

■ From the editors' desk

We have reached the end of 2018 and (once the frenzy of preparations for the festive season eases off) this is a good time for reflection on past achievements and to plan for the future. This also applies to us in *The International Association for Plant UV Research*. Digging deeper and deeper into the shady corners of the hard disc on my PC, I found that the name UV4Plants popped up for the first time in October 2014. Yes, we have been in existence for the past four years, and what started as an experiment is fast becoming something much more permanent (now don't jinx it, editor!). In those shady depths of my PC I came across a flurry of emails from four years ago, mostly on rules and objectives. Some of the proposed rules now seem rather draconic (how can we avoid a rogue UV-researcher capturing the UV4Plants assets (all of our €174.12, I believe) to go on a luxury cruise; or how can we avoid that a single dictatorially-minded researcher taking over the Association to dominate life on planet Earth)? Yet, some of the objectives are spot on, such as the objective "*To promote the advance of Plant UV Research by promoting sharing of knowledge and collaboration among academic and non-academic researchers*". Personally, I consider this the most important objective of UV4Plants. Only last week I visited, together with a Danish UV4Plants member, the laboratory of one of our Swedish members. While drafting papers, we reckoned we could achieve better science if we had some additional data on DNA-damage. A quick email to a German UV4Plants member, and within 24 hours we had a plan for collaboration. This is what the Association is all about!

In the past year, we had a wonderful opportunity to share knowledge and build networks at the great UV4Plants meeting in Bled,

organised by Alenka Gaberščik, Mateja Germ and the singing members of their laboratory and university. In this Bulletin there is an excellent report by Louise Ryan and some of our other young researchers on the Bled meeting. From the photos accompanying the report you might assume that we just had a good time (I strenuously deny this!). In fact, for this issue Paul Barnes et al. drafted a detailed summary of the in-depth scientific debate on "the importance and relevance of current and future UV-research". The importance of this informal discussion paper is not to be underestimated since Paul, with several others, was instrumental in drafting the latest UNEP Environmental Effects Assessment Panel (EEAP) report. I have no doubt that the discussions in Bled filtered through to this important document.

An interesting aspect of community building is considered in this issue of the Bulletin by Robert Logan who discusses participation of early stage researchers and women in conferences. The dominance of senior male researchers among conference attendees can be a problem, and as a community it is good to be on the alert for a possible negative impact of gender and/or age imbalances.

Looking forward to 2019, there will be some excellent opportunities for further networking and knowledge sharing. On April 15-16 there will be a discussion-intensive UV4Plants workshop focussed on the interactive effects of UV- and climate change in Cork, Ireland (for details see the UV4Plants website, or contact Marcel Jansen). The small workshop will particularly focus on interacting effects, such as those of drought and UV, and CO₂ and UV, as well as on experimental approaches suitable for studies of interacting effects. On August 25-30 there will be a large photobiology conference in Bar-

celona jointly organized by the ESP and IUPB. This meeting covers all aspects of photobiology including plant photobiology, and photosensory biology and environmental photobiology sections (see UV4Plants website for updates).

As editors of UV4Plants we have recognised that the Bulletin can play a key role in bringing together our community of collaborating scientists. Therefore, we have instigated a new type of contribution named “**Meet-a-Member**”. For those who love Christmas riddles, here is your challenge for the 2018 festive season: “What are the dangers associated with the use of tractors in plant UV research”. Read “**Meet-a-Member**” in this issue, and I am sure you will laugh as loudly as I did! We hope to introduce two new members to the wider community in each issue of the bulletin. If you want to propose somebody (or yourself), please contact me.

Last but not least, in this issue we have a very instructive methodology paper on simulation of solar spectra by Pedro J. Aphalo. The described methodology enables creation of spectral data as a function of solar elevation and/or geographical location. This technology, together with the rapidly advancing technology/use of UV-emitting LEDs, might well underpin new series of experiments where we are mimicking solar light spectra more accurately than ever before.

Best wishes to you all,

Marcel A. K. Jansen (editor)

Cork, December 2018.