

Ecohealth: review covering the period 2010-2012

Basic facts

EcoHealth, the official journal of IAEH, was launched in 2004 and is published quarterly in hard-copy and online. It is an international, peer-reviewed journal with a focus on the interface between ecology and health sciences building on the complementary journals *Ecosystem Health* and the *Global Change and Human Health*. *EcoHealth* was founded as an authoritative forum for research and practice by merging these two journals and linking with the Consortium for Conservation Medicine. The journal provides a forum integrating wildlife and ecosystem health including medical aspects. The journal is published by *Springer*, a global publishing company with major offices in Berlin, Heidelberg and New York City. With around 2,000 journals and 7,000 new books published each year *Springer* is the largest book publisher and second-largest journal publisher worldwide after Elsevier. *Springer* covers technical, medical and general scientific fields providing major reference works, textbooks, monographs and book series as well as scientific databases such as *SpringerLink*, *Springer Protocol* and *SpringerImages*.

Panel and approach

Active scientists with intimate knowledge of the Ecohealth, including one longstanding member of the International Association for Ecology and Health (IAEH), one board member and external person were chosen to carry out a review based on desk review of available journal reports, open ended questionnaire and the *Ecohealth* executive group (EEG) documents; interviews with EEG and editorial members at all levels, interview with Springer representatives and readers.

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It should be noted that the efforts to interview readers and authors by e-mail or telephone was a sluggish process and most of those approached did either reply late or not at all. This kind of apathy may either indicate that people are inundated with other Internet-related activities or that they are not sufficiently interested to regularly read the journal and therefore not felt confident to comment. English as a second language also inhibited some individuals from responding to emailed questionnaires.

Ecohealth's standing in the field

Table 1 provides the impact factor trends for the Ecohealth Journal from 2007 to 2011. An impact factor was awarded for the first time in 2007 (1.492) reaching its highest level the following year (2.315). Thereafter the impact factor for the journal declined rapidly over 3 years to 1.702 in 2011. The average over the years 2007-2011 achieves no more than 1.85. The impact factor for 2012 will be released in June 2012.

Year	Impact Factor
2007	1.492
2008	2.315
2009	2.089
2010	1.640
2011	1.702
2012	Not yet available

Table 1

EcoHealth is indexed in a large number of databases and references (often with abstracts) and references to articles in the journal can be found by both well-known general search engines as well as some specialized ones such as: Academic OneFile, Biological Abstracts, BIOSIS Previews, Business Source, CAB International, CSA/Proquest, Current Abstracts, Current Awareness in Biological Sciences (CABS), Current Contents/Agriculture, Biology & Environmental Sciences, EBSCO, Elsevier Biobase, EMBASE, EMBiology, Environment Index, Gale, GeoRef, Google Scholar, Thomson Reuters Web of Knowledge, ISI Web of Science, Journal Citation Reports/Science Edition, OCLC, PubMed/Medicine, Science Citation Index Expanded (SciSearch), SCOPUS, Summon by Serial Solutions, TOC Premier, Zoological Record.

E-mail contact was made with authors and readers of *EcoHealth* covering the three areas ‘One Health and Conservation Medicine’; ‘Ecosystem Approaches to Health’ and ‘Public Health, Ecosystems and Society’. The results, presented in Annex A and B, were as expected somewhat mixed but there was general agreement regarding the professional standing and quality. However, professional standing was sometimes considered to be ‘work in progress’ implying that this lagged behind the quality aspect. One respondent said the journal was not known to social scientists and that it was not targeted by authors from this discipline. This is however not consistent with statistics of submitted manuscripts which show a recent increase in articles of a social nature.

Breadth and depth

As seen in Annex B, two out of five respondents said the journal content was of sufficient breadth and depth but did not expound. The other three concurred in that there were challenges in this area. The feeling was that *Ecohealth* is rather too focused on specific subjects like wildlife health and biology leaving no room for the socio-ecological pillars for the journal as defined by IDRC. However, at least, one of the tenets of this idea acknowledged that broadening the focus would also be problematic (“potentially fatal”). It was suggested that instead of the journal’s three themes, it might be better to have a specific focus of each issue even if this might reduce the *Ecohealth* to a “perpetual special-issue journal”.

Punctuality

All the respondents (Annex B) indicated that the issues were in the past delayed but there has been significant progress regarding this. There was agreement that the quarterly frequency of

publishing is appropriate although one respondent advocated for the open-access approach to keep up with trends in citations.

The editorial process including entities such as submission, review and revision was felt to be excellent (Annex A & C) The issues are coming out on time and the manuscript flow is deemed largely acceptable even if the turnaround time for manuscript reviews can be, and are, sometimes lengthy.

Contractual obligations

The IAEH has a contractual responsibility with the journal's publisher Springer. These obligations are detailed in Annex D. Information provided by the Editor-in-Chief, Peter Daszak and the managing editor, Aleksei Chmura indicates that the IAEH currently fulfils the terms of its contract and that Springer is pleased with the progress of the journal. This claim is supported by quantitative data on the number of manuscripts submitted for peer review (Figures 1 & 3).

