

Editorial comments from the Chief Editor, July 2016

Geochemistry: Environment, Exploration, Analysis (GEEA) is published by Geological Society of London, a long-standing publisher of some of the most prestigious Earth science journals globally. The Geological Society of London is an organization totally dedicated to the promotion of Earth science at every level, and its staff – including Jessica Pollitt as the Production Editor of GEEA – is among the most competent and dedicated in the Earth sciences. Within this family, GEEA is a journal aimed at applied geochemistry, and its success can be attributed in large part to the efforts of its founder and Chief Editor for the past 15 years, Gwendy Hall. Gwendy worked meticulously at building the reputation of the journal and making it the most relevant publication for those with the vision to integrate exploration, analytical and environmental science. Gwendy remains a strategic consultant on all things GEEA. As the relatively new Chief Editor, I am fortunate to have her as a colleague, and we all benefit from working alongside someone so dedicated to applied geochemistry and its community.

GEEA focuses on mineral exploration using geochemistry, geoanalysis, method and technique development, and environmental issues associated with anthropogenic activity, mining and source apportionment. Despite the altruistic subject matter of GEEA, the impact of the journal must continue to increase and its visibility must be enhanced. To evaluate the position of GEEA, there was a meeting among Kurt Kyser (Chief Editor), Matt Leybourne (Associate Editor), Gwendy Hall (past Chief Editor), and Dan Layton-Matthews (consultant) to discuss the development of the journal. Among the points discussed, the group recognized that, although the focus of GEEA is well defined, it is not well appreciated by a scientific community that is often focused on pure rather than a more balanced applied research component. The definition of what GEEA is, and how it is distinct from similar journals, deserves clarification. The following are what some researchers would consider ‘similar’ journals, along with their *raison d’être* as defined by the journal itself:

(1) *Applied Geochemistry* — ‘devoted to publication ... in geochemistry and urban geochemistry which have some practical application to an aspect of human endeavor, such as the preservation of the environment, health, waste disposal and the search for resources’;

(2) *Journal of Geochemical Exploration* — ‘new developments in the application of analytical geochemistry and geoinformatics’;

(3) *Environmental Geochemistry and Health* — ‘any environmental and/or health issues related to the extraction technique known as fracking’;

(4) *Journal of Analytical Atomic Spectroscopy* — ‘innovative research on fundamentals, instrumentation, and methods in the determination, speciation and isotopic analysis of (trace) elements within all fields of application’;

(5) *Ore Geology Reviews* — ‘recent advances in a number of interconnected disciplines related to the study of, and search for, ore deposits’;

(6) *Economic Geology* — ‘any segment of economic geology and studies of all classes of mineral deposits’;

(7) *Mineralium Deposita* — ‘new observations, principles, and interpretations from the field of economic geology, including

nonmetallic mineral deposits, experimental and applied geochemistry, with emphasis on mineral deposits’.

Our journal is distinct from all of these, and GEEA papers should reflect the integration of analysis with exploration and environmental science. An analytical section is implicit and should be an integral part of each paper — it addresses both how the numbers were generated and what they mean. GEEA embodies papers that talk about analysis with a purpose, environmental papers that address the importance and impact on society of the science presented, and the impact of geochemistry on both exploration and responsible mining. Papers in GEEA should reflect both pure and applied aspects of geochemistry, and reflect the overlap of environmental and exploration geochemistry, such as in baseline studies. None of the journals listed above target these contributions, and that is what makes GEEA unique in the spectrum of pure and applied geochemistry.

So, how do we make GEEA a better journal? In addition to an enhanced definition of the purpose of the journal and how it is distinct from other seemingly similar journals, the following initiatives are being addressed:

(1) Increasing the visibility of GEEA. The visibility of the journal in environmental and exploration industries is being enhanced and we will be getting GEEA into the hands of scientists who are unfamiliar with its content. As part of this activity we will identify key researchers in both academia and industry and invite them to contribute review articles.

(2) Attracting higher quality papers. We will work proactively to drive up the quality of published papers, ensuring geographic diversity and the submission of papers from, in particular, the USA and Australia.

(3) Improving logistics. We will improve the submission process to ensure a timely and efficient handling of all papers and also enhance the efficiency of the peer review and publication processes. GEEA editors will check and verify the standard of language and grammar on receipt in order to facilitate rapid peer review. Authors will be required to suggest reviewers, which will facilitate a quick decision.

(4) Appealing to the ‘next generation’ of authors. GEEA will seek out and attract up-and-coming authors, including students, PDFs (Postdoctoral Fellows) and new professors who require fast publication of their results. Papers that have a student as the lead author will be identified as such, so that the article can receive additional attention. In addition, a student paper prize award will be given.

(5) Inviting key people to contribute review articles. To increase the stature and appeal of GEEA, we will identify experts to contribute articles that review key exploration and environmental aspects of our area. For example, results of various AMIRA and CAMIRO studies will be targeted for inclusion in theme issues and active and high-profile researchers who normally do not publish in GEEA will be invited to contribute review articles.

(6) Teams on Themes. Pairs of researchers will be invited to submit articles on topics that must encompass environment, exploration and analysis. These pairs will be chosen such that one

is very experienced but not necessarily driven to publish and the other is someone who should publish as part of their career.

These initiatives will increase the awareness of GEEA amongst the exploration, environmental and analytical communities and ensure that the next generation of researchers is made aware that they can

communicate their work via a journal that is designed specifically for them.

All of these initiatives aim to increase the awareness of GEEA amongst the exploration, environmental and analytical communities. It is also imperative that we reach out to the next generation of researchers and this is promoted as part of the GEEA directive.