

Guidelines for the Review Process of the *Journal of the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO*

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After submission

The first stage for a newly submitted article is that the editorial staff consider whether to send it for peer-review. On submission, the manuscript is assigned to an editor covering the subject area based on the available database and pool of referees. The criteria for a paper to be sent for peer-review are that the results seem novel in nature and that the work described has both immediate and far-reaching implications. The initial judgement is not a reflection on the technical validity of the work described, or on its importance to people in the same field.

Special attention is paid by the editors to the readability of submitted material.

Once the decision has been made to peer-review the paper, the choice of referees is made by the editor who has been assigned the manuscript, who will be handling other papers in the same field, in consultation with editors handling submissions in related fields when necessary. Most papers are sent to two or three referees, but some are sent to more or, occasionally, just to one. Referees are chosen for the following reasons:

- independence from the authors and their institutions
- ability to evaluate the technical aspects of the paper fully and fairly
- currently or recently assessing related submissions
- availability to assess the manuscript within the requested time.

Referees' reports

The ideal referee's report indicates

- who will be interested in the new results and why
- any technical failings that need to be addressed before the authors' case is established.

Although *Journal for the Kenya National Commission* editors themselves judge whether a paper is likely to interest readers outside its own immediate field, referees often give helpful advice, for example if the work described is not as significant as the editors thought or has undersold its significance. Although KNATCOM Journal's editors regard it as essential that any technical failings noted by referees are addressed, they are not so strictly bound by referees' editorial opinions.

Conflict of interest among referees

Some potential referees may be engaged in competing work that could influence their opinion. To avoid such conflicts of interest, *Journal for the Kenya National Commission* requires potential referees to disclose any professional and commercial competing interests before undertaking to review a paper and requires

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referees not to copy papers or to circulate them to third parties. All referees agree to KNATCOM Journal's conditions before journal sends them a manuscript to assess.

Although *Journal for the Kenya National Commission* editors go to every effort to ensure manuscripts are assessed fairly, the Journal is not responsible for the conduct of its referees.

Journal for the Kenya National Commission welcomes authors' suggestions for suitable independent referees (with their contact details), but editors are free to decide themselves who to use as referees.

Transparent peer review

Journal for the Kenya National Commission shall use a transparent peer review system, where for manuscripts submitted and once reviewed, the reviewer comments will be relayed to the authors. Authors are provided the opportunity to opt out of this scheme at the completion of the peer review process, before the paper is accepted. Although we hope that the peer review files will provide a detailed and useful view into our peer review process, it is important to note that these files will not contain all the information considered in the editorial decision-making process, such as the discussions between editors, editorial decision letters, or any confidential comments made by reviewers or authors to the editors.

Reviewer information

In recognition of the time and expertise our reviewers provide to the journal's editorial process, we formally acknowledge their contribution to the external peer review of articles published in the journal.

What the decision letter means

All Articles published in *Journal for the Kenya National Commission* shall be subjected to at least one round of review, usually two or three, sometimes more. At each stage, the editor will discuss the manuscript with editorial colleagues in the light of referees' reports, and send a letter to the author offering one of the following options:

- The paper is accepted for publication without any further changes required from the authors.
- The paper is accepted for publication in principle once the authors have made some revisions in response to the referees' comments. Under these circumstances, revised papers are not usually sent back to the referees because further technical work has not been required but are accepted for publication once the editors have checked that the referees' suggestions have been implemented and the paper is in the required format.
- A final decision on publication is deferred, pending the authors' response to the referees' comments. Under these circumstances, further experiments or technical work are usually required to address some or all the referees' concerns, and revised papers are sent back to some or all of the referees for a second opinion. Revised papers should be accompanied by a point-by-point response to all the comments made by all the referees.
- The paper is rejected because the referees have raised considerable technical objections and/or the authors' claim has not been adequately established. Under these circumstances, the editor's letter will state explicitly whether or not a resubmitted version would be considered. If the editor has invited the authors to resubmit, authors must ensure that all the referees' technical comments have

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been satisfactorily addressed (not just some of them), unless specifically advised otherwise by the editor in the letter and must accompany the resubmitted version with a point-by-point response to the referees' comments. Editors will not send resubmitted papers to the reviewers if it seems that the authors have not made a serious attempt to address all the referees' criticisms.