EcoHealth Journal Statistics from 2005 to 2012

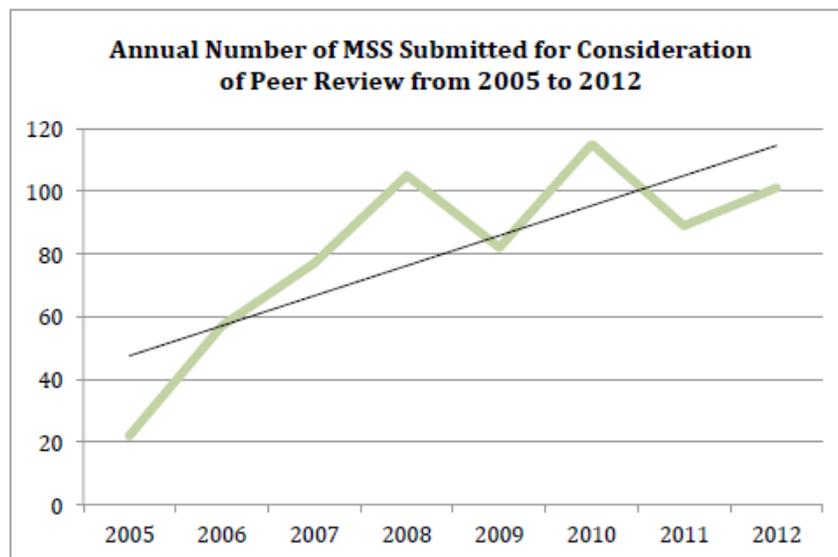


Figure 1

Publishing record

When it comes to the number of articles published in relation to all submitted, the graph (Figure 2) indicates that this ratio is coming down from close to 60% to 50%. Although this can be interpreted as an increase in quality, it is contrary to the statistics on impact factor which actually suggest quality (as measured by impact) is going down. On the other hand, it may simply mean that there are more papers being submitted than can be accommodated in the issues produced per year resulting in forced rejection or postponement of the publication.

While top journals such as *Science* and *Nature* publish well below of 10% of all manuscripts received, the corresponding figure for specialized journals varies between 30 and 50%. It would be an advantage if this trend would continue down over in the future as indicated by Figure 2.

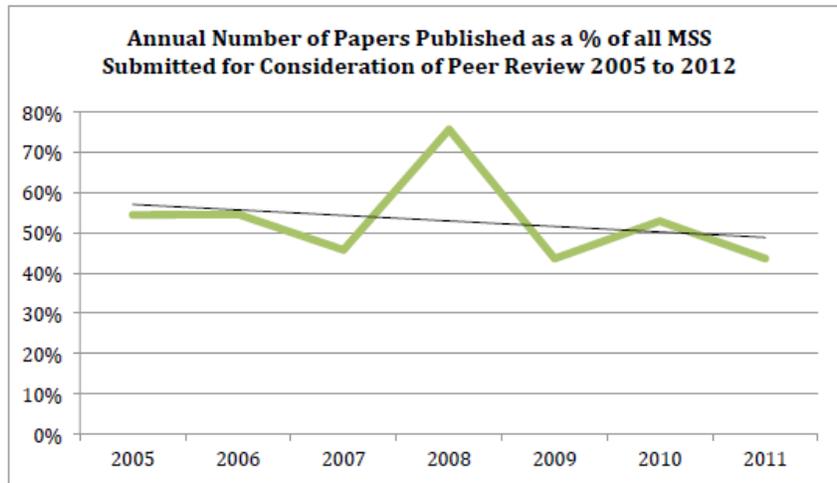


Figure 2

It is of interest to note that *Ecohealth* receives an ever increasing number of manuscripts under the ‘Health Inter Network Access to Research Initiative’ (HINARI) programme, which means that this initiative is resulting in a continued larger share of research reports from the developing countries. Importantly, 2012 represents the highest number of papers from HINARI countries ever received by *Ecohealth* (Figure 3).

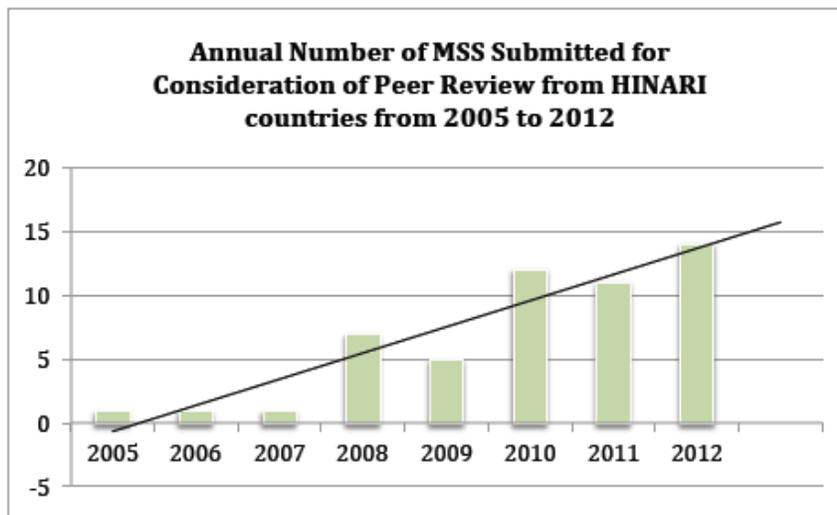


Figure 3

The HINARI programme was set up by the World Health Organization (WHO) together with major publishers to enable developing countries to access collections of biomedical and health literature. This initiative provides free or very low cost online access to the major journals in biomedical and related social sciences to local, not-for-profit institutions in developing countries. Today more than 150 publisher partners are offering more than 15,000 information resources this

way. HINARI is part of Research4Life, the collective name for four programmes - HINARI (focusing on health), AGORA (focusing on agriculture), OARE (focusing on environment), and ARDI (focusing on applied science and technology). Together, Research4Life provides developing countries with free or low cost access to academic and professional peer-reviewed content online.

The HINARI approach notwithstanding, the number of submissions from the North American continent is still significantly higher than that of any of the other parts of the world (Figure 4). As this mainly reflects the scientific superiority of the United States of America (USA), it will be some time until other countries catch up. However, the expected rise of Asian papers experienced an abrupt change for the worse between 2010 and 2011.

