

Peer-reviewing scientific papers

Why and how

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Outline

1. **What** is peer review
2. **Why** review?
 - benefits to science
 - benefits to the reviewer
3. **When** to review?
4. **How** to review?
5. **Ethics**
6. **Becoming a reviewer**
7. Resources

Topic: Peer review

- The **evaluation** of a proposed paper, presentation, book . . . by the author's **peers**
 - “peer” 同等地位的人, someone of equal rank/status, in this case **scientific knowledge/competence**
- Purpose: ensure that only **sound science** is published → the scientific record is clear and **correct** → does not mislead other researchers
- Reviewers are selected and solicited by the **journal editors** – **they make the final decision**



Peer review flow

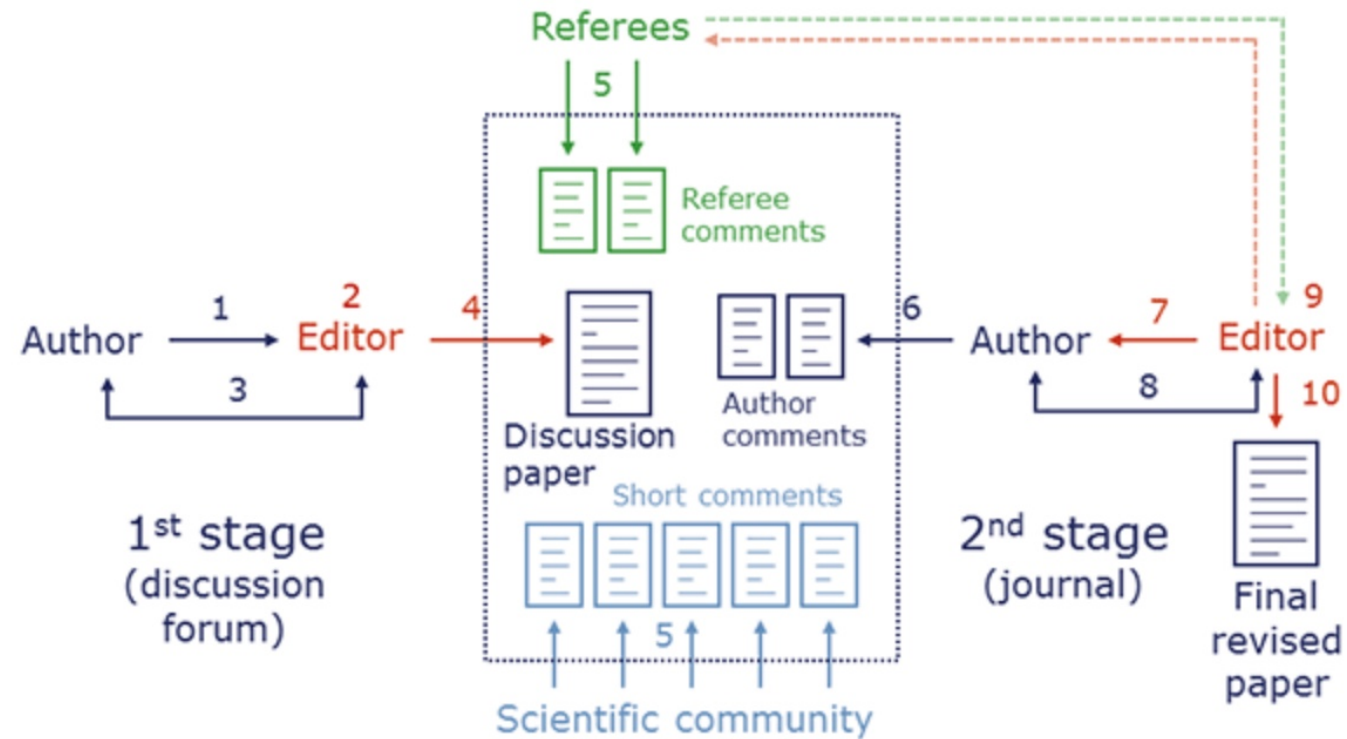
Source: <https://www.elsevier.com/reviewers/what-is-peer-review>

Types of review

- **public**: both author and reviewer names are public
 - the review is **on-line** with the draft of the paper, the review(s), the author's response(s), and the final paper
- **open**: both author and reviewer names are known to each other
- **single-blind**: authors are known to the reviewers, but not vice-versa
 - The reviewer can choose to reveal his/her identity in the comments
- **double-blind**: no one's name is known
 - often it is easy to guess some of the authors, from the papers they cite (their own previous work)

Public review – flow

Interactive Public Peer Review™



source: https://www.soil-journal.net/peer_review/interactive_review_process.html

Public review – example



SOIL

An interactive open-access journal of the European Geosciences Union



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<https://doi.org/10.5194/soil-2018-30>
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[Discussion papers](#)

Abstract

Discussion

Metrics

13 Sep 2018

Original research article

Refining physical aspects of soil quality and soil health when exploring the effects of soil degradation and climate change on biomass production: an Italian case study

Antonello Bonfante et al.

