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 **WILEY-BLACKWELL**



*Welcome from **EJSS** and **SUM***



*Donald Davidson and Steve
Jarvis*

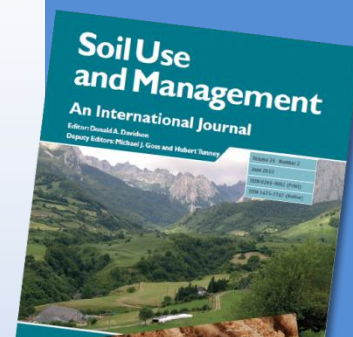


What is this presentation about?

- ☐ **targeting inexperienced authors**
- ☐ **understanding journal policies and processes**
- ☐ **not a guarantee for paper acceptance**
- ☐ **a guide to help you optimize your time and efforts (and ours!!)**



Soil Use and
Management



European
Journal of
Soil Science



The aims of the two journals



☐ **SUM**

- ☐ focuses on scientific principles to understand and solve soil problems with crop production and environmental issues.
- ☐ provides background scientific evidence for management techniques to achieve sustainable use of land.
- ☐ papers take a broad view of 'use' and 'management' as well as concern with technique development for monitoring soils

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The aims of the two journals

☐ **EJSS**

- ☐ international quality, innovative science
- ☐ advances in understanding of soil processes
- ☐ developments in advanced techniques
- ☐ topics include:
 - ☐ biological/chemical/physical interactions
 - ☐ carbon and organic matter
 - ☐ development of statistical and spatial distribution methods
 - ☐ soil variability, distribution and development

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Why are we doing this?

For the 2 journals:



☐ **19% of our MSs are rejected immediately (2009)**



☐ **only 17% are published**

☐ **very large regional variation**



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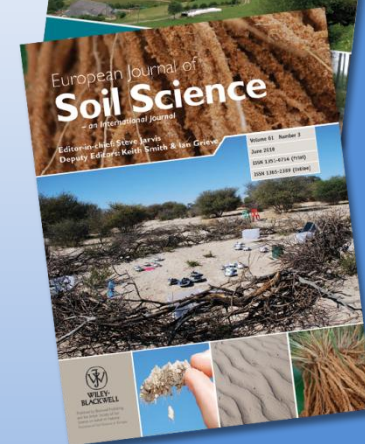
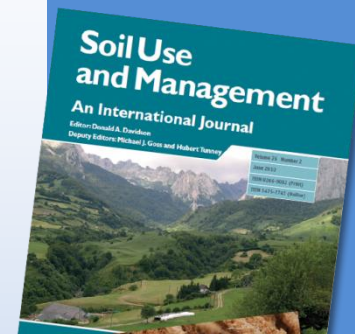
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Origin of papers sent to *SUM* & *EJSS* (%)

	SUM	EJSS
China:	21	14
France		
+ Germany:	6	16
Spain:	8	6
India:	8	6
UK:	8	6
Iran:	8	4
USA:	6	2
+ many others		

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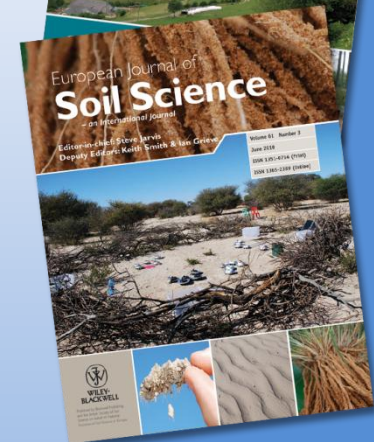
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Why such a large rejection rate?

- ❑ wrong topic
- ❑ no novelty/innovation, local relevance only
- ❑ poor science/poor execution/poor experimental design
- ❑ poor interpretation and analysis
- ❑ plagiarism/double publishing
- ❑ too applied (EJSS) -> SUM
- ❑ too 'processy' (SUM)->EJSS



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Other common problems (may be possible to rectify)



- ☐ too long
- ☐ too short! Preliminary information only or material not substantive enough to provide a complete picture
- ☐ too descriptive- no hypothesis
- ☐ English presentation is not of an acceptable standard
- ☐ does not meet formatting style or quality of journals

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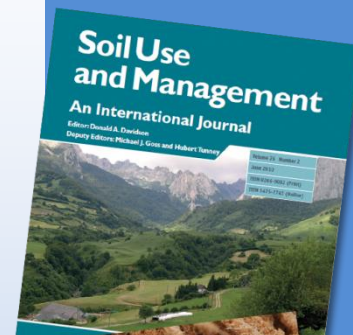


Title may be a clue 1.

