

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OCEANOGRAPHY SOCIETY

Oceanography

CITATION

Tomczak, M. 2014. Letter to the editor. *Oceanography* 27(2):7, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5670/oceanog.2014.61>.

DOI

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5670/oceanog.2014.61>

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and **Best et al.** summarize some of the numerous efforts by ocean observatories to monitor the seafloor, understand the physical processes underlying the hazards, provide early warning of hazards, and construct databases that can be input to hazard models. **Sgroi et al.** describe an ocean floor observatory in the Mediterranean that is providing insights into the area's geohazards by analyzing seismic signals associated with submarine landslides, volcanic tremor, and possibly hydrofracturing of outcrops due to changes in the stress field around Mt. Etna. **Mori et al.** discuss the Japan Trench Fast Drilling Project (JFAST) that drilled boreholes in the seafloor through the fault zone of the 2011 Tōhoku-Oki earthquake (M9.0) to improve understanding of the rupture process and tsunami generation. **Hori et al.** take a computational approach, assimilating real-time data from both onshore and offshore seismic networks to construct a forecasting

system for the Nankai Trough off Japan based on the physical processes that generate earthquakes. In contrast, **Wallace et al.** and **McHugh et al.** use historical and geologic evidence of earthquakes, among other tools and observations, to better understand the seismic and tsunami potential in New Zealand (Wallace et al.) and in Haiti and Turkey (McHugh et al.).

I would like to thank the Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC) for supporting production of this special issue of *Oceanography*, and Yoshihisa Shirayama (JAMSTEC), Shuichi Kodaira (JAMSTEC), Yoshiyuki Kaneda (Nagoya University), and Jason Chaytor (US Geological Survey) for their outstanding job as guest editors.


ELLEN S. KAPPEL, EDITOR

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

In the December 2013 issue of *Oceanography* our president made some insightful and worrying observations about the impact of social media on research choices, particularly of young scientists. It appears that online conversation lets people make remarks publicly that they would have reserved for private face-to-face insults or relegated to behind-the-back comments in the past. We in the science community should strive to maintain proper standards of communication, no matter how controversial a topic may be.

Online technology brought about social media and their frequent toxicity, but it can also help to promote good standards of debate through immediateness and openness. The European Geoscience Union (EGU) began several years ago to publish its journals under the Public Peer-Review & Interactive Public Discussion system. It puts submitted papers online as "Discussions", which are open for public comment and debate while they are

reviewed by expert referees. The reviewers' comments, the author's reply and the editor's decision are also posted as part of the discussion. If the paper is accepted for publication the final version is published in the appropriate EGU journal. All contributions to the Discussion process remain available, regardless of the editor's decision to accept or reject the submitted paper.

In my view the system has several advantages over the traditional peer-review system. It makes the review process more transparent; even if the referees choose to remain anonymous, public availability of their reports eliminates instances of malicious judgment. Young scientists who submit a paper on a controversial topic may receive adverse comments, but if the points they make are of any value they will also find support from others in the discussion, which can help them to counter malevolence from established colleagues. Even if a paper is rejected and its main ideas are found valid

only years later, its existence in the Discussions section provides proof of priority of the ideas and can help the author to rectify earlier career setbacks.

The print edition of *Oceanography* is one of the finest publications in our science fields. There is no need to change its ways. But now that *Oceanography* has an online edition as well it may be time to consider whether the online edition should not move to the Public Peer-Review & Interactive Public Discussion system.

Matthias Tomczak
Emeritus Professor of Oceanography
Flinders University of South Australia