

Editorial: *Swiss Journal of Geosciences*, 2007–2016 (Vols. 100–109)

Celebrating 10 years of publishing a high-quality international journal with the cooperation and support of the Swiss geoscience community

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The Swiss Journal of Geosciences (SJG) is the scientific journal of the Swiss Geological Society (SGS), continuing the traditions of the *Eclogae geologicae Helvetiae* and the *Schweizerische Mineralogische und Petrographische Mitteilungen*, first published in 1888 and 1921, respectively). It is a major part of the Society's efforts towards promoting

the advancement of the geological sciences, in Switzerland and internationally, by publishing high quality original research, organizing field workshops and sponsoring scientific conferences, with particular focus on the geological evolution of the Tethyan realm and the Alpine/Himalayan orogen. This photograph of an international group of

geoscientists on a field workshop to study the Dent Blanche nappe, in October 2016, symbolises these efforts. It was organised by the Swiss Tectonic Studies Group (a specialist section of the SGS) and was based mainly on research papers published in the SJG.

On the internet site of the Swiss Journal of Geosciences (SJG), the oldest volume available online is said to date back to the year 2004 (Volume 97). So why do we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the SJG in 2017? To understand this, we have to take a brief look back into the recent history of the journal and of the three societies by which it was published, namely the Swiss Geological Society, the Swiss Society of Mineralogy and Petrology and the Swiss Palaeontological Society.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the above mentioned geoscientific societies increasingly felt a need to bring the different branches of the solid-earth geosciences closer together by holding a joint annual geoscience meeting instead of presenting their research results at the not very well attended annual meetings of the “Schweizerische Naturforschende Gesellschaft” (now named “Akademie der Naturwissenschaften Schweiz” or “Swiss Academy of Sciences”), at which all branches of natural sciences used to gather up to 2002. The first of these joint meetings took place within a new and broader geoscience conference named “Swiss Geoscience Meeting”, held in Basel in 2003, bringing together not only “solid-earth” but all branches of geosciences. This annual meeting is now a firmly established part of the Swiss scientific scene and is attended by up to 800 participants. It is organized by the Geosciences Platform of the Swiss Academy of Sciences and hosted every year by a different university or research institution active in geoscientific research.

At around the same time, the committee of the Swiss Geological Society also felt a need to go online with their publication, formerly named “*Eclogae geologicae Helvetiae*” (“*Eclogae*” for short). This journal has a long history, with its first volume dating back to 1888.¹ It was decided to have the focus of the *Eclogae* far beyond the boundaries of Switzerland, by gradually transforming the journal into an international, predominantly English-language, journal, “...focusing on the entire Tethyan realm reaching from the Atlantic to the Himalayas. The journal welcomes original contributions of modern interdisciplinary and process-oriented research in Geosciences...” (citing the report of the 119th Annual Assembly of the Swiss Geological Society, 2003). The first volume of the *Eclogae* to appear online,

Volume 97, came out in 2004, with the chosen English title added, “Swiss Journal of Geosciences” (this had been in informal use since 2001). For this reason—for simplicity but strictly speaking incorrectly—Volumes 97 (2004) to 99 (2006) of the *Eclogae* can be accessed under the English title on the web. It is worth adding here that all of the volumes of the *Eclogae* preceding Volume 97 can be accessed over: www.e-periodica.ch or <http://retro.seals.ch>, hosted by the library of the ETH Zürich.

In the years 2004–2006, and after the sudden death of its long-standing Chief Editor, Prof. Jürgen Remane, in 2004, the *Eclogae* was jointly edited by a member of the Swiss Geological Society (Dr. Stefan Bucher) and a member of the Swiss Palaeontological Society (Dr. Ivan Stössel). However, it was only in 2007, 10 years ago, that the *Eclogae* officially changed name to “Swiss Journal of Geosciences”. This change of name went along with another and equally important decision in 2006, when the three societies representing solid-earth geosciences in Switzerland planned to jointly publish the 100th volume of the *Eclogae* under the new name, from 2007 onwards.² A new name was looked for because the Swiss Society for Mineralogy and Petrology decided to merge their own journal, the “*Schweizerische Mineralogische und Petrographische Mitteilungen*” (“SMPM” for short), with the *Eclogae* into one single journal run by all three Swiss societies active in solid-earth geosciences. Hence, it is primarily this decision—to jointly publish a well-focussed and international journal—that we celebrate with the present issue of the Swiss Journal of Geosciences, and—to a lesser degree—also the change of name.

