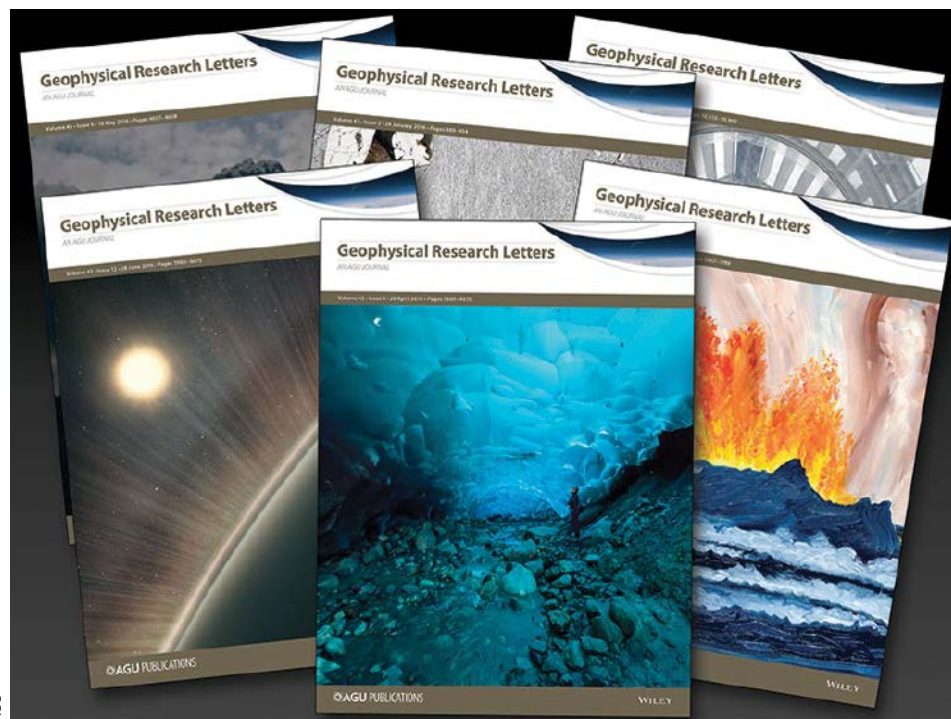


New *Geophysical Research Letters* Editorial and Revisions Policies



Covers of some recent issues of the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*.

Because significant advances in the geosciences can have an immediate impact on members of the AGU community, rapid publication is an essential service of AGU Publications. The mission of *Geophysical Research Letters* (GRL) is to publish “high-impact, innovative, and timely research on major scientific advances in all the major geoscience disciplines.”

Papers accepted for GRL are communications-length articles with broad and immediate implications in their discipline or across the geosciences. GRL maintains the fastest turnaround of all high-impact publications in the geosciences and works closely with authors to ensure broad visibility of top papers.

The GRL Editorial Board continues to work hard to fulfill this mandate while serving the broad and growing community through a fair and transparent editorial and peer-review process. Submissions to GRL show just how much this community is growing and diversifying: Submissions grew 16% in 2015 (to a total of 4057), and year-to-date submissions are up an additional 15% in 2016 (to a total of 2783 through 31 July 2016).

Throughout this time, GRL has maintained a record of returning first decisions to authors in less than 30 days (on average) for papers that have gone to review and in less than 7 days (on average) for papers that are returned without review.

Over the past several months a number of changes have been implemented that help GRL to continue to fulfill its mandate within the context of the rapid growth in submissions.

A Return to Major Revisions

After a decade of using a “no major revisions” policy, GRL has recently resumed the use of a

“major revisions” editorial decision. For these decisions, the manuscript number is maintained, and authors are required to submit their revisions within 30 days of the decision.

Once the revision is received, the editor may make a decision based on the revisions or may send the revised manuscript for re-review. For any manuscript sent for re-review, the editor may choose to use the previous reviewers and/or one or more new reviewers. This deliberation depends on reviewer availability and on the nature of the previous reviews, the authors’ responses, and the authors’ revisions.

This new major revisions decision type does not replace other decision types used at GRL but merely adds to them.

Retention of Original Submission Date

When appropriate, an article’s original submission date can now be preserved, even if a manuscript has received a new manuscript number through previous rounds of review and resubmission. This enhancement, which has been implemented across all AGU journals, was made possible by an update implemented in the GEMS online manuscript submission system.

The intention behind this change is to use it for manuscripts in which the primary body of scientific results has remained intact throughout the resubmission and revision process and for which the resubmission occurs promptly. This new policy recognizes that in some cases authors may provide convincing evidence that substantial additions to a paper are not necessary.

Mobility Between Journals

Another update implemented in GEMS allows manuscripts to be transferred between AGU journals. In some cases, a recommendation for a transfer may be based on a communica-

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tion between the editors of the respective journals.

