INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

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1. MAJOR GUIDELINES OVERVIEW
Key instructions are summarized in the following table:

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<th>Sections</th>
<th>RESEARCH ARTICLE</th>
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2. TYPES OF ARTICLES
_Agronomy for Sustainable Development_ publishes three types of papers: _Research articles, Review articles_ and _Meta-analyses_. The findings should be located at the interface of Agriculture and Sustainable Development: see _Aims and Scope_ for specific topics.

3. SUBMISSION PROCESS
_Agronomy for Sustainable Development_ only accepts **online submission**, at the following address: [http://www.editorialmanager.com/asde](http://www.editorialmanager.com/asde)

Authors must justify that their manuscript fit the journal _Aims and Scope_. Therefore, they must select the **classification item(s)** corresponding to the main topic of their manuscript.

The manuscript must be accompanied by a **cover letter** containing the article title, the full first name (no initial) and last name of all the authors, a paragraph describing the **claimed novelty** of the findings versus current knowledge, and a **list of six suggested, international reviewers** (title, name, postal address, Email address). The suggested reviewers must have no conflict of interest with the authors; they should **not be co-authors of previous publications co-signed by the authors**.

The ORCID identifier is mandatory for the corresponding author.

4. EDITORIAL PROCESS
Upon submission, articles enter the preselection process. At that stage, the general quality of the manuscript and its **compliance with scope and author instructions** are evaluated by the Managing Editor and the Editors in chief. The articles pre-selected are then assigned to an **Associate Editor** and at least two **external reviewers**, in a **single blind** process.

The Associate Editor submits his/her decision to the Managing Editors, which communicates a final decision to the authors. When revisions are requested, the authors are asked to answer point by point to each reviewer comment. The revised manuscript returns to the **same Associate Editor** and
is eventually evaluated again by the same or by alternative reviewers. Upon acceptance of the manuscript, the journal requests that the authors provide a short post on their article, that will be published in the journal blog (http://ist.blogs.inra.fr/agronomy/). The purpose of this post is to convert the main research information into easily accessible language in order to be understandable by the largest possible audience. This post must be accompanied by a relevant photo in landscape format. At the production stage, author should carefully examine the article proofs. No major corrections such as change in authorship will be accepted at this stage.

5. REQUIRED FORMAT FOR RESEARCH ARTICLES

General
Research articles should report the results of original research. The material should not have been previously published or submitted for publication elsewhere. Research articles should focus on one major discovery supported by 2-4 results.

Novelty
The novelty, or difference, of the major finding versus current knowledge should be clearly explained in:
- the cover letter to the Editor-in-Chief;
- the abstract;
- the end of the Results and Discussion section;
- the Conclusion section.
To explain the novelty, authors should first state what is already known (current knowledge), then state what is the added value of the main finding. Novelty claims should be made in an affirmative way, using for instance “Here we show for the first time that ...”, or “This is the first...” Only articles that show an outstanding added value will be sent for in-depth evaluation.

English
All manuscripts should be written in high-quality American English. Non-English native authors should seek appropriate help from English-writing professionals before submission. The journal may ask authors to provide a certificate from an English language proofreading service, ensuring correct grammar and typographical error corrections (i.e., punctuation, spelling, inconsistencies...) to help authors present a clear and scientific message.

Sections
The manuscript should contain the following items (in the same order):
- article title
- full first and last names of authors with an asterisk “*” highlighting the corresponding author;
- postal addresses; e-mail address of the corresponding author
- Abstract (less than 300 words)
- List of keywords (maximum 10)
- 1. Introduction
- 2. Materials and methods (including subsections - 2.1, 2.2...)
- 3. Results and discussion (including topical subsections - 3.1, 3.2...)
- 4. Conclusion
- Acknowledgments
- Declaration on conflict of interest
- References
- Statement of data availability (see in section 11. below what is expected here)
Other sections such as annexes and appendices are not accepted.
Separated "results" and "discussion" sections are not accepted.

