
Very few natural bodies of water are as complex as estuaries. The estuaries all over the world are usually surrounded by high population density and are subjected to considerable industrial pressure. These two factors lead to multiple uses of the estuaries, and often these are mutually conflicting. There is a growing awareness that estuaries are fragile environment which has lead to increasing interest in the study of estuaries all over the world. This handbook provides in a compact form informations on most of the aspects which could be termed as conventional studies of estuaries. It consists of seven articles. These are on estuaries and estuarine sedimentation (K. R. Dyer), tidal movement (N. C. Glen), hydrographic surveying (D. J. Hooper), side scan sonar and seismic reflection profiling (B. D’Olier), sediment sampling and analysis (A. T. Buller and J. McManus), suspended sediment (J. N. McCave) measurement and analysis of water current, temperature, salinity and density (B. Kjerfve).

Dyer’s article deals with the definition, classification, modelling of and sedimentation in estuaries and provides the required background information for the subsequent articles. Each of these starts off with a brief description of the parameter being measured which are followed by field and laboratory equipment in use, their principles of operation, data collection, analysis and interpretation. McCave’s paper on suspended sediment is particularly a very useful compilation. Much of the sediment transported to the continental shelf from the land is routed through the estuaries and a knowledge of the physical, chemical and biological processes which affect the suspended sediments is necessary for understanding a variety of sedimentation and geochemical processes. Even though the handbook is compiled from the view point of estuarine studies, the techniques dealt with therein are equally applicable to oceanographic studies and these could be used by oceano- graphers very profitably. Numerous photographs, diagrams and a list of references for further reading are included in all the articles. Some names and addresses of the manufacturers of the important equipment mentioned in the text could have a helpful addition. The handbook, nevertheless, forms a very useful single source of the many techniques and instruments used in the study of estuaries.

—R. R. Nair