

LIMNETICA – EDITORIAL GOVERNANCE

1. Introduction

The mission of *Limnetica* is to promote scientific excellence in limnology, methodological rigor, and the dissemination of high-quality research, while fostering an inclusive and transparent editorial process that serves the scientific community.

1.1. Purpose of this Document

This document defines the editorial structure of *Limnetica* and establishes the roles, responsibilities, and authority of the individuals and bodies involved in the editorial process. It also sets out the principles governing the selection, appointment, and terms of service of editorial members.

The objectives of this document are to:

- Ensure clarity and transparency in editorial governance
- Promote consistency and fairness in editorial decision-making
- Safeguard the independence and integrity of the peer-review process
- Provide guidance for current and future editorial teams

1.2. Guiding Principles

The editorial governance of *Limnetica* is based on the following principles:

- **Scientific integrity:** Editorial decisions are based exclusively on scientific merit, originality, relevance, and methodological soundness.
- **Editorial independence:** Editors act independently of authors, institutions, sponsors, and external pressures.
- **Transparency and accountability:** Editorial roles, responsibilities, and procedures are clearly defined and publicly available.
- **Efficiency and fairness:** Manuscripts are handled in a timely manner, with equal treatment of all submissions.
- **Ethical standards:** All editorial activities adhere to internationally recognized standards of publication ethics, including the management of conflicts of interest.

This document serves as a reference framework for the operation of the journal and may be revised periodically to reflect evolving best practices in scholarly publishing.

2. Editorial Structure of the Journal

2.1. Overview of the Editorial Organization

The Editorial Board of *Limnetica* is composed of the following core roles:

- **Editor(s)-in-Chief**
- **Associate Editors**
- **Editorial Office**

In addition to these permanent roles, the journal may appoint **Guest Editors** for specific thematic issues or collections, under conditions defined in this document.

In previous stages of the journal's development, *Limnetica* also benefited from the guidance of an **Editorial Committee** (*Comité Editorial*), composed of senior limnologists whose experience and long-standing contributions were instrumental in consolidating the journal. As part of the evolution toward a streamlined and operational editorial structure, this committee is hereby discontinued, with its advisory functions integrated into the current Editorial Board framework.

2.2. Roles within the Editorial Board

The Editorial Board functions as a coordinated body in which each role has distinct and complementary responsibilities:

- The **Editor(s)-in-Chief** provide overall scientific leadership and are responsible for the strategic direction, editorial policy, and final editorial decisions of the journal.
- The **Associate Editors** support the Editor(s)-in-Chief by managing the peer-review process for submitted manuscripts within their areas of expertise and by making editorial recommendations.
- The **Editorial Office** provides administrative, technical, and communication support to ensure the smooth operation of the editorial workflow and adherence to journal procedures.

All members of the Editorial Board are expected to act in accordance with the guiding principles set out in Section 1, particularly with respect to scientific integrity, editorial independence, confidentiality, and ethical standards.

2.3. Decision-Making and Accountability

Editorial decision-making in *Limnetica* follows a clear hierarchy of responsibility. Final responsibility for editorial decisions rests with the Editor(s)-in-Chief, who may delegate defined tasks to Associate Editors and, where appropriate, to Guest Editors.

The Editorial Office is accountable for the correct implementation of editorial procedures and for supporting the Editorial Board in its duties.

3. Editor(s)-in-Chief

3.1. Role and Mandate

The Editor(s)-in-Chief hold the highest editorial authority in *Limnetica* and are responsible for safeguarding the scientific quality, integrity, and reputation of the journal. They provide academic leadership, define editorial policy, and ensure that the editorial process operates in accordance with the principles set out in this governance document. *Limnetica* may be led by one or more Editor(s)-in-Chief. When more than one Editor-in-Chief is appointed, they act jointly and share responsibility for editorial decisions, strategic orientation, and oversight of the Editorial Board. At the time of adoption of this document, *Limnetica* is led by two Editor(s)-in-Chief, who jointly exercise the responsibilities described above.

3.2. Core Responsibilities

The Editor(s)-in-Chief are responsible for the following core functions:

1. **Initial editorial assessment**

Conducting an initial evaluation of all submitted manuscripts to determine their suitability for peer review, based on scope, scientific relevance, originality, and compliance with journal standards. This includes the decision to desk-reject a manuscript or to assign it to an Associate Editor for full peer review.

2. **Final editorial decision**

Reviewing the outcomes of the peer-review process and the recommendations provided by Associate Editors, and making the final decision on acceptance, revision, or rejection of manuscripts.

