

Report of the IAVS Publications Officer: 2014-2015

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1. State of the Journals

The IAVS journals are doing very well as judged by nearly any metric. Here I summarize some of the most important of these.

Availability & Usage

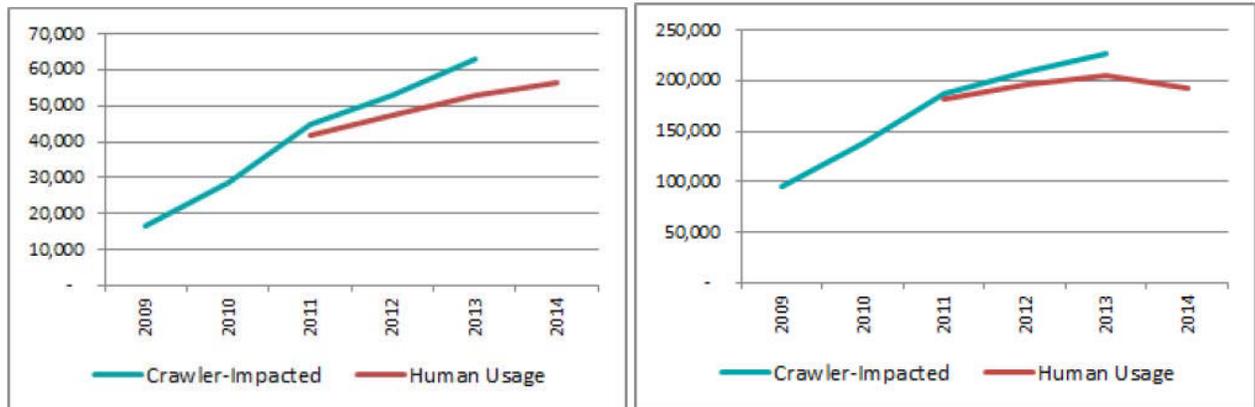
Applied Vegetation Science and *Journal of Vegetation Science* are available in approximately 4,315 institutions worldwide via either traditional subscriptions or a Wiley license. In addition, Wiley philanthropic initiatives extend low-cost or free access to 5,246 developing world institutions. These numbers are up a modest amount from 2013, which, in a global context of shrinking budgets and increasing numbers of journals, is very good news.

Institutional and individual print subscriptions continue to decline and the print run currently stands at approximately 200 copies per issue. Wiley considers that this is sufficient to continue to offer print as an option and we expect this to continue for at least a few more years.

IAVS journals continue to be highly international in both authorship and use. The 75 AVS articles in 2014 had corresponding authors from 25 countries, with the largest numbers representing the US (14), France (7), Czech Republic (6) and Germany (6). The 145 articles in JVS had corresponding authors from 28 countries with the highest being the US (32), Australia (9), Canada (8), Germany (7) and South Africa (7).

Online Readership

Over the period 2009-2013 Wiley reported dramatic increases each year for both journals in the number of article downloads. Not surprisingly, this cultural shift in how literature is accessed has started to approach saturation. In addition, Wiley has changed its metric for article downloads in an attempt to eliminate counting non-human (crawler) downloads. The new metrics show AVS continuing to increase and JVS relatively stable.



Revenue

Revenue received by IAVS from Wiley has remained strong with a modest increase each year. Overall revenue was up slightly for 2014 (£ 103,125) as compared to 2013 (£ 102,245). However, at the Council meeting in 2013 we approved a one-time purchase of extra pages to reduce the journal backlog, which reduced our income slightly (-£ 6,941), leaving us with net 2014 income of £ 96,181. Total net income to the Association in Euros was € 123,604 for 2014 compared to € 121,534 for 2013, the increase in Euro net income compared to the decrease in UK£ net income reflecting primarily the decline in value of the Euro relative to the pound. We are not expecting a significant change for 2015.

