New insights into biometeorology

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This special issue presents a series of 16 articles led by members of the Students and New Professionals (SNP) group of the International Society of Biometeorology (ISB). The SNP group includes almost 50 active members who are either within 5 years from leaving education (e.g. PhD study) or under 35 years of age. The group first met together at the 18th International Congress of Biometeorology (ICB) in Tokyo, September 2008 and for a second time at the 19th ICB in Auckland, December 2011. At the 19th ICB the group agreed to submit a series of articles for consideration for publication in a special issue of International Journal of Biometeorology. This issue of the journal serves to disseminate the articles that were submitted and accepted for publication, and also to highlight the latest biometeorological insights from this group of the ISB.

Biometeorology is an extensive study area (McGregor 2012) and this is demonstrated by the diversity of studies in the special issue, which include several of the “fields” covered by the journal and for which there are dedicated Field Editors (Beggs 2013). In the order in which they appear in the issue, these fields include: phenology (Hanes 2012); climate change and public health (Hondula et al. 2013; Vanos and Cakmak 2013; Cheung and Hart 2012; Sujaritpong et al. 2013); urban biometeorology (Park and Tuller 2013); animals (de Melo Costa et al. 2013; Luo et al. 2013; Nascimento et al. 2013); and epidemiology (Tawatsupa et al. 2012; Allen and Sheridan 2013; Burkart et al. 2013; Xu et al. 2013; Wanka et al. 2013; Jacobs et al. 2013).

The articles also reflect the international diversity of the SNP membership, with articles that describe biometeorological research conducted in Australia (Jacobs et al. 2013), Bangladesh (Burkart et al. 2013), Brazil (de Melo Costa

et al. 2013), Canada (Vanos and Cakmak 2013; Park and Tuller 2013), Germany (Wanka et al. 2013), Hong Kong (Cheung and Hart 2012), Republic of Korea (Park and Tuller 2013), Thailand (Tawatsupa et al. 2012), and the United States (Hanes 2012; Allen and Sheridan 2013).

The final article published in this special issue is a glossary for biometeorology (Gosling et al. 2014), which represents the output of the SNP group members’ main joint research project since the 18th ICB. It is the first published glossary of biometeorological terms and it brings together the expertise and efforts of our diverse, dynamic and integrated group.

I have been privileged to Chair the SNP group since late 2009 (Gosling 2010) and I have enjoyed observing the activities of the group grow rapidly over the past 5 years. Collaboration across the SNP group continues to develop and with the generous support of the Tromp Foundation and the ISB we have started work on our next SNP group project, which aims to assess current weather-health relationships in cities in India, Russia and New Zealand. The first outcomes related to this project are presented in this issue (Hondula et al. 2013). We are also organising a 1-day workshop, which all SNP group members are invited to attend, at Kent State University on 28th September 2014, at the start of the 20th ICB in Cleveland, USA.

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