



Foreword

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While it is never easy to pinpoint the exact origin of any concept or initiative, it is probably correct that the idea to launch a new scientific journal such as *Environmental Modeling and Assessment* was first seriously discussed in 1991 in Conches, a district of Geneva. Alain Haurie from the University of Geneva had organized one of his many stimulating international workshops spanning cognate themes of quantitative analyses and their applications in the broad areas of environmental protection and sustainable development. The workshop was held at Académie de l'Environnement, a multidisciplinary unit of the University of Geneva. It was in an open discussion session at the end of a busy day of lectures that I floated the idea of launching a new journal dedicated to the best practice of mathematical modeling in the context of serious environmental problems facing humanity.

What followed was an animated discussion that generally supported the concept of forming such a journal and raised many challenging issues that ranged from the precise name of the journal, through to its scope, and anticipated challenges posed by the emergence of what are loosely called “computer models.” Jan Rotmans from Maastricht University argued passionately that integrated assessment should be the dominant theme of the new journal. The difficulty of finding a reputable publisher willing to risk starting a new journal was also raised as a serious obstacle in an era of uncertainty about the impact of the internet on scientific publishing. Ultimately, it was agreed that the concept was worthwhile and should be developed further.

Not long after the Geneva meeting, I had a pivotal brainstorming discussion with Panos Pardalos from the University of Florida who recommended that we approach Baltzer Science Publishers with a more refined and focused proposal. This was followed by a period of fruitful discussions

involving Daniel Baltzer representing the publisher, myself, Jan Rotmans, and Koos Vrieze, also from Maastricht University. What emerged out of these discussions was the current scope of the journal emphasizing its multidisciplinary nature and the name: *Environmental Modeling and Assessment*. My colleagues at Maastricht University hired an artist who came up with the current puzzle-like logo which adorns the front of our journal and the rest, as they say, is history.

One of the insights supplied by Daniel Baltzer, in those early days, stuck in my memory. He said something like, “Commitment to launching a new journal is similar to a commitment to having and bringing up a child. It takes some 21 years for a journal to mature.” In retrospect, this was a prophetic observation.

Over the past two decades, the journal has undergone many changes which included Baltzer Science Publishers being acquired by Kluwer which subsequently merged with Springer. In the early years, there were times when, as editor, I was nervous about not having enough quality papers accepted for the next issue. In more recent years, this problem has been replaced by the workload problem associated with growing numbers of submissions. However, it is fair to say that the journal has now come of age.

Environmental Modeling and Assessment undoubtedly owes its success to the high caliber of its editorial board both past and present. A quick scan of the inside cover of the journal reveals the names of the scholars who are world leaders in their fields of research or are rising stars. The commitment, dedication, and attention to detail of our Advisory Editors—when processing submitted manuscripts—has ensured the high quality of papers that we publish and has led to the steadily growing reputation of our journal in the international scientific community. Importantly, our Advisory Editors are not just demanding but are also fair and frequently work hard to help authors bring out the best in their manuscripts.

Consequently, when a decision was made to celebrate the 21st birthday of *Environmental Modeling and Assessment*, it seemed most appropriate to do so by inviting our Advisory Editors to contribute to a special issue that highlights not only

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some of their latest results but also any issue that they think would be of interest to our readership. I am delighted that, in this issue, we have assembled twelve excellent manuscripts authored, or co-authored, by members of our distinguished editorial board. I am especially pleased and honored that two of the contributions are from Alain Haurie and Panos Pardalos—both renowned researchers—who helped launch the journal in the first place.

When celebrating someone's birthday in my native country, Poland, it is customary to wish them "Sto Lat," namely, a lifespan of a hundred years. I trust that the readership of *Environmental Modeling and Assessment* will join me on this auspicious occasion in wishing our journal *Sto Lat!*

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