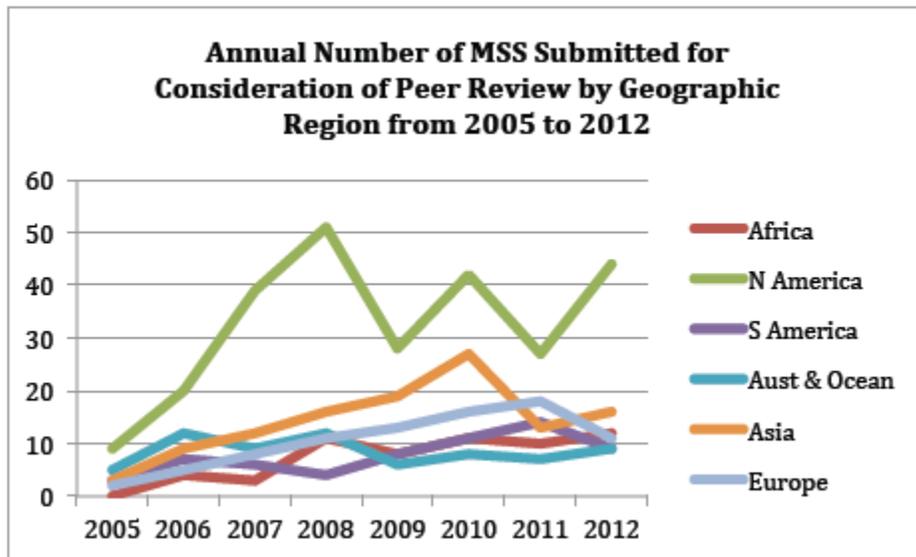


Figure 4

The HINARI approach is not the only action taken by IAEH and the ‘EcoHealth Executive Editorial Group’ to address previously identified issues, e.g., previous concerns about papers with a social science focus not being adequately represented have been addressed both formally, through the appointment of new review editors and reviewers, as well as informally through the active encouragement of potential authors of such manuscripts by members of the ‘Association and the Editorial’ team. The effectiveness of this strategy is evidenced in Figure 5.

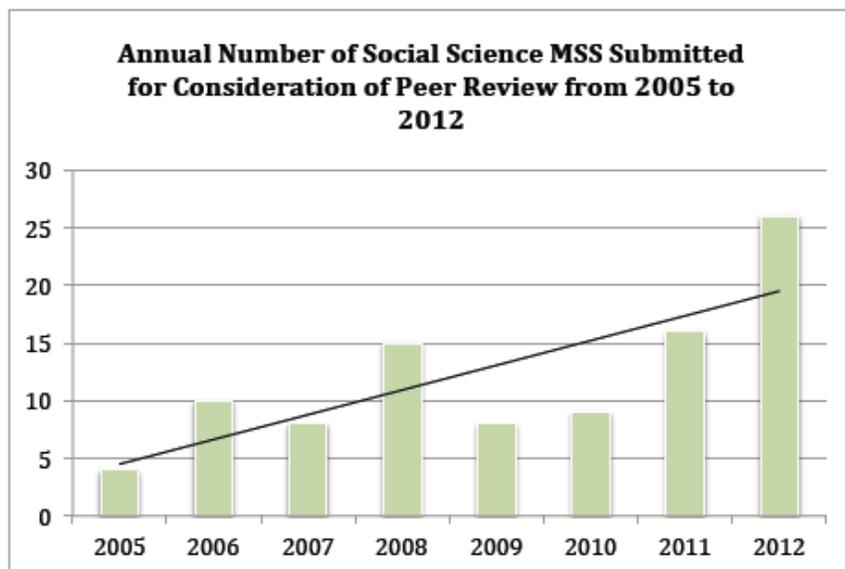


Figure 5

Dividing the manuscripts from the topic viewpoint shows that there is a healthy share of each of the three profiles of the journal (Figure. 6).

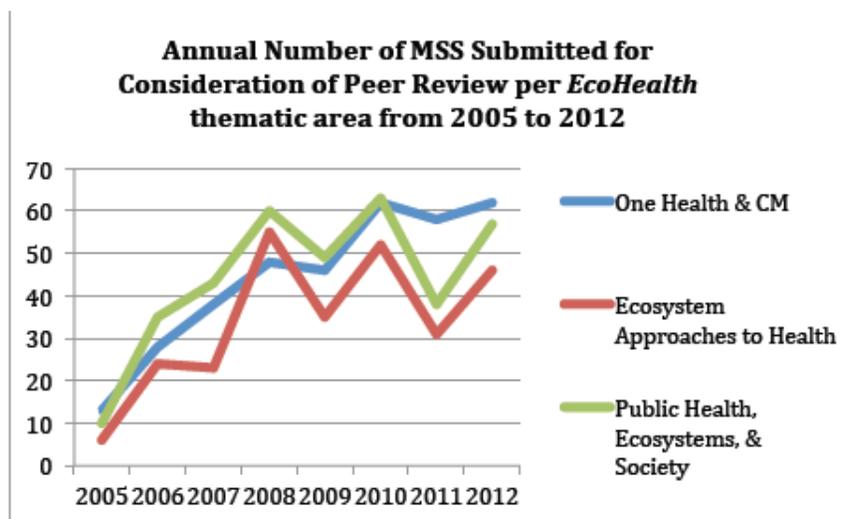


Figure 6

Finally, the field has become better balanced from the gender point of view. The trend seems clear even if only a third of the current year has been recorded so far (Table 2). This trend should be seen as a reflection of the increasing participation of women in science rather than a suspicion of an active effort of editors to favour papers with female first authors.

Gender	Number of papers by year	
	2011	2013
Male first author	18	24
Female first author	5	15
Ratio	1:3	1:1.7

Table 2

Information obtained from the managing editor indicates that, while the journal does fulfil its contractual obligations, there is potential for the reach of the journal to be expanded. Two key factors underpinning this potential have been identified:

1. the appeal of the journal to audiences from multiple fields by virtue of the fact that the journal publishes trans-disciplinary research; and
2. the expansion of IAEH internationally.

Transdisciplinarity

The responses regarding how transdisciplinarity is reflected in the contents show that most of the articles published indicate that the work was done in some kind of transdisciplinary arrangement but the write up does not bring that out clearly. Publishing of theoretical or review papers on transdisciplinarity was encouraged but this seems to be out of sync with the current thinking of the editorial board. It was also expressed that the editorial board seems to emphasize more the scientific rigour at the expense of the realm of transdisciplinarity and hence tend to accept papers on the basis of the former rather than both strengths.

