ECMWF Newsletter – Guidance for authors

Purpose and content

The purpose of the ECMWF Newsletter is to make users of ECMWF products, collaborators with ECMWF and the wider meteorological community aware of new developments at ECMWF and the use that can be made of ECMWF products.

To satisfy this purpose the Newsletter is published four times a year and includes:

- Features about new developments and systems at ECMWF, collaboration in international projects, case studies of important meteorological events, and uses of ECMWF products.
- News items about changes to operational systems and progress with projects and other ongoing activities, and new activities, including recent initiatives and decisions of Council and new European Union or EUMETSAT-supported projects.
- Information about publications, changes to the website, and plans for ECMWF workshops and the education programme for the coming year.

It is assumed that the readers of the Newsletter have a professional interest in the activities of ECMWF but may have little detailed knowledge of these activities. Therefore more background information is required than in a more formal article submitted to a journal. Equations should be avoided as these may deter readers.

Articles are welcome from people not working at ECMWF, especially those from Member States and Co-operating States. Articles about the use of ECMWF products are particularly encouraged.

Production schedule

The deadline for the submission of feature articles for the Newsletter will normally be 1 February (Spring), 1 May (Summer), 1 August (Autumn) and 1 November (Winter).

The Editor will liaise with authors to assist them in ensuring that the content and presentation of their articles are suitable for publication in the Newsletter.

There is an internal review process at ECMWF for all feature articles.

The proofs of the Newsletter will normally be completed within six weeks of the submission deadline. Authors will be given the opportunity to check the proofs of their articles. This should normally be done within one week of receipt of a proof.

The Director of ECMWF will give final approval for publication of the Newsletter.

Further information

Detailed guidance about the text, structure, style and graphics is given on the second page of this note. The Editor, Georg Lentze, can be contacted at Georg.Lentze@ecmwf.int to deal with any queries about any aspect of publishing an article in the Newsletter. He is happy to give advice to anyone considering submitting an article for publication in the Newsletter.

Text

- The text should be submitted as a Microsoft Word™ file.
- A typical length of a feature article is between 2,000 and 4,000 words, though articles can be shorter than this.
- The number of figures/tables should be commensurate with the length of the article. Typically the space occupied by figures should not exceed that occupied by the text. If there are too many figures they become separated from the associated text and this makes it difficult for the reader.
- News items should normally be no longer than about one page of the Newsletter in length (i.e. equivalent to about 850 words). When possible news items should include a graphic.

Structure

- Use the newspaper's 'inverted pyramid' structure as much as possible. Give the readers the most interesting information at the start, and then provide the detail and supporting information. Avoid using the structure that is traditional for scientific papers.
- Do not use more than two levels of headings, and preferably keep to one level.
- Only include references that are absolutely essential. It should be assumed that the reader will not read the references. The references should be listed under the heading 'Further Reading' at the end of the article using the format designated for all ECMWF publications.
- Figure captions should be given at the end of an article.
- Detailed information that will not be of interest to many readers can be put in a box which is then referred to in the text in a similar way to that of figures and tables.
- Footnotes should not be used.
- There should not be a separate acknowledgements sections. Any acknowledgements should be incorporated into the body of the article.

Style

- Avoid repetitive writing by varying the length and structure of sentences. Do not use very long sentences and avoid long paragraphs.
- Use active voice rather than passive voice (e.g. "Figure 3 shows the results" rather than "The results are shown in Figure 3"). This means minimising the use of "is", "are", "was", "were" etc.
- Define acronyms and abbreviations when they are first used.

Graphics

- Line diagrams (e.g. graphs, charts) should be supplied as either encapsulated Postscript (eps), Postscript (ps) or native Adobe Illustrator (ai) files.
- Photographs, 3-D renderings and other 'real-world' images should be submitted as jpg (using minimum compression / highest quality). These bitmap images should be of high resolution.
- Graphics in PDF format may be accepted but do not create them by just using the 'save as PDF' option. If this is chosen then a great deal of image compression takes place and figures become unusable. To save figures in PDF format use the option of 'Press Quality' or 'High Quality Print' for the file type from Acrobat Distiller.
- Graphics in the following forms are NOT acceptable: Powerpoint files (unless the figure is intended to be an entire slide from a presentation); GIF files; line diagrams that have been converted to bitmap, in particular compressed JPEG.