



GREIFSWALD  
MIRE  
CENTRE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016



May 2017

## 1. Introduction

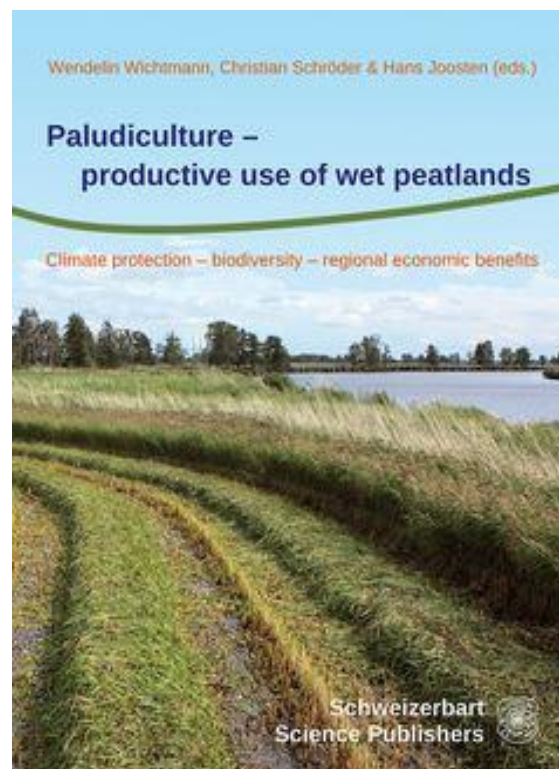
The Greifswald Mire Centre (GMC) is a cooperation between the University of Greifswald, Michael Succow Foundation, and the Institute of Sustainable Development of Landscapes of the Earth (DUENE e.V.). The GMC was founded in early 2015, based on a Memorandum of Understanding.

This annual report summarises the development of GMC during its third year of existence: It chronologically lists mile stones of the year, outlines the current structure and gives an impression of selected external assessments of the GMC.

## 2. Research and Science

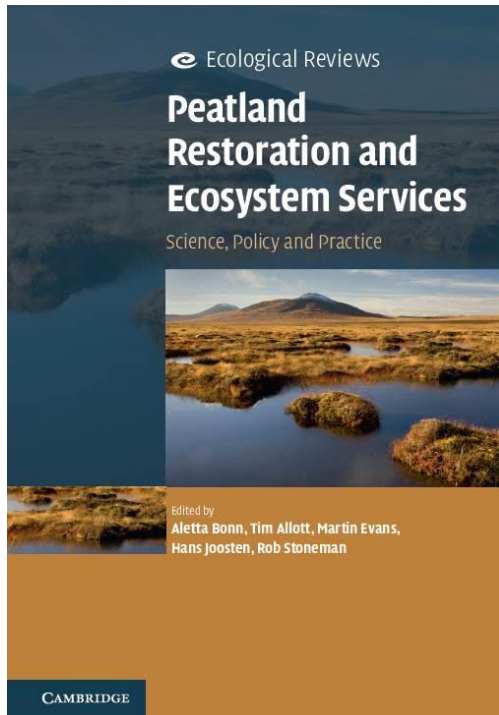
### Hot of the press I: new book about productive use of wet peatlands

19/04/2016 The GMC scientists Dr. Wendelin Wichtmann, Christian Schröder and Prof. Hans Joosten edited the book “Paludiculture – productive use of wet peatlands”. On 288 pages this book, which is released by Schweizerbart Science Publishers, provides extensive information on wet peatland utilisation (paludiculture) with respect to policy making, management, practice and science. It explains the principles of wise peatland utilisation and encourages the worldwide implementation of paludiculture as the only possible form of sustainable utilisation of organic soils. The book can now be ordered at Schweizerbart Publishers.





## Hot of the press II: „Peatland Restoration and Ecosystem Services“



27/06/2016 „Peatland Restoration and Ecosystem Services: Science, Policy, and Practice“ is the title of the first, up-to-date and comprehensive book on peatland restoration and ecosystem services. For the 493-page English-language book, Cambridge University Press claims to have brought together world-class experts to look at the issue from an environmental, social and economic perspective. The GMC scientists are delighted about this - they have contributed to nine out of 20 chapters. The book "Peatland Restoration and Ecosystem Services: Science, Policy, and Practice" is also available as an e-book.