In this context it is worth mentioning that, since 2007, the three societies representing solid-earth geoscience in Switzerland themselves formally united into a single society under the name “Swiss Geological Society” (SGS). The former members of the Swiss Society for Mineralogy and Petrology and the Swiss Palaeontological Society continue to act as specialist groups within the SGS; they also delegate Scientific Editors to the Swiss Journal of Geosciences and organize sessions at the Swiss Geoscience Meeting. Additionally, our journal is profiting from the continued support of affiliated specialist groups, namely the Swiss Geological Survey, the Swiss Tectonic Studies

¹ For a detailed account of the history of the first 50 years of the Geological Society of Switzerland, founded in 1882, the reader is referred to an article by Prof. Jean-Paul Schaer entitled “Les cinquantes premières années des *Eclogae geologicae Helvetiae*: au service des géologues suisses et de la géologie” (*Swiss Journal of Geosciences* 100, pages 5–12).

² See the Editorial written by the presidents of the three Geoscience societies (*Swiss Journal of Geosciences* 100, page 1) where they state: “As in the past, a particular emphasis will be put on the evolution of the Tethys realm and the Alpine-Himalayan orogen. At the same time, the journal offers to document high-quality geoscientific data of more regional content, including the occasional publication of maps, but also special thematic issues. In short, we intend to continue to maintain a good balance between being a highly renowned international journal and being “Swiss”, in the sense that we also cultivate a regional focus on the territory of Switzerland and adjacent Alpine countries.”

Group, SwissSed and the Swiss Group of Geophysicists. The SGS also continues to receive generous funding by the Platform Geosciences of the Swiss Academy of Sciences, commensurate with its significant increase in membership after fusion (now, ca. 950 members).

Recently our journal significantly improved its international reputation. Between 2011 and 2015, the internationally recognised 2-year Impact Factor rose from 0.879 to 1.660 and we expect to reach 2.0 in the near future. 61% of all electronic article downloads in the year 2016 came from Europe (a mere 15% from Switzerland), followed by North America (15%) and Asia–Pacific countries (13%). In addition, the number of SJG articles downloaded in 2016 jumped to over 22'000, after lying at around 16'000 during the three previous years. Hence, we are under way to become a truly international journal, with the professional support of our publishers, Springer Basel AG (a branch of Springer International, formerly Birkhäuser Basel AG). In 2016, almost 100 manuscripts were submitted to the journal, a large increase with respect to the two preceding years (2014: 59; 2015: 50), partly due to the scheduling of the two Special Issues in 2017. We were also able to increase efficiency in handling manuscripts: in 2016, the average duration of a completed review was around 3 months while the average time from submission to acceptance was about 7 months; after an average additional 1 month, these articles were published “online first”.

With regard to content, some idea of the wide scope of the journal can be obtained by summarising the special issues and topical collections of papers published during the past 10 years. In addition to the individual research papers, about 250 in all, whole issues or parts of issues have been published on a wide range of topics:

- Supplementary Issues: “Orogenic Processes in the Alpine Collision Zone (Vol. 101 Suppl., also published as a book); “Symposium: Lithographic Limestone and Plattenkalk” (Vol. 104 Suppl).

- Special Issues: “Clay mineral diagenesis and low-grade metamorphism” (Issue 105/2); “Tribute to Professor Jean-Pierre Berger (Issue 106/2); “Harmonising geological data in Switzerland” (Issue 109/2); “Mont Terri rock laboratory: 20 years of research” (Issue 110/1 at present in press, also to be published as a book).
- Collections of papers from Symposia and Workshops: “Symposium in honour of Rudolf Trümpy” (100/3), “Modern methods in structural geology and tectonics: Martin Burkhard Conference” (101/2); “Seismic source characterisation in Switzerland: PEGASOS project” (102/1); “Proceedings, Stegosauria Symposium” (103/2); “Overdeepening of Alpine valleys” (103/3); “Natural analogue research” (108/1).

This Jubilee Issue of the SJG, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the journal, primarily addresses the general theme of the geological evolution of the Tethys realm and the Alpine/Himalayan orogen, which from the beginning was the major scope of the journal. Part 1 of this issue contains a collection of papers, which were presented at the 12th Alpine Workshop held in 2015, entitled “From ocean formation to mountain evolution in alpine-type orogens”. This is followed by Part 2, a collection of recently accepted individual articles within the general area of Alpine geological research.

We are confident that the performance and impact of SJG will further increase in the coming years. We thank all the authors, reviewers and editors that contributed to the positive development of SJG during the past 10 years, as well as all members of the Swiss geoscience community for their cooperation and support.

Alan Geoffrey Milnes

Chief Editor SJG

Stefan Schmid

Scientific Editor SJG (Tectonics, Geophysics).

President, Swiss Geological Society, 2004-2007.