

TOOLS FOR SUPPORT AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERENCE FOR IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE*

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INTRODUCTION

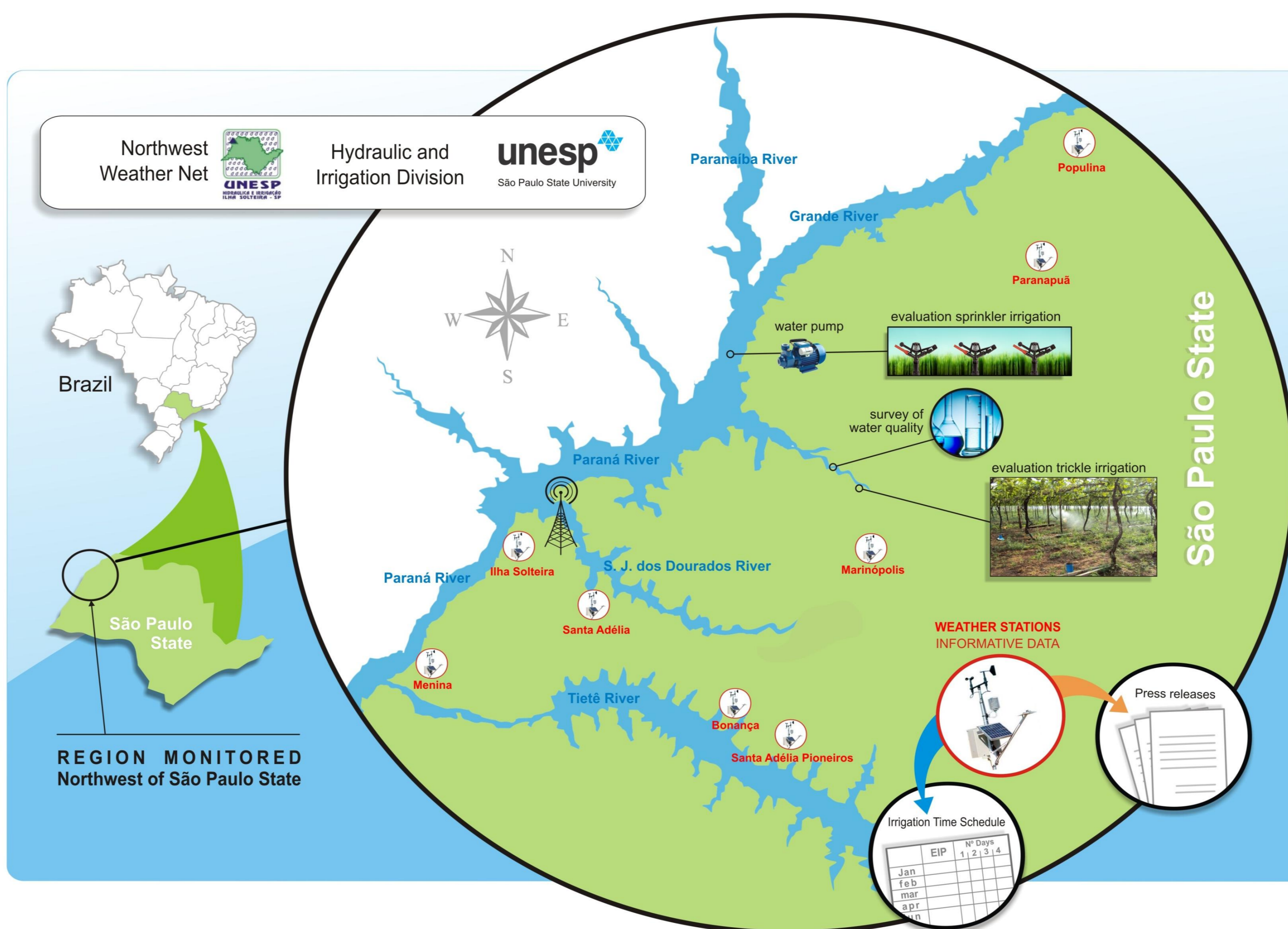
The increase of water use efficiency or water productivity, is required considering the exploitation of water resources sustainably and ensure availability of water for the competing groups and there are many examples where there are disputes over water use, with intensification of conflicts. Major water user, irrigated agriculture must be based on multidisciplinary knowledge and practices, not always available to irrigators. This paper describes the actions taken by UNESP - São Paulo State University in northwestern of São Paulo State, Brazil, as tools supporting to maintenance and expansion of irrigated agriculture in the region with eight months of drought.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The use of water at the right moment and on the right quantity, leading to an increase of productivity depends on climatic, soil and irrigation system information and multidisciplinary knowledge concerned on irrigated agriculture.

