

Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement

Introduction

Raumforschung und Raumordnung | Spatial Research and Planning (RuR) is owned and edited by

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on whose behalf it is published at regular intervals six times a year in printed and electronic form by the publishing house [oekom – Gesellschaft für ökologische Kommunikation mbH, Munich](#) (oekom).

RuR recognizes its responsibilities in upholding ethical standards and pursues best practices in scholarly publishing. RuR supports the recommendations of the German Research Foundation (DFG) regarding „[Leitlinien zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis](#)“ (Kodex) 2019 (Stand November 2021).

In this statement, RuR provides basic information about the journal and outlines its principles of expected ethical behaviour. The following list of tasks and responsibilities of the members of the editorial board and scientific advisory board, the editorial office, guest editors, authors, peer reviewers and publishing house is intended to give a broad overview; it is not exhaustive. It is consistent with COPE guidelines and the wording is partly based on [Elsevier's Publishing Ethics policy](#).

Name of the journal

Raumforschung und Raumordnung | Spatial Research and Planning (RuR)

Revenue sources

RuR is mainly financed by the journal owners ARL, ILS, IÖR and IRS from their basic funds (provided by the German federal government as well as the federal states). After the “online first” publication of a text, author charges, known as article processing charges (APCs), of €250 plus VAT are incurred. There are no submission fees. The journal owners have established “hardship funds” that may be possible to access. The journal can be ordered as a print edition from the publisher. The publisher collects the subscription fees, which cover the costs of printing and distribution.

Advertising

The journal owners and the publishing house (oekom) decide together whether and which advertisements will be published in the journal. Advertisements from external advertisers are limited to a maximum of four pages in print per issue; in addition, the publishing house (oekom) may cover a maximum of eight pages with its own advertisements. By no means will advertisements influence journal content or editorial decision making. All advertisements will be kept separate from published content and will be clearly marked.

Marketing

Any direct marketing activities, including solicitation of manuscripts that are conducted on behalf of the journal, shall be appropriate, well targeted, and unobtrusive.

Open access policy

RuR is an open access journal. It is indexed in the Directory of Open Access Journals ([DOAJ](#)). The journal website provides free online access to the entire current issue and provided archive of the journal.

Payable individual print issues can be ordered from the publishing house (oekom) (please send your request to abo@oekom.de). A paid print subscription can be ordered via <https://www.oekom.de/zeitschrift/abo/raumforschung-und-raumordnung-15>.

All access information is provided on the website <https://rur.oekom.de>.

Publication schedule

RuR is published at regular intervals six times a year in print and online.

Copyright and licensing information

RuR is an open access journal. If not otherwise indicated, all articles are published under the [Creative Commons license CC BY 4.0](#). According to this CC license, RuR contributions may be reprinted or otherwise distributed as long as the authors are credited and the complete bibliographical data are cited. Authors agree to publish their articles under the Creative Commons license CC BY 4.0 by giving their approval for publication in RuR. Full copyright as well as all other exploitation rights remain with the authors. Copyright and licensing information is clearly stated on the website under the heading “Open Access”, under the heading “Submission” and in the author guidelines.

Data sharing and reproducibility

RuR encourages authors to share the data and other artefacts supporting the results in the paper by archiving it in an appropriate public repository. Authors may draft a data availability statement, including a link to the repository they have used, in order that this statement can be published in their paper. This statement will describe how the data can be accessed, and

include a persistent identifier (e.g., a DOI for the data, or an accession number) from the repository where you shared the data. Shared data should be cited.