Examples of rejected MSs from SUM

- ☐ Impacts of soil slaking and drying on release and retention of cations during desalinization – ***process based not applied soil science***
- ☐ Topography and water regimen influence on phosphorus desorption .. semi-arid soils – ***too descriptive***
- ☐ Impact of sewage sludge amendment on heavy metal in soils of soybean .. – ***better placed in an environmental quality journal***
- ☐ Heavy metals in the soils of urban and peri-urban irrigated land in - ***survey information, not hypothesis driven***
- ☐ Status and causes of soil salinization as influenced by soil properties in... - ***process based, not applied soil science***

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Title may be a clue 2. EJSS – fictitious example for EJSS

**“Response of ground nuts to fertilizer
and manure addition in North Tawtonia
in 2009” by Jarvis and Donaldson**

☐ **Is it novel/innovative?**

Possibly but....

☐ **Is it too applied?**

Yes

☐ **New basic/process information?**

No

☐ **Of general international interest**

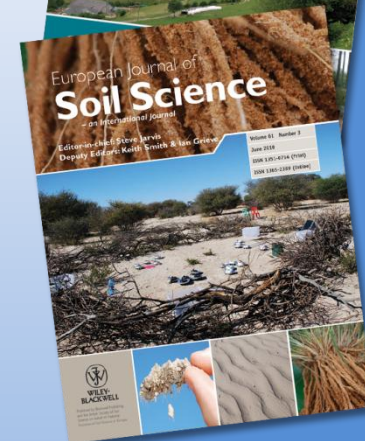
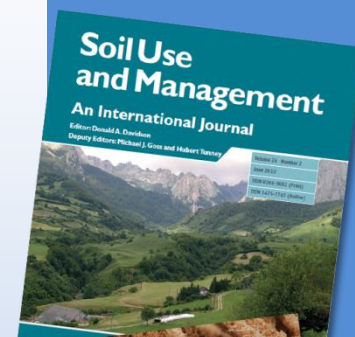
No (North Tawtonia)

☐ **Adequate experimental design?**

Probably not (one year)



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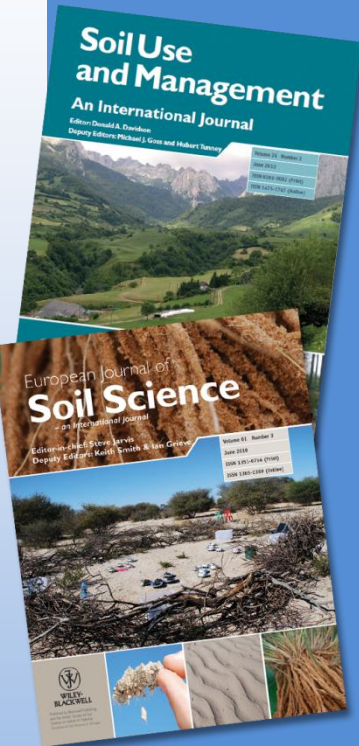
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How does the editorial system operate?

1. Initial review (Eds): No → immediate reject
Yes → Associate Ed. & refs → 2
2. Review
No → reject
Yes → revision → 3
3. Revision
Reject but re-submit → 1
Major revision → 4
Minor revision → 4
4. Review
Reject
Major revision → 3
Minor revision → 3
Accept → 5
5. EIC
Final review and edit by EIC
Questions to authors
Send to publishers



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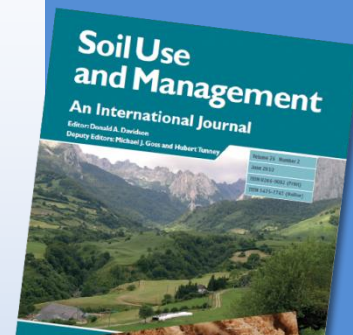
What to do before you start

Ask yourself:

- ☐ **is the experimental approach and design good?**
- ☐ **have you consulted others: statisticians, statisticians, statisticians....?**
- ☐ **does the work meet the main criteria for the journal?**



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For EJSS:

☐ is it good science (this includes experimental design and techniques)?

☐ is it new or novel?

☐ does it improve significantly our understanding of soil processes?

