



## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PEER REVIEWERS

### Peer review process

Peer review is a very important step in ensuring the quality of published papers. For this reason, papers submitted to the journal “The Holistic Approach to Environment” are evaluated through a **single-blind peer review process**, which is schematically shown in Figure 1. In a single-blind peer review process reviewers know the names of the author, but the author does not know the names of the reviewers.

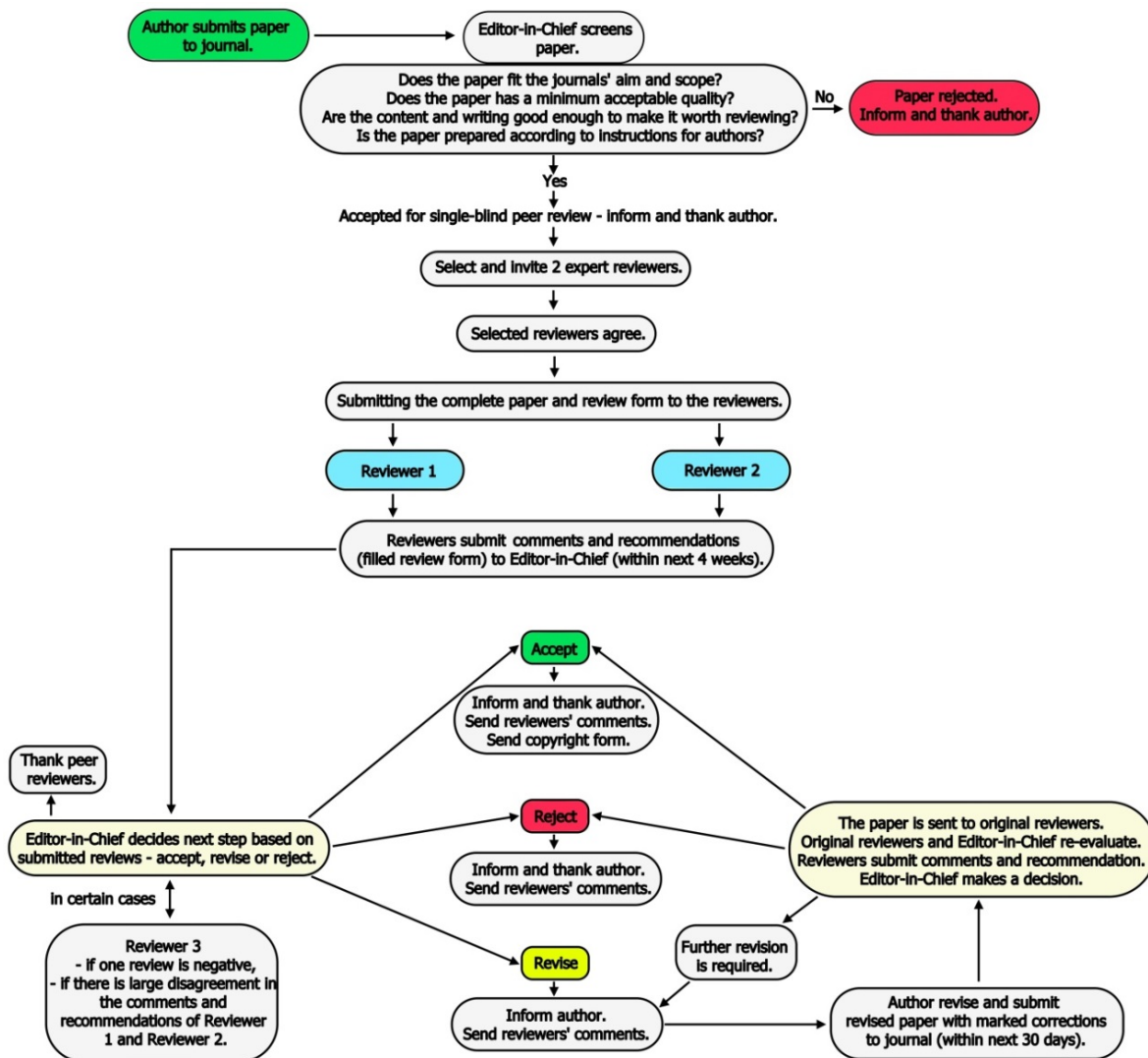


Figure 1. Evaluation of papers for the journal “The Holistic Approach to Environment” through a single-blind peer review process

The Editor-in-Chief invites reviewers who are competent to review the paper. Reviewers are experts in their field and perform the review independently. They provide unbiased opinion and expert feedback on the paper, allowing the author to improve the quality of the paper. Reviewers are responsible for their reviews and should be objective in their comments.