The Hydraulic and Irrigation Division from UNESP Ilha Solteira built the Weather Network of the Northeast of São Paulo state, evaluates irrigation systems and combining the crop's evapotranspiration, soil hydro-physics properties and the system capacity of applying water elaborates to the farmers practical tables to the irrigation management (irrigation table schedule).

We believe on the value of information as the background to comprehension of problems and concretization of good work and we display freely on the internet data and results acquired from scientific researches, including climatic information providing better conditions of professional improvement. There are different kinds of media: The main website (www.agr.feis.unesp.br/irrigacao.php) containing information provided as "Channels", the Climate website (clima.feis.unesp.br) is the repository of all historic weather database and operates real-time, with tables and interactive graphics, the Blog (irrigacao.blogspot.com) made for quick uploads, despite of the simple and informal appearance, it is used to disclose the daily forecast. We also manage the Irrigated Agriculture Discussion Group.



We maintain means of communication to those interested in irrigated agriculture and the elements involved and through communicants and electronic mail one can interact with the Hydraulic and Irrigation Laboratory through the e_mail irriga@agr.feis.unesp.br and the instant messengers MSN (irriga@agr.feis.unesp.br) and Skype (equipe-lhi), besides the phone numbers.

Fellows do the disclosure of the paperwork, answer the callings and work up the press-releases sent to different medias by email, blog updates, while events and papers are published at the main website.

