

## **2000 Progress Report**

### **Southern Hemisphere Permafrost and Periglacial Environments**

The objectives are to create a scientific platform to stimulate interaction between permafrost and periglacial researchers in the Southern Hemisphere, and to synthesise permafrost and periglacial data and information, including existing IPA initiatives in the region. Jan Boelhouwers (South Africa) and Kevin Hall (Canada) are the co-chairs of this new WG. Following its first business meeting at the INQUA Congress in August 1999, WG members began compiling regional bibliographies on periglacial and permafrost research. A series of reviews on periglacial and permafrost research was compiled and are currently in the review process for publication in the *South African Journal of Science*. It is the intention to make the reviews available as downloadable files on the internet. The reviews cover Antarctica (J. Bockheim and K. Hall), maritime and sub-Antarctic (K. Hall), New Zealand (P. Augustinus), Patagonia (D. Trombottto), NW Argentina (A. Ahumada), Tasmania (E. Colhoun) and Southern Africa (J. Boelhouwers and I. Meiklejohn).

Several activities were undertaken to formalize an IPA working relationship with the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research (SCAR). Following discussions at the Arctic Summit Week in Cambridge, UK, between Jerry Brown and David Walton (British Antarctic Survey), IPA President French wrote SCAR President Rutherford suggesting several steps towards developing IPA-SCAR connections. One of these involved Jan Boelhouwers representing IPA in May 2000 at a SCAR Biology workshop on its newly approved programme Regional Sensitivity to Climate Change in Antarctic Terrestrial Ecosystems (RiSCC). As an outcome, RiSCC has agreed to include the GTNP active layer/permafrost monitoring approach within its science and implementation plans. RiSCC aims to, inter alia, bring together existing ground thermal records and support adjustment of existing and new monitoring protocols for ground thermal monitoring as proposed by the IPA/GTN-P guidelines. The active layer monitoring protocol for the Antarctic will need to consider differing sampling approaches from those applicable in the Northern Hemisphere. Various international programmes focus on, or have a substantial interest in, the geomorphological responses to climate change in the Antarctic. Jan Boelhouwers is undertaking a planning effort to coordinate these studies into a single activity, which would systematically address the science issues. The status will be discussed during the Rome meeting.

Activities for South America are reported by Dario Trombottto in the Argentine report. Membership of Australia and/or New Zealand in the IPA is still under discussion.

The next business meeting of the working group, which will review its progress on the bibliographies and permafrost map inventory, will take place during

the IAG conference in Tokyo, 2001. Discussions are planned during the Rome meeting.

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