



Editorial comments from the incoming Chief Editor, January 2022

I'm delighted to have been asked to take over the role as Chief Editor of *Petroleum Geoscience*, to succeed Phil Ringrose after his 3 year successful tenure. He leaves the journal stronger and more relevant than ever, having managed its evolution during this transformative time in energy geoscience. I hope to be able to call on Phil's experience for advice in the months/years to come. It is also reassuring to know we have a very strong publications team at the Geological Society and the European Association of Geoscientists and Engineers, who offer the continuity and support to build on the progress made and navigate the next phase of the journal's evolution. *Petroleum Geoscience* is a journal with a strong reputation, that presents high quality novel research papers. Disseminating knowledge to drive innovation is critical to maintain global energy supply and sustain our economies, whilst also striving for geological solutions to mitigate our impact on climate. Phil recognized the linkage of Petroleum and Geoenergy with the establishment of the Energy Geoscience Series and also through Thematic Collections, an important relationship that should be maintained.

I envisage my main role is to ensure the quality of submissions and output for our dedicated readership. We need to be seen to drive the science and remain a journal of choice, whilst being responsive to changes in industry and academia. Oil and gas companies have mostly now all rebranded as energy companies. The balance of petroleum geoscience activities will likely continue to shift from frontier exploration in favour of near-field or hub-exploration and development. There is already an increasing focus on associated mitigation (CCS) and new subsurface energy sources such as geothermal or hydrogen. That will feed through in terms of submissions and thus the focus of the journal will reflect this. Academia too is experiencing a huge shift in research focus, driven by funding and a pivot to meet global challenges, often framed around the UNs 17 Sustainability Goals. Whilst regional geology and research areas such as reservoir characterization or seal integrity/structural studies remain popular, there is increasing focus on renewables, carbon sequestration, alternative energies and energy strategic mineral resources. Most of these research themes have huge synergies with the knowledge and techniques mastered in the search for oil and gas. Continued improvements in oil and gas exploration and development, to maintain energy security of supply and reduce environmental impact, can symbiotically feed the drive for new energies and the removal of carbon from the atmosphere.

I join as Editor in Chief of *Petroleum Geoscience* with a background firmly in oil and gas exploration, having started in the early 80's with Fina UK. After a few years working in the North Sea, a vibrant time for exploration, I was fortunate to be posted

overseas, initially to Singapore, undertaking regional petroleum system evaluations across Vietnam and Malaysia. Later I moved to Libya, a great training ground for any geologist, and finally Italy. The breadth of experience, both cultural and geological, has repaid me well in subsequent years. I joined a small new ventures team with Amerada Hess based in London, tasked to look for new opportunities across the globe, that finally led to me relocate to



Indonesia as we opened up a new office and built a business. My career change to become an academic 20 years ago led me initially to Oxford Brookes University and latterly as Professor at the University of Manchester, where we built an internationally recognized Petroleum Geoscience MSc and the Basins Research Group. My love of regional geology and exploration helped me found the North Africa Research Group, which has continually undertaken projects ranging from regional stratigraphy, sedimentology, source to sink, seismic and basin modelling, with lots of fieldwork in spectacular locations for over 2 decades. Working with over 30 PhDs and PostDocs, we have built strong links with Universities and government bodies across the region, funded by a consortium of international oil companies. Many of our papers have been published in *Petroleum Geoscience* and I feel humbled now to be able to play a small part in supporting the journal. I present this potted CV to give you some idea of my background, which brings a mix of industry and academic experience, a focus on deliverables, with an eye for academic excellence.

It is a time of change, everyone who works in oil and gas knows that. The challenge of climate change requires a response, to mitigate risk, and this is driving the Energy Transition. But during this transition most models suggest significant oil and gas usage for the next 20 to 30 years, with gas remaining an important part of the energy mix. Our science and the importance of understanding subsurface geology is more relevant than ever. Together with the strong editorial board I will strive to navigate a path to maintain *Petroleum Geoscience* as a highly relevant journal during the Energy Transition, and I hope to build on the legacy passed on by the founding Chief Editor Andrew Hurst and those that followed; John Parker, Tony Doré, Phil Christie and latterly Phil Ringrose.

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