The continuing evolution of Energy Policy

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(article starts on next page)

Energy Policy xxx (xxxx) xxx

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Editorial

The continuing evolution of *Energy Policy*

As the world confronts the Covid-19 pandemic, we hope that all of you are doing well. We know that many lives have been greatly disrupted, and that world economic activity is slowing and maybe declining in some places. We have read reports that energy consumption has been greatly affected by the slowdown in world economic activity—likely contributing to the sharp plunge in oil prices earlier this year. We do not know how long this pandemic may last. As we look forward to the end of the pandemic and a recovering world economy, however, we wonder if and how energy systems may have to be transformed, and whether new energy policy needs and approaches will emerge. Will we see any change in the trajectory of adopting sustainable energy systems and reducing carbon emissions?

In the academic world, many of us are now teleworking and teaching our courses online. This transition has proved time consuming—so we want to thank our many reviewers who are staying on or close to schedule. So far, *Energy Policy* has been mostly unaffected by the pandemic, but we must recognize that the Elsevier employees who are responsible for the operations side of the journal may at some time be affected by Covid-19.

In the meantime, we want to keep you informed about some recent developments regarding *Energy Policy*, including a little about its history and our editorial priorities.

1. *Energy Policy*: A continuing evolution

The first issue of *Energy Policy* was published 47 years ago in June 1973. In its first year of publication, *Energy Policy* had three issues that contained 18 research articles and several reports. The focus was on oil, natural gas, electricity markets and nuclear energy. None of the articles in the first year focused on environmental issues, climate change issues, energy efficiency/conservation or renewable energy. John A.G. Thomas was the editor with Ivan F. Klimes as the assistant editor. The International Editorial Board, as it was then called, included such well-known energy researchers as Morris Adelman, Peter Odell and Sam Schurr.

Over the years, the important policy issues in energy use and supply have changed, and the interest in energy policy issues has grown. As a result, *Energy Policy*'s content has evolved and expanded, reflecting the pivotal role that policies play in shaping energy systems across the globe (Fig. 1).

1.1. Evolving topics

The 1974 volume had one article out of 24 that addressed environmental issues related to energy use. The 1978, 1980 volumes had one article each on climate change issues related to energy use. The 1980 volume also had one article addressing environmental issues related to energy use. Dominated by the oil crises, security of supply, and energy efficiency, the 1975, 76, 77 and 79 volumes did not have any articles addressing environmental or climate change issues.

The 1976 volume had one article that addressed energy efficiency/conservation. The 1979 volume had several such articles. The 1977 volume had one article that addressed renewable energy. The 1978, 79, 80 volumes had no articles about renewable energy. By the mid-1980s, however, the journal regularly published articles addressing energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energy. Today, these topics occupy regular space in every volume of *Energy Policy*.

Chernobyl (and later Fukushima), acid rain, climate change and other environmental issues related to energy supply and use gradually changed the direction of research about policies affecting energy use and production. By the mid-to late 1980s, the journal regularly published articles on environmental issues. Articles about climate issues related to energy use took a bit longer to develop, and the journal published a special issue on climate policy in 1993. Today, both environmental and climate change topics are featured in every volume of *Energy Policy* Fig. 2).

1.2. Increased publication of articles

During its first ten years of publication, *Energy Policy* grew fairly robustly in size. Volume 11 (published in 1983) comprised four issues with a total of 36 articles, representing a doubling of articles compared to 1973 and an annual average growth rate of 7.2% (1973–1983). Volume 21 (published in 1993) comprised 12 issues with a total of 109 articles, representing more than a tripling of articles published in comparison to Volume 11 and an annual average growth rate of 11.2% (1983–1993).

Perhaps reflecting the weakness in world oil prices, Volume 31 (published in 2003) comprised 15 issues with a total of "only" 134 articles, representing a 22.9% increase of articles over Volume 21 and an annual average growth rate of merely 2.1%.

Increased recognition about environmental issues and climate change associated with energy use and then rising oil prices have stimulated a strong surge in research about energy policy. In 2019, *Energy Policy* had about a 25 percent acceptance rate and published 695 articles. The 2019 figure represents nearly a 38-fold increase over the number of articles published in 1973, or an annual average growth rate of 8.1% (from 1973 to 2019). The articles published in 2019 covered a wide variety of topics in energy policy including primary energy resources; energy conversion, transportation, transmission and storage; energy use and end-use technologies; energy markets and pricing;

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energy and society; energy and the environment; investment, financing and other economic issues; and technological change.

