
AFRICAN JOURNAL OF RANGE & FORAGE SCIENCE

Types of Manuscripts Published

The African Journal of Range & Forage Science publishes peer reviewed Research Papers, Research Notes, Reviews and Commentaries. Papers are evaluated on the quality and originality of the material and its interest to our reader-ship. Papers are reviewed by two anonymous referees (three in the case of Reviews), who are selected by an Associate Editor. The identity of the author(s) is withheld from reviewers to ensure a fair review process. Final acceptance or rejection rests with the Editor-in-Chief. In addition, the Journal also publishes Letters to the Editor and invited Book Reviews, which are evaluated by the Editor-in-Chief and the Book Reviews Editor, respectively.

Research Papers report original research that is of interest to a wider audience. The research should be contextualised in the relevant theory and test hypotheses that are founded on existing theory and literature. Studies should be based on sound experimental design and analysed using appropriate statistical methods. The conclusions and management implications must be supported by the data. Papers that are descriptive, e.g. which characterise landscape patterns or classify vegetative communities, or work based on quantitative models are also acceptable, provided they are of sufficient general interest. Research papers must be based on sufficient data and be suitably replicated to allow the findings to be extrapolated beyond the immediate area and time frame in which the study was conducted. Where the focus is on comparing yields between different treatments, research papers should be based on a minimum of two seasons' field data. Research papers should not report work that simply followed well-established protocols and report familiar findings without some context that adds novelty (e.g. results for subhumid areas that are different to previous work done in arid areas). There is no length limit on research papers, but they should be concise and contain only as much text, tables and figures as is required to accurately describe the research and convey its findings. For most research papers, this should be less than 6 000 words, excluding the abstract and including the reference list.

The Introduction of research papers should outline the problem in general and clearly state the study objectives. References to previous work are only desirable if they have direct bearing on the subject of the paper. A detailed review of the literature is usually inappropriate. Typically, the intermediate sections will be Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusions and Acknowledgements (including funding sources and names of presubmission reviewers).

Research Notes report on work that is of interest to a wider audience but is more suited to a short communication. This

includes the following: interesting preliminary results; novel research based on a small or pseudoreplicated data set; papers reporting on advances in research methodologies; research that is mainