

# *Tropics*

## Instructions to Authors



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### **Aims and Scope**

*Tropics* is an international Open Access journal covering all aspects of ecology and ecology-related science in tropical regions. Published twice a year by the Japan Society of Tropical Ecology (JASTE), *Tropics* features four types of peer-reviewed articles. Original Articles, Field Notes and Monographs are reports of novel experimental or observational research, and Reviews are comprehensive and insightful overviews of topics of interest to the journal's international audience. The journal also publishes special issues comprising Original Articles, Field Notes or Reviews.

*Tropics* aims to foster communication about tropical ecology locally, regionally and internationally, as well as between field and experimental scientists. Those interested in contributing to *Tropics* are strongly encouraged to submit their work.

### **Manuscript Types**

The journal welcomes the following manuscript types, all of which are subject to peer review.

#### **Reviews**

Articles presenting novel or unique overviews of recent or important developments in the field. Reviews must be insightful and must address the question(s) of interest using appropriate and fully presented evidence; exhaustive general summaries will not be published. Reviews can explore several aspects of importance in a broader subject area.

#### **Original Articles**

Reports describing original research, findings or ideas with supporting data; they can be full and comprehensive, although short reports with supporting data are also considered Original Articles. Original Articles are presented in the standard format of Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion and References.

#### **Field Notes**

Short articles describing new observations, discoveries or ideas that are not yet fully supported by comprehensive data. This may include studies based on minimal data or on robust data sets that lack novelty or are incremental advances.

### **Monographs**

Monographs are articles that delve deeply into a specific topic or subject. For example, they may focus on the history of an ethnic group or a certain taxon. They may also compile the results of in-depth analyses and research. Monographs are published separately from the journal's regular issues.

### **Special issues**

Authors and others are invited to send proposals for special issues on interesting topics or subjects to the Editor-in-Chief. Proposals should include a title and a brief description of the idea.

### **Journal & Ethics Policies**

*Tropics* upholds the highest standards in scholarly publishing.

Before submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors must ensure that they have read and complied with the journal's policies. The journal reserves the right to reject without review, or retract, any manuscript that the Editor believes may not comply with these policies.

The responsibilities of the journal's authors, editors, reviewers and publisher regarding research and publication ethics are described in full below.

Submission to the journal implies that the manuscript has not previously been published (in part or in whole, in any language), is not in press, and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Authors must inform the editors if any related manuscripts are under consideration, in press or published elsewhere. The availability of a manuscript on a publicly accessible preprint server does not constitute prior publication (see 'Preprints').

If authors choose to submit their manuscript elsewhere before a final decision has been made on its suitability for publication in *Tropics*, they should first withdraw it from the journal.

### **Submission**

*Tropics* welcomes manuscript submissions from authors based anywhere in the world.

Submission of a manuscript to the journal implies that all authors: have approved it, warrant it is factual, have agreed to its submission, and have the right to publish it.

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To support the wide dissemination of research, the journal allows authors to post their research manuscripts on community-recognized preprint servers, either before or alongside submission to the journal. This policy applies only to the original version of a manuscript that describes primary research. Any version of a manuscript that has been revised in response to reviewers' comments, accepted for publication or published in the journal should not be posted on a preprint server. If the manuscript is accepted and published in *Tropics*, the authors should include links on the preprint server to the *Tropics* article on J-STAGE.

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- (2) approved the submitted version (and any substantially modified version that involves the author's contribution to the study); and
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Given that artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as large language models (LLMs) and various openly available services do not meet the requirements listed above, they cannot be listed as an author of a manuscript.

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Authors must not falsify or fabricate data. Authors may digitally manipulate or process images, but only if the adjustments are kept to a minimum, are applied to the entire image, meet community standards, and are clearly described in the manuscript. All images in a manuscript must accurately reflect the original data on which they are based. Authors must not move, remove, add or enhance individual parts of an image. The editors reserve the right to request original, unprocessed images from the authors. Failure to provide requested images may result in a manuscript being rejected or retracted.

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Authors of manuscripts describing experiments involving humans or materials derived from humans must demonstrate that the work was carried out in accordance with the principles embodied in the [Declaration of Helsinki](#), its revisions, and any guidelines approved by the authors' institutions. Where relevant, the authors must include a statement in their manuscript that describes the procedures for obtaining informed consent from participants regarding participation in the research and publication of the research.

