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EDITORIAL

Open Access

Annals of Forest Science promotes multidisciplinary research devoted to forests and wood in a changing world

Erwin Dreyer[1*] , Andreas Bolte[2] , Marco Ferretti[3] , Jean-Michel Leban[4] , John M. Lhotka[5] , Shuguang Liu[6] and Véronique Lesage[7]

The year 2022 was a time of great changes in *Annals of Forest Science*. We moved from a hybrid to a full Open Access publication model with BMC-Springer. This means that our authors are full owners of the articles, at the price of a quite moderate article processing charges (APC) which is sometimes covered by general agreements between institutions and Springer–BMC. Although it resulted in a temporary decline of publications during this first year (48 instead of about 90–100 during previous years), we are optimistic that this change will increase the impact of the journal, as each published paper reaches a wider audience than before. We saw two times more downloads/paper 6 months after publication. The decline in number of submitted manuscripts was anticipated given the numerous changes brought to the journal's display, webpage (*Annals of Forest Science| Home annforsci.Biomedcentral.Com*) and communication (Twitter @annforsci) among others. As a matter of

fact, we already have seen a new increase in submission by the end of 2022 and hope that soon more papers will be published than before the transition.

It is worth mentioning that our objective is not to publish as many papers as possible to increase total revenue of the journal. Rather, we aim to publish high-quality papers conveying new and solid results, new syntheses and new ideas, in an Open Science framework. Open Science refers to following features:

- The publication of papers that may be freely disseminated by the authors and everybody under a licence allowing reuse;
- We accept the submission of preprints that have been made available in a public preprint repository and even preprints that were recommended by a Peer Community in … like the Peer Community in Forest & Wood Sciences (PCI Forest and Wood Sciences (peercommunityin.org);
- We insist that authors should make the data associated to the papers available in an institutional data repository of their choice under the FAIR principles (https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/) and with the support of Springer-Nature (https://www.springernature.com/fr/researchers/campaigns/state-of-open-data);
- We publish data papers in the case of large datasets, with the aim to describe those datasets and show their potential for reuse by other scientists in the frame of meta-analyses (see our website for details about Data Papers and for some examples). As an

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example, this year's highlighted papers are a research paper about oak provenances in France, and the associated data paper describing the very large data set on which the research was based; the data set describes the results from large-scale comparative provenance plantation followed over decades across France (Ducousso et al. 2022; Girard et al. 2022).

During 2023, we will continue implementing this data policy in the journal and motivate our authors to provide access to the data associated to published papers: this is not just an additional constraint but also an excellent way to valorise the datasets and increase the visibility and credibility of the research done by the authors.

There many other aspects behind Open Science, and the journal will continue developing new initiatives to make its content open.

The journal also defined more explicitly its identity among the numerous journals in the Web of Science category *"Forestry"*. This is partly expressed in our new motto: *Multidisciplinary research devoted to forests and wood in a changing world,* which insists on the multidisciplinary nature of our scope (indeed, issues about forests and wood are global and require the cooperation among many scientific disciplines). It also puts an emphasis on the changes that forests across the world are undergoing in response to climate change and a diversity of disturbances. It also integrates novel management procedures to adapt to climate change and to new social expectations towards forests.

Given the challenges imposed by multi-disciplinarity, we have strengthened the editorial team of *Annals of Forest Science* to cover as many different relevant disciplines as possible. The current team is presented on our website (*Annals of Forest Science*| Editorial board (biomedcentral. com), and we are open to new candidates to cover new topics and scientific disciplines.

Annals of Forest Science was ranked 10/69 in *Forestry*, with an impact factor of 3.77 for the year 2021. This unexpected high impact factor is explained by the papers published in 2019 and 2020 which were quickly cited as they report on climate change and forest management. With these results, we are convinced that—besides reviews and opinion papers that may attract even more citations—we intend to publish primary research papers as they provide novel results. We will keep the balance between the different article types and not focus exclusively on publishing many review papers with the tactical intent of increasing the journal's impact factor.

We also insist on the scientific quality of the papers and take the time to help authors improve their manuscripts rather than promising a quick publication that is not always conducive to an engaged and thoughtful

review process. This leads sometimes to delays in publication due to subsequent revisions. However, we believe that this commitment to the review process is beneficial for authors and their contribution to forest science and to our readers at large. We also accept (i) confirmatory papers as we consider that novelty cannot be an exclusive criterion for acceptance as this may lead to biases in the shared knowledge and to the research reproductivity crisis that affects several domains and (ii) papers with negative results provided the statistical basis is valid.

The above commentary presents a few features of *Annals of Forest Science* as a constantly evolving journal keeping pace with ongoing changes in science publishing and in the frame of its long-lasting history. We hope 2023 will be a successful year for the journal and its community (associate editors, reviewers, authors, readers) who is contributing greatly to these developments to elevate the quality of the journal.

References
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