

Preface

Under the 6th Framework Program for Research, the European Commission established a series of priority lines, in order to support the direct policy needs expressed by various General Directorates. In this sense, the project entitled: Screening methods for Water data InFormaTion in support of the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (SWIFT-WFD) has been carried out in order to support the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). Within the SWIFT project different tasks have been carried out including the organization of seminars, courses, interlaboratory comparison exercises, different meeting, scientific interchange platforms, and three focus workshops. The first of these focus workshops was on "Validation of robustness of sensors and bioassays for screening pollutants", organized by IIQAB-CSIC (Barcelona) and the Institut Menorquí d'Estudis, chaired by Professor Damià Barceló and co-chaired by Professor Richard Greenwood and Dra Marinel·la Farré with the objective to bring together technologies on sensors, biosensors and bioassays that have been widely developed and applied for determining a variety of pollutants in water during the last few years together with new developments in the field.

During the workshop 27 lectures and 7 posters were presented on sensors, biosensors and bioassays developed in Europe for environmental monitoring. An overview of the state-of-the-art in Europe was extended on catalytic, optical, and DNA electrochemical biosensors, new technologies such as nanosensors, rapid screening tests for estrogenicity, immunoassays for biological and environmental applications, and rapid bioassays for risk assessment. Finally, the results and conclusions of the first

European interlaboratory exercise on water toxicity using the bioluminescence of *Vibrio fischeri*, organised by the IIQAB-CSIC in the context of the SWIFT-WFD project during 2004, were presented and discussed along several lectures. On the other hand, a new inter-laboratory ring exercise on estrogenicity by YEAST assays, which will be organized by the IIQAB-CSIC, and that conducted during 2005, was also presented.

This special issue of *Talanta* contains 10 selected papers presented at this workshop covering a variety of topics. This type of workshop is a unique platform where analytical chemists, environmental chemists, policy makers, water quality managers and biosensor/bioassays specialists and instrument manufacturers, can meet together and develop common strategies to solve real-world environmental applications in the area of screening methods for water pollution control. Finally, I would like to thank my co-workers Dra Marinel·la Farré and Sara Rodríguez as well as Dr. J.M. Vidal, of the local organization committee in Menorca. The next workshop of the SWIFT project is planned sometime on the Spring of 2006 in Barcelona on the topic "Identification of protocols for the implementation of the Water Framework Directive". We are looking forward to meeting you there.

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