- The paper is rejected with no offer to reconsider a resubmitted version. Under these circumstances, authors are strongly advised not to resubmit a revised version as it will be declined without further review. If the authors feel that they have a strong scientific case for reconsideration (if the referees have missed the point of the paper, for example) they can appeal the decision in writing.

After acceptance

Formats and lengths of papers

Format requirements must be strictly observed, as advised by the editor handling the submission, and detailed in the manuscript formatting guide.

Subediting of accepted papers

After a paper is accepted, it is subedited (copyedited) to ensure maximum clarity and reach, a process that enhances the value of papers in various ways. Subeditors are happy to advise authors about the format of their Articles after acceptance for publication. Their role is to:

- i. edit the language for maximum clarity and precision for those in other disciplines – special care shall be given to papers whose authors' native language is not English, and special attention is given to summary paragraphs;
- ii. ensure that the paper is at the length specified by the manuscript editor (including number of figures);
- iii. ensure that the terminology and notation conform to Journal house style; and
- iv. ensure that the figures and tables are clear and will fit in the space available.

Proofs and reprints

Our subeditors send authors the edited text for approval before it is typeset. This enables most queries to be resolved before proof stage. Authors subsequently receive an e-proof, including the figures, and can also download a PDF proof of the layout. We suggest that authors send proofs to co-authors for them to check, but request that changes among the co-authors are coordinated so that only one author communicates with Journal and only one set of corrections is sent. The corresponding (or other single designated) author is responsible on behalf of all co-authors for the accuracy of all content, including spelling of names and current affiliations of all co-authors, so please ensure these are checked carefully.

To facilitate the review process however, we strongly encourage you to incorporate the manuscript text and figures into a single PDF or Microsoft Word file. Suitably high-resolution figures may be inserted within the

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text at appropriate positions or grouped at the end. Each figure legend should be presented on the same page as its figure. The reference list should include article titles. If providing a PDF, please number all lines. The submission system will number all lines in a Word document for you. We accept LaTeX files at the acceptance stage, but before that time please supply PDFs.

Fonts

We prefer the use throughout of a 'standard' font, preferably 12-point Times New Roman. For superscripts or subscripts, please apply actual super/subscript format; do not use 'raised' or 'lowered' formats. For mathematical symbols, Greek letters, and other special characters, use 'insert', 'symbol' and then select '(normal text)' or 'symbol' as the font. Use of other fonts can cause translation problems. List non-standard keyboard symbols in the letter accompanying the final accepted version of your paper.

Sizing

The *Journal for the Kenya National Commission* will often reduce figures to the smallest size possible for reasons of space. Authors are encouraged to indicate the smallest possible size they think appropriate for their figures, but editors reserve the right to make the final decision.

Authors should check (using a reducing photocopier) that, at the smallest possible size, lettering remains readable, and lines are sufficiently (but not too) heavy to print clearly. Line weights and strokes should be set between 0.25 and 1 pt at the final size (lines thinner than 0.25 pt may vanish in print). Do not rasterize or outline these lines if possible.

After acceptance

After acceptance for publication, we will subedit your manuscript (main text, full Methods, legends for print-only figures, complete print-only tables) to ensure that it is intelligible to our wide readership and that it conforms with house style. Our subeditors shall send authors the edited text for approval before it is typeset so that most queries are resolved before proof stage. You will subsequently receive an e-proof, including the figures and Extended Data display items, for checking before the paper is signed off and is ready to schedule in print/online.

When you receive your proof, we suggest you send it to your co-authors for them to check, but please coordinate these changes among the co-authors so that only one author communicates and only one set of corrections is sent. The corresponding (or other single designated) author is responsible on behalf of all co-authors for the accuracy of all content, including spelling of names and current affiliations of all co-authors, so please ensure these are provided.

After online publication, further changes can only be made in the form of an Erratum, which will be hyperlinked to the article.