

## International SURF Groups and Partners

16 May 2023

1.00 – 2.30pm London Time

Meeting No. 31

### Representatives:

- NICOLE and SuRF France: Olivier Maurer (chair)
- SuRF-Taiwan: Bing-Nan Wang and Dr Hung
- SuRF-UK : Paul Bardos & Alan Thomas
- SuRF-Canada : François Beaudoin
- SuRF-Italy and NICOLE : Claudio Albano
- SuRF-Japan : Yasuhide Furukawa/Tetsuo Yasutaka
- NICOLA: Hayley Thomas
- Secretariat : Nicola Harries CL:AIRE

### Apologies received:

- SURF-USA : Roy Thun
- SuRF-ANZ : David Tully
- SuRF-France: Pierre Jolly
- SuRF-Colombia : Alfonso Rodriguez
- NICOLE Latin America/SuRF Brazil : Joyce Cruz Di Giovanni

1.	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>Olivier Maurer (OM) welcomed everybody to the International Sustainable Remediation Forum meeting collectively known as International Sustainable Remediation Alliance (ISRA). Everyone introduced themselves on the call. The agenda was agreed and Nicola Harries (NH) provided apologies.</p>
2.	<p><b>Recent progress updates</b></p> <p>All Sustainable Remediation Fora (SuRFs) provided a brief update of their activities. For those SuRFs unable to attend and had sent a report, their reports were read out and included for completeness.</p> <p><b>SuRF-France</b></p> <p>OM provided an update on behalf of SuRF-France because Pierre Jolly is currently on leave and therefore there has been a hiatus of work. One project is currently being worked on which relates to closure of mining sites and is being led by WSP in collaboration with BRGM. The project is looking at developing technical guidance to remediate former mine sites and contaminated sites without the use of geomembranes and using more natural covers (capillary barriers).</p> <p><b>SURF - US</b></p> <p>Roy Thun (RT) was unable to attend but sent a written report. He confirmed that SURF US recently had an election resulting in several new board members from consulting, industry and regulatory. Roy is no longer on the board, but will continue to serve as the SURF US liaison with ISRA. SURF US had a very successful West Coast (California) meeting in March. It is working on updating the case study library from the AEHS East (Oct 2022) and AEHS West (March 2023) conferences technical presentations. The Environmental Justice technical initiative</p>

is going strong. The SURF board is discussing starting another technical initiative (potential topic is biodiversity and remediation) later this spring. Some SURF members will be in attendance at the Battelle Bioremediation conference in Austin, Texas. Roy has been selected as a keynote for the ecoforum/SustREM conference in Melbourne, Australia in October. SuRF US is planning the next SURF US meeting at AEHS East for Oct 2023.

#### **SuRF-UK**

Alan Thomas (AT) provided an update on behalf of SuRF-UK. He confirmed that the SuRF-UK bulletin on how sustainable remediation aligns with ISO 14001 environment management systems has recently been published and is available here:

<https://www.claire.co.uk/component/phocadownload/category/16-surf-uk-bulletins?download=917:surf-6-bulletin-sustainable-remediation-concepts-align-with-iso-14001>

The SuRF-UK steering group has been extended with new members from the financial sector regulator, environmental regulator, environmental contractors and consultants. In addition, SuRF-UK is in the final stages of preparing an introductory bulletin on sustainable remediation that will sit in between the animation and the technical guidance. It hopefully will help signpost to the correct SuRF-UK guidance that different users may wish to access. The main focus of work for 2023 is carrying out a mapping exercise of all the different supporting guidance that exists that could be useful to help map against the different SuRF-UK indicators. This work is at an early stage at present.

SuRF-UK is also planning to prepare another training course for Remtech Europe conference, to build on last year's training course and potentially working with international ENVIRONET.