1.3. An upward trend in Energy Policy's impact factor

Clarivate reports a fairly steady climb in *Energy Policy*'s two-year impact factor since 2014. The respective figures are 2.575 in 2014, 3.045 in 2015, 4.140 in 2016, 4.039 in 2017 and 4.880 in 2018. The 2019 Impact Factor will become available in June 2020.

The 2018 Impact Factor places *Energy Policy* in the top quartile of journals in Economics (SSCI), Environmental Studies (SSCI), Environmental Sciences (SCIE) and Energy & Fuels (SCIE). Similarly, Research Papers in Economics' (RePEc's) aggregate ranking for *Energy Policy* places it in the top 25 of economics journals over the past ten years. *Energy Policy* is available in thousands of academic libraries and government institutes and had more than 3 million full-text downloads in 2019.

1.4. Editors

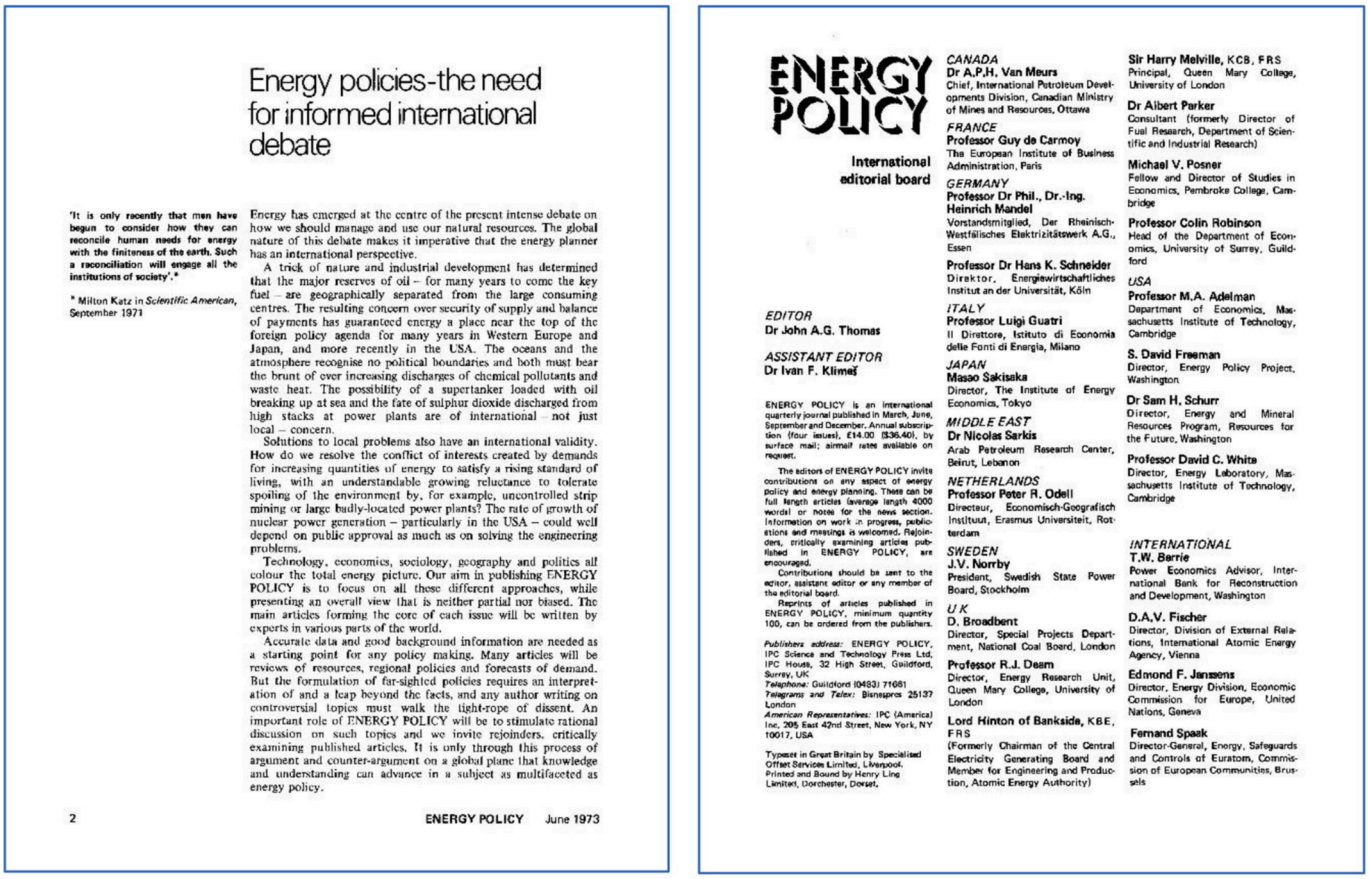
After John A. G. Thomas, Patrick Coyne served as Editor for a number of years. With several changes in publication houses, the records of editorial leadership are less clear in the 1970s and 80s. By 1990, however, the editorial team was Lyndon Driscoll, Managing Editor and Nicky France, Editor. By 1993, Lyndon Driscoll was the publisher and Nicky France was the sole Editor—a role she served in for many years before Lorna Greening and Michael Jefferson took over as Editors in 2013. With Greening's departure in 2015, the editorial team expanded to five people: Stephen P. A. Brown, Michael Jefferson, Reinhard Madlener, Stephen Thomas, and Peng Zhou. Marilyn Brown joined the team in 2018. When Michael Jefferson retired as Senior Editor in early 2019, Carlos Henggeler Antunes and Sonia Yeh joined the editorial team. More recently Huibin Du and Stéphane Goutte joined the editorial team, bringing the number to nine.

