

## Editorial

The 27th Nordic Water conference was held in Oulu, Finland on 13–15 August 2012. The conference attracted a record number of participants from the Nordic countries, Baltic states and many other parts of the world where cold climate hydrology plays a role. The main topic was ‘catchment restoration and water protection’, but the conference also included special sessions and scientific contributions on all aspects of hydrology. The main topic was selected to respond to future challenges laid down by the EU Water Framework Directive and the Groundwater Directive, which aim to ensure good water quality for human and ecosystem needs. Several of the manuscripts in the special issue increase our understanding of hydrological process, modelling and future water management.

The special issue covers many aspects of hydrological research with an emphasis in northern conditions. These conditions include the natural environment, climate and socio-economic development. Generally, water is highly valued and good water quality is required for drinking water, watercourses and groundwater systems. Therefore,

cost-efficient solutions for water protection are needed, as well as for diffuse pollution control. Temporary varying frost and snow cover affect water quantity and quality in many ways. Also land forms are variable. These unique conditions call for high level hydrological research.

The present issue includes 15 papers submitted to *Hydrology Research* after the conference. In total 55 papers were submitted and 20 accepted (the five papers that did not fit into the special issue were accepted to a normal journal issue). I would like to thank all authors for their interest in *Hydrology Research* and reviewers for their help in the review process, which significantly improved the quality of the papers. I also acknowledge the Finnish Ministry of Forestry and Agriculture for providing funding for Hanna Arola and Maiju Kosunen at SYKE who helped in the editorial work.

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