Preface

An interdisciplinary approach is not only a key characteristic of synthetic biology but has also been the endeavour of our work in analysing this new field. This book is the result of a joint effort of eight researchers from fields as different as synthetic biology, xenobiology, microbiology, philosophy, ethics, social science and law. The project group met fourteen times over a period of 3 years to discuss and frame the topic, and to introduce each other to the individual perspectives on synthetic biology. Getting to know these manifold viewpoints helped to develop an integrated perspective presented here. Complex as synthetic biology is, this book should be seen as an interdisciplinary toolbox to facilitate and differentiate its societal evaluation. Members and authors of this study are Michael Bölker (Marburg), Nediljko Budisa (Berlin), Kristin Hagen (Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler), Christian Illies (Bamberg), Georg Toepfer (Berlin), Gerd Winter (Bremen) and Margret Engelhard (Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler), who chaired the group. The group received, in addition, input from external speakers whose contributions enriched the study, and in this respect the authors' special thanks go to Roger Brownsword (London), Arnim von Gleich (Bremen) and Christoph Then (Munich).

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