Review status

This discussion paper is a preprint. It is a manuscript under review for the journal SOIL (SOIL).

Interactive discussion

Status: open (until 25 Oct 2018)

[AC](#): Author comment |
 [RC](#): Referee comment |
 [SC](#): Short comment |
 [EC](#): Editor comment |
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RC1: 'Review', David Rossiter, 24 Sep 2018  [\[reply\]](#)
AC1: 'Discussion SOIL-2018-30, reply to David Rossiter (RC1)', Antonello Bonfante, 08 Oct 2018  [\[reply\]](#)

source: <https://www.soil-discuss.net/soil-2018-30/#discussion>

Advantages of public review

- The process is **transparent** so there is less chance of bias or favouritism
- Authors are likely more careful to “get it right the first time”
- Reviewers are more likely to be thorough and constructive

But . . . most reviews are still **private**

- Only the authors, reviewers, and editors see these

Topic: Why review? – 1

1. **Do your part** for the overall success of the scientific enterprise

- The “scientific mansion” 大厦 is built up from many small bricks 小块, each paper is one of these bricks
- Dutch 成语 *iedereen hun steentje bijdragen* = every person adds his or her little stone to the building

Why review? – 2

2. **Keep up to date** with the latest developments: you see this new work before it is published; it can **stimulate your own research**
3. The review forces you to **look at the related literature** and perhaps learn some new techniques

Why review? – 3

4. You can receive **recognition** from the journal and **include in your CV/list of publications**
5. It is a step towards becoming an editorial board member or (associate) editor
→ **professional recognition**

Recognition

- Individual publishers/journals, e.g., Elsevier
- Community of publishers/journals, e.g., Publon

Welcome David Rossiter

★ Excellence Award

✉ dgr2@cornell.edu 📄 Cornell University

We thank you for your contributions to the peer review process. If you are interested in reviewing for more titles, [please let us know](#).

☰ My Latest Review: September 2018, Catena

Claim your Book discount



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☰ My Review Status

Please find an overview of your review recognitions below.

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🕒 Yearly overview for 2017



Outstanding reviewer - Geoderma Achieved: July 2018

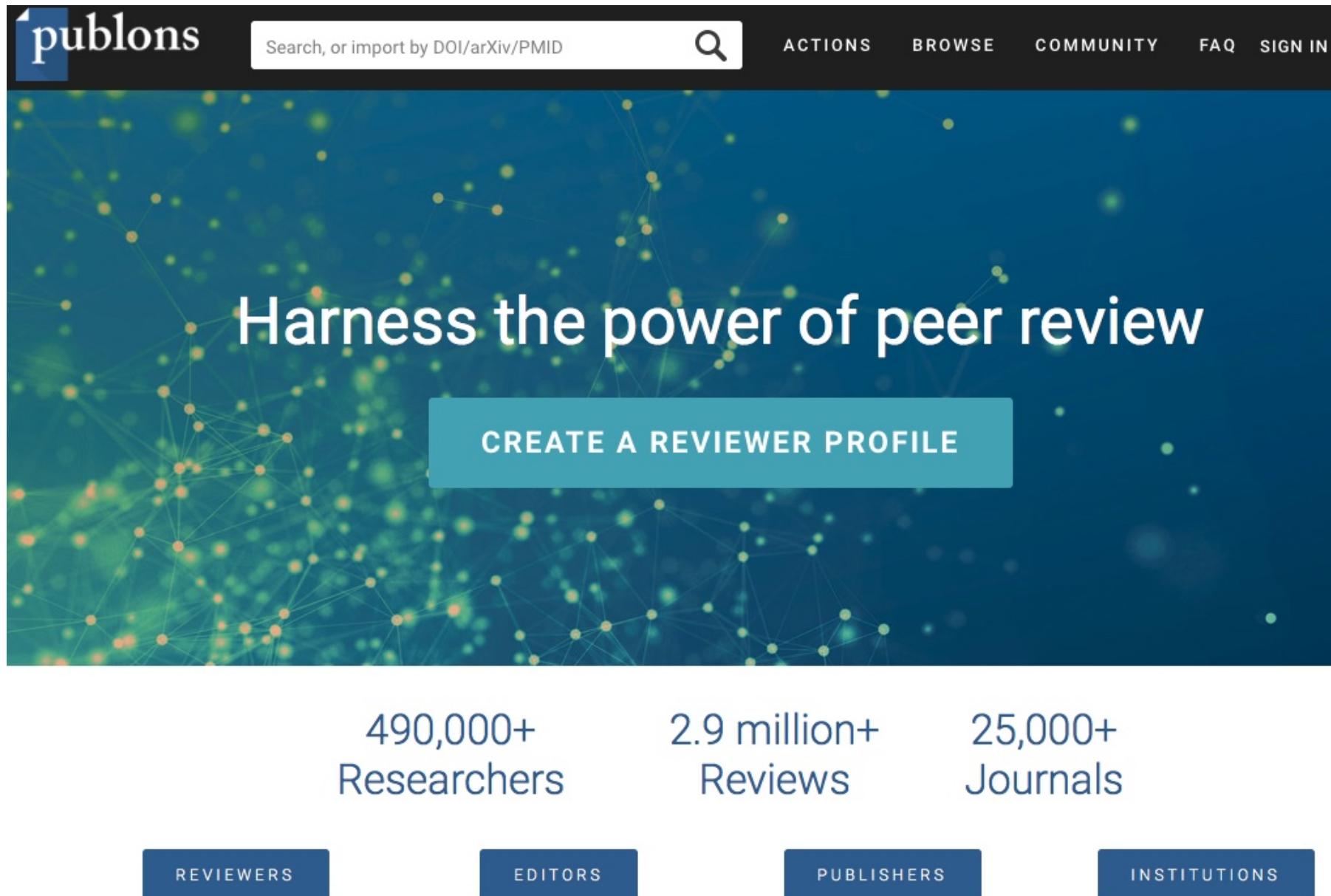
— You have been awarded this recognition as you are within the top 10th percentile of reviewers for this Journal, in terms of the number of manuscript reviews completed in the last two years. For **Geoderma**, this meant a minimum of 2 reviews in two years. View details for your full Elsevier journal review record and to claim your free certificate.

