

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

Waste Management

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/wasman

Editorial

Story of a success which must go on

A changeover in journal management is invariably a time for summing up, reflecting on the current situation and undertaking new initiatives.

1. Summing up

Since 2002 *Waste Management* has served as the official Journal of the IWWG (International Waste Working Group), a scientific organization founded to act as a forum for the scientific and professional community which aims to provide an intellectual platform to encourage and support integrated and sustainable waste management and to promote practical scientific development in the field without ideologies, politics or financial interests. To achieve this goal, existing waste management options must be implemented by referring to the IWWG mission “learning from the past, analyzing the present, developing new ideas and visions for the future”.

In order to implement this mission IWWG, in agreement with Elsevier, appointed Dr. Luis Diaz, President of CalRecovery, and member of the IWWG Managing Board, as Editor in Chief. Under the editorship of Luis the Journal has reached a high standing in terms of Impact Factor, number of submitted papers and technical and scientific interest. This successful outcome was achieved also thanks to the fundamental collaboration with Linda Eggerth, Managing Editor, and the highly qualified team of Associate Editors. After more than seven years of hard work Luis has decided to leave the front line, although his involvement with the Journal will continue as member of the IWWG Editorial Strategic Group. The IWWG and, I am sure, the authors and readers all convey their sincere thanks to Luis, Linda, the Associate Editors and reviewers as well as to all those who have actively taken part in publishing the Journal.

Following my term as President of IWWG, and on the basis of a new agreement reached between Elsevier and the IWWG Managing Board, I have now been invited to take over as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal. This choice was made to ensure continuity in the journal's operation and management. It will be up to me to not let Luis' absence be felt too much!

2. Reflections and perspectives

Nowadays a modern solid waste management system is expected to consider the numerous requirements dictated both by an increased awareness and recognition of environmental problems by the public and by the scientific growth of knowledge in the field, as well as by the considerable attention to unavoidable global ecological issues (limited resources, climate change, increas-

ingly widespread pollution, population growth, depletion of non-renewable energy sources, etc.).

Waste management strategies should be implemented on a worldwide basis, not limited solely to industrialized countries. In the field of solid waste management, the role of a scientific journal to publish and disseminate the results of research studies and innovative technological and management experiences, is of the utmost importance. Indeed, in order to avoid choices that may be influenced, as often occurs in the field of solid waste management, by improvised solutions, demagogic issues, business interests, negative habits, emotional factors, political interests, etc., the journal may prove fundamental in guiding choices made by decision makers, in training and updating solid waste professionals and in representing a specific reference point for Research & Development in industry.

As a consequence of the different interests, *Waste Management* can count on several classes of potential users representing the world of stakeholders: researchers from universities and other public organisations, decision makers, students, public administrators, private sector research & development departments, managers, designers and other professionals.

Some of the above would be potential authors whilst others potential readers. The contents and layout of the Journal and a high editorial quality should be appealing to both of them. The papers published should comply with strict scientific content and relevance. If a paper is not relevant either from a scientific or an applied point of view, it will be of scarce interest to users and readers. It should always be kept in mind that it is good scientific papers that convey importance to the journal, not the other way around!

Waste Management is available in print and online formats. Use of the electronic version is on a continual upward trend. Nowadays, papers submitted to an important publisher such as Elsevier are handled entirely online. Likewise, a considerable number of researchers have online access to the Journal, also being able to take advantage of well-organised databases such as ScienceDirect.

Desirable goals include the following:

- increased appeal for highly qualified scientific research by providing additional facilities online and a rapid review process;
- application of stricter criteria in accepting submitted papers with particular emphasis on scientific quality and relevance;
- increased circulation of the Journal and improvement in Impact Factor
- keeping an open eye on advances made in developing countries with a view to implementing the more qualified technical and scientific contributions;

- wider association with contexts beyond the academic or waste management fields. The latter could be achieved through guest editorials or invited reviews focusing on controversial issues or subjects of particular interest (e.g. health aspects, economy, education, policy etc.).

3. New initiatives

With a view to facilitating the above-mentioned strategic aims, the operational tasks focusing on the quality of papers accepted and timing of the peer-review process are critical.

Timing of the peer-review process. The current printing times of *Waste Management* should be shortened, even though at the end of the peer-review process an accepted paper is rapidly published online. In close consultation with the Associate Editors and with the assistance of the Managing Editorial Office, a number of operational actions will be undertaken to considerably reduce peer-review times.

The number of Associate Editors has been doubled. Keynote experts have been chosen on the basis of their scientific standing and their service to the Journal as outstanding reviewers. The new team of Associate Editors represents 11 different countries from all the continents, thereby providing an effective lookout network for new developments in different areas.

Authors will be invited to strictly adhere to times allotted for manuscript revision. Papers not returned within the allotted times will be considered withdrawn.

A poor use of the English language is often cause of considerable delays during the evaluation and review process. Authors whose first language is not English should have their paper checked by a native English expert prior to submission. English language will be accurately checked and poor quality manuscripts may be rejected.

All efforts will be undertaken to ensure that papers are evaluated by Associate Editors and reviewers of a nationality other than that of the author.

Papers submitted by members of the various editorial teams will be subjected to the same review procedures applied for all authors.

Quality of papers published and scientific standing of the journal. This aspect can be assessed on the basis of numerous bibliometric parameters, including Impact Factor, Citation Index and, more generally, the degree of satisfaction as evaluated periodically by Elsevier.

A stricter selection process will be established, focusing mainly on scientific quality and relevance.

Papers focusing on a specific theme determined by the Editorial Committee and compiled following the normal peer-review process may be published each year in two thematic special issues.

Publication times for the printed version. Publication times are determined not only by operations of the Editorial Office but also by any existing backlogs. While the Publisher may to some extent adapt the yearly page budget to reduce backlogs, financial constraints limit this possibility.

To keep the backlog within acceptable levels the following measures will be implemented:

- a stricter selection process;
- reduction of number of pages per paper according to type of paper submitted (case studies, mini reviews, preliminary works, etc);
- use of the online version to publish finer details (extensive tables, lengthy descriptions of mathematical models, complex algorithms, etc.).

To conclude, we trust that *Waste Management* will build on the results obtained to date, becoming an increasingly widespread reference point for the international scientific and technical community.

By raising the responsibilities of both the Associate Editors and authors in achieving a high quality, rapid peer-review process the Journal will become more appealing for qualified research contributions. If we succeed it will be thanks to the efforts of all concerned.

Let us hope it is plain sailing!

Raffaello Cossu
University of Padova,
Italy

E-mail address: raffaello.cossu@unipd.it