



Editorial

Into the Clouds

[Lance Gunderson](#)¹ and [Carl Folke](#)²

INTRODUCTION

Ecology and Society aims at integrative science for resilience and sustainability. The work published in this journal reflects the work of scholars attempting to understand and describe the complex interactions between humans and their environment, what we call social-ecological systems. Such descriptions involve words for natural objects; such as trees, landscapes, reindeer, or clouds. As technology creeps more into our world, there is a pattern by which names for natural objects are applied in different ways. One such example is how this editorial was written and edited on an apple computer (Macintosh variety). Another such word is cloud. Indeed, the more common use (per a google search) refers to the use of the word to describe distant agglomerated objects (such as water molecules in the atmosphere), or used in context of lacking details. So it is the spirit of agglomerated objects, we use the word cloud as a way of describing the two recent issues of our journal.

THIS ISSUE

With this issue, we close the eighteenth volume of *Ecology and Society*. From June through December of this year, the journal has published more than 108 peer-reviewed articles in issues three and four. In this interval, we have closed six special features, with topics that range from restoration, governance, sustainable practices, indigenous knowledge, and two features on Law and Resilience. We encourage topics that connect diverse fields, that integrate across disciplines, that provide insights and new ways of understanding social-ecological systems, and that are relevant for sustainability. Another 16 special features are in progress reflecting the sustainability challenge!

The numbers in the previous paragraph indicate a dramatic increase in the number of articles published by the journal. But within those numbers there is an amazingly diverse set of

publications. These represent a complex set of notions and propositions about the dynamic interactions between humans and their environment, of social-ecological systems. The breadth and depth of the articles reflect the quality and hard work of a growing set of scholars and practitioners. It is quite rewarding to follow the development and emergence of integrative science for resilience and sustainability.

Summarizing and synthesizing the ideas held in over one hundred quality articles is no mean task. Looking for shortcuts, we thought that we would try a new approach to summarizing the content in the past two issues. In this case, we used a free online application called Wordle (<http://www.wordle.net>). The program produces a graphic based upon text input by the user. In this case, we input all of the titles from the hundred plus articles published in *Ecology and Society* over the last six months. The Wordle program then produces a graphic output called a word cloud. The content of the cloud is made up of the commonly used words across all of the titles. The program scales the size of the word based on how frequently it occurs. Climate, Governance, Change, Management, Resilience, Knowledge, and Adaptation all stand out as recurring themes in these two issues.

Ecology and Society aims at being at the front of sustainability science, encouraging new ways of thinking, analyzing, experimenting, integrating, and performing. We are most grateful for the hard work of all that contribute. We cannot thank enough the dedicated editors and reviewers who give of their precious time to help steer the direction and quality of the journal. We thank the Resilience Alliance for fiscal and administrative support. Finally, we thank the staff, Jennifer Miner, Jennifer Mullie and Adele Mullie, who have managed the day to day operations, and the copy editors who improve all of our writing, but are rarely acknowledged. We wish all the very best for the New Year to come.

Fig. 1. Word cloud of article titles in Issues 3 and 4 of Volume 18 of *Ecology and Society*.



¹Emory University, USA, ²Beijer Institute, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University