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Recognized reviewer - Spatial Statistics Achieved: June 2018

— You have been awarded this recognition because you completed at least one manuscript review in the last two years for **Spatial Statistics**. View details for your full Elsevier journal review record and to claim your free certificate.

The image shows the homepage of the Publons website. At the top, there is a dark navigation bar with the 'publons' logo on the left, a search bar in the center with the text 'Search, or import by DOI/arXiv/PMID' and a magnifying glass icon, and a series of links on the right: 'ACTIONS', 'BROWSE', 'COMMUNITY', 'FAQ', and 'SIGN IN'. Below the navigation bar is a large blue banner with a network of glowing yellow and orange nodes connected by thin lines. The text 'Harness the power of peer review' is centered in white. Below this text is a teal button that says 'CREATE A REVIEWER PROFILE'. At the bottom of the banner, there are three statistics: '490,000+ Researchers', '2.9 million+ Reviews', and '25,000+ Journals'. Below these statistics are four dark blue buttons: 'REVIEWERS', 'EDITORS', 'PUBLISHERS', and 'INSTITUTIONS'.

<https://publons.com/home/>



✓ Verified reviewer
 56 Reviewer Merit
 17 reviews
 3 papers scored

IDENTIFIERS

publons.com/a/1170953/

NAVIGATE

Has reviewed for 9 journals

16 Pre-publication Reviews

1 Post-publication Review

PROFILE STATISTICS

Samuel Kilonzo Mutiga

Postdoc - Plant Pathology, University of Arkansas - Fayetteville - Present
 Visiting Scientist - Plant Pathology, BecA-ILRI Hub, Kenya
 Complete PhD in 2014 - Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology, Cornell University

BIO

My research interests are in plant diseases caused by fungal pathogens. I am interested understanding the genetic basis for disease resistance of crop plants to fungal pathogens, identification of resistance mechanisms, and deployment of the resistance using plant breeding methods. Because resistance to plant pathogens is not always complete (qualitative), and could be conferred by multiple genes of small effect and modulated by environment (quantitative), I have an interest in utilizing both qualitative and quantitative epidemiological tools to dissect other factors that could be associated the trait. My previous research experience includes use of survey tools, field experiments, and molecular approaches in dissection of environmental and genetic factors for aflatoxin and fumonisin accumulation in maize. I am currently involved in a rice research project which focuses on identification of durable resistance to rice blast disease in Africa. In the current research effort, I have been involved in genotyping and pathotyping of a diverse collection of isolates of *Magnaporthe oryzae* from Africa using rice differential lines carrying varying blast resistance genes that were developed by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). My ultimate goal is to be a key player in tackling food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa through identification and deployment of disease resistance in crop plants to reduce yield losses, and to contribute to capacity building through mentorship of new scientists.

RESEARCH FIELDS

PLANT BIOLOGY

EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

Samuel is not currently contributing as an editor for any journal or publisher.

HAS REVIEWED FOR



(3) Agriculture



(3) Toxins



(1) African Journal of Microbiology Res...



(1) Biological Control



(1) Nature Scientific Reports



(3) Sustainability



(2) Agronomy



(1) Applied Sciences



(1) Crop Protection

<https://publons.com/author/1170953/samuel-kilonzo-mutiga#profile>

Topic: When to review?

When you are invited to review . . .

- **Read the abstract:** the topic should be **within your area(s) of expertise**
 - you must be qualified to understand the paper
 - you must be familiar with the relevant literature, so you can see if the authors ignore or mis-represent previous work
- Check if you have any **conflict of interest**
 - each publisher has a clear definition
 - * Examples: in the same work group, have published with (one or more of) the authors (if known) . . .
 - Are **prejudiced** *for or against* the author(s) and do not feel you can give an unbiased review
 - *if in doubt ask the editor* – they will advise if you should continue or withdraw

Workload

- A proper review takes **half a day to a week**
 - depending on the complexity of the paper and your familiarity with the work
- For each paper you **submit**, you should be willing to **review** two.
- Limit to the time allocated to the activity by your group leader – typically **one per month**.

Topic: How to review?

- Different journals have different requirements
- **Instructions** are always supplied with the review request
- These typically point to a web page with detailed instructions
- Structure the review according to instructions



[Home](#) > [Reviewers](#) > [How to review](#)

How to conduct a review



1- Before you begin

Before you accept or decline an invitation to review, consider the following questions:

- Does the article match your area of expertise? Only accept if you feel you can provide a high-quality review.
- Do you have a potential ↓ [conflict of interest](#) ? Disclose this to the editor when you respond.
- Do you have time? Reviewing can be a lot of work – before you commit, make sure you can meet the deadline.
- Do you need to find out more about reviewing and the peer review process? If so, check out the free tutorials on the [Elsevier Researcher Academy](#) ↗

Respond to the invitation as soon as you can (even if it is to decline) – a delay in your decision slows down the review process and means more waiting for the author. If you do decline the invitation, it would be helpful if you could provide suggestions for alternative reviewers.



2- Managing your review

Confidential material

source: <https://www.elsevier.com/reviewers/how-to-review>

Check: methods

Before going into detail of the review, **make sure the methods were proper** – if not, the whole paper (or the part of it with certain methods) is invalid and the authors should correct that first.

- **Unsound methodology**

- Example: improper pre-processing of soil samples prior to particle-size analysis by laser diffraction → “no” clay fraction → incorrect equations to predict soil hydrologic properties

- **Discredited method**

- Example: Ordinary Least Squares linear regression with spatially-correlated residuals

- **Missing processes** known to be influential on the area of reported research

Check: data sources

- Properly **documented**?
- **Appropriate** to the research question?

Literature search

- The paper will cite some **literature** – is it **relevant** and **up-to-date**?
 - If not, authors should do a proper literature search and re-submit
- Search for papers by the same authors (if known) and on the same topic – **is this paper new information?**

Author search

Select a database

Web of Science Core Collection

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Cited Reference Search

Advanced Search

+ More

Bonfante, A*

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Author

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Search

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1990

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to

2018

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- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 1. | <p>The role of soil series in quantitative land evaluation when expressing effects of climate change and crop breeding on future land use (vol 259, pg 187, 2015)</p> <p>By: Bonfante, A.; Bouma, J.
 GEODERMA Volume: 281 Pages: 133-133 Published: NOV 1 2016</p> <p>Get it! Cornell</p> | <p>Times Cited: 0
 (from Web of Science Core Collection)</p> <p>Usage Count ▼</p> |
| 2. | <p>The role of soil series in quantitative land evaluation when expressing effects of climate change and crop breeding on future land use</p> <p>By: Bonfante, Antonello; Bouma, Johan
 GEODERMA Volume: 259 Pages: 187-195 Published: DEC 2015</p> <p>Get it! Cornell Full Text from Publisher View Abstract ▼</p> | <p>Times Cited: 14
 (from Web of Science Core Collection)</p> <p>Usage Count ▼</p> |
| 3. | <p>The LIFE plus SOILCONSWEB project: A web based spatial decision support system embedding DSM engines</p> <p>By: Langella, G.; Basile, A.; Bonfante, A.; et al.
 Conference: 5th Global Workshop on Digital Soil Mapping Location: Sydney, AUSTRALIA Date: APR 10-13, 2012
 Sponsor(s): Univ Sydney; Soil Sci Australia; State Govt Victoria, Dept Primary Ind; Australian Collaborat Land Evaluat Program; NSW Govt, Off Environm & Heritage; CSIRO
 DIGITAL SOIL ASSESSMENTS AND BEYOND Pages: 277-280 Published: 2012</p> <p>Get it! Cornell View Abstract ▼</p> | <p>Times Cited: 0
 (from Web of Science Core Collection)</p> <p>Usage Count ▼</p> |
| 4. | <p>A physically oriented approach to analysis and mapping of terroirs</p> <p>By: Bonfante, A.; Basile, A.; Langella, G.; et al.
 GEODERMA Volume: 167-68 Pages: 103-117 Published: NOV 2011</p> <p>Get it! Cornell Full Text from Publisher View Abstract ▼</p> | <p>Times Cited: 15
 (from Web of Science Core Collection)</p> <p>Usage Count ▼</p> |
| 5. | <p>Use of Physically Based Models to Evaluate USDA Soil Moisture Classes</p> <p>By: Bonfante, Antonello; Basile, Angelo; Manna, Piero; et al.
 SOIL SCIENCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA JOURNAL Volume: 75 Issue: 1 Pages: 181-191 Published: JAN 2011</p> <p>Get it! Cornell Full Text from Publisher View Abstract ▼</p> | <p>Times Cited: 5
 (from Web of Science Core Collection)</p> <p>Usage Count ▼</p> |
| 6. | <p>Comparative Land Evaluation approaches: An itinerary from FAO framework to simulation modelling</p> <p>By: Manna, P.; Basile, A.; Bonfante, A.; et al.
 GEODERMA Volume: 150 Issue: 3-4 Pages: 367-378 Published: MAY 15 2009</p> <p>Get it! Cornell Full Text from Publisher View Abstract ▼</p> | <p>Times Cited: 21
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Title/topic search

