

PREFACE

This issue is dedicated to the Fourth International Conference on Geomorphology, to be held in Bologna, Italy, August 28–September 3, 1997. The contents of this volume illustrate clearly that the majority of the subject matter of *PPP* falls squarely within the realm of geomorphology. It is a useful opportunity, therefore, to stress the importance played by permafrost and cold-climate (i.e. periglacial) processes in the fashioning of the landscapes of approximately one quarter of the earth's land surface today. Moreover, during the various cold periods of the Pleistocene, an additional 20% of the ice-free land surface was affected by these same conditions.

It is for these reasons that the International Permafrost Association (IPA) and the International Association of Geomorphologists (IAG) have developed a policy of close interaction, with official liaison between the two associations. *PPP*, and Wiley, are pleased to be a vehicle for such an exchange of ideas and information. Permafrost and periglacial processes are not minor components of geomorphology; on the contrary, an understanding of cold-climate conditions is essential to modern geomorphology, and it has many applied, geotechnical implications. Finally, if global warming trends are, indeed, accentuated and first apparent in the high latitudes, then the IAG and IPA need to continue their association.

The Editors of *PPP* wish the IAG all success in the year to come.

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