Archiving

Current and past issues are freely accessible online via <https://rur.oekom.de>

Archiving policy

To ensure permanent availability and accessibility, RuR pursues various strategies:

- Public Knowledge Project (PKP) Private LOCKSS Network (PLN): RuR uses Open Journal Systems (OJS), a journal management and publishing system developed by the Public Knowledge Project (PKP). Published content is deposited into the PKP Private LOCKSS Network (PLN) for preservation and post-cancellation and perpetual access.
- Portico – digital long-term preservation service: RuR archives its published content in Portico, a community-supported preservation archive that safeguards access to e-journals, e-books, and digital collections. Content will remain accessible and usable for researchers, scholars, and students in the future (preservation, post-cancellation, perpetual access).
- German National Library (DNB) mandatory deposits: The publishing house oekom is obliged to submit all online issues of RuR to the DNB, which catalogues and archives online publications, guarantees their authenticity and ensures long-term preservation.
- RuR digital archives: Furthermore, RuR maintains its own digital archive and preserves all information on external computers and disks.

The website

All RuR journal content and information – including that provided in this statement– are available on the website <https://rur.oekom.de>. The website has an English and a German version.

The website <https://rur.oekom.de> uses the publishing system Open Journal Systems (OJS). Open Journal Systems (OJS) is a journal management and publishing system that has been developed by the Public Knowledge Project (PKP) through its federally funded efforts to expand and improve access to research.

Editorial board – profile and tasks

Members of RuR's editorial board are appointed by the directors of ARL, ILS, IÖR, IRS and IfL by virtue of their internationally recognized expertise in the interdisciplinary field of spatial development and spatial planning. Members of the editorial board

- serve a period of three years with an option for renewed appointment upon consensual decision of the editorial board. In the event of a tie the editor-in-chief makes the final decision;

- define the journal's general thematic and editorial guidelines at regular meetings;
- appoint the members of the scientific advisory board;
- evaluate and select themes for special issues;
- appoint external scientific experts to serve as guest editors for special issues of the journal;
- assure the quality of calls for papers for special issues;
- manages the editorial as well as quality assurance (review) processes and prepares the journal issues for publication in print and online in cooperation with the publishing house;
- invite reviewers for any manuscripts in the categories "Forschungsbeitrag / Research Article";
- decide on the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts upon suggestions from reviewers;
- check all submissions prior to review to ensure that the manuscripts comply with the journal's publication ethics, fall within its remit, and meet its standards of scientific and formal editorial quality. They also ensure that they are accessible to readers in terms of language, illustrations and figures;
- review each manuscript in the categories "Kommentar/ Commentary" and "Rezension / Book review" to ensure it complies with the journal's publication ethics and meets its scientific and formal editorial standards;
- act, if necessary, as arbitrators in all matters of conflict between authors, reviewers, guest editors and readers.

The full names and affiliations of current appointments to the editorial board are listed at the [website](#).

Scientific advisory board – profile and tasks

Members of the scientific advisory board of RuR are appointed by the editorial board by virtue of their internationally recognized expertise in the interdisciplinary field of spatial development, spatial planning and related research areas. Members of the scientific advisory board

- serve a period of three years with an option for renewed appointment upon consensual decision of the editorial board. In the event of a tie the editor-in-chief makes the final decision;
- suggest thematic contributions that correspond with the journal's profile;
- suggest authors and reviewers;
- may act as third reviewer in the case of conflicting first and second reviews;
- support the journal in shaping a profile in the field of spatial development and spatial planning.

The full names and affiliations of current appointments to the scientific advisory board are listed at the [website](#).

Editorial processes

RuR is committed to editorial independence, and strives in all cases to prevent this principle from being compromised through conflicts of interest, fear, or any other corporate or political influence. Article processing charges or waiver status do not influence editorial decision

making. Any person involved in RuR's editorial processes is required to respect this commitment to editorial independence.

Editorial processes for peer-reviewed manuscripts in the journal section "Forschungsbeitrag / Research Article"

Corresponding authors may submit a manuscript at any time to the journal's editorial board via the publishing system Open Journal Systems (OJS). Upon receipt, the editorial board, if necessary, in cooperation with disciplinary experts from the journal's scientific advisory board, pre-checks the submitted manuscript in view to its thematic fit with the journal's remit, scientific quality and compliance with the journal's publication ethics as well as scientific and formal editorial standards. The editorial board reserves the right to reject any manuscript that does not comply with content requirements, formal specifications, or quality standards of the journal. In such a case, the corresponding author will be notified within approximately two weeks.

