

Genetic Control of Environmental Pollutants

Gilbert S. Omenn Dean, Public Health and Community Medicine University of Washington Seattle, Washington 98195 On behalf of the University of Washington, the City of Seattle, the sponsors and donors, and my co-organizers, I am delighted to welcome all of you to this Conference on Genetic Control of Environmental Pollutants. My only regret is that Dr. Alexander Hollaender, who has inspired so many of us as young scientists and stimulated so many trail-blazing conferences in environmental sciences and in genetic engineering, is ill and was unable to make the trip to Seattle. He sends his warm good wishes for an outstanding meeting and a fine volume. The purpose of this Conference is to identify and assess strategies for more effectively and safely managing wastes and toxic substances in the environment, in part through use of genetically engineered microorganisms. There is a sense of desperation in our society that modern technologies have introduced a bewildering array of potential hazards to human health and to our environment. There is an accompanying sense of frustration that our prodigious basic research capabilities and our technological ingenuity have not yielded practical ways to control many pollutants and waste streams, or better still--to convert them to useful products.

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53,49 €

49,99 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9781468447170

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-1-4684-4717-0

Verlag: Springer US

Erscheinungstermin: 15.04.2013

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: Softcover Nachdruck of the original 1. Auflage 1984

Serie: Basic Life Sciences

Produktform: Kartoniert

Gewicht: 786 g

Seiten: 408

Format (B x H): 178 x 254 mm

