

Forest Systems

Instructions for authors

1. AIMS AND SCOPE

Forest Systems (FS) is a four-monthly international peer-reviewed journal. *Forest Systems* main aim is to integrate multidisciplinary research with forest management in complex systems with different social and ecological backgrounds. To fulfil this integrative approach, FS gives preference to papers that bring together two or more disciplines, organisms, or forest products and services. Studies of all kinds of forest systems are welcomed, particularly those that describe a wide variety of wood and non-wood products and ecosystem services, such as forests in regions with a Mediterranean climate. *Forest Systems* covers research findings on all aspects of forestry, such as genetics (including breeding), plant ecology, ecophysiology, paleoecology, dendroecology, silviculture (including biometrics), forest management, integrated fire management, forest conservation (plants and animals), forest soils and erosion, soil bioma (including fungi and mycorrhization), forest pathology, entomology and plagues, forest policy and economics, ecosystems services, agroforestry systems (including pastures and grazing), forest products (including non-wood) and wood technology, remote sensing and GIS advanced tools, data forests and software.

Descriptive bibliometric studies are not accepted. These technics are only accepted if the results are well discussed and focused to forest topics.

2. MANUSCRIPT CATEGORIES

Forest Systems accepts the following manuscript categories:

Research articles make an original and significant contribution to the field of study within the scope of the journal. These articles should be of interest to a broad audience, scientifically sound, well written and concise.

Short communications should cover a concise study of wide interest, novelty and/or high quality. Papers must report relevant information, not preliminary findings. Articles with local-regional interest may only be accepted here or in the *Resource Communications* section.

Resource communications include all types of papers on resources or tools of interest for the study and management of forest systems (e.g., methodologies, software and growth models, open access databases). They must report a completed work, not preliminary findings.

Reviews or minireviews aim to provide an overview for an issue of great interest or topicality. They will be invited by the Editorial Board. However, potential authors can suggest topics to the Editor-in-Chief. Authors must have published some works earlier on the subject.

3. PLAGIARISM POLICY, PEER REVIEW AND EDITING

Upon submission, the Editor-in-Chief assesses the manuscript for suitability. Manuscripts may be rejected without peer review if they do not relate to the scope of the journal or if they do not conform to the submission rules. The submitted manuscript must not be under consideration for publication elsewhere and the work described has not been published previously in any language (except in a book of abstracts, in the proceedings of a scientific meeting or as part of a thesis). Through Similarity Check, we use the [iThenticate](#) software to detect instances of overlapping and similar text in submitted or published manuscripts.

All other articles are allocated to Associate Editors, depending on the topic. Associate Editors maintain a global vision of their topic areas. They select relevant referees (including members of the International Scientific Committee) for single-blind peer review (the referees know the identity of the authors, but the authors do not know the identity of the referees).

Two referees are usually invited to comment on each submission. When the opinions of the referees differ significantly, the manuscript is usually sent to a third referee. When a decision has been reached, the decision is communicated to the author.

The editors' decision is final unless there is a proven error in the process of manuscript evaluation or peer review. If you believe that there has been a process error in the handling of your manuscript, please address your concerns to the *Forest Systems* Editorial Office (forestsystems@inia.csic.es) and include the manuscript submission number.

COPYEDITING. After the author has submitted the final version and this has been accepted for publication, the manuscript undergoes a copyediting process. The copyeditor performs the clean-up edit. This edit occasionally generates new queries, which are sent to the author. *FS* reserves the right to correct grammar, improve clarity, and impose the *FS* style. Authors are responsible for content, including the spelling of personal and place names. *FS* reserves the right to refuse publication of articles that, upon repeated resubmission, do not meet stylistic standards. When copyediting is complete, the issue is produced.

4. OPEN ACCESS

Forest Systems is an Open Access Journal. All articles are distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\) License](#), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

There are no handling or page charges (no APC, this is a Diamond Open Access Journal).

5. ETHIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Previously published material is not accepted: Authors are held responsible for obtaining permission for partial reproduction of materials (text, tables, or figures) included in other publications, and for accurately quoting their origin. Authorization must be requested from the owner of this material.

When reporting experiments on animals, authors must indicate which institutional and national guide for the care and use of laboratory animals has been followed.

