

■ Letter from the President

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Spring in Bled

As I write this in late March there are signs that Glasgow is taking its first tentative steps towards spring. Only a couple of weeks ago snow and sub-zero temperatures closed our University for several days and we all hid inside our houses, venturing outside only when necessary. In the UK we do not have serious snow very often and do not have the infrastructure to deal with it, so everything comes to a halt. Our Scandinavian friends must laugh at us! But now temperatures are rising, the sun is trying to shine, and a few spring flowers have bravely emerged. To quote the famous Scottish poet Robert Burns:

*The smiling Spring comes in rejoicing,
And surly Winter grimly flies;
Now crystal clear are the falling waters,
And bonie blue are the sunny skies.*

From: *My Bonie Bell* (1791)

But although the Scottish spring has much to commend it, I am really looking forward to experiencing spring in Bled. Apart from the warmer climate, we can enjoy the local scenery, Slovenian hospitality and, of course UV4Plants 2nd Network Meeting! We have assembled an excellent programme and Alenka Gaberščik and her team will ensure that everything runs smoothly. Planning for the Meeting started in January 2017 when we invited applications to host the event and the decision to hold it in Bled was made just over a year ago. Since that time a lot of effort has gone into organising the conference and we are very grateful to Alenka and the members of the local organizing committee for

all the time they have devoted to this project. It is never easy organising a conference but now we can appreciate the results of the hard work. We look forward to hearing about new progress in UV-B research, both through presentations and posters. Hopefully the new information and ideas we share will have a lasting influence on our research. Importantly we will get the chance both to meet old friends and to make new ones, and to discuss opportunities to work together. Our early career researchers will benefit from making contacts with other labs and will see how their work fits into the broader context of UV research. We have designed the Meeting to facilitate networking. We deliberately included long coffee/tea breaks in the programme to promote interaction and to keep everyone fresh. There will be dedicated poster and discussion sessions and, in addition, we will hear a presentation from Dr Lars Olof Björn, who has made major contributions to UV-B research over many years.

I doubt if Robert Burns would have had the slightest interest in plant responses to UV-B, but I'm sure he would have appreciated the beautiful scenery of Lake Bled, with its Castle and island in the middle. He might even have tried a trip in a Pletna boat. There is certainly much to look forward to and I sincerely hope everyone enjoys and benefits from the meeting.

Best wishes,

Gareth Jenkins
(President UV4Plants)



Figure 2.1: Spring in Bled, 2014-04-01. Photo: Pedro J. Aphalo.