



About the book and congress series “Arsenic in the Environment”

Although arsenic has been known as the ‘silent toxin’ since ancient times, and the hazard of arsenic of geogenic origin in drinking water resources was described from different places around the world long ago—e.g. in Argentina in 1917— it is only in the last two decades, that it has received overwhelming public attention worldwide. As a consequence of the biggest arsenic calamity in the world detected more than two decades ago in Southern Asia, there has been an exponential rise in scientific interest that has triggered high quality research. Since then arsenic hazard in drinking water resources, soils, plants and air of predominantly geogenic origin, the propagation of arsenic in the food chain, the chronic affects of arsenic ingestion by humans, and their toxicological and related public health consequences, have been described in many parts of the world, and every year there new countries or regions where the arsenic hazard is newly discovered. These discoveries together with the recent lowering of the regulatory limits for arsenic concentration in drinking water to 10 µg/l, means that number of people known to be exposed to drinking water concentrations of arsenic higher than the regulatory limit are increasing, and the estimate of 200 million people exposed worldwide to arsenic through drinking water alone, may now be an underestimate.

The book series “Arsenic in the Environment” (Balkema/CRC Press/Francis & Taylor), is an inter- and multidisciplinary source of information, making an effort to link the occurrence of geogenic arsenic in different environments and media including ground- and surface water, soil and air, and its effect on human society. The series fulfills the growing interest on the arsenic issue worldwide which is being accompanied by stronger regulations on arsenic contents in drinking water and food, which were and are adapted not only by the industrialized countries, but increasingly by developing countries.

The book series covers all fields of research concerning arsenic in the environment with an aim to present an integrated approach from its occurrence in rocks and their mobilization into the ground- and surface water, soil and air, its transport therein, the pathways of arsenic and their introduction into the food chain up to the uptake by humans. Human arsenic exposure, bioavailability, metabolism and toxicology are treated together with related public health effects and risk assessments in order to better manage the arsenic-bearing terrestrial and aquatic environments to reduce human arsenic exposure. Arsenic removal technologies and other methodologies to mitigate the arsenic problem are addressed not only from the technological, but also from economic and social, point of view considering legislative and political issues and international cooperation, as e.g. international agreements or programs for mitigating the arsenic problem. Only such inter- and multidisciplinary approaches, would allow case-specific selection of optimal mitigation measures of to provide arsenic safe drinking water, food, and air.

We have an ambition to make this book series an international, multi- and interdisciplinary source of knowledge and a platform for arsenic research oriented to the direct solution of problems with considerable social impact and relevance rather than only focusing on cutting edge and breakthrough research in physical, chemical, toxicological, medical and other specific issues on arsenic on a broader environmental realm. The book series shall also form a consolidated source with information on worldwide occurrences of arsenic, which otherwise is dispersed and often hard to access, is bundled, and therefore anybody can easily find and access information about arsenic related topics. It shall also have a role to increase awareness and knowledge among administrators, policy makers and company executives, on the problem and to improve the international and bilateral cooperation on geogenic arsenic hazard and its effects globally.

As consequence we see this book series as comprehensive information base, which includes authored or edited books from world-leading scientists on their specific field of arsenic research, but will also contain volumes with selected papers from international or regional congresses or other scientific events. Further on, the abstract books of the homonymous international congress series, which we organize biannually in different parts of the world shall appear in this book series. The series shall be open for anybody, in person or as scientific associations, society and scientific networks, for bringing in new book projects. Supported by a strong multi-disciplinary editorial board, book proposals and manuscripts will be peer reviewed and evaluated. The first volume with the title “Geogenic Arsenic in Groundwater of Latin America” is publishes in 2008, one of the following up volumes has the title is “Arsenic in Taiwan—past and present”.

Jochen Bundschuh
Prosun Bhattacharya
(congress series organizers
and editors of book series)