

2019 Editorial Board Meeting Minutes

Time: 8:30—11:30, 25 April 2019

Location: A404, 4 Floor, PRIC

1 **Welcome and Introductions (Yang Huigen)**

Huigen Yang	Director General of Polar Research Institute of China, Co-Editor-In-Chief
Ian Allison	Co-Editor-In-Chief
Beichen Zhang	Standing Vice-Editor-In-Chief, Editorial Board Member
Bo Sun	Editorial Board Member
Ren Xu	Deputy Director of Polar Research Institute of China
Chaolun Li	Editorial Board Member
Zhouqing Xie	Editorial Board Member
Yue Zhao	Editorial Board Member
Yanyan Shan	Officer, Technology Development Division of Polar Research Institute of China
Xiaoliang Ling	Officer, Editorial Office of <i>Advances in Polar Science</i>
Jing Huang	Officer, Editorial Office
Weiquan Zhao	Officer, Editorial Office
Xinke Cheng	Officer, Editorial Office

2 **Overview of current status, publication schedule, achievements and problems with *Advances in Polar Science* (Huang Jing)**

Four issues of volume 29 plus one issue of Volume 30 have now been published. Two of these were special issues, 29(2) “Advances in Antarctic geoscience based on Chinese research”, and 29(3) “Polar climate change: driving processes, extreme events, and global linkages”. Volume 29 included 31 papers (2 Reviews, 1 Trend, 24 Articles, 2 Letters, 2 Opinion Editorials) with a total of 299 pages.

Issues 29(4) and 30(1) were published on schedule, redressing the delays that had existed for the last few volumes. In 2018, the average time from manuscript submission to final decision was 122 days. However, the average time from the submission to first decision was only 55 days. Obtaining agreement from suitable experts to serve as reviewers, and getting them to submit timely reviews, is an ongoing difficulty. Another reason for delay in the final decision is the time taken by some authors to revise manuscripts in response to review comments.

In 2019 the international content in APS improved considerably. In 2015 the percentage of published papers with a non-Chinese submitting author was 24% (from 4 countries); in 2016, it

was 33% (from 12 countries); in 2017, it decreased to 15% (from 7 countries) because of the 28(2) special issue on 30-years of CHINARE with all Chinese authors; in 2018, it was 39% (from 12 countries); and in 2019, it was 45% (from 8 countries; data from January to April). More papers from non-Chinese authors are expected to be submitted for two special issues in 2019.

The publication plans for 2019 are:

- 30(1) General Issue; complete. This issue exclusively contains papers that are about polar research programs and activities of countries in the Asian region. Most of the papers were submitted from the member countries of AFoPS (Asian Forum for Polar Sciences), 7 papers published.
- 29(2) General Issue. 3 papers complete, 3 revised manuscripts in review, 1 paper in process. Aim for publication by 30 June 2019.
- 29(3) Special Issue on "Geology and palaeontology of the James Ross Basin, Antarctic Peninsula". 4 papers complete, 1 paper in major revision, 1 paper in minor revision, 3 manuscripts in process, plus 1 paper coming soon. Aim for publication by 30 September 2019. The lead Guest editor, Dr. Carolina Acosta Hospitaleche from Argentina, is very efficient and positive in promoting this special issue.
- 29(4) Special Issue on "Sea ice observations and modeling in China and Norway". 1 paper in process, 3 potential papers from MET Norway, 1-2 potential papers from National Marine Environmental Forecasting Centre, China, and 1 potential paper from PRIC. Aim for publication by 31 December 2019.