This view is supported by evidence collected from some of the authors and readers of the journal (Annex A & B), particularly with regard to the first of these factors. One author highlighted some issues which might undermine effective engagement with researchers from multiple fields, commenting: “Many people already do *EcoHealth* work but don’t call it that, and I think that for these folks, the lack of coherence or clarity of vision for the journal might deter them from submitting their work to the journal”. This author claims that “the journal does not tell a coherent story” and that “it is not clear what type of work the journal accepts.” Suggestions offered for addressing these issues included:

- special issues of the journal;
- lumping articles together by content in each issue together with a clearer opening article or commentary that describes how the topics of the articles are tied together; and
- dividing up the original contributions section by the three listed topics of the journal (i.e. One Health & Conservation Medicine; Ecosystem Approaches to Health; and Public Health, Ecosystems and Society).

However, another author/reader also noted that these topic areas are not as clearly distinguished as they could be, so sharpening the distinctions between the categories might assist with clarity and enhance engagement with potential contributors and readers.

Open-ended questions

There were varied expressions among those who responded to the questions soliciting any opinions about the journal in general (Annex B). One opinion was that there should be a special issue every two years. This is already happening as evidenced by the issue emanating from the Kunming Conference. The under representation of social science related work was lamented. One respondent felt that the journal was falling short in promoting social-ecological changes that are important for addressing social injustices that are currently being practiced. This seems to be advocating for narrative papers that are highly qualitative, an aspect that is not currently preferred by the editorial board. Another respondent suggested that the scope of the journal should be broadened. This however the idea muted by the respondent who thought going that route was “potentially fatal”.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. The impact factor is adequate for a specialized journal, but efforts should be made to improve it over the next few years. There is a worry that the best valuations were achieved more than three years ago and that this level has not been reached again.
2. Overall, IAEH fulfils its contractual obligations well. However, given the growing awareness of the impingement of ecosystems on human health, these obligations could far exceed current levels if the journal were more widely promoted in the public health field. There is also a feeling that it falls short in promoting the ecohealth approach as articulated by organizations like IDRC.
3. The apathy experienced with regard to the author/reader interviews may point to people not being sufficiently interested to read the journal regularly. English, being a second language for many, may also have inhibited some individuals from responding. Communication could be improved by including better media coverage (mobile phones, tablets). Possibilities for offering such services should be investigated.
4. The EEG and the editorial board need to investigate the current emphasis of the journal with the aim to create an overview section that truly reflects what the journal is meant to address. The interviews with authors and readers indicate a need to revise the format considering specific sections vs the idea of themes for each issue and possibly the inclusion of new, regular features such as, for example, a ‘letters to the editor’ section. It would also be useful to discuss the place for theoretical papers and the possibility to publish special issues.
5. The editorial process is largely without fault. Journal review editors receive excellent, timely support from the managing editor. These editors function independently and unaware of the EEG. However, it appears also to be scope for improvement in the turnaround time for manuscript reviews.

6. The number of manuscripts submitted for peer review is increasing and the percentile of accepted papers (out of all submitted) shows a healthy trend downwards. However, the recent fall in the number of submitted Asian papers may need to be addressed.
7. Most of the articles published indicate that the work was done transdisciplinary, but this needs to be brought out more clearly. For example, authors in the field of social sciences feel that the journal does not adequately cover socio-ecological aspects.

Annexes

- A. Responses from readers of *Ecohealth* and authors submitting manuscripts
- B. Further responses from readers of *Ecohealth* and authors submitting manuscripts
(includes a word summary and spreadsheet for a subset of the responses)
- C. Interview with EEG members and review editors
- D. Contractual responsibility between IAEH and the publisher (Springer)

1. Response rates for data collection

Table 1. Distribution according to membership category

Membership	No. contacted	No. responding
One Health & CM	~10	3
Ecosystem Approaches to Health	~10	1
Public Health...and Society	~10	7
EEG	3	3
Editorial Board	4	3
Total	38	17

Table 2. Geographical distribution
(response rates not reported to maintain anonymity)

Location	No. contacted
Africa	2
Americas	13
Australia	1
Asia	10
Europe	5

Table 3. Readers contacted

Location	No. contacted	
	General	EcoHealth
Africa	1	
Americas	3	1
Australia	2	1
Asia	1	1
Europe	3	1

Table 4. Authors contacted

Location	No. contacted	
	General	EcoHealth
Africa		
Americas	3	2
Australia	2	4
Asia	1	
Europe	1	

It should be noted that tables 1-2 do not come from the same source as tables 3-4, so the outcome reported in them cannot be collated into just two tables.

2. The transdisciplinary/quantitative paradox

According to the EcoHealth 2011-12 Publisher's Report from Springer, the top downloaded article in 2011 (Patz et al., 2007) was one that could be defined as a narrative-based article though it also includes some quantification. In our opinion, we do have reason to question the over-emphasis on quantitative research. Qualitative research contributes significantly to the defining and delineating of research questions which can then be explored quantitatively. Similarly, quantification of issues rarely answers all of the relevant questions, with qualitative research needed to explore the underlying reasons, perceptions and experiences of those involved and affected. What we need in the EcoHealth journal is more balance between the two approaches.

3. Training/Orientation for EEG and review editors

It is apparent from the comments of authors from whom feedback was received that reviewers need to be better apprised of the type of paper they are being asked to review as well as the journal's expectations in this regard. With respect to review editors, there is an inherent paradox in recruiting people based on their disciplinary strength for a journal, which focuses on transdisciplinarity; review editors need to be constantly reminded of this fact.

