



**Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow  
and Landscape Research WSL**

A research institute of the ETH Domain



# **Observations of an editor of a Diamond Open Access Journal**

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# The New Zealand Journal of Forestry Science

- Published by the NZ Forest Research Institute since 1971
- Diamond Open Access since 2013 (via Springer Open)
- Since 2019 using Open Journal Systems (OJS) – affordable!
- Ecki Brockhoff Co-Editor-in-Chief since 2019,  
with 3 other Co-Editors, all in honorary role (no pay)
- All articles get a DOI, indexed in Web of Science, Scopus, etc.
- WOS Journal Impact Factor average 1.3, JIF Quartile Q2-Q3
  - Not bad for a NZ-based forestry journal
  - Also compared with other NZ-based journals
  - Partly due to a small local pool of researchers
  - Increasing submissions from outside NZ (> 85%)



# Some observations – some challenges

- No cost leads to many submissions from countries with limited research budgets
- Manuscript standard often not so high
  - High rejection rate (ca. 80%)
  - Manuscripts which are published often require much editorial assistance
- Very difficult to find reviewers
  - Because invitations to review end up in spam filters?
  - Because journal is not prestigious enough (to be worthy of review)?
  - Affects publication time (submission to publication)
- Limited budget doesn't allow for enlisting paid editorial assistance
  - Lots of work for the editors

# Some observations – the positives

- It's satisfying to contribute to lowering publication costs
- Publishing a journal as Diamond OA is possible, even with a limited budget
  - It can be done!
- NZ J For Sci publishes papers from any region, but still some focus on NZ / global south
- Other alternatives in our field exist, e.g.:



Published by Italian Society of Silviculture  
and Forest Ecology / CNR  
**Impact factor 1.7**



Published by European  
Ecological Federation  
(representing European  
ecological societies)  
**Impact factor 2.4**

# A plea for publishing in Diamond OA journals and for getting involved more

- Most of us (scientists) already contribute as reviewers, associate editors, and editors
- Our services are mostly free (except some editors-in-chief)
- Mostly for commercial publishers (who make huge profits from public research funds)
- **Why not provide services instead to non-profit Diamond OA Journals?**
- **Consider becoming more involved and help improve the standing of DOA Journals.**
- ‘We’ probably respond more to review invitations from commercial journals (top ones)
- ... than to invitations from less known Diamond OA (my personal experience)
- **Consider helping more as reviewer for Diamond OA Journals**
- **and be mindful if journals are commercial or non-profit ...**