Impact factor

The 2014 impact factors were released in June. AVS increased a bit from 2.416 to 2.548, while JVS leaping up from 3.372 to 3.709. AVS and JVS are now at all-time highs in the rankings of Ecology journals, Forestry journals and Plant Sciences journals (see table below). Our past and present Chief Editors and their Associate Editors and Editorial Boards are to be congratulated.

Year	Ecology		Forestry		Plant Sciences	
	JVS	AVS	JVS	AVS	JVS	AVS
2014	31	56	2	5	25	52
2013	35	58	3	7	27	55
2012	45	61	3	8	38	58
2011	47	75	3	15	44	74
2010	49	66	2	9	39	65
2009	49	77	2	15	36	79
2008	51	72	5	15	39	71

Production time

Time from receipt of a final manuscript at the publisher to publication in early view had been relatively constant from 2010 through 2013 for both journals at approximately 40 days. This increased to somewhat over 50 days in 2014, perhaps as a consequence of the added quality control that we have implemented. We will be looking into the reasons for this increase.

Two years ago we had developed a significant backlog of papers owing to the editors accepting papers at a rate faster than our page budget would allow them to be published. To reduce the backlog and increase speed of print publication we allocated extra pages for 2014. In the tables below you can see improvement over 2013, especially for the final issue of the year (which approximates the final result of this initiative).

Applied Vegetation Science

Year	Volume	Number of issues	Number of pages	Number of articles	Average days from receipt at Wiley to Early View publication	Average days from receipt at Wiley to print publication
	17	Issue 4			69	199
2014	17	4	796	75	58	203
2013	16	4	716	69	40	218
2012	15	4	607	55	37	185
2011	14	4	606	51	44	153

Journal of Vegetation Science

Year	Volume	Number of issues	Number of pages	Number of articles	Average days from receipt at Wiley to Early View publication	Average days from receipt at Wiley to print publication
	25	Issue 6			56	179
2014	25	6	1,509	145	51	220
2013	24	6	1,211	118	39	226
2012	23	6	1,197	112	33	182
2011	22	6	1,154	104	36	121

2. Relationship with Wiley

Staff turnover at Wiley

A few years ago we were delighted with our contacts at Wiley, these being our primary point of contact Matt Pacey, his assistant Felicity Clark, and Matt's boss and our original point of contact Liz Ferguson. Matt left Wiley in the fall of 2013 and after a few months was replaced by a person who proved inappropriate and was released in summer 2014. Only very recently has his replacement, Adam Wheeler, arrived. Adam, who joined Wiley March 30, inherited an enormous backlog of work. Meanwhile Felicity had departed and approximately a year ago Zoe Halbert replaced her, only to depart 2 days before Adam arrived, and she has not yet been replaced. Finally, about a year and a half ago Wiley reorganized its staff, moving our good partner Liz to a new and institutionally more important role as Publishing Solutions Director within the newly created Research Innovations business group. She was replaced in our line of contacts by Vicky Johnson, who has been very helpful. We once again have a fine set of contacts, but this has taken time, backlogs that developed are only now being cleared.

Membership & Renewal Management

As I reported last year, since taking over JVS and AVS, Wiley has maintained a membership list for IAVS and has solicited renewals. In the absence of dedicated IAVS staff, this was by far the best solution available. However, the Wiley list often had serious problems such as multiple records for a single person, inconsistent formatting, and virtually no ability to handle historical information such as past members and their past roles. As a consequence IAVS officers have had to spend large amounts of time maintaining a separate membership database. Our new business office at FASEB has the ability to maintain our membership records in a society-oriented database, handle all membership renewal activities, and simply inform Wiley periodically as to who should receive journals. There is a cost, but we could also change the Wiley contract to recover much of that cost. Given the dramatic changes going on with the transition to FASEB, The Governing Board has decided to wait until at least fall 2015 to make a decision as to which team should handle the IAVS membership records.