1.5. Recent additions to the editorial team

As described above, *Energy Policy* recently added two members to the editorial team, Huibin Du and Stéphane Goutte.

Huibin Du joined *Energy Policy* as an Associate Editor on December 1, 2019. Prof. Dr. Du is a professor and the vice dean of the College of Management & Economics, Tianjin University. Her expertise is in resource and environmental management. As a principal investigator, she has conducted a National Key R&D Program of China, a National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) key project, and many other projects. Based on these programs, she co-led a large collaborative team from Georgia Institute of Technology, Stony Brook University, the University of Adelaide, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Peking University and several other universities/institutes to implement research on air pollution regional joint governance, renewable energy development, and energy-water nexus, energy-economy-environment (3E) System, etc. She has published more than 40 SCI/SSCI indexed papers on international academic journals including *Water Research*, *Applied Energy*, *Energy Economics*, *Energy Policy*, and *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*.

Stéphane Goutte joined *Energy Policy* as an Associate Editor on January 1, 2020. He has two PhDs, one in Mathematics and one in Economics. He is Full Professor at CEMOTEV, Université Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines University, France. He is also Adjunct Professor at Telfer School at University of Ottawa, Canada. He received his Habilitation for Supervising Scientific Research (HDR) in 2017 at University Paris Dauphine. Previously, he was associate professor at



Energy policies-the need for informed international debate

'It is only recently that men have begun to consider how they can reconcile human needs for energy with the finiteness of the earth. Such a reconciliation will engage all the institutions of society'.*

* Milton Katz in *Scientific American*, September 1971

Energy has emerged at the centre of the present intense debate on how we should manage and use our natural resources. The global nature of this debate makes it imperative that the energy planner has an international perspective.

A trick of nature and industrial development has determined that the major reserves of oil – for many years to come the key fuel – are geographically separated from the large consuming centres. The resulting concern over security of supply and balance of payments has guaranteed energy a place near the top of the foreign policy agenda for many years in Western Europe and Japan, and more recently in the USA. The oceans and the atmosphere recognise no political boundaries and both must bear the brunt of ever increasing discharges of chemical pollutants and waste heat. The possibility of a supertanker loaded with oil breaking up at sea and the fate of sulphur dioxide discharged from high stacks at power plants are of international – not just local – concern.

Solutions to local problems also have an international validity. How do we resolve the conflict of interests created by demands for increasing quantities of energy to satisfy a rising standard of living, with an understandable growing reluctance to tolerate spoiling of the environment by, for example, uncontrolled strip mining or large badly-located power plants? The rate of growth of nuclear power generation – particularly in the USA – could well depend on public approval as much as on solving the engineering problems.

