Letter from the Chief Editor

The final issue of the 19th edition of the APJMBB 2011 aptly showcases scientific advancement and technologies used to study, improve and utilise crops and plants. The utilisation of Biomass of economic importance has spurred research into their management against biotic stresses (see Norwati et al., pp 149-156 for Teak) as well as the development of efficient bioconversion technologies to enable their use as future feedstocks (LongWee et al., pp 117-120 for Sago).

The issue of food security and feedstock sustainability remains at the forefront of sustainable development for both developing and developed countries. The scarcity of new arable land and the need to adapt food, feed and now feedstock crops to less than favourable conditions adds to the issues and certainly future solutions will lie in the understanding of mechanisms that underpin the fundamental processes of these resources (Zainal and Turnbull, pp 121-130) and our increasing understanding on the relationships between the species (Song et al., pp 157-168). The development of technologies that aid metabolic engineering such as the use of RNAi also holds much promise for improving the efficiency of many cellular processes in plants that could lead to better crops in the future (Singh and Kumar, pp 137-148).

Not least these advances and their potential benefits must be proactively communicated to the public as proposed by Navarro and Hautea (see pp 131-136) in recounting their experiences in the Asia Pacific region. Acceptance of new technologies can be a challenging issue but more often than not it is a result of poor or ineffective communication between the stakeholders. The involvement and the engagement of the public at an early stage in discussing the potential outcomes of scientific advancements must be part and parcel of the developmental process of any technology and it is thus imperative that scientists be also properly skilled and tooled for this process.

Finally we are very happy to announce that the APJMBB will be entering its 20th year of publication in 2012. As the flagship journal of the Malaysian Society of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, the journal will continue to improve its services and to enhance its role in providing an open access platform for disseminating scientific advancement in the field of molecular biology and biotechnology in the Asia Pacific and beyond. Thank you to our valued community, the contributors and readers, for all your support over the years. A special acknowledgement is due to the past editors of the journal, the excellent technical support from our management teams and to the generosity of our past and present institutional sponsors: Universiti Putra Malaysia and University of Malaya.

Watch out for the 20th anniversary edition next year!

With best wishes

Rofina Yasmin Othman, PhD
Chief Editor,
Asia Pacific Journal of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology