

GUIDE TO GOOD EDITORIAL PRACTICES

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This Guide to Good Practices aims to constitute a code of conduct addressed to the parties involved in the management and publication of scientific results in **ECOSISTEMAS** journal: the editorial team, authors, and reviewers of the works. This guide has been based on the guidelines of COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) and the good practices code of the CSIC.

Editorial Team of ECOSISTEMAS

The Editorial Team is responsible for the published content, ensuring its scientific quality, avoiding malpractices in the publication of research results, and managing the editing of received works within a reasonable time frame. This responsibility entails observing the following principles:

Impartiality

The Editorial Team shall be impartial in managing the works submitted to the journal for publication and must respect the intellectual independence of the authors, who shall be granted the right to reply in case of negative evaluations. Works presenting negative results of research shall not be excluded.

Confidentiality

Members of the Editorial Team are obliged to maintain confidentiality regarding the received texts and their content until they have been accepted for publication. Only then can their title and authorship be made public outside the review process. Additionally, no member of the Editorial Board can use data, arguments, or interpretations contained in unpublished works for their own research without the express written consent of those who have conducted it.

Review of Works

The Editorial Team shall ensure that published research works have been evaluated by at least two specialists in the field, except for well-documented exceptions, and that such review process has been fair and impartial (except for contents for specified sections that do not require reviews). ECOSISTEMAS offers two types of peer review, “blind” (voluntary anonymity of the reviewer) and “double blind” (the identity of both authors and reviewers is unknown).

The Editorial Team shall consider the rejection by an author to be evaluated by certain specialists if the reasons presented are deemed reasonable. The Editorial Team is not obliged to dispense with such specialists if it considers their opinions

fundamental for the correct evaluation of the work. Individuals submitting a work for evaluation may propose the names of up to three specialists for the evaluation of their work. The Editorial Team reserves the decision to accept or reject this proposal, without being obliged to communicate such decision.

The Editorial Team shall emphasize that the evaluation process monitors the originality of the works, detects plagiarism and redundant publications, as well as falsified or manipulated data. Additionally, the sections of the journal whose contents are subject to peer review will be clearly indicated.

The Editorial Team shall value and appreciate the contribution of those who have collaborated in the evaluations of the works submitted to the journal. Likewise, it will promote academic authorities to recognize peer review activities as part of the scientific process and will dispense with those who conduct low-quality, incorrect, disrespectful, or untimely evaluations.

Acceptance or Rejection of Manuscripts

The responsibility for accepting or rejecting a work for publication lies with the Editorial Team, and for this, they shall base their decision on the evaluation reports received regarding the same. These reports shall base their judgment on the quality of the works, their relevance, originality, and clarity of presentation.

The Editorial Team may directly reject received works without resorting to an external consultation process if they are deemed inappropriate for the journal due to lacking the required level of quality, not being suitable for the scientific objectives of the journal, or presenting evidence of scientific fraud or plagiarism.

Disavowal and Notice of Irregularity

The Editorial Team reserves the right to disavow previously published works that are subsequently determined to lack reliability as a result of both involuntary errors and scientific fraud or malpractice: fabrication, manipulation, or copying of data, plagiarism of texts, redundant or duplicated publication, omission of references to consulted sources, use of content without permission or justification, etc. The aim of disavowal is to correct the already published scientific production, ensuring its integrity.

Duplicity conflict, caused by the simultaneous publication of an article in two journals, will be resolved by determining the date of receipt of the work in each of them. This includes articles that, having different titles, are mostly identical, both in their written, graphic, or tabular content. If only a part of the article contains an error, this can be rectified later through an editorial note or an erratum. In case of conflict, the journal will request explanations and pertinent evidence from the author or authors to clarify it, and will make a final decision based on these.

The journal shall compulsorily publish the notice of disavowal of a specific text, mentioning the reasons for such measure, in order to distinguish malpractice from involuntary error. The journal will also notify the disavowal to the responsible authorities of the institution of the author or authors of the article. The decision to

disavow a text will be adopted as soon as possible, so that said erroneous work is not cited in its field of research.

Disavowed articles shall be retained, clearly and unequivocally indicating that they are a disavowed article, to distinguish them from other corrections or comments.

As a preliminary step to definitive disavowal, the journal may issue a notice of irregularity, providing the necessary information in the same terms as in the case of disavowal. The notice of irregularity shall be maintained for the minimum necessary time, and shall conclude with its withdrawal or with the formal disavowal of the article.

Application of Editorial Team Rules

The Editorial Team of ECOSISTEMAS is responsible for ensuring that the rules governing the operation of the Editorial Team are correctly applied and must ensure that its members are aware of them. These include: promoting and representing the journal in various forums, suggesting and supporting possible improvements, gathering contributions from reference specialists in the field, reviewing received works in an initial evaluation, writing editorials, reviews, comments, news, etc., attending Editorial Team meetings, and proposing Guest Editors to lead and supervise the various monographs that make up the journal.

