

EDITORIAL

It is a matter of great privilege to be able to reach out to the valuable readership of the *International Journal of Tea Science (IJTS)*, which was brought back to India sometime ago. With the resumption of publication of volume 8(1) late last year the journal is back on the track. Continuing this journey further, the editorial team is pleased to bring out the 3rd issue of Volume 8 of *IJTS*. The journal has made conscious strides by way of identifying selected topical issues, nurturing region-specific approaches with a view that their efficacy would be tested in the field, and disseminating useful information, in addition to contributions on varied topics by esteemed authors. It is hoped that the information notes and research studies contained in this issue of the journal will go some way in enhancing the knowledge base of the researchers and tea growers, and would also contribute towards policy-making in the long run.

A number of articles make the main body of *IJTS* 8(3), including five Research Papers, a Review, and one Country Report on tea, News & Views section, Research in Progress along with Tea Statistics provided by an established tea research institute in the north-east India. The usual section on Tea Science Abstracts along with news on conferences and seminars adds great value to the journal. Different articles presented in this issue should provide further insights to both established and prospective researchers, as well as to the tea enthusiasts and growers. The research paper authored by David M. Kamau *et al.* deals with an important aspect of changes in the soil characteristics, following conversion of forests into tea plantations in Kenya. They have analysed soil samples from a natural forest and from tea plantations after 14, 29, 43 and 76 years of initial plantations, in an attempt to examine the effect of ageing on yield of tea plantations *vis-à-vis* soil properties. Sandip Pal and co-authors have looked at selected biochemical parameters of proven value on health aspects of branded teas in order to understand the functional properties of Indian teas with respect to teas from other countries. G.C.S. Negi and V. Bisht have attempted to enumerate ecological *vis-à-vis* socio-economic aspects of tea cultivation by small holders from a hilly state in north India. Results of a biochemical study on theanine biosynthesis during tea seed germination has been reported by L. Basavaraju *et al.*; they further reported increased levels of theanine by the application of gibberellic acid. The fifth research article by I. Duarah *et al.* deals with the enzyme activities and physicochemical characteristics of tea soils under water-logging. The review paper on tea genetic resources in Sri Lanka by M.T.K. Gunasekare and colleagues reports on collection, conservation and appraisal of tea germplasm in *ex-situ* gene banks. It also deals with biotechnological approaches and their applicability in current tea breeding programmes. The country report from the United States of America provides an insight into geographical variations and sustainable organic production methods used by the American tea planters, *albeit* limited in numbers. The section on News & Views includes new thoughts on brewing tea and financing of small tea growers in India, followed by recent details of tea research at Tocklai Experimental Station – one of the largest and oldest centres of researches on tea globally. A. Basu Majumder *et al.* have provided valuable tea statistics through their article entitled “Contour of Indian tea industry: a review”. Analysis of consumption patterns will be an eye opener to the marketeers, and to those involved at the policy level.

In the end and on behalf of *IJTS* Editorial Board, we wish to thank the panel of expert referees for their critical evaluation of individual papers, and to our valued contributors for reworking on their respective papers in the light of suggestions received from the referees. Support and guidance received from the International Society of Tea Science (ISTS) and the Tea Board of India is gratefully acknowledged.

Your suggestions and comments for the improvement of the *IJTS* would be highly appreciated. Happy reading and best wishes.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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