Moreover, many review editors were unaware of the EEG beyond the support of Aleksei and Peter. Editor A replied, "I have (no) knowledge of how the EEG interacts with the board." Editor C replied, "I had to look up these groups on 'www.ecohealth.net'.....I could not find those titles (EEG) you indicated ... most of the information about the journal and its functioning I get is during the Ecohealth conference, during journal-related meetings open to all". A majority of the review editors are thus unaware of the EEG, its role and the connection to the Association.

Finally, no specific questions pertaining to the EEG and review editors understanding of the ecohealth concept were asked, but it seems that their orientation with regard to ecohealth in broad terms maybe lacking.

4. Recommendations for Future Journal Evaluations

It would have been helpful to have a list of emails of all authors in the review period, and to have been provided with a random sample of readers to contact. This would enhance the review team's capacity to ensure that the samples chosen are representative.

Subsequent reviews should include questions that probe the EEG and review editors on their understanding of the ecohealth concept. The need for response rates by region should be clearly established before surveys are distributed. Classification of members into one of the three categories (One Health & CM, Ecosystem Approaches to Health, Public Health...and Society) can be self-selected by the members when registering for membership. Members with minimal ESL skills should be contacted by individuals who speak/write in their native language or approached and interviewed at conferences in person. It might be useful if the review process could take place in conjunction with the biannual conference.

Annex A

Responses from readers of Ecohealth and authors submitting manuscripts

Each author was asked to comment on the following questions, and each reader was asked to comment on the first two of these questions:

- In your opinion, is the journal of professional standing and high quality?
- Is the content of the journal of sufficient breadth and depth?
- How well do submission and revision procedures work?
- How effectively does communication function between editors and authors?

Four of the five authors and all of the readers perceived the journal to be of high quality, with the fifth claiming that his peers view it as a ‘B journal’. Nevertheless, this author expressed an intention still to submit work to *EcoHealth*. Positive comments from the other authors included: “(I) was very pleased when I was accepted for publication”; “[I have] yet to notice [a paper] that doesn’t make the grade”; “it is a great asset as a location for transdisciplinary articles.” In terms of its breadth and depth, there were mixed responses, including the one noted at the end of the previous section. Other comments included:

- “(breadth and depth) is one of the strengths of EcoHealth - it covers a wide range of topics but it manages to do it without it being too superficial or light. The wide range of topics and the multidisciplinary of the journal is the reason it is one of the journals I keep an eye on and is always considered when looking for a journal for a paper which covers more than one discipline.”
- “EcoHealth is appropriately crossing boundaries and represents real challenges of investigation and policy with health as an organizing principle. I am especially drawn to the macro systems thinking and social-ecological work.”
- “I think that the journal is of sufficient breadth (although, I would personally like to see more articles from the IDRC EcoHealth school of thought recruited), but I think that this breadth is poorly organized. I suppose that this is an inherent issue when *EcoHealth* spans so many fields and has so many schools of thought. But, the journal does not tell a coherent story.”
- “I have the perception that a more thematic direction is necessary, for example, try in a more specific way (to highlight) the ecosystem approach, that sometimes is difficult to differentiate in some articles.”
- “it is too deep in some areas and lost ... readers. (I) suggest increasing the breadth whilst maintaining the depth.”
- “YES. I worry sometimes about the relationship between the *EcoHealth Alliance* (EA) and the journal which should do different things. I read EA members’ articles and editorials carefully. I would hate the journal to become polarised.”

- “As a social scientist I find it doesn't cover broader topics in public health, health promotion, policy and 'upstream' thinking. A lot of the focus seems to be on biology, cells, environmental health.”
- “I have offered to review qualitative transdisciplinary studies but not many so far – is this because they are not submitted?”

Assessment of submission and revision procedures was also mixed. One author noted: “As I recall it was efficient and a relatively fast turn around from first draft submission through to full publication. I found author instructions/systems clear and concise.” Another commented: “Online submission process is relatively straight forward and easy to use (fairly standard with other journals which is good). Revision process is good - no complaints; again very straight forward.” However, others were more critical:

- “the process of the submitted manuscript is too slow, and lost reader’s interest to publish;”
- “I was a bit put off by my experience submitting an article as I waited a very long time (c. 6 -7mo) to hear back the first time and then was asked to do inappropriate statistical treatment of the data, and idiosyncratic editing so it was a fairly long process.”
- “My first submission took 10 months for a decision. It was rejected without review. Evidently there was a change in online submission platform at the time. My second submission took six months for the first review.”

One author, in particular, provided very detailed feedback which offers some useful insights and stated: “The submission process is very clear and the instructions for authors are very clear and helpful. One reviewer that we had was excellent and made suggestions that substantially improved the depth and rigour of the paper. I often refer to the suggestions that this reviewer made as an example of why peer-review works. BUT, the revision process does have room for improvement. I have published two articles as the corresponding author in the past two years and I have had the following problems:

- Types of papers: We submitted a “Profile Paper”, which the journal specified should “describe projects or programs exemplifying integrative and transdisciplinary themes as outlined by the EcoHealth thematic areas.” The type of paper submitted was not clear to the reviewers, as they thought that I was submitting an original manuscript. Consequently, the reviewers focused their efforts and critique on the lack of research results and analysis. I think that if the reviewers understood the type of paper we were submitting, we would have received valuable and useful feedback on how our project was presented and described, which would have helped improve the rigour and impact of the paper. (NB. the journal no longer accepts Profile Papers, but I think that notifying the reviewers of the type of paper submitted and the journal’s expectations would be useful. In addition, for an emerging field of study, it is a shame that the journal no longer accepts this type of paper. The profile paper that we published in EcoHealth was a top downloaded article, which I believe reflects the appetite for this type of article.)
- Proofs: The proofing stage was frustrating for both papers. We corrected proofs for both articles, and in both published versions, but errors remained. In one paper, the

acknowledgement section was not included in the published version (but it was submitted). In the other paper, a community government was listed as a co-author on the article. On the proof, they were included as the co-author, but in the final published manuscript, they were cut out. Still, to this date, they do not show up in the online abstract or the HTML versions of the paper (they do appear on the PDF version). Since EcoHealth approaches often involve substantial community involvement and engagement in research, I was personally very upset and felt terrible that our community collaborators were not acknowledged due to proofing errors. More oversight, attention, or involvement from the journal in the proofing stage would be really useful.

