The severe drought in 2003 was similar in severity to our multi-year drought treatment in May and June, but started 2 month earlier. This may explain the drastic effects of the 2003 drought event as compared to those of our experimental droughts.

In deeper layers soil moisture shows close connection with the monthly amount of precipitation, while in the upper layers depends rather on the finer distribution patterns.

Soil water content and approximate water potential as a function of depth in July and August 1998. The vegetation is Pannonian sand forest steppes, mosaic of dry grasslands and juniper-poplar groves (Juniperus communis, Populus alba). The shrub is formed by the root suckers of the clonal white poplar. The soil is Calcaric arenosol, sand = 95-97%, silt <2%, clay <2%. SOM <1%, pH 7.5-8.5, field capacity ~ 12 V/V%.

The contribution of small and large rainfall events to yearly precipitation in wet and dry years. Wet years differ from dry years in the disproportionately higher amount of precipitation falling in big events in central Hungary.

The severe drought in 2003 was similar in severity to our multi-year drought treatment in May and June, but started 2 month earlier. This may explain the drastic effects of the 2003 drought event as compared to those of our experimental droughts.

In deeper layers soil moisture shows close connection with the monthly amount of precipitation, while in the upper layers depends rather on the finer distribution patterns.