

The Research Journal of Mountains: Biodiversity, Landscapes and Cultures

Submission Guidelines

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Focus of the Journal

The Research Journal of Mountains: Biodiversity, Landscapes and Cultures is an international, peer-reviewed, open-access journal dedicated to advancing research and understanding of mountain regions worldwide.

It publishes high-quality, original studies that explore the interconnections between biodiversity, landscape dynamics, ecological systems, cultural heritage, and sustainable development in mountainous environments.

We welcome a broad range of contributions — from empirical field studies and theoretical analyses to interdisciplinary approaches combining environmental sciences, geography, anthropology, cultural studies, and sustainability research.

Our editorial policy emphasizes scientific rigor, interdisciplinary perspective, and ethical responsibility. Manuscripts are assessed not only for originality and significance but also for methodological clarity, replicability, and relevance to mountain systems and cultures.

Authors are encouraged to share supporting data, maps, and methodological materials to enhance transparency and reproducibility in mountain research.

All submissions undergo a double-blind peer review conducted by experts from relevant disciplines.

In addition to full research articles, the journal publishes review papers, short communications, and conceptual essays that shed light on emerging trends, challenges, and innovations in mountain studies and biodiversity conservation.

We particularly encourage collaborative works across institutions and regions to strengthen global knowledge exchange and promote comparative understanding of mountain environments and societies.

General Information

Open Access Policy:

The journal is fully open access — all published papers are freely available online upon publication without any subscription or access fees.

Publication Fees:

There are no article processing charges (APCs) or submission fees. Publication in this journal is completely free of charge.

Language:

Manuscripts must be written in clear and academically appropriate English. Authors whose native language is not English are advised to have their manuscripts reviewed by professional editors before submission.

Ethics Compliance:

All submissions must comply with international publishing ethics standards, including those outlined by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Ethical integrity, transparency in data use, and respect for local and indigenous communities are essential principles for all submitted work.

Types of Manuscripts Accepted

Original Research Articles

Comprehensive studies presenting new empirical or theoretical insights into mountain biodiversity, landscapes, ecosystems, and cultural dynamics. Papers should include a clear research question, well-defined methods, robust data analysis, and sound conclusions.

Review Articles

Scholarly overviews that synthesize existing research on key issues related to mountains, such as conservation strategies, cultural adaptation, land use, or sustainable development. Reviews should critically assess the state of knowledge and propose directions for future research.

Short Communications

Concise reports presenting preliminary but important results or methodological innovations relevant to mountain environments. These papers are ideal for rapid

publication of novel findings that contribute to ongoing debates in biodiversity or sustainability.

Initial Submission and Review Process

All manuscripts submitted to The Research Journal of Mountains: Biodiversity, Landscapes and Cultures undergo an initial editorial screening to ensure that they align with the journal's thematic focus, ethical standards, and formatting requirements.

Only manuscripts that meet these criteria will proceed to the peer review stage.

Authors are required to submit a cover letter that briefly includes the following points:

A concise explanation of the scientific significance and originality of the study — or, where applicable, the relevance of replication to mountain systems.

Confirmation that all necessary approvals (e.g., research permits, field access, funding, and ethical clearance for human or environmental data) have been obtained.

If the study is ongoing, a short anticipated timeline for completion.

A statement of data transparency, indicating willingness to share datasets, maps, or supplementary materials — or explaining any limitations due to confidentiality, indigenous rights, or environmental protection concerns.

Pre-submission inquiries are welcome for authors uncertain about the fit of their manuscript within the journal's scope. However, a full manuscript submission is required for the peer review process to begin.

Manuscript Preparation

1. Formatting and Structure

Manuscripts should be prepared in Microsoft Word or LaTeX format, written in clear, academic English.

To ensure readability and consistency, authors should adhere to the following standardized structure:

Title Page

Title:

The title must be concise, informative, and specific — clearly reflecting the main focus of the study (e.g., biodiversity dynamics, landscape change, cultural adaptation, or sustainable management in mountain regions). Avoid vague phrases or unnecessary abbreviations.

A well-formulated title should immediately convey the essence and relevance of the research.

Author Names and Affiliations:

Provide full names, institutional affiliations, and postal addresses for all authors. Superscript numerals may be used to connect authors to their respective affiliations.