If the pre-check is successful, then the corresponding author is notified that their manuscript will enter the double-blind peer review process. Approximate timescale: four weeks. If the outcome of the peer review process is positive ("acceptance without revisions", or "acceptance with (major) revisions"), the editorial board forwards the reviews to the corresponding author within approximately two weeks. The corresponding author is then given the necessary time for revisions. If the peer reviews are conflicting ("acceptance without revisions" and "rejection") the editorial board will request a third review, preferably issued by one of the members of the scientific advisory board. If the manuscript receives two negative peer reviews, it is rejected and the corresponding author notified.

The final manuscript version is checked by the editorial board for compliance with the journal's publication ethics, scientific and formal editorial standards, if necessary, in cooperation with disciplinary experts from the journal's scientific advisory board. Approximate timescale: four weeks. If the manuscript meets the scientific quality and complies with editorial standards, then the corresponding author is notified and the editorial copy editing and external layout processes begin.

If, after a prolonged period of revisions, the manuscript still does not meet the reviewers' scientific requirements and/or editorial standards, it may be rejected by the journal's editor-in-chief in coordination with the editorial board.

The corresponding author receives the galley proofs, and gives print approval within five days. The manuscript is published in one of the upcoming issues of the journal in print and online, approximate timescale for online publication is four weeks.

Editorial processes for manuscripts in the journal sections "Kommentar / Commentary" and "Rezension / Book review"

Corresponding authors may submit a commentary or book review to the to the journal's editorial board via the publishing system Open Journal Systems (OJS), provided that they fall within the journal's thematic remit, comply with the journal's publication ethics and adhere to category-specific author guidelines.

The editorial board reviews the manuscript (editorial board peer review), if necessary, in

cooperation with members of the scientific advisory board, and decides whether to accept the manuscript into the editorial process on the basis of its thematic fit and scientific quality. The editorial board will notify the corresponding author within three weeks of receipt whether the manuscript has been accepted into the editorial process or not. The editorial board reserves the right to suggest and request alterations and improvements to the manuscript, in particular with regard to its scientific content, length and/or style.

If the manuscript meets the scientific quality and complies with the journal's publication ethics as well as scientific and formal editorial standards, then the corresponding author is notified and the editorial copy editing and external layout processes begin, approximate timescale: four weeks.

The corresponding author receives the galley proofs, and gives print approval within five days. The manuscript is published in one of the next issues of the journal in print and online, approximate timescale for online publication is four weeks

Editors' responsibilities

The following responsibilities apply to the editor-in-chief and the whole editorial board as well as the editorial office, all subsumed in this section under the term "editor".

Fair play

Submitted manuscripts are evaluated for their intellectual content without regard to age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the author(s).

Confidentiality

The editors must not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the publishing house, as appropriate.

Use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the journal editorial process

Peer review is foundational to the integrity of the scientific process, which RuR upholds rigorously. The editorial responsibilities for assessing scientific manuscripts are solely human functions due to the nuanced judgment they require. Therefore, RuR prohibits the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies by editors in the manuscript evaluation or decision-making process. Such technologies do not possess the critical thinking and original assessment capabilities essential for this task and risk producing flawed or biased conclusions. The editor bears full responsibility for managing the editorial process, making the final decisions, and communicating them to the authors.

- Editors are responsible for ensuring that both authors and reviewers fully disclose their use of AI tools and comply with ethical standards.
- AI tools should not be employed in the manuscript evaluation or decision-making processes due to the inability of these technologies to perform critical editorial

assessments.

- If AI tools are used to select reviewers, the editorial team must closely supervise this process and retain ultimate responsibility for editorial decisions.
- As AI technologies evolve, RuR will regularly update its policies and guidelines to promote responsible and transparent use within scientific publishing.
- To improve article visibility in academic search engines, the editorial team is aligning article titles with Academic Search Engine Optimization (ASEO) principles. For this purpose, the RuR editorial office may utilize "ChatGPT Team", a paid version of ChatGPT. This tool prioritizes confidentiality and data ownership by abstaining from utilizing entered data for model training.

