

Steve Jewson  
London  
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**Re: The inaccessibility of meteorological journals to the private sector**

Dear Sir,

I work for a private company that provides meteorological services to several hundred banks, insurance companies and energy companies. We have a large research department, and are potentially users of some of the government and EU funded research in meteorology that is done in the UK today.

However, in practice we use almost none of it. There are a number of reasons for this, but one of the main obstacles is that the results of this research are simply not available to us in any practical way: they are printed in journals for which we cannot justify paying a subscription. Furthermore we hesitate to publish in these journals because they would not be accessible to our main target audience (scientists in industry) and we even hesitate to cite papers from these journals because it seems unfair to cite material that is so difficult to get hold of.

I am reminded of the planning permission for the demolition of Arthur Dent's house, which was "published" in a similarly useful way "in the bottom of a locked filing cabinet stuck in a disused lavatory with a sign on the door saying 'Beware of the Leopard'".

A case in point is the DEMETER project, which, according to the website, has a goal of trying to establish the utility of multimodel seasonal forecasting in agriculture and health. The results from this project, however, will not be freely available to the very agricultural and health organisations who might want to read them.

NERC and the EU are both apparently keen to make the applied research they fund more relevant to industry. If this really is the case, then solving this problem should be their first priority. The solution is clear: they must insist that all results of applied research that they fund are published in open-access journals. They should measure the success of scientists who do such research by the number and quality of papers published in such journals and scientists who don't publish in such journals should not get further funding to do applied research. In the mean time individuals who do applied research can themselves go a long way to making their research publicly available by using preprint servers: this is common practice in economics, finance and physics, but not in meteorology, unfortunately.

The PLoS (PloS.org) is leading the way towards making research publicly available with the recent establishment of a new open-access journal: PLoSBiology ([www.plosbiology.org](http://www.plosbiology.org)). Nonlinear Dynamics in Geophysics is also open-access. Let's have an open-access journal in meteorology too, and look forward to the research that will be done in the next 20 years being more widely available, more widely read and more widely used than that done in the last 20.

Steve Jewson

(ps: the author's own publications are all freely available on the preprint servers <http://www.arxiv.org> and <http://www.ssrn.com>).