

From the Editor's desk

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The year 2020-2022 has been quite challenging for us. The sudden outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020 followed by the lockdown of all the nations created havoc and disturbed the life of people. Back to *Journal of Environmental Biology* (JEB) Editorial Secretariat, as a precautionary measure, remained closed for a major part of the year 2020-2021, strictly following the protocols issued by the Government of India. Despite the closure, the entire editorial team of JEB worked from home and successfully managed and released all the issues of Journal. Amongst chaos and disturbances, the journal still managed to achieve a good impact factor of 0.76 in July 2021; however, in December 2021 the impact factor was suspended as the journal did not meet certain Web of Science selection criteria. One was the Editorial Policy of the journal, though not present on the journal's website but was effective and operational in practice. Immediately, after consulting the Board of Management the Editorial Policy of JEB was uploaded on JEB's website. Thereafter, we also applied for COPE Membership. Journal is still under evaluation by WOS and recently, the journal been issued a Journal Citation Index of 0.13 by WOS. Likewise, soon we hope to receive COPE Membership also.

The journal also had a good NAAS score of 6.76 which is issued by the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences India, however, due to the non-availability of Impact factor, JEB was excluded from the NAAS score-2022. We applied for re-evaluation of the journal in NAAS under the Category II, fulfilling all the criteria of evaluation finally the NAAS score for the year 2022 was restored and the current NAAS score of JEB is 5.57. We sincerely thank the NAAS Committee for evaluating the journal and for the early restoration of NAAS rating.

Now coming to the point, in January 2022 when the NAAS score list was released, which did not include JEB, we received endless e-mails and phones from Indian researchers. They were curious, flabbergasted, and inquisitive to know why such an old, reputed, internationally established journal was excluded from the NAAS score list. Although disappointed, at that instance, I realized the popularity of JEB among the Indian research community, which was a motivation for us to work harder in order to attain a higher rating in the future.

Quite frequently we receive queries regarding the impact factor or rating of our journal. It is expected that a journal should have a high impact factor; moreover it is also quite natural for a researcher to select a high impact factor journal for publishing their research work. My question is "Has one ever paid attention to the factors that contribute to high impact factor to a journal?" Is the journal solely responsible for obtaining a high impact factor? To my mind, the answer is 'NO' because if we study the criteria required for indexing a journal by reputed database agencies, one would realize that journal or a publisher alone cannot accomplish this task. My experience of more than one decade in the field of research publication says that there exists a symbiotic relationship between the contributors and publisher of a journal. On one hand, it is the responsibility and duty of a publisher to frame relevant journal policy and guidelines, follow ethical practices of scholarly publishing, and create the best scholarly communication system while on the other hand, it is the researchers or scientists who play a pivotal role in the growth of a journal by submitting quality research papers. Only these quality research papers after peer review, revision, copyediting, plagiarism check, and typesetting are published; post-publication these papers are assessed and covered by the database indexing agencies so as to provide the impact factor. Thus research content of a journal and its citation are important factors that account for the impact factor of a journal.

As JEB follows a rigorous peer review system, good numbers of research papers get rejected after peer review. This reflects that somewhere there is laxity while preparing a manuscript. Therefore, I again suggest the senior authors who are generally the communicating authors to critically check their manuscript for research content before submitting their manuscript to JEB. Also, if a paper gets rejected authors should carefully read the reviewers reports to rule out the reason for rejection, and to modify their manuscript for future submission.

During my doctorate program, several times I took the opportunity of attending the open viva voce of research scholars of my department. Once a senior examiner of a reputed Central University of India while concluding a viva voce had suggested the scholars and faculty members to patronize and submit their quality papers in national journals. *Journal of Environmental Biology* is one of the oldest research journal published in India and in the last 43 years it has earned international fame and recognition for publishing quality research papers following strict Publication mechanism. The Editorial Board Members, Reviewers, and In-office Editorial Staff work conjointly with the Editor for this research-oriented endeavor.

I've written this column to draw the attention of all contributors and readers that it is essential for all of us to know and understand the prerequisite of International Publication for indexing of research content of the journal by popular and leading journal indexing agencies. We have been emphasizing the researchers to submit research papers of emerging topics in JEB.

As an Editor, I would like to ask the researchers is it appropriate for the authors to withdraw their processed and accepted papers at the eleventh hour of publication? I earnestly request the authors to visit journal's website and read the "Guidelines for Authors and Publication Policy" of the JEB before submitting their research paper to the journal.

For wider coverage, increase visibility and readership of JEB at international level, it is important for us to publish novel research papers of emerging topics. This submission of mine is a nation-wide call for researchers to submit their quality research papers in JEB to make it one of the best and outstanding research journal so that it may be enlisted in top international journals.

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