Conflicts of interest: A conflict of interest exists when professional judgment concerning a primary interest (such as the validity of research) may be influenced by a secondary interest (such as financial gain). Financial relationships (such as employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony) are the most easily identifiable conflicts of interest. However, conflicts can occur for other reasons, such as personal relationships, academic competition, and intellectual passion. *FS* expects authors to declare any commercial involvements that may represent a conflict of interest in connection with their articles.

Authorship. Following the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors recommendations (<http://www.icmje.org>), authorship must be based on the following four criteria:

- i) Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- ii) Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- iii) Final approval of the version to be published; AND

iv) Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work by ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

In addition to being accountable for the parts of the work he or she has done, an author should be able to identify which co-authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work. Besides, authors should have confidence in the integrity of the contributions of their coauthors.

All those designated as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, and all who meet the four criteria should be identified as authors. Those who do not meet all four criteria should be acknowledged.

It is the authors' collective responsibility, not the journal to which the work is submitted, to determine that all people named as authors meet all four criteria.

The **corresponding author** is the one individual who takes primary responsibility for communication with the journal during the manuscript submission, peer review, and publication process and must be the same person that makes the submission. The corresponding author should be available throughout the submission, peer review and copyediting processes to answer to editorial queries in a timely way, and should be available after publication to respond to critiques of the work and cooperate with the journal editorial office regarding any requests for data or additional information about the paper that arise after publication.

6. SUBMISSION

Authors must submit manuscripts via the website of *Forest Systems* (<https://revistas.inia.es/index.php/fs>).

IMPORTANT!

- There are word templates available for preparing your manuscript (point 6.2) that we strongly recommend to use.
- Authors are required to check off their submission's compliance with all of the items indicated in the Submission check list (point 10).

6.1. Submission process

The corresponding author is the person who has to submit the work at the system. This author may register on the site at any time, but he/she should register only once. During registration, the author chooses a username and password. The security of the manuscripts is protected by the username/password system.

The corresponding author must also fill in all the co-authors data, in step 3 of the submission process (List of contributors). It is mandatory to fill in the following fields: given name and family name, email, country (of professional activity), institutional affiliation, and Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier ([ORCID](#)). A submission will be automatically rejected if it does not comply with these requirements.

The corresponding author must use a single email address throughout the entire process: (i) when registering as an author in the system, (ii) in the list of contributors (metadata in the system) and (iii) in the word document of the article. In case the institutional e-mail address fails in certain instances, please include in the manuscript an alternative personal e-mail address besides this one.

You may find instructions to upload a manuscript under the site MAKE A SUBMISSION.

Please upload three documents:

- i) The entire **MANUSCRIPT**, with tables, figures and supplementary files in Word format, on separate sheets but in the same document as a unique file. Separate figure files will be required later if the manuscript is accepted.

- ii) **COVER LETTER:** indicate the main aims of the manuscript, the type of paper (Research paper, Review paper, Short communication, Resource communication), the novelty of the content, and convincing arguments of why *FS* should publish this paper. In case of resubmission, a rebuttal letter indicating the reference number of the first submission.
- iii) **A LIST OF FOUR POTENTIAL EXPERT REVIEWERS** with full contact information and e-mail addresses. These reviewers must not have a conflict of interest with the authors (e.g. personal relationship or work in the same institution) or the paper content, and the Editorial Board may decline to contact any of the reviewers suggested by the authors.

Submission of a manuscript implies the following:

- The work described has not been published previously in any language (except in a book of abstracts, in the proceedings of a scientific meeting or as part of a thesis).
- The work is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.
- All persons named as authors critically reviewed the manuscript, approved the final version and consented to its publication.
- All persons named as authors in the manuscript must be coincident with the persons included in the List of Contributors when filling the metadata in the submission process.
- It is the authors' collective responsibility, not the journal to which the work is submitted, to determine that all people named as authors meet the criteria described in the instructions for authors.
- The authors agree to the automatic transfer of the copyright to the publisher (CSIC) if and when the manuscript is accepted for publication.
- The manuscript will not be published elsewhere in any language without the consent of the copyright holders.
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- The language has been revised by a professional science editor or a native English-speaking colleague if there is any doubt about the clarity of the language, or English is not the mother tongue of the authors. *FS* reserves the right to require a professional certification of English language review.
- In case of resubmission, the reference of the initial submission is provided.

