

Editorial

Dear Colleagues,

This Special Issue of the *Journal of Peptide Science* is dedicated to the 1st International Congress on Natural Peptides to Drugs (NP2D) that was held in Zermatt, Switzerland in December 2004. When we initially considered launching this new multidisciplinary event, we were anxious to see the level of support the idea would receive. We were not disappointed and the result was such a fantastic story, that we have now decided to move ahead for a second NP2D congress in April 2006.

On the one hand, our basic idea was to stimulate interactions amongst those for whom being part of an adventure aimed at bringing a peptide drug on the market is a dream. On the other hand, we wanted to create a constructive debate for a better understanding of the many complex traps paving the way from research to market. To reach our ambitious goal, we decided to focus our efforts on three main axes:

- bringing together worldwide leading peptide experts in research, lead discovery, lead optimisation, industrial production, drug development, drug delivery, regulatory issues and marketing,
- covering the many scientific areas linked to natural peptides such as antimicrobials, hormones, enzyme inhibitors, toxins and other bioactive peptides of biomedical relevance,
- offering conditions for a warm and friendly atmosphere by proposing ample time for social activities and by organising the congress in a five star hotel of one of the most beautiful places in the world: the small village of Zermatt at an altitude of 1620 m in the heart of the Swiss Alps and at the foot of the majestic Matterhorn mountain.

We were delighted to see 120 participants of various horizons and from more than 20 countries attending the event. NP2D started with fresh snow and under the sun and turned out to a true social, scientific and business success (you may visit the congress web-site for more information). We are grateful to the authors for their contributions, the referees for their efforts, pertinence and time. As you will see, the ten articles of this special issue cover a wide variety of fields and nicely represent the natural peptides to drugs field. We hope that you will enjoy reading them.

Finally, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to the scientific steering committee, to our sponsors and exhibitors, to the speakers, to all the participants for their confidence and for the nice atmosphere they created. We are also grateful to all of those who helped from the shadow-side. We hope to spend more such wonderful days during the next NP2D congress that will be held on 18–21 April 2006 at the same place, and we warmly invite you to join us. More information is available on the NP2D website at: <http://www.np2d.com>

On behalf of NP2D,

Philippe Bulet, Dimitrios Noukakis and Reto Stöcklin
Guest Editors

