

## **EMS Annual Meeting, 3-8 September 2023**

### **Europe and droughts: Hydrometeorological processes, forecasting and preparedness**

I had the pleasure to attend the EMS Annual Meeting in Bratislava from September 3rd to 8th 2023, having been awarded the Young Scientist Conference Award.

Having already participated in other conferences, what really strikes me about EMS is its dimension, which permits a level of “Customer care”, that goes beyond the rather generous coffee breaks or icebreaker events (that is, however, a positive and remarkable fact in the current context of international conferences).

It provides a cozy context, with the possibility of following almost all presentations, where human interactions are much easier to create compared to other gigantic and “oceanic” settings. I am explicitly referring to EGU or AGU, where participants are around 15,000 against the approx. 600 that attended EMS this year.

In the specific case of an Early Career Scientist like myself, this context is perfect to develop many types of connections with not only fellow young researchers, but knowledgeable academics as well.

Going quickly through the Session Programme, I would like to underline here how the Plenary and Special Events (PSE) keynotes were well attended and offered very inspiring talks at the highest level, setting the scene for each of the three main sessions.

I found the Engagement with Society (ES) very useful since the scientific value has to be conveyed to society in order to become effective and this needs, of course, to be done also through better education, outreach and training.

The session on Operational Systems and Applications (OSA) offered an overview of new products and methods to better process data, and the latest developments in climate modeling. In addition, it dealt with renewable energy and energy meteorology, which are fields that are quickly becoming essential for a fossil fuels-less world.

Session Understanding Weather & Climate Processes (UP), where I contributed, was an exciting tour among the latest scientific findings, with a view to new and promising tools such as Machine Learning techniques. Last but not least, Workshops (such as the Data demo on drought and wildfires) offered the opportunity to cover the grey area between research and application for relevant stakeholders. Side Meetings (WSM), such as the Early Career Scientists lunch, were gathering moments where it was possible to understand how joyful can be doing science together

All in all, I found the meeting well balanced between solid quantitative pillars, a fresh look towards novel approaches and themes (e.g. ES1 Bringing benefits to society, ES2 Communication with and within Society), and an effort to innovate the EMS, hence attracting younger scientists. It resulted in a well-prepared and mixed Meeting, with inspiring and enjoyable moments.

Below are some suggestions that I wish to offer as a Young Scientist :

1) despite 12 minutes may seem a lot, it should be conveyed that a poster is in no way less relevant than an “oral” contribution. It offers more time to chat, a more active cross-fertilization, and it breaks down some barriers (some colleagues are shy and do not like offering questions in a public context like that of an oral). This narrative has to be improved, especially among Young Scientists. At the same time, the poster venue has to be identified in a way that facilitates the gathering (in Bratislava's case I found the room too small and with insufficient ventilation).

2) It was not uncommon that speakers engaged in Sessions starting after coffee breaks had to face a number of colleagues entering several minutes after the presentations had started. Since this bad habit reflects in a way the personal level of respect of the single scientists, I think it would be relatively easy to have an EMS-identified member to “herd cats” and remind them that Sessions are starting again shortly, or something like that.

3) In many cases there was only one or two conveners in oral sessions, despite the list of names was apparently longer. EMS should make sure that whoever is listed as convener or co-convener then adds real value to the Session, maybe with a short speech even online.

Thank you all again for having kindly decided to award my contribution. I look forward to further sharing other scientific insights at the next EMS meeting in Barcelona in 2024.

Best wishes

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