# Contents

1. General introduction 7

2. Water quality dynamics and hydrology in riparian zones in the Netherlands 25

3. Nitrous oxide emission and denitrification in chronically nitrate-loaded riparian buffer zones 49
   *Journal of Environmental Quality 32:1194-1203 (2003)*

4. Spatial variation in denitrification and N$_2$O emission in relation to nitrate removal efficiency in an N stressed riparian buffer zone 67

5. Water table elevation controls on soil nitrogen cycling in riparian wetlands along a European climatic gradient
   *Biogeochemistry, 67(1), in press (2004)* 89

6. The role of vegetation and litter in the nitrogen dynamics of riparian buffer zones in Europe
   *Ecological Engineering, accepted (2004)* 107

7. Nitrogen transformation and retention in riparian buffer zones: a synthesis 133

References 153

Summary 175

Nederlandse samenvatting 183

Dankwoord 191

CV 197