Preface

This volume is based on a Workshop held at the University of Surrey in Guildford, UK, from August 15 to 19, 1983. It was produced under the guidance of the Scientific Group on Methodologies for the Safety Evaluation of Chemicals (SGOMSEC), an international group of scientists concerned with human health and ecological effects. This group examines methods for the evaluation of effects of chemicals, attempts to identify those which are now useful, and suggests procedures for developing new or improving inadequate ones. The two preceding SGOMSEC Workshops have been published by John Wiley & Sons*.

SGOMSEC operates under the joint sponsorship of the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) of the World Health Organization (WHO) in which are represented the International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE).

It has been recognized for many years that although real exposures of people and non-human biota are generally to mixtures of chemicals rather than to pure entities, evaluations in the field or in the laboratory have frequently been carried out as though only a single chemical was involved. Accordingly, SGOMSEC attempted to identify the limitations, practicalities, and utility of dealing with chemicals in mixtures.

This work consists of 42 papers by internationally recognized experts in their fields; the papers were commissioned many months in advance of the Workshop. At the Workshop the contributors as well as other invited participants prepared a Joint Report. This was edited by the SGOMSEC editors in consultation with the chairpersons of the subgroups.

This publication represents, we believe, a first systematic attempt to examine methods for evaluation of the effects of mixtures of chemicals. It is recognized that the task is an extremely difficult one and that complete success is not to be anticipated. The Joint Report takes note of this and suggests directions which research and further study might take in order to improve our approach to the subject.

* *Methods for Assessing the Effects of Chemicals on Reproductive Functions*, SGOMSEC 1; *Methods for Estimating Risk of Chemical Injury: Human and Non-human Biota and Ecosystems*, SGOMSEC 2.

We are much indebted to Dr Dennis Parke not only for his scientific contributions but as well for hosting the meeting at the University of Surrey. His leadership in providing facilities at the conference centre at the University of Surrey was important to the success of the Workshop. We are also indebted to Mrs Mary Lewis for her management of the logistics at the Workshop, to Mr Smith, Director of the conference centre, and to Dr Horth of the Department of Biochemistry for his assistance before and during the Workshop. Ms Sumohandoyo of IPCS was a great aid in organizing and conducting the secretarial work throughout the meeting. The reviews of Drs M. Chadwick, M. Mayes, R. Morris, E. Scherer, E. Smith, and W. Winner were greatly appreciated. We owe special thanks to Dr Patrick Sheehan who both as conference coordinator and as a participating scientist made important contributions to the Workshop.

Dr Velimir Vouk served as editor of this publication during the Workshop and later, until his death in July, 1984. In this he was assisted by Janet Guthrie, Judith Edmonds and Mary Laster of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. Thereafter the editing was completed by Dr Gordon Butler and Susan Asher, assisted by Evelyn Monson, of the National Research Council of Canada. Throughout this period, especially in the organizational stages, Joyce McManus and Jane Galvin of the New York University Medical Center helped with the tracking and typing of manuscripts.

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