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Roberto Danovaro

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Editorial: 20 years of Chemistry and Ecology

I write to introduce myself to readers and contributors as the new Editor-in-Chief. “Chemistry & Ecology” was first published in 1982, 20 years ago, and Dr. E.J Perkins (University of Strathclyde, Department of Biology, Marine Laboratory, Kilcreggan, Dunbartonshire, Scotland) was the Editor-in-Chief. Dr. G. Howells (Department of Zoology, University of Cambridge, Cambridge) collected the heritage of Dr. E.J Perkins, and launched the journal with new scopes. Dr. G. Howells managed the journal from 1987 to 2001, changing the Journal’s title from “Chemistry in Ecology” to “Chemistry and Ecology”. In January 2002 Dr. Howells left, but she will continue as Advisory editor.

I wish to thank the former Editor for the work done and for the sensitivity and courage she displayed in promoting the scientific works carried out not only in the most developed countries but also in emerging countries. This often required a huge amount of work for improving scientific quality and manuscript style, together with major editing. The ambition was the one of connecting emerging issues related to the problems of (new) chemicals into the environment and the interactions between ecology and chemistry. Last, but not least, promoting the use of “chemistry” in ecological research. Her expertise in radiochemistry and hydrobiology certainly facilitated the ability to cover different issues and broad thought integrated scientific topics, a hard issue for most environmental scientists.

In the last 20 years “Chemistry and Ecology” published more than 350 articles and hundreds of contributors from all parts of the world have been attracted by topics of the journal and therein published their results. The objective of the new Editorial Board is to continue improving the standard making this journal, in the next years, one of the most relevant outlets for these topics in the world. In January 2002 “Chemistry and Ecology” moved from Gordon & Breach to Taylor & Francis Publishing Group (London) that wanted to improve the journal by means of accurate editing, strict timing of publication and increasing its diffusion.

As the new Editor-in-Chief, I’m looking for new perspectives. Aims and scopes have been updated to the new scientific frontiers and opened to topics that 20 years ago were still unknown. From now on “Chemistry and Ecology” aims also at playing a key role in highlighting the contributions from multi-disciplinary approaches dealing with the following topics:

1. *Environmental pollution*: distribution, fate and ecological implications of pollutants including nutrients and key elements, in the atmospheric, soil and aquatic environments.

2. *Ecotoxicology*: responses to toxic agents at community, species, tissue, cellular and sub-cellular level, including aspects of uptake, metabolism and excretion of toxicants.
3. *Environmental bioremediation and biotechnology*: laboratory and field research on the identification, evaluation and use of biological/biotechnological items and supporting physical treatments for the restoration of contaminated soil and aquatic environments; laboratory and field research on microbial, plant or bio-fouling and its monitoring and their treatment;
4. *Biogeochemical cycles*: biogeochemical cycles in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems with special emphasis on the potential effects of pollutants.

An important aspect of the Journal is that its philosophy will remain open to the most innovative science. In the development of the journal, the former editor in Chief and the American Editor (Dr. I.W. Duedall) were assisted by an Editorial board, including M.S. Cresser (the reference for soil chemistry and biology and environmental quality assessment), S.M. Mudge (expertise in the assessment of environmental radioactivity and organic pollution), D. Osborn and V. Pravdic (environmental pollution). In the new course of the journal, other scientists covering new scientific fields are being integrated into the Editorial Board. I.M. Banat will cover the manuscripts dealing with environmental biotechnology, wastewater and soil bioremediation. Edward A.C. Macaulay will provide his expertise in the field of terrestrial and aquatic nutrient cycles. M. Holmer is one of the main European experts in biogeochemical cycling of N and P in the marine environment. M.D. Loye-Pilot is a renowned expert on atmospheric deposition of natural and anthropogenic elements. F. Regoli is a recognized expert in the field of environmental pollution and ecotoxicology. G. Van der Velde will make available his experience in the field of chemical treatments of fouling organisms. Finally, I'll be supported by two Assistant Editors, A. Pusceddu and A. Dell'Anno.

The journal, by facing these new scientific branches, will be stimulating, innovative and capable of attracting a large interest. To do this "Chemistry and Ecology" has to become highly efficient in all publishing processes. The journal acquired a new format and will increase the number of issues: from the 4 issues per year, which characterized the whole life of the journal, to 6 issues per year, starting from January 2003. The new "Chemistry and Ecology" will allow considering long manuscripts and will broaden the types of contributions: from "Research papers" (exciting findings fitting the aims and scope of the journal) to "Review articles" (state-of-art evaluations on defined research areas of general interest), from "Short notes" (short communications) to "Ideas" (very short communications expressing novel ideas or correspondence with respect to previously published work). The Review of Books, already well established in the history of the journal, will be maintained. This would mean also a better performance in terms of Impact Factor. A priority will be given to the quality and rapidity of the review process. This would obviously mean the increase in the flow rate of manuscripts, a better selection of the science published and the improvement of the quality of the journal.

We are just at the beginning and much work has yet to be done, but we have legs and breath to run.

Roberto Danovaro