

## EDITORIAL

It was with some trepidation that we accepted the invitation to write the first editorial of the Journal for Bioprocessing of Solid Waste and Sludge. The Journal represents the latest stage in the development of the ORBIT organisation. The Association, as many of you know, started out as a group of like minded researchers, practitioners and friends to avoid the proliferation of too many similar conferences and workshops. The first conference under the ORBIT banner took place in [Harrogate in 1997](#), which was followed by [Weimar in 1999](#), and we now await with eager anticipation [Orbit 2001](#) in Sevilla in May this year.

The whole issue of treatment and utilisation of organic wastes has grown in importance at a remarkable rate since the Bologna conference over five years ago. In Europe it is reflected in activities such as the rolling out of the Landfill Directive into national legislation. Its 20 year programme heralds the onset of progressive, yet massive, change for all states in the EU. Globally there are many other manifestations of the concern over organic waste which is shown in both fiscal and legal measures set up to reduce the impact of their uncontrolled disposal and degradation. Many of these controls have been set up as a result of concerns expressed at the Rio and Kyoto conferences over the impact of the uncontrolled release of methane and carbon dioxide on global warming.

In recognition of the speed with which change was happening, the founding members of the ORBIT Association saw that there was a need for this rate of change to be supported through an appropriate journal. The idea was not only to present state-of-the-art ideas in research but also to look at a wide range of other issues, which could potentially bring about change in the way in which we treat, utilise and manage organic wastes. The nature of the changes seemed naturally to call for a means of communication that was both rapid and global, hence the launch of this journal in an electronic, web-based format.

We hope that you enjoy the first issue and that it goes at least part way to achieving some of the ambitious targets we have set for it.

*on behalf of the Founding Editors*

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