Coastal and Estuarine Environments:
sedimentology, geomorphology and geoarchaeology
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Coastal and Estuarine Environments: sedimentology, geomorphology and geoarchaeology

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The Geological Society of London was founded in 1807 and is the oldest geological society in the world. It received its Royal Charter in 1825 for the purpose of 'investigating the mineral structure of the Earth' and is now Britain's national society for geology.

Both a learned society and a professional body, the Geological Society is recognized by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as the chartering authority for geoscience, able to award Chartered Geologist status upon appropriately qualified Fellows. The Society has a membership of 9099, of whom about 1500 live outside the UK.

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Preface

This book arises from a two day international conference held at the Geological Society of London in November 1998. The meeting was organized with the purpose of bringing together sedimentologists, geomorphologists, archaeologists, environmental scientists and environmental managers to discuss recent research and topical issues relating to the interactions between natural processes, morphology and human activities in coastal and estuarine environments. More than 200 delegates, from 16 countries, attended the meeting over the course of the two days, stimulating lively discussion both about basic scientific issues and management implications. The meeting was sponsored by the British Sedimentological Research Group, the British Geomorphological Research Group, and English Heritage, and was also supported by the Environmental Sedimentology Committee of the International Association of Sedimentologists. The editors would like to thank these organizations, together with staff at the Geological Society and numerous daily helpers, especially postgraduate students and others from the University of Reading, for their generous assistance in making the meeting a great success.

The principal themes of this title are:

1. The nature of basic processes affecting coasts and estuaries and their relationship to morphological and sedimentological changes on timescales ranging from months to millenia, and at spatial scales ranging from tens of metres to tens of kilometres;
2. The effects of changes in the natural environmental forcing factors on coastal and estuarine morphology and sedimentary characteristics, and the implications for human activities and their record;
3. The impacts of human activities and their record on coastal and estuarine processes and morphology;
4. Issues relating to the future management and conservation of the natural and archaeological heritage, including outstanding problems and future research needs.

This publication contains 29 papers based on a selection of the 32 oral presentations and more than 30 poster presentations made at the conference, and draws on examples from all over the world. The ordering of chapters has been arranged broadly to follow the sequence of the four main themes, starting with the shorter term, smaller scale and moving to the longer term, larger scale and management issues. There is, naturally, considerable overlap between themes in many of the contributions.

We hope that this book will serve not only as a record of scientific knowledge and concerns at the end of the first millennium, but also as a stimulus for further research endeavour and a significant influence on thinking about the ways in which natural processes, historical changes and the record of human activities in coastal and estuarine environments need to be taken into account in their future management. The need for breadth of approach, and a willingness toward sympathetic communication between different specialists, has never been greater.

Ken Pye & John R. L. Allen