

Preface

This book was derived as output from the Techware Workshop, *A Comparison Among Four Different European Biotic Indices (IBE, BBI, BMWP and RIVPACS) for River Quality Evaluation*, held at the Istituto Agraio of S. Michele TN, Italy, in June 1998. The objectives of this course were the study of the aquatic environment in a comprehensive way and to promote the use of biotic methods in evaluating the quality of running waters. The uncommon opportunity to evaluate, as a scientific exercise, the performance of different methods based on the same or similar biological/environmental rationale, was regarded as an exciting experience by the main developers of the tested biotic indices – who were the teachers in the course – and stimulated exchange of experiences at all levels.

The possibility given to us by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd to publish the lectures presented at this workshop and other contributions pertaining to river ecology and monitoring suggested by an editorial panel, is greatly appreciated.

The workshop anticipated the aims and strategies of the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) in as much as it focused on methodological questions related to a common understanding of the technical and scientific implications.

In the time which has elapsed between the end of the workshop and the publication of this book, some relevant changes have occurred in technical and legislative fields related to the topics covered. For these reasons, this text has also embraced other aspects of river monitoring, including new tools and strategies for river ecology evaluation, relevant for a complete coverage. The contents of this book offer scientists and all workers involved in river monitoring the possibility to have an updated and integrated view on river ecology, the application of biotic indices using the more common biological indicators and the interpretation and future development of river monitoring in different parts of the world.

We are grateful to all of the authors for their contributions and for their efforts in achieving the objectives of this book.

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