

Preface

The International Biohydrometallurgy Symposium 2007 is the 17th event in this series. The first symposium took place in Wolfenbüttel, Germany, in the year 1977. In recent years attention has focused increasingly on the role that microorganisms play in the treatment of minerals, metals, coal, oil, waste materials and also in related environmental issues. Today, besides new technologies for the production of raw materials and valuable substances, the main tasks are focused on the remediation of former mining sites and environmental protection connected with the different kinds of mining and the mining industries. Increasing contributions to the field from disciplines like genetics, biochemistry, electrochemistry, microbiology, hydrometallurgy, chemistry, geology and process engineering have affected the rapid development as well as pressure from legislation of the European Union and of national governments. The International Biohydrometallurgy Symposium IBS2007 is held at the well-equipped DECHEMA premises in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The Symposium provides a forum to present the latest scientific and technological advances in this area, and an opportunity for biotechnologists, practitioners and environmentalists to meet and discuss challenging future trends in the field.

Furthermore, the symposium is held in Germany for the second time! Due to the geographic location we have a large number of participants from the new EU member states and developing countries. The latter often encounter a wide range of problems related to post-mining remediation. Consequently it is a unique opportunity to demonstrate the manifold remediation techniques in ore mining, uranium mining as well as coal and lignite mining, which have been put into use in Germany as a result of former mining activities. Therefore, the meeting will be an opportunity for scientists and engineers from all over the world to study biohydrometallurgical applications, to learn how to implement them as well as to find and/or facilitate new ways of collaboration.

Wolfgang Sand (Chair IBS 2007)