3 *Introductory remarks by Editors-in-Chief (Ian Allison and Yang Huigen)*

Ian Allison emphasised the improvements in the Journal over the last few years:

- The publication schedule is back on target. In a little over 8 months since the last Board Meeting, 5 issues have been published: 4 issues of Vol. 29 plus 1 issue of Vol. 30. There are presently 36 new manuscripts in process in the ScholarOne System, so it should be possible to maintain the publication schedule.
- In the last few years, the quality of papers has improved considerably. This is evidenced both by peer comment, and from the ResearchGate (RG) Journal Impact factor. The RG factor has increased from 0.38 in 2014 and 2015 to 1.05 in 2017. This factor is calculated from the ResearchGate database and does not have the same formal recognition as other international Impact Factors, such as SCI. But it does indicate a strong increase in acceptance of the Journal, especially when compared to the RG factor for other similar journals.
- In 2016, *Advances in Polar Science* succeeded in being included in the Chinese Scientific and Technical Papers and Citations Database (CSTPCD) which is issued annually by the Institute of Scientific and Technical Information of China.

- On 20 April 2019, APS was accepted for inclusion in the 2019-2020 Chinese Science Citation Database (CSCD), issued biennially by the National Science Library, Chinese Academy of Sciences. This is the top Chinese citation database: of the 431 English-language science journals published in China, only about half are included in CSCD.
- International contributions to APS have increases steadily, as noted in Item 2.

IA thanked all Editors, and particularly the staff of the Editorial Office (EO), for their contributions to improvement of the Journal.

Members of the Editorial Board have not changed since the 2018 meeting, with 28 Editors representing 13 nations. Of these, 11 are Chinese and 17 International members. There has been a considerable increase of papers on Social/Political Science in the last few years and at the 2018 meeting it was proposed that we should appoint a suitable Associate Editor to cover this field. We also agreed to appoint a Russian representative to the Editorial Board, and consider appointment of an Early Career Scientist as Guest Editor of some Special Issues. These new appointments have not yet been made and are discussed further below.

The Editorial Office has taken preliminary steps to have the Journal recognized by Scopus, and will provide the additional information sought as soon as possible. IA suggested that we now also meet all the requirements for inclusion on the Thomson-Reuters Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI). We have a strong international editorial team of scientists who are expert in their fields; we have good international content; we are published on schedule and we have an improving quality of papers. It was agreed that the EO would prepare and submit an application for inclusion on the Thompson-Reuters Emerging Sources Citation Index by the end of June 2019. We are additionally eligible, and will apply this year, to be included in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) (<http://doaj.org/application/new>).

4 Plans for Future Development (Ian Allison)

IA summarized recent changes that have been made to the publication process of the Journal:

- Reference citation. The citation style and reference listing were changed from the superscript numbering in order of introduction in the text, to author name and date with references listed alphabetically.
- Publication Categories. A new category of Opinion Editorial has been introduced.
- Cover picture. We now invite authors of papers which have been accepted by the journal to submit a suitable photograph related to their paper to be published on the cover. The choice of image to be used on the front cover is made by the Editorial Office and Co-Editors-in-

Chief on the basis of relevance and attractiveness. The photo title and attribution, and reference to the paper, are printed under the Content. The photo changes with each issue.

- Special Issue deadline: A deadline for completion of papers submitted to each SI is now set so that late papers do not delay publication. A paper accepted after the SI deadline can still be published in a General Issue.
- At the discretion of the Co-EiCs, we can now appoint a Guest Editor to a single ordinary issue, particularly when we receive a manuscript outside the fields of expertise of the Associate Editors. For example, Dr. Shunying Ji and Dr. Xuesong Xu were invited to be Guest Editors for six recent papers concerning polar ship technology. The Guest Editors will be acknowledged inside the front cover of the relevant issue.
- Professional English-language support is provided for Chinese and other non-native English authors based on recommendations of the EiCs and reviewers.

A number of further changes to the publication process were accepted at the meeting. Some of these were suggested during the open discussions.