Disclosure and conflicts of interest

Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in the own research of an editor without the express written consent of the author(s). Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. The editors should recuse themselves from considering manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or (possibly) institutions connected to the papers.

Where an editor or staff member is on the author list, they must declare this in the competing interests section of the submitted manuscript. These submissions will be treated the same as all other manuscripts.

Publication decisions

The editorial board is responsible for deciding which of the submitted articles will be published. They should be guided in their decisions by the journal's high standards of quality assurance, thematic profile and formal editorial standards. They are constrained by legal requirements regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. They may confer with members of the scientific advisory board or reviewers when making these decisions.

Peer-review process

RuR understands peer review as a process to obtain advice on individual manuscripts from reviewers expert in the field of publication. The peer review process is outlined on the webpage (reviewer's responsibilities) and, thereby, publicly accessible.

RuR's peer review process for manuscripts in the category "Forschungsbeitrag / Research Article" is double-blind and not public: the persons involved in the peer review process (authors, reviewers, editorial board, as well as, in the case of conflicting reviews, members of the scientific advisory board) don't know each other by name. They interact with equal rights in a fair and constructive way.

The central aim of the peer review process is quality assurance. The reviewers' comments support the editorial board in their assessment of manuscripts and include suggestions for their improvement. This also includes the reasoned rejection of manuscripts. Reviewers are qualified by unbiased and proven scientific expertise in the field of the manuscript under

review.

This means: Peer reviewers should not consider evaluating manuscripts in which they assume knowing the author(s). All judgements and findings in the peer review process should be objective. Reviewers should sustain their critique by pointing to relevant published work, which is not yet cited. Reviewers must treat all information from manuscripts under review confidentially before publication, or in the event that the manuscript is rejected.

Reviews and possible replies from the authors are not published.

Manuscripts are reviewed by two external reviewers who are not members of the editorial board. If the outcome of the peer review process is positive (“acceptance without revisions”, or “acceptance with (major) revisions”), the editorial board forwards the reviews to the corresponding author within approximately two weeks. The corresponding author is then given the necessary time for revisions. In the case of conflicting peer reviews (“acceptance without revisions” and “rejection”) the editorial board will request a third review, usually issued by one of the members of the scientific advisory board. If the manuscript receives two negative peer reviews, it is rejected and the corresponding author notified.

Manuscripts in the categories „Kommentar / Commentary“ and „Rezension / Book Review“ undergo an editorial board peer review: The editorial board reviews the manuscript, if necessary in cooperation with members of the scientific advisory board, and decides whether to accept the manuscript into the editorial process on the basis of its thematic fit and scientific quality.

Reviewers’ responsibilities

Contribution to editorial decisions

Peer review assists the editorial board in making editorial decisions and through the editorial communications with the author(s) may also assist the author(s) in improving the paper. Any selected referee who feels unqualified to peer review the research reported in a manuscript, assumes to know the author(s) or knows that its timely review will be impossible should immediately notify the journal’s editorial office.

Confidentiality

Any manuscripts received for peer review must be treated as confidential documents. They must not be shown to or discussed with others.

Standards of objectivity

Peer reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author(s) is inappropriate. Referees should express their views clearly with supporting arguments.

All reviews for “Forschungsbeitrag / Research Article” include an assessment of the submitted manuscript according to the following dimensions:

- Positioning in the academic discourse (e.g. convincing, one-sided, selective, missing)

- Originality and novelty (e.g. new aspects illustrated, further developed, little original content)
- Structure (e.g. stringent, requires some revision, poorly structured)
- Consistency of contents/appropriateness of the title and abstract and their fit with the main text (e.g. very good, requires improvement, unsystematic)
- Consideration of the current debate (e.g. convincing, requires some elaboration, incomplete)
- Tables and figures (e.g. appropriate, compelling, require improvement, redundant)

Use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies

Reviewers should not use AI tools to write reviews or parts of reviews in order to prevent biased or inaccurate evaluations. If AI tools, including translation and grammar correction tools, are used at any stage of the review process, confidentiality must be maintained. Reviewers are also required to disclose the use of these AI tools to the journal, specifying which tools were used and how they were applied.