3. **Strategic guidance**

Defining and periodically reviewing the strategic direction of the journal, including its scientific scope, editorial policies, ethical standards, and positioning within the international publishing landscape.

4. **Leadership and coordination**

Providing leadership to the Editorial Board, coordinating the work of Associate Editors and the Editorial Office, and fostering a collaborative, professional, and efficient editorial environment.

5. **Promotion and representation of the journal**

Representing *Limnetica* within the national and international scientific community, promoting the journal's mission and standards, and contributing to its visibility, reputation, and scientific impact.

3.3. Authority and Delegation

The Editor(s)-in-Chief may delegate specific editorial tasks to Associate Editors and, where appropriate, to Guest Editors, while retaining ultimate responsibility for editorial decisions. Delegation does not diminish the accountability of the Editors-in-Chief for the integrity and consistency of the editorial process.

In cases of [conflict of interest](#), the Editor(s)-in-Chief shall recuse themselves from

handling the affected manuscript, and appropriate alternative arrangements shall be made within the Editorial Board.

4. Associate Editors

4.1. Role and Position within the Editorial Board

Associate Editors are key members of the Editorial Board and play a central role in the management of the peer-review process. They operate under the supervision of the Editor(s)-in-Chief and are entrusted with the scientific evaluation of manuscripts within their areas of expertise.

Associate Editors act as guarantors of quality, rigor, and fairness in the review process, and serve as an essential link between authors, reviewers, and the Editor(s)-in-Chief. They are expected to adhere strictly to the journal's policies, ethical standards, confidentiality requirements, and conflict-of-interest policies.

4.2. Core Responsibilities

The responsibilities of Associate Editors include the following:

- 1. Initial scientific assessment**

Conducting an initial assessment of manuscripts assigned by the Editor(s)-in-Chief to evaluate their scientific soundness, originality, relevance, and suitability for peer review within the scope of the journal.

- 2. Management of the peer-review process**

Selecting and inviting qualified, independent reviewers; overseeing the review process; ensuring timely responses; and assessing the quality and relevance of reviewers' reports.

- 3. Editorial evaluation and recommendation**

Based on the reviewers' reports and their own scientific judgment, making a reasoned editorial evaluation of the manuscript, including a recommendation regarding acceptance, revision, or rejection. Associate Editors provide clear, constructive guidance to authors and submit their recommendations to the Editor(s)-in-Chief for final decision.

- 4. Support to the Editor(s)-in-Chief**

Assisting the Editor(s)-in-Chief in maintaining editorial standards, resolving complex or contested cases, and contributing to the consistent application of editorial policies when requested.

- 5. Promotion and representation of the journal**

Actively promoting *Limnetica* within the scientific community, encouraging high-quality submissions, and contributing to the visibility, reputation, and scientific standing of the journal.

5. Editorial Office

5.1. Role and Function

The Editorial Office provides the administrative, technical, and operational backbone of *Limnetica*. It supports the Editor(s)-in-Chief and Associate Editors by ensuring that editorial procedures are implemented efficiently, consistently, and in accordance with the journal's standards and policies.

The Editorial Office does not participate in scientific evaluation or editorial decision-making. Its role is to facilitate the editorial process and to ensure smooth interaction between authors, reviewers, and editors.

5.2. Core Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Editorial Office include, but are not limited to, the following functions:

1. **Quality control and compliance checks**

Performing initial and post-review checks of submitted manuscripts to ensure compliance with the journal's formal requirements, including formatting, completeness of metadata, and adherence to submission guidelines. This includes the use of anti-plagiarism and similarity-detection tools, as well as verification of ethical statements and required documentation.

2. **Editorial workflow management**

Managing the technical progression of manuscripts through the editorial system, coordinating communications among Editor(s)-in-Chief, Associate Editors, reviewers, and authors, and monitoring timelines to support an efficient and transparent peer-review process.

3. **Communication and support**

Serving as the primary point of contact for authors and reviewers on procedural and technical matters; providing guidance on submission requirements; and supporting editors in the resolution of administrative or logistical issues.

4. **Dissemination and visibility of the journal**

Supporting the dissemination of *Limnetica*'s published content through the maintenance of the journal's website and, where applicable, its presence on social media and other communication channels, in coordination with the Editor(s)-in-Chief. The Editorial Office is also responsible for the layout, publication, and dissemination of articles.

