



## 1. ETHICAL EXPECTATIONS

### 1.1. Editors' responsibilities

**Diligence:** First responsibility of the editor is to scrutinize every paper submitted for publication with the utmost care; to see that it presents a worthwhile observation, either developing a new subject or providing new light on an old one. The editor of the EJSD journal is solely and independently responsible for deciding which of the articles submitted to the journal should be published. The validation of the work in question and its importance to researchers and readers must always underwrite such decisions. The editor may be constrained by legal requirements regarding issues such as libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. The editor may follow the requirements and legislation in the country or region in which the study was conducted, so long as sufficient detail is included.

**Fairness:** To act in a balanced, objective and fair way while carrying out their expected duties, without discrimination on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, ethnic or geographical origin of the authors. To handle submissions for sponsored supplements or special issues in the same way as other submissions, so that articles are considered and accepted solely on their academic merit and without commercial influence.

**Confidentiality:** To protect the confidentiality of all material submitted to the EJSD journal and all communications with reviewers, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant authors and reviewers. Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript, patents or ideas obtained through the peer reviewing process must not be used in an editor's own research or other personal advantage.

**Disclosure, conflicts of interest and complaints:** To adopt and follow reasonable procedures in the event of complaints of an ethical or conflict nature, in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Society where appropriate. To give authors a reasonable opportunity to respond to any complaints. All complaints should be investigated no matter when the original publication was approved. Documentation associated with any such complaints should be retained.

### 1.2. Reviewers' responsibilities

**Diligence:** To contribute to the decision-making process, and to assist in improving the quality of the published paper by reviewing the manuscript with professional dedication, in a timely manner.

**Objectivity:** Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is not acceptable. They should express their views clearly with appropriate supporting arguments.

**Confidentiality:** To maintain the confidentiality of any information supplied by the editor or author. Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript, patents or ideas obtained through the peer reviewing process must not be used in a reviewer's own research or other personal advantage.

**Disclosure, conflicts of interest and complaints:** To alert the editor to any published or submitted content that is substantially similar to that under review. To be aware of any potential conflicts of interest (financial, institutional, collaborative or other relationships between the reviewer and author) and to alert the editor to these, if necessary withdrawing their services for that manuscript.



### 1.3. Authors' responsibilities

**Accuracy and Data retention:** To maintain accurate records of data associated with their submitted manuscript, and to supply or provide access to these data, on reasonable request. Where appropriate and where allowed by employer, funding body and others who might have an interest, to deposit data in a suitable repository or storage location, for sharing and further use by others.

**Originality and Acknowledgement of Sources:** To confirm that all the work in the submitted manuscript is original and to acknowledge and cite content reproduced from other sources. To obtain permission to reproduce any content from other sources. To confirm/assert that the manuscript as submitted is not under consideration or accepted for publication elsewhere. Where portions of the content overlap with published or submitted content, to acknowledge and cite those sources. Additionally, to provide the editor with a copy of any submitted manuscript that might contain overlapping or closely related content.

**Authorship of the Paper:** An author must have made “substantive intellectual contributions” to the manuscript. Creative input is thus more eligible for authorship than purely mechanical work. A technician merely acquiring data, a senior researcher only obtaining funding or providing supervision, a collaborator solely providing a new reagent or samples, and other research-related but non-creative tasks do not merit authorship on their own. These individuals and their contributions could be cited in an acknowledgments section instead.

**Hazards and Human or Animal Subjects:** Authors should ensure that any studies involving human or animal subjects conform to national, local and institutional laws and requirements (e.g. WMA Declaration of Helsinki, NIH Policy on Use of laboratory Animals, EU Directive on Use of Animals) and confirm that approval has been sought and obtained where appropriate. Authors should obtain express permission from human subjects and respect their privacy.

**Disclosure, conflicts of interest:** To declare any potential conflicts of interest (e.g. where the author has a competing interest (real or apparent) that could be considered or viewed as exerting an undue influence on his or her duties at any stage during the publication process).

**Manuscript Integrity:** To notify promptly the journal editor or publisher if a significant error in their publication is identified. To cooperate with the editor and publisher to publish an erratum, addendum, corrigendum notice, or to retract the paper, where this is deemed necessary.

### 1.4. Publisher responsibilities

The European Center of Sustainable Development (ECSDEV) shall ensure that good practice is maintained to the standards outlined above. ECSDEV will support the efforts made by the editors and the reviewers, in maintaining the integrity of the scholarly record. The publisher has a supporting, investing and nurturing role in the scholarly communication process but is also ultimately responsible for ensuring that best practice is followed in its publications.



## 2. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH UNETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

### Identification of unethical behaviour

- Misconduct and unethical behaviour may be identified and brought to the attention of the editor and publisher at any time, by anyone.
- Misconduct and unethical behaviour may include, but need not be limited to, examples as outlined above.
- Whoever informs the editor or publisher of such conduct should provide sufficient information and evidence in order for an investigation to be initiated. All allegations should be taken seriously and treated in the same way, until a successful decision or conclusion is reached.

### Investigation

An initial decision should be taken by the editor, who should consult with or seek advice from the publisher, if appropriate.

Evidence should be gathered, while avoiding spreading any allegations beyond those who need to know.

### Minor breaches

Minor misconduct might be dealt with without the need to consult more widely. In any event, the author should be given the opportunity to respond to any allegations.

### Serious breaches

Serious misconduct might require that the employers of the accused be notified. The editor, in consultation with the publisher or Society as appropriate, should make the decision whether or not to involve the employers, either by examining the available evidence themselves or by further consultation with a limited number of experts.

### Outcomes (in increasing order of severity; may be applied separately or in conjunction)

- Informing or educating the author or reviewer where there appears to be a misunderstanding or misapplication of acceptable standards.
- A more strongly worded letter to the author or reviewer covering the misconduct and as a warning to future behaviour.
- Publication of a formal notice detailing the misconduct.
- Publication of an editorial detailing the misconduct.
- A formal letter to the head of the author's or reviewer's department or funding agency.
- Formal retraction or withdrawal of a publication from the journal, in conjunction with informing the head of the author or reviewer's department, Abstracting & Indexing services and the readership of the publication.
- Imposition of a formal embargo on contributions from an individual for a defined period.
- Reporting the case and outcome to a professional organisation or higher authority for further investigation and action.



### 3. EDITOR-IN-CHIEF SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- The EiC should send reviewers' comments to authors in their entirety unless they contain offensive or libellous remarks.
- The EiC should seek to acknowledge the contribution of reviewers to the journal.
- The EiC has a duty to act if they suspect misconduct or if an allegation of misconduct is brought to them. This duty extends to both published and unpublished papers.
- The EiC should not simply reject papers that raise concerns about possible misconduct. The EiC should first seek a response from those suspected of misconduct. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should ask the relevant employers, or institution, or some appropriate body (perhaps a regulatory body or national research integrity organisation) to investigate.
- The EiC should make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a proper investigation into alleged misconduct is conducted; if this does not happen, editors should make all reasonable attempts to persist in obtaining a resolution to the problem.
- The EiC should encourage and be willing to consider cogent criticisms of work published in their journal.
- Authors of criticised material should be given the opportunity to respond and studies reporting negative results should not be excluded.
- The EiC should respond promptly to complaints and should ensure there is a way for dissatisfied complainants to take complaints further. Complaints can be addressed directly at [editor@ecsdev.org](mailto:editor@ecsdev.org)