Technology, economics, sociology, geography and politics all colour the total energy picture. Our aim in publishing ENERGY POLICY is to focus on all these different approaches, while presenting an overall view that is neither partial nor biased. The main articles forming the core of each issue will be written by experts in various parts of the world.

Accurate data and good background information are needed as a starting point for any policy making. Many articles will be reviews of resources, regional policies and forecasts of demand. But the formulation of far-sighted policies requires an interpretation of and a leap beyond the facts, and any author writing on controversial topics must walk the tight-rope of dissent. An important role of ENERGY POLICY will be to stimulate rational discussion on such topics and we invite rejoinders, critically examining published articles. It is only through this process of argument and counter-argument on a global plane that knowledge and understanding can advance in a subject as multifaceted as energy policy.

2 ENERGY POLICY June 1973

ENERGY POLICY

International editorial board

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ENERGY POLICY is an international quarterly journal published in March, June, September and December. Annual subscription (four issues), £14.00 ($36.40), by surface mail; airmail rates available on request.

The editors of ENERGY POLICY invite contributions on any aspect of energy policy and energy planning. These can be full length articles (average length 4000 words) or notes for the news section. Information on work in progress, publications and meetings is welcomed. Rejoinders, critically examining articles published in ENERGY POLICY, are encouraged.

Contributions should be sent to the editor, assistant editor or any member of the editorial board.

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Fig. 1. Excerpt from the first issue and volume of *Energy Policy* (1973) (Editorial and International Editorial Board).

University Paris 8 and researcher at French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS). He teaches mathematics, energy and environmental economics and related topics in M. Sc and B.Sc. He is also a Senior Editor of *Finance Research Letters*; an Associate Editor of *International Review of Financial Analysis* (IRFA) and *Research in International Business and Finance*. His interests lie in the area of mathematical finance and econometric applied to energy or commodities. He has published more than 45 research papers in international peer-reviewed journals. He has also been a Guest Editor of various special issues of international peer-reviewed journals and Editor of many handbooks. He was a visiting professor at University of Luxembourg and Vietnam National University of Hanoi, Vietnam.

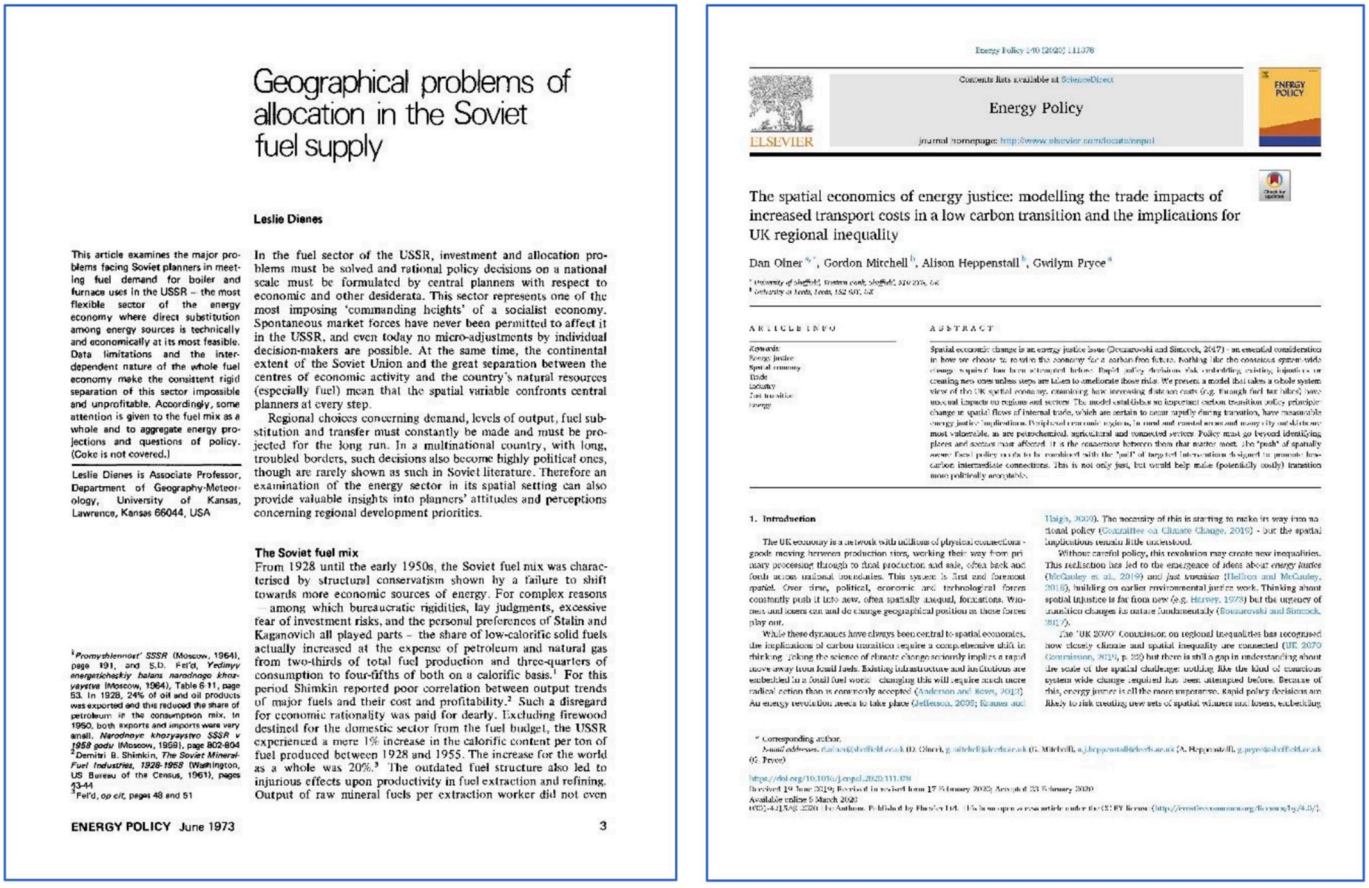
2. Editorial priorities at *Energy Policy*

