

Preface

The FRIEND-Water (Flow Regimes from International and Experimental Network Data) programme is an international collaborative research initiative under the umbrella of UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP) and has disseminated research results by convening international scientific conferences every four years since 1989. This publication is the proceedings of reviewed papers of the 7th World FRIEND Conference held in Montpellier, France, 7–10 October 2014 on the theme of *Hydrology in a Changing World: Environmental and Human Dimensions*. FRIEND-Water aims to facilitate understanding about how climate, river basin and human factors influence the spatial and temporal distribution of water.

A large number of universities, research institutes and water-related agencies in over 150 countries around the world have actively participated in FRIEND-Water. It is a worldwide programme, not only with respect to its geographical coverage, but also with respect to the issues that are investigated.

The response to the “call for papers” for this conference generated 230 abstracts, which may well provide an indication of the increasing significance of water issues in the world and the FRIEND-Water and IHP scientific communities. The papers share knowledge on changes in hydrological processes and their impacts, including ecological flows, erosion and sedimentation, and the development of adaptable water management and water policies to account for these impacts, as well as changes in the frequency and variability of floods and droughts due to a variety of factors. Six main topics were addressed: hydrological databases; trends in hydrological regimes and extremes; changes in ecological flows and coastal ecohydrology; erosion and sediment transport processes and trends; regional observational hydrological modelling frameworks; and water resources and prospective scenarios.

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