

## **Publishing ethics**

The Editorial Board of *Phytologia Balcanica* shall follow the ethical standards for publication, in order to ensure high-quality scientific publications, transparency of scientific findings and results, and society credit for the scientific work and ideas.

**Editors' responsibilities:** The Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor and other members of the Editorial Team shall act in a balanced, objective and fair way, while carrying out their duties. No discrimination shall be permitted on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, ethnic or geographical origin of the authors.

**Reviewers' responsibilities:** The Reviewers shall be expected to assist in improving the quality of articles by reviewing the manuscripts objectively and in a timely manner; to maintain confidentiality of the manuscripts and the reviewing process; to alert the Editor-in-Chief to any published content that is substantially similar to that under review; to alert the Editor-in-Chief to any potential conflicts of interest (e.g. financial, institutional, collaborative relationships with the authors, etc.).

All manuscripts shall be subject to **Peer Review** and are expected to meet the standards of academic excellence. If approved by the Editor, submissions will be considered by the Peer Reviewers, whose identities shall remain anonymous to the Authors. The Editorial Team may consult experts and the Academic Editor before deciding on any appropriate actions, including but not limited to recruiting reviewers with specific expertise, assessment by extra editors, and declining to consider further a submission. Editors and Reviewers must announce it, if they have previously discussed the manuscript with the authors.

**In order to avoid plagiarism**, the Authors should not use the words, figures, or ideas of others without attribution. All sources should be cited at the point of their use, and reuse of wording should be limited and be attributed to or quoted in the text. In case of proven plagiarism, the manuscript shall be rejected.

*Phytologia Balcanica* shall consider only original articles that have not been published previously, including in a language other than English. Manuscripts submitted to the Journal should not be submitted elsewhere while under consideration, and should be withdrawn before being submitted elsewhere. The Authors whose articles are found to have been simultaneously submitted elsewhere may incur sanctions. If the Authors have used their own previously published work, or work that is currently under review, as basis for a submitted manuscript, they must cite the previous articles and indicate how their submitted manuscript differs from their previous work. Extended versions of articles published at conferences could be accepted, if the Authors declare this in the cover letter, the earlier version is clearly cited and discussed, there is significant new content, and all necessary permissions are obtained.

**Citation** manipulation shall not be permitted. The Authors should include only citations connected with the current study. Editors and reviewers should not ask the Authors to include references merely to increase the citations in their own work.

All listed Authors should have made a significant **scientific contribution** to the research in the manuscript, approved its claims, and agreed to be an Author. It is important to list everyone who has made a significant scientific contribution. The Authors' contributions could be described at the end of the submission. Changes in authorship should be announced to the Journal and agreed to by all Authors. Anyone, who has contributed to the research or manuscript preparation, but is not an Author, should be acknowledged with their permission. Financial support should be also acknowledged.

**Conflicts of interest** shall not be allowed. Conflicts of interest occur, when issues outside the research could be reasonably perceived to affect the neutrality or objectivity of the work or its assessment. Submissions with undeclared conflicts shall be rejected. A clear declaration of all possible conflicts shall make it possible to make informed decisions about the work and the process of its reviewing. Any conflicts of interest found after publication could be embarrassing for the Authors, the Editor and the Journal. This may call for publishing a corrigendum or reassessing the review process.

**The Authors should declare all potential interests** in the 'Conflicts of interest' section, with an explanation why any interest may be at conflict. If there are none, the Authors should state "*The Author(s) declare(s) that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.*" The Submitting Authors shall be responsible for the Coauthors to declare their interests. Any declared conflicts of interest shall be considered by the Editor and Reviewers and included in the published article.

**Unethical behaviour** may be identified and brought to the attention of the Editor-in-Chief at any time and by anyone. Whoever informs the Editor, should provide sufficient information and evidence for a detailed investigation. Evidence should be gathered, while avoiding any spread of allegations beyond those concerned. In case of minor breaches, the Editor-in-Chief shall take the final decision how to proceed. In case of serious breaches, the Editor may consult a wider circle, may notify the employers of the accused persons, or may report the case to a professional organization or a higher authority for further investigation and action. In both cases, the Authors shall be given an opportunity to respond to any allegations.