#### **SuRF-Canada**

Francois Beaudoin (FB) confirmed that SuRF Canada is continuing with its activities to become an incorporated not for profit organisation. SuRF Canada has seen an increase in its activities due to climate change and resiliency work of other SuRF chapters postings. SuRF Canada representatives propose to attend SustRem 2023 and it will be working closely with the National Federal Contaminated Sites Workshop in November 2023 where SuRF-Canada will submit sustainable remediation focused presentations. It is a good opportunity to profile SuRF-Canada at this meeting as it attracts public, private and academic sectors. SuRF- Canada is keen to capture the increased interest in sustainable remediation in Canada and proposes to update its website to show its increase in activity.

#### **SuRF-ANZ**

David Tully (DT) was unable to attend in person but sent a written report. Since the last ISRA meeting SuRF-ANZ have been primarily focussed on preparations for the Ecoforum/SustRem 2023 Conference to take place in Melbourne from 10 to 13 October 2023. The Call for Abstracts closes 22 May 2023. Details about the conference can be found on the conference website

- <https://www.ecoforumsustrem2023.com/> .

SuRF-ANZ has also amended the judging criteria for their Annual Sustainable Remediation Project Management Award and invitations for submissions for the award will be announced shortly. The award will be presented at the SustRem 2023 conference. It is only open to projects undertaken in Australia or New Zealand.

#### **SuRF-Italy**

Claudio Albano (CA) confirmed SuRF-Italy is being restarted and being hosted by ASSORECA which is an organisation made up of Italian service providers of consultants, contractors and laboratories. There will be a working group that is looking to re-establish SuRF Italy. One of the first activities will be to revamp the

draft White Paper that was prepared in 2015. They plan to host a session at Remtech Italy where case studies will be presented and announce the re-establishment of SuRF-Italy and the linkage to the International Sustainable Remediation Alliance (ISRA). It is hoped that Nicola Harries will be able to present remotely about ISRA. At present ASSORECA has 30 -40 organisations that have indicated an interest in being involved in a sustainable remediation working group, including regulators and practitioners. The profile of sustainability and particularly resiliency is now very topical because of the extreme weather events that have been occurring in Italy recently.

### **SuRF-Taiwan**

Bing Nan Wang (BN) confirmed that SuRF Taiwan had a new committee in place from April 2023, and Professor Chihhao Fan from National Taiwan University is the new president of SuRF Taiwan. Dr Hao-Chun Hungg who works for the EPA Taiwan also joined the meeting. BN confirmed that SuRF-Taiwan is currently promoting Green and Sustainable Resilient Remediation (GSRR). EPA Taiwan will be sponsoring a conference in November 2023 on GSRR. The conference will focus on GSR case studies and it hopes to invite ISRA members to attend and give presentations and trends about GSRR.

SuRF-Taiwan is looking to produce a short animation video clip for education purposes on GSRR. In addition they plan to create an award for best project demonstrating GSRR. They are currently developing the criteria for selection of the best project and they will they start promoting the award. SuRF-Taiwan feels that this will encourage consultants to start to consider GSRR and also will demonstrate to the public that companies and government are paying attention to sustainability.

EPA Taiwan is also planning to evaluate local environmental protection bureaus and they will be awarding points for demonstration of GSRR.

SuRF-Taiwan plan to attend SustRem 2023 and look forward to catching up with other ISRA members.

### **NICOLE**

Olivier Maurer (OM) provided an update on behalf of NICOLE. He confirmed that although NICOLE no longer has a special interest group on sustainable remediation, many of their activities are still very closely related. Much of their recent focus is working more closely with the European Union, and the soon to be published Soil Health Directive. The EU has a number of research strands that NICOLE members are keen to be involved in. One area that they are looking to work closely with researchers is on "Living Labs". This is where real sites are used as demonstration sites, so NICOLE is hopeful that some of their member organisations will become involved (Lucia Buvé leading for NICOLE).

NICOLE has recently awarded the NICOLE Innovation Award to a small start up company that has developed a tool that can be used for groundwater flux measurements. In addition, NICOLE will be hosting a webinar shortly that will be jointly hosted with the Common Forum focusing on European Green Week (note: this webinar will be postponed as there was not enough time and resources to organize on time).