General presentation
The text length of research articles is limited to 15 pages, excluding figures, tables and references. The number of literature references is limited to 30. All text should be written in a concise and integrated way, by focusing on major points, findings, breakthrough or discoveries, and their broad significance. All running text should be in Times 11 or Times New Roman 11, with 1.5 line spacing. Figure and table captions must be self-explanatory and they should be written in Times 10 or Times New Roman 10. Lines, as well as every page of the manuscript, including the title page, references, tables, etc. should be numbered.

Title
The title of research articles should be concise and informative and focused on the main scientific discovery.

Abstract
The research articles abstract of less than 300 words should report concisely on the main scientific breakthrough. The abstract should not contain abbreviations nor literature references. The abstract is structured in three parts: the first part summarizes the Introduction section, it thus gives the background, the global and specific issues, and the hypothesis (about 3-4 sentences). The second part abstracts the Experimental section, it thus gives a brief overview of the experiments or surveys (about 2-3 sentences). The third part abstracts the Results and discussion section, it thus gives: the 1-2 major results using precise trends and data, then the interpretation of those results, then the claimed novelty of those results versus current knowledge, then the basic or applied benefits of those results for sustainable agriculture. Novelty claims should be made in an affirmative way, using for instance “Here we show that ...”, “Here we demonstrate that ...” or “This is the first...”

Abbreviations
In general abbreviations should be avoided in the main text because they decrease article readability and impact. Only 1-2 common abbreviations such as DNA or LED are accepted in the main text. When their use is essential, abbreviations must be explained when they first appear in the text. Abbreviations in figures, tables and equations are accepted only if there is not enough space to write full words. Here, abbreviations should be explained in figure and table captions, or after equations.

Footnotes
Footnotes in the running text and in tables are not accepted. Table footnotes should be included in the table caption.

Units
Data description in the text, tables and figures should follow the International System of Units, as it is the most widely used system of measurement. The choice of another system of units may be tolerated if it is explained and argued clearly.
6. REQUIRED FORMAT FOR REVIEW ARTICLES
For review articles please follow the general instructions for research articles, with the following exceptions:

- The page number may surpass 15;
- The figure and table numbers are not limited.
- The title should end by “. A review”
- The abstract of less than 300 words should contain two parts: the first part should give general and global issues, then specific and scientific issues in about 5-6 sentences. The second part should start by, e.g., “Here we review... The major points are the following: 1)... 2)...”. Those points are the major advances demonstrated in the article by literature analysis. The reader should clearly understand the added value of those advances.
- The first section of the article should be “1. Introduction”, and the last section “X. Conclusion”. All sections and sub-sections should be numbered. At the end of each section, authors are advised to propose a concise view of the novelty described and/or the main research hypotheses addressed by the reviewed knowledge.
- A Contents should be inserted after the list of keywords, before the introduction section.

7. REQUIRED FORMAT FOR META-ANALYSES
For meta-analyses, please follow the general instructions for research articles, with the following exceptions:

- The title should end by “. A meta-analysis”
- An additional section “References of the meta-analysis” should be inserted after the “References” section

Meta-analyses should meet the following criteria:

- The procedure used to select papers from scientific databases should be explained,
- Individual data should be weighted according to their level of precision when possible,
- Site-year variability of the results should be analyzed from an agronomic point of view, to identify relevant explanatory variables,
- Efforts should be made to check for the publication bias and confounding effects.

8. REFERENCES

Citation
Cite references in the text by name and year in parentheses. Some examples:

- Negotiation research spans many disciplines (Thompson 1990).
- This result was later contradicted by Becker and Seligman (1996).
- This effect has been widely studied (Abbott 1991; Barakat et al. 1995; Kelso and Smith 1998; Medvec et al. 1993).

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Reference list
The list of references should only include works that are cited in the text and that have been published or accepted for publication. Personal communications and unpublished works should only be mentioned in the text. Do not use footnotes or endnotes as a substitute for a reference list. Reference list entries should be alphabetized by the last names of the first author of each work. The DOI should be indicated when available.