- Time from Submission to Publication: Both articles had only one round of revisions; however, both articles took a relatively long time from submission to publication. This relatively long time from submission to publication has deterred us from submitting manuscripts to EcoHealth. As an editorial review board member for another journal, I can appreciate and understand how slow the review process can be, and how difficult it can be to find good reviewers. However, I think that a faster turn-around time would be hugely beneficial and increase the number of submissions (which would hopefully also increase the quality of publications and impact of the journal). To compete with other public health journals, EcoHealth must reduce the time from submission to publication.

The effectiveness of communication between editors and authors was also mixed. Positive responses included:

- “I’ve found the communication between editors and authors good so far – haven’t had any issues.”
- “I liked the direct email notices re decisions/editing. The tone and format of the communications were positive and clear.”
- “I worked with two different editors and both were easily accessible via email. When one was out of reach, another alternate contact was easily accessible via email. I really appreciated this as an author.”

However, one author noted: “The Managing Editor was unresponsive to inquiries about manuscript status ... [but] was responsive and very helpful regarding communications during manuscript revision.”

Annex B

Further responses from readers of Ecohealth and authors submitting manuscripts

1. Is the journal of professional standing and high quality?

- Yes
- Generally the journal is of high quality, as long as the issues continue to be published on time, this will improve its professional standing.
- Recognition of the journal is growing. It certainly *looks* beautiful and professional, which is definitely important.
- Yes, I think it is of good quality. In my field, the social sciences, it is not known at all nor a target for publishing.
- YES
- well accepted, improving
- ok
- High quality but still gaining traction as a primary, professional source and as a journal that numerous authors think about when considering where to publish.
- maybe improved by originality of papers and I ll like to see more inter-transdisciplinary papers that address methodologies issues
- Most of the articles are very good in reference to clarity and focus - I think some articles need more editorial supervision.
- excellent for a new journal--increasing every year
- The Journal has a good quality. Because Ecohelth is a new field of study and it different to the traditional research approach, therefore the researchers need to learn and explore the framework, the methodology, how to approach and successful of implementing of Ecohealth from case studies. Ecohealth journal can serve them.
-

2. Is the content of sufficient breadth and depth?

- It is satisfactory
- Herein lies the main challenge for the journal – by focussing almost exclusively on original contributions of scientific discovery or application, in such a broad thematic area, it is challenging to develop a regular readership. In this way, papers are too narrow in focus, but address a very wide range of themes, disciplines and issues. There is a lack of definition to the scope. But defining it too much would also be problematic (and potentially fatal). The approach of having a particular focus for each issue is a good way to begin to deal with this, since the reader finding one paper through a search may be drawn to read more in the same issue. Since most people do not read journals cover to cover anymore, this may be less important than it used to be. Researchers will read a journal that publishes their papers, and papers by their mentors and colleagues. Cultivating a culture of *Ecohealth*, and promoting debate of ideas, will help attract more related papers, as well.
- It seems like there is often a slant towards wildlife health articles when I glance at the TOC. I would be interested in more public health/epi articles. I've heard others mention that they would like to see more social science representation.

- No. As a social scientist, I find that the orientation to the journal is not sufficiently addressing the key pillars of *Ecohealth* as laid out by IDRC in a relatively balanced way in each issue and it is not addressing certain kinds of socio-ecological issues that are more heavy on the humanities and social sciences type perspectives and light on the hard sciences (i.e. microbiology).
- YES
- No, little on human health so far and on connections
- No, the quality of the research and methods is often low
- Yes, there are a wide variety of articles from different subject areas (breadth), yet those articles can still serve as important models and references for additional research (depth)
- Maybe improved by originality of papers and (I would) like to see more transdisciplinary papers that address methodologies issues
- No, you need to get more Alaskan Natives and American Indian Colleges involved
- No, (the journal) could increase in its diversity – but it is already on this trend. would love to see more one health related articles
- Yes. Most of the contents cover the principle of EcoHealth. The journal is very useful for the researchers who are interested in this approach. It has plenty of case studies.

3. How is the journal fulfilling its role in relation to trans-disciplinary research?

- most of the papers published are from researchers implementing Ecohealth approach
- The papers do not address this very well, in many cases. The journal has occasionally published theoretical or review papers on this subject and this is very positive. More of this is needed. In most of the papers, either it is not at all addressed (because it was not part of the research) or it is mentioned dismissively in the background. A more rigorous treatment of transdisciplinarity is important as well as the interdependency of many of the elements under study, and the potential use or application of the findings
- I think that EcoHealth does try to represent work from many disciplines as well as cross-cutting research. It might be nice to try to include more "solutions oriented" work by recommending that the others end with a "policy recommendations" or "predicted outcomes" section.
- I see the journal is more concerned with appearing very scientifically rigorous rather than taking risks in the realm of transdisciplinarity.
- I think trans-disciplinary research has a very good place in the journal, judging by the content and nature of most articles published in the journal;
- getting there, still not too many really "trans" articles
- well
- Very well. Good breadth of subject matter and articles.
- I think the journal should include papers that really talk about methodology in transdisciplinarity with reflections and concepts than mainly listing a series of case studies
- Focus is okay
- seems to have started wildlife disease heavy, but the diversity has been increasing

- Trans-disciplinary is not only knowledge but it need to be implemented or practiced. the articles on the implementation of trans-disciplinary approach has been published increasingly on this journal year by year since 2007.
-