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## **Peer Review Process**

### **Editorial and peer review process**

The journal uses single-anonymized peer review. When a manuscript is submitted to the journal, it is assigned to the Editor-in-Chief, who performs initial screening. Manuscripts that do not fit the journal's scope or are not deemed suitable for publication are rejected without review. The remaining manuscripts are assigned to a coordinating Editor who assigns two reviewers to assess each manuscript. The deadline for submission of the reviewers' reports is usually 3 weeks.

Upon receipt of the reviewers' reports, the Editor makes the first decision on the manuscript. If the decision is to request revision of the manuscript, authors have one month to resubmit their revised manuscript. Authors who cannot meet the stated deadline should notify the Editor and include justification for the missed deadline. The Editor may send revised manuscripts to peer reviewers for their feedback or may use his or her own judgment to assess how closely the authors have followed the Editor's and the reviewers' comments on the original manuscript.

The Editor then makes a recommendation to the Editor-in-Chief on the manuscript's suitability for publication. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for making the final decision on each manuscript.

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### **Reviewer selection, timing and suggestions**

Reviewers are selected based on their expertise in the field, reputation, recommendation by others, and/or previous experience as peer reviewers for the journal.

Reviewers are asked to submit their first review within 3 weeks of accepting the invitation to review. Reviewers who anticipate any delays should inform the Editorial Office as soon as possible.

When submitting a manuscript to the journal, authors may suggest reviewers that they would like included in or excluded from the peer review process. The Editor may consider these suggestions but is under no obligation to follow them. The selection, invitation and assignment of peer reviewers is at the Editor's sole discretion.

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It is the journal's policy to transmit reviewers' comments to the authors in their original form. However, the journal reserves the right to edit reviewers' comments, without consulting the reviewers, if they contain offensive language, confidential information or recommendations for publication.

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If a manuscript satisfies the journal's requirements and represents a significant contribution to the published literature, the Editor may recommend acceptance for publication in the journal.

Articles in the journal must be:

- within the subject area of the journal's scope
- novel and original
- descriptions of technically rigorous research
- of high interest to the journal's audience
- important additions to the field.

If a manuscript does not meet the journal's requirements for acceptance or revision, the Editor may recommend rejection.

### **Editorial independence**

The Japan Society of Tropical Ecology (JASTE) has granted the journal's Editorial Board complete and sole responsibility for all editorial decisions. JASTE will not become involved in editorial decisions, except in cases of a fundamental breakdown of process.

Editorial decisions are based only on a manuscript's scientific merit and are kept completely separate from the journal's other interests. The authors' ability to pay any publication charges has no bearing on whether a manuscript is accepted for publication in the journal.

### **Appeals**

Authors who believe that an editorial decision has been made in error may lodge an appeal with the Editorial Office. Appeals are only considered if the authors provide detailed evidence of a misunderstanding or mistake by a reviewer or editor. Appeals are considered carefully by

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### **Confidentiality in peer review**

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3. use any data or information from the manuscript in their own work or publications
4. use information obtained from the peer review process to provide an advantage to themselves or anyone else, or to disadvantage any individual or organization
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A conflict of interest exists when there are actual, perceived or potential circumstances that could influence an editor or reviewer's ability to act impartially when assessing a manuscript. Such circumstances include (but are not limited to) having a personal or professional relationship with an author, working on the same topic or in direct competition with an author, having a financial stake in the work or its publication, or having seen previous versions of the manuscript.

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### **Errata and Retractions**

The journal recognizes the importance of maintaining the integrity of published literature.

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are encouraged to contact the journal's Editorial Office with full details of their concerns. The Editor-in-Chief will investigate further and contact the authors of the published article for their response. In cases where co-authors disagree over a retraction, the Editor-in-Chief may consult the Editorial Board or external peer reviewers for advice. If a Retraction is published, any dissenting authors will be noted in the text.

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Any member of the journal's Editorial Board, including the Editor-in-Chief, who is an author on a submitted manuscript is excluded from the peer review process and from viewing details about their manuscript before the final decision.

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## Manuscript Submission

All manuscripts must be submitted via email to the Editor-in-Chief via [tropics.jaste@gmail.com](mailto:tropics.jaste@gmail.com). Submissions should include the following three items:

- (1) [Submission Form](#), available from the JASTE [website](#);
- (2) A Microsoft Word file containing a title page and the main text pages of the manuscript; and
- (3) A PDF file of the tables and figures.

Where relevant, instructions for revised manuscripts are provided with the first decision letter.

