

# ECOGRAPHY

## Editorial

### Two decades with *Ecography*: a farewell and a new beginning

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After two decades of service to *Ecography* – first as a subject editor, then as deputy Editor-in-Chief, and for the past twelve years as Editor-in-Chief – the time has come for me to bid farewell. My connection with the journal stretches even further back: *Ecography* was one of the first outlets where I published work from my PhD. At that time, manuscripts were submitted by printing multiple copies and sending them by post to Linus Svensson, who for several decades loyally served the Nordic Society Oikos – the society that publishes *Ecography* – before his recent retirement. From the editorial office, Linus would then mail the manuscripts to reviewers together with a request to review the paper. Since reviewers could decline, the process could take several months just to manage submissions, and it was not unusual for a paper to take several years from submission to publication. First as an author, and later as an editor, I strongly advocated for reform, and as digitisation advanced, we finally arrived at the streamlined submission process we use today.

*Ecography* is a truly special society journal. It has traditionally had a strong focus on biogeography and macroecology, yet it distinguishes itself from similarly profiled journals by its openness to other fields of ecology with a strong spatial or temporal component. When I took over the Editor-in-Chief role, I was determined to maintain this broad scope already pursued by my predecessor, Carsten Rahbek, while also pursuing carefully targeted expansions into related fields, such as ecological epidemiology and experimental macroecology. The urgency of including ecological epidemiology became especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. We achieved this goal by appointing editors with expertise in these areas and by preparing special issues dedicated to these themes (Guégan et al. 2024, whole special issue here: <https://nsojournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/16000587/2024/2024/1>).

The journal itself has undergone significant transformation. Founded in 1978 as *Holarctic Ecology* under the editorship of Rolf Vik (University of Oslo, Norway), it was restructured in 1992 to become *Ecography*, subsequently led by a distinguished line of Editors-in-Chief: Nils Malmer (1992–1993, Lund University, Sweden), Sven Jonasson (1993–1996, University of Copenhagen, Denmark), Esa Ranta (1996–2002, University of Helsinki, Finland), Martin Zobel (2002–2005, University of Tartu, Estonia), and Carsten Rahbek (2005–2013, University of Copenhagen, Denmark).



[www.ecography.org](http://www.ecography.org)

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Today, *Ecography* is firmly established as a leading outlet in ecology and biogeography. Along the way, it has developed several distinctive sections that set it apart from other journals: Forum papers, which present short and challenging contributions at the forefront of ecology and biogeography, often multidisciplinary and conceptually innovative; Review and Synthesis papers, which provide focused, critical assessments of rapidly advancing topics and propose new hypotheses or methods; Software Notes, which highlight the best new tools in spatiotemporal ecology, ensuring broad dissemination and accessibility; News & Views, which offer concise, accessible commentaries on exciting recent research published in the journal; and Brevia, short reports of important new findings written in a clear, accessible manner and of broad significance. Together, these initiatives have enriched *Ecography* and fostered a diversity of contributions that extend well beyond standard research articles.

When I assumed the EiC role, *Ecography* was financially supported by surpluses from its sister journal *Oikos*. One of the key challenges during my tenure was overseeing the transition to open access – a process that, unlike in many other journals, went notoriously smoothly (Araújo et al. 2019). With this transition, *Ecography* became self-sustaining. Today, it generates a surplus that secures its long-term viability while also contributing directly to the community – for example, through the E4 Award for reviews led by early-career researchers, support for society-based conferences, student merit and travel awards, and the provision of open access fee waivers assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Throughout these years, we have also made a conscious effort to maintain an editorial board balanced across topics, gender, and regions. Achieving perfect balance is not always possible, as inequalities in the broader scientific community inevitably echo in editorial structures. Yet striving toward fairness and inclusivity has remained a guiding principle – never pursued at the expense of quality, but rather as a means of enriching the journal with diverse perspectives while upholding the highest scientific standards.

At the same time, I am aware that new challenges are already shaping the landscape of scholarly publishing. Among them is the need to cope with an increasingly aggressive publishing ecosystem, where the competition for visibility and impact can sometimes overshadow scientific integrity and community values. Another is the rise of inequalities

stemming from the weakening of global cooperation, which risks marginalising voices from less privileged regions and undermining the international character of ecological research. A further challenge lies in safeguarding the integrity of peer review in a world that moves ever faster, while the availability of qualified and willing reviewers is increasingly limited. To this we may add the growing pressure to integrate technological advances – such as AI-assisted tools – into the editorial and review process, balancing efficiency with rigour and fairness.

These are not easy challenges, but they are opportunities as well (McGill Brain et al. 2018). Addressing them will require resilience, creativity, and a strong sense of community. I am confident that *Ecography*, as a society journal deeply rooted in service rather than profit, is well positioned to navigate this future and to continue playing a leading role in ecology and biogeography under new leadership.

It has been both a privilege and a pleasure to serve this community. I am deeply grateful to the dedicated team of editors with whom I have had the honour to work – including our Managing Editor, Maria Persson, who oversees the day-to-day management of the journal – to the board of the Nordic Society Oikos for the trust placed in me over these many years, and to the reviewers and authors whose contributions are the lifeblood of the journal. I now wish the very best to my successor, Christine Meynard, who takes on the role as the first female (and Latin American) Editor-in-Chief of *Ecography*. I am confident that under her leadership the journal will continue to thrive, expand, and inspire.

Miguel B. Araújo  
Editor-in-Chief of *Ecography*

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