## Five million euro for peatland research: Funding from regional excellence initiative

21/10/2016 With 5 million Euro the regional excellence initiative Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania is funding WETSCAPES – matter dynamics in peatland and coastal sites as basis for land use, climate impact and water protection, a joint project of Greifswald University and Rostock University. From 2017-2020 the project will improve the scientific basis of sustainable use of formerly degraded, rewetted peatland sites. Peat formation in percolation mires, coastal transgression mires and alder carrs in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania will get particular attention. In total five consortia are funded by the regional excellence initiative. WETSCAPES was developed by the working groups Joosten, Wilmking, Kreyling and Urich at Greifswald University together with colleagues from Rostock University. Third partner is the German Aerospace Centre (DLR) Neustrelitz. Project outcomes will be communicated via the Greifswald Mire Centre.



The WETSCAPES-Team in the Peene valley (Photo: P. Schroeder).

### **More peatland research - Two new EU projects start in 2017**

21/12/2016 In the coming year, two new EU projects will start at the Greifswald Mire Centre. In REPEAT, restoration and prognosis of peat formation in fens will be studied, with a particular focus on linking diversity in plant functional traits to soil biological and biogeochemical processes. In cooperation with the universities Warsaw (Poland) and Antwerp (Belgium), NIBIO (Norway) and the Danube Delta Research Institute (Romania), Greifswald University will carry out field research in Belgium, the Netherlands, North-East-Germany, East-Poland and in the Danube Delta. Nationally, the project is funded by German Research Association (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)).

Very recently, also the project CLEARANCE was approved for funding. This project will develop a circular economy approach to river pollution by agricultural nutrients with use of carbon-storing ecosystems. Consortium partners are, together with Greifswald University, two universities in Warsaw (Poland), Aarhus University (Denmark), Nijmegen University (The Netherlands) as well as the Leibniz-Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries (IGB) Berlin and a Polish NGO.

### 3. Transferring Science into practise

#### **A tonne of Typha: Insulation from the wetland next door**

31/03/2016 Using cattail (*Typha*) from the area next door as insulation for housing is a showcase for paludiculture currently pursued near Anklam (Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania). That's why the recent cattail harvest there was enthusiastically supported by GMC co-workers. In the end twenty big bags were stuffed to the brim. About a tonne of dry *Typha* biomass was the result of harvesting about half a hectare of peatland. This paludiculture flagship project was initiated by the Dutchman Aldert van Weeren. An entrepreneur in nature tourism he is currently turning an old country house into a holiday destination for nature lovers using mostly ecological building material. The passionate ornithologist and tour guide is particularly happy that the *Typha* from next door does not only provide local and renewable building material but also reflects nature conservation by peatland re-wetting. Currently the *Typha* biomass is being processed for cavity wall insulation by a small factory in Prenzlau.

#### **Establishing instead of devastating: Constructed wetland near Ueckermünde**

05/04/2016 Establishing peatlands instead of destroying them. That was the goal of a construction project near Ueckermünde in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania at the end of March. In the project 288 m<sup>2</sup> will be rewetted. This offers advantages to two different groups of interest: The farmer is interested in testing new methods for nutrient retention from agriculture on his area, a poldered fen. The scientists are gaining new insights into how constructed wetlands can contribute to improving water quality. As a possible side effect, the farmer could use the vegetation as a renewable raw material and thus create additional value.

#### **New GMC offer: agricultural advice**

05/04/2016 Since this year, individual agricultural advice on the climate-friendly use of fens has been eligible for funding in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and is offered under the umbrella of the GMC. It offers information on alternative management options for wet bogs and support in switching to paludiculture. The participants of the "Moorschutz" conference at the end of March in Güstrow, which was attended by around 60 farmers and representatives of the administration, showed keen interest in the new advisory services. Contact person for the advice is Dr. Wendelin Wichtmann.

## Sundew in the front - SoTaMed receives two 1<sup>st</sup> places

14/07/2016 The GMC research team of Dr. Jenny Schulz and Balazs Baranyai took first place twice this summer in the ideas competition of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (Ideenwettbewerb MV) and the UNIQUE ideas competition in Greifswald (Greifswalder UNIQUE Ideenwettbewerb). "SoTaMed" is the start-up idea of the founding team: they are the first group in the world to be able to cultivate the carnivorous plant, which supplies active medical ingredients, on rewetted peatlands, i.e. sundew in paludiculture. Commercial cultivation is not yet possible, but the worldwide demand for sundew far exceeds the supply from wild collections. With their cultivation methods, Schulz and Baranyai can offer a high-quality and particularly sustainably produced raw material.



