

# WOOD AND FIBER SCIENCE

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## CHARTING A COURSE TO A NEW *WOOD & FIBER SCIENCE*

The Society of Wood Science and Technology (SWST) has survived and flourished for over 50 yr because we have provided a peer-reviewed outlet for state-of-the-art science in wood science and its many technologies, professional consensus for standards development and educational direction and accreditation, and a diverse venue for practitioners in wood science and its many technologies to share and expand their professional vision.

To accomplish this, we have regularly assessed our mission, vision, and strategic plan.

We have also periodically changed the way we deliver our science-based information to our members and to our international wood science audience through our annual meetings and our flagship journal, *Wood & Fiber Science* (W&FS).

Over the last 6 yr, I have had the privilege to serve SWST, first as a Director and then as an Executive Officer. One accomplishment that I believe we have excelled in is our ongoing reassessment of our Society's mission, vision, and strategic plan. We all realize the need to expand our base from wood to wood- and other cellulose-based biomaterials. Our revised mission and vision statement now reflect that expanded scope. Our new SWST Strategic Plan stresses that wood and other lignocelluloses have material and technological commonalities. We must embrace these commonalities if we are to succeed and flourish as a Society.

We have come to understand the changing ways in how our members share and use our

science and technology. In today's electronic world, science-based journals exclusively tied to paper publishing are struggling, while those embracing electronic publishing are growing in scientific impact and in popularity. In our extremely economically driven world, similar issues exist when comparing journals that have page charges with those that do not. Many of the latter are flourishing while some of the former are lagging behind in scientific diversity, global impact, and numbers of submissions.

Once again, it is time for SWST to respond and adopt its science-delivery systems. As a start, in 2008 we began hosting our annual conventions in international cities (ie 2008 Chile, 2010 Switzerland, 2012 China, and a site to be determined in 2014). This expansion in our outreach has been successful in increasing membership outside North America and increasing our "brand" recognition internationally compared with other national-based societies in wood and cellulosic biomaterial science and its many technologies.

However, in our "flat world" of this now second decade of the Third Millennium, we must recognize that our current and future members desire quick access to E-publications, and they want it for free. As such, the SWST Executive Board is now considering new ideas, including:

1. how we might reduce or eliminate page charges for W&FS;
2. how to migrate W&FS from a paper journal to a completely electronic journal; and most critically,

3. how to accomplish such ideas without lowering our scientific IMPACT or incurring financial risk to our future as a Society.
- and enhancing the global impact of our wood and cellulosic biomaterial science and their technologies.

The Executive Board values your input on these issues and seeks your guidance on what and how we can do a better job increasing membership, improving our value to our members,

*Past President, SWST*  
*Adjunct Professor,*  
*University of Minnesota*

JERROLD E. WINANDY