

Reflections on Publishing in JEEM: An Editor's Perspective

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JEEM Summary Statistics

- About 600 submissions annually (small # of notes)
 - 2014: About 300-400
- ~35 percent are desk rejected
- ~20 percent are offered revision opportunity
- ~13 percent are ultimately accepted
 - 77 papers accepted in 2021
- Current 2-Year Impact Factor – 3.449
- SiteScore – 7.8
- Considered an A / A- journal by most Chinese universities

JEEM Summary Statistics



Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Journal of Environmental Economics and Management

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jeem



Research trends in environmental and resource economics: Insights from four decades of JEEM[☆]



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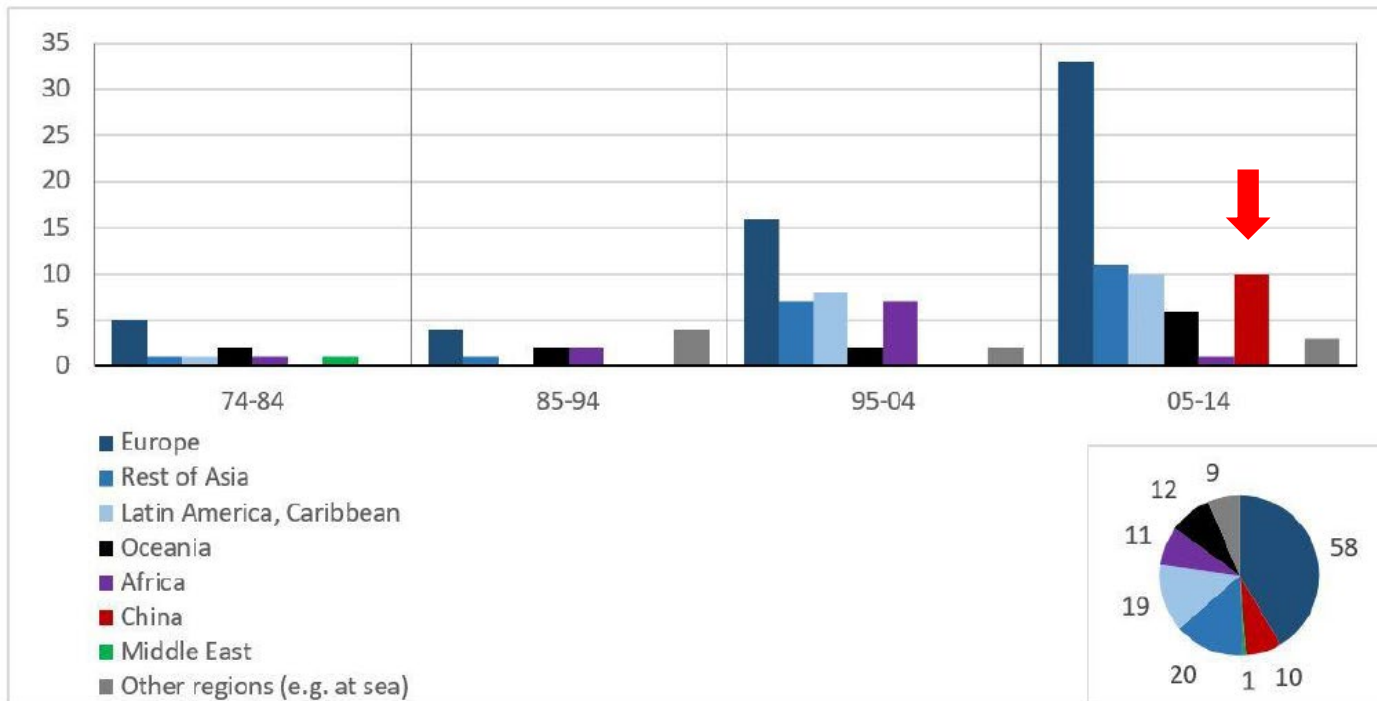
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Some Observations

- Papers with direct application to China are on the rise

Figure 20: Regional dimension (one per article, N=1,672, p-value: 0.000).