The statewide ideas competition of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania supported by the Hub of Entrepreneurship and Rostock University (Zentrum für Entrepreneurship und Universität Rostock) aims to sensitise scientists and encourage them to take their ideas forward on their own initiative, e.g. to patent them or to become self-employed. Parallel to this, the UNIQUE Ideas competition of the Greifswald University and the Leibniz Institute for Plasma Research and Technology e.V. (INP) supports students and researchers at the Greifswald University in the development of their ideas up to the foundation of a company.

Awardees Dr. Jenny Schulz and Balazs Baranyai at "inspired" ideas competition MV (photo: pixflut Jessica Brach)

## Is best practise on peatlands possible? A workshop in the project MoorDialog

27/06/2016 How can we define how to do good work on peatlands? What do they need not to degrade? What do farmers need to sustainably cultivate peatlands? And how do we as a society want to use our peatlands? The German MoorDialog (peatland protection dialogue), a project carried out at the GMC within the framework of the National Climate Initiative, together with the German Society for Mire and Peat Science (DGMT), held an expert discussion on these questions in Fohrde near Brandenburg from 16-18 June 2016. Nearly 30 representatives from science, practice, administration and associations were invited and discussed aspects of water regime and land management that influence the use of peatlands. The participants from agriculture, nature conservation and water management brought together legal and economic aspects that currently determine peatland use in Germany. They also debated how improved use could be promoted through legislation or subsidies. The workshop resulted in a discussion paper that was published in the same year (Abel et al.



2016). The workshop and discussion paper form a basis for a broad public discussion on the establishment of good technical practice on moor soils.

### **Tiny mosses – big style! First large scale harvest of cultivated peatmoss worldwide**

17/07/2016 It was a global premiere: the first mechanical harvest of cultivated peatmoss ever! At Hankhauser Moor (Lower Saxony), scientists of Greifswald University and staff of the peat company Moorkultur Ramsloh harvested the rare commodity from the joint pilot site. Being precious seed, the mosses were immediately reused and spread out, thus tripling the Sphagnum farming area. Expanding the site to a total 'business-scale' size of 13 ha also kicked off the MOOSWEIT-project (see for spectacular pictures the television movie). Five years ago, the project partners had installed the peatmoss culture on former bog grassland that had been a drained and intensively used meadow for over 50 years. Mosses had established successfully and showed remarkable growth over the years. Peatmosses may be used as substrate in horticulture and thus present an alternative to peat. However, peatmoss biomass is not yet available in sufficient quantities and seed is especially scarce. Therefore, MOOSWEIT investigates large scale cultivation, mechanical harvest and regeneration of the permanent crop. The project is financed by the State of Lower Saxony, the EU (ERDF), and the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Moreover, Sphagnum farming allows a sustainable utilisation of rewetted bogs (paludiculture). So far, most peatlands in Germany are being drained for agricultural use. This results in immense emissions of greenhouse gases. In contrast, wet peatlands hardly emit any CO<sub>2</sub>, filter nutrient-rich water and offer habitats for rare species. For more information on the peatmoss cultivation at Hankhauser Moor see the press release of Fachagentur für nachwachsende Rohstoffe (FNR) and [www.sphagnumfarming.com](http://www.sphagnumfarming.com).



Mechanical peatmosses harvest at Hankhausen (Photo: lensescape.org).

## Kick-off for MeerGewinn project: Minister Backhaus at anacrusis

05/08/2016 At the 4th of August Dr. Till Backhaus (Minister of Agriculture and the Environment of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) visited the botanical garden of Greifswald University to hand over the funding approval for the three-years project "MeerGewinn - gemeinsam innovativ". The project, coordinated by DUENE e.V., guarantees benefit on two different sides: The retention of nutrients from agricultural used peatlands and constructed wetlands contributes to better water quality of rivers and streams and thus to a cleaner Baltic Sea. At the same time, the nutrients are used for the regional production of renewable raw materials. To accomplish this benefits local authorities, farmers, entrepreneurs and scientists are working together in MeerGewinn. The project is funded by the European Union via the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.



