The change in this journal’s name from *Proceedings of the Indian Academy of Sciences (Earth and Planetary Sciences)* to *Journal of Earth System Science* (JESS) in 2005 saw the number of submissions nearly double from 51 in 2004 to 97 in 2005. To accommodate the larger number of papers and decrease the period between acceptance and publication, the number of issues was increased from four to six the same year. The number of submissions has continued to increase: 452 manuscripts were received in 2014, when the number of issues was increased to eight.

The increase in number of submissions has necessitated a clarification of the journal’s scope, which was last modified in 2005 to reflect its new name and the broader scope it implied. As noted by Narasimhan in an editorial in JESS (Emerging relevance of Earth System Science, 2007, 116(6), 465–467), the articles published continue to emphasise distinct elements of the earth system. While this compartmentalisation is perhaps unavoidable owing to the fragmented nature of research programmes, the journal has been compelled to turn down several manuscripts that are extremely limited in their spatio-temporal coverage. It is not that the data or model results reported in them are technically incorrect, but that the results cannot be extended beyond the limited domain in space and time that are studied, making them more suitable to specialised journals. Several manuscripts have also been declined for reporting the effect of anthropogenic activity on land use or the environment over an extremely limited domain, like a city, or being more oriented towards engineering or mathematics than the earth system. As its name implies, the focus of this journal is on the earth system, i.e., on how the earth evolves as a system, or how the components of the earth system evolve, rather than on changes over a limited spatio-temporal domain due to, but not restricted to, anthropogenic activity.

As noted in an earlier editorial in February 2005, “the popularity of a journal and its prestige are based on the rapport built between the journal and its authors through association over a time span of decades. An important element of the rapport is the confidence that the author has in the journal as the right place for making his or her work known.”

Therefore, we felt it necessary to state formally this interpretation of the journal’s scope to help authors decide if JESS is the right place for their work. The revised statement of the scope is as follows:

“Begun in 1934 as a quarterly journal, the *Proceedings of the Indian Academy of Sciences (Earth and Planetary Sciences)* was renamed *Journal of Earth System Science* (JESS) in 2005. JESS now publishes eight issues (Feb, Mar, Apr, Jun, Jul, Aug, Oct, and Dec) a year. The journal is highly interdisciplinary and publishes scholarly research – new data, ideas, and conceptual advances – in Earth System Science. The focus is on the evolution of the Earth as a system: manuscripts describing changes of anthropogenic origin in a limited region are not considered unless they go beyond describing the changes to include an analysis of earth-system processes. The journal’s scope includes the solid earth (geosphere), the atmosphere, the hydrosphere (including cryosphere), and the biosphere; it also addresses related aspects of planetary and space sciences. Contributions pertaining to the Indian subcontinent and the surrounding Indian-Ocean region are particularly welcome.

Given the fact that a large number of manuscripts report either observations or model results for a limited domain, manuscripts intended for publication in JESS are expected to fulfill at least one of the following three criteria.

- The data should be of relevance and should be of statistically significant size and from a region from where such data are sparse. If the data are from a well-sampled region, the data size should be considerable and advance our knowledge of the region.
- A model study is carried out to explain observations reported either in the same manuscript or in the literature.
- The analysis, whether of data or with models, is novel and the inferences advance the current knowledge.”

We hope that this clarification of the journal’s scope will lead to fewer rejections on grounds of scope.

June 2015

Editors