Meiofauna refers to small benthic and interstitial organisms that pass through a 500 (1000) μm sieve and are retained on a 44 μm (or 63, 31 μm, depending on authors) sieve (Giere 2009). The majority of recognized phyla have meiofaunal representatives. Nematodes are predominant in most bottom habitats, and harpacticoid copepods and foraminiferans are secondarily dominant in many environments. Introductions on meiofauna are given in Higgins & Thiel (1988) and Giere (2009).

The International Association of Meio-benthologists (IAM) publishes a biannual newsletter, Psammonalia, and sponsors a triennial international conference. Psammonalia is published in June and December. The first issue of Psammonalia was published 10 November 1966 and was two pages long, and recently, No. 160 of Psammonalia was published in December 2013 (IAM 2014).

The purpose of meiofauna conferences has always been to gather researchers from around the world to share and discuss the taxonomy and ecology of meiofauna. The first meio-benthologists’ international meeting dates back to July of 1969, when 28 researchers gathered at Tunis, Tunisia. At that time the organization was called the “Association of Meio-benthologists,” but the name was changed to “International Association of Meio-benthologists” in 1976 (IAM 2014). The community of meiofauna researchers grows with each conference, bringing together more enthusiasts to share their knowledge of the meio-benthos, and the conference reached its fifteenth meeting in 2013 (Table 1).

The Fifteenth International Meiofauna Conference (FiftIMCo) was held in Korea, marking the first time the conference was held in Asia. “Biodiversity of Meiofauna” was the slogan for the FiftIMCo. More than 120 meiofauna enthusiasts from around the world attended the conference. A preconference workshop was held on 15–20 July 2013 at Yeosu, Chonnam National University, and the main conference was held on 22–26 July 2013 at Ansan, Hanyang University.

The conference was divided into ten different sessions, covering a variety of topics related to the study of the meio-benthos. Morphology and evolution of meiofauna, diversity and distribution of ostracods, frontiers and advances in foraminifer research, meiofauna in particular aquatic habitats, and meiofauna in coastal waters are only a few of the many exciting topics the conference included. Special keynote speakers were invited to discuss the future of meiofaunal research. The conference included abstracts for 68 oral presentations and 69 abstracts for poster presentations from 120 participants from 24 nations.

This special issue of the Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington is dedicated to the “Fifteenth International Meiofauna Conference (FiftIMCo)” and contains 18 selected papers in two sections: I) “Biodiversity of Meiofauna” with ten papers, and II) “Invertebrate fauna from Korea” with eight papers. The papers presented in this issue represent the first collective publication of proceedings of a meeting of the International Meiofauna Conference since its inception.