Because this enhancement allows the transfer of reviews and revisions between journals, it can substantially speed up the review and decision process at the receiving journal by allowing the authors to transfer a revised version that responds to the original reviews. Manuscripts may be transferred from *GRL* without being sent for peer review, or they may be transferred after the peer-review stage.

After the *GRL* decision has been made, the authors decide whether to finalize the transfer of the manuscript. Should the authors choose to finalize the transfer, any decision to accept the paper or to consider further review and revisions is up to the editors of the new journal.

Accessing All of the Data

In December 2013, the AGU Council adopted a new comprehensive data policy. This policy states that all data necessary to understand, evaluate, and replicate the reported research must be accessibly archived whenever possi-

ble, with information for how to access the data included either in the main text or in the acknowledgments. The policy applies to all data used in the analysis, including data from numerical models.

Further, the policy includes not only the underlying source data but also “derived data products reported or described in a paper.” As is stated in the data policy, “AGU reserves the right to refuse publication when authors are unwilling to make the underlying data available or otherwise refuse to comply with this Data Policy.” For further discussion of the policy, please see the AGU Publications Data Policy web page (<http://bit.ly/agu-data-policy>).

Ensuring Originality

For several years, AGU has used the Cross-Check text comparison service to detect overlap between submitted manuscripts and previously published works. *GRL* continues to return without review manuscripts that exhibit excessive overlap between the main manuscript text and previously published works, including works written by the authors

of the submitted manuscript.

This decision is made on the basis of the overlap in the main text and captions and not on overlap in the author affiliations, acknowledgments, reference list, or common data set names. Authors are asked to revise the manuscript to address the instances of overlapping text and submit the revised version. Additional information is available on AGU’s Scientific Ethics for Authors and Reviewers web page (<http://bit.ly/ethics-page>) and Dual Publication Policy web page (<http://bit.ly/dual-pub-page>).

Recognition for Reviewers

As an acknowledgment of the significant contributions of our reviewer community, AGU allows

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reviewers to receive credit for a review through their Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier (ORCID) records. In addition, GEMS now sends notification emails to reviewers once a final decision on a manuscript is made. This notification acknowledges each individual reviewer for his or her input and describes the outcome of the editor’s final decision.

Increased Visibility

Finally, to ensure broad visibility of top papers, *GRL* and AGU staff have implemented a suite of journal content enrichments:

- *GRL* editors’ highlights
- *GRL* commentary pieces
- *Eos* research spotlights
- *Eos Editors’ Vox* blog posts
- AGU press releases
- AGU social media promotion

This enriched content makes *GRL*-published research more accessible to broader audiences and is centrally collected on the *GRL* website’s Highlights tab. Articles selected for enriched content also feature that content on the article web page.

We are honored by the trust that the AGU community places in us as editors of *GRL*, and we take very seriously our responsibility to fulfill both the *GRL* mandate and the high standards of AGU Publications. We hope that these enhancements will help *GRL* to continue to serve the AGU community through rapid, transparent, and fair review and publication of cutting-edge Earth and space science research.

By **Noah Diffenbaugh**, Editor in Chief, *Geophysical Research Letters*; email: difflenbaugh@stanford.edu; and **Lisa Beal, M. Bayani Cardenas, Kim Cobb, Meghan Cronin, Andrew Dombard, Tatiana Ilyina, Benoit Lavraud, Andrew V. Newman, W. K. “Bill” Peterson, Jeroen Ritsema, Julienne Stroeve, Joel A. Thornton**, and **Paul D. Williams**, Editors, *Geophysical Research Letters*



ICDP Workshop on amphibious drilling to Investigate Miocene Mediterranean-Atlantic Gateway Exchange (IMAGE)

Rabat, Morocco, 22-24 November 2016

Marine gateways are a key control on the pattern of global ocean circulation and associated heat transport and climate. For the past five million years Mediterranean seawater has flowed out of the Gibraltar Straits, forming a saline plume at intermediate depths in the Atlantic that contributes to AMOC. However, previously, two additional marine corridors existed through northern Morocco and southern Spain. The restriction and closure of these connections resulted in the Mediterranean Messinian Salinity Crisis (MSC). Understanding the causes of high-amplitude salinity change, its impact on the position and nature of the overflow plume, and the consequences for thermohaline circulation, is dependent on recovering a complete record of Mediterranean-Atlantic exchange before, during and after the MSC. These sediments would also allow us to test physical oceanographic hypotheses for extreme high density overflow dynamics.

ICDP has funded a workshop to develop an amphibious (ICDP & IOBP) drilling proposal to recover a complete record of Miocene Mediterranean-Atlantic exchange. We invite all interested scientists to complete the application form on the ICDP website (www.icdp-online.org) and send it to Rachel Flecker (r.flecker@bristol.ac.uk) by 9th September 2016.