

**Dear readers of ALTEX,**

While editing the current issue, we have – as quite often in life – received good news and sad news, which I must share with you. The very good news is that Thomas Hartung has started in his new position as head of CAAT in Baltimore. The sad news is that a highly respected member of our editorial board, Gotthard M. Teutsch, the pioneer animal ethicist and animal welfare advocate, passed away on April 20. As you may recall, we dedicated the last issue of 2008 to him on the occasion of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Very early on, when the ethics of animal protection in science had not yet been established, Gotthard M. Teutsch was an outstanding advocate of a better treatment of animals. We are deeply sorry that we can no longer count on his advice, and he will be deeply missed by the animal welfare community. On page 146 you will find a short obituary dedicated to Gotthard M. Teutsch, a longer one will follow in ALTEXethik.

Despite this sad news, we are happy at the same time that finally one of our dreams has come true: Thomas Hartung has been appointed to succeed Alan Goldberg as head of CAAT (Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing) at the prestigious Johns Hopkins University (JHU) in Baltimore (USA), the most influential centre for promoting the 3Rs in the USA. Owing to generous funding by the Doerenkamp-Zbinden-Foundation, Thomas now also holds the Doerenkamp-Zbinden Chair for “Evidence-based-Toxicology“ (EBT) at the Bloomberg School of Public Health at JHU. His inauguration on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2009 will not only be a very special day for Thomas but for all who have supported him over the years on his way from Konstanz, Germany via Ispra, Italy to Baltimore, where he will take advantage of a unique environment to establish *in vitro* toxicology as the basis for EBT. Although we know that his start in America may not be easy, he can build on the foundations laid by Alan Goldberg in the past 25 years and that Alan has agreed to provide guidance during the first years as chairman of the CAAT board. We all appreciate that the colleagues on the board of the Doerenkamp-Zbinden-Foundation and in particular Mrs. Doerenkamp had the courage to provide Thomas with the best environment to realise his vision of EBT.

Thus we are proud that in the current issue Thomas, who has already established a new ALTEX editorial office in Baltimore, is contributing two articles illustrating his new activities. In the first edition of “CAATfeed” he illustrates the activities initiated at CAAT, and the article from his series “Food for thought...” is devoted to “Evidence-based Toxicology“ (EBT). This latter article reminds us that Sebastian Hoffmann, one of his students, whom many of us have met, focused his thesis on “evidence-based *in vitro* toxicology”. Over the years Thomas realised that the more complex toxicology becomes, the more we need EBT.

Meanwhile, he has shared his views with an increasing number of colleagues and has received very positive responses. However, a critical mass is needed and may be established in the USA, in particular when the new concept “Toxicology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” is funded by the NIH.

In the first regular article in this issue, Anja Henn and her colleagues from the Doerenkamp-Zbinden Chair for alternative *in vitro* methods in Konstanz describe their success in establishing BV2 cells as an alternative model system for brain inflammation. The new *in vitro* model is well characterised at the molecular level and holds promise to significantly reduce severe suffering of animals in experiments on infectious diseases of the central nervous system. In the second article, Mahtab Bahram-soltani and her colleagues from the Veterinary School of the Free University of Berlin give an overview of *in vitro* models used to study the complex processes of angiogenesis and antiangiogenesis, which play an important role in many diseases, including tumour growth and metastasis. The angiogenesis models allow the study of a very complex mechanism in a simple, reproducible and cost efficient manner. In the last contribution, Ursula Sauer critically reviews animal experiments conducted in the new and promising field of nanotechnology to confirm product safety. The German Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) as well as the European Commission fund an extensive number of studies to find new applications in nanotechnology and nanomedicine. Despite the absence of adverse effects of nanomaterials in consumer products so far, e.g. in cosmetics, additional safety testing will be required. Although from a very formal perspective, the suitability of *in vitro* methods to assess human safety of the new techniques has not been proven, there is no evidence that internationally accepted *in vitro* toxicity tests cannot be used in the safety assessment of nanomaterials used in finished cosmetic products.

Several interesting congress reports and the news section round off the issue and, last but not least, we very cordially invite you to join us at the 7<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Animal Use and Alternatives in the Life Sciences (WC7), which will be held in Rome from August 30 to September 3, 2009 ([www.aimgroup.eu/2009/WC7](http://www.aimgroup.eu/2009/WC7)) and which is co-chaired by Thomas Hartung and Herman Koeter.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the WC7 this summer in Rome!

With best wishes



Horst Spielmann