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soil AND (quality OR health) NOT (air or human) ✕

Title ▼

Search

[+ Add row](#)

Timespan

Last 5 years ▼

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(from Web of Science Core Collection)

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...More

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Refine Results

Search within results for...

Filter results by:

☐ Open Access (406)

☐ Associated Data (11)

Refine

Publication Years

☐ 2019 (5)

☐ 2018 (332)

☐ 2017 (355)

☐ 2016 (344)

☐ 2015 (318)

Sort by: Date Times Cited Usage Count Relevance More

☐ Select Page 5K Save to EndNote online Add to Marked List

☐ 1. **Effects of vegetation restoration on soil quality in degraded karst landscapes of southwest China**
By: Zhang, Yaohua; Xu, Xianli; Li, Zhenwei; et al.
SCIENCE OF THE TOTAL ENVIRONMENT Volume: 650 Pages: 2657-2665 Part: 2 Published: FEB 10 2019
[Get it! Cornell](#) Full Text from Publisher View Abstract

☐ 2. **A new method for soil health assessment based on Analytic Hierarchy Process and meta-analysis**
By: Xue, Rui; Wang, Chong; Liu, Mengli; et al.
SCIENCE OF THE TOTAL ENVIRONMENT Volume: 650 Pages: 2771-2777 Part: 2 Published: FEB 10 2019
[Get it! Cornell](#) Full Text from Publisher View Abstract

☐ 3. **Soil health assessment: A critical review of current methodologies and a proposed new approach**
By: Rinot, Oshri; Levy, Guy J.; Steinberger, Yosef; et al.
SCIENCE OF THE TOTAL ENVIRONMENT Volume: 648 Pages: 1484-1491 Published: JAN 15 2019
[Get it! Cornell](#) Full Text from Publisher View Abstract

☐ 4. **Soil quality assessment in Yellow River Delta: Establishing a minimum data set and fuzzy logic model**
By: Wu, Chunsheng; Liu, Gaohuan; Huang, Chong; et al.
GEODERMA Volume: 334 Pages: 82-89 Published: JAN 15 2019
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Name: Baveye, Philippe Description: love him or hate him, always interesting Query: AUTHOR: (Baveye, P*) Open	Web of Science Core Collection		ON Created: 2014-10-14 Last Run: 2017-06-08 Expires: 2019-03-07 Renew	E-mail Address: dgr2@cornell.edu Type: Author, Title, Source, plus Abstract Format: Plain Text Frequency: Weekly
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name: Bouma, J Description: Query: AUTHOR: (bouma, j) Open	Web of Science Core Collection		ON Created: 2018-06-04 Last Run: 2018-06-04 Expires: 2019-03-07 Renew	E-mail Address: dgr2@cornell.edu Type: Author, Title, Source Format: HTML Frequency: Weekly
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name: Land evaluation Description: Query: Topic=("land evaluation" or "land suitability") Open	Web of Science Core Collection		ON Created: 2013-02-18 Last Run: 2018-05-23 Expires: 2019-03-07 Renew	E-mail Address: dgr2@cornell.edu Type: Author, Title, Source, plus Abstract Format: Field Tagged Frequency: Weekly
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name: Soil Health Description: Query: TITLE: ("soil health") Open	Web of Science Core Collection		ON Created: 2018-08-16 Last Run: 2018-08-16 Expires: 2019-03-07 Renew	E-mail Address: dgr2@cornell.edu Type: Author, Title, Source, plus Abstract Format: HTML Frequency: Weekly
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name: Soil colour Description: Query: #3 OR #2 Open	Web of Science Core Collection		ON Created: 2018-10-24 Last Run: 2018-10-24 Expires: 2019-04-10 Renew	E-mail Address: dgr2@cornell.edu Type: Author, Title, Source Format: HTML Frequency: Weekly

