

## Editorial—Welcome, Demetris, as *HSJ* Deputy Editor

I have served the *Hydrological Sciences Journal (HSJ)* as Editor for over nine years, since my nomination at the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) Scientific Assembly in Rabat in April 1997. Recently, I have found it increasingly difficult to fulfil the obligations of being the sole Editor of the Journal and to meet the expectations of all stakeholders, while maintaining my existing duties at the Research Centre for Agricultural and Forest Environment, Polish Academy of Sciences in Poznań, Poland and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Potsdam, Germany. The Journal has grown considerably since 1997. Now, there are many more submitted papers to process. One should not forget the Journal's role: in line with the mission of IAHS, it is to promote the science of hydrology and to serve the international hydrological community. It is not only about selecting the good papers which can be published with minor or no modification, and rejecting those that cannot be accepted. It is most gratifying to see that some authors, often from less developed countries, benefit greatly from the constructive criticism provided by *HSJ* referees and, even if their papers are rejected, their further submissions are considerably improved. However, all this takes a lot of time, which I cannot afford.

While willing to continue as Editor of my beloved Journal, I was looking for a scientist who could share the duty with me. After careful consideration I concluded that Dr Demetris Koutsoyiannis of the Technical University of Athens, Greece could be an optimal choice. This was based on my observing Demetris's work—as an author, a referee, and an Associate Editor. I was impressed by his extraordinary intellectual abilities and his affinity to the Journal. Despite many other obligations, he has treated *HSJ* as a high priority. Having embarked with Demetris on a small project of a joint editorial article for *HSJ*, about the peer-review system (Kundzewicz & Koutsoyiannis, 2005), which raised rich formal and informal discussion, I had no doubt that, together, we could achieve much. The idea of inviting Demetris to take on the task of Deputy Editor was endorsed by the IAHS Bureau in Paris, July 2006.

Welcome, Demetris in your new role as Deputy Editor. I wish you good luck in your new capacity and look forward to continuing to collaborate with you for the benefit of our Journal.

Zbigniew W. Kundzewicz, *Editor*

## REFERENCES

- Kundzewicz, Z. W. & Koutsoyiannis, D. (2005) Editorial—The peer-review system: prospects and challenges. *Hydrological Sciences Journal*, 50(4), 577–591.

## Editorial—Grateful and apprehensive

The Editor's invitation, with the IAHS Bureau's endorsement, to become the Deputy Editor of *HSJ* is a great honour for me. I feel grateful for their trust. My honour is even greater because of the timing of my appointment. *Hydrological Sciences Journal*, the most international and the oldest hydrological journal (published since 1956) has attained a historical peak of prestige, influence and popularity. This is manifested by

several objective indices. Its impact factor (IF) is now 1.606 (ISI Journal Citations Report for 2005), which places it in the top ten water-related journals. In the last eight years, this index has quadrupled. In the same period, the number of new submissions per year has doubled.

Obviously, this has not happened spontaneously. We, the readers of *HSJ*, acting also as authors and some of us as reviewers and Associate Editors, know well that, behind the promotion and advancement of *HSJ*, there are the inspired and inspiring editorial leadership and the assiduous efforts of Professor Zbigniew W. Kundzewicz. This is known and recognized in the wider hydrological community too. The Journal's progress is also the result of the collective services of *HSJ* authors and reviewers and particularly of the 30 distinguished Associate Editors, orchestrated by the Editor. And this result would not have been achieved without the professionalism and commitment of Mrs Frances Watkins, Production Editor and Dr Cate Gardner, IAHS Press Manager. I am very happy that, with my new role, I will be in closer collaboration with these colleagues and the IAHS/*HSJ* community.

The doubling of the new submissions to *HSJ* explains the need for a Deputy Editor. Since 1 September 2006, I have taken the responsibility of handling several submitted manuscripts, which are now under review. Soon I will have to make decisions on approving or rejecting them. Determined by the growing rate of submissions and the very small margin for increasing the number of papers published, the *HSJ* rejection rate is high. This is the bad side of the advancement of *HSJ*; sometimes even a good paper may be rejected because there are now so many good papers. From the statistics I have seen, I understand that, on average, I will have to reject, either immediately or after iteration(s), two out of three papers. Having received many rejections for my papers, I know well the feelings of an author whose paper is declined—feelings that may get stronger as one grows older. As a token of comfort to those whose papers are rejected (which I address also to myself), I can say that sometimes rejection, despite the negative sentiments it triggers, *post factum* may prove very useful as it results in improvement and better dissemination of a paper. On other occasions a rejection may be unjustified and have no positive impact. Even this situation has to be understood, because the scientific community is not perfect and its procedures are not ideal (cf. Kundzewicz & Koutsoyiannis, 2005). Such rejections should not discourage authors. Generally, we must have in mind that the outcome of the review process is not a strictly objective characterization of a paper as good or bad; sometimes very good, novel and innovative papers may be misunderstood or challenge reviewers' beliefs, thus leading reviewers to characterize the papers as poor and recommend rejection. And a paper with such an assessment and recommendation is difficult to accept (after all, the peer review system is a collective process, in which editors trust referees and *vice versa*). With these thoughts, with the apprehension of a new-comer (in my new responsibility) and with the recognition that there are a lot of uncontrollable, random parameters within the review process, I wish our authors the best of luck for their papers.

**Demetris Koutsoyiannis**, *Deputy Editor*

## REFERENCES

- Kundzewicz, Z. W. & Koutsoyiannis, D. (2005) Editorial—The peer-review system: prospects and challenges. *Hydrol. Sci. J.* **50**(4), 577–591.