
Preface

This publication contains material presented at the Euroconference entitled “New Paradigms for the Prediction of Subsurface Conditions: Characterisation of the Shallow Subsurface and Implications for Urban Infrastructure and Environmental Assessment”, together with ideas and inspiration freely shared amongst the delegates. The Euroconference was held at the Sol Cress conference centre, Spa, Belgium, 7–12 July 2001.

This Conference, the 7th in a series (Turner, *this volume*), arose from a series of meetings which began over 10 years ago, as mentioned in the introduction to Part A (*this volume*), in Santa Barbara in California with NATO sponsorship. Then followed a move to Europe with a 3D GIS focus, to Würzburg and then to Freiburg (Germany), then with ESF funding to: Lucca (Italy), Canterbury (UK) and Kerkrade (The Netherlands).

The conference offered young researchers an opportunity to explore cross-disciplinary applications of their specialised research knowledge and experience through participation in lectures, demonstrations, and poster sessions, as appropriate to their research.

An important aspect of the conference was the time periods set aside for discussion of issues by smaller focus groups, and the subsequent reporting of these discussions to the entire group of participants. Each focus group was no larger than 10 participants, so that all had a chance to raise issues. Arrangements were made to assist groups in recording their discussions. The conference organisers assigned participants to these groups, and discussion group facilitators (chairs, secretaries and reporters) were appointed, thereby assuring that young researchers were heard during these discussions.

The authors hope that the essence of the meeting has been successfully captured in this volume, enabling the delegates' deliberations to be shared with the wider community and encouraging the evolution of information technologies to better address user needs for subsurface characterisation.

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The editors

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