Although *Energy Policy* has evolved and taken on a greater academic relevance since its beginnings in 1973, in many ways it remains the same. Although the journal has become more technical as the field of energy-related research has matured, we expect the articles that we publish to inform energy-related policy. Mathematical modeling, econometrics and other approaches should serve only to support the policy issues being examined. Modeling should be a means rather than an end. Papers that are focused on technology assessment, mathematical modeling, econometrics and other approaches with a few policy implications tacked on at the end, or no deeper and explicit new policy insights and implications derived from the analysis, do not belong in *Energy Policy*. They should be sent to more technically oriented journals.

At *Energy Policy*, we consider a wide variety of topics that include fossil energy, renewable energy, nuclear power, behavioral, environmental and climate issues—provided that the manuscript focuses on the policy issues related to energy supply or use. We consider manuscripts with research methods from a wide variety of disciplines—including economics, engineering, law, political science, public policy, psychology and sociology. We expect these manuscripts to either advance research methods or represent the current state of the art in these disciplines, *and* for the manuscripts to address policy issues about energy supply or use. The requirements for Policy Perspectives are a little different as described below.

A number of other journals publish articles that may be somewhat similar to those published in *Energy Policy*—such as *Energy Economics*, *The Energy Journal*, *Resource and Energy Economics*, *Energy Research & Social Science*, *Renewable & Sustainable Energy Reviews*, *Energy for Sustainable Development*, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *Energy*, *Applied Energy*, *Joule*, *Energy and Climate Change*, *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management*, *Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists*, *Climate Policy*, *The Electricity Journal*, various IEEE journals and *Utilities Policy*. The principal difference with these journals is that *Energy Policy* requires a focus on policy issues related to energy supply or use.

Energy Policy's editors do have the ability to make the direct transfer of a manuscript to some other Elsevier journals and occasionally will suggest such a transfer (either pre- or post-review). A direct transfer does require author approval, and avoids the authors' burden of resubmission to another journal. In most cases, however, the editors prefer to make suggestions about other journals and let the authors decide which journal is most appropriate.



Geographical problems of allocation in the Soviet fuel supply

Leslie Dienes

This article examines the major problems facing Soviet planners in meeting fuel demand for boiler and furnace uses in the USSR – the most flexible sector of the energy economy where direct substitution among energy sources is technically and economically at its most feasible. Data limitations and the interdependent nature of the whole fuel economy make the consistent rigid separation of this sector impossible and unprofitable. Accordingly, some attention is given to the fuel mix as a whole and to aggregate energy projections and questions of policy. (Coke is not covered.)