Acknowledgement of sources

Peer reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the author(s). Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument had been previously reported should be accompanied by the relevant citation. Peer reviewers should also call to the editorial board attention any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published paper of which they have personal knowledge.

Disclosure and conflicts of interest

Peer reviewers should not consider evaluating manuscripts in which they assume knowing the author(s). Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in a reviewer's own research. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage.

Authors' responsibilities

RuR lays out detailed principles of the ethical behaviour that is expected from authors in its Author Guidelines. The most important authors' responsibilities are summarized below.

RuR is an open access journal. After the "online first" publication of a text, author charges, known as article processing charges (APCs), of €250 plus VAT are incurred. The journal owners have established "hardship funds" that may be possible to access. There are no submission fees. No author processing charges apply for peer review or editorial processing. Authors interested in submitting a paper to RuR can find this information clearly stated on the RuR website, for example, under "Submission" and in the Author Guidelines.

RuR is a peer-reviewed journal, as stated on the website under "Submission" and in the Author Guidelines.

Reporting standards

Authors of papers of original research should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the paper. The manuscript should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behaviour and are unacceptable. Review and professional publication articles should also be accurate and objective, and editorial ‘opinion’ works should be clearly identified as such.

Originality and acknowledgement of sources

Authors should ensure that they have written entirely original works, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others that this has been appropriately cited or quoted and permission has been obtained where necessary. Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work. Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical behaviour and is unacceptable.

Use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies

Authors are required to disclose any use of AI tools, including generative AI and language models (LLMs), in the preparation of their manuscripts. This disclosure should include the tool’s name, version, and manufacturer and be placed in the manuscript's methods section or acknowledgements. The use of translation and grammar correction tools, such as *DeepL Translator* and *Writefull*, does not require declaration. However, manual verification of their outputs remains compulsory.

Generative AI tools, including LLMs, must not be credited as authors. Accountability for the manuscript content rests solely with human authors. Authors must ensure that AI-generated content adheres to established publication ethics and guidelines, maintaining the integrity of the submitted work.

Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication

Authors should not in general publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical publishing behaviour and is unacceptable.

Pre-prints

RuR will consider for review articles previously available as pre-prints, on condition that the authors agree to the following: The authors retain copyright to the preprint and are permitted to submit to the journal. The authors declare that a pre-print is available within a cover letter presented during submission. This must include a link to the location of the pre-print. Should the submission be published, the authors are expected to update the information associated with the pre-print version to show that a final version has been published in the journal, including the DOI linking directly to the publication. Any previous publication as a pre-print

should be disclosed in the paper.

Authorship

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be acknowledged or listed as contributors. A so-called “honorary authorship” is inadmissible.

The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors and no inappropriate co-authors are included on the paper, and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication. Authors of scientific publications are always jointly responsible for their content.

Moreover, RuR integrates established and emerging industry standards to increase transparency in authorship (for example, [ORCID](#)).

Hazards and human or animal subjects

RuR is committed to ensure that ethical and responsible research is published. To comply with ethical oversight, author(s) are asked that all necessary consents and approvals have been obtained to publish their work. If the work involves chemicals, procedures or equipment that have any unusual hazards inherent in their use, the author(s) must clearly identify these in the manuscript. If the work involves the use of animal or human subjects, the author(s) should ensure that the manuscript contains a statement that all procedures were performed in compliance with relevant laws and institutional guidelines and that the appropriate institutional committee(s) have approved them.

Disclosure and conflicts of interest

All authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their manuscript. All sources of financial support for the project should be disclosed.

At the time of submission of a manuscript, author(s) must disclose any affiliations with any organizations that to any author’s knowledge have a direct interest, particularly a financial interest, in the subject matter or materials discussed. The single most important piece of information to be disclosed is the source of funding for the study.

