Ethical guidelines for publication in scientific journals and statement on the misuse of publications

The Croatian Geographical Bulletin is published by the Croatian Geographical Society and the Department of Geography of the Faculty of Science of the University of Zagreb. The published articles directly reflect the quality of the work of the authors and the institutions that support them. It is necessary to agree on standards of expected ethical behavior of all parties involved in the publication: Authors, editors, reviewers and publishers. Our ethical statements are based on the COPE Guidelines for Best Practice for Journal Editors. To improve the overall quality of the journal, the Editorial Board has established the following guidelines:

**Editor**

Improving publication ethics
The Editor actively seeks the views of authors, readers, reviewers, editors and members of the Scientific Advisory Board on ways to improve the journal. The Editor supports initiatives to reduce academic misconduct and educates researchers about publication ethics. The journal's policies are revised as needed, taking into account new findings in the field of journal editing and publication and the impact of the journal's policies on the behavior of authors and reviewers.

The editorial board
The publisher shall establish an appropriately qualified editorial board whose members can actively contribute to the development and good management of the journal. The tasks and duties of the editorial board members include supporting and promoting the journal, pre-reviewing and peer-reviewing articles in the journal, searching for the best authors and the best articles and actively promoting applications, accepting assignments to write editorials, reviews and commentaries on articles in their field, attending editorial board meetings (members of the scientific advisory board are not obliged to attend meetings). The editor is obliged to consult the editorial board and the members of the scientific advisory board at least once a year in order to
obtain their opinion on the management of the journal, to inform them about changes in the journal's policy and to identify future challenges.

**Decisions on publication**

It is up to the editors to decide which of the submitted articles will be published after a double-blind review. The editorial board decides which of the submitted articles will be published. Decisions are made on the basis of the quality and relevance of the article for researchers and readers. The editor may consult with the reviewers, the editorial board and the members of the scientific advisory board. The editor may be guided by the editorial principles of the journal and is bound by the applicable legal provisions on libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. However, neither the Editor-in-Chief nor the Secretary have the authority to influence the reviewers who blindly review the articles submitted for peer review.

**Fair play**

The editor will always evaluate manuscripts on their intellectual merit, regardless of the author's race, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, ethnicity, nationality, or political philosophy. Submissions to the journal whose authors are the editor, employees of the publisher or members of the editorial board and the scientific advisory board will be processed in such a way as to ensure an unbiased review.

**Confidentiality**

The editor and the editorial team may not disclose any information about the submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisors and, if applicable, the publisher.

**Disclosure and conflicts of interest**

a) Unpublished material from the submitted manuscript may not be used for research purposes without the written consent of the author.

b) Privileged information or ideas obtained during the review process must be kept confidential and may not be used for personal gain.

c) The editor should withdraw from reviewing manuscripts if he/she is in a conflict of interest arising from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or affiliations with any of the authors, companies, or institutions associated with the papers.

d) The editor should require all authors to disclose relevant conflicts of interest and publish corrections if conflicts of interest are discovered after publication. If necessary, other appropriate action should be taken, such as publishing a retraction or reporting concerns.

**Participation and cooperation in investigations**

If ethical complaints are made about a submitted manuscript or published work, the editor should take appropriate action in cooperation with the publisher. This usually involves contacting the author of the manuscript or published work and properly investigating the complaint or allegation in question, but also further communication with the relevant institutions and research bodies and, if the complaint is upheld, publishing a correction, retraction, statement of concern.
or other communication that may be relevant. Every reported case of unethical publication behavior must be investigated, even if it is discovered years after publication.

**Reviewers**

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Peer reviews help the editor to make editorial decisions, and through editorial communication with the author, they can also help the author to improve their work. Peer reviews are an essential part of formal scholarly communication and are at the heart of the scientific method. The journal shares the view of many that all scientists who wish to contribute to publication are obliged to undergo fair peer review. Reviewers do not know the identity of the author as all identifying information is extracted from the paper prior to review. The reviewers' comments are confidential to the editors and are anonymized before they are forwarded to the author. The names of reviewers remain strictly confidential; their identity is known only to the Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board.

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Any selected reviewer who feels unable to review the research published in the manuscript, or who knows that expeditious review is not possible, should notify the Editor-in-Chief or the Secretary and withdraw from the review.

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All manuscripts received for review must be treated confidentially. They may only be shown or discussed with others with the permission of the Editor-in-Chief or the Secretary.

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Reviewers should be objective. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Reviewers should formulate their views clearly and back them up with arguments.

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**Disclosure and conflicts of interest**
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Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution or interpretation of the published study. All persons who have made a significant contribution should be listed as co-authors. If other individuals have contributed to certain important aspects of the research project, they should be acknowledged or listed as contributors.

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The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate and no inappropriate co-authors are listed in the paper and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and agree to its publication.

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If the work contains chemicals, procedures or equipment whose use is associated with unusual hazards, the author must clearly identify these in the manuscript.

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