

Guest editorial address

This special issue of the Hungarian Geographical Bulletin is devoted to the international conference on “Changing world, changing society, changing knowledge acquisition, the role of renewable energies in regional development”, held in Eger in the central building of the Eszterházy Károly College, 10–12 October 2013. The conference was organised within the framework of the TÁMOP-4.2.2.A-11/1/KONV-2012-0016 project.

The project title is as follows: “Complex analysis of the potential applicability of renewable natural resources in the mirror of climate change, in order to develop a sustainable model region, under German Hungarian Cooperation”.

The special issue contains seven selected papers reflecting the broad spectrum of the conference where altogether 55 papers were presented on the following topics:

1. Global and regional environmental challenges;
2. Renewable energies and regional planning;
3. Regional studies;
4. Challenges of earth sciences in public and higher education.

This is the second conference on “Changing world, changing society, changing knowledge acquisition” at the Eszterházy Károly College organised by the Department of Geography. The first conference took place in 2009 when the Department of Geography celebrated its sixtieth anniversary.

During the last decade the Department of Geography has widened its research and education activities. As a result of this, the Agria Innoregion Knowledge Centre was established in 2011. The Department of Geography organised several conferences recently. In 2010 the annual meeting of the Hungarian Meteorological Society was held in Eger. In 2012 the Department of Geography and the Hungarian Geological Society set up the IGCP 572 Closing Conference. The XI. HUNGEO Conference, the meeting of Hungarian earth scientists took place also in the city in 2012.

After the opening of the conference by the rector of the college, Professor Kálmán LIPTAI and by Zsolt V. NÉMETH, Minister of State for Rural Development, seven papers were presented at the plenary session. Ilona PAJTÓK-TARI, vice rector of the College gave a talk on the Eger model-region focusing on sustainability, followed by the keynote speech of Gabriele GORZKA (Universität Kassel) about the role of the East–West co-operation in technology transfer. Professor Ulf HAHNE (Kassel University) gave an interesting paper about the resilience of regions and about solving spatial problems for the post-fossil society. Professor Jürgen ARING (Dortmund Technical University) focused on the Eger region introducing the concept and action plan for the development of the Eger region.

Three panel presentations are included in this issue. Judit BARTHOLY *et al.* gave an overview on the expected characteristics of climate change in Hungary. Maria SZABÓ, M. and Ádám KISS reported on the effects of renewable energies on the landscape and on regional development. Methodical aspects, i.e. the application of GIS technology were dealt with in the paper of János UNGER *et al.* The papers published in this issue are grouped according to the topics of the last three keynote speeches. The first day was finished by a fantastic concert and a gala dinner.

Three sessions were organised in the morning of the second day. The first session focused on global and environmental challenges, the second, parallel session on renewable energies and regional planning and the third, parallel session on the challenges of earth sciences in public and higher education. After lunch the papers were given in three parallel sessions (global and regional environmental challenges, renewable energies and regional development, regional studies).

A half-day scientific excursion was organised on the third day of the conference to the Bükkalja Region, in the vicinity of Eger. Interesting natural features like a fossil tundra soil profile, thermal springs and a thermal spa as well as travertine terraces, beehive stones (rhyolite cones, formed by selective erosion) and cliff dwellings were shown during the excursion.

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