

A distinct pleasure...

It is indeed a pleasure to edit this new periodical. Assessment of the value and merit of a new publication must include many factors, of which the scientific standard of contributions probably looms very high for many readers, the number and scope of contributions, circulation numbers, the inevitable economic prospects in launching a new periodical, reactions from the readership. However, the personal and professional value for each single reader is undoubtedly the singular most important factor determining the long-term success or failure: Why am I reading another new publication? Do I have the time for this?

Although still very early in the life of *TOS forum*, these are already factors of keen interest for the Editor and the Publisher both. And we are greatly satisfied—with the reactions shown, indirectly as well as explicitly, so far... In fact, these crucial indicators prompted a few directed solicitations, in the form of open invitations to report here on the personal and institutional/company impressions and reactions to both WCSB6, Lima (2013) and SAMPLING2014, Perth (2014). This *TOS forum* issue 3 both carries a personal assessment of WCSB6, submitted “from a young professional from the mining industry” as well as no less than three reports on SAMPLING2014, which at the time of writing is not even two month ago. Talk of convenient timing! These testimonies are meant to provide salient information to all in the world sampling community that, for one or other reason, unfortunately could not personally attend these events, but also to colleagues outside our own narrow circles, for example to the NIR spectroscopy community in particular, which has adopted a professional interest in all manners of sampling recently—a pleasure to behold. In this endeavour these contributions fulfil several of the main communication objectives of the *TOS forum*—a pleasure to behold.

Among the strict scientific contributions, please find the second instalment of Francis Pitard’s treatment of “A new System of Units”, and a “review of sampling and monitoring protocols related to radioactive elements in fractured rock aquifers” by Gaather Mahed, South Africa. Another contribution,

from Brazil, is from the mining sector with a theme that surely must interest a very wide audience, perhaps not only in this sector: “Illusionary reconciliation”. Similarly, *TOS forum* issue 3 carries a detailed summary of a recent PhD from a parallel, and not always obviously inter-related sector, that of commodity sorting. It turns out that there is a more than subtle connection to the Theory of Sampling after all... How to sort in a reliable manner, if/when the critical calibration is not based on representative sampling the lot eventually to be sorted in its entirety? Perhaps, or perhaps not, surprisingly, this issue is far from always taken care of with sufficient professionalism (*TOS*) writes the newly minted PhD Chistoffer Robben.

The featured piece of *TOS forum* issue 3 is the *Aloha Sampler*—a newly developed concept, and equipment, which will stun the reader by its “ingenuity in simplicity”. It has been the Editor’s wish to present the *Aloha Sampler* ever since WCSB6, but several distracting and delaying issues have intervened—but this is now a moot point: ENJOY reading about the solution to a very difficult objective: representative sampling of surface waters.

The reader will also find two illuminating opinion pieces from Dominique Francois-Bongarcon and Claudia Paoletti, both addressing the needs of the world sampling community but from diverse points-of-view: the one from an organisational viewpoint: Samplers, what needs to be done?, the other summarising a decade of frustration, giving insight into what, among other mandates, is driving the GMO Unit at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA).

This issue appears to be a perfect example of the scope for this new communication platform for the world sampling community—between conferences. It is to be hoped that the distinct pleasure editing and publishing *TOS forum* translates into also making it—a distinct pleasure—reading it. You tell us!

P.S. *TOS forum* issue 4 will carry a plethora of information regarding the World Conference on Sampling and Blending, WCSB7, Bordeaux, 10–12 June 2015; you will find a reference to the conference homepage on page 2 in this issue. At the very least fix this week in your calendar now ;-)

The Aloha Sampler™ and its inventor, Chuck Ramsey. Read more on page 12.



Be part of the next issue of *TOS forum*!

We welcome contributions to *TOS forum*: articles, letters, comment, news or news of PhD projects for the PhD Presentations column.

TOS forum Editor, Kim Esbensen, would be pleased to discuss any ideas you may have and to receive your contributions.

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