6.2. Manuscript preparation

Authors must use the [Microsoft template](#) to prepare their manuscript.

Research articles should not be longer than 8,500 words, including front page, references, tables and figures, and excluding the supplementary material. Research articles should contain a front page, an abstract, up to seven keywords and the abbreviations used. The main text should have the following sections (see suggested layout below): introduction; material and methods; results; discussion (avoid combining the results and discussion sections); acknowledgments; authors' contributions; up to 40 references; tables and figures; and supplementary material, if any. [Research article template](#)

Short communications and **Resource communications** should be no longer than 3,500 words, including front page, references, tables and figures, and excluding the supplementary material. Short communications should contain a front page, an abstract, up to seven keywords and the abbreviations used. The main text should include the following sections: introduction; material and methods; results and discussion combined sections; acknowledgments; authors' contributions; up to 30 references; up to three tables and/or figures; and supplementary material, if any. [Short communication template](#) and [Resource communication template](#)

Review or minireview articles (typically invited by the Editor) should be no longer than 10,000 words, including front page, references, tables and figures, and excluding the supplementary material. They should include a front page (the manuscript title must contain the word "Review"); an abstract; up to seven keywords; abbreviations used; a variable main text (the introduction should be based on general coverage of the issue, followed by a critical assessment of the most important references); acknowledgments; authors' contributions; up to 80 references; tables/figures (encouraged); and supplementary material, if any. Reviews will also be submitted to the peer-review process. [Review article template](#)

Language: Manuscripts should be written in concise, legible English, which must be carefully reviewed by the authors for correctness of language and content. English spelling can be British or American, but it must be consistent throughout. Authors whose first language is not English are strongly advised to have their manuscripts checked by a proficient third party prior to submission.

Papers reporting sequence data. Manuscripts containing primary nucleotide sequence data must be accompanied by (an) accession number(s) from an internationally available nucleotide database.

Papers reporting software. Software should be available for a period of two years after publication of the manuscript.

Papers reporting field research. Field research should indicate replications in sites and years in connexion to the addressed aims of the experiment(s). In many cases, several years may be required to account for all variations in factors that affect plant growth and development, in particular for those researches dealing with production and yield. Since the lack of this requirement can be cause of manuscript rejection during the preliminary inspection, if this recommendation is not fulfilled, arguments supporting the validity of the results must be stated and included in the letter addressed to the Editorial Office.

6.3. Layout

The following layout is strongly recommended. Please see the templates (point 6.2):

6.3.1. Front page

Special attention should be paid to the title and abstract, as these will influence readers' decisions to proceed with the text. The first page must include the following:

- *Type of the paper.*
- *Title.*
- *Authors' names.*
- *Authors' ORCID ID.*
- *Affiliations.*
- *Corresponding author's name and e-mail address.*
- *Running title.*
- *Topic.*
- *Number of tables and figures.*
- *Abstract.*
- *Additional key words.*
- *Abbreviations used.*
- *If any, number of supplementary tables and/or figures.*
- *Funding.*
- *Competing interests.*

6.3.2. Text of the article

The text of the [Research articles](#), [Short communications](#) and [Resource communications](#) should contain the following sections listed in the order:

- **Introduction**
- **Material and methods**
- **Results***
- **Discussion***
- **Acknowledgements**
- **Authors' contributions**
- **References**
- **Tables and/or figures**
- **Supplementary material** (data that do not appear in the paper itself but that accompany it online), either figures or tables, should be included in the article itself, on separate sheets but in the same unique document. These data are peer reviewed, must be cited in the text and are subject to the same criteria as the data published in the paper.

* In Short communications and Resource communications, Results and Discussion sections must be combined in a single section.

The text of the [Review articles](#) should contain the following sections listed in the order:

- **Introduction**
- **Titles and Subtitles regarding literature review**
- **Conclusions and future perspectives**
- **Acknowledgements**
- **Authors' contributions**
- **References**
- **Tables and/or figures**
- **Supplementary material** (data that do not appear in the paper itself but that accompany it online), either figures or tables, should be included in the article itself, on separate sheets but in the same unique document. These data are peer reviewed, must be cited in the text and are subject to the same criteria as the data published in the paper.

