

An introduction to *Scientific Data*

For scientists associated with the Cold and Arid Regions Science Data Center at Lanzhou

Scientific Data is a new open-access journal for descriptions of scientifically valuable datasets. We are now open for submissions, and will launch formally in May 2014.

Scientific Data invites submissions describing unpublished ecological, environmental, or evolutionary datasets, when the data would be of wider value to the scientific community. Scientists may also submit manuscripts describing datasets that have been analyzed in previous research publications, when a new publication would allow authors to release the data more fully and provide important information to enhance their reuse potential.

The Data Descriptor, the primary article type published by *Scientific Data*, is a new category of publication designed to provide detailed descriptions of experimental and observational datasets, including the methods used to collect the data and technical analyses supporting the quality of the measurements. Data Descriptors are peer-reviewed publications, and will be listed in the major scholarly indices.

Scientific Data cooperates with a range of public data repositories, and will help authors find an appropriate resource to archive their data. We are currently in the process of adding the Cold and Arid Regions Data Center at Lanzhou data portal to our list of recommended data repositories, and scientists are welcome to submit manuscripts describing datasets stored in this resource. We also recognize a series of other repositories that are appropriate for environmental and ecological datasets; these can be found on our website at <http://www.nature.com/scientificdata/for-authors/data-deposition-policies/#recommended-repositories>.

Hosted on nature.com — the home of over 80 journals published by Nature Publishing Group and the destination for millions of scientists globally every month — Data Descriptors will be disseminated to the widest possible audience through a program of continuous online publication.

For more information, and to see our first two publications, please visit us online at:

<http://www.nature.com/scientificdata>

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