

## **Message of the President**

Doing research and operating and maintaining a research infrastructure in a high alpine environment has always been and will remain a challenging experience. I am extremely happy to notice that in 2014, as in previous years, the International Foundation High Altitude Research Stations Jungfrauoch and Gornergrat HFSJG, its management and administration, and the many science teams met these challenges successfully.

Scientific activity was again extensive and of high standard, as reviewed in the report of the director. My grateful appreciation goes to all the research teams and scientists for their outstanding projects, all the more so because acknowledged international significance of their work is the primary basis for the continued success and the further development of the Foundation's research infrastructures.

For the Foundation HFSJG and the operation of the scientific stations, 2014 was a year with many "construction areas" and work in progress, as also summarized in the director's report. The main respective keywords are: new three-year grant application to the Swiss National Science Foundation, White Paper and strategic planning for the research site Jungfrauoch, new protection roof of the Research Station Jungfrauoch, Jungfrau East Ridge, Stellarium Gornergrat, high-speed broadband internet connection between Bern and Gornergrat, and Virtual Alpine Observatory VAO. All these projects required a lot of hard work by many individuals and institutions. Not everything progressed as rapidly and smoothly as anticipated. But by combining the efforts of many partners, organizations and individuals several milestones could be reached and substantial progress was achieved in all areas. On behalf of the Board of the Foundation HFSJG, I would like to express my sincere and cordial thanks to all those who contributed to these achievements in shaping the future.

For the continued and successful operation of our high altitude research infrastructures, a stable long-term financial basis is essential. In this regard, we highly appreciate and gratefully acknowledge in particular the enormous support by our main funding body, the Swiss National Science Foundation SNSF. But we are equally thankful for the significant direct and indirect contributions by the University of Bern, as well as for the long standing loyalty and responsibility demonstrated towards our Foundation by our Swiss and non-Swiss member institutions and their representatives. The importance of the inherent internationality of our Foundation in sustaining our research sites as cornerstones in European high alpine research cannot be stressed enough.

It is with great pleasure and satisfaction that I look back once again on a year of continued excellence in scientific achievements and continued endeavour in pursuing the challenging goals of the Foundation. All this would not have been possible without the dedicated work of our Director, Prof. Markus Leuenberger, and his team. My sincere thanks, therefore, to all of them, for successfully coping every single day with an immense workload. But I would also like to thank our Honorary President, Prof. Hans Balsiger, for his unbroken interest in the affairs and the well-being of our Foundation, and for providing advice as well as active support if asked for.



Erwin O. Flückiger

Bern, April 2015