



Editorial

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It is a great honor for me to take over the position of Editor-in-Chief of *Plant Molecular Biology (PMB)* from 1 January 2019, succeeding the former Editor-in-Chief (EiC), Professor Wilhelm Gruissem of ETH Zurich (Fig. 1). Approximately 30 years have already passed since my first paper was published in *PMB*. When I reflect back to that time, when I was studying as a graduate student, I could not dream that one day I would be serving as EiC of *PMB* in the future. I will strive to do my best to further develop *PMB* in collaboration with the Associate Editorial Board Members, Editorial Office Staffs of *PMB*, and Springer Nature.

PMB was founded in 1981 by Rob Schilperoort as the first international journal covering plant molecular biology research. The EiCs of *PMB*, Rob Schilperoort (1981 to September 1998), Stephen H. Howell (October 1998 to June 2001), Wilhelm Gruissem (July 2001 to December 2018), and Motoaki Seki (January 2019 to present), have built a long-standing reputation for publishing solid and more diverse plant research papers in a total of 100 volumes of research publications (Fig. 1). Over the course of its years in press, *PMB* papers have covered topics such as comparative and functional genomics, integrated omics, bioinformatics, computational biology, biochemical and regulatory networks, and biotechnology. Additionally, *PMB* publications have addressed important biological problems and new insights in various crops as well as model plants, such as *Arabidopsis*. In 1981, when the journal started, only one volume with six original papers was published (<https://link.springer.com/journal/11103/1/1>). During the early 1980s, it was difficult to obtain a sufficient quantity of high-quality research papers. With the dramatic development of novel technologies and their improvement, in addition to accumulating knowledge pertaining to plant molecular biology, the number of high-quality papers has increased, and 18 issues

containing approximately 150 papers are currently published annually. In 2001, the electronic manuscript submission and management system, Editorial Manager™, was introduced and has contributed greatly to efficient handling of the editorial review workflows. Under most circumstances, the first decision is usually made within 30 days of submission.

Since the early 1980s, several global issues such as food security, environmental deterioration, and population explosion have become serious topics. More recently, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>). It goes without saying that plant scientists will also contribute to the SDGs, and *PMB* very much welcomes related research papers. With the development of more affordable sequencing technologies, whole-genome sequences of various crops have been determined at significantly lower cost compared with previous efforts. However, several thousand full-length complementary DNAs (cDNAs) have not been isolated in *Arabidopsis* (see the ORFeomics subcommittee report of the MASC; <http://arabidopsiresearch.org/index.php/en/subcommittees>), although its complete genome sequence was determined in 2000. This information and other research data indicate that a very large number of plant molecules (genes, RNAs, peptides, proteins, metabolites, epigenetic regulation molecules, etc.) remain unidentified in plants, being said to be present in more than 200,000 plant species on Earth. Bearing this in mind, *PMB* will continue to advance both basic and applied plant molecular biology research with novel insights in the future. *PMB* will also continue to provide up-to-date original papers and reviews and publish special issues on selected topics. A special issue focusing on cassava has been already confirmed, and the discussion of other special focus issues among the editorial board members is in progress. Authors are encouraged to contact the EiC for suggestions of future special issues.

To demonstrate its dedication to the publication of high-impact papers, several new leading scientists, Hongwei Guo (Southern University of Science and Technology, China), Misato Ohtani (Univ. of Tokyo, Japan), Takayuki Tohge

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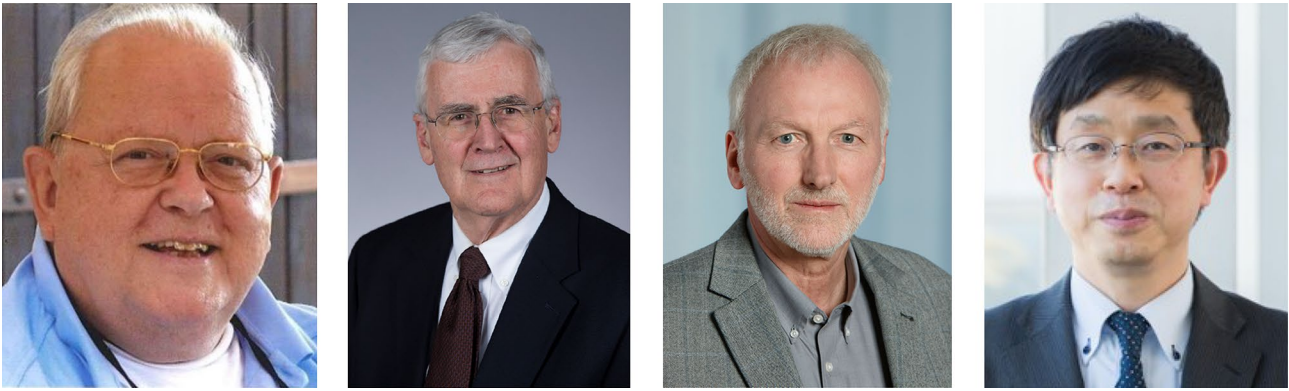


Fig. 1 History of EiCs of *Plant Molecular Biology*. From left to right: Rob Schilperoort, Stephen H. Howell, Wilhelm Gruissem, and Motoaki Seki

(Nara Inst. of Science and Technology, Japan), Feng Qin (China Agricultural Univ., China), Haiyang Wang (South China Agricultural Univ., China), and Kentaro Yano (Meiji Univ., Japan), have recently been appointed as Associate Editorial Board Members. Information on all the AEs (photo, affiliation, research interests, etc.) is available on the website (www.springer.com/11103). We aim to successfully develop *PMB* and advance discoveries in plant science that contribute to the SDGs and the sustainability of life in the

future. I am greatly looking forward to seeing what *PMB* will look like at volume 200.

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