- Journal article

Ideally, the names of all authors should be provided, but the usage of “et al” in long author lists will also be accepted:


- Article by DOI

- Book

- Book chapter

- Online document

- Dissertation

Always use the standard abbreviation of a journal’s name according to the ISSN List of Title Word Abbreviations, see http://www.issn.org/services/online-services/access-to-the-ltwa/
For authors using EndNote, an output style that supports the formatting of in-text citations and reference list is available at: http://endnote.com/downloads/style/agronomy-sustainable-development. The authors should check very carefully that references cited in the text are in match with the reference list; and that all references in the list are really cited in the text. The accuracy of references should also be carefully checked.

9. ARTWORK (TABLES AND FIGURES)

Color figure in the introduction section
For both research and review articles, the introduction must contain one figure including 1-2 color photos. The photo(s) should reveal the main topic of the article to a wide audience.

Number of tables and figures
For research articles, the number of tables plus figures is limited to 5, including a maximum of 2 tables and the introduction color figure. For articles at the interface with social sciences, a higher number of tables and figures may be tolerated, if duly justified by the authors in the cover letter. For review articles, there is no limitation of tables/figures number.

Colors
Color illustrations are accepted at no charge both for the electronic version and the printed version of the journal.

Format
The titles of figure and axes should be bold.
The Y-axis title should be written horizontally at the above-left of the graph, when possible. Preferably, a graph should contain a maximum of 3 curves.
Symbol legends are not accepted; the name of a curve should be written in the graph, beside the corresponding curve, using arrows if necessary.
Regression equations should not appear on the graph, but rather at the end of the caption.

Authors are encouraged to use contrasting colours (red, blue, green...) to increase the readability of the figures.
Do not use faint lines and/or lettering and check that all lines and lettering within the figures are legible at final size.
Do not use background lines
All lines should be at least 1 pt wide.

**Lettering**
- To add lettering, it is best to use Helvetica or Arial (sans serif fonts).
- Keep lettering consistently sized throughout your final-sized artwork, usually about 2–3 mm (8–12 pt).
- Variance of type size within an illustration should be minimal, e.g., do not use 8-pt type on an axis and 20-pt type for the axis label.
- Avoid effects such as shading, outline letters, etc.
- Do not include titles or captions within your illustrations.

**Numbering**
- All figures are to be numbered using Arabic numerals.
- Figures should always be cited in text in consecutive numerical order.
- Figure parts should be denoted by lowercase letters (a, b, c, etc.) and the placement of letters in the figure parts should be consistent throughout the paper (i.e. preferably top left)

**Captions**
A “scheme” or “photo” should be named “figure”. Figure captions should be self-explanatory and must contain a brief description of the main scientific point of the figure, using 1–2 well thought sentences: a figure should be almost understandable without reading the main body text of the article. The characters should be in Times or Times New Roman with an appropriate size to be readable after 50% reduction.
Do not refer to colors in the captions in case readers print in black and white

**Resolution and quality**
Figures and tables should be of high quality.
- Scanned line drawings and line drawings in bitmap format should have a minimum resolution of 1200 dpi.
- Combination artwork should have a minimum resolution of 600 dpi
- Halftones should have a minimum resolution of 300 dpi

**Figure Placement and Size**
- Tables and figures should be uploaded as separated files at the submission stage. Their place in the manuscript should be clearly indicated by authors.
- When preparing your figures, size figures to fit in the column width.
- The figures should be 39 mm, 84 mm, 129 mm, or 174 mm wide and not higher than 234 mm.

**Permissions**
If you include figures that have already been published elsewhere, you must obtain permission from the copyright owner(s) for both the print and online format. Please be aware that some
publishers do not grant electronic rights for free and that Springer will not be able to refund any costs that may have occurred to receive these permissions. In such cases, material from other sources should be used.

Accessibility
In order to give people of all abilities and disabilities access to the content of your figures, please make sure that

- All figures have descriptive captions (blind users could then use a text-to-speech software or a text-to-Braille hardware)
- Patterns are used instead of or in addition to colors for conveying information (color-blind users would then be able to distinguish the visual elements)
- Any figure lettering has a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1

10. ELECTRONIC SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL
Supplementary materials should not be used to support the author main conclusion. ASD does not allow data, graphs, schemes, photos, short tables and common figures as supplementary materials. ASD allows only two categories of supplementary materials: videos (V) and audios (A). Videos and audios should explain a method, procedure or experiment in fine details, in order to ease replication by readers. Videos and audios can also show an author interview explaining issues and findings to the public. Supplementary materials should be inserted at the end of a manuscript with a caption explaining in details the content, with at least five sentences, e.g. Video 1:... Audio 1:...