Dr. Till Backhaus, Minister of Agriculture and Environment at the Kick-off event (Photo: lensescape.org).



## **Peatlands and how we can use them: information for farmers and associations in Brandenburg**

*15/10/2016* At the 14th of October the information meeting "peatland use - perspectives for peatlands of Brandenburg" (Moornutzung – Perspektiven für brandenburgische Moore) targeting on farmers, landscape conservation associations and rural co-operations was taken place at the nature park centre in the Nuthe-Nieplitz wetland. The meeting focused on economical ways of farming on peatlands as a contribution to climate protection and the preservation of biodiversity. The meeting was organised by the Greifswald Mire Centre, the State Agency of Environment of Brandenburg and the German Association for Landcare (DVL). Additional to the presentation of best practise examples experiences on the agri-environmental programme "Moorschonende Stauhaltung" were exchanged.

## **Global Peatlands Initiative launched: Pushing peatlands protection for saving climate**

*20/11/2016* To save peatlands as the world's largest terrestrial carbon stock leading peatland experts and institutions launched the Global Peatland Initiative at the World Climate Conference (COP 22) in Marrakech mid of November. It is a joint effort to cut greenhouse gas emissions from drained peatlands and thus make peatland protection a vital factor in meeting climate goals of the 2015 Paris agreement. The Global Peatlands Initiative was funded by the governments of Indonesia, Peru, the Republic of Congo, UNEP, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, CIFOR, Wetlands International, UNEP-WCMC, GRID-Arendal, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, European Space Agency, WRI, Greifswald Mire Centre and StarVision/Sateligence. More on [www.globalpeatlands.org](http://www.globalpeatlands.org)

## **SoTaMed won UNIQUE+ competition**

*07/12/2016* The sustainable cultivation of sundew for the extraction of medical raw materials is just convincing. Following the idea, the business concept submitted for the SoTaMed project has now also won the main prize in the UNIQUE+ business plan competition of the Greifswald University - almost 6,500 euros and an education voucher. This brings SoTaMed further into the concrete implementation: The company founders Dr. Jenny Schulz and Balazs Baranyai put the money into setting up the cultivation areas. SoTaMed has already won a total of seven prizes and awards.

### **Action group "clean Ryck"**

*14/12/2016* To be able to swim in the river Ryck again, this is something that Stefan Fassbinder already demanded in his elections campaign in 2015. Now – as the mayor of Greifswald – he is willing to put this into practice together with the “Clean Ryck” initiative. Representatives of the Greifswald Mire Centre, the Greifswald University, the Greifswald Agricultural Initiative and the regional Water and Soil Association provided up-to-date knowledge on the status quo at a symposium at the beginning of December. Right now, the Ryck is not suitable for swimming and the problem of low water quality goes beyond the borders of Greifswald. Many of the used areas along the river are on drained peatlands, which releases nitrogen and accumulate in the river. A shift to alternative and wet use of the peatlands (paludiculture) could alleviate nutrient problems and lower the eutrophication of the river. In this context the GMC contributes its experience and knowledge to the initiative. In addition to the development of restoration and compensation measures, the public will also be involved: Planting campaigns on the shore, a photo competition and a "Ryck day" for the coming year are planned.

## 4. Political consulting

### **German government about protection of peatlands: Reply on request by the German green party**

*15/01/2016* By increasing the water level, greenhouse gas emissions from drained peatland areas can be reduced, the carbon storage function of peatlands can be restored with almost complete wetting and, in addition, considerable positive effects for the water balance and biodiversity can be achieved - this is explained by the Federal Government in its current answer (18/7197) to a small question "Protection of peatlands - contribution to nature and climate protection" by the parliamentary group of the German green party. The group had consulted the GMC in the run-up to the inquiry. The goal of the Federal Government is therefore to significantly reduce peat extraction in Germany from 2015 and to rewet five percent of the peat soils used for agriculture and forestry. The answer mentions the Greifswald research on Sphagnum farming, the project on the rewetting of peatlands in the Russian Federation and the National MoorDialog project, thus emphasising the importance of these GMC projects.

### **Mires at the Federal President: Panel for peatlands at the Week of Environment**

*08/06/2016* At a forum during the Week of the Environment, the GMC presented initiatives for the revitalisation and sustainable use of peatlands in Germany and worldwide. Prof. Michael Succow was warmly welcomed to the event by Federal President Joachim Gauck. His plea for the preservation of the peatlands and a rethinking of the millennia-old tradition of peatland drainage attracted great attention. At the panel, Prof. Hans Joosten presented hard facts about the importance of peatlands for the climate and a possible solution - paludiculture. For this new, wet use of peatlands, stakeholders as farmers and others must be involved. This is why the GMC is advancing the national MoorDialog, funded by the National Climate Initiative of the Federal Government. Jozef Bednar (Wetlands International) highlighted the importance of peatland restoration beyond national borders in a project of the Federal Government's International Climate Initiative in Russia. It became clear: Germany must continue to fulfil its great responsibility for the protection and restoration of peatlands in the future in order to make its contribution to climate protection and biodiversity conservation.

### **Paludi-Interchange: Minister Meyer discusses at the Greifswald Mire Centre**

*23/07/2016* At the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, Christian Meyer, Minister of Agriculture of Lower Saxony, met entrepreneurs and experts of the Greifswald Mire Centre, to discuss about the economic potential of paludiculture. The GMC together with the greens party in Western Pomerania-Greifswald invited to a public discussion. Among the guests were Stefan Fassbinder,



mayor of Greifswald, and Ulrike Berger, Deputy Chairwoman of the Greens' parliamentary group in the Landtag MV. As minister of one of the most peatland-rich federal states in Germany, Christian Meyer was very interested in Greifswald peatland research, in particular the implementation projects for the conservation, rewetting and sustainable use of peatland sites. In Lower Saxony, where more than 95% of the areas are affected by drainage, he himself helped to initiate committed programmes and projects for peatland and climate protection.

Everybody agreed that paludiculture offers an opportunity for new ideas, business models and regional added value, but therefore the political conditions must be adapted and incentives created. So far, the climate-friendly use of peatland soils in paludiculture has been worse off than conventional, drainage-based peatland management. In Lower Saxony, agriculture and forestry on peatlands and peat extraction account for 12% of the state's total greenhouse gas emissions. The state government has recognised the challenge of reducing these emissions and wants to incorporate the know-how of the Greifswald Mire Centre on paludiculture, i.e. the wet management of raised bogs and fens.



Christian Meyer, Lower Saxony's Minister of Agriculture discusses with the GMC about paludiculture (photo: lensescape.org).

### **Peatland meeting for Ramsar Convention - International workshop on Vilm**

16/09/2016 Peatlands store twice as much carbon as the forest biomass worldwide and are huge source of greenhouse gases in many countries. To strengthen the role of peatlands in climate protection and the Ramsar Convention experts from politics, science and the private

sector met for a three-day workshop on the island of Vilm (Germany). The meeting report will cover guidelines for designating globally significant peatlands, best practice examples of restoration as well as ideas for the upcoming new Global Peatland Initiative. An excursion to the restored peatland Karrendorfer Wiesen and the first heating plant powered by fen biomass at Malchin complemented the workshop. It was jointly hosted by the Federal Agency for Nature Protection (BfN), the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention, the Danish Nature Agency and the Greifswald Mire Centre. For more information see the press release Peatland protection is climate protection of the German Federal Agency for Nature Protection (German only).



Ramsar-Moor-Workshop on the island of Vilm (Photo: M. Pakalne).

### **A statement on climate protection: more peatlands needed in Climate Action Plan 2050**

*04/10/2016* The Greifswald Mire Centre claimed position about peatland and climate protection in the draft of Climate Action Plan 2050 (Klimaschutzplan 2050) by the German Federal Ministry of Environment. The statement highlights the possible emission reductions, the low CO<sub>2</sub> avoidance costs and the high area efficiency of rewetting peatlands as a climate protection measure in agriculture and forestry. To use this potential, an end of subsidise for conventional agricultural peatland use and the support of paludiculture via subsidise is seen to be essential. The same chance is necessary for the public funding of new draining systems which has to come to an end as well. Another important issue is the reduction of peat use

and the promotion of peat substitutes. The statement clearly shows: peatlands have an outstanding potential for reducing emissions, and their rewetting and wet use are essential steps for achieving the goal of the Paris Climate Agreement.

