Foreword

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This is the first issue of the new journal ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESSES. Understandably there are many questions related to “*why a new journal on the environment?*”, “*which is the link of European Water Resources Association (EWRA) with the environment?*”, “*why this timing was selected?*”, and many others. In this short foreword, I will try to answer briefly these questions so that the reader will have a clear view for this initiative of EWRA.

The decision to launch this new journal was taken during the EWRA Conference in Porto last June, by a representative percentage of EWRA members after a long debate which lasted for more than one year. It was considered as a “mature” initiative with great potential, embracing a wider audience from the core audience of EWRA, which is mostly associated to water resources and their planning and management.

The main reasoning behind this “expansion” of EWRA activity space is the fact that the environment is one of the three pillars of the Integrated Water Resources Management, with the other two being the *water availability centres* and the *consumption centres*. This means that without an in-depth knowledge of the environmental conditions and processes Water Resources Management cannot be integrated and scientifically sound. Needless to say, that the environment with its constraints and limitations is the starting point for any management of both natural and socioeconomic systems.

The concept of Environmental Processes, obviously, covers an even wider scientific area than that of water related processes. Therefore, the journal is called to cover also aspects and processes which are not totally related to water, such as biodiversity, ecosystem services, atmospheric pollution, environmental legislation etc.

The scientific field of Environmental Processes is really vast and complicated. Human induced interventions and natural changes and variability affect significantly these processes. Lately, the current and anticipated climate change and its influence on the environmental processes has been recognised as a topic of high priority in the agenda of most international organisations and governments.

Now, coming back to the management issues (mainly to water related management) it should be clearly stated that for any effective management strategy, action or project, the environmental processes should be known, so that the response of the system, including both the physical and socio-economic sub-systems, will be realistically accounted for.

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It is striking that most policies of the European Union, USA and other countries, follow paradigms in which environmental criteria are the most important in a multicriteria, multilevel decision making. For this reason, conventionally, algorithms, models and software packages are used. It can be supported that although several models are currently available to analyse environmental and quality issues, there is still a need for a new generation of quality models to address the current and future requirements (Benedini and Tsakiris 2013).

After the success of EWRA's first journal WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, which has been established as the leader in the field, EWRA took the initiative to launch other journals, such as the EUROPEAN WATER for interesting applications in the water sector, and the WATER UTILITY JOURNAL directed mostly to the professionals of the water sector. Today, together with the international expansion of EWRA, we launch, with the assistance of Springer, the new journal ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESSES, having high expectations and a firm belief that it will be soon a central scientific outlet for high quality papers which will advance our knowledge in this wide field. We also believe that ultimately the journal will help decision makers and stakeholders to improve their abilities for more comprehensive decisions, which will contribute to a sustainable environment, useful for the people and their activities.

I sincerely thank all those who helped in launching this new journal. Good luck in this promising initiative!

George Tsakiris

President of the European Water Resources Association

References

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