

António Chambel, Vice-President for Programme and Science Coordination, who attended the 5th International Symposium on Karst, Spain



KARST SCIENTISTS GATHER IN MALAGA

The 5th International Symposium on Karst was held from 14 to 16 October 2014 in Malaga, organized by researchers from the Centre of Hydrogeology of the University of Malaga (CEHIUMA) and the Spanish Geological Survey (IGME) and supported by IAH. António Chambel, Vice-President for Programme and Science Coordination represented the Association.

The Symposium enabled the scientific community to share recent advances in karst hydrogeology and to increase the level of understanding about processes in and impacts on karst aquifers. Researchers from 25 countries attended and more than 100 oral and posters presentations were made, which were collected together in a book published by Springer and distributed during the symposium: "Hydrogeological and Environmental Investigations in Karst Systems". The presentations covered topics such as karst groundwater flow, hydrochemical studies and hydrogeological parameter estimation, protection of karst aquifers, pollution and vulnerability in karst, thermal anomalies in carbonate aquifers, dye tracing, stable isotope applications and numerical modelling among others, and all these in different climatic environments, from tropical to temperate humid regions, with a significant representation of mountain areas.

Understanding karst processes requires knowledge of catchments in natural areas, detailed information on average residence time and more studies about the potential for natural attenuation of contaminants to enhance our knowledge on intrinsic and specific vulnerability assessment. The results and discussions demonstrated that more research, not only on groundwater resources assessment but also on characterization of the hydrogeological functioning of the aquifers, is necessary to manage karst aquifers in a sustainable way and solve the remaining uncertainties. Karst science must evolve and knowledge must be updated regularly to fulfil the needs of society and preserve karst water resources.

The symposium was a forum for exchange of ideas not only within the venue but also on the pre-symposium field trip to Grazalema and intra-symposium field trips to Nerja Cave, Fuente de Piedra wetland and karst and gypsum. The next karst symposium (Eurokarst-2016) will be held in Neuchâtel, Switzerland.



DECEMBER 2014