

## **JOURNAL OF BES: REVIEW GUIDELINES**

### **SCOPE & AIMS OF THE JOURNAL**

*Journal of BES* is an open access, online journal dedicated to promoting the informed conservation of the Himalaya's rich natural heritage and ecological diversity. Consistent with the mission of the Bhutan Ecological Society, the journal brings together work and perspectives from many sectors—including legal, education, research, management, religious, and media—to understand and develop solutions for the Himalaya's pressing environmental challenges, with relevance to Bhutan. All articles must have a strong environmental conservation focus.

*Journal of BES* is published once per year. All submissions are reviewed by an editorial board comprising national and international conservation scientists and practitioners. The journal accepts original submissions in the following categories:

- **Research Article (up to 6000 words).** Original theoretical or empirical research in the natural or social sciences, relevant to Bhutan.
- **Policy Analysis (up to 6000 words).** Informed analysis of current conservation policy topics in Bhutan.
- **Review Paper (up to 7500 words).** Thorough literature or interview review of a current topic within the journal's scope.
- **Short Communication (up to 2500 words).** Important preliminary and novel research or findings (e.g., discovery of new species) that may not be appropriate for submission as a full 'Research Article'.
- **Perspective (up to 2500 words).** Personal viewpoint on a subject within the journal's scope, or responding to material previously published in *Journal of BES*. Arguments should be supported by evidence with relevant citations.

### **MANUSCRIPT QUALITY**

A manuscript published in *Journal of BES* should meet these criteria:

- Is original (not previously published)
- Methods are sound and appropriate to the question
- (When present) data analyses are correct and appropriate
- Results are clearly presented and support the conclusions
- All statements and anecdotes are supported by credible evidence
- Correctly references previous relevant work

### **REVIEW PROCESS TIMELINE**

The purpose of the peer review process is to ensure that manuscripts published in *Journal of BES* support the mission of the journal and meet certain standards of quality and scientific rigor. Every submission will undergo a standard review process as outlined at the end of this document.

## **DECISION CATEGORIES**

- **Accept.** Accept the manuscript as-is with only proofreading edits.
- **Request Revision:**
  - **Minor Revisions.** The manuscript requires clarifications and minor corrections as advised by the reviewers.
  - **Major Revisions.** The manuscript requires significant change, which could be in conceptual content, explanation of methods, analysis, manuscript structure, coherence, or readability, as advised by the reviewers.
- **Reject.** The manuscript is not appropriate for the journal and cannot be modified / improved to make it suitable for the journal. The manuscript cannot be revised and resubmitted.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- **Confidentiality.** Any manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. They must not be shown to, or discussed with, others except as authorized by the editor. Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in a reviewer's own research without the express written consent of the author. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage.
- **Reviewer Anonymity.** The review process will be double-blind. The Secretariat will remove all references to authors (and associated institutions) from the text of a manuscript before it is sent for review. Reviewers should not reveal their identities within the text of their review, nor should they discuss with others the titles (or contents) of the manuscripts they are reviewing.
- **Conflict of Interest.** Reviewers who feel they might have any difficulty writing an objective review on a manuscript should decline review, citing conflict of interest. Potential causes of conflict of interest (if these make it difficult for the reviewer to be objective) include: working in the same department or institute as one of the authors, previously having co-authored a paper with one of the authors, or having a professional or financial connection to the article.

## **REQUESTS FOR DEADLINE EXTENSION (FROM AUTHORS OR REVIEWERS)**

The Secretariat may grant extensions as deemed appropriate.

| ITEM | WHAT   | WHO            | HOW LONG | NOTES  |
|------|--|----------------|----------|--|
| 1    | Enter manuscript in database and assign ID#; confirm receipt of manuscript | Secretariat    | 3 days   |  |
| 2    | Desk (immediate) reject  | Secretariat    | 3 days   |  |
| 3    | First round of reviews   | Peer reviewers | 1 month  | Secretariat will send each manuscript to two reviewers (may include Editorial Board members). Secretariat may seek guidance from Editorial Board on appropriate reviewers. For each journal issue, an Editorial Board member may be requested to review up to 2 manuscripts. Reviewers should confirm within one week whether or not they are willing to review a manuscript.  |
| 4    | Initial decision   | Secretariat    | 1 week   | If reviewer recommendations conflict, the Chief/Managing Editor may either request a third independent review or make the initial decision based on the existing reviews.  |
| 5    | Author response  | Author         | 3 weeks  | Authors will be provided the publication decision from the peer review process, including each reviewer's comments. Within the specified timeline, a revised manuscript should be accompanied with a point-by-point response to every comment from each reviewer, including line number reference to the changes in the manuscript (when relevant). If the author does not agree with a reviewer's comment, the author need not make the requested change, but should explain why (s)he disagrees with the reviewer's comment. If the author makes any new changes in the revision, (s)he should include in the response where these are made and rationale. |
| 6    | Second round of reviews  | Peer reviewers | 1 month  | We expect reviewers to stay with the review process for a manuscript until a final decision is made. In the second round of reviews, for manuscripts given the opportunity to revise and resubmit, reviewers should determine if the author's revisions sufficiently address concerns from the initial review. Except in extenuating circumstances, NEW concerns should not be raised by the reviewers about the original manuscript (these concerns should have been raised in the initial review) at this point.   |
| 7    | Copy editing for publication   | Secretariat    | 2 months |  |

**NOTE: First round of reviews begins only AFTER receipt of full manuscript that conforms to Author Guidelines**