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In the fuel sector of the USSR, investment and allocation problems must be solved and rational policy decisions on a national scale must be formulated by central planners with respect to economic and other desiderata. This sector represents one of the most imposing 'commanding heights' of a socialist economy. Spontaneous market forces have never been permitted to affect it in the USSR, and even today no micro-adjustments by individual decision-makers are possible. At the same time, the continental extent of the Soviet Union and the great separation between the centres of economic activity and the country's natural resources (especially fuel) mean that the spatial variable confronts central planners at every step.

Regional choices concerning demand, levels of output, fuel substitution and transfer must constantly be made and must be projected for the long run. In a multinational country, with long, troubled borders, such decisions also become highly political ones, though are rarely shown as such in Soviet literature. Therefore an examination of the energy sector in its spatial setting can also provide valuable insights into planners' attitudes and perceptions concerning regional development priorities.

The Soviet fuel mix

From 1928 until the early 1950s, the Soviet fuel mix was characterised by structural conservatism shown by a failure to shift towards more economic sources of energy. For complex reasons – among which bureaucratic rigidities, lay judgments, excessive fear of investment risks, and the personal preferences of Stalin and Kaganovich all played parts – the share of low-calorific solid fuels actually increased at the expense of petroleum and natural gas from two-thirds of total fuel production and three-quarters of consumption to four-fifths of both on a calorific basis.[1] For this period Shimkin reported poor correlation between output trends of major fuels and their cost and profitability.[2] Such a disregard for economic rationality was paid for dearly. Excluding firewood destined for the domestic sector from the fuel budget, the USSR experienced a mere 1% increase in the calorific content per ton of fuel produced between 1928 and 1955. The increase for the world as a whole was 20%.[3] The outdated fuel structure also led to injurious effects upon productivity in fuel extraction and refining. Output of raw mineral fuels per extraction worker did not even

[1] *Promyshlennost' SSSR* (Moscow, 1964), page 191, and S.D. Fel'd, *Vedinyy energeticheskiy balans narodnogo khozyaystva* (Moscow, 1964), Table 6-11, page 53. In 1928, 24% of oil and oil products was exported and this reduced the share of petroleum in the consumption mix. In 1950, both exports and imports were very small. *Narodnoye khozyaystvo SSSR v 1958 godu* (Moscow, 1959), page 802-804

[2] Demitri B. Shimkin, *The Soviet Mineral-Fuel Industries, 1928-1958* (Washington, US Bureau of the Census, 1961), pages 43-44

[3] Fel'd, *op cit*, pages 48 and 51

ENERGY POLICY June 1973 3

Fig. 2. First page of the first article ever published in *Energy Policy* (Leslie Dienes was Associate Professor in the Department of Geography-Meteorology at the University of Kansas), compared to the appearance of a specimen article (on regional energy inequality in the UK by a group of authors from Leeds and Sheffield University) in May 2020.

3. Other recent developments at *Energy Policy*

We have made a few additional changes at *Energy Policy*, as explained below in some detail. We have reduced considerably the delay in handling manuscripts. We have increased the word limit for Policy Perspectives. We are working to increase the number of Invited Review Articles, and we continue to seek the submission of manuscripts addressing behavioral aspects of energy choices that need to be better understood in order to design effective programs and policies.

Surprisingly, a number of manuscripts fail initial technical checks and are returned to the authors for correction. Such problems can greatly delay assignment to an editor, and we encourage the authors to take responsibility for the submission of appropriately formatted articles (i.e. such that they match the requirements described in the Guide for Authors).

3.1. Reducing the delay in handling manuscripts

Throughout most of 2019, the editorial capacity of the *Energy Policy* was somewhat less than the more than 3000 submissions that the journal sees during a typical year. By Fall (2019), *Energy Policy* had a backlog of unprocessed manuscripts that led to a delay of 6–8 weeks between the time a manuscript was submitted to the journal and it was assigned to an editor. The delay resulted in considerable author concern and frustration.