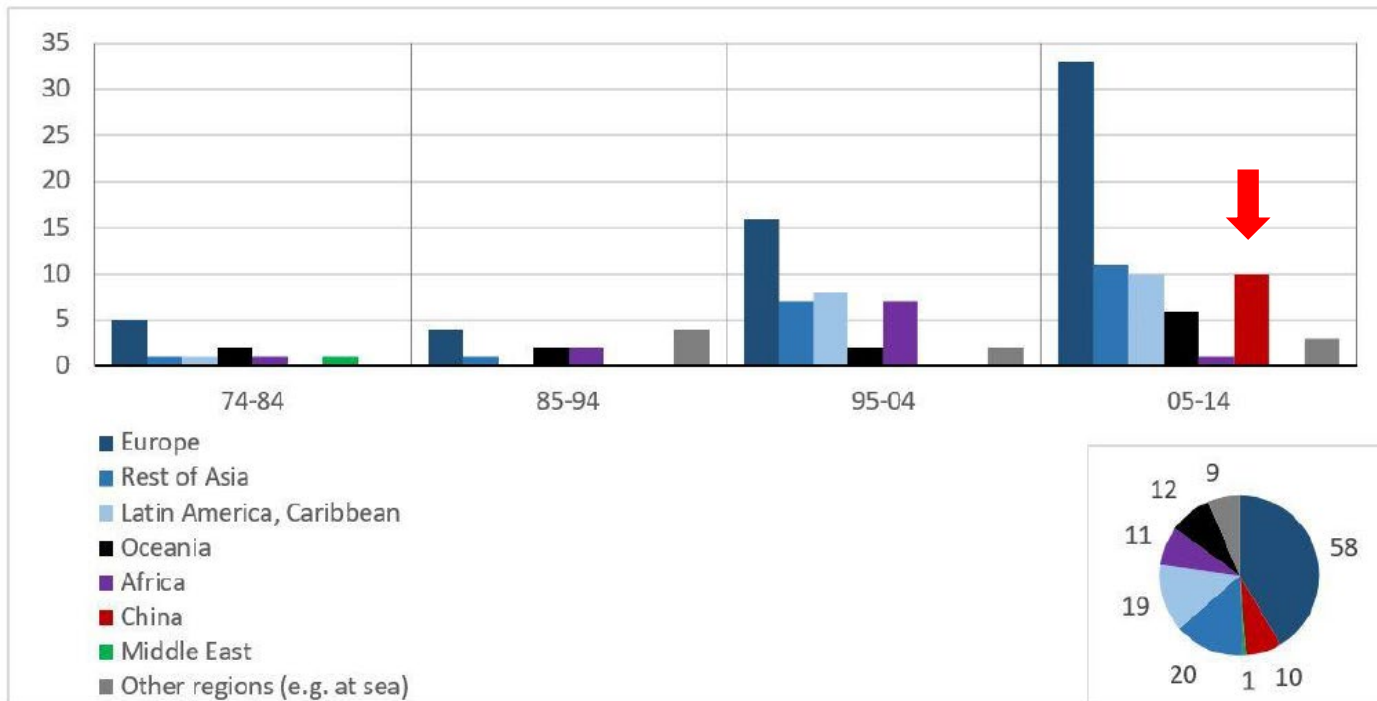


Some Observations

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Figure 20: Regional dimension (one per article, N=1,672, p-value: 0.000).

16/77 of 2020 published papers have China focus



Overview of the Review Process

- Initial Submission
 - Paper initially handled by Andreas Lange or myself
 - ~30 percent of papers are quickly desk rejected
 - Remainder are allocated to the co-editors based on research interests, current workload and potential conflicts of interest
 - Hendrik Wolff (empirical, climate)
 - Lucija Muehlenbachs (empirical, energy)
 - Josh Linn (empirical, transport, regulation)
 - Nic Rivers (empirical, CGE)
 - Matt Cole (empirical, trade)
 - Martin Quaas (dynamic theory)
 - Fredrik Carlsson (SP valuation, experiments)
 - Katheline Schubert (theory, climate)
 - Andreas Lange (static theory, experiments)
 - Roger von Haefen (empirical, RP valuation, misc.)

Overview of the Review Process

- Another 5 percent of papers are desk rejected by co-editors
 - Why are 35 percent of papers desk rejected?
 - Paper falls outside JEEM's aims and scope
 - e.g., energy, transport, health or finance paper with minimal environmental connections
 - Note: JEEM's aims and scope are evolving
 - e.g., epidemiology papers are frequently published now
 - Paper reports a curious result where the mechanism is unclear / not explored or identification is questionable
 - Poor quality / minimal chance of ultimately being published
 - This is the editor's subjective call, often based on a quick read of the abstract and introduction

JEEM's Aims and Scope

- The Journal of Environmental Economics and Management publishes **theoretical** and **empirical** papers devoted to specific **natural resource** and **environmental issues**. To warrant publication in **JEEM** papers should address new empirical findings that are of interest to a broader audience, theoretical analyses explaining new phenomena or puzzles, or development of theoretical or empirical methods likely being useful for further research.

