



**Henny J Colenbrander**

**THE  
NETHERLANDS**

In 1959 I graduated from the Agricultural University at Wageningen and took an early retirement in 1992 but continued some professional work till 1995. My main research topics at the University were water use in agricultural, hydrology and water management. In the same year that I graduated from University, I started my professional carrier at Rijkswaterstaat, Service for Water Management. I became in charge of the hydrologic research in the Leerinkbeek area, a small river basin in the Eastern part of the Netherlands. At the same time I acted as Secretary of the Commission supervising this research project.

In 1967 I left Rijkswaterstaat for the Provincial Water Board of Gelderland, to become Secretary of the Commission for Water Management of the Province of Gelderland. The commission dealt with all the interests (agriculture, industry, households, nature etc.) in the water resources of a certain river basin. It focussed in particular on the inter-relationship of the terms of the water balance.

In line with this research work, I got involved in the international research in this field, in particular the projects of the governmental bodies UNESCO and WMO. I became member of the Working Group on Representative and Experimental Basins of the International Hydrological Decade (IHD) of UNESCO. I have also chaired a number of groups in charge of the execution of several IHP projects and contributed to a number of WMO projects of. I have also been member of the Committees representing UNESCO and WMO at national level i.e. the National Committee for the IHP (International Hydrological Programme) and for the OHP (Operational Hydrological Programme).

A main career change has been the transition in 1977 from the Provincial Water Board to TNO, the Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research. I became Secretary of the Commission for Hydrological Research, CHO TNO and Head of the Bureau. All relevant water research institutions and management bodies, the water research groups at university departments are member of the commission. These research groups and –projects are mainly operating in the framework of governmental organisations. However, my main contributions to international hydrology have been through a non-governmental organization, the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS).

I started in IAHS as member of the International Commission on Water Resources Systems, followed by the Presidency of the International Groundwater Commission. Thereafter, as successor of John Rodda, I became Secretary General (SG) of IAHS and served as such from 1988-1995. In addition to the administrative business for the Bureau, my main task as SG was to overlook the activities of the various commissions and working groups of IAHS dealing with the various subjects (surface water, groundwater, soil moisture etc.). As SG I also had to maintain the contacts with the IUGG Bureau (International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics) the “mother-organization” of the different scientific Associations dealing with various disciplines (hydrology, meteorology, physical science of the Ocean etc.). These scientific associations are cooperating in the ICSU (International Council of Scientific Unions).

I have represented IAHS in the board of the IAH, the International Association of Hydrologist. The contacts with groups dealing with technical water aspects like ICID and IAHR were less intensive. These groups belong to UATI (Union of International Technical Associations). The water related groups of ICSU and UATI are working together in COWAR (Committee on Water Research). I was Secretary of COWAR for many years.

Besides the research activities at national and international level, I have lectured in hydrology at the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education at Delft and at the postgraduate courses in Hydrology at Padua.