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Author to Editorial member : A Story

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Wilson Mhlanga holds a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) Honours Degree in Agriculture (Animal Science major) from the University of Zimbabwe. He obtained his postgraduate degree (M. Sc.) in Applied Hydrobiology from Cardiff University (United Kingdom). His work experience spans 26 years, 17 years as an Aquatic Ecologist with the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, 3 years as a Project Manager in IUCN, 3 years as a Freelance Consultant and 3 years as a Lecturer at Bindura University of Science Education, where he is currently based.

I subscribe to the AuthorAid group. It was through this Group that I saw the invitation for Editors for the International Journal of Environment in early 2013, and I submitted my name. This was the first time I connected to the Journal. I was then appointed an Editor on 5 June 2013.

After the appointment, I have been reviewing the manuscripts which I receive. Where the subject matter of the manuscript does not fall within my area of expertise, I then pass back the manuscript without comments.

IJE is the only journal that I am an Editorial member. However, in terms of manuscript submission to peer-reviewed journals, I have submitted manuscripts to different journals depending on the thematic area of the journal, for example, ecology, wildlife, fisheries and aquaculture.

As a University Lecturer, I work with IJE as part of my academic activities. I endeavour to include the IJE activities within my own work time-table. When I have many outstanding urgent University tasks during the week, I attend to these first and then work on IJE tasks during the week-ends.

I believe that the journal has achieved its current success due to a number of reasons. The journal provides a platform for researchers to share work on Environmental issues which may not necessarily be in line with the requirements/focus of most of the other journals. The Open Access approach makes the information readily available, especially for academics/researchers in developing countries who have limited budgets for purchasing journal articles. IJE provides a platform for upcoming researchers/academics to be mentored through candid feedback on submitted manuscripts. The absence of Manuscript Processing Charges attests to the journal's focus on scholarly work at minimum costs.

The Chief Editor has a passion for the Journal, is willing to learn and welcomes suggestions on improving the journal. The Chief-Editor has also made efforts to receive feedback/guidance from organisations that are well versed with publishing (for example the review of the journal that was done through the AuthorAid platform). I believe that the journal will soon have an Impact Factor rating (as work has already started on this).