### **Climate Action Plan 2050: Which role do peatlands play?**

*28/11/2016* In mid-November, the federal cabinet approved the Climate Action Plan 2050. Long discussions and sensitive cutbacks had preceded. Nevertheless, Germany sent out a strong positive signal internationally. It was the first country ever to take up this challenge and is showing the way towards an almost greenhouse gas-neutral Germany in 2050.

The Climate Action Plan contains targets and measures for the sectors energy, buildings, mobility, industry and economy, agriculture as well as land use and forestry. Peatland preservation is also a goal - a promising sign that the Federal Government is tackling the problem of peatland drainage! The Greifswald Mire Centre has already contributed to the discussion on the content of the Climate Action Plan 2050 and has issued a statement. It has now analysed the targets and measures contained therein that are relevant for peatlands.

Conclusion: Even if the first positive steps towards peatland protection are being taken as effective climate protection in land use, there is still a lack of concrete data for land use and forestry and thus also for emissions from organic soils. Corresponding peatland protection measures must now be further developed and concretised in the dialogue between the actors. This is the only way to achieve the overall goal of an almost carbon-neutral society by 2050.



## 5. Important Events

### **Iconic peatland conservationist turns 75 - Colloquium honours Michael Succow**

30/04/2016 “He can fill people with enthusiasm whether they want it or not!” was one explanation for the outstanding lifetime achievement of nature and peatland conservationist Michael Succow end of April 2016. A colloquium at Greifswald University honoured the Right Livelihood Laureate on occasion of his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. In her birthday letter German chancellor Angela Merkel congratulated Michael Succow also to the newly established Greifswald Mire Centre. Erwin Sellering, Prime Minister of the Federal State of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (MV), in his speech stressed that the GMC strengthens the reputation of Greifswald and MV beyond state borders. Several friends and companions such as Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Environment, entrepreneur Michael Otto and Jakob von Uexküll, founder of the Right Livelihood Award, honoured the long lasting commitment of the peatland scientist.



Michael Succow and Erwin Sellering, Prime Minister of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, during the celebrational colloquium at the University of Greifswald (Photo: T. Dahms).

## 6. Public relations

### **On grandfather's traces - C. A. Weber's grandson visits peatland library PeNCIL**

09/06/2016 Special guests in the Peatland and Nature Conservation International Library (PeNCIL) in Greifswald: At 9th July Axel Weber, grandson of the pathbreaking peatland scientist C. A. Weber (1856-1931), and his wife paid a visit to get an impression of PeNCIL library stocks and research of the Greifswald Mire Centre. Greifswald peatland scientists greatly admire his grandfather: In 2002 John Couwenberg translated Weber's „Über die Vegetation und Entstehung des Hochmoores in Augstumal [On the vegetation and development of the raised bog of Augstumal]" (in today's Lithuania) into English and thus made it accessible to a wider audience. This year GMC members supported Lithuanian peatland scientists issuing a Lithuanian language edition. Since very recently, also the new book can be found at PenCIL, which is generously funded by the Bernhard and Ursula Plettner Foundation. To help Axel Weber tracking his grandfather's traces even in Lithuania, GMC scientists also put him into contact to their Lithuanian colleagues.



Axel Weber (left), grandson of the peatland researcher C. A. Weber, with his wife to visit at Greifswald Peatland and Nature Conservation International Library (PeNCIL) (right Dr. Franziska Tanneberger, Prof. Hans Joosten) (Photo: T. Dahms).

### **Peatlands Sustainability Art: Joint exhibition with Biorama**

*10/09/2016* From reed to art - from 19 August to 31 October 2016 the exhibition 'no book can be a ladder?' in the Biorama project showed new materials made of reed in installations by the Australian artist Jacki Parry. As a cooperation partner, the GMC contributes information on peatlands and their sustainable use (paludiculture). On 9 September Dr. Wendelin Wichtmann from the Greifswald Mire Centre gave a lecture entitled 'Art of Paludiculture', followed by a guided tour of the exhibition. Located in the UNESCO biosphere reserve Schorfheide-Chorin, the Biorama project aims to convey ideas of sustainability and innovation in an artistic way. It is about the environmentally and climate-friendly recycling of previously unused biomass: reed from the island of Rügen, processed by the company Zelfo Technology GmbH without the addition of binders to boards, is the material from which the works are made - paludiculture for art. Sustainable building or packaging materials can also be produced from reed or other peatland plants. Why peatlands are important, why they need to be protected and how they can be used is explained by the GMC in the information section of the exhibition.