☐ is it interesting and relevant to an international audience?

☐ is analysis of the data adequate and appropriate to the investigation?



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For SUM:

- ☐ is it good science (this includes experimental design and techniques)?
- ☐ is it new or novel?
- ☐ does it contribute to the management and use of soils?
- ☐ is analysis of the data adequate and appropriate to the investigation?

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What to do before you write



- ☐ read guidance to authors very carefully (website)
- ☐ look at example paper:
 - structure
 - figures and tables
 - references
 - statistics



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Statistics and soils

Excellent series of papers by Webster: guidance on the use and presentation of statistical methods and results in soil science:

- SUM 5 (2) and EJSS 48 (3): regression
- EJSS 52 (2): statistics to support soil research and their presentation
- EJSS 58 (1): analysis of variance, inference multiple comparisons and sampling effects

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Statistics and soils

Some highlights. 1

- ☐ sampling design – details given?
- ☐ pseudo-replication?
- ☐ clear presentation of results? See examples by Webster
- ☐ CV – should be restricted to variables with an absolute zero
- ☐ ‘Treatment A yielded significantly more than treatment B ($P = 0.05$)’ – essential to also quote mean values
- ☐ overall, better to give Standard Errors of the mean rather than Standard Deviations

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Statistics and soils

Some highlights. 2.

- ☐ regression – give the regression equation, S.E. and value of R^2
- ☐ ANOVA – must include replication and randomization
- ☐ importance of data transformations
- ☐ present numerical results to 3 significant figures



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What to do when you write

- ☐ follow the recommended style, length & format
- ☐ check references: precision & numbers
- ☐ ask colleagues to read your MS
- ☐ for non-native English speakers – get guidance



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Example of the structure of a SUM paper

Phosphorus fertilizer form affects phosphorus loss to waterways: a paired catchment study

Abstract

Two catchments were used to test the hypothesis that using reactive phosphate rock (RPR), a low water soluble fertilizer, instead of superphosphate, could decrease phosphorus (P) export in streams.....

Introduction

Materials and methods

Site and measurements

Treatments

Statistical analyses

To determine a treatment effect with paired catchments, the data were split into two periods: calibration and treatment.

Results

Discussion

Conclusions

The analysis of the paired catchment experiment indicated a significant decrease in P losses when RPR was applied instead of superphosphate...



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Example of the structure of a EJSS paper

Stock, turnover time and accumulation of organic matter in bulk and density fractions of a Podzol soil

Summary

Temperate forest soils store large amounts of organic matter and are considered as net sinks for atmospheric carbon dioxide. Information about the sink strength and the turnover time of soil organic carbon.....

Introduction

Materials and methods

Site description

Sampling

Analyses

Density fractionation

Turnover time of organic carbon

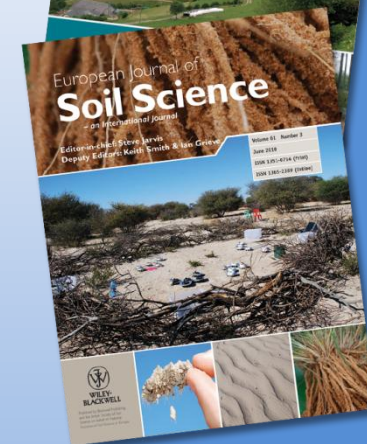
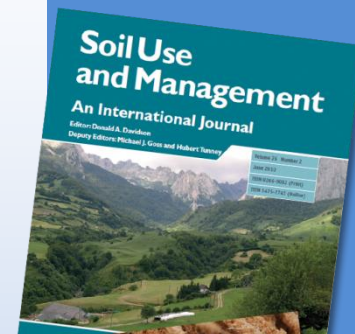
Statistics

Results

Discussion

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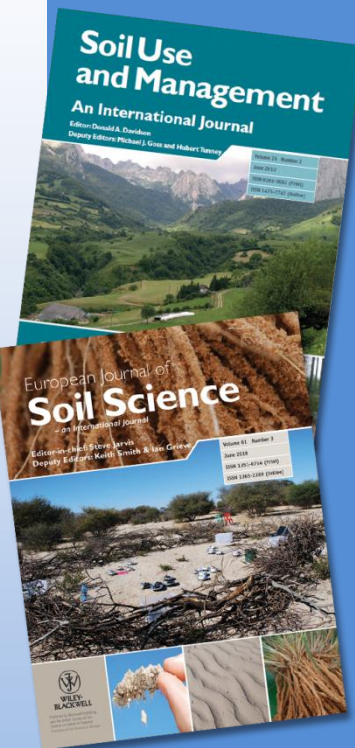
What to do when the decision is made 1.



