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A new, exciting chapter for Gene Reports

Since the beginning of my career, I have always been mystified by the inner workings of the peer-review process and its defining role in shaping the future of science. Since quite early, I was eager to be part of this, not just by submitting my papers to different journals but also by volunteering to participate as a peer-reviewer. I believe that this learning process is fundamental to succeed as a scientific writer, both for publications and grant proposals.

I am a broadly trained marine biologist. I started my academic career in Spain, working mainly in molecular evolutionary genetics. Soon after that, I moved to Canada, where my work transitioned to a more biochemical focus, particularly on chromatin and epigenetics. After returning briefly to Spain as an Assistant Professor, I moved my lab to the United States, where I am now a Professor in Marine Biology at Florida International University in Miami, Florida. Over the last 25 years, my laboratory (the Environmental Epigenetics Lab, environmentalepigenetics.com) has pioneered the field of Marine Environmental Epigenetics, bringing cutting-edge molecular biology approaches to the study of marine ecology and evolution. Throughout my career, I have developed extensive teaching, mentoring, and service activities in Europe and the U.S., striving to transform my enthusiasm for learning into a tool to engage audiences both within and outside the classroom.

For the past 10 years, I have been linked to Elsevier journals in different editorial capacities, including Associate Editor, Executive Editor, and now Editor-in-Chief. When I was offered the possibility to take on the role of EiC for Gene Reports, I was extremely honored and thrilled, plus the offer came at an appropriate stage in my career. I hope that, through this role, I can use my own academic and editorial experience to further grow and consolidate the journal, particularly around its mission of providing a platform for rigorous, original, and scientifically sound research across diverse aspects of gene metabolism, with special emphasis on emerging research as well as early-career scientists. I am very excited to support my fellow editors, and especially the authors who submit their latest work to Gene Reports, striving to provide them with the trust and support necessary to steer Gene Reports into the future.

I believe that Gene Reports fills its niche by providing a platform for original and scientifically sound research across different disciplines. Yet, I would like to broaden that niche by attracting a broader participation from early-career scientists, increasing the geographic diversity of the contributions, and, most importantly, by complementing traditional studies with emerging topics within gene biology. For instance, I look forward to keep promoting basic research with implications for human society, including health and agriculture, but also to bolster applied studies using non-model organisms aimed at ecology, evolution, and conservation. Overall, I think it is important to balance different areas of research, which can ultimately integrate aspects from molecules to ecosystems.

Gene reports has demonstrated that it has a place within the crowded and competitive field of journals within the Molecular Biology and Genetics category. Our journal has achieved that thanks to its ability to attract research from a diverse demographic, ranging from top institutions in high-income countries to more modest institutions in developing nations. Gene Reports, through its expert peer reviewers and editorial team, provides authors across this spectrum with a highly respected home for their research and high visibility, including the option to open access. For the future, I will strive to increase the amount of contributions across different disciplines and geographic regions, building the increasing reputation and impact factor of Gene Reports as a reference multidisciplinary journal. Such an increase will be met by a revamped editorial pipeline, enhancing a fast, rigorous, objective, and constructive peer review process. Along with my editorial team, we would further promote the development of the journal by opening a selection of special issues focused on emerging topics, open to all authors for contributions. Overall, I look forward to evolving the journal into the future by innovating but also keeping it grounded in its core mission.

I am positive that the contributions from early-career scientists will constitute one of the pillars supporting the consolidation of Gene Reports. Our journal has a very diverse scope, including contributions often difficult to publish elsewhere, such as proof-of-concept data, negative results, or perspective pieces on emerging topics. Therefore, Gene Reports provides early-career investigators with a valuable opportunity to organize the initial stages of their work into a manuscript that, being scientifically sound and original, will be peer-reviewed and given consideration for publication in the journal. I encourage early-career scientists to think about Gene Reports not only as a venue for this type of contributions, but also for longer pieces of research fitting into the scope of the journal.

Lastly, I would like to thank Elsevier and all the Publishing, Editorial and Scientific team behind Gene Reports. But most importantly, all the authors who entrust us with the intellectual products of their hard work. We will continue to work to keep your trust, striving to increase the visibility of your research and keep the strict peer-reviewing standards to make our journal the platform of choice for rigorous, original, and scientifically sound research across diverse aspects of gene metabolism.

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