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Special External Effects on Fluvial System Evolution

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Message from the Guest Editors

Rivers are excellent witnesses of the dynamics affecting the Earth's surface. They are highly sensitive to climate change, base-level change, tectonic movements and human influence. In addition, the complexity of this external forcing has to be supplemented with internal mechanisms. Rivers are reliable recorders of these dynamics via their sedimentary products and morphological expression, which may be considered as fluvial archives.

Until now there has been a focus on evaluating the general impacts of individual external factors. However, specific environmental characteristics have been shown to be increasingly important by recent case studies (e.g. regional climate, topography and vegetation, and frozen ground appear to play an essential role). Integration of such conditions in the processes that were active within the complex fluvial system opens new perspectives in the understanding of the evolution of landscape, ecology, sediment fluxes and hydrology, within the framework of external drivers (tectonics, general climate and human activity). This is an appealing challenge that we want to address in this Special Issue under the aegis of the Fluvial Archives Group (FLAG).

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Editor-in-Chief

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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

We live in a Quaternary world, that is, a world shaped by the interplay of the different compartments of the earth system—lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, biosphere, cryosphere—during the last ~2.6 million years. It is not possible to understand the current world—and, hence, to anticipate its possible future developments—without knowing the Quaternary history of drivers, processes, and mechanisms that have generated it. Our own species is an evolutionary outcome of the Quaternary performance. Therefore, the journal *Quaternary* is born with the aim of being an integrative journal to encompass all aspects of Quaternary science focused on understanding the complex world in which we live and to provide a sound scientific basis to anticipate possible future trends and inform environmental policies.

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