
NEWS

IN MEMORIAM JEAN-FRANÇOIS GELEYN (1950-2015)

Jean-François Geleyn passed away on 8 January, 2015. We knew that Jean-François was struggling with his health in the last years, but still the incoming news was devastating for everybody in the Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) community. We lost a leader in NWP in general and our leader in the ALADIN cooperation in particular. Jean-François had enormous influence on the progress of NWP in Central and Eastern Europe certainly including also Hungary. He had special ties with Hungary as honorary member of the Hungarian Meteorological Society (since 2000) and a member of the Editorial Board of “Időjárás”. He paid 12 visits to Hungary between 1992 and 2011 (his last talk in Hungary can be seen at www.mettars.hu/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Eloadas110328.pdf).

Jean-François Geleyn was the main initiator of the ALADIN international cooperation in 1990 with the proposal of the support programme of Météo France towards several Central and Eastern European countries. Hungary joined the cooperation among the first countries and already took part (by Dezső Dévényi) in the feasibility study of the project in March, 1991 in Paris. The development work of the ALADIN limited-area model started in Toulouse in September, 1991. Jean-François was leading the group in charge of the development of the ALADIN model. He was not only our scientific supervisor. He was also very supportive to help the newly arriving Météo France “stagiaires” (the French word for students) from Prague, Budapest, Vienna or Bucharest to find their way into their new lives in Toulouse. We remember very well, he was waiting for us at “Gare Matabiau” at our first arrival to Toulouse. He helped us to settle down in our new temporary home in France, he was showing us around in Toulouse and at Météo France, he was jogging with us, when we prepared for our marathon along the Canal du Midi and he was keen to join our “stagiaire” parties at the Météo France campus. His attitude and helpfulness made possible to “cement together” the “students” in Toulouse inside and outside work. This strong cohesion among the ALADIN developers was one of the secrets of the success of the ALADIN project. This made possible that the researchers working together on ALADIN was not simply forming a scientific team, but also a friendly and supportive company, which is spanning much farther than work on Numerical Weather Prediction. Based on all these scientific and personal achievements it was not accidental that the HIRLAM cooperation decided (around 10 years ago) to join forces with the ALADIN partners and further develop the ALADIN system together (they refer to it as HARMONIE). Now the ALADIN and HIRLAM communities together are forming the strongest NWP limited-area consortium in Europe.

Jean-François's main area of interest was physical parameterizations of the NWP models, but he was extremely knowledgeable at every aspect of numerical modeling. He had an excellent overview of the entire NWP and he was a very fast thinker making it almost impossible to follow him real time. He had a firm long-term vision on NWP, he was stubbornly insisting on his views and he was tirelessly working on its realization. Basically, he had never had a rest, he devoted his entire life to NWP and to the ALADIN cooperation.

We all know that the landscape of numerical weather forecasting modeling in Europe would be very different without the contributions of Jean-François. We owe him enormous professional and personal gratitude for all what he had done for meteorology. We will always remember him as a scientist and friend who was always supporting us and our meteorological community. We will miss Jean-François with sorrow, but we will preserve his memory and put forward his legacy in Numerical Weather Prediction.

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