In late December 2019 and early January 2020, the editors undertook a special project to substantially reduce the backlog of manuscripts by culling out the considerable number of manuscripts that did not meet the aims and scope of the journal. By the end of January, the time between submission and assignment to an editor was reduced to several weeks. We are continuing the practice of quickly culling out manuscripts that do not meet the aims and scope of the journal, with hopes of being able to maintain relatively quick assignment of the surviving manuscripts to editors throughout 2020 and beyond.

3.2. Full Length Articles and Research Notes

Full Length Articles are the principal work that we publish. These articles should present rigorous research about energy policy issues. They are normally 4500–8000 words. The editors will consider papers of exceptional merit up to 10,000 words. Authors submitting a Full Length Article of more than 8000 words must submit a brief statement in their cover letter, explaining the exceptional merit of the submission to energy policy.

Research Notes are shorter papers of less than 4500 words. Research Notes should present fully realized research but are shorter in length than Full Length Articles.

3.3. Policy Perspectives

We have increased the word limit for Policy Perspectives from 4500 to 6000 words. A Policy Perspective is a relatively short contribution that offers judgment on an energy policy issue—normally without original research. A Policy Perspective should present well-reasoned and fully considered thinking to reach conclusions that are germane to important policy issues in energy supply or use. The number of Policy Perspectives per journal volume may be limited at the discretion of the editors.

3.4. Invited Review Articles

Energy Policy occasionally publishes Invited Review Articles that are reviews of the literature. It does not publish reviews of the energy situation in a region, country or group of countries as Invited Review Articles. Invited Review Articles are typically initiated by one of the editors inviting a senior person to provide such an article. The editorial team will consider proposals for outstanding articles that review the literature and well capture the policy issues, but such proposals are typically expected to be received from individuals with senior standing in the profession.

3.5. Behavioral aspects of energy choices

The editors of *Energy Policy* recognize that additional theoretical and empirical analysis of the behavioral aspects of energy choices is needed to better inform the design of energy programs and policies. We continue to seek more submissions examining the behavioral aspects of energy choices. What is the role of consumer trust and social norms, cognitive effort and rational inattention, environmental attitudes, time preferences, loss aversion, habits and habit formation, status quo bias, and more? These concepts need to be examined more fully to better understand how behavioral responses and shifts (including the rebound effect) could run counter to policy goals and alter policy effectiveness, and to assess how energy policy could be reformulated to address these behavioral responses.

4. Submissions and technical checks

Before it is assigned to an editor, each new manuscript is screened by Elsevier's technical staff to assure that it complies with submission requirements. A surprising number of manuscripts are returned to the authors for failure to comply with the submission requirements. The technical expectations are:

1) The submission includes all the expected files, including Cover Letter, Highlights, Manuscript File, Tables (if needed), and Figures (if needed);
2) The manuscript file contains all of the following elements in this order: Title, Authors, Affiliations, Abstract, Keywords, Main text, References, Appendix;
3) The authors listed on the manuscript match the list of authors specified in the submission;
4) 1–6 keywords are present in the manuscript file;
5) All headings and subheadings are numbered throughout and in the journal's style;
6) The first main heading is labelled 'Introduction' and the last main heading is labelled 'Conclusion and Policy Implications';
7) References are provided in the journal's style (author + year);
8) The paper is formatted with double-line spacing;
9) All of the submission questions have been answered correctly;
10) The word count is below the maximum, and that the number matches the actual word count of the paper (according to the counting rules specified in the Guide for Authors);
11) 3–6 Reviewers are suggested, ideally with a doctoral degree, and none of them are at the same institution as any of the authors; and
12) The Abstract is 150–220 words

5. Continuing engagement with the academic and energy policy community

As Peter Odell (1983) wrote on the tenth anniversary of this journal: "*Energy Policy*, which commands the interest and respect of both scholars and policymakers in so many aspects of the important energy issues, will remain an important forum for presentation and discussion …"

Energy Policy has a continuing mission of advancing and informing policy issues about energy use and supply. Fulfilling this mission requires well-researched articles using rigorous research methods *and* thinking about energy policy issues. We consider a continuum of papers, from those that make more substantial contributions to policy to those that make more substantial contributions to methodology, but we expect all papers to have a focus on policies about energy supply or use.

By characterizing our priorities, the editors hope to continue to attract strong manuscripts with meaningful energy policy implications that can be published in future issues of *Energy Policy*.

Reference

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