Submission
- Supply all supplementary material in standard file formats.
- Please include in each file the following information: article title, journal name, author names; affiliation and e-mail address of the corresponding author.
- To accommodate user downloads, please keep in mind that larger-sized files may require very long download times and that some users may experience other problems during downloading.

Collecting Multiple Files
It is possible to collect multiple files in a .zip or .gz file.

Captions
For each supplementary material, please supply a concise caption describing the content of the file.

Processing of supplementary files
Electronic supplementary material will be published as received from the author without any conversion, editing, or reformatting.

Accessibility
In order to give people of all abilities and disabilities access to the content of your supplementary files, please make sure that

- The manuscript contains a descriptive caption for each supplementary material
• Video files do not contain anything that flashes more than three times per second (so that users prone to seizures caused by such effects are not put at risk)

11. AFTER ACCEPTANCE
Upon acceptance of your article you will receive a link to the special Author Query Application at Springer’s web page where you can sign the Copyright Transfer Statement online and indicate whether you wish to order OpenChoice or offprints. Once the Author Query Application has been completed, your article will be processed and you will receive the proofs.

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The purpose of the proof is to check for typesetting or conversion errors and the completeness and accuracy of the text, tables and figures. Substantial changes in content, e.g., new results, corrected values, title and authorship, are not allowed. After online publication, further changes can only be made in the form of an Erratum, which will be hyperlinked to the article.

Continuous Article Publishing
The article is published online after receipt of the corrected proofs. This is the first official publication citable with the DOI. Manuscripts are immediately assigned to the current issue. As a consequence, the final page and issue numbers are defined immediately. After release of the printed version, the article can also be cited by volume and article number.

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Upon acceptance, authors will be asked to provide ten email addresses of colleagues who will receive a complimentary copy of the PDF of the paper. We disseminate information about published papers via social networks (blog, twitter, Google+). Authors can post shareable link online on social media or any platform to give everyone access to a read-only version of the full-text article (SharedIt initiative).
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Authors can deposit the accepted version of their manuscript on their personal webpage on condition that it is not the publisher (Springer) version and that they provide the publisher’s web link and the DOI.

Institutional archiving
All articles published in Agronomy for Sustainable Development are automatically deposited in an open repository (HAL, https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/ARINRA-AGRODEV/) 12 months after online publication. The articles are available for free in the publisher version. Authors can deposit their manuscript on their Institute/University repository 12 months after online publication on condition that it is not the publisher (Springer) version and that they provide the publisher’s web link and the DOI.

12. RESEARCH DATA POLICY

ASD data policy
Following a Springer Nature initiative, Agronomy for Sustainable Development adopted a standardised research data policy: the Research Data Policy Type 2.
Specifically, a submission to ASD implies that materials described in the manuscript, including all relevant raw data, will be freely available to any researcher wishing to use them for non-commercial purposes, without breaching participant confidentiality. ASD strongly encourages that all datasets on which the conclusions of the paper rely should be available to readers. We encourage authors to ensure that their datasets are deposited in publicly available repositories (where available and appropriate) whenever possible. The selection of the repository is the authors’ responsibility. ASD does not accept datasets as supplementary material.

Data availability statement
The journal encourages authors to provide a statement of data availability in their article. Data availability statements should include information on where data supporting the results reported in the article can be found, including, where applicable, hyperlinks to publicly archived datasets analysed or generated during the study. Data availability statements can also indicate whether data are available on request from the authors and where no data are available, if appropriate.

Data Availability statements can take one of the following forms (or a combination of more than one if required for multiple datasets):
1. The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available in the [NAME] repository, [PERSISTENT WEB LINK TO DATASETS]
2. The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not publicly available due [REASON WHY DATA ARE NOT PUBLIC] but are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.
3. The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.
4. Data sharing not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.
5. All data generated or analysed during this study are included in this published article.

