

## Preface

The Aquatic Ecosystem Health and Management Society (AEHMS) has launched a program focusing on the “*Freshwater Fishes and Fisheries of the World: Biodiversity, Health, and Habitat*” (see Vol. 9, Issue 4, 2006). We are pleased to devote this issue to “*Freshwater fishes of South America: Their biodiversity, fisheries and habitat*”. A compendium of seven papers, plus a synthesis, is included in this special issue which covers various freshwater habitats of South America (Fig. 1):

1. Magdalena River
2. Orinoco River basin
3. Amazon River basin
4. Paraná River basin
5. Paraguay-Parana-Rio de la Plata riverine axis
6. Altiplano Plateau
7. Patagonia

The editors are pleased by the enthusiasm and progress of this project, which is intended to raise global awareness of freshwater fishes, their biodiversity, health and habitat. It is hoped that this, and subsequent, issues will draw greater attention to the challenges, problems and issues facing the freshwater fish and fisheries from human development and activities. We would sincerely like to thank Dr. Wolfgang Junk of the Max Planck Institute for Limnology (Germany) and the entire team of contributors for the development and publication of this interesting special issue.

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Fig. 1. Ecosystems of South America covered in this issue.