JEEM's Aims and Scope

Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- Analysis of **environmental policy**
- Further development of **valuation techniques** and novel applications of valuation techniques to new data sets
- Study of **environmental behavior** and **responses to regulation**
- Analyses of exhaustible, **renewable** and **non-renewable, resources** and **resource policy**, notably the **economics of fisheries, forestry and fossil fuels**
- Analyses of the **carbon cycle, accumulating pollutants**, such as **greenhouse gases**
- **Environmental problems in developing countries**, such as **degradation of natural resources** and **health problems caused by pollution**
- Topics of **energy economics** related to the environment
- Topics of **agricultural economics** related to the environment

JEEM's Aims and Scope

We also welcome *interdisciplinary work* as far as it addresses environmental or resource economic issues requiring expertise beyond economics. Since JEEM is an economics journal, we do not publish papers that just combine methods of different disciplines but do not address economic issues in the first place.

We usually do not publish papers that replicate standard empirical findings or apply standard empirical methods to new but similar data sets. We usually do not publish theoretical analyses that are merely minor extensions or variations of known models and results. We do not publish papers that only marginally touch upon natural resource and environmental economics issues.

JEEM's Aims and Scope

In our review process, we prescreen all papers and immediately reject some. This includes papers we do not consider a good fit in terms of topic or methodology. This also includes papers that fall short of our high scientific standards. We will not reconsider papers already rejected for publication by JEEM, unless the editor in his or her decision letter explicitly leaves open this possibility.

Should You Appeal a Desk Rejection?

- **NO**
 - The editors generally have a good sense of what will be well-received by reviewers
 - Even if the editor has likely made a bad decision, the chance that a desk-rejected paper will ultimately be accepted is remote
 - Better to move on to another journal after taking any constructive criticism to heart
 - Andy Yates' advice – you can appeal an editor's decision once on your career, otherwise you risk being labeled a complainer

Overview of the Review Process

- The remaining 65 percent of papers go out for review
 - Two reviewers are generally recruited
- **Question:** How are reviewers selected?
 - Editors likely have a good handle on researchers working in your area
 - Past publications in JEEM / your references
 - Programs for top conferences (WCERE, AERE, EAERE)
 - My general approach:
 - One senior, one junior reviewer
 - For empirical papers, find someone with institutional knowledge

Overview of the Review Process

- After 2-3 months, reviews come back
 - If three months pass and you have heard nothing, be patient
 - If four months pass, you can check in with the editor
 - If you need an expedited decision for your tenure/promotion case, editors will be sympathetic but notify them early on in the process
 - You can monitor the progress of your paper through EVISE

Overview of the Review Process

- Types of reviewer recommendations:
 1. Both recommend reject (most common)
 - In this case, editor will likely review referee comments, and skim the paper, then make a decision (prob of reject = .98)
 - Overrule only if the comments are generally positive and the reviewers have a reputation for being tough
 2. Both recommend accept (never happens)
 3. Both recommend extending revision opportunity (best-possible outcome)
 - In this case, editor will review referee comments, read paper, and then make a decision (prob of revision opp. = .9)
 - Editor might know the paper better than the reviewer and overrule or feel that the path to publication is too uncertain / difficult

Overview of the Review Process

- Types of reviewer recommendations:
 - 4. Split reviews (common)
 - In this case, editor will review referee comments and paper carefully, then make decision (prob of reject = .66)
 - Key issues are:
 - 1) Does the paper make a significant enough contribution to merit publication?
 - 2) Is there a clear path to publication?
 - 3) Is the paper so poorly written that it will be costly to get it into shape for publication?
 - In general, junior faculty are more likely to receive benefit of the doubt

Overview of the Review Process

- If your paper is **rejected**:
 - Appealing is likely not worth it
 - Remember Andy Yates' advice
 - And it's a repeated game
 - Take the referee comments to heart, make appropriate revisions, and resubmit elsewhere
 - Doing nothing is a bad strategy
 - If you run into the same reviewer, s/he will be angry

Overview of the Review Process

- If your paper is **offered a revision opportunity**:
 - Try to be as responsive as you can to the referee's comments
 - Hopefully the editor will give you advice on what comments to prioritize
 - But remember it's your paper – if a reviewer is giving you bad advice and you can convincingly articulate why, don't make the changes s/he requests
 - Authors are generally given 2-3 months to resubmit, but it's fine to ask for more time if necessary
 - Make sure your notes to the referees are clear, concise and responsive to the referee's concerns