Fundamental errors in published works

When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author’s obligation to promptly notify the journal editorial board and cooperate with the editorial board to retract or correct the paper.

Publication ethics

For all parties involved in the act of publishing it is important to agree upon standards of proper ethical behaviour. RuR lays out its principles of expected ethical behaviour for members of the editorial board, members of the scientific advisory board, guest editors, authors, reviewers and publishing house in this Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement its guidelines for authors and reviewers.

Ethical oversight

RuR is committed to following the above mentioned guidelines and enforcing the stated standards of behaviour. To comply with ethical oversight, RuR asks the members of the editorial board, members of the scientific advisory board, guest editors, authors, and reviewers to read the above mentioned guidelines carefully and adhere to the conditions. Where RuR suspects or is made aware of ethical breaches by members of the editorial board, members of the scientific advisory board, guest editors, authors, or reviewers, RuR will proceed to take the necessary measures, handling the suspected case with confidentiality. Depending on the scope and severity of the case, measures taken can range from contacting and investigating those under suspicion, to informing relevant institutions (e. g. those of members of the editorial board, members of the scientific advisory board, guest editors, authors, and reviewers), and involving further institutions or organizations as appropriate. In doing so, RuR will follow [COPE guidelines](#) and [flowcharts](#).

Allegations of misconduct

RuR is committed to upholding the integrity of the work RuR publishes. RuR regards as scientific misconduct the intentional and grossly negligent statement of falsehoods in a scientific context, the violation of intellectual property rights or impeding another person's research work. RuR will take all appropriate measures against publication malpractices such as alleged or proven scientific misconduct, fraudulent publication or plagiarism pre-publication and post-publication. In no case shall RuR or its editors encourage such misconduct, or knowingly allow such misconduct to take place.

In order to actively identify and prevent such publication malpractices, RuR has various systems in place. The members of the editorial board check that all submissions adhere to scientific quality and standards. External reviewers evaluate scientific quality, substance and novelty during the peer-review process. In the event that the journal's publisher or editors are made aware of any allegation of research misconduct relating to a published article in their journal, the publisher or editor shall follow COPE's guidelines (or equivalent) in dealing with allegations.

Data fabrication and data falsification

Making false assertions in performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results seriously deviates from good scientific practice and is unacceptable. Data fabrication concerns making up results and recording them as if they were real. Data falsification concerns manipulating research materials, equipment or processes or changing, omitting or suppressing data or results without justification (for instance, by selecting desirable results or evaluation methods or dismissing unwanted results or evaluation methods, without

disclosing this decision, or by manipulating reports, diagrams or illustrations). Manipulating images and figures by obscuring, enhancing, deleting and/or introducing new elements into an image or figure, is considered as improper.

Plagiarism

RuR understands plagiarism as unauthorized use following the claim of authorship. RuR does not tolerate plagiarism. To verify the originality of content submitted to the journal, RuR uses the plagiarism checking tool [iThenticate](#) to check submissions against previous publications. Submissions containing suspected plagiarism, in whole or part, will be rejected. If plagiarism is discovered post-publication, RuR will follow its guidance outlined in the *Retractions, corrections and expressions of concern* section of this Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement.

Retractions, corrections and expressions of concern

RuR allows debate post publication through letters to the editor.

Where RuR suspects or is made aware of alleged or proven scientific misconduct, fraudulent publication or plagiarism, it will launch investigations and take all reasonable steps to prevent the publication of papers where research misconduct has occurred. This includes the prompt publication of corrections as errata or, in the most severe cases, the complete retraction of the affected work.

Cases of alleged plagiarism initiate a process in which authors must provide exonerating evidence and/or correct the manuscript. The editorial board will evaluate the evidence and/or corrections, for manuscripts submitted for a special issue in cooperation with the guest editors. Together these bodies will make a decision whether to reject the manuscript or continue with the editorial process.

