**Ensuring only high-quality systematic reviews get published: new obligations and strategies for environmental health journals**

*Paul Whaley, Associate Editor for Systematic Reviews, Environment International (Elsevier) and Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, UK.*

Systematic reviews are becoming increasingly prevalent in the environmental health literature, driven by recognition of their value as a “gold standard” method for reliably synthesising evidence relevant for public health and environmental policy-making. However, early evidence suggests that environmental health journals are publishing too many low-quality systematic reviews. This brings the risk that low-quality systematic reviews will be mistaken for gold-standard research, potentially resulting in environmental health challenges being misidentified, subsequent policy being based on incorrect interpretations of the available evidence, and ultimately the value of systematic review in decision-making being undermined. In this context, the new obligations which growing interest in systematic reviews places on scientific journals are discussed. Experience is shared of efforts at the journal *Environment International* to raise the standard of published systematic reviews, including appointment of the first Associate Editor for Systematic Reviews at an environmental health journal, the use of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) reports in the submission process, improved communication with submitting authors, and enhancement of the peer-review process. Finally, the results of two international, multi-stakeholder projects to develop interventions to raise the standard of published SRs are presented, one directed at researchers and the other to enhance the quality of peer-review, along with a theory of change as to how these are anticipated to be effective when implemented by journals.