

Weather, Climate, and Society: Moving Forward

Five years ago, the American Meteorological Society took the bold step of establishing a new journal, which it called *Weather, Climate, and Society*. AMS has a long history of producing leading scientific journals in meteorology and related research areas. However, *Weather, Climate, and Society* was not intended to be a traditional AMS journal. Avowedly interdisciplinary, the journal was intended to bridge the gap between meteorology, including research in both weather and climate, and socioeconomic and policy-relevant research.

The decision to establish a new publication was not easy. It was made only after a lengthy period of discussion within the AMS on the scientific need for a journal in this arena. In the course of this discussion, it was recognized that many scientists in both meteorology and the social sciences were doing interdependent research that examined both the anthropogenic influences on weather and climate and the ways in which weather and climate influence society. Equally important, some scientists argued that it was essential to better understand how to convey meteorological information to decision makers and the general public and to use scientific research understanding in addressing society's problems. The question some asked was whether the AMS had any responsibility to advance this research. Eventually, it was decided that there was sufficient scientific benefit to be gained from fostering research in weather, climate, and society that it would be valuable for the AMS to take this step.

Another set of discussions that took place was whether it was the American Meteorological Society's responsibility to establish a journal for this field and whether there were other organizations or publishers who already had journals that would meet this scientific need. After careful study, the AMS found that there were very few journals interested in manuscripts in this emerging field. Scientists who attempted to cross the traditional disciplinary boundaries in their research had a difficult time finding a respected journal that would publish their work. The further argument was made that if the AMS published the first journal to reach out explicitly to scientists working across these two broad fields, it could benefit scientists in both groups. Scientists in the field of meteorology would have access to cutting-edge research and analysis by social scientists, and social scientists would be able to publish their work in a journal that would be read and commented on by scientists interested in both basic and applied meteorology, one that was sponsored by the leading publisher of meteorological research in the world.

Launching a new journal is never cost free. Once the decision was made as to the scientific value of publishing *Weather, Climate, and Society*, the AMS provided invaluable economic, administrative, and management resources. This included both staffing and technological support for the management, reviewing, editing, production, and subscription processes in the new journal. There were also publicity costs associated with launching a new journal, and again, the American Meteorological Society provided the necessary expertise and support. The unwavering support of the AMS throughout the past five years has been essential to the success of the journal.

I have had the pleasure of serving as chief editor of *Weather, Climate, and Society* for five years, watching the scientific partnerships among physical and social scientists develop and extend into new substantive areas. There are now increasingly more manuscripts being submitted to the journal, more citations of articles that are published in it, and broader acknowledgement of the critical importance of the journal. My job as chief editor throughout this period was totally dependent upon the knowledge, skills, and judgment of the journal's

editors. Specifically, I want to acknowledge the significant scientific, policy, and even technical contributions of Jeff Lazo, Lisa Dilling, Ben Orlove, Kirstin Dow, and Dave Letson, which were essential to the success of *Weather, Climate, and Society*.

A new chief editor, Professor Amanda Lynch of Brown University, has been appointed to succeed me. Her appointment is an asset to the journal and she will begin her work with outstanding human and organizational resources in place. I look forward to watching *Weather, Climate, and Society* as it moves forward and advances our science and policy.

Roberta Balstad
Chief Editor
Weather, Climate, and Society