

PREFACE

INTERCOH2015 is the 13th edition of an international gathering of scientists and engineers facing challenges posed by the presence of cohesive sediments (“mud”) in the aquatic environment. Even though for the first time organized in Belgium, it is not the first international meeting of this kind. In November 1990 (25 years ago) an International Workshop on Cohesive Sediments, entitled *Towards a definition of “mud”*, was organized by the Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences in Brussels, in collaboration with many national partners, under the chair of Prof. Stanislas Wartel. This very likely triggered the further internationalization of Prof. Ashish Mehtha’s workshops in the US, resulting in the first edition under the title INTERCOH, which was organized in 1994 for the first time outside the US by HR Wallingford in the UK.

For further information on INTERCOH, visit the website www.intercoh.org.

Even though Belgium is small, the problems caused by the presence of mud in the major ports of Antwerp and Zeebrugge and their access channels, have triggered scientific mud research, a challenge taken up by Prof. Jean Berlamont of the KU Leuven in the early 1980s. Belgium is also the home to two of the largest dredging companies in the world.

This book of abstracts gives an impression of the scientific questions and practical problems that are faced by scientists and engineers today. Sediment research is difficult; cohesive sediment behavior is more complex than that of non-cohesive sediments. Some of the questions are (very) old and have not found adequate solutions for many years. Whether this edition succeeds in presenting progress and innovation is left to the judgment of the participants.

The submitted abstracts have been evaluated by members of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC). The compilation of the book and its lay-out has been carried out by VLIZ under the excellent coordination of Ingrid Dobbelaere.

Full papers will be published in the journal *Ocean Dynamics* (Springer) after peer-review, forming a Topical Collection.

This conference would not have been possible without the efforts of many people. The help and advice from the other members of the core team of the LOC, consisting of Tina Mertens (VLIZ), Michael Fettweis (RBINS) and Joris Vanlede (Flanders Hydraulics) have been invaluable. The conference secretariat was well taken care of by Anita Vermunicht (KU Leuven, Hydraulics Division). Many members of the KU Leuven Hydraulics research staff have been helping out for all kinds of logistic tasks.

Finally, I would also like to thank the sponsors for supporting this conference: FWO Vlaanderen, DEME, ASICON-Geometius, Nortek and IMDC.

Prof. Dr Erik A. Toorman
Chairman INTERCOH2015