

Dear Editorial Board Members,

We (Resat Ulusay and Louis Wong) have taken up the roles of Editor-in-Chief of BOEG since 1 Jan 2019 (LW had been the Editor-in-Chief together with Martin Culshaw since 1 Jan 2018). It may be the right time to update you some issues of BOEG.

1. **Volume 78 Issue 1** – We have just released the first issue in 2019, which contains 45 papers. You are strongly encouraged to visit the following site to read the papers.

<https://link.springer.com/journal/10064/78/1>

2. **2. Number of submissions** - From 1 Jan to 10 Feb 2019, BOEG has received 113 manuscripts. It is thus likely that the total number of submissions will exceed 1000, similar to the record-high number of 1100 for 2018.
3. **3. Increased number of issues** – As shared by Martin before, BOEG will have 8 issues in 2019, which doubles that in 2018 (and other recent years). As we have a huge backlog of "online first papers" (312 papers as on 10 Feb 2019; see the link below), we are able to clear most of the backlog by the end of 2019.

<https://link.springer.com/journal/10064/onlineFirst/page/1>

4. **4. Impact Factor** –The impact factor (IF) of a journal is calculated by dividing the number of current year citations to the source items published in that journal during the previous two years. Assume the numbers of citations of BOEG have been similar in the past few years. Due to the increased number of papers (doubled that of previous year), the BOEG IF (2019) will likely drop to half of those in previous years.
5. **5. Can we not increase the number of issues?** Occasionally we receive inquiries from authors whether their accepted (online first articles) can be assigned to an issue as soon as possible. It is because for student graduation and staff promotion, some universities only recognize papers which have been included in an issue. It indicates that if we are able to clear the backlog faster and assign those accepted papers earlier, it will increase the competitiveness of BOEG among other similar engineering geology journals. Both of us recommended the publisher that the sequence of "papers appearing online" to be included in the issues should be based on "their date of online first", and such requests from some authors as mentioned above should not be accommodated. Our request has been kindly approved by the publisher.
6. **6. Structure and composition of the Editorial Board (EB)** – In view of the increasing number of submissions, we have to heavily rely on a reliable and efficient EB to manage the submissions. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone's effort and time in serving the EB. However, we are worried about a few cases that the responsible EB members take no action for more than half a year after receiving the assigned manuscript. In some other cases, the manuscripts are simply sitting in the system for over a year. After receiving the comments from the first reviewer, the system is waiting

for the EB member to invite another reviewer to complete the review process. Regarding these issues, we are in the process of reviewing the structure and composition of the EB, and the manuscript review logistics. We hope that the quality and efficiency of the manuscript review process, as well as the authors' experience, can be enhanced at the end. Meanwhile, we are fully aware that the EB service is entirely voluntary and many of you are occupied by other commitments. If you find it difficult to perform the EB member duty, please let us know. We will be happy to let you step down and find a replacement.

7. **7. Other issues which need your attention and action –**

- a. According to our BOEG policy, each manuscript has to be reviewed by **at least two reviewers**.
- b. Since not all reviewers will accept the review invitation, we strongly advise you to invite at least three reviewers at the first instance. It can minimize the delay in looking for additional reviewers.
- c. We would like to request every EB member to provide his/her comments on the "received comments" and personal assessment of the manuscript, while making a recommendation to the Editor-in-Chief.
- d. Please add the name, address and main areas of interest of the new reviewers in the online system whom you have invited.

8. **Evaluation procedure by the Editors-in-Chief:**

- ∅ First, we evaluate the papers in terms of language and format. If they are poorly written or not well organized based on the instructions for authors required by BOEG, we reject them.
- ∅ If the subject matter of the paper lies outside that usually covered by BOEG, we also do not accept the papers and recommend the authors to submit them to other relevant journals.
- ∅ In addition, if the papers offer nothing scientifically new or does not present an unusual case history, we also reject such papers without inviting any EBM.
- ∅ Besides based on the similarity check of the submitted manuscripts done by the publisher, if the manuscripts indicate that substantial parts of the manuscript are similar to those from other works we return such manuscripts without review.
- ∅ Except the papers described above, we invite EBM to proceed with the review process of the submitted papers.

As a consequence, the EBM should not reject the papers solely due to the subject matter (out of scope). Such decisions have already given by the EICs before the assignment of any paper to the EBM.

Thank you very much.

Best regards,

Naveen (For EICs of our BOEG journal)