

Region and Group News

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Belgium

We are pleased to announce the new officers for the Belgian region. They are:

President : Adelin Albert
Vice-president : Els Goetghebeur
Secretary : Philippe Lambert
Treasurer : Noel Veraverbeke.

Ordinary members are Eric Le Boulengé, Pierre Dagnelie, and Paul Darius.

Brazilian

The 43rd annual meeting of the Brazilian Region was held on 21-22 May, 1998, at UNESP, Campus Araraquara. The conference was attended by almost 200 participants from all over Brazil. The opening ceremony presented a conference "Ethics in Research", by Dr. William Saad Hosne (UNESP), who focused his speech on ethic problems in the Medicine Research. Two round tables (The interdisciplinary character of statistics, coordinated by Euclides C. Lima Fo; Computer discipline for agriculture schools, coordinated by Clarice G.B. Demetrio), and four more conferences were offered to the participants:

- Undergraduate and graduate teaching of Biostatistics: some ideas Clovis de A. Peres (UNIFESP);
- Is statistics a mathematical branch? Ademir Petenate (UNICAMP);
- Applications of MCMC in Genetics, Daniel Sorensen (Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Denmark);
- Hierarchical models in complex sample designs, Fernando A. Moura (UFRJ).

We had 65 contributed papers. The abstract of most of them will appear on the Website of the IBS. This two-day meeting was the scene of stimulating presentations and discussion. During the meeting the Assembly took place, and the newly elected RBRAS officers are:

President : Clarice Garcia Borges Demetrio (ESALQ/USP),
Vice-President : Cecilia Candolo (DEs/UFSCar),
1st Secretary : Luzia Aparecida Trinca (IB/UNESP/Botucatu),
2nd Secretary : Romeu Magnani (IQ/UNESP/Araraquara),
1st treasurer : Euclides Braga Malheiros (FCAV/UNESP/Jaboticabal),
2nd Treasurer : Jose Carlos Barbosa (FCAV/UNESP/Jaboticabal).

The present Council is composed of:

(1996-1999) Clovis de Araujo Peres e Enrico Antonio Colosimo,
(1997-2000) Lisbeth Kaiserlian Cordani e Euclides Braga Malheiros,
(1998-2000) Carlos Roberto Padovani,
(1998-2001) Decio Barbin e Julio da Motta Singer

Congratulations to the new officer members and good luck. On behalf of the RBRAS members we sincerely thank the outgoing members for their time to the Society.

The next meeting of RBRAS (the 44th) will be held jointly with the 8th SEAGRO (Symposium of Statistics Applied to Agricultural Research) at UNESP, Botucatu, in 1999 (26-30, July). For further information contact Paulo Mancera (pmancera@ibb.unesp.br).

Lisbeth K. Cordani

British



At reception before Conference Dinner: David Finney (Life Member of IBS), Roger Mead (Past Secretary IBS) and Peter Avery (IBS Council member).



At reception before Conference Dinner: Robert Curnow (RSS President and guest of Honour) with Rob Kempton (British Region Past President) and Rose Gaines Das (British Region Secretary).

The 187th Ordinary General Meeting was held (jointly with the RSS Environmental Statistics Study Group) on 26 February 1998 at the Royal Statistical Society. The following talks were given: Prof. R. Payne (IACR Rothamsted), "The Assessment of Agricultural Sustainability"; and Dr. Kevin Stokes (Centre for Environment and Fisheries, Lowestoft), "The Estimation and utility of biological reference points as used in precautionary fisheries management".

The British Region held a conference in Edinburgh (April 6-8, 1998) to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the region. (The first meeting of the region was held on 29 April 1948 when R. A. Fisher and J.W. Trevan spoke). A reception and dinner were held in the Playfair Library in Old College and Professor R. Curnow, President of the Royal Statistical Society was the guest speaker. The conference was attended by eight members from the early years (D. Finney, P. Armitage, J. Nelder, P. Hewlett, D. Cox, G. Dyke, F. Marriott and D. Patterson); 117 persons attended all or part of the meeting.

The invited speakers were P. Armitage, N. Cressie, V. Farewell, and at sessions on mark-recapture in epidemiology (R. Cormack and A. Viallefant), on General Linear Mixed Models (D. Clayton and J. Nelder) and on errors in X-Variables (G. D. Smith and G. Reeves). Abstracts for invited and contributed presentations are given elsewhere. There were several posters including one giving details of speakers and titles from the earliest years. The British Classification Society held a satellite meeting immediately following the conference. The conference promoted a variety of recent advances in biometrical methods and looked forward to the next 50 years.

The Summer meeting will be held on 27 August 1998, at the Isaac Newton Institute in Cambridge organised by N. Goldman. The proposed programme will include several scientific talks and a talk on the role and work of the Institute. The 1999 AGM and 188th Ordinary General Meeting will be held on Thursday 15 October 1998 at the Royal Entomological Society. The Presidential Address will be given by D. Altman, retiring President. The 189th Ordinary General Meeting

will be held on 3 December 1998 at the Royal Entomological Society. (Proposed topic: risk assessment).

Clive Moncrieff

Nigeria

Group Nigeria continues to grow. Its current membership is 38, and will certainly reach 50 pretty soon. At its recent meeting at the Ladoko Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho, Dr. Ben Oyejola (of the Department of Statistics, University of Ilorin) presented an interesting seminar on the "Estimation of Sample Sizes in Agro-forestry". For its next seminar at the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria in Ibadan on 11 August 1998, Dr. J.T. Atobatele (of the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Ibadan) will present his paper on "Estimation of Parameters in a Regression Model with Auto-correlated Disturbances".

In another development, Group Nigeria has finalised the theme for the Sub-saharan Africa Network (SUSAN) meeting scheduled for August 1999. The central theme is "Biometry and Quality of Life" with sub-themes as: (i) Sustainable agriculture and farmer participatory trials; (ii) Gender considerations in designs; (iii) The environment and human health; and (iv) Biometrics and National Statistical Systems. More details in subsequent issues.

Sagary Nokoe

Spanish

The Spanish Region, with the aim of promoting the relationship between their members, has been organizing scientific activities. A logistic regression course was given in Valencia (Spain), April 20-24, 1998. The course was taught by Gilda Piaggio from the Statistics and Data Processing Department of the WHO in Ginebra. A total of 25 scientists, from different geographical areas and from a variety of applied fields, attended the course. The course turned out to be very useful and interesting. The participants enjoyed it a lot, as you can see in the photograph of the meeting.

The Universitat Politècnica de Valencia and the Spanish Region have organized as well a course on mixed models, "Analyzing Mixed-Effects Models with S-Plus", that was taught by José Pinheiro (from Bell Laboratories) (June 15-19, 1998). Those interested in this area can get the notes of the course and the software used from the following addresses:

<http://etsia.upv.es/acteon/anlisis.htm>

and

<http://etsia.upv.es/acteon/ftp.htm>

I take this opportunity to invite you to join the VII meeting of the Spanish Region of the Biometric Society, which will take place in Palma de Mallorca, March 10-12, 1999. Full conference details are available at the web site:

<http://iirs1.uib.es/people/biome99/>

M. Luz Calle