Authorship Rules

The presentation standards for originals of each type of contribution to the journal (referring to the extension of the abstract and the article, the preparation of images, the system for bibliographic references, etc.) will be published and available on the journal's website.

Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest arises when a work received in the journal is signed by a person who is part of the Editorial Team, by someone with whom there is a direct personal or professional relationship, or is closely related to the past or present research of those involved. Anyone affected by any of these cases shall refrain from intervening in the evaluation process of the proposed article.

Regarding the authorship of ECOSISTEMAS articles

Publication Rules

The texts submitted for publication must be the result of original and unpublished research. They must include a description of the obtained and used data, as well as an objective discussion of their results. Sufficient information must be provided so that any specialist can replicate the research conducted and confirm or refute the interpretations defended in the work.

Authors must properly acknowledge the origin of ideas or literal phrases taken from other previously published works in the manner indicated in the author instructions. When including images as part of the research, it must be adequately explained how they were created or obtained, whenever necessary for their understanding. In the case of using graphic material (figures, photos, maps, etc.) reproduced partially in

other publications, authors must cite their source, providing the relevant reproduction permissions if necessary.

Unnecessary fragmentation of articles should be avoided. If it is a very extensive work, it can be published in several parts, so that each one develops a specific aspect of the overall study. Each of the works must have its own entity.

Originality and Plagiarism

Plagiarism in all its forms, multiple or redundant publication, as well as the invention or manipulation of data, constitute serious ethical violations and are considered scientific fraud. Authors must ensure that the data and results presented in the work are original and have not been copied, invented, distorted, or manipulated.

Authors shall not submit to ECOSISTEMAS originals that are already under consideration in another journal. Authors shall not submit articles under review in ECOSISTEMAS to another journal until notification of their rejection or voluntary withdrawal. However, it is permissible to publish a work that expands upon another previously published as a brief note, communication, or abstract in the proceedings of a conference, provided that the text on which it is based is appropriately cited and that it represents a substantial modification of what has already been published.

Work Authorship

The individual responsible for the article in the journal, in the case of multiple authorship, must ensure the recognition of those who have significantly contributed to the conception, planning, design, execution, data acquisition, interpretation, and discussion of the results of the work; in any case, all individuals who sign it share responsibility for the presented work. Likewise, the corresponding author must ensure that those who sign the work have reviewed and approved the final version of the work and give their consent for its possible publication. The corresponding author must ensure that none of the responsible signatures of the work has been omitted and that it thus meets the aforementioned criteria of co-authorship, thus avoiding fictitious or gift authorship, which constitutes scientific malpractice. Authors must indicate the contribution of each based on the CRediT system as explained in the manuscript submission guidelines.

Additionally, the contribution of other collaborations that are not signatories or responsible for the final version of the work must be acknowledged in a note of the article, as a form of acknowledgment. If requested by the journal or the article signatories, the published version shall briefly describe the individual contribution of each member of the signing group to the collective work.

Information Sources

The publications that have influenced the research must be acknowledged in the text of the work, therefore, the original sources on which the information contained in the work is based must be identified and cited in the bibliography. However, irrelevant citations for the work or related to similar examples should not be included, and there should be no abuse of references to well-established research in the corpus of scientific knowledge.

The author must not use information obtained privately through conversations, correspondence, or from any debate with colleagues in the field unless explicit written permission is obtained from the information source, such information has been received in a context of scientific advice, and it is acknowledged in the article as "personal communication."

Significant Errors in Published Works

When an author discovers a serious error in their work, they are obligated to notify the journal as soon as possible to modify their article, withdraw it, retract it, or publish a correction or erratum. If a potential error is detected by any members of the Editorial Committee, the author is obliged to demonstrate the correctness of their work. The process of resolving these conflicts is described in section 1.5.

Conflict of Interest

The article text must be accompanied by a declaration stating the existence of any commercial, financial, or personal ties that may affect the results and conclusions of the work. Additionally, all funding sources granted for the study must be indicated. This information shall appear in the published version of the article.

Evaluation of Works in ECOSISTEMAS

The individuals participating in the evaluation play an essential role in the review process that ensures the quality of publication. They assist the journal's bodies in making editorial decisions and help improve the articles.

Confidentiality

Those conducting an evaluation must consider the work to be reviewed as a confidential document until its publication, both during the review process and afterward. Under no circumstances should they disseminate or use the information, details, arguments, or interpretations contained in the reviewed text for their own benefit or that of others, nor to harm third parties. Only in special cases can they seek the advice of other specialists in the field, a circumstance that must be reported to the journal's Editorial Committee.

Objectivity

Those conducting an evaluation must objectively judge the quality of the entire work, including the information on which the working hypothesis is based, theoretical and experimental data, and their interpretation, without neglecting the presentation and writing of the text. They must specify their criticisms and be objective and constructive in their comments. They must adequately support their judgments, without adopting hostile positions and respecting the intellectual independence of the author of the work.