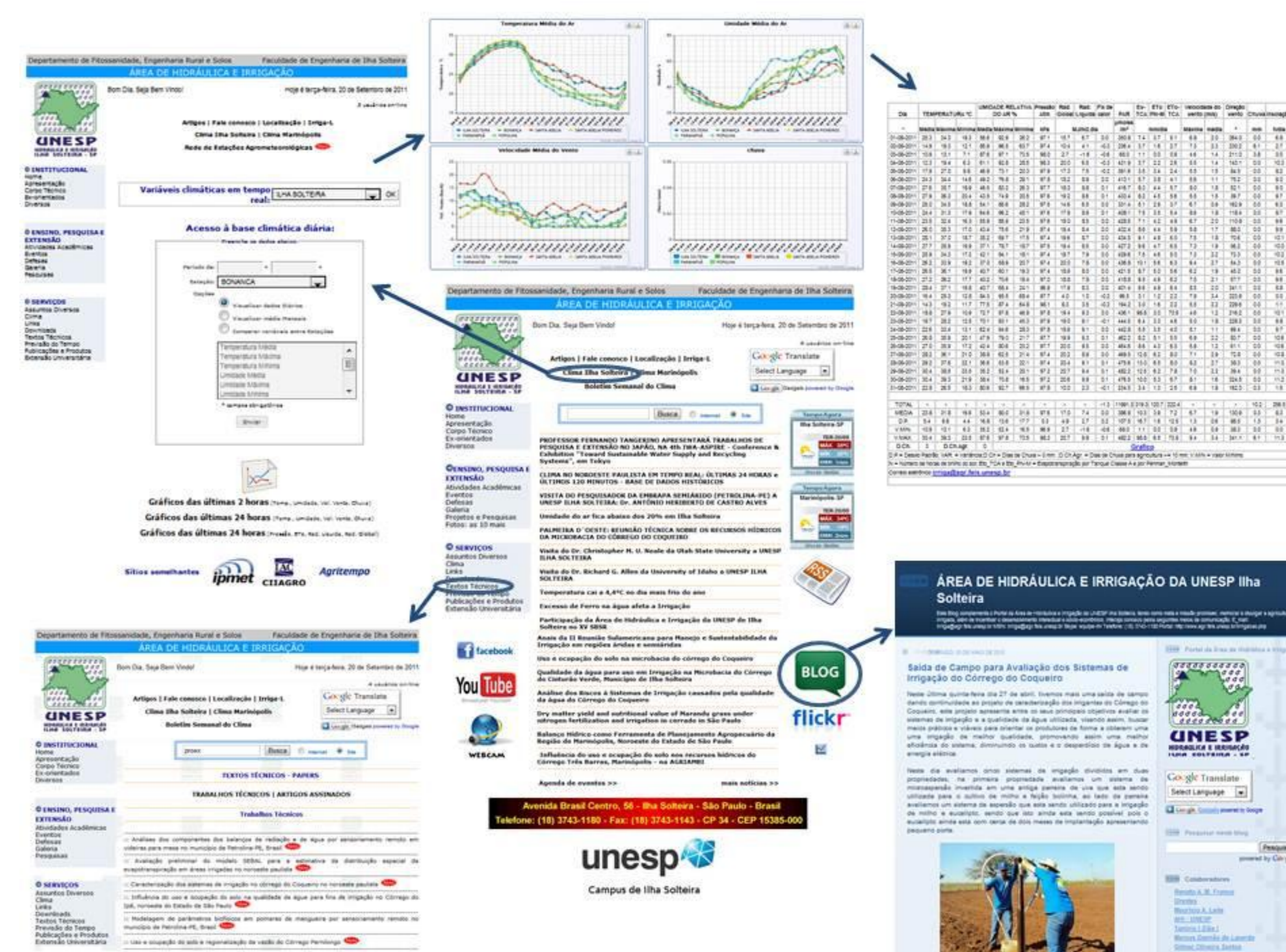
The work evaluation is made by the statistics of the accesses and consults to the different means of communication and also by the recovery, is done the clipping and the value estimation of spontaneous media, it means, by the measure of the area and the value of the published news on the mean of communication where the UNESP Ilha Solteira Hydraulic and Irrigation Division was mentioned.

DISCUSSION

Weather Networks are the basis for climate research, hydrologic studies and evapotranspiration and allows the construction of grids of interpolated climatic variables, increasing the accuracy in regional studies, and will be the content of media channels used. The importance of the online means of communication is exposed by the increasing number of access every year. In 2010, was registered about 836 pages visited each day and the Blog registered around 121 daily accesses. Fellows in Research and Extension are essential to the data obtainment and treatment into information and management of the displayed services.

The validation of work is done by the feedback of the spontaneous media, which reached in 2010 US\$ 20,995 as the result of 130 spontaneous publications on several pressed medias, adding up 36.236 cm² of texts with references provided by UNESP Ilha Solteira.

Besides the benefit to society in general, the information generated is also of vital importance for the development of many environmental projects and particularly to irrigators in the region, which has in it an important source of information for the rational water use through estimate and release of the evapotranspiration.



CONCLUSION

The actions and information available make the basis for the development of works planning of water use and increase of the water productivity, ensuring sustainability of the system, for it the weather network is absolutely necessary as a basis for all the work of water efficient use by allowing the estimation of evapotranspiration. Likewise, the dissemination of information establishes the conditions for conscientization and acceptance of best management practices and we believe that the Internet should be used widely for the transfer of technology and knowledge obtained from research projects. Thus to evaluate the presence of climate and irrigation information in media, the spontaneous media value, computed from the publications in different media of communication, can be used, indicating the interest of community in the subject.