## Manuscript Preparation

### Style

The text should be double-spaced throughout on A4 page size with 3 cm margins. Pages and lines must be numbered consecutively throughout the entire text, starting with the title page. Characters to be printed in italic, bold, or small capital letters should be entered using the features of the word processing software. Use italics for non-English terms, scientific names of organisms and mathematical parameters and variables, including statistics, but do not apply italics to anglicized terms such as ‘et al.’.

### English standard

Manuscripts should be written in clear, grammatically correct English. If a manuscript is not clear due to poor English, it may be rejected without undergoing peer review.

### Format

The main text of the article should be divided into the following sections: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgments, author declaration sections (Funding, Conflict of Interest Statement, Data Availability Statement, Author Contribution Statement, Ethics approval and consent to participate), References, and Appendices. Manuscript sections may differ slightly depending on the manuscript type.

### Title page and affiliations

The first page of the manuscript must contain the following information: (1) the title; (2) the full name(s) of the author(s), including any middle initials; (3) the affiliation(s) of the author(s); (4) an abstract of 250 words or less in a single paragraph; and (5) up to five keywords.

Use superscript numbers to link authors’ names and affiliations and an asterisk to indicate the corresponding author, as shown in the example below. Include the full address of each author’s institution(s) (including laboratory, department, institute and/or university, city, state and country).

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### **Running title**

The running title should not exceed ten words.

### **Abbreviations**

Each abbreviation should be defined in parentheses after its non-abbreviated term when it first appears in the text (except in the Title and Abstract).

### **Units**

Use metric units unless otherwise required. All specifications of measurements must follow the SI system. All biological and chemical terms should follow current standards for international nomenclature. Use an italicized "l" for liter. Use the Celsius scale (not Fahrenheit) for temperature.

Insert a space between numbers and units (e.g., 3 min, 40 µg ml<sup>-1</sup>, and 50 ha), but not between numbers and symbols such as "%" and "°C" (e.g., 3%, 20°C, and \$100). Use "%" only with numerals and in tables and figures. Otherwise, use the word "percentage" (e.g., percentage of forest cover).

### **Acknowledgments**

Authors may briefly acknowledge those who have assisted in the work or preparation of the manuscript but who do not qualify for authorship (as defined in the Authorship section). Authors should also list all funding sources for their work in the Acknowledgments section.

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Authors are required to declare any competing financial or other conflicts of interest in relation to the work described. Please see the 'Author competing interests and conflicts of interest' section for detailed information. If there are no declared interests, authors should include the following statement in this section of their manuscript: "The authors declare no competing interests."

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Supervision: Author 1.

Visualization: Author 3.

Writing – original draft: Author 1, Author 2, Author 3.

Writing – review & editing: Author 1, Author 2.

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### **References**

All publications cited in the text should be listed in the References section following the main text and author declaration sections. Citations of unpublished results or papers in preparation should be included in the text but not in the reference list. Articles cited in the text should be referred to by the surname of the author(s) and the year of publication in parentheses, without a comma between the name and year. If there are more than two authors, only the first author's name is given, followed by "et al.". In the reference list, surnames and initials of all authors should be given, and the references should be listed alphabetically by the first author's surnames.

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Tanaka S, Lattirasuvan T, Nakamoto K, Sritulanon C, Sakurai K. 2010. Soil fertility under various types of upland farming in northern Thailand: Case study of a village located in a transitional zone of hill evergreen and mixed deciduous forests. *Tropics* 18: 185-199.

#### *b. Books*

[FAO] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2011. *Global forest resources assessment 2010: main report*. FAO, Rome.

#### *c. Edited books*

Angelsen A, Lund JF. 2011. Designing the household questionnaire. In: Angelsen A, Larsen HO, Lund JF, Smith-Hall C, Wunder S (eds) *Measuring livelihoods and environmental dependence*. Earthscan, London. 107-126.

*d. Electronic materials*

Scheer MB. 2011. Mineral nutrient fluxes in rainfall and throughfall in a lowland Atlantic rainforest in southern Brazil. *Journal of Forest Research* 16(1): 76-81. DOI: 10.1007/s10310-010-0222-9.

[OECD] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2012. *Promoting growth in all regions*. OECD Publishing. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264174634-en> (cited October 1, 2018).

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Tables must be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals. Each table should have a brief and self-explanatory caption. Any explanation essential to the understanding of the table, such as abbreviations, should be given in a footnote below the table. Vertical lines should not be used to separate columns. If necessary, additional space should be used to separate columns.

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*Tables:*

Submit all tables as separate files in Microsoft Excel format.

*Figures:*

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