

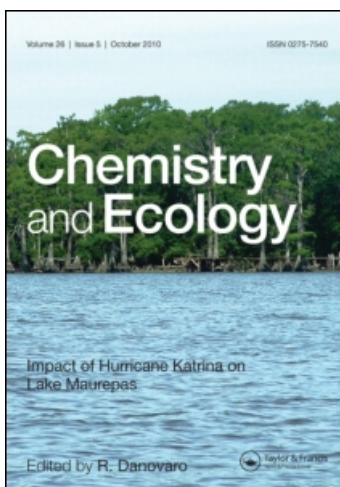
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Integrated Pollution Control, Drake, J.A.G. (Editor) (1994) 102pp. Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge. Isbn 0-85404-705-0, £37.50

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BOOK REVIEW

Integrated Pollution Control, Drake, J.A.G. (Editor) (1994) 102pp. Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge. ISBN 0-85404-705-0, £37.50.

Why has such a prestigious scientific society as the RSC published a book like this? One expects something special in 99 pages of A5-size text for £37.50. Instead, all one gets is a ragbag of 14 'chapters' based on papers given at a two-day symposium in 1993. The only clear integration between them is left to two pages of subject index. Chapters range from the reasonable to those that appear to be superficially edited copies of authors' hand-outs and transparencies. The book claims to provide a 'timely outline' and 'clearer picture' of integrated pollution control via a 'diversity of case studies'. David Slater of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution (HMIP) sets the standard in the first chapter, entitled 'How IPC is facilitating environmental protection'. This consists of six insubstantial pages of tub-thumping about 'regulator-industry' partnerships, lauding the preparation of a consultation paper on environmental and economic assessments. The 'timely outline' claim is dispelled when the Editor has to add a copy note to the fact that the consultation paper was issued in April 1994! The second chapter (by W.S. Forbes of the National Rivers Authority) provides a better overview of statutory water quality objectives—but again, it is out-of-date, the Government having decided to abandon fisheries and other use-class approaches in favour of a physicochemically-determined 'general quality assessment' (GQA) scheme in 1994. The third chapter makes the reader even more dissatisfied—can two pages of text and one reference really be considered to form an adequate contemporary review of 'Setting Air Quality Standards'?

The book improves slightly in later pages, although the remaining chapters form a strange mix of emphasis and information content. Industry is very concerned about the problems and costs of obtaining IPC authorisations from HMIP. Two case histories are offered (from BASF and BP Chemicals) but these are far too brief and superficial to offer much information. Similarly, chapters on environment management systems, BS 7750 and public relations, are so short they can only whet the appetite. In contrast, some of the chapters on specific IPC technologies are relatively more useful, e.g. those on decontamination of radioactivity, deep shaft effluent treatment, photolysis and land clean-up. This is perhaps not so surprising in that, at 9-10 pages long, these are two to three times as long as the majority of other chapters! And, unlike many others, they actually contain some references!

This book cannot be worth £37.50. As a typical symposium collection of authors' notes and overheads, it would have had some ephemeral value—providing its cost was included in the fees. That being said, some of the technological papers are worthy of expansion and inclusion in fuller texts.

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