

First announcement

Invitation

On behalf of the Organizing Committee of the 2008 Joint Meeting of the International Grassland Congress and the International Rangeland Congress (2008 IGC/IRC) I have great pleasure in inviting colleagues from all over the world to Huhhot, China, from 29th June - 5th July, 2008.

This forum will be the first time that these two important International Congresses have met together to allow international exchange and discussion on the multi-function of grasslands and rangelands in a changing world. The Congress will focus on discussing scientific and technological aspects of Grassland/Rangeland management; and on the challenges involved to overcome major limitations for implementing sustainable development. For this reason, we feel that any person from the research, university, government and industry sectors from around the world will find the 2008 IGC/IRC most stimulating and worthwhile.

The first joint Congress will be a significant milestone in the history of IGC and IRC, and in research and development of grasslands and rangelands in the world. China has breathtaking scenery and outstanding hospitality. It is an ideal country to host the Congress with 392.8 million hectares of grasslands and rangelands in which more than 6,000 plant species grow. Diversity is most characteristic of China's grassland, with alpine meadow, steppe, desert, tropical and sub-tropical ecosystems, and people of 56 nationalities who use the grasslands in many different ways depending on their culture. Agricultural and pastoral systems are being developed and modernized, with attention to landscape management, amenity values, plant and livestock production, and product processing and marketing.

We look forward to welcoming you to a truly memorable 2008 IGC/IRC in China.

Hong Fuzeng, Lei Erdeni, Yun Jinfeng

Chairmen, Organizing Committee of 2008 IGC/IRC

Programme at a Glance

The 2008 IGC/IRC joint meeting will be held from 29 June to 5 July 2008. The programme sessions will consist of Grassland/Rangeland Resources and Ecology, Grassland/Rangeland Production, and, Multi-functions of Grassland/Rangeland. The details are below,

- a. Ecology of Grasslands/Rangelands
- b. Soil-Plant-Animal Interrelationships
- c. Alternative Uses of Grassland/ Rangeland Resources
- d. Reclamation of Degenerated Grasslands/ Rangelands
- e. Water Resources in Grasslands/ Rangelands
- f. Integration of Cropping and Foraging Systems
- g. Developing Improved Forage Plants
- h. Policy Issues for Grasslands/Rangelands
- i. Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition
- j. Conservation of Grassland/Rangeland Resources

- k. Forage Utilization and Resources
- l. Monitoring for Grassland/Rangeland Resources
- m. Seed Science and Technology
- n. Integrated Management of Harmful Organisms
- o. Amenity and Conservation Turfgrasses
- p. Multi-Functions of Grasslands/Rangelands
- q. Education, Training and Rural Development for Grasslands/Rangelands

Trade and Industry Exhibiton

A Trade and Industry Exhibition will be held during the Congress and will demonstrate new technology applicable for grassland management and products for trade.

Pre-Congress Tours

1. Silk Road tour

Starting in Lanzhou, Gansu on Monday 23 June, this tour will go along the Silk Road and cross the Hexi Corridor. It will take in a number of sites of alpine meadow-yak production, alfalfa hay production, desert rangelands and some very historic sites (such as Mogao Grottoes). This tour will return to Lanzhou on Friday 27 June.

2. Loess Plateau tour

This tour, starting in Xi'an, Shanxi on Monday 24 June, will visit dairy systems, forage seed production and the Qin Terra Cotta Warriors and Horses near Xi'an. Some watershed rehabilitation projects and cave dwellings will be visited on the way from Xi'an to Qingyang. This tour will return to Xi'an on Friday 27 June.

3. Kunming -Diqing

This 5-day tour, starting in Kunming, Yunnan will cover a variety of pasture systems starting with subtropical native pastures, the Stone Forest, paddy-ryegrass systems, and dairy buffalo production systems. It will then traverse higher altitude temperate and alpine pastures also visiting the ancient city of Lijiang and some of the most scenic areas of Diqing on the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau. This tour will return to Kunming on Friday 27 June.

4. Xishuangbanna

This tour, starting in Kunming, Yunnan on Monday 24 June, will visit the agricultural sites and Karst landscape near Kunming on day-1, and then travel to Xishuangbanna to visit tropics grassland and virgin forest and biodiversity. This tour will return to Kunming on Friday 27 June.

5. Hulunbeier Grassland

This tour, starting in Hailaer, Inner Mongolia on Monday 23 June, will visit a number of sites of natural grasslands and virgin forest. The tour will experience cultures of Mongolian, Ewenke minorities. This tour will return to Hailaer on Friday 27 June.

6. Xilingele Steppe

This tour, starting in Xilinhot, Inner Mongolia on Monday 23 June, will take in a number of sites of dry and typical steppe. It will visit national natural reserves and some tourist attractions in Xilingele and Keshiketeng. This tour will return to Huhhot on Saturday 28 June.

7. Monglia

The Mongolian tour will start on Saturday 21 June, visit lake Khovsgol in the mountainous region along the Russian border, travel east to the Onon River in the largely unpopulated forest steppe

region of northern Khenti Province and the grass steppe ecological zone in western Dornod Province, and return to the capital city of Ulaanbaatar through the shrub steppe ecological zone in northern Sukhebaatar and Dorngov Provinces on Friday 27 June.

Social Programme

All delegates and registered accompanying persons are welcome to attend a variety of social events. This will begin with a reception following the Opening Ceremony on 29 June, and end with a Conference Banquet on Friday 4 July. Optional events will be organized on a number of nights, so that delegates will be able to sample the unique atmosphere in Huhhot. An example will be a concert of folk singers held during the congress featuring the Running for Grassland-lark Singers.

Accompanying Delegates Programme

There will be an extensive programme for Accompanying Delegates throughout the Congress. This will include visits to Mongolian culture centres, featuring ethnically diverse ways of life, unmatched natural views and famous scenic spots such as the monument to the famous King of Genghis Khan, the Buddhist temple and Grottos. Accompanying Delegates will also have an opportunity to share Chinese and Mongolian literature, music and local opera.

Additional workshops

Facilities will be available for additional meetings and workshops of specialist groups to be held in Huhhot during the Congress. Convenors of such groups are invited to contact the Congress Secretariat (secretariat2008@hotmail.com).

Future Announcements

An Announcement incorporating the Call for Papers and Registration Form will be published and distributed during December 2006. If you are interested in receiving this information, please return a completed Request for Further Information Form to the Secretariat, or email the completed form via www.IGC-IRC2008.org.

Contact Information

For information on registration and general enquiries, please contact:

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