



*Editorial*

## **Introducing AIMS Geosciences**

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We live in a time of historically unprecedented change in the Earth system. Even a quick look at the current geosciences literature reveals research articles detailing rapid and extensive changes in the Earth's atmosphere, climate and hydrologic systems, oceans, and land surface. Addressing these new research priorities is an increasingly interdisciplinary undertaking, and the results of this research needs to reach a much broader scientific audience. Currently, geosciences research is published in a wide variety of more or less specialized journals, which are typically devoted to one of the many individual disciplines which make up the geosciences. While much of the research that appears in these journals is firmly founded in one of the fields that make up the traditional geosciences, more and more of these studies cut across disciplinary boundaries. It is becoming increasingly more difficult to easily place much of today's cutting edge geoscientific research neatly within the confines of a single geoscientific discipline. Multi-, cross-, and transdisciplinary research is increasingly the norm in the earth sciences, as collaborative teams of geoscientists work together to synthesize and extend our understanding of the entire earth system. Accompanying this evolution in the scope and extent of the geosciences is an explosion of new data sources and analytical technologies available to address research questions. These new data and analytical resources not only enable a deeper understanding of the foundational questions within each individual geosciences discipline, they also provide the backbone of integrative, cross-disciplinary research within the field. Reflecting this trend, publication outlets in the geosciences are becoming more interdisciplinary, but the need for suitable publication venues remains an unmet need in the field. It is within this changing scientific context, and in response to this need for more broad-spectrum publication outlets that we launch AIMS Geosciences. As disciplinary boundaries within the geosciences become broader and more inclusive, the need for suitable publication outlets, where cutting edge research addressing a broad array of scientific questions can be addressed within a single publication increases. With AIM Geosciences, our goal and intent is to provide such an outlet.

The stated aim of AIMS Geosciences is to provide a timely venue for high-quality study of the Earth and other planets in a general or interdisciplinary approach, with special attention to research that

incorporates original theories, comprehensive research and the latest achievements in the geosciences. In defining these goals for the journal, we have deliberately chosen a broad scope, in order to attract contributions across the breadth of research in the earth sciences. In establishing a new journal, perhaps the most important consideration is, what can be offered that is not already available? By collecting this diverse research into a single journal, we hope to bridge disciplinary gaps by providing a single outlet where geoscientists and others can go to see topical, cutting-edge research results across the breadth of the field. The Aims and Scope of AIMS Geosciences (which can be viewed at the journal's website (<http://www.aimspress.com/news/113.html>)) reflect this interest in the broad spectrum of the geosciences. The journal encourages original, high quality research contributions on the dynamics and history of the solid earth (geology, geophysics, mineralogy, and paleontology), the atmosphere (meteorology) and the oceans. In addition, submission of research on geosciences questions that cut across these traditional divisions, such as hydrology, biogeochemical cycling, land cover dynamics and the climate system is especially encouraged. Recognizing that comparative analysis between the earth and other solar system bodies is a key element in our current understanding of the earth system, we also encourage contributions on these topics, as well. The content of the journal will also extend to more integrative studies from fields such as geography, where the human dynamics of the earth system are considered. Methodological articles of relevance to the geosciences community (for example, remote sensing and modeling) are also encouraged. We strive for content that covers the breadth of the field.

Along with their evolution toward a more multidisciplinary nature, we also recognize that the sciences, including the geosciences, are more than ever a global enterprise. New and exciting ideas come from everywhere. By offering our journal on-line and with open access, we hope to encourage contributions from, and provide an outlet for, as internationally diverse a readership as possible. We especially wish to encourage students and early career scientists to submit their research to our journal. We aim to provide the widest exposure possible for a diverse range of topics. The journal will frequently feature issues devoted to special topics, which will be announced well in advance to allow for contributions to be submitted. To insure timely publication, peer review will be completed within a month. As the journal develops, we would also like to explore new ideas and less widely used methods in scientific publication, especially those made possible by the on-line format of the journal. Some of these might include advanced dynamic visualizations, interactive components (e.g. models accessible by the reader), access to data sets, or video and audio content. No doubt other possibilities exist, and we would like to explore them. We might also consider other publication ideas, such as pre-review.

A journal with the breadth of AIMS Geosciences must by necessity be overseen by a large and diverse editorial board. The editorial board assembled for this journal is just such a group. The board consists of an international, multidisciplinary and diverse group of academics and scholars who are leaders in their fields. Their contributions will be supported by ad hoc reviewers who will evaluate each contribution for its scientific quality and suitability for AIMS Geosciences. We will need to call on a wide array of referees to help with this peer review process. If we contact you, I hope you will support us with your expertise. Most of all, I hope you will support us by submitting your research. I am excited by the prospect of what AIMS Geosciences can become, and I look forward to my role as its Editor in Chief.



AIMS Press

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