### **White hags, black soil: Literature evenings at the Peatland and Nature Conservation International Library (PeNCIL)**

*14/10/2016* Peatland are not just about mosquitos and wisps, but there is also a considerable part of culture and world politics in them. Stories by dictators and popes, fascists and communists, artists and haunted figures are therefore the subject of a second round of literature evenings at the Peatland and Nature Conservation International Library (PeNCIL) from 19 October 2016 to 22 March 2017. Peatlands as scenes of horror and beauty - learn more about their role in the siege of Leningrad, Mao's March of the Thousand Dead through Tibet or the invasion of the Bay of Pigs, but also van Gogh's delicate purple and white inspiration and high-proof buckwheat brandy.



## 7. Structure of GMC

The Greifswald Mire Centre is a cooperation of the University of Greifswald, the Michael Succuw Foundation and DUENE e.V. Everybody who is employed at one of these institutions and working with peatlands is a member of the GMC. Currently there are about 70 people. For the internal exchange, monthly GMC meetings are held to inform and discuss current events at the GMC and outside. The second part of these meetings is a public lecture with peatland-associated topics or to present the work of other working groups and external experts to evaluate possible future cooperation.

According to the Memorandum of Understanding of February 2015, 1 to 3 persons from each partner belong to the GMC Coordinator Group (GMCCC), which makes the main decisions. The GMCCC appoints the GMC director, consisting of 1 to 2 persons, the contact person(s) for the GMC people and mediator to the GMCCC, implements the decisions of the GMCCC, takes over the preparation, moderation and recording of the GMCCC and GMC meetings and much more. GMCCC rules of procedure are currently being drawn up.

GMC's financial basis consists of third-party funds acquired by individual partners or as joint projects. Acquisition of third-party funding is facilitated by a GMC funding interface. It is looking for current calls for proposals, checks their relevance to the peatlands, presents the results at the monthly GMC meetings, advises people on the application process and supports them in both the content and technical areas. A total of approximately 4.7 million euros in peatland-related third-party funding was approved from applications submitted in 2015 and 2016, of which 4.2 million euros of the university. Further applications of more than 6 million euros have been submitted.

## 8. Assessment of GMC on local a global scale

Maria Nuutinen (UN Food and Agriculture Organisation): „GMC's member organisations are relatively well known and highly appreciated for their peat research, advocacy and applying the science. GMC's role has been instrumental in integrating peatlands into prominent international processes, such as UNFCCC negotiations, IPCC's technical guidance.”

Prof. Dr. Chris Evans (University of Bangor, UK): „In my experience the Greifswald group is very well known and respected amongst the peatland policy/practitioner/NGO community.”

Marcel Silvius (Wetlands International): „ GMC is a key centre of expertise in relation to peatland issues and solutions. It is known for its database on peatland distribution and its leading knowledge on paludiculture. Wetlands International has highly profited on GMC's knowledge, especially on its know-how in EU-Politics and EU-Law, as well as at the UN-Climate Convention”.

Prof. Dr. Jutta Zeitz (Humboldt-University of Berlin): „ GMC is a bundling of competencies especially long-term experience and knowledge about mires and peatlands in combination with modern alternative initiatives to protect and use mires worldwide. All PhD students in my department are continuously following the publications of GMC.”

Tobias Salathé (Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention, Senior Advisor Europe): “GMC is a competence centre for peatlands. It is an independent and science-based institution with the capacity to undertake independent assessments and evaluations of established "truths" and assumptions. GMC also holds a large information base (library, database) on peatland matters. This is completed by the GMC's own hands-on field experience. GMC is a reliable key partner for global peatland issues.”

## **9. Outlook**

In 2016, the Greifswald Mire Centre continued to develop into a locally and globally active interface between science, practice and politics in all peatland issues. The development of a strategy for the GMC is planned for 2017 in a joint process of the people working in the GMC. Furthermore, the establishment of project-independent basic financing for GMC management, funding interface and public relations work, the (currently not financially secured) expansion of the global peatland databases as a unique selling point and the creation of a permanent peatland science professorship in Greifswald must have highest priority.

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