

British Ecological Society Journals Editors Code of Conduct

As Society-owned journals, the BES journals play an integral role in the Society's mission to advance ecology and create solutions for a planet under threat. Equally, the journals subscribe to the Society's values to be evidence-led, bold and inclusive.

The BES journals are published under the direction of the BES Publications Committee and in collaboration between academic editors, reviewers, authors, and publishing professionals at the BES editorial offices and at our publishing partner, Wiley.

BES publishing staff work with journal Senior Editors, Publications Committee and Wiley to create and update [editorial policies](#) to reflect the evolving publishing processes, publishing industry standards, and best practices in ecology and its related subjects.

BES journals and those involved in their publication commit to following the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) [Core Practices](#).

BES journals value the [diversity](#) and wide range of perspectives that people from different backgrounds bring to their work and to ecology. In line with the [Joint Commitment for Action on Inclusion and Diversity in Publishing](#), the journals adhere to policies and processes that support an equitable and inclusive experience for all involved, support recruitment practices that foster diversity within journals' editorial team, reviewer pool and authorship base; and evaluate manuscripts based solely on research content.

This Code of Conduct outlines what is expected of Editors and applies to all Associate Editors, Guest Editors, Lead Editors, Senior Editors, and Editors-in-Chief contributing to BES journals.

BES Editors commit to the following:

Publication Ethics

Editors adhere to COPE's [Core Practices](#) and follow COPE guidance to resolve any publication ethics issues.

Where Editors are concerned about potential unethical behaviour or are being made aware of such concerns, they must flag these with the editorial office immediately and all related correspondence must include editorial office staff.

Adherence to Research Standards

Editors consider compliance with relevant research standards, including but not limited to details of ethical approvals or waivers; approval for animal research; data reporting; data and code archiving; compliance with appropriate research design protocols; collection of informed consent for studies involving human participants; and adherence to community reporting standards.

Where Editors are concerned about lack of compliance with the above standards or are being made aware of such concerns, they must flag these with the editorial office immediately and all related correspondence must include editorial office staff.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Editors ensure that editorial processes are conducted with consideration of diversity, equity and inclusion, and they use their judgement to recognise when statements or behaviours may be inappropriate.

Editors report immediately to the editorial office any incidents of discrimination or harassment by Editors, reviewers, or authors against an individual on the grounds of factors including but not limited to: age; physical and mental disability; physical appearance; sex and gender identity; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy, maternity or paternity; race, nationality, religion and belief; sexual orientation or socio-economic background.

Editors should also remain aware of their own conscious or unconscious biases and seek to adopt inclusive and equitable editorial behaviours and best practices.

Professional Conduct

Editors uphold a high standard of professional conduct and establish respectful relations with the global journal community including fellow Editors, authors, reviewers, and publishing staff to ensure an inclusive, collaborative, respectful, and safe working environment.

Harassment, bullying, disrespectful behaviour, or discrimination of any kind against individuals or groups will not be tolerated. We will focus on the impact of words and actions rather than intentions when investigating allegations of misconduct.

Peer Review, Manuscript Handling and Self-citation

Editors should familiarise themselves with the BES [Guide to Peer Review](#).

Editors uphold high standards in peer review and manuscript handling and conduct all manuscript handling and related correspondence via the journal's manuscript handling system.

Editors seek at least two independent peer review reports for the manuscripts they handle, allow no more than one author-recommended reviewer and do not serve as peer reviewers unless approved by the editorial office.

Editors must not ask authors to add citations to the Editor's own papers when there is no strong scholarly rationale for doing so, and they intervene if a peer reviewer requests excessive or inappropriate self-citation in line with COPE's guidance on [citation manipulation](#) and [editing peer reviews](#).

Editors are encouraged to submit their own papers to the journal but must not seek to influence the peer review process of their submission in any way.

Editors are expected to advise or take appropriate action for handling appeals against editorial decisions.

Confidentiality

Editors handle manuscripts confidentially in accordance with [COPE guidelines](#) and the journal's terms and conditions as agreed by the author upon submission.

Conflicts of Interest

Editors must disclose any potential sources of conflict of interest to the editorial office.

Editors should recuse themselves from handling manuscripts or adjudicating on specific integrity or ethical concerns where they have any potential or perceived conflicts of interest that may influence their ability to make unbiased editorial decisions or manage an impartial peer review process. In these situations, they should delegate responsibility for manuscript handling to another Editor unless explicitly agreed with the editorial office.

Any interest or relationship, financial or non-financial, that might be perceived as influencing objectivity is considered a potential source of conflict of interest. Potential sources of conflict of interest include but are not limited to:

- having recently collaborated with, supervised or been mentored by any of the authors of the manuscript they have been asked to review or edit.
- having a close personal relationship with any of the authors of a manuscript they have been asked to edit.
- employment, or membership of a board of directors, advisory board or committee for a private company or non-profit organisation that may directly benefit or be disadvantaged by publication of a manuscript they have been asked to edit.
- consultancy for or receipt of speaker's fees from a company or non-profit organisation that may directly benefit or be disadvantaged by publication of a manuscript they have been asked to edit.
- ownership of a patent or stock of which the value may directly benefit or be disadvantaged by publication of a manuscript they have been asked to edit.

Handling Concerns Regarding Research Integrity

Editors must escalate any research integrity concerns they have or are being made aware of, during peer review or following publication, with the editorial office and work with the journal team and publisher to resolve these in order to maintain the integrity of the work published in the journal.

Complaints Procedure for Violations of the Code

Concerns should be raised with the relevant editorial office, Executive Editor/Editor-in-Chief of the journal, the [BES Director of Publishing](#) or the BES's [safeguarding lead](#), as appropriate.

The BES will investigate allegations of instances where the Editor Code of Conduct has not been adhered to and will work with all parties to reach a resolution.

Lack of adherence to the Code of Conduct may result in the termination of the Editor's appointment.