prudent, Marawit Tesfa, Madi Abaker, and Amonda El Houssainy.

Invited speakers:
Dr. Christos Panagiotopoulos: Tracers of biomass burning emitted particles in the ocean,
Dr. Marios Drosos: Insights into the soil Humeome,
Prof. Davide Vione: Photochemical processes of DOM-The fate of contaminants.

22nd IHSS Meeting in Rimini, Italy (August 25-30, 2024)

The 22nd Conference of the IHSS titled "**The role of Natural Organic Matter and Humic Substances in achieving Sustainable Development Goals**" (IHSS 2024) was held on August 25-30, 2024, in Rimini, Italy (https://ihss2024.azuleon.org/). The IHSS 2024 was organized by the Italian Chapter of the IHSS, with Profs. Claudio Ciavatta (Univ. of Bologna), Teodoro Miano (Univ. of Bari), and Claudio Zaccone (Univ. of Verona) as Chairs of the Organizing and Scientific Committees.

All topics included in the programme, such as food security, climate change mitigation, environmental remediation, biodiversity preservation, utilization and recycling of waste biomass, etc, had a common denominator, which is the natural organic matter. The IHSS 2024 hosted researchers, students, and companies worldwide. Almost 200 people coming from 27 countries attended this meeting, and presented their most recent results (6 keynotes, 54 orals, and 88 posters).



Selected works presented during the IHSS 2024 will be published, following a traditional peer-review process, in a thematic Special Issue in Environmental Research titled **Natural Organic Matter and Sustainable Development Goals** (https://www.sciencedirect.com/special-issue/313858/ihss2024-natural-organic-matter-and-sustainable-development-goals).

The common feeling was a friendly and stimulating atmosphere for sharing results and opinions, combined with a nice excursion to Urbino and Gradara (103 participants) and a great gala dinner in the wonderful Repubblica di San Marino (126 participants).

Claudio Zaccone
IHSS Board Member
and IHSS 22nd Meeting organizer

Call for Training Award 2024

Training awards enable students and young scientists to spend 1-3 months in training/research at leading laboratories, where they can become better acquainted with new techniques and new aspects of research on humic substances. Proposals may be submitted by graduate students (MSc, PhD) and young scientists under the age of 35 years (at the deadline of the call). The applicant has to be member of the IHSS. The award will only be granted one time for one specific applicant. Applications must demonstrate the potential importance of the training period for pursuing a career in humic substances science or a related field. The award is meant to cover a significant part of economy travel expenses, eligible living expenses, and the subsistence for one to three months. The award does not cover analytical fees, instrumental fees, personnel costs or laboratory supplies.

The Application has to be sent to:

the President of IHSS

Dr. Deborah Dick

(deborah.dick@ufrgs.br)

and to the Secretary of IHSS

Dr. Marios Drosos

(marios.drosos@unibas.it)

Deadline: December 31st, 2024

For more information visit:

https://humic-substances.org/awards/

Call for Young Investigator Research Grant (YIRG) 2025

The goals of the IHSS Young Investigator Research Grant Program are:
• to support fundamental research in the humic substances (HS)/natural organic matter (NOM) field, and
• to develop the next generation of engineers and scientists through support of advanced scientific education.
The IHSS Young Investigator Research Grant Program aims to promote the careers of young researchers by supporting research of high scientific caliber, and to enhance the career opportunities of their undergraduate/ graduate students, and/or postdoctoral associates through the research experience.

IHSS Young Investigator Grants (YIRG) provide start-up funding for scientists and engineers who are post-doctoral researchers or in their first academic appointment at the level of Assistant Professor or equivalent. The YIR Grants may be used to illustrate proof of principle or concept, to test a hypothesis, or to demonstrate feasibility of an approach.

The YIR Grant program is seeking investigator-initiated, original research across the spectrum of our mission. Excluded from consideration are proposals in which the ideas being presented are a mere extension of research from the principal investigator´s (PI) graduate or postdoctoral experience. Research projects must be unique. Although a PI may send the same proposal to more than one agency, IHSS will not support a project having overlap, or partial overlap, with research funded by another agency.

Award information
Amount: up to $ 45,000 total over 1 to 2 years
Estimated number of awards: 1 per competition

Eligibility criteria
Applicants must be a post-doctoral researcher or in their first academic appointment at the level of Assistant Professor or equivalent in a science or engineering department, no more than 6 years after the acquisition of their PhD degree.

In addition, applicants must meet the following criteria:

• The PI must be a current IHSS member in good standing and have been a member for at least 1 year prior to the application due date.

• The PI must be employed by or under contract with a non-profit institution.

• The terms of appointment of the PI must promise reasonable continuity of service. The appointment should continue at least through the period of funding requested in the proposal.

Generally, the above criteria are automatically met by tenure-track assistant professors or equivalent. If the PI is not in a tenure-track faculty position, a brief statement describing the appointment and a Department Chair's letter affirming that the PI meets all of the above criteria must be included with the application.

The Application has to be sent to:

the President of IHSS

Dr. Deborah Dick

(deborah.dick@ufrgs.br)

and to the Secretary of IHSS

Dr. Marios Drosos

(marios.drosos@unibas.it)

Deadline: May 15th, 2025

For more information visit:

https://humic-substances.org/awards/

Deborah P. Dick

President of the IHSS

CALL FOR MEMBERSHIP AWARD 2025

Coordinators of Regional and National Chapters demonstrating **increasing membership** numbers for two or more years are encouraged to apply **for consideration of an award** of **one registration fee** that can be awarded to one member from their chapter to attend **the next international IHSS** meeting. **Applications shall be sent to the IHSS president** Deborah P. Dick (deborah.dick@ufrgs.br) and in copy to the secretary Marios Drosos (marios.drosos@unibas.it)

The applicant should provide **a description of activities** resulting in the increased membership. The decision will be made by the Board of Directors.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Polish Chapter International Meeting
June 2-5, 2025

Humic Substances in Ecosystems 12

Pokrzywna, Opawskie Mountains, Poland
https://hse12.uwr.edu.pl/en/

23rd Meeting of the IHSS

Humic & NOM science & technology: current state and future perspectives

Organized by the Czech chapter (Brno University of Technology)

In Brno, Czech Republic/Moravia: https://www.gotobrno.cz/en/

August 23-28, 2026

The planned venue site (https://www.orea.cz/en/hotel-congress)

IHSS SPONSORSHIP FOR SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

All members are encouraged to apply for IHSS sponsorship of scientific meetings. The respective guidelines are published on the webpage:

http://humic-substances.org/apply-for-ihss-sponsorship-of-a-conference/

APPLICATIONS TO HOST IHSS 2028 MEETING

IHSS Board invites all scientists interested in hosting the future IHSS 2028 meeting to apply. The respective guidelines are published on the webpage:

https://humic-substances.org/apply-to-host-an-ihss-conference/

IMPRESSUM

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NEWSLETTER 64

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