Reviewers do not make the decision to accept (with or without revision) or reject the paper, but give a recommendation to the Editor-in-Chief who makes the final decision.

The reviewer's work is not paid. However, reviewers can always get a certificate of the number of reviews they have made for the journal.

### **Invitation to review the paper**

When a reviewer receives an invitation to review the paper, before accepting or rejecting it, he should consider the following questions:

- Do you have enough time? Do not accept the review if you are unable to do it within 4 weeks of receipt. You can always suggest another reviewer.
- Does the paper truly match your area of expertise? Accept the invitation only if you feel competent to review the article.
- Do you have a potential **conflict of interest** (for example: you worked on the paper previously with the author, you work in the same institution or department as the author, you have a financial or professional connection with the paper, etc.)? Inform the Editor-in-Chief about the potential conflict of interest in your response.

In addition, before accepting an invitation to review the paper, reviewer should consult [“Publication ethics and malpractice statement”](#), document established by the “Association for Promotion of Integral Approach to Environment”, as a publisher of the journal "The Holistic Approach to Environment". Further ethical guidelines for reviewers and information on conflicts of interest can be found in the [COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers](#).

The reviewer should respond to the invitation as soon as possible (preferably within 5 days of receipt). Delaying the response slows down the review process, so the author has to wait longer.

### **Reviewing the paper**

The reviewer should carefully read the paper and indicate its main strengths and weaknesses in the review form submitted by the Editor-in-Chief. In the first part of the review form, the reviewer should answer the following basic questions about the quality of the paper:

- Is the topic of the paper suitable for the journal "The holistic approach to environment"?
- Are the results novel? Rate the originality of work (1 – poor, 5 – excellent),
- Are the figures, tables and text of the paper clear and understandable?
- Is the paper easy to follow and does it have a logical flow? Rate the paper presentation (1 – poor, 5 – excellent),
- Is English good and grammar acceptable (especially professional terminology)?

In the second part of the report, the reviewer should give detailed, clear and precise comments to the author that allow improving the quality of the paper. It is very important to point out the shortcomings and errors in the paper. The reviewer should consider the following:

- Does the title match the paper?
- Is the abstract clear and precise, and contains the main findings and conclusions of the paper?
- Does the Introduction/Literature review section adequately presents the current knowledge about the researched topic and contains the objectives of the paper? Does the author use appropriate references? Is any significant reference ignored?
- Are the experimental methods clear and replicable?
- Are there any errors in the experiment?
- Is sampling carried out properly?
- Does the author was sufficiently precise in describing measurements?
- Do all the obtained results presented match the methods described?
- Are the obtained results clearly presented and explained, and adequately discussed in the context of existing knowledge (references)?
- Are the claims in the conclusion reasonable and supported by the results obtained?
- What are the major claims and how significant are they?
- Is there a need for further examinations to confirm the results and claims?
- Does the author use standard nomenclature and SI system of units?

In the review form, the reviewer may provide certain information to the Editor-in-Chief, which will not be available to the author. This is very desirable, especially in the following cases:

- The author already published a similar paper,
- There are already many papers on the same topic published by other authors,
- There is a **suspicion of misconduct**, such as plagiarism, dual submission and/or publication, falsification of results, undeclared conflicts of interest, etc.

To complete the review, the reviewer should do the following:

- Recommend categorization of the paper (the final decision on the categorization of the paper is made by the Editor-in-Chief):
  - a) Original scientific paper,
  - b) Preliminary note,
  - c) Professional paper, or
  - d) Review paper,
- Make a recommendation regarding the publication:
  - a) Accept without changes (which is rare),
  - b) Reject (explain the reasons for rejection), or

- c) Revise – recommend minor or major revision (depending on your comments to the author). Minor revision usually requires the author to make relatively small changes in the paper that does not take too much time. Major revision usually requires the author to make significant changes (improvements) in the paper which can take more time (maybe even a few weeks).

If a minor or major revision is required, the author should revise the paper and submit it again to the journal. The Editor-in-Chief will submit a revised article to the reviewer for re-review along with the author's responses to the reviewer on all of his comments. All changes and additions in the revised paper will be highlighted. Reviewer should re-evaluate the paper and submit a revised recommendation.