

Chemical Abstracts on CD-ROM

Chemists around the world will welcome the CD-ROM version of their favourite search tool, *Chemical Abstracts (CA)*, described by its publishers as 'the key to the chemical literature', when it becomes available in 1996.

CA on CD-ROM will provide easy access to the same information available in the printed version—complete bibliographic citations, abstracts, structure diagrams, keyword indexing and comprehensive volume indexing—but with the added advantages of the electronic medium. *CA* currently covers about 600,000 documents every year, including articles from over 8000 journals.

The new product will be compatible with both Windows and Macintosh systems and a user can access information from a number of access points, such as author name, keyword, substance name and chemical formula. On the price front, though, customers will have to pay an as-yet-undisclosed additional sum over the subscription price of the printed version. In return, a basic subscription will allow four simultaneous users at the same site.

Some time ago, Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) brought out the compact disc version of the Twelfth Collective Index of *CA*, but users around the world found it less than ideal. Hope

fully, the search software of *CA* on CD meets the expectation of the users.

CAS will do well to bring out *CA* of at least the past ten years on CD. Chemists tired of handling the heavy bound volumes of *CA* will be grateful. Indeed, *CA* is perhaps the last of the major science databases to be issued on CD-ROM format. The citation indexes of ISI, Philadelphia, BIOSIS, Compendex Plus and INSPEC's *Physics Abstracts* and related products are available on CD for a number of years.

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Intensive course on 'applications of remotely sensed data on ocean colour'*

Primary production in the ocean lies at the base of the marine food chain. A accurate estimation of primary production has, therefore, several important applications: (a) it gives an indication of the amount of food available to sustain higher forms of marine life; (b) it plays a significant role in the thermodynamics of the mixed layer, which, in turn, controls the exchange of energy between the ocean and the overlying atmosphere and; (c) it provides a lower bound on the carbon dioxide flux across the

air-sea interface. Fortunately, satellite imagery is providing ever more reliable estimates of primary production. This comes as a most welcome development since the spatial and temporal coverages of conventional measurements are extremely sparse.

Fifty scientists, including 22 foreign participants from 18 different countries, participated in the course.

Shubha Satyendranath, Dalhousie University, and Trevor Platt, Bedford Institute of Oceanography, both eminent researchers in this area, were instructors for the course. The topics covered included a hierarchy of models and algorithms of varying complexity to estimate primary production (notably, nonspectral, spectral, available light and absorbed light models), determination of total water column productivity, extrapolation of local

algorithms to regional and basin scales and the use of ocean colour as a tool in the modelling of mixed-layer processes and biogeochemistry of the ocean. There were also five invited talks by participants on instrumentation and sensors and six on the application of ocean colour data.

The organization of the course was particularly timely, as the imminent launch of the SeaWiFS and other ocean colour satellites would soon provide considerable amount of data, which, in turn, would call for extensive modelling and analysis. The comprehensive coverage of all aspects of the analysis of ocean colour data and the sharp focus of the course was, therefore, appropriate.

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