Overview of the Review Process

- After you **resubmit**:
 - Editor will likely send the paper back to the same reviewers
 - If one referee is especially negative, maybe not
 - You might have to wait an additional 2-3 months for a decision
 - Hopefully, the reviewers will view the revision favorably and an acceptance or conditional acceptance (subject to minor revisions) will be extended
 - But it is not unusual for at least one referee has serious concerns, and the paper could be sent to a third reviewer (likely someone on the editorial council) or it could be rejected outright
 - This is an unfortunate outcome that editors try to avoid
 - That said, they don't want to publish subpar papers

Overview of the Review Process

- Time to first decision:
 - About 65 days
- Time to acceptance:
 - 15 months

Overview of the Review Process

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I wish it were faster!

Overview of the Review Process

- **JEEM's new replication policy:**
- All data and code used to generate published results must be uploaded with final version
 - If confidential data is used, protocols for obtaining the data must be reported
- Policy will go into effect for new submissions starting Summer 2021

Advice

- Identifying **research topics / agenda**
 - Read widely – and deeply
 - Study what interests you
 - Mentors and peers matter
 - There is no substitute for hard work

Advice

- Environmental & resource economics is increasingly empirical
 - A deep understanding of econometrics is essential
 - Both reduced form and structural
 - Knowing some theory (both neoclassical and behavioral) helps too
 - And access to extraordinary data is highly valuable

Advice

- Sir Isaac Newton:
 - “Standing on the shoulders of giants, I saw a little further.”
 - Important to recognize that research is generally incremental, not transformational
- Often involves combining insights from different fields
 - Environmental economics typically applies methods from labor, IO or even macro to environmental problems

Advice

- Good communication skills are essential
 - This is hard for everyone because good writing requires organized thinking
 - And its not as much fun as analysis work
 - It's especially difficult for non-native English speakers
 - Co-authoring might make sense, at least early in your career
 - Study well-written papers, hire a copy editor
 - Get feedback on your papers at conferences and from mentors
 - Rewrite, rewrite, rewrite

Advice

- Some helpful websites:
 - [The Introduction Formula](#) by Keith Head
 - [The Middle Bits](#) by Marc Bellemare
 - [The Conclusion Formula](#) by Marc Bellemare

Advice

- Recent JEEM publications with ties to China
 - [Science Direct](#)

Advice

Practical Tips for Writing and Publishing Applied Economics Papers

Timothy Beatty
UC Davis

&

Jay P. Shimshack
University of Virginia

Advice

Selected references and readings

- Suggested Books:
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Advice

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Advice

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Call for Papers

Second Biannual JEEM Conference in Environmental and Resource Economics

Date: 16-17 July 2020

Beijing, China

The Journal of Environmental Economics and Management (JEEM) is delighted to announce a call for papers for the 2nd biannual JEEM Conference in Environmental and Resource Economists. The conference will be held 16-17 July 2020 at Renmin University of China in Beijing. Stephen Polasky of the University of Minnesota and Nick Kuminoff of Arizona State University are scheduled to provide keynote addresses.

Authors are invited to submit empirical and theoretical papers on topics consistent with the journal's [aims and scope](#). Abstracts or incomplete papers will not be considered. Submissions from researchers at Chinese and other Asian universities are encouraged, and papers on Chinese and Asian topics written by authors from around the world will receive special consideration. After the conference, participants will be strongly encouraged to submit their revised papers to JEEM for publication. Those papers will be subjected to the regular review process that, to the degree possible, will be expedited. The Program Committee, consisting of Professors Hua Wang, Yazhen Gong, Jinhua Zhao, Andreas Lange and Roger von Haefen, will select roughly twelve papers for presentation based on their overall quality and potential impact. Depending on the mix of submissions, the committee anticipates selecting two or three conference themes around which to organize selected papers.

Travel and lodging costs for three nights will be reimbursed for one presenter for each accepted paper. The deadline for submissions is **15 January 2020**. Authors will be notified of acceptance decisions by **15 March 2020**.

Please submit electronic versions (preferably *.pdf) of papers to jeemconference@ncsu.edu. Authors' names and affiliations should be on the cover page only. In the corresponding email, authors must acknowledge that their paper is not currently under review for publication elsewhere. There is no submission fee.

Questions about the conference may be sent to jeemconference@ncsu.edu or directly to members of the Program Committee.