NICOLE has now launched its Foundation aiming to support projects around the world to help rehabilitate orphan sites. The first project has been working with NICOLE Latin America where coffee beans have been contaminated with Cadmium. The project has received some seed funding from United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization to support teams in Latin America carry out the research project, with knowledge being provided by NICOLE partners. They are looking to grow the Foundation with a pool of volunteers that they can match to different projects.

	<p>OM confirmed that NICOLE's Autumn workshop will be jointly hosted with Renmark in Malmo in October 2023 focusing on innovative solutions for large industrial sites. The 2024 Spring workshop will be held in Brussels in March jointly with OVAM.</p> <p><b>NICOLA</b> Hayley Thomas (HT) provided an update on behalf of NICOLA. She confirmed that they are currently busy organising their next face to face annual conference in October 2023. In addition they continue with their "connect" events for networking, with the next in Durban South Africa. NICOLA continues to look to extend its reach across Africa with some success linking to Nigeria.</p> <p><b>NICOLE Latin America/SuRF-Brazil</b> OM confirmed that NICOLE Latin America is still active with focus on circular economy and sustainable remediation. They are still working on the White Paper. The next workshop will be on June 20 in Santiago de Chile, topic: sustainable solutions for mining and large contaminated areas. Another one will be held in Sao Paulo in August.</p> <p><b>SuRF-Japan</b> Yasuhide Furukawa attended on behalf of SuRF-Japan and confirmed that SuRF-Japan is focusing their work on green and sustainable remediation case studies. SuRF-Japan has been using the principles of Green and Sustainable Remediation (GSR) on a number of high profile sites across Japan with the support of experts.</p> <p><b>SuRF China</b> Paul Bardos confirmed that he continues to work with colleagues in China that are very interested in GSR. A delegation is hoping to tour Australia in the October and attend SustRem 2023 in Melbourne.</p> <p><b>SuRF-Colombia</b> Alfonso Rodriguez (AR) was unable to provide an update on behalf of SuRF-Colombia.</p>
3.	<p><b>Events:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Battelle Bioremediation and Sustainable Environmental Technologies 8-11 May 2023, Austin, Texas USA</li> <li>■ Nicole Latin America workshop Santiago de Chile, June 20 2023 (confirmed, free attendance)</li> <li>■ AquaConsoil 2023 11-15 Sept 2023, Prague Czech Republic</li> <li>■ Remtech Europe 20-22 Sept 2023, Ferrara Italy</li> <li>■ EcoForum &amp; SustRem 2023 10-13 October 2023 Melbourne Australia</li> <li>■ NICOLE workshop in Malmo Sweden, jointly with Renmark, October 2023</li> <li>■ NICOLA Annual Conference 25 October 2023, South Africa</li> </ul>
4.	<p><b>Opportunities to drive consistency and collaborate between SuRF initiatives</b></p> <p>There was great interest for ISRA to host jointly a web based conference in 2025 as the next SustRem.</p> <p>In addition there was interest for ISRA to potentially sponsor a technical award that would be open across the world.</p> <p>Both items need to be discussed further as they would require substantial resourcing.</p> <p>There was also discussion about how the SuRFs GSRR agenda fits within the agricultural/horticulture agenda. OM is aware that the EU is discussing about the introduction of a Soil Health Law with little reference to brownfield sites/soil reuse community. The brownfield sites/soil reuse community has a lot of knowledge</p>

	<p>about site rehabilitation, circular economy and can contribute extensively. OM explained that he is trying to ensure that the EU are not limiting their discussions.</p> <p>Diffuse pollution is another area that regulators are starting to look at which contaminated land practitioners understand and can contribute knowledge to. Sustainable remediation can be used to work with nature based solutions.</p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>PB flagged that there is a new EU project called ISLANDR – Information based strategies for land remediation that would like to engage further with ISRA members. The project has a whole work package focusing on sustainable and risk based remediation. NH confirmed that she plans to attend the meeting and has offered to be the link to ISRA.</p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Next meeting</b></p> <p>Next teleconference will be arranged for November 2023. NH will contact SuRFs in North America to ask for a volunteer to chair the next call.</p> <p><b>ACTION: NH to arrange the next meeting.</b></p>