4. Comment on frequency and timely publication of journal issues

- It is OK
- Quarterly, if it can be maintained, is reasonable. . Needs to be kept on time. Should move toward open-access model to keep up with trends in citations.
- I like the quarterly format because it's not overwhelming, and I can actually keep up with the tables of contents and articles I'm interested in reading as they come out. The journal was behind schedule for awhile, but things are slowly moving back on track. I will say that the some of the authors of the Student Dialogues section have been confused about why it took so long for their article to come out, but I think that will smooth itself out too as things progress with the new section.
- I think this is doing ok.
- Frequency and timely publication can be improved; I think there is ongoing and encouraging progress in this aspect;
- issues are coming out on time
- don't track it carefully

5. What else would you like to say about the journal

- Provision should be made, at least every two years, to have a SPECIAL issue to allow members of IAEH to publish
- Even though all of my work as a medical sociologist is oriented to *Ecohealth* i find that the journal is infrequently relevant to the work I am trying to do to strengthen the social dimensions of ecosystem based health research.
- I also think that the journal is failing in addressing 'wicked problems' and especially as they arise in relation to the social justice aspects of ecological health issues. Overall, this is making the journal and the work of the IAEH increasingly conservative and resulting in this approach as not being a tool for creating social-ecological change that gets to the roots of social injustices within problems. I am very concerned about this pathway. My hope is that the journal will think more about transdisciplinary research as a topical issue (ie give space for some more methodological issues) and take a risk to publish some work that is very high caliber relating to social injustice even if it doesn't have a strong quantitative dimension.
- Keep the scope broad to cover the many aspects of the interactions between health and environment.

Section content	How do you perceive the professional standing and quality of the EcoHealth journal?	How is the journal fulfilling its role in relation to trans-disciplinary research?	Are the issues coming out on time?	Are manuscripts flowing adequately?	How do feel about the manuscript submission and revision procedures compared to other journals?	Is the content of the journal of sufficient breadth and depth?	Please describe	General readership emails but no response to survey
Ecosystem Approaches	excellent for a new journal-increasing every year	seems to have started wildlife disease heavy, but the diversity has been increasing	don't track it carefully	seems slow	Have not gone through a regular submission and revision process, so I can't answer this question	No	could increase in its diversity-but it is already on this trend, would love to see more one health related articles.	
One Health & CM	ok	well	Yes	Yes	I haven't submitted an article to ecohealth yet	No	The quality of the research and methods is often a little low	
One Health & CM	The journal has a good quality, because ecosystem is a new field of study and it different to the traditional research approach, therefore the researchers need to learn and explore the framework, the methodology, how to approach and successful of implementing of Ecohealth from case studies. Ecohealth journal can serve them	Trans-disciplinary is not only knowledge but it need to be implemented or practiced, the articles on the implementation of trans-disciplinary approach have been published increasingly on this journal year by year since 2007.	Yes		I have never sent my own manuscript, just the co-investigator of the study.	Yes	Most of the contents cover to the principle of Ecohealth. The journal is very useful for the researchers who are interested in this approach. It has plenty of case studies.	
One Health & CM								
Public Health/Society	well accepted, improving	getting there, still not too many really "trans" articles	I always receive the print issue way too late, not even got one from 2013 this year, only 3/2012 (Well, yes, it seemed I was always getting the paper copies from the year before. But actually, I checked now, and things have improved. In the past it was really getting 2011 in 2012, but then they caught up and now the newest paper copy I have is Vol 9, Issue 3 (the Kunning one) which is in fact the newest version I realize as I received an email yesterday that Issue 4 is in the mail only now. So you can ignore my comment! Sorry!		only had one experience as co-author, seemed fine	No	little on human health so far and on connections	I would love to review the journal, but after 6 months of subscription I still haven't received one issue. I'll check what happened...
Public Health/Society	High quality but still gaining traction as a primary, professional source and as a journal that numerous authors think about when considering where to publish.	Very well. Good breadth of subject matter and articles.	Yes	Not sure	Unsure, but the procedures seem fair and do not appear to be too onerous.	Yes	There are a wide variety of articles from many different subject areas (breadth), yet those articles can still serve as important models and references for additional research (depth).	
Public Health/Society	maybe improved by originality of papers and I like to see more inter-transdisciplinary papers that address methodologies issues	I think the journal should include papers that really talk about methodology in transdisciplinarity with reflections and concepts than mainly listing a series of case studies	my new address has changed 33 rue sainte therese gatineau, Q. J8A 2N5	my new address has changed 33 rue sainte therese gatineau, Q. J8A 2N5	okay		maybe improved by originality of papers and I like to see more inter-transdisciplinary papers that address methodologies issues	
Public Health/Society	Most of the articles are very good in reference to clarity and focus - I think some articles need more editorial supervision.	Focus is okay	Yes	NA	NA	No	You need to get more Alaskan Natives and American Indian Colleges Involved.	
Public Health/Society								I am not sure I have been receiving EcoHealth Journal. Could you remind me how to access it on line.
Public Health/Society								
Public Health/Society								I am sorry for i can not fulfill the table for you ,because of the limited major and experiences and language ,i can not understand of the question. If i fulfill the table for you ,that mean i am a unresponsible people for you and the journal, thank you for your email and trust.
Public Health/Society								Thank you for your invite to participate in the evaluation of EcoHealth Journal. Much that I want to and knowing how important evaluations are, I

Annex C

Interview with EEG members and review editors

Questions

Is the journal EEG functioning collectively?

Are the activities of the EEG transparent to the Board?

Responses from EEG members

Member A: EEG is doing a good job. The journal is thriving scientifically and reaching a wide audience. The process seems to be working well.

Member B: Regarding the first question my sense is generally yes. Our monthly teleconferences are a bit uneven in participation, but generally more than half of the EEG is on line, and most contribute. Our Editor in Chief has definite opinions but he listens to the rest of the group, and is generally responsive to suggestions by the group.

Question 2 is a bit difficult for us to answer that because we don't see exactly what the board sees or hears. But Peter and Aleksei always update us on some aspect of interactions with the Board, and assess our views on anything he feels is an active question or potentially controversial. Thinking it over a bit further, the Board interactions and report are a standing agenda item on our EEG conference calls and often some aspect of the agenda and/or discussions is included in the materials we receive ahead of time.

