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2012 Report of the Belgian National Chapter of the IAH

The “Comité Belge des Hydrogéologues” (CBH) in French and “Belgisch Comité voor Hydrogeologen” (BCH) in Dutch, CBH-BCH, acts as the National Chapter of the IAH in Belgium.

In 2012, the number of members of the CBH-BCH increased to 83 individual members, including the delegates of 4 corporate members.

In 2012, the Council of the CBH-BCH was composed of 14 elected members and gathered five times (on 13/01/2012, on 27/02/2012, on 27/04/2012, on 25/09/2012, and on 21/11/2012) in order to plan and coordinate the committee’s activities.

The 2012 General Assembly of the CBH-BCH took place on January 13, 2012 at the Wifi auditorium of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences in Brussels.

During 2012, the following activities were organized by the CBH-BCH:

1. Annual Conference

Following the General Assembly, Mrs. Dr. M. HUYSMANS (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) held a lecture on “Modelleren van grondwaterstroming en transport in milieus met een complexe geologische heterogeniteit” (in Dutch) and Mrs. Dr. I. BONNIVER (Faculté universitaires Notre-Dame de la Paix - Namur) held a lecture on “Etude hydrogéologique et dimensionnement par modélisation du "système – traçage" du réseau karstique de Han-sur-Lesse (massif de Boine – Belgique)” (in French).

2. Study day 2012

The study day 2012 of the CBH-BCH took place on June 8th, 2012 in Liège and Eisden. The topic was “Interactions between surface and subsurface water”. Five presentations were given in the morning in the Auditorium of the Aquapôle building at the University of Liège. Presentations covered topics ranging from solute transport and risks associated to subsurface pollution in the context of surface and subsurface water interactions, the Dutch approach to surface and subsurface water interactions, and case studies in the Walloon and the Flemish Regions of Belgium.

In the afternoon, a field trip was organized to Liège and to Eisden. In Liège, pumping has to be maintained in order to prevent the bottom of the valley to be flooded, as a result of ground subsidence due to coal mining in the area. One of the pumping stations was visited. In Eisden, water productions installations at a former mining site where visited. 44 people took part at the study day.

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3. Reference book on Belgian aquifers

In 2009, the CBH-BCH has endeavoured the publication of a reference book on Belgian aquifers. The book is divided into a series of chapters, each corresponding to an important aquifer of Belgium. Several specialized issues are also tackled in the book, such as geothermal applications, mineral waters, production and distribution, surveillance networks, regional-scale groundwater modelling, groundwater rebound in abandoned coal mines, or groundwater-related problems in constructions works.

The book is edited by Kristine Walraevens and Alain Dassargues. Most of the chapters have been collected by the editors and the reviewing phase has been initiated. Additional funding is currently being sought in order to finalize the layout of the book.

4. Contacts with other scientific organizations

Contacts are maintained with other organizations promoting earth sciences (UBGL, SBGIMR, Geologica Belgica) to promote cooperation and synergies.

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