Preface

The role of Reviews is to publish detailed scientific review articles on all aspects of environmental contamination and associated toxicological consequences. Such articles facilitate the often complex task of accessing and interpreting cogent scientific data within the confines of one or more closely related research fields.

In the nearly 50 years since Reviews of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology (formerly Residue Reviews) was first published, the number, scope, and complexity of environmental pollution incidents have grown unabated. During this entire period, the emphasis has been on publishing articles that address the presence and toxicity of environmental contaminants. New research is published each year on a myriad of environmental pollution issues facing people worldwide. This fact, and the routine discovery and reporting of new environmental contamination cases, creates an increasingly important function for Reviews.

The staggering volume of scientific literature demands remedy by which data can be synthesized and made available to readers in an abridged form. Reviews addresses this need and provides detailed reviews worldwide to key scientists and science or policy administrators, whether employed by government, universities, or the private sector.

There is a panoply of environmental issues and concerns on which many scientists have focused their research in past years. The scope of this list is quite broad, encompassing environmental events globally that affect marine and terrestrial ecosystems; biotic and abiotic environments; impacts on plants, humans, and wildlife; and pollutants, both chemical and radioactive; as well as the ravages of environmental disease in virtually all environmental media (soil, water, air). New or enhanced safety and environmental concerns have emerged in the last decade to be added to incidents covered by the media, studied by scientists, and addressed by governmental and private institutions. Among these are events so striking that they are creating a paradigm shift. Two in particular are at the center of ever-increasing media as well as scientific attention: bioterrorism and global warming. Unfortunately, these very worrisome issues are now superimposed on the already extensive list of ongoing environmental challenges.

The ultimate role of publishing scientific research is to enhance understanding of the environment in ways that allow the public to be better informed. The term “informed public” as used by Thomas Jefferson in the age of enlightenment
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