Please see Springer Nature’s website for detailed information about
-data policy types (http://www.springernature.com/gp/authors/research-data-policy/data-policy-types)
-list of repositories (http://www.springernature.com/gp/authors/research-data-policy/repositories)
-examples of data availability statements (http://www.springernature.com/gp/authors/research-data-policy/data-availability-statements)

13. DISCLOSURE OF POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Authors must disclose all relationships or interests that could have direct or potential influence or impart bias on the work. Although an author may not feel there is any conflict, disclosure of relationships and interests provides a more complete and transparent process, leading to an accurate and objective assessment of the work. Awareness of a real or perceived conflicts of interest is a perspective to which the readers are entitled. This is not meant to imply that a financial relationship with an organization that sponsored the research or compensation received for consultancy work is inappropriate. Examples of potential conflicts of interests that are directly or indirectly related to the research may include but are not limited to the following:

- Research grants from funding agencies (please give the research funder and the grant number)
- Honoraria for speaking at symposia
- Financial support for attending symposia
- Financial support for educational programs
- Employment or consultation
- Support from a project sponsor
- Position on advisory board or board of directors or other type of management relationships
- Multiple affiliations
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The corresponding author collects the conflict of interest disclosure forms from all authors. In author collaborations where formal agreements for representation allow it, it is sufficient for the
corresponding author to sign the disclosure form on behalf of all authors. Examples of forms can be found here.

The corresponding author will include a summary statement in the text of the manuscript in a separate section before the reference list, that reflects what is recorded in the potential conflict of interest disclosure form(s).

See below examples of disclosures:

- Funding: This study was funded by X (grant number X).
- Conflict of Interest: Author A has received research grants from Company A. Author B has received a speaker honorarium from Company X and owns stock in Company Y. Author C is a member of committee Z.

If no conflict exists, the authors should state: Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

14. ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF AUTHORS

This journal is committed to upholding the integrity of the scientific record. As a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) the journal will follow the COPE guidelines on how to deal with potential acts of misconduct.

Authors should refrain from misrepresenting research results which could damage the trust in the journal, the professionalism of scientific authorship, and ultimately the entire scientific endeavour. Maintaining integrity of the research and its presentation can be achieved by following the rules of good scientific practice, which include:

- The manuscript has not been submitted to more than one journal for simultaneous consideration.
- The manuscript has not been published previously (partly or in full), unless the new work concerns an expansion of previous work (please provide transparency on the re-use of material to avoid the hint of text-recycling (“self-plagiarism”)).
- A single study is not split up into several parts to increase the quantity of submissions and submitted to various journals or to one journal over time (e.g. “salami-publishing”).
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Authors are strongly advised to ensure the correct author group, corresponding author, and order of authors at submission. Changes of authorship or in the order of authors are **not accepted after acceptance** of a manuscript.

Adding and/or deleting authors **at revision stage** may be justifiably warranted. A letter must accompany the revised manuscript to explain the role of the added and/or deleted author(s). Further documentation may be required to support your request.

Requests for addition or removal of authors as a result of authorship disputes after acceptance are honored after formal notification by the institute or independent body and/or when there is agreement between all authors.

Upon request authors should be prepared to send relevant documentation or data in order to verify the validity of the results. This could be in the form of raw data, samples, records, etc. Sensitive information in the form of confidential proprietary data is excluded.

If there is a suspicion of misconduct, the journal will carry out an investigation following the COPE guidelines. If, after investigation, the allegation seems to raise valid concerns, the accused author will be contacted and given an opportunity to address the issue. If misconduct has been established beyond reasonable doubt, this may result in the Editor-in-Chief’s implementation of the following measures, including, but not limited to:

- If the article is still under consideration, it may be rejected and returned to the author.
- If the article has already been published online, depending on the nature and severity of the infraction, either an erratum will be placed with the article or in severe cases complete retraction of the article will occur. The reason must be given in the published erratum or retraction note. Please note that retraction means that the paper is **maintained on the platform, watermarked "retracted"** and explanation for the retraction is provided in a note linked to the watermarked article.
- The author’s institution may be informed.