5.3. Accountability and Coordination

The Editorial Office operates under the direction of the Editor(s)-in-Chief and is accountable for the correct and timely implementation of editorial procedures. It works in close coordination with all members of the Editorial Board to ensure consistency, confidentiality, and adherence to ethical and professional standards.

The scope and organization of the Editorial Office may evolve over time in response to changes in submission volume, publication practices, or strategic priorities of the journal.

6. Guest Editors

6.1. Role and Scope

Guest Editors may be appointed on a temporary basis to oversee specific editorial initiatives, such as special issues, thematic collections, or other clearly defined projects aligned with the scope and objectives of *Limnetica*. Their appointment responds to the need for specialized expertise or targeted editorial leadership in relation to a particular topic.

Guest Editors are not permanent members of the Editorial Board and do not participate in the general governance or strategic management of the journal. Their role is limited to the scope and duration of the editorial project for which they are appointed.

Guest Editors are required to adhere to the same standards of confidentiality, impartiality, and conflict-of-interest management as permanent members of the Editorial Board.

6.2. Responsibilities

Under the supervision of the Editor(s)-in-Chief, Guest Editors may be responsible for:

- Conducting an initial assessment of manuscripts submitted to the special issue or thematic collection.
- Managing the peer-review process for these manuscripts, including the selection of reviewers and the evaluation of reviewers' reports.
- Formulating editorial recommendations to authors and to the Editor(s)-in-Chief based on the outcome of the peer-review process.
- Ensuring that manuscripts handled under their responsibility comply with the scientific, ethical, and quality standards of *Limnetica*.

Guest Editors may not take final decisions on the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts. Final editorial authority remains with the Editor(s)-in-Chief.

7. Selection and Appointment Procedures

7.1. General Principles

The selection and appointment of members of the Editorial Board of *Limnetica* are guided by principles of scientific excellence, transparency, fairness, and commitment to the mission and values of the journal. Appointments seek to ensure an appropriate balance of expertise, disciplinary coverage, experience, and diversity.

All appointments are made with due consideration of potential conflicts of interest and

with the objective of maintaining the editorial independence and integrity of the journal.

7.2. Editor(s)-in-Chief

Candidates for the position of Editor-in-Chief must meet the following minimum criteria:

- Hold a doctoral degree in limnology or a closely related scientific discipline.
- Demonstrate substantial scientific experience, including a sustained record of research activity.
- Possess a strong publication record in peer-reviewed international journals.
- Show a clear commitment to publication ethics, scientific integrity, and the ethical standards upheld by *Limnetica*.
- Maintain a formal link with the AIL, the owner of *Limnetica*, through membership and demonstrated involvement in its activities.

The selection of Editor(s)-in-Chief follows a transparent and structured process designed to ensure fairness and academic excellence: A public call for candidates is launched among members of the AIL, with the support and dissemination of the AIL Board.

1. Interested candidates submit the required documentation, which may include a curriculum vitae, a statement of editorial vision and motivation, and any additional materials specified in the call.
2. The AIL Board appoints a Selection Committee, composed of individuals with appropriate scientific and editorial expertise.
3. The Selection Committee evaluates the candidates against the predefined selection criteria and issues a reasoned proposal or decision, which forms the basis for the appointment of the Editor(s)-in-Chief.

7.3. Associate Editors

Candidates for the position of Associate Editor must meet the following criteria, which largely mirror those established for Editor(s)-in-Chief, with adaptations appropriate to the role:

- Hold a doctoral degree in limnology or a closely related scientific discipline.
- Demonstrate solid scientific competence and active engagement in research.
- Possess a good publication record in peer-reviewed scientific journals.
- Show a clear commitment to publication ethics, scientific integrity, and the ethical standards upheld by *Limnetica*.

A formal link with the AIL is not required.

The selection of Associate Editors follows a transparent process coordinated by the journal:

1. A public call for candidates is issued by *Limnetica*, outlining the expected

profile, responsibilities, and term of service.

2. Applications received in response to the call are evaluated by a Selection Committee appointed by the journal, taking into account the predefined selection criteria and the strategic needs of the Editorial Board.

7.4. Editorial Office

Members of the Editorial Office are appointed based on their technical competence, organizational skills, and experience in scholarly publishing or editorial management.

Appointments are made by, or in consultation with, the Editor(s)-in-Chief, in accordance with the operational needs of the journal and any applicable institutional or contractual frameworks.

7.5. Guest Editors

Guest Editors are appointed by the Editor(s)-in-Chief for specific editorial initiatives. Selection is based on subject-matter expertise, scientific reputation, and the relevance of the candidate's experience to the proposed thematic issue or collection.

