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European Journal of Protistology xxx (2016) xxx–xxx

European Journal of
PROTISTOLOGYwww.elsevier.com/locate/ejop

Editorial

This Special Issue of the *European Journal of Protistology* features contributions that were presented at the recent VII European Congress of Protistology (VII ECOP) in Seville, Spain (5–10 September 2015). This meeting, which was attended by approximately 370 delegates representing 38 countries, continued the successful series of European Protistology meetings that were initiated in Reading (UK) in 1992. The Seville meeting was organised by Aurelio Serrano on behalf of the Spanish Society of Microbiology. However, the VII ECOP was special; for the first time, it was organised as a joint meeting in partnership with the International Society of Protistologists (ISOP). Please see the following contribution in this issue by Aurelio Serrano for details on this exciting meeting.

The articles of this Special Issue represent invited articles or reviews. They are based upon plenary lectures (W. Foissner, P. Luporini et al., J. Pawlowski et al.) or summarise the contributions presented at several invited symposia (del Campo et al., Gutierrez et al., Valverde et al., Weisse et al.). The former articles originate from the long-term research of three outstanding protistologists and their co-workers. The latter articles primarily reflect the view and expertise of the symposium speakers and do not necessarily represent comprehensive reviews. It was a major challenge for the corresponding authors to synthesise complementary work and partially divergent views of several co-authors and anonymous reviewers in coherent articles. All articles published in this Special Issue underwent the normal peer-review process. I would like to thank all (co-)authors and reviewers for submitting their work and comments in relatively short time, with an impressive result. I am pleased that the articles published in this special issue of our journal cover major parts of the

breadth of the scientific contributions of VII ECOP, ranging from taxonomy to cell biology, molecular genetics/genomics and their ecological and evolutionary implications, physiology and ecology. Several articles in this issue bridge the gap between investigating protists in basic research and their use as bioindicators, for environmental monitoring, and in various biotechnological applications.

I hope this Special Issue of the *European Journal of Protistology* will contribute to another successful year for its authors and readers. Thanks to the continued and joint efforts of our authors and reviewers, the editorial and the production team the high standard of the journal could be further improved in 2015 and the current year. With an average time of 42 days from submission to the first decision, three weeks from acceptance to online publication, and an impact factor of 2.55 (in 2015) the journal is highly competitive in its field. The international recognition of the journal is obvious; more than one third of all articles published in 2015 were submitted by non-European authors, with Chinese authors contributing 16% of all published articles. China remains also the country with the most downloaded articles, closely followed by the United States. We know from Elsevier's Author Feedback Program that the overall satisfaction of our authors with the journal is high. However, together with the Associate Editors and Editorial Board members, I look forward to hearing from our authors and readers about recommendations to further improve the *European Journal of Protistology*.

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ejop.2016.06.002>

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