Ruminations of the Urban Climate Field and Hopes for the Future

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In the recent book entitled Urban Climates (2017) by T. Oke, G. Mills, A. Christen and J. A. Voogt, there is an Epilogue section on the History of Urban Climatology (pp 454-459) which states its scientific study dates from the early 19th century (as we know, from Luke Howard’s famous works) and can be divided into four periods of activity: (a) before 1930, pioneering climatographies of selected cities and weather elements, (b) 1930-1965, the growth of micro- and local climatology of climate differentiation and new field techniques, (c) 1965 to ca. 2000, explosive increase in research interest, closer links to meteorology and emergence of physically-based models of the urban atmosphere, and (d) 2000 and beyond, a maturing of the science into a predictive science, a period called one of consolidation and prediction. With a proliferation of interests, new entities were formed during (d) - e.g., the International Association for Urban Climate and the Board on the Urban Environment of the AMS. They are dedicated to furthering scientific work in the urban climate and meteorology field and fostering cooperation between all interested scientists and practitioners. Through experiencing period (c) and now (d) with colleagues, students, administrators, practitioners, and the public (although now as an emeritus faculty in geography and urban planning) and being exposed to these organizations, it is this latter mission of the urban climate community I would like to highlight. It is a hope that the cooperative spirit of world scientists and practitioners is further intensified (e.g., through CitiesIPCC and other academic and applied entities) in order to achieve major global-to-local solutions for our world cities. Technologies are exploding; the hope is that there is a concomitant explosion of practice.