Corresponding Author:

Identify one corresponding author responsible for all communication during the peer review and publication stages. Include an active and accurate email address.

ORCID IDs:

Authors are encouraged to include their ORCID identifiers to ensure accurate recognition and indexing of their scholarly contributions.

Abstract

The abstract should present a concise yet comprehensive overview of the research (maximum 300 words). It must summarize the background, objectives, methodology, main results, and key conclusions of the study.

Abstracts should be written clearly enough for readers to understand the scope, purpose, and main contributions of the paper without needing to consult the full text.

Avoid references, undefined abbreviations, or excessive technical detail.

Keywords: Provide 4–6 specific keywords that best represent the core themes of the study.

Keywords should reflect commonly used terminology within mountain research — such as biodiversity, landscape dynamics, ecosystem resilience, climate adaptation, cultural heritage, or sustainability — to facilitate proper indexing.

Main Text

Introduction

Clearly describe the research problem, its scientific and practical significance, and the main objectives of the study.

Provide sufficient background and literature review to situate the research within the broader context of mountain studies, climate change, or sustainable management.

Once submitted, the Introduction and any pre-defined hypotheses cannot be altered unless explicitly approved during editorial revision.

Materials and Methods

Describe the study design, materials, instruments, and procedures in enough detail to allow replication by other researchers.

For mountain-related studies, this should include:

Description of the study area (e.g., elevation range, relief type, vegetation zones, socio-cultural setting);

Field or laboratory methods, including data collection tools, GIS analysis, and statistical or qualitative approaches;

Ethical considerations, where relevant (especially for indigenous or community-based studies).

Any previously published methods must be cited properly, and modifications should be clearly explained.

Results

Present the findings logically and clearly, using tables and figures where appropriate.

Avoid repeating the same data across text and visuals.

If supplementary or exploratory analyses are included (e.g., secondary datasets, additional site comparisons), they must appear in a separate “Exploratory Analyses” section.

Such material should not dominate the manuscript (generally a 1:1 ratio with the main study).

Authors must inform the editors before adding new content.

All statistical results should include exact p-values, confidence intervals, and effect sizes.

The total number of tables and figures in the main text must not exceed five; additional visuals should be placed in the Online Supplemental Material section.

Discussion

Interpret the results in light of existing research.

Highlight novel insights, theoretical contributions, or practical implications — for example, implications for sustainable tourism, biodiversity conservation, or climate resilience in mountainous regions.

Address limitations honestly and suggest how they may be overcome in future studies.

The discussion should extend beyond simply restating the results, offering meaningful interpretation.

Conclusion

Provide a concise synthesis of the major findings and emphasize their broader significance for mountain ecosystems, cultural heritage, or regional development.

You may also suggest potential directions for future research and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Acknowledgments

Authors should acknowledge individuals, institutions, or organizations that contributed to the research but do not meet the criteria for authorship.

This may include technical or field assistance, data access, valuable feedback, or logistical support (for example, help with mountain expeditions, mapping, or environmental monitoring).

Authors must obtain written consent from all individuals mentioned in the Acknowledgments section.

Funding Information

All authors must fully disclose funding sources that supported the study.

Please list the name(s) of funding organizations, grant or project numbers, and any relevant institutional support.

If the research was conducted without external financial support, include the statement:

“This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.”

If applicable, authors may also mention fieldwork support, collaboration grants, or institutional research funds used for mountain-based research or conservation activities.

Conflict of Interest Statement

Authors are required to declare any financial, professional, or personal conflicts of interest that could influence the interpretation or presentation of results.

If no such conflicts exist, the following statement must be included at the end of the manuscript:

“The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding this publication.”

This policy helps maintain transparency and integrity in mountain research, especially where conservation, land-use policy, or resource management issues may arise.

References

All works cited in the manuscript must be included in the Reference List and formatted consistently.

Completeness and Accuracy:

Each citation must contain full details — including author names, publication year, article title, journal or book title, volume, issue number, page range, and DOI (if available).

Citation Style:

The journal follows APA 7th Edition referencing standards.

In-text citations must exactly correspond to the entries in the reference list.

