

## Editorial

Although hydroinformatics makes use of any development in information and communication technology (ICT) that comes to hand, it is ultimately directed towards the application of these technologies in the real world. Hydroinformatics is indeed a *socio-technical* discipline, in the sense that technical observations cannot normally succeed without changes in the society, while correspondingly social changes cannot normally be realised without the introduction of technological innovations provided to catalyse these changes.

While on one side hydroinformatics has recourse in the latest ICT developments it is still primarily the study of the flows of data and knowledge related to the flow of water. Hydraulics understood as the study of flows of water is accordingly central to hydroinformatics. Without hydraulics, no hydroinformatics! From this situation it may at first appear as though hydroinformatics provides only a new periphery to hydraulics. A new way of transmitting hydraulics knowledge and data to society. A ‘plasticification’ of hydraulics within graphical user interfaces. In practice, however, the situation is quite different. The way in which hydraulics is practiced today is altered as a result of incorporation of the new paradigms provided through hydroinformatics.

In this issue of the Journal, we attempt to present these various ‘faces’ of hydroinformatics. While the paper by

Wright addresses some fundamental computational fluid dynamics issues, the papers by Reed *et al.* and Hankin & Bevan discuss prudent uses of emerging technologies in hydraulics and hydrology. These, if you will, ‘academic’ contributions are then contrasted with a contribution by Thorkilsen and Dynesen, who offer their perspectives on hydroinformatics and its use and usefulness in the real world, in this case during the planning and construction of the recently completed bridge and tunnel connection between Denmark and Sweden.

Hydroinformatics fundamentally depends upon the integration of expertise in many different technologies. It seems that we have collectively, as a community, evolved and learned how to blend these somewhat assorted backgrounds in an amalgamated technology. Our community has matured its diversity over the past decade. And it is this diversity which is today primary fuel for both technological and practical breakthroughs in hydroinformatics.

Enjoy reading.

**Vladan Babovic**

*April 2001*