

News from WETLANDS

By Marinus L Otte, Editor-in-Chief

A journal's impact factor (IF) says little about the quality of the articles published in it, as it reflects a simple calculation of the average number of citations that an article receives from the date of publication. It is a measure of popularity, not quality, and is calculated over two and five years. Because journals like WETLANDS (<https://link.springer.com/journal/13157>) include many reports based on long-term research, the impact factor is always lower than journals that tend to include more articles based on short-term studies. This in turn means that the IF for WETLANDS should not be compared to journals like Cell, or Science. Still, the IF and similar metrics are used widely as indicators of how a journal is doing. The IF over data from the previous year are announced in June of every year, and it quite satisfying to find that the 2-year IF for WETLANDS based on data from 2025 significantly increased from 2.0 to 2.4. This is the highest it has ever been.

Many factors affect the IF. I strongly believe that in the case of WETLANDS, the increase in IF is because we have stuck to a rigorous system of peer review, based on volunteers. Another reason may be the publication of high quality, high impact articles, such as the Mark Brinson reviews (for example <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13157-023-01722-2>), as well as the Topical Collections (<https://link.springer.com/journal/13157/collections>), and our recognition for having published more than half of the articles in 2025 related to one or more of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (see <https://link.springer.com/journal/13157/updates/27337432> and <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>).

Success is good but it does not mean that we can just keep doing what we are doing. A particular challenge is that the number of submissions of manuscripts has been increasing in recent years as well. From 2012, when I started as Editor-in-Chief, to 2022, the numbers of submissions remained at about 325/year. Since 2022, that number has been rapidly increasing, and is expected to surpass 600 this year. Instead of about one new manuscript per day, we now receive two. This in turn means much more work for the editors.

It is to the credit of the 54 Associate Editors around the world that WETLANDS is where it is now. I will retire as Editor-in-Chief at the end of 2026. Dr Tatiana Lobato de Magalhães, based at the Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro in Mexico, will take over as Editor-in-Chief on 1 January 2027 to lead the journal into the future. Your continued support, as readers, authors, reviewers, and editors is much appreciated!