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ToC 21 September 2018 at 13:24

Geoderma : Volume 337

To: Rossiter, D G <david.rossiter@wur.nl>

Alert: Geoderma

New articles available on ScienceDirect

Geoderma

Volume 337, Pages 1, 1 March 2019

[Seasonality, altitude and human activities control soil quality in a national park surrounded by an urban area](#)

Pages 1-10

Available Online 2018-09-10

Valeria Memoli, Anna De Marco, Francesco Esposito, Speranza Claudia Panico, Rossella Barile, Giulia Maisto

[Advantages of fuzzy k-means over k-means clustering in the classification of diffuse reflectance soil spectra: A case study with West African soils](#)

Pages 11-21

Available Online 2018-09-10

Jannis Heil, Volker Håring, Bernd Marschner, Britta Stumpe

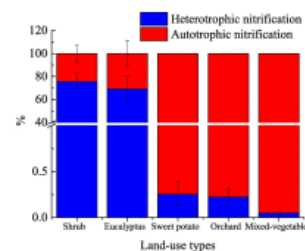
[Land-use type affects nitrate production and consumption pathways in subtropical acidic soils](#)

Pages 22-31

Available Online 2018-09-10

Yushu Zhang, Xiangzhou Zheng, Xiangyun Ren, Jinbo Zhang, Tom Misselbrook, Laura Cardenas, Alison Carswell, Christoph Müller, Hong Ding

Graphical abstract



[Prediction of soil organic carbon stock by laboratory spectral data and airborne hyperspectral images](#)

Pages 32-41

Available Online 2018-09-11

Long Guo, Haitao Zhang, Tiezhu Shi, Yiyun Chen, Qinghu Jiang, M. Linderman

Write your own summary

- In your own words, summarize the objectives and main findings/innovations of the paper
- *Not* the authors's Abstract
- This shows the editor and reviewer that you understand the main idea of the paper.
- Example:

“This paper simulates the situation where more or less experienced observers identify the soil series at a point location, from simple to more complete field observations and knowledge (via the SSURGO geographic database) of the map unit and its context at that location. The field observation is simulated by a NCSS-Soil Characterization Database profile, taken as what would be observed, and its characteristics are taken as observed at the various levels of observation detail. The series is identified from a set of series in the observation's map unit (its components) and its neighbours (their components) by taxonomic distances, comparing three methods of considering depths and three levels of property information.”

Review items – for detailed comments

Each journal or publisher has their own suggested list, here is an **example** from SOIL

(1) **relevance and scientific merit**

1. Does the paper address relevant scientific questions within the **scope** of the journal?

“SOIL publishes scientific research that contributes to understanding the soil system and its interaction with humans and the entire Earth system. The scope of the journal includes all topics that fall within the study of soil science as a discipline, with an emphasis on studies that integrate soil science with other sciences (hydrology, agronomy, socio-economics, health sciences, atmospheric sciences, etc.).”

2. Does the paper present **novel** concepts, ideas, tools, or data?

3. Does the paper address soils within a **multidisciplinary context**?

4. Is the paper of **broad international interest**?

(2) **scientific approach**

1. Are **clear objectives and/or hypotheses** put forward?
2. Are the **scientific methods** valid and clear outlined to be reproduced?
3. Are **analyses and assumptions** valid?
4. Are the presented **results sufficient to support the interpretations** and associated discussion?
5. Is the **discussion relevant** and backed up?
6. Are **accurate conclusions** reached based on the presented results and discussion?

(3) **structure**

1. Does the **title** clearly reflect the contents of the paper and is it informative?
2. Does the **abstract** provide a concise and complete summary, including quantitative results?
3. Is the overall presentation **well structured, concise** and to the point?
4. Is the **language** fluent, precise, and grammatically correct?
5. Are the **figures and tables** useful and all necessary?
6. Are mathematical formulae, symbols, abbreviations, and units correctly defined and used according to the **author guidelines**?
7. Should any parts of the paper (text, formulae, figures, tables) be **clarified, reduced, combined, or eliminated**?

(4) **ethics/relation to previous work**

1. Do the authors give **proper credit** to related and relevant work and clearly indicate their own original contribution?
2. Has this same work, or most of it, been **published before**?
3. Are the number and quality of **references** appropriate?

Example review (part)

SOIL Discuss.,
https://doi.org/10.5194/soil-2018-30-RC1, 2018
© Author(s) 2018. This work is distributed under
the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License.



Interactive comment on “Refining physical aspects of soil quality and soil health when exploring the effects of soil degradation and climate change on biomass production: an Italian case study” by Antonello Bonfante et al.