7.6. Remuneration and Employment Status

The positions of Editor(s)-in-Chief, Associate Editors, and Guest Editors are honorary and do not carry any financial remuneration. These roles are performed on a voluntary basis as a service to the scientific community and in support of the mission of *Limnetica* and the AIL.

In contrast, members of the Editorial Office hold remunerated positions, reflecting the operational, technical, and administrative nature of their responsibilities. At present, the Editorial Office is operated by one individual employed by the (AIL). This employment arrangement constitutes the standard operational model of the journal and is intended to be maintained.

Any changes to the structure, staffing, or contractual arrangements of the Editorial Office are made by the AIL Board, in coordination with the Editor(s)-in-Chief, and in accordance with applicable institutional and legal frameworks. When necessary or appropriate, decisions should be approved by AIL members in the biannual general assemblies.

7.7. Transparency and Conflict of Interest

All editorial appointments are subject to transparency requirements and to the disclosure and appropriate management of conflicts of interest. Individuals appointed to editorial roles are expected to declare any circumstances that could compromise, or be perceived to compromise, their impartiality.

Procedures for the management of conflicts of interest are applied consistently across all editorial roles, in line with internationally recognized standards of publication ethics.

8. Terms of Service, Renewal, and Evaluation

Terms of service for editorial roles in *Limnetica* are defined to ensure continuity, accountability, and periodic renewal of the Editorial Board. Fixed terms allow for regular evaluation of performance while supporting the incorporation of new perspectives and expertise.

Renewal, non-renewal, or early termination of appointments is based on performance, adherence to ethical standards, and the strategic needs of the journal.

8.1. Editor(s)-in-Chief

Editor(s)-in-Chief are appointed for a term of five (5) years.

The performance and continuation of the Editor(s)-in-Chief are subject to review by the AIL Board, in the interest of the journal and in accordance with the statutes and governance responsibilities of the AIL.

8.2. Associate Editors

Associate Editors are appointed for a term of three (3) years.

At the end of the term, appointments may be renewed, based on the needs of the journal and the performance of the Associate Editor. Decisions regarding renewal or non-renewal are made by the Editor(s)-in-Chief. The number and disciplinary distribution of Associate Editors may be adjusted over time to reflect the submission volume, thematic coverage, and strategic priorities of the journal.

The Editor(s)-in-Chief may also decide to terminate an appointment before the end of the term in exceptional cases, such as sustained inactivity, failure to meet editorial responsibilities, or breaches of ethical standards.

8.3. Editorial Office and Guest Editors

Members of the Editorial Office are appointed under contractual arrangements defined by the AIL. Their terms of service, evaluation, and renewal are governed by applicable employment or service contracts and institutional procedures.

Guest Editors are appointed for the duration of the specific editorial initiative for which they are responsible.

8.4. Evaluation and Resignation

Editorial performance may be evaluated periodically, taking into account criteria such as timeliness, quality of editorial work, adherence to ethical standards, and contribution to the functioning and reputation of the journal.

Editors may resign from their position before the end of their term by providing reasonable notice to the Editor(s)-in-Chief or, in the case of Editor(s)-in-Chief, to the

AIL Board. Appropriate transitional arrangements shall be made to ensure continuity of the editorial process.

8.5. Recognition and Non-Financial Incentives

While the roles of Editor(s)-in-Chief and Associate Editors are non-remunerated, *Limnetica* and the AIL recognize the significant professional time, expertise, and responsibility associated with editorial service.

To acknowledge this contribution and to support sustained engagement, the journal may propose non-financial forms of recognition and support for members of the Editorial Board, subject to approval by the AIL Board. Such measures may include, but are not limited to:

- Reduced registration fees or other benefits associated with AIL congresses and scientific meetings;
- Discounts or partial waivers of AIL membership fees;
- Institutional or financial support for travel related to editorial activities, such as participation in meetings or workshops with other journals or publishing initiatives;
- Formal recognition of editorial service through certificates, acknowledgements, or other appropriate mechanisms.

The implementation, scope, and conditions of these measures are defined by the AIL Board in accordance with available resources and institutional policies. This provision reflects an intent to recognize editorial service and does not create an entitlement to specific benefits.

The peer-review process relies fundamentally on the expertise and commitment of the specialists who serve as reviewers. In recognition of their voluntary contribution to maintaining the journal's scholarly standards, the journal publishes an annual acknowledgement of all reviewers on its official website.