Renewal of the IAVS contract with Wiley

The initial IAVS contract with Blackwell (now Wiley) was for the five-year period 2009-2013, after which the contract states that there is automatic renewal unless one party asks for renegotiation at least 1 year in advance. The Publications Committee felt that both the Committee and the Governing Board should review the contract during 2012-13 and decide if any important changes are needed, particularly in the context of a new IAVS business office. The Publications Officer brought this matter up with our representatives at Wiley and they proposed a new contract for our consideration. The Chief Editors and the Publications Committee reviewed the contract in early 2013 and largely approved it. However, discussions within the Governing Board with respect to establishment of the IAVS Business Office led to

a delay in the final discussions of the contract revision. This delay was followed by another delay largely induced by staff turnover at Wiley. We are now hopeful that the new contract can be presented and discussed at the annual meeting in Brno.

Production workflow and quality control

Effective October 1, 2012 production of our journals was outsourced by Wiley and as a consequence moved from the Edinburgh Office of Wiley to SPS (Scientific Publication Service) in India. Copy editing takes place in yet another location. We had been very happy with the Edinburgh operation. Since the transfer of the production functions the Chief Editors have observed various problems and errors. We have worked with Wiley to reduce these problems and the situation has improved somewhat over the last year, although there remains significant room for improvement. We will continue to work with Wiley and SPS to minimize these problems.

3. Publications Committee

The IAVS Publications Committee consists of Robert Peet, Chair (US), Helge Bruelheide (DE), Hans Henrik Bruun (DK), Jessica Gurevitch (US), Tomáš Herben (CZ), Michael Manthey (DE), Laco Mucina (AU) and Martin Zobel (EE). The Publications Committee had planned to undertake a formal review of the journals and the Chief Editors during spring 2015. However, owing to staff turnover at Wiley and the complexity of establishing the IAVS business office at FASEB, I decided in consultation with members of the Governing Board to postpone the review until fall 2015. However, I have over the past year consulted with Wiley staff, other members of the Governing Board, and with the Chief Editors to verify that there were no pressing issues.

4. Other IAVS-related Publications and Issues

Bulletin

Production of the *Bulletin* has long constituted a drain on the time of the Society officers. Now that IAVS has a business office with FASEB, it is possible to obtain some staff support for production of the *Bulletin*. President Diekmann has worked with Stefan Bradham at FASEB to develop a partnership between FASEB and the Society officers to expedite production of the *Bulletin*.

Phytocoenologia

Phytocoenologia was founded in December of 1973 by some of the same individuals that were instrumental in founding or guiding the early governance of IAVS. Volume 1 was published with the subtitle 'Journal of the International Society of Plant Geography and Ecology' and subsequently changed to 'Journal of the International Association for Vegetation Science'. However, IAVS had never approved the use of its name on the cover, and this seemed at odds with subsequent contracts with first Opulus and then Wiley wherein IAVS declared JVS and AVS to be the official journals of the Association. This issue was finally resolved in January 2014 when a Memorandum of Understanding was approved by Governing Board and signed by A. Nägele on behalf of the publisher Gebrüder Borntraeger Verlagsbuchhandlung. Hereafter the cover will indicate that the journal is "Published in collaboration with the International Association for Vegetation Science."

Meanwhile, Ulrich Deil, the Editor for the past 17 years, announced his intension to retire from the journal at the end of 2014. In June 2014 Erwin Bergmeier contacted the IAVS Governing Board on behalf of the publishers of *Phytocoenologia* and proposed a set of 8 editors and a new general vision for the journal. These were approved by the Governing Board in July 2014. I have been told that the new editors will present the first issue of the new *Phytocoenologia* at the IAVS Symposium in Brno.

DOIs

During the 2014 meeting we discussed the need to assign DOIs to articles in the *Bulletin* and in the Newsletters of the Sections and Working Groups. During the fall of 2014 Stefan Bradham (our FASEB representative) researched this issue for us. He recommended that we contract with CrossRef, which would cost \$275/year plus \$1 per DOI. This seemed like a good solution, and much less expensive than other options. Subsequently Jürgen Dengler noted that it might be possible to obtain DOIs free from Technical Information Library in Braunschweig. Stefan will look into this and advise us at the Brno meeting. Either way, we need to make a decision at the Brno meeting.