D. Rossiter (Referee)

david.rossiter@wur.nl

Received and published: 24 September 2018

Review of soil-2018-30 D G Rossiter ISRIC-World Soil Information/Cornell University/Nanjing Normal University

(1) General comments

This paper is a welcome step towards quantifying the concept of "soil health" and towards relating it to the concept of soil phenoforms (management-induced semi-permanent changes in soil properties within one soil genoform). It also presents a

C1

SOILD

Interactive
comment

Printer-friendly version

Discussion paper



convincing argument to use simulation for the future (obviously). The technical aspects are sound, in particular a good choice of soil-plant-atmosphere model and associated pedotransfer functions and a good choice of quantitative phenoform indicators. Less convincing are the future scenarios, although that is entirely because of the uncertainty in the RCP 8.5- IPCC scenario – a reasonable choice since this is what is presented to policy makers. The clear message is that biomass yield, as affected by changes in soil physical properties, can be a quantitative indicator of soil physical "health".

The paper mentions an "logical and interconnected sequence considering pedological, physical, chemical and biological aspects" to holistically evaluate soil health; however the paper does not give any details of how such a sequence would work, nor indeed why a sequential approach (and in the order given, at that) would be desirable. This is outside the scope of the paper (as indicated by its title) but if it is included in the discussion it could be expanded somewhat.

(2) Specific comments

L30 likely under the scenarios; see also comment below on L309

L57 fixed values as expressed by laboratory measurements of the pressure head

L91 Unfortunately, the "soil series" is not used everywhere, explain that the lowest level of other classifications are essentially the same concept. However this level is recognized as necessary for communication with stakeholders, see for example: Lepsch, I. F. (2013). Status of soil surveys and demand for soil series descriptions in Brazil. Soil Horizons, 54(2), 0. <https://doi.org/10.2136/sh2013-54-2-gc>

L182: Is Yw always lower than Yp? Perhaps if averaged over a number of years – there are always unfavourable years.

L200 These are the phenoforms! emphasize

L255, Figure 1: terminology "environmental systems" seems over-ambitious for what are "landform classes" or similar. Is this the standard terminology used in Italian soil

C2

SOILD

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Discussion paper



The recommendation

Usually there are three choices; in all cases **explain your reasoning**.

1. **Accept** without revision
2. **Reject**, no possibility to improve enough to publish in this journal
3. **Revise**:
 - can be major, moderate or minor
 - explain **what** revision is requested and **why** it is necessary
 - tell to the editor whether you would be willing to review the revised article

Recall, *the journal editor does not have to accept your suggestion*.

Do not ...

- ... question the **motives** or **ethics** of the authors – if there is suspicion of ethical problems (e.g., plagiarism) contact the editor
- ... **attack** the authors (“What kind of idiot would write such garbage?”)
 - Express your opinion politely
 - * “The main message of this paper is not clear to this reviewer”
 - * “The authors use methods that have been superseded by more appropriate methods some time ago, for example ...”

Topic: Ethics in reviewing

- Confidential material
- Conflict of interest
- Avoiding bias

Codes of conduct

COPE

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About COPE

COPE is committed to educate and support editors, publishers and those involved in publication ethics with the aim of moving the culture of publishing towards one where ethical practices becomes the norm, part of the publishing culture. Our approach is firmly in the direction of influencing through education, resources and support of our members alongside the fostering of professional debate in the wider community.

Best practice & guidance

Core practices are the policies and practices journals and publishers need, to reach the highest standards in publication ethics. Each area includes cases with advice, guidance, education and events.

[View Resources](#)

Advice

Members can submit cases to the quarterly Forum for discussion and advice. All the cases, together with advice from the Forum, are available to search by core practice.

[View Cases](#)

Education

Our eLearning course gives practical guidance on topics including: plagiarism, falsification, authorship, conflicts of interest and misconduct.

[View eLearning](#)

Authority

Our purpose is to ensure ethical practices become part of publishing culture. We speak about current debates and issues at events and in newsletters and articles.

[View News & Opinions](#)



sources: <https://publicationethics.org>, <https://www.nwo.nl/en/documents/nwo/policy/netherlands-code-of-conduct-for-research-integrity>

Confidential material

- The material you are reviewing is **unpublished**, which means it is still **private**
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Conflict of interest

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- ... reject a paper because it conflicts with your **own views**, if otherwise the paper is sound
- ... reject a paper because you are working on the **same topic** and do not want other work published first
- ... suggest that the author include **citations to your work** unless for valid scientific reasons (i.e., it would add value to the paper)

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If the authors and their institutions are known (single-blind review) or can be inferred (double-blind review):

- Judge the work on its **own merits**, *not* on the reputation of the authors or institutions
 - *positive* (“Chinese Academy of Sciences”) or *negative* (“Institution you have never heard of in a country you had to find on the map”)
- Be especially aware not to judge on the basis of **affiliation**, **country** of origin, **gender**, apparent **religious beliefs** or **political affiliation** of authors
 - Military or (agro-)industry . . .
 - Chinese names, obviously Muslim or Jewish names . . .

