

ANNOUNCEMENT

Recognizing our authors

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As of 2016 we have been publishing for 10 years—the first 3 with the University of Tokyo Press, and the last 7 with Springer Japan. From biannual issues with all e-mail correspondence, we are now publishing bimonthly using a manuscript management system with thousands of registered users, as well as a core group of sustainability scientists who use the journal to disseminate their work and volunteer their time as reviewers. It is this core group of researchers and their partner institutions that have helped lift sustainability science, and Sustainability Science Journal, to their current level of international recognition.

The foundation for the sustainability science research community in Japan was set in 2005 when the Integrated Research System for Sustainability Science (IR3S) and its 5 partner universities was created by the Committee for Presidential Initiatives at the University of Tokyo. Together with the international network Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS), comprising of MIT in Boston, Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden, and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, a conference was held in Tokyo that gathered the will and ideas for the creation of Sustainability Science Journal. The people involved in that meeting strongly shaped the scope and content of the journal for the next 6 years. The year 2012 brought changes to the funding landscape in Japan and the journal was shifted under the auspices of the International Society for Sustainability Science, an initiative started at the 2nd International Conference

on Sustainability Science in Arizona State University. The rumor is that the project was agreed upon at a late night meeting around a campus bar, the only time all the key people could meet in one place.

The resulting partnership between the University of Tokyo, Arizona State University, the Sapienza University of Rome, and the United Nations University represented a third phase of the journal, the second being the transfer of publishing duties to Springer Japan in 2009. This phase marked the publishing of outcomes of the International Conferences on Sustainability Science, starting with the 2nd conference in Arizona. These papers have become some of the most well cited and serve as fundamental findings in science-policy-society linkages, sustainability education, action research, transdisciplinary research, and disaster risk reduction research. The years since 2012 also saw research themes unique to the journal being successfully explored by a core network of authors, editors, and reviewers, as well as young scientists graduating from the numerous sustainability science graduate programs around the world. It is this work and its early beginnings we acknowledge with the Sustainability Science Best Paper Awards, and starting this year with the Most Cited Paper Awards, presenting the top two most cited papers since 2006.

In 2015, we published in total 67 articles in diverse fields, from researchers located all over the globe. The subfields of the discipline also proliferate as researchers in fields not usually represented in this journal start to investigate how their efforts can make a contribution to sustainability. Out of these diverse papers we narrowed down six for this year's Best Paper Awards, (excluding note and comments, editorial, message article and papers authored by a member of the committee) with excellent review scores between 80

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and 100%. These papers attempt to integrate different types of knowledge, or examine the changing roles of stakeholders and focusing on transdisciplinary processes. This journal values highly work that considers complexity in cause and effect relationships, considers uncertainty at appropriate scales, makes predictions and forms scenarios.

We welcome judgments based on values and the practical aspects of application that effects change, which often must include non-researcher actors. As in previous years, editor nominations were narrowed by the editorial office and presented to the selection committee. After some debate we have selected what we believe are the three most outstanding papers from the past year. I congratulate the authors for their hard work on this significant accomplishment. I also thank Richard Bawden from Systemic Development Institute of Australia and Jeffrey I. Steinfeld from Massachusetts Institute of Technology for their help on the selection committee.

The winning best papers of 2015 are:
Outstanding Article

Roland W. Scholz, Gerald Steiner

For the paper entitled

The real type and ideal type of transdisciplinary processes: part II—what constraints and obstacles do we meet in practice?—Vol. 10 Issue 4

What the selection committee said:

“A stand-out paper with a combination of focus on theory and on practice”.

Honorable mention

Li Xu, Dora Marinova, Xiumei Guo

For the paper entitled

Resilience thinking: a renewed system approach for sustainability science—Vol. 10 Issue 1

What the selection committee said:

“... the clearest exposition on the connections between resilience, sustainability and systemics, and the way all of these are related, and contribute to the development of sustainability science...”

Honorable mention

Scott Victor Valentine

For the paper entitled

What lurks below the surface? Exploring the caveats of sea level rise economic impact assessments—Vol. 10 Issue 1

What the selection committee said:

“...paper deals clearly and concisely with a very important and oft-ignored aspect of sustainability science, namely, the uncertainty inherent in all modeling and integrated assessment exercises.”

The winning most cited papers since 2006 are:

Fussler, HM

For the paper entitled

Adaptation planning for climate change: concepts, assessment approaches, and key lessons—2007 Vol. 2, Issue 2, Review Article

Wiek, Arnim; Withycombe, Lauren; Redman, Charles L.

For the paper entitled

Key competencies in sustainability: a reference framework for academic program development—2011 Vol. 6, Issue 2, Review article

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