Balance and Relevance:

Authors should include a diverse and balanced range of sources, prioritizing recent, peer-reviewed, and high-quality studies related to mountain ecology, geography, sustainability, tourism, and cultural landscapes.

Unpublished work or inaccessible materials (e.g., local reports, non-indexed documents) should be avoided unless crucial to the research context.

Tools:

To ensure accuracy and consistency, authors are encouraged to use reference management tools such as EndNote, Mendeley, or Zotero.

Figures and Tables

Figures and tables should be prepared to visually support and clarify the text, especially where they illustrate geographic, ecological, or climatic data.

Figures:

Submit high-resolution files (minimum 300 dpi) in formats such as JPEG, PNG, TIFF, or EPS.

Each figure must include:

A clear and descriptive caption,
Consecutive numbering (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2), and
Readable labels, symbols, and scale bars.

Figures that include maps, topographic models, or satellite images must specify coordinate systems, data sources (e.g., Copernicus, USGS), and resolution details. All images should adhere to ethical publication standards — e.g., proper credit for external datasets or maps.

Tables:

Prepare tables in editable formats (e.g., Word or Excel) rather than as images.

Each table must have:

An informative title,

Clearly labeled columns and rows, and

Explanatory footnotes when necessary (for example, defining abbreviations or data sources).

Large datasets should be summarized, with detailed data placed in Online Supplementary Materials.

General Guidelines for Registered Reports (RR) Using Existing Data at The RJM

The Research Journal of Mountains welcomes Registered Reports (RR) based on secondary analysis of existing environmental, climatic, or socio-cultural datasets.

These may include publicly available databases (e.g., FAO, GBIF, WorldClim, UNEP, Copernicus) or compiled research data from prior mountain studies.

If authors wish to use large datasets they personally collected, they should consult the editorial board before submission to confirm eligibility.

Key Requirements for Data Analysis and Reporting

1. Publicly Accessible Data:

All datasets used in RR submissions must be freely accessible through credible repositories (e.g., Zenodo, Figshare, Dryad, national or institutional archives).

Authors should include clear metadata, data dictionaries, and repository links.

2. Analytical Rigor:

Given that the data already exist, reviewers will apply a high standard of analytical rigor.

Analyses should employ robust statistical, spatial, or computational methods appropriate to the dataset (e.g., regression models, GIS spatial analysis, temporal trend modeling, or machine learning approaches).

3. Model Validation:

To ensure reliability and avoid overfitting, datasets should be split into training and testing subsets (e.g., 70/30 or cross-validation).

Validation techniques (e.g., k-fold cross-validation, bootstrapping) must be described clearly.

4. Comparative or Integrative Analysis:

Authors are encouraged to compare different modeling approaches (e.g., comparing spatial models for biodiversity distribution or climatic impact prediction).

Submissions should demonstrate why the selected analytical model is optimal.

5. Complementary Studies:

Where possible, authors should consider registering complementary analyses — such as small-scale field validations, surveys, or experimental replications — to strengthen the reliability of secondary data findings.

Final Manuscript Structure and Editorial Review at The RJM

The final manuscript must strictly follow the approved research plan and reflect the structure approved at the Stage 1 review.

No appendices are accepted; all supplementary materials — such as extended figures, raw environmental data, GIS layers, or fieldwork notes — should be included in the Online Supplementary Material section.

The Introduction and the main hypotheses or research objectives cannot be altered except for minor editorial improvements.

The Methods section should describe any small deviations from the registered protocol, clearly explaining their rationale and ensuring transparency.

The Results section must clearly distinguish between “Preregistered Findings” and any “Exploratory Findings.”

During final editorial review, the emphasis is on:

Protocol adherence — confirming that all methods were carried out as approved,

Data integrity — ensuring that results are authentic and reproducible, and

Conclusion justification — verifying that interpretations follow logically from the data.

Importantly, editorial decisions are not influenced by the perceived novelty or impact of the results. If the approved research design and procedures are faithfully followed, the article is accepted for publication regardless of outcome.

Protocol and Publication Requirements

Transparency:

Upon final submission, authors must provide the full dataset and analysis materials (e.g., statistical or GIS scripts, climate modeling code, or qualitative data frameworks) for editorial verification.