In the event of demonstrable fundamental errors in a published article, RuR's editorial board may decide to retract the article from the RuR online presence as well as from associated databases. This process is carried out in collaboration with an ombudsperson selected from the RuR editorial board members and the editor-in-chief. Fundamental errors include, amongst others, the deliberate or unconscious use of false empirical data that is central to the argumentation of the text, and the deliberate or unconscious omission of references to sources for empirical data or cited text passages. Authors may be given the opportunity to add the errata to the publication. If this is not possible, the result may be the permanent withdrawal of the article.

By publishing in RuR, authors commit themselves to expressing any concerns and notifying the editor-in-chief and/or members of the editorial board at the earliest possible opportunity should they become aware of any fundamental error in their text. RuR expects its readers, reviewers and editors to notify them of any concerns about plagiarism, by contacting the editor-in-chief.

Complaints and appeals

Complaints and appeals against the journal, its editorial board, scientific advisory board, guest editors, reviewers, publishing house, or authors are handled by the editor-in-chief

as the journal's ombudsperson (see the tasks and responsibilities of the editorial board and editor-in-chief above). The ombudsperson shall be the first point of contact and is responsible for investigating the issue, mediating between parties and taking a final decision on the issue. In this process, the ombudsperson may consult the expertise of other members of the editorial board, the scientific advisory board, the guest editors, or any other person the ombudsperson deems appropriate in order to resolve the conflict. The ombudsperson shall not be obliged to follow instructions. If the ombudsperson is accused of a conflict of interest, the editorial board shall appoint a substitute.

The editorial board, or the editor-in-chief, shall also handle conflicts of interest of authors, reviewers, the editorial board, guest editors, journal and publishing house, whether identified during the editorial process or after publication. The same process as described above will apply.

Complaints and appeals during the editorial processes

RuR will consider appeals on decisions taken during the editorial processes listed above. The editorial board, together with the original reviewers and/or a third reviewer and/or members of the journal's scientific advisory board, will consider any new data supplied by the author in support of their argument. The author will be notified of the outcome of their appeal along with an explanation of the decision.

Complaints and appeals after the editorial processes

Such cases include: When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal's editorial board and cooperate with the editorial board to retract or correct the paper. In the event of errors noted after publication, the corresponding author is obliged to provide corrections, which will be published as errata. In the event of fundamental violations of the journal's publication ethics detected after publication of the manuscript, the corresponding author is obliged to consent to the retraction of the article. In the event of errors detected only after publication of the manuscript and committed by the journal's editorial board, or the publishing house, the latter are willing to publish corrections, clarifications, retractions and apologies where needed.

Conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest exists when any personal interests of the editorial board, scientific advisory board, guest editors, reviewers, publishing house, or authors conflict with the veracity or integrity of a publication, peer review, or editorial decision-making. Conflicts of interest can arise from commercial, intellectual, financial, and other grounds.

In the event that any member of the editorial board has a conflict of interest with any subject matter or authorship of any work, he or she should decline to manage the work, in order to avoid incurring any subjectivities or undue delays in the process of editing the work.

The editorial board or the editor-in-chief shall also handle conflicts of interest of authors, reviewers, the editorial board, guest editors, journal and publishing house, whether identified during the editorial process or after publication. The same process as described above will

apply.

Readers who wish to comment on a published work should declare their conflicts of interest with the subject matter or authors.

Confirmation from the publishing house

In the event that the publishing house [oekom – Gesellschaft für ökologische Kommunikation mbH, Munich](#) (oekom) is made aware of any allegation of research misconduct relating to a published article in RuR, it will in cooperation with the editorial board take all measures necessary, including the prompt publication of an erratum or, in the most severe cases, the complete retraction of the affected work (see *Retractions, corrections and expressions of concern* above). The publishing house and the editorial board declare that they shall follow the principles of expected ethical behaviour developed in line with [COPE Core Practices](#) (or https://publicationethics.org/files/editable-bean/COPE_Core_Practices_0.pdf) as laid out in this Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement and shall turn in cases of controversial issues to the procedures and recommendations provided by COPE.

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