

Preface

The subject of pollution remains high in the public consciousness and has been a significant factor on the political agenda of both developed and developing countries for a number of years. The subject is now seen as a priority area for research and for technological developments. It is therefore a fast-moving field and one where books require updating on a rather frequent basis. The First Edition of this book was published in 1983 and arose from the collation of course notes from a Residential School held at Lancaster University in 1982, supplemented with additional chapters to give a fuller overview of the field. Subsequent editions have expanded the coverage so as to provide a fairly full overview of the field of chemical and radioactive pollution. The level of treatment remains much the same, being essentially introductory, although covering some more advanced aspects. The very high sales achieved by the book suggests that this has been very popular and *Pollution* is used both as a teaching text and a reference book by practitioners requiring broad knowledge of the field.

In a fast-moving field it is necessary to scrutinize contents carefully and to ensure thorough updating. The Fourth Edition of *Pollution* has one wholly new chapter on *Clean Technologies and Industrial Ecology* reflecting the growing importance of pollution prevention as opposed to end-of-pipe controls. Whilst authorship of the majority of the other chapters remains in the same hands, a large proportion of these chapters have been thoroughly revised to reflect new developments in the field. Additionally, some glaring omissions have been addressed, such as the inclusion of microbiological contamination as well as chemical pollution of water in the chapter on *Drinking Water Quality and Health*. The subject of sewage sludge treatment is dealt with at greater length in the chapter on *Sewage and Sewage Sludge Treatment* reflecting the pressures generated by the cessation of disposal at sea. Similarly, the subject of local air quality management now features strongly in the chapter on *Air Pollution, Sources, Concentrations and Measurements* following the implementation of the UK National Air Quality Strategy since its launch in 1997.

Once again, the chapter authors have been selected on the basis of their established reputation in the field and their ability to write with clarity of presentation. I am delighted that a high proportion of those who wrote for the Third Edition have updated their contributions for the Fourth Edition. A number of those in fast-moving areas have completely re-written their contributions.

Comparing the Fourth with the First Edition of this book, I am struck by the explosion in knowledge in this vital area. Environmental pollution is now a very major area of research, consultancy and technological development, and I hope that this book goes some way towards providing an authoritative knowledge base for those working within the field.

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