6.4. Revised manuscripts

Once the editorial decision is sent to the authors, they are required to submit their revised manuscripts highlighting the changes by using the option "Track Changes" in the Microsoft word file and accompanied by a letter containing a detailed (point-by-point) reply to the reviewers and editor's comments. A revised manuscript will retain its original date of receipt only if it is received within two months of the date of return to the author. Revised papers returned after this interval will be archived and treated as new submissions. Papers will not be accepted until all required changes have been incorporated into the document.

7. STYLE

Units and symbols. Use SI (International System) units in accordance with the recommendations of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) or the *Bureau for Poids et Mesures* (BIPM) (http://www.bipm.org/utis/common/pdf/si_brochure_8_en.pdf).

Use abbreviations L, mL and μ L for capacity or volume units. Express N (normality) as mmol/L and ppm as mg/kg or mg/L. Please spell out numbers one through nine, except when used with units. When units are not preceded by a number, the term should be written in full, without using the symbol (e.g., "metres", "23 m"). Express

decimals using a full stop (e.g., 3.14) and thousands with commas (e.g., 21,314). For decimal quantities <1, place a zero before the decimal point. Report dates with the day first, then the month, and then the year.

Abbreviations must be defined when first mentioned in the abstract or text [e.g., “polymerase chain reaction (PCR)”] and again in the tables and figures. Abbreviations must then be used throughout the article, except at the beginning of a sentence.

Style must be that of scientific English throughout the article. Please ensure that a science editor reviews the paper before submitting it for publication.

Mathematical equations. Use an equation editor for mathematical expressions whenever possible. Avoid inserting equations as images.

Parameters. It is a common mistake to use the term “parameters” instead of “variables” or “characters”. Variables are quantities that vary from individual to individual (e.g., length, width). By contrast, parameters do not relate to actual measurements or attributes, but to quantities that define a theoretical model; they are properties of a collection of individuals (e.g., mean and SD). In other words, you measure a variable; a parameter describes the measurements, such as the mean.

Never start sentences with a numeral: “Four plants and five years ago” is correct, not “4 plants and 5 years ago”. This means that some sentences may need to be rewritten: “Farmers collected 4,000 fruits the first year” instead of “4,000 fruits were collected the first year.”

Scientific names. Genus must be written in full the first time an organism is mentioned in the abstract or text and in every table and figure. If you are discussing several different species within a genus so that the genus is the same for each species mentioned, write genus + species in full the first time each new species is mentioned, even if it seems redundant. After the first time, use the genus abbreviation with a period.

Genus and species are always italicised. Do not italicise “spp.”, “sensu stricto” or “sensu lato”, which may follow genus and species. Genus is italicised when it appears alone (*i.e.*, *Phytophthora* infections).

Latin binomials or trinomials and authorities, when first mentioned, must be given for all plants, insects and pathogens (e.g., *Solanum lycopersicum* L.).

Both common and chemical names of pesticides must be given when first mentioned (e.g., “Atrazine (2-chloro-4-ethylamino-6-isopropylamino-1,3,5-triazine) was most persistent...”).

Identify soils at series and family level, or at least the Great Group, when first mentioned.

Mark botanical cultivars in single inverted quotation marks, or use the abbreviation *cv.* when first mentioned (e.g., tomato ‘Royesta’ or *cv.* Royesta). Subsequently, this can be referred to as Royesta tomato or Royesta cultivar.

Animals (breed, sex, age, and body weight), diets, measurements and statistical models should be written in a clear and detailed way.

Statistical results. In-line statistical results should be presented as: (i) the test statistic followed by degrees of freedom as subscript(s), e.g., $F_{1,12}=1.74$ or $t_8=31.8$; (ii) followed by the p-value, or NS (for non-significant), e.g., $F_{1,12}=1.74$, $p>0.05$. In tables, statistical results should be comprehensive, facilitating future meta-analyses. Depending on the details of the analyses, the results reported may include parameter estimates, test statistics, degree of freedom, significance levels and error/residual model information, e.g., error MS and d.f. in ANOVA or regression models. Because exact p-values can be useful for meta-analyses, we recommend that these be quoted even when non-significant, e.g., $t_{23}=0.25$, $p=0.34$, or $F_{2,32}=1.12$, $p=0.55$. However, non-significant tests (*i.e.*, $p>0.05$) should always be interpreted as such and not reported.