Protocol Adherence:

For studies granted In-Principle Acceptance (IPA), publication depends on strict compliance with the registered methodology.

Any deviation — even minor — must be reported to the editorial board before completing data collection or analysis.

Exploratory Analysis:

Analyses not included in the original registered plan are generally not permitted for this publication format. However, minor interpretive or descriptive additions may be accepted if transparently labeled as exploratory.

Ethical and Legal Considerations

Originality:

All submissions must represent original work and must not be under review elsewhere.

Plagiarism:

Manuscripts are screened using plagiarism-detection software. Submissions with more than 15 % similarity (excluding references and appendices) may be rejected.

Data Transparency:

Authors must ensure that all field, environmental, and laboratory data are accurately reported and available upon request for verification.

Human and Animal Research:

Studies involving human participants (e.g., community interviews) or wildlife must include appropriate ethical approval statements from recognized institutions or conservation authorities.

Conflict of Interest:

Authors are required to declare any potential conflicts — financial, institutional, or collaborative — that may influence the objectivity of their work.

Publication and Withdrawal Policies for Registered Reports

The journal maintains full transparency by listing all In-Principle Accepted (IPA) manuscripts in an Advanced Content Registry on the RJM website.

If authors withdraw their manuscript after receiving IPA (for instance, due to technical, environmental, or logistical issues), the entire manuscript must be

withdrawn; partial withdrawal (e.g., removing one dataset or study component) is not permitted.

Withdrawn manuscripts will be publicly logged in a “Withdrawn Registrations” section, listing:

Author names,

Original title and abstract, and

A short explanation for the withdrawal.

Incremental Registrations

Authors may propose Incremental Registrations to add new datasets or follow-up analyses (e.g., updated field measurements, later observation periods, or regional extensions).

These additions will undergo fast-track Stage 1 review.

If the new submission is not approved, authors still retain the right to publish the previously accepted version of the study.

Replication Studies

The RJM actively encourages Replication Studies, particularly those that provide valuable theoretical, empirical, or regional extensions.

Collaborative replication with the original authors is recommended.

If direct cooperation is not possible, the original authors may be invited to:

Write a commentary on the replication study, or

Submit their own pre-registered replication protocol for future publication.

Reference Examples

All references must be formatted according to APA 7th Edition standards.

Authors should ensure accuracy, consistency, and accessibility of all sources.

References in non-Latin scripts (Azerbaijani, Russian, Persian, Georgian, etc.) must include both transliteration and English translation in brackets.

Journal Article Example

Rahimov, U., & Huseynova, S. (2023). Impacts of climate variability on high mountain ecosystems in the South Caucasus. *Journal of Mountain Research*, 28(2), 115–129. <https://doi.org/10.xxxx/jmr.2023.02802>

Book Example

Sati, V. P. (2022). *Sustainable mountain livelihoods and ecosystems: A South Asian perspective*. Springer.

Chapter in an Edited Book Example

Baghirov, H. (2021). Landscape transformation in the Greater Caucasus. In M. A. Aliyev & T. Demir (Eds.), *Environmental change and mountain biodiversity* (pp. 33–58). Elsevier.

Conference Paper Example

Shabanova, A. (2024). The role of southern slope relief of the Great Caucasus as a factor for climate processing in tourism. In *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Mountain Studies*, 11(1), 67–72.

Website Example

UN Environment Programme (UNEP). (2024, February 5). *Mountain biodiversity and climate adaptation strategies*. <https://www.unep.org/mountains>

Newspaper Article Example

Guliyev, R. (2023, November 12). *Conservation priorities in the Caucasus mountains*. *The Caspian Times*, p. A6.

Dataset or Repository Example

World Bank. (2022). *Mountain region population and environmental data (Version 4.0)* [Data set]. <https://data.worldbank.org>

Non-Latin Script Example

Aliyev, T. [Алиев, Т.] (2021). Kafkas dağlarında torpaq eroziyası problemləri [Soil erosion issues in the Caucasus Mountains]. Ekologiya Araşdırmaları Jurnalı, 15(1), 45–59.

Online Forum or Digital Discussion Example

Global Mountain Forum. (2024, June 15). Community-based reforestation practices in highlands [Online discussion thread]. <https://www.globalmountainforum.org>