Those conducting an evaluation must inform the Editorial Committee of any substantial similarity between the work under review and another article already published or under review in another journal (redundant or duplicated publication).

Likewise, they must draw attention to plagiarized, falsified, invented, or manipulated texts or data.

Promptness of Response

Those conducting an evaluation must act promptly and deliver their report within the agreed time, therefore, they shall notify the Editor of any possible delays. Likewise, they must inform the Editor who commissioned the review of the document as soon as possible if they do not consider themselves capable of judging the assigned work or if they cannot fulfill their task within the agreed-upon deadline.

Acknowledgment of Information Sources

Those conducting an evaluation must verify that relevant works already published on the subject are cited. For this purpose, they will review the bibliography collected in the text, suggesting the elimination of superfluous or redundant references, or the incorporation of others not cited and considered relevant to the article under review.

Conflict of Interest

Those conducting an evaluation must reject the review of a work when maintaining a professional or personal relationship with any of the individuals involved in its authorship that may affect their judgment of said work. Conflicts of interest may also arise when the work under review is closely related to the work the reviewer is currently conducting or has already published. In these cases, if in doubt, they must resign from the assigned task and return the work to the Editor, stating the reasons for such a decision.

Policy on the use of artificial intelligence

Generative artificial intelligence and large language models are a powerful research tool, but they also pose challenges in terms of transparency, credibility, accountability, and ethics. At **Ecosistemas**, we recognize the potential advantages of these auxiliary tools, but we advocate for their responsible use. For this reason, Ecosistemas promotes the control and detailed reporting of their use throughout the editorial process. Transparency in the use of these tools is also in line with the principles of traceability and reproducibility of open science promoted by the journal.

Rules on the use of artificial intelligence

Authors

AI tools cannot be listed as authors.

AI tools do not meet Ecosistemas' authorship requirements. They cannot take responsibility for the work submitted. As non-legal entities, they cannot affirm the presence or absence of conflicts of interest, nor can they manage copyright and licensing agreements.

The declaration of AI use is mandatory

Authors are responsible for the originality, validity, and integrity of the content of their manuscript. In this regard, AI may be used to improve the sentence structure and readability of manuscripts, including punctuation, grammar, and spelling. This assisted use of AI does not need to be declared by the authors. The use of AI that

goes beyond assisted use is considered generative and, in this case, must be declared. For example, the use of AI is permitted for the generation of illustrations and diagrams or to search for and synthesize existing bibliography, provided that the AI tool is properly cited in the manuscript. Generative AI should not be used to interpret results, and authors must ensure that the manuscript does not include any unverifiable data generated by AI. Authors must provide the name of the AI tool used and clearly describe the purpose and scope of its use. This can be done in the “Methods” or “Acknowledgments” sections of the manuscript.

When registering the manuscript, authors must certify that they have described the generative use of AI tools in the “Methods” or “Acknowledgments” section.

Editors and reviewers

It is not permitted to upload confidential data or unpublished manuscripts to public AI platforms.

Manuscripts that are reviewed or edited are original, unpublished documents subject to copyright, and therefore both their content and any personal data they contain must be treated with strict confidentiality. Consequently, original manuscripts should not be uploaded to AI systems that index content and use it to train their tools, but rather in controlled AI contexts with guarantees of security and confidentiality. The use of AI by those who edit and review original manuscripts, whether to identify potential reviewers, summarize content, check for plagiarism, etc., must be communicated in detail to the journal's editorial team.

Editors' decisions should be based solely on their scientific expertise and not on AI-generated comments. Reviewers' comments and reports should always be written by humans, as they are responsible for the content they submit. If editors and reviewers suspect that authors or reviewers have violated the AI policy, they must notify the editorial team.

The assisted use of AI (score checking, grammar, and spelling) is permitted to improve the structure and readability of reports by both editors and reviewers.

When submitting their report, reviewers must certify that they have complied with these rules.

Sources consulted:

- COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics): <http://www.publicationethics.org>
- Directrices EASE (European Association of Science Editors): <http://www.ease.org.uk>
- Ethical Guidelines for Journal Publication: <http://sjss.universia.net/codigo-etico.jsp>
- Código de buenas prácticas científicas del CSIC. Madrid, CSIC, 2011.
- Norma Reguladora de las Publicaciones del CSIC, 17 de septiembre de 2012: <http://editorial.csic.es/publicaciones/porta/la-editorial/normativa-general-de-publicaciones/c6321842-ae8a-49b2-b742-1f64e1e02bde>
- Revistas CSIC. Guía de buenas prácticas para la publicación. Madrid, CSIC, 10 de Mayo de 2014. http://revistas.csic.es/public/guia_buenas_practicas_CSIC.pdf