

Online First publication

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The editors of the *Journal of Wood Science* and Springer are pleased to announce a new service for our authors and readers: Online First, the quick online publication of articles shortly after receipt of the corrected proofs.

Online First publishes accepted articles in electronic form prior to the appearance of the printed journal, without having to wait for the completion of an entire issue, printed or electronic. The electronic version of all articles will be available to subscribers via the Internet weeks before the printed version appears. This means a significant reduction in publication time. It will not be necessary for manuscripts to wait until the next available print issue.

As each article becomes ready for Online First publication, it will be published on the Web with its own publication date. Each article will receive a permanent, unique international identification code, the digital object identifier (DOI), which is registered with the International DOI Foundation <http://www.doi.org>. Contributions published Online First but not yet available in print may be cited by journal title and DOI only. Furthermore, the DOI forms part of the article's URL (Web address) and can be used to access the article before the print version has appeared (e.g., <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10086-005-0723-x>). The DOI is never changed and can be used, for example, to create hyperlinks between Online First articles. The print version also includes the DOI and date of online publication.

The appearance of an Online First article online constitutes official publication, so articles cannot subsequently be changed or withdrawn. Any corrections that might be necessary will be in the form of an Erratum, which will be hyperlinked to the article.

To commemorate the beginning of Online First publication of the *Journal of Wood Science*, the editorial board specially requested that Dr. Takayoshi Higuchi, professor emeritus of Kyoto University and well known as a world authority in lignin biochemistry, write a review article to provide an overview of the development of lignin biochemistry to date, as a suitable article for the opening page of our inaugural Online First publication.

We believe that from this date forward the *Journal of Wood Science* will achieve great progress as the world's highest-level global journal in the field of wood science, with its added capability to quickly deliver the latest research results from the fields of life science and wood chemistry, including timber constructions.

We hope you will keep your eye on the *Journal of Wood Science* and its exciting new developments in the days to come.

Kohei Komatsu, Editor-in-Chief
Springer-Verlag