

Editorial

Dear authors and readers:

We enter the year 2000 with the prospect of remarkable changes in scientific publishing during the first years of the millennium. Electronic media have developed into a vehicle that will be increasingly used for communication, publishing and archiving in science. This may imply that electronic depositories rapidly become new platforms of scientific documentation in biology similarly to previous developments in physical sciences. All existing high-quality journals, including *FEBS Letters*, have to meet this challenge. This should not compromise the quality of peer reviewing, but it means that traditional journals have to meet the speed and wide accessibility provided by electronic platforms. *FEBS Letters* is happy to face this challenge.

In his goodbye, Prof. Giorgio Semenza summarized the success of *FEBS Letters* (see the last issue of 1999). This has been due to the devotion that Giorgio and his predecessor, Prof. Datta, have given to this journal. I feel the obligation to continue this effort when I now take on the responsibilities as the next Managing Editor. I wish to express our gratitude to Giorgio who has fostered *FEBS Letters* for the past 14 years, and leaves its management in a very good shape. I am also happy that he continues as a member of the Editorial Board.

FEBS Letters is available on the web (<http://www.elsevier.nl/febs>). This web site has been created by our publisher, Elsevier, and also contains papers in preprint form. These appear on the web about one week after the day of acceptance. This is one of the ways in which *FEBS Letters* provides the authors and readership rapid access to publications. It is clear that we, like others, are moving towards electronic handling of submission in the near future. This should again

shorten the overall publication time (now about 8 weeks) and reduce the cost of manuscript submission.

At the moment, we are setting up the *FEBS Letters* Editorial Office at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory in Heidelberg. This central office will take an active role in the initial stage of manuscript handling. Handling of the large number of manuscripts that pass the editorial system annually (ca. 3500) requires better coordination. The new office will receive all submissions, make the initial quality check and distribute the papers to the Editors who will then carry out the actual evaluation of papers as before.

In future, *FEBS Letters* would like to provide more space for short reviews ('minireviews' as we call them). We are also willing to organize special issues of the journal more frequently than before. Authors who have a special need for publication space (for instance, when a genome project matures) may approach the Editorial Office with such requests.

The authors were previously instructed to submit their papers to the Editor who is closest to their scientific field. From now onwards, all submissions should be sent to

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I wish you all a pleasant, prosperous and productive year 2000.

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Matti Saraste