- A major challenge for the Journal is to improve our review time and enhance the reputation of APS as a rapid and efficient publishing option. However, a Guest Editor suggested extending the review deadline from two weeks to three weeks and the time given for minor revision from 5 days to two weeks. These changes would extend the target time from submission to print-ready from 77-84 days to 84-91 days. However, in 2018, the actual average time from submission to final decision was 122 days. The proposed changes are thus realistic and may actually help to get reviewers to accept invitation. The changes were agreed to by the meeting. The editorial office will keep fuller statistics on processing times of papers in 2019/2020 to identify the problem areas.
- Editors are requested to carefully consider the relevance of the title of each submitted manuscript and whether the abstract properly highlights the main outcomes. They should help authors improve these if necessary.
- An AE to cover social sciences will be appointed. Dr. Yang Huigen recommended Dr. Yang Jian (Vice president, Shanghai Institutes for International Studies). He will be invited this year.
- The date that a published paper was submitted, accepted, and first published on-line will be included below the title and authors.
- The names of the Associate Editors responsible for each paper, and of those reviewers who so agree, will be listed at the end of the paper. Reviewers will be asked if they wish to be recognized or remain anonymous: if they do not answer this on the review pro-forma, it will be assumed that they wish to be anonymous.
- The cover photograph on each issue will also include suitable images illustrating scientific results from a paper in the issue. Authors will be invited to submit suitable diagrams and

will be offered professional support to enhance the impact of their image. Further scientific details of the image will be included in the caption inside the front cover. That paper will become the “featured cover paper”.

5 *Future development towards attracting higher quality submissions (Ian Allison)*

A number of suggestions came from open discussion at the meeting, including:

- Target developing polar nations for submissions. For example, Russia, South Africa, South America (Chile, Argentina, Brazil, etc.), Thailand, India. The EO will send email alerts to universities and institutes of those countries that are cooperating with China.
- Invite one Russian scientist, possibly in oceanography, to join the editorial team.
- Reject those papers that are assessed on review as needing very major revision, but strongly encourage resubmission of a new version of the paper taking into account the review comments. At present, Editors and reviewers are striving to help authors improve the quality of their papers, with some manuscripts going through many revisions. But this is slowing the publication process, and making the overall rejection rate look somewhat low.

6 *Plans of Special Issues for Vol. 31 (Ian Allison)*

The meeting discussed potential Special Issues for 2020 and beyond. A special issue has been accepted focusing on “Polar Regions in the Global Climate System”, based on the 8th Malaysian International Seminar on Antarctica which will be held on 18-19 June 2019 in Universiti Putra Malaysia. Three agreed expert Guest Editors for this SI are Dr. Yunus Shukor (Universiti Putra Malaysia), Prof. Azizan Abu Samah (University of Malaya, Director of National Antarctic Research Centre), and Prof. Ian Allison. It is planned to publish this in 2020 as Volume 31, Issue 2. All editors are urged to submit further suggestions for Special Issues.

A suitable Early Career Scientist will be sought to serve as a Guest Editor of the Malaysian Special Issue, and possibly for other SIs.

The EiCs will formally thank and acknowledge the work of GEs after publication of their special issue.

7 *Other Business*

I am not sure what we decided about an ECS prize. I think it was that Chinese ECS authors of APS papers will be eligible, along with authors in the Chinese Journal, for the prize at the October 2019 Chinese Polar Science Symposium, and that eligible nominees will be invited to apply. Also, the EO will keep a record of how many ECS authors there are (international and Chinese) of APS papers in order to determine whether it is practical to have an award for APS-only papers.

Add something about changed sponsorship of the Journal to Chinese oceanographic society (Huigen Yang).

The APS paper most frequently accessed on line over a 3-year period will be prominently shown on the website. This will be updated annually.

Efforts will be made to attract more "Opinion Editorial" submissions so that an OpEd can be published in each general issue. These attract international interest

Associate Editors are urged to present or introduce APS to their colleagues during their seminar and academic meetings.

We need to consider potential future editors to replace any of the present editors who may wish to eventually step down. Dr. Allison noted that the present Associate Editor team, Chinese and International, is working very efficiently and dedicatedly and he hoped that they would continue as a team for the near-future. All the editors and EO staff were thanked for their ongoing efforts.

8 Summary (Ian Allison)

The Journal is steadily and consistently improving. There is a good outlook for Vol. 30 to be completed on time within 2019. Many suggestions were received on promoting the Journal. Challenges remain in attracting manuscripts and maintaining and improving the progress we have made.