Reject:

- ☐ **outright rejection**
 - ☐ *little chance- accept decision*
- ☐ **later rejection after full review**
 - ☐ *if the advice from AE and referees is solid – accept decision*
 - ☐ *contact EIC ONLY if you have evidence that the reviewers are wrong*
- ☐ **don't get angry with the EIC!**

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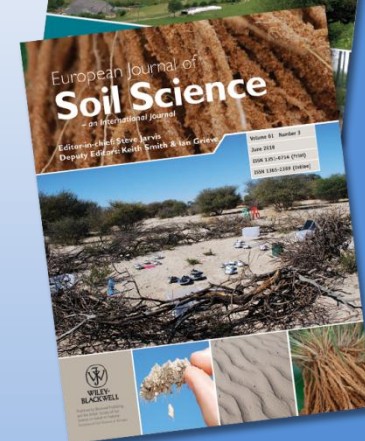
What to do when the decision is made 2.

Revise:

- ☐ **take each recommendation very seriously - do not ignore**
- ☐ **explain your reactions and changes carefully**
- ☐ **provide concrete evidence if you ‘dispute’ decisions**
 - “We are right”* is not a good enough response**



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Final comments 1.

- ☐ **pressure to publish is great**
 - ☐ **300 - 350+ MS per year**
- ☐ **do not take short cuts**
 - ☐ **our AEs & referees will find you out!**
- ☐ **take advice**
- ☐ **read decision letters and review reports very carefully**

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Final comments 2.

If all this advice is followed:

- ☐ improved chances of MSs being accepted
- ☐ continued flow of high quality papers
- ☐ improved international representation of good work
- ☐ more satisfaction for you
- ☐ an easier life for us!!!

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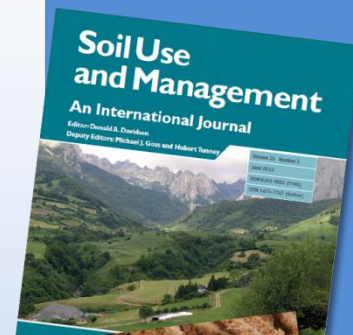
Thank you for reading this.

***Do not hesitate to contact us if
you wish any initial guidance on
the potential suitability of a
paper:***

***.. and we look forward to
receiving your papers.***



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A Selection of Questions and Answers

Following the presentation at the World Congress of Soil Science in Brisbane, Australia, August 2010



Q 1. Is there prejudice (against the origin of the paper) in the acceptance of papers?

A. The only prejudice is for high quality science (not at all against the country of origin.)

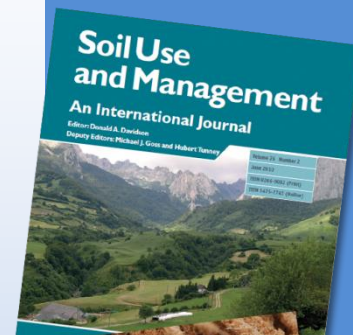


Q 2. How can authors from developing countries access previously published work in the two journals?

A. Wiley-Blackwell participates in programmes which provide free or low-cost online access to important research in developing countries. The journals are available in 3003 libraries in developing countries through the AGORA, OARE and INASP initiatives as well as in Haiti.



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Questions and Answers continued.....

Q3. Are letters to the editor when submitting the manuscript important?

A. They are sometimes useful but do not always provide additional helpful information.

Q4. Why are so few pedology papers published in EJSS now?

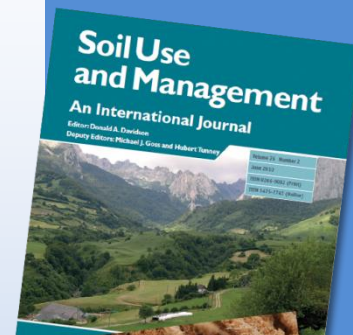
A. There are fewer pedologists around now so we see fewer submitted: the journal is still very keen to see high quality pedology papers.

Q5. Is it best to cite the original paper or to cite more recent examples of that work?

A. It is preferable to cite the original work, if there has been a recent comprehensive review of the topic, it would be useful to cite that as well.



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