

Editorial: Welcome from the new Editors

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Published 24 February 2006.

Citation: Rohling, E. J., and G. R. Dickens (2006), Editorial: Welcome from the new Editors, *Paleoceanography*, 21, PA1000, doi:10.1029/2006PA001272.

[1] *Paleoceanography* occupies a central role for publications on how the oceans have evolved over time. On 1 January 2006 we officially began 4-year terms as the new Editors of this journal. Following tradition, we share some opening commentary.

[2] Our journal presently sits at the cusp of our discipline for two reasons: great editing over the past 4 years and a steady stream of strong papers. The journal was in a difficult situation several years ago, with long turnaround times between submission and publication and a mostly hard copy format. During their editorial terms, Lisa Sloan and Larry Peterson have expertly guided the journal, which has experienced a significant reduction in the handling time of manuscripts and a very successful transition to full electronic format. Along with their active nurturing of submissions and an emphasis on a constructive and fair review process the journal has received and published a series of exciting and incisive contributions. Once again, *Paleoceanography* resides as the flagship journal for our discipline. On behalf of all who read and use *Paleoceanography*, we thank Lisa and Larry for the energy and effort they devoted as Editors. Of course, a peer-reviewed scientific journal can only remain top-notch with outstanding submissions, excellent refereeing, and an active audience. We also thank you.

[3] As the new Editors, our first aim is to maintain the high standards set by Lisa and Larry. We will strive for outstanding science, a rapid turnaround of papers, and a fair and constructive reviewing process. Like our predecessors, we also take a broad view of *Paleoceanography*. Our discipline naturally spans incredible scientific diversity and invites links to other research fields, such as oceanography, geology, climatology, geochemistry, biochemistry, physical geography, paleontology, and more. We see these attributes as a key to the past and future strength of our journal, and we encourage submissions that cover a wide range of timescales and topics. As a general guideline, *Paleoceanography* should be a choice for excellent work that has been or could be presented in most “Paleoceanography and Paleoclimatology” (PP) sessions at annual AGU meetings. We stress, though, that the exact content of our journal depends on you.

[4] Although we are generally pleased with *Paleoceanography*, we will strive to make a few changes that reflect the nature of our discipline. As highlighted at the 2005 American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting by Jim Kennett, the founder and first Editor of our journal, the focus of research in our discipline has shifted considerably over the past 50 years; paleoceanography has now matured into the cornerstone for understanding and constraining global processes in the time domain (J. P. Kennett, *Paleoceanography and beyond: Changing perspectives over more than four decades*, *Eos Transactions AGU*, 86(52), Fall Meeting Supplement, Abstract PP24A-08, 2005). One consequence of this progression is the increasing need to truly integrate location-specific data with large-scale models for mass and heat transfer. Too often, interpretations of data are made without considering a larger modeling context (Is the interpretation plausible? How might the interpretation be used?), and models are presented without considering the full range of available data (Does the model explain all relevant observations? What data can be generated to test the model?). We will make a concerted effort to improve data-model interaction.

[5] We will also encourage open discussion about the quantification and robustness of results. *Paleoceanography* has long emphasized innovative studies that present new and exciting interpretations, concepts, and proxies. We feel that, in a specialized journal with relatively generous page limits, it should also be the norm to include discussion about key assumptions, process representations, potential problems, uncertainties, and alternative explanations. Such discussions, applicable to analytical and numerical studies, trigger new developments that improve our reconstructions and make our efforts more useful to the wider community. We are fully aware that well-defined qualitative observations can offer critical constraints, even if they cannot be easily incorporated into quantitative models. In these cases the robustness of the interpretations should still be transparently evaluated.

[6] In addition, we will institute a few changes to the journal format. First, we will resurrect *Paleoceanography Currents*, the section for short, provocative papers, ideally 5 pages or less when printed. Right now, *Paleoceanography* does not embrace these papers so they are being published elsewhere. We want great short papers on topics relevant to our discipline published in *Paleoceanography*.

[7] Second, we will limit all articles to the equivalent of 16 printed pages, including text, figures, tables and references. Frankly, we find very few colleagues interested

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in reading or reviewing papers that exceed this length and even fewer well-written papers beyond this length. On the other hand, we appreciate the desire to publish all relevant material (e.g., original data, methodology, taxonomy, computer codes, etc.). Following many journals, our solution is to give the option of providing additional materials in electronic supporting materials.

[8] Third, we will introduce an “Editor’s Choice” section on the *Paleoceanography* Web site. Some other journals,

notably *Geophysical Research Letters*, have short summaries of papers that appeal to an especially wide audience. We want to highlight these papers and send the summaries to the press.

[9] Last, we note that *Paleoceanography* will have, for the first time, an Editor from outside the United States. This can be taken as a clear sign that we want to increase international involvement, from attracting submissions to gaining readership.