

Foreword

Natural gas occupies an increasingly important position in the global structure of energy resources. The effective development and utilization of natural gas resources has attracted great attention from academic and industrial sources in recent years, and is considered a challenging topic for catalytic scientists and engineers. However, no international academic journals specialized in the reporting of worldwide research developments in the field of natural gas chemistry currently have existed so far.

The *Journal of Natural Gas Chemistry*, formerly sponsored by the Chengdu Institute of Organic Chemistry, Chinese Academy of Sciences, is a quarterly academic journal published in English since February 1992. During the last decade, this Journal concentrated mainly on reporting research and development information in the field of natural gas chemistry in China, and made great contributions to the publishing of natural gas research achievements in our country.

Due to a reorientation of the research programs at the Chengdu Institute of Organic Chemistry, this Journal underwent a restructuring in January 2002, and will now be jointly sponsored by both the Dalian Institute of Chemical Physics and the Chengdu Institute of Organic Chemistry, Chinese Academy of Sciences. The Science Press of China publishes this reorganized version of the Journal. The objective of this new edition of the *Journal of Natural Gas Chemistry* is to provide information about worldwide research and development efforts in natural gas chemistry.

For realizing this objective, a new international editorial board has been set up. Professor Xinhe BAO from the Dalian Institute of Chemical Physics

(DICP), Chinese Academy of Science, and Professor Alexis T. BELL from the University of California at Berkeley in the USA kindly serve as the new Chief Editors of this reorganized Journal. Dr. Theo FLEISCH, Senior Advisor at BP in the USA, and Professor Yide XU of DICP are invited to be the Associate Chief Editors. The new editorial board consists of 26 members from America, Germany, Russia, France, England, Japan, Hungary, Australia, Denmark, and China. The members of the editorial board are all outstanding scientists practicing in the field of natural gas chemistry and related areas. The establishment of the new international editorial board will surely guarantee the transformation of the Journal into a reputable publication within the global scientific community.

Beginning with this issue, the columns of the Journal consist of articles, communications, reviews, up-to-date science and technology news, brief introductions of research institutes, and future conferences. It is our hope that the readers of the Journal will enjoy a useful and convenient source for obtaining relevant information regarding natural gas chemistry in the world.

We invite scientists and engineers in the field of chemistry, especially natural gas chemistry and C1 chemistry, to join us in enhancing the international exchange of valuable information on the research, development and utilization of natural gas resources. We believe that with the enthusiastic support of the readers, the Journal will grow into an international publication of the highest quality with the latest and pertinent scientific information in the field of natural gas chemistry.