Member C: Regarding question 1, I feel that the journal is functioning collectively and that adequate meetings are held to permit a collective approach to the journals development. It must be recognised that this journal has the potential to represent a broad swath of science with both divergence views and multiple disciplines. This makes collective viewing and a consensus approach to the journal and non to easy task. Personally I would like the journal to adopt a more One Health position but recognise that this may be to the detriment of the environmental issues that the Journal tackles. Importantly though, these views are discussed and "managed" collectively - and this is really what we are after.

With respect to the links to the Board (question 2), I guess the fact that I don't know, tells you as much as you need to know? Our interaction with members of the Board is limited and primarily confined to face to face meetings at the odd conference

Review editors

Editor A: With respect to question 1, I can sat that I am a review editor - that is, I get allocated papers to locate reviewers and then manage the review process through to recommendation of accept/reject. I have no real contact with the EEG - beyond Peter and Aleksei. Peter sends the email allocating the paper - this is usually a formula email. Aleksei sends the odd hurry-up when I am tardy. I have emailed him a couple of times when I was not sure of the correct action to take re working the online review system. These emails have been answered in a timely fashion and the advice has been of value.

Regarding question 2 I must say that I have had no other meaningful interactions with the EEG. Nor do I have any knowledge of how the EEG interacts with the Board of IAEH.

Editor B. On the first question I'd say that it has been a great experience - lots of support from everybody. When I made suggestions, they have been well received. Had the resources available to get answers questions answered. I feel extremely good about the journal.

With regard to question 2, I must admit that I am unaware of the EEG or what they do and therefore I never asked them for help/assistance in reviewing a manuscript. Judgement has been made based on my own knowledge of the journal. I have sometimes spoken with Peter and Aleksei informally to confirm certain things.

Editor C: On question 1, I'm afraid that what I had to do to reply to you sums up my answer; I had to look up these groups on 'www.ecohealth.net' but there I could not find those titles you indicated in the email. Essentially, any or most of the information about the journal and its functioning I get is during the Ecohealth conference, during journal-related meetings open to all; this source only being available because I attend the conference and those meetings.

Regarding question 2, I feel that I can always get support as review editor: whenever I have a doubt or question, I can always get help from Aleksei and the conference is always a good opportunity to chat things over. But I can't say I'm aware of any other means of following.

Annex D

Contractual responsibility between IAEH and the publisher (Springer).

- a. The Association shall exercise sole control of the editorial development and editorial content of the Journal, subject to the Publisher's then-current guidelines to contributors and its editorial standards and practices, and shall be responsible for maintaining a consistently high quality for all published contributions.
- b. By means of written agreement, the Association will nominate an editor-in-chief, from an executive editorial group [the composition of which will be agreed by the Association's board, and which will normally include the co-editors, the other senior editorial staff (currently Arts & Culture Editor and Book Review Editor) and the managing editor] that will have broad oversight on journal operations on behalf of the Association. The editor-in-chief shall be so appointed by the Association following (i) written notice to the Publisher of the proposed appointment and (ii) receipt from the Publisher of a written notice of approval, not to be unreasonably withheld. The editor-in-chief shall be responsible for all day-to-day aspects of editorial development and shall exercise control over the material to appear in the Journal in consultation with the executive editorial group. The editor-in-chief shall be responsible for peer review of all submitted articles; peer review shall be performed in conformance with the Publisher's guidelines to contributors and its editorial standards and practices, each as shall be in effect from time to time during the term of this agreement.
- c. The Association's editorial office shall be responsible for supplying the Publisher with peer-reviewed and accepted manuscripts, including but not limited to, all illustrations, graphs, tables, charts and captions, all according to the publication schedule as determined by the production department of the Publisher and submitted to the editorial office on an annual basis. All materials shall be delivered to the Publisher electronically in formats reasonably specified by the Publisher.
- d. The Association shall select an editorial board that shall provide both international representation and diverse expertise. The editorial board shall assist the editor-in-chief as reasonably required to keep publication of the Journal on schedule, to maximize quality and to enhance the reputation and sales of the Journal. The Association shall also select an executive editorial group [which will normally include the editor-in-chief, the co-editors, the other senior editorial staff (currently Arts & Culture Editor and Book Review Editor)]. The executive editorial group shall meet regularly (ideally, at least every two months) to discuss all matters of editorial policy and reach consensus on these issues and how to execute this policy. They shall also maintain contact with representatives at the Publisher on a regular basis and assist in the smooth execution of any plan of action (see 9d and 9e). This will include inviting the Publisher's representatives to each of the executive editorial group meetings, to which at least one Publisher representative shall be expected to attend.

- e. The Association represents that there are no fewer than two hundred fifty (250) Association Member Subscriptions. A list of Association Member Subscribers shall be electronically submitted to the Publisher within thirty (30) days of signing this agreement. The Subscription List should include full postal addresses. The Association shall send a current Subscription list at the Publisher's request prior to publication of each issue. In the event that the actual number of the Association's Subscriptions for any Subscription Year shall fall below ninety percent (90%) of the foregoing, the Publisher reserves right to terminate this agreement pursuant to Subsection 17(c) at the end of the then-current Subscription Year unless the parties shall have negotiated an amendment to the financial terms of this agreement.
- f. The Association shall have the right to purchase additional copies of the Journal prior to files for a given issue being sent to press. These copies will be charged at the rate of \$2.00 per copy and may not be used for re-sale. The Association shall pay the Publisher for those copies within thirty (30) days following delivery of the Publisher's invoice.
- g. At the Publisher's request, the Association will provide the Publisher with approximately ten (10) square feet of complimentary, prominent exhibit space at the Association's biennial scientific meeting, for display of the Journal material and other Publisher publications of potential interest to Association members. If additional booth space is requested and provided, the Publisher may be charged for additional space at the Association's discretion.