Topic: Becoming a Reviewer

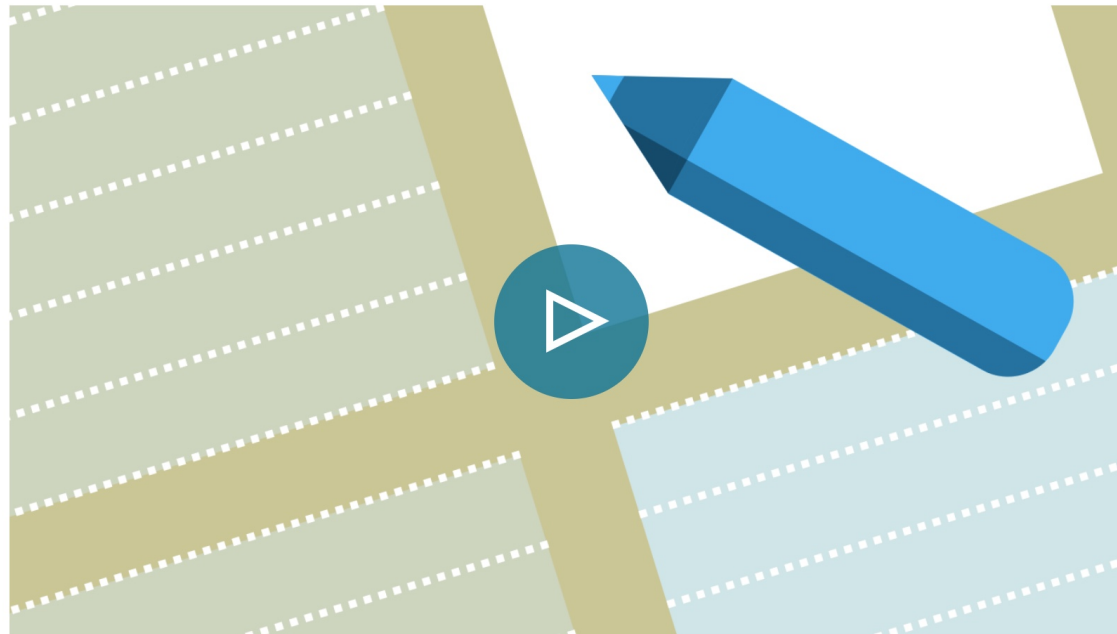
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- You may **volunteer**:
 - via the **journal's home page**
 - * register as a potential reviewer and indicate your interests
 - via direct contact with an **editor** – see the editorial board at the journal home page

Topic: Resources

- **publisher's web pages**
 - Elsevier “Researcher Academy”; Springer “How to peer review”
- a **senior colleague**
- a **journal editor** – they are eager to get good reviewers and good reviews

< BECOMING A PEER REVIEWER

Understanding the peer review process



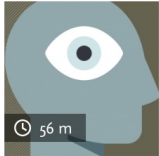
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How to peer review

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Although it is an important aspect of the scientific process, how to peer review is rarely taught in universities and can be a daunting task for those new to it. Compared with conducting research, teaching, and writing your own manuscripts, reviewing someone else's work may seem relatively easy. In fact, reviewing effectively is a special skill that takes time and effort to develop. This tutorial gives you an introduction to peer review and explains how you should go about reviewing a paper.

source: <https://www.springer.com/gp/authors-editors/authorandreviewertutorials/howtopeerreview>

The image shows the landing page of the Publons Academy. At the top, there is a dark navigation bar with the 'publons' logo on the left, a search bar in the center with the placeholder text 'Search, or import by DOI/arXiv/PMID', and links for 'HOME', 'BROWSE', 'COMMUNITY', and 'FAQ' on the right. The main content area features a large background image of two people working on a laptop in a modern office setting. Overlaid on this image is the 'Publons Academy' logo, which consists of a shield with a large 'P' and the text 'PUBLONS ACADEMY' below it. Below the logo, the text 'Welcome to the Publons Academy' is displayed in a large, white, sans-serif font. Underneath this, in a smaller white font, is the phrase 'Become a master of peer review'. A prominent white button with the text 'GO TO COURSE' in blue is centered below the text. At the bottom of the page, there are three orange icons: a bar chart with a magnifying glass, three stylized figures, and a person at a whiteboard. Each icon is accompanied by a line of text in blue capital letters.

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Take-home messages:

- Peer review is a **vital part of the scientific enterprise**
- Peer review can **stimulate your own research**
- Peer review can make you **recognized in your scientific community**
- **Journals are eager for good peer reviewers** and have resources to help do a proper review