

Editorial

This Cluster First Results Special Issue has been a major challenge:

- In order to fulfill the specification requested by ESA and the Cluster PIs, the schedule between submission and publication was only six months in duration, whereas past special issues usually needed 10 to 12 months to be completed;
- In addition, the first time, only electronic submission was strongly recommended for the authors, in order to shorten the time required to exchange the papers between the Annales Geophysicae Office, the Editors and the Referees;
- It was certainly a big challenge for the authors themselves to complete their work in an extremely short timetable, between the end of the Cluster Mission commissioning period and the submission deadline;
- The request from the Annales Office to the Referees to provide their reports in a very timely manner was also unusual;
- And the production process was also kept to a minimum, an effort greatly appreciated by the EGS Production Office.

Now this Special Issue is completed and published in due time and on schedule: Annales Geophysicae is extremely proud to have contributed to this publication. However, the final result is certainly not perfect. Indeed, a few papers are missing due to late submission or to major revisions requested by Referees/Editors, but these papers may have a chance to appear in a forthcoming regular issue. In addition, it is most likely that a few papers are also missing because

the authors refrained from submitting their work when faced with the strict and short deadlines. Some papers will also not be published, since strict peer-review policies were requested by the Editors and Referees, so that every published paper fulfills the standards requested for regular paper submission. As a result, some authors were disappointed, but nevertheless, they followed the rules of the publication game. In the end, I really hope that this issue will constitute a publication cornerstone, as it should for the ESA Cluster Mission, and that this issue will become a reference for the future.

All of this would not have been possible without the convergence of the unprecedented efforts from the authors themselves, but also from the work done by the Annales Editors, Gérard Chanteur and Mark Lester, assisted by Guest Editor Philippe Escoubet, who have given this Cluster First Results publication project their highest priority; most of the Referees have also made great efforts and their contributions are recognised and greatly acknowledged as well. In addition, the Editorial management of this issue has been a very heavy load for the Annales Office, in particular, due to the handling of the electronic submission and revisions, a difficult task to handle given the work load and the various formats of the electronic files. Sylviane Perret is acknowledged for her major role in ensuring that the whole process worked very smoothly. And at the end of chain of events, Barbara Heyburgh and Dieter Schmitt at the EGS Production Office, have successfully and timely coordinated the process of copy-editing, typesetting, and assembling all of these papers. As Editor in Chief, I am pleased to thank all of them.

Denis Alcaydé
Editor in Chief