8. CORRECTION OF PROOFS

Page proofs of articles are sent to authors by email as PDF files. Corrected proofs (by means of the Acrobat system) should be sent back to the Editorial Office within three days by email. Proofreading occasionally generates additional queries for the author. If corrections are not received in due time, the editors reserve the right to perform the corrections that they consider most appropriate.

The articles are published in three formats: PDF, HTML and XML. Due to the difficulty to correct the three types of proofs, authors are asked to check only for misprints or syntactic errors but not to modify the manuscript.

9. FOREST SYSTEMS POLICY ON ARTICLE WITHDRAWAL

Articles that have been published shall remain extant, exact and unaltered as far as possible. However, very occasionally circumstances may arise where an article is published that must later be retracted or even removed. Such actions can only occur under exceptional circumstances, such as:

Article retraction: Only used for articles which represent infringements of professional ethical codes, such as multiple submission, bogus claims of authorship, plagiarism, and fraudulent use of data or the like. A retraction note titled “Retraction: [article title]” signed by the authors and/or the editor is published in the paginated part of a subsequent issue of the journal and listed in the contents list. In the electronic version, a link is made to the original article. The online article is preceded by a screen containing the retraction note. It is to this screen that the link resolves; the reader can then proceed to the article itself. The original article is retained unchanged except for a watermark on the PDF indicating on each page that it is “retracted.”

Article replacement: In cases where due to unintentional error, or the article, if acted upon, might pose a serious health risk, the authors of the original article may wish to retract the flawed original and replace it with a corrected version. In these circumstances the procedures for retraction will be:

- I. The original article is retained unchanged (same doi) except: 1, in the title “Article replaced” will be added at its end; 2, in the article metadata, the link to the new doi will be included at the end of the Abstract; 3, a watermark on the PDF will indicate on each page “ARTICLE REPLACED”; 4, a first page will be added to the pdf with the history.
- II. A new pdf will be prepared (new submission, new doi). The first page will have a footnote with the history (*This article replaces the article with the same title (xxx) that has been published in xxx. The reason for its replacement is ...*).

Article removal: In an extremely limited number of cases, it may be necessary to remove an article from the online database. This will only occur where the article is clearly defamatory, or infringes others’ legal rights, or when the article is, or we have a good reason to expect it will be, the subject of a court order, or when the article, if acted upon, might pose a serious health risk. In these circumstances, while the metadata (title and authors) will be retained, the text will be replaced with a screen indicating the article has been removed for legal reasons.

10. SUBMISSION PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Authors are required to check off their submission's compliance with all of the following items, and submissions may be returned to authors that do not adhere to these guidelines:

- The work described has not been published previously in any language (except in a book of abstracts, in the proceedings of a scientific meeting or as part of a thesis).
- The manuscript is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.
- All persons named as authors critically reviewed the manuscript, approved the final version and consented to its publication.

- It is the authors' collective responsibility, not the journal to which the work is submitted, to determine that all people named as authors meet the criteria described in the instructions for authors.
- No person responsible for the manuscript and who meets the criteria for scientific authorship has been omitted from the list of authors.
- The person submitting the article to the Forest Systems web must be the corresponding author.
- Each of the authors has been identified including the following data:
 - Given name (in full form) and family name(s).
 - Email contact address.
 - Country of professional activity.
 - Institutional affiliation.
 - Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier ([ORCID](#)).
- All sources of funding provided for this study are acknowledged, with a concise mention of the funding organization and identification code.
- The article is adapted to the Microsoft Word template provided by the journal: [Research article](#), [Short communication](#), [Resource communication](#) or [Review article](#).
- Authors send a cover letter indicating the main aims of the manuscript, the type of paper (Research paper, Review paper, Short communication, Resource communication), the novelty of the content, and convincing arguments of why *Forest Systems* should publish this paper. In case of resubmission, a rebuttal letter indicating the reference number of the first submission.
- Authors nominate a list of four potential reviewers, providing full contact address and e-mail details. These reviewers must not have a conflict of interest involving the authors or paper, and the editorial board has the right to not use any reviewers suggested by authors.
- The authors agree to the automatic transfer of the copyright to the publisher (CSIC) if and when the manuscript is accepted for publication.
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