Omenn

Environmental Biotechnology

Reducing Risks from Environmental Chemicals through Biotechnology

Gilbert S. Omenn Dean, School of Public Health and Community Medicine University of Washington Seattle, Washington 98195 On behalf of the University of Washington, the City of Seattle, the Steering Committee, and the sponsoring agencies, corporations, and organ izations, I welcome you. \Ve all expect this Conference to stimulate further what is becoming an important application of biotechnology in an area in which our society experiences considerable frustration and gloom: the management of hazardous wastes. It is an all-too-frequent refrain that technology has its benefits and its risks. To many--in the lay pUblic, at least--the damaging notion has taken hold that we are capable of creating problems but are less capable of finding solutions. Chemical streams from industry, agriculture, municipal operations, and household operations have contaminated groundwater, drinking water, and soils, and have undermined the productivity of agri culture and the quality of life. In the meantime, however, we have im proved our quality of life in immeasurable ways through some related developments. The challenge is to continue the enhancements while modifying or preventing the damage.

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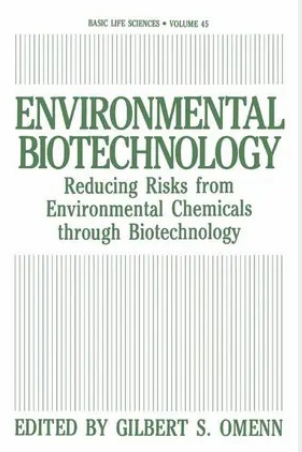

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