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Foreword

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Foreword

Membrane fouling generally refers to a pore plugging and external pore blocking, resulting from the deposition of particles and colloids on the membrane surface and the precipitation of smaller dissolved materials in the membrane pores. Membrane fouling declines the permeate flux and increases the trans-membrane pressure drop, thereby limiting the development of membrane processes for water and wastewater treatments. Physical, chemical, and biological schemes are utilized to prevent fouling or regenerate fouled membranes. This theme issue, as a continuation of the issue published in volume 41, issue 7 of *Separation Science & Technology*, reviewed the state-of-the-art research regarding the possible contribution of microbial products to fouling. In particular, this theme issue comprises selected peer-reviewed papers from the 5th IWA

specialized membrane technology conference for water and wastewater treatment held during September 1–3, 2009, Beijing and those from invited experts of reknown.

As guest editors of this issue, we are indebted to all the authors for their kind contributions to cover a sufficiently wide range of topics that are of interest to membrane researchers and practitioners. Also, we are grateful to Steven M. Cramer, the Editor, for providing the valuable journal volume (again) to highlight the achievements of membrane professionals. And, we hope that you will find this issue informative and valuable for your research work.

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The Guest Editors