

The Editors of Marine Biology greatly appreciate your effort in evaluating this manuscript.

A good review helps the editor to decide whether a manuscript is suitable for publication in Marine Biology and helps the author(s) to publish the manuscript. The reviewer identifies problems and provides guidance to the author(s) for improving the manuscript.

Please find below (I) general GUIDELINES for evaluating the manuscript and (II) practical INSTRUCTIONS for submitting your review.

#### I GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Marine Biology receives far more scientifically correct manuscripts than can be published. We have, therefore, to concentrate our efforts on those manuscripts which will likely attract the attention of a broad, international readership. Only articles presenting novel and useful information for the scientific community, and contributing to scientific progress in a particular field can be considered for publication. The potential impact and importance of the work must be obvious to ensure that the article will be read and cited.

We understand that reviewers may have certain limitations in expertise with respect to a particular manuscript (e.g. concerning specific methods, statistical analyses, language skills etc.). We appreciate if reviewers indicate if they feel unsecure in evaluating certain parts of the manuscript, e.g. special methods, statistics or language, and advise us to invite additional experts for these fields. Reviews covering only some parts of a manuscript are welcome, but the reviewer's limitations should be stated.

The following points and questions might be helpful in reviewing an article.

**GENERAL SCIENTIFIC VALUE AND ORIGINALITY:** Does the manuscript provide new insights in the field, or is it just a replication of other work? Will the paper have an impact? Is the study designed to answer a question, support/disprove a hypothesis or idea, or is it mainly descriptive? Is there an idea behind the study?

**TITLE:** Is the title informative and a good reflection of the content? Does it signal the importance of the study for the field?

**ABSTRACT:** Does the Abstract cover the salient points of the paper? Does it explain what has been done, why it has been done and what the major results are?

**INTRODUCTION:** Is the problem clearly stated and is it clear why the problem is important or interesting? Is the study placed in an appropriate context by referring to citations of previous work? If any part of the data has appeared in a prior publication, or one that is in press or in review, by one or more of the current authors, has the extent of the overlap with the manuscript under consideration clearly been stated?

**METHODS:** Is the experimental or sampling design appropriate? Are all necessary parameters measured? Are the methods described clearly or are additional details needed to reproduce the study? Are there control experiments (if required)? Are the replicates correct or is there pseudo-replication?

**DATA/RESULTS:** Is the database sufficient or are additional data needed; if yes, would it be possible to provide them for a revision? Are the data/results clearly presented or would another form of presentation (Table, Figure, Text) be more helpful? Are GenBank accession numbers presented for DNA results?

**STATISTICS:** Are the statistical methods adequate?

**FIGURES/TABLES:** Are the figures and tables clear and informative? Are the figures with their legends self-explanatory (i.e. is all the information required to understand the figure provided in the figure labels and/or in the legend)? Are all tables and figures needed? Do graphs duplicate information given in tables and vice versa?

**DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS:** Do the data support the conclusions of the author? Do the authors speculate too much? Could they offer alternative interpretations of their results?

**LITERATURE:** Are the literature references presented correctly? Are the references relevant, up-to-date and accessible?

**LANGUAGE:** Is the language concise and clear? Does the manuscript conform to standard rules of English grammar and style?

## II INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF THE REVIEW

Please make a recommendation for the Editor by choosing one of the following options, give your rating and submit your comments to the author and to the editor.

### RECOMMENDATION: OPTIONS

**ACCEPT:** The manuscript is ready for publication (usually only after one or more revisions)

**ACCEPTABLE AFTER MINOR REVISION:** Please select this option if you consider the present manuscript suitable for Marine Biology and if the changes required are only minor. "Minor" does not primarily reflect the number of changes but their nature. It will not be necessary to send the revised manuscript out for review again.

**REVISE AND RESUBMIT:** Please select this option if you consider the present manuscript not yet adequate for publication, but a major revision could make it suitable, e.g. if improvement of the text and/or the mathematical/statistical evaluation of the data is required. If additional experiments/sampling/data are necessary the manuscript should be rejected. Usually a manuscript in this category will be reviewed again. "Revise and resubmit" is not a formal commitment to accept the paper.

**REJECT:** Rejection is a final decision. However, authors can be encouraged to submit a new paper if additional data can be provided. They can also be asked to re-write the paper if it contains interesting data but the scope seems too narrow for the wide audience of Marine Biology.

## RATING

Please make a priority rating regarding the importance and originality of a manuscript and the robustness of the methods (1 low - 5 excellent)

## COMMENTS

The Comments can be written or pasted directly into the respective fields or can be submitted as attachments.

In the "CONFIDENTIAL COMMENTS TO THE EDITOR" the reviewer should clearly indicate the specific importance of the study, the general suitability of the (revised) paper for publication in Marine Biology, and the main shortcomings.

In the "BLIND COMMENTS TO THE AUTHOR" the reviewer should point out any problems and, if possible, make suggestions for improvement. The comments should be friendly, but unambiguous.

Please use the right fields for your comments to the editor and for the comments to the author.

Otherwise confidential comments to the editor might be sent to the authors and are also visible for the other reviewers.

END



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