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Editorial

Introductory Overviews

The inherent nature of environmental systems necessitates interdisciplinary approaches to analyse and understand them. The development and application of environmental models can involve highly diverse teams, comprised of scientists with different educational backgrounds and a wide of array of methods and terminology. As we grapple to understand environmental problems of increasing complexity, it becomes even more important that we cross traditional disciplinary boundaries and make greater efforts to exchange information, knowledge and ideas. To this end, EMS has created a new form of scientific contribution: Introductory Overviews.

Introductory Overview articles are designed to provide introductory level background to key themes and topics that caters to the eclectic readership of EMS. It is envisaged that these articles will help to break down barriers to shared understanding and dialogue within multidisciplinary teams, and make environmental modelling more accessible to a wider audience. Introductory Overviews include an introduction to the fundamentals of the topic, including core theories, frameworks or features that underpin research in a field, as well as reference to seminal papers.

Relevant concepts are presented in relatively simple terms, with the audience assumed to have some basic knowledge of environmental modelling and mathematics. Introductory Overviews are directed specifically at the EMS audience and undergo formal peer review. These articles are not intended to be comprehensive reviews, but should provide readers with sufficient background to understand core concepts about a topic and common tools or approaches. This will help to overcome issues of terminology, for readers coming from other disciplines. Last, but not least, Introductory Overviews aim to serve as interdisciplinary learning material. Thus they will include a short section that outlines the learning objectives of the paper and the assumed background knowledge of readers. The paper will refer to relevant key literature that the reader is suggested to pursue for further investigation.

Introductory Overviews are by invitation only. Ideas for Introductory Overviews can be canvassed with one of the Editors. The first Introductory Overview, which provides a primer on the dimensions of Integrated Assessment and Modelling, is published in this issue.

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