

# The Brazilian Journal of Geology receives its first Impact Factor from Thomson Reuters

*A Brazilian Journal of Geology recebe seu primeiro Fator de Impacto da Thomson Reuters*

In late May 2015, the Brazilian Journal of Geology (BJG) was accepted by Thomson Reuters for inclusion in the Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE) and in the Journal Citation Reports (JCR). Coverage began with the number 3 of volume 41, 2013, and the first Impact Factor (IF) of 0.598 for Brazilian Journal of Geology was released in June 2016.

The SCIE is accessible online via Web of Science platform ([www.webofknowledge.com](http://www.webofknowledge.com)) and covers more than 5,600 world's leading journals of science and technology in 150 different disciplines. The Web of Science allows access to multiple databases referencing cross-disciplinary research. Certainly, the presence of a journal in the Web of Science platform greatly increases its international visibility, as well as number of article readings and downloads. The JCR is an annual publication on academic journals in the sciences and social sciences, including Impact Factors, also accessible online via the Web of Science. In the JCR, the impact factor of a scientific journal measures the average annual number of citations to articles (standard research articles and reviews) published during the past two years in that journal.

The Impact Factor of the BJG for the year 2015 was calculated as  $\text{cites (2013+2014)}/\text{articles (2013+2014)}$ . The BJG had 49 items published in 2013 and 43 items published in 2014, a total of 92. In 2015, it received 34 cites to items published in 2013 and 21 cites to items published in 2014, a total of 55. Therefore, the IF is calculated as the ratio  $55/92=0.598$ .

The Thomson Reuters Impact Factor has been used as the most reliable prestige indicator of a particular journal, as a “proxy” for its relative international importance, and as a reference for academic institutions and funding agencies. However, it must be remembered that there is some criticism regarding the indiscriminate use of the IF in the evaluation of scientific activity, considering that there is variability in different scientific fields. One of the main criticisms concerns the wide variation in the number of references in articles in different areas of knowledge, for example much lower in mathematics than in other disciplines (Ferrer-Sapena *et al.* 2016). In addition, up to 75% of the articles in highly prestigious journals had number of citations below the value of the 2015 IF for that journal (Larivière *et al.* 2016), and for this reason the citation performance of individual papers shall not be inferred from the journal impact factor.

A relevant indicator for a given journal is its impact factor without journal self-cites. The BJG received only 7 self-cites, with self-citations running at about 12.7%, leading to an impact factor without self-cites of 0.521. Thomson Reuters considers a self-citation rate of 20% or less as “characteristic of the majority of the high-quality science journals selected for coverage in Thomson Reuters products”.

Authors publishing in the BJG have quotations from their works computed in the expanded database of the Web of Science, which allows the calculation of their h-index. This index is defined as the number of papers of that author with citation number  $\geq h$ , and it “gives an estimate of the importance, significance and broad impact of a scientist’s cumulative research contributions” (Hirsch, 2005).

The first impact factor of the BJG was received with great enthusiasm. It must be remembered that a few years ago our journal was very close to IF = zero, and our expectation was for an initial IF from the Thomson Reuters around 0.3. The assessment close to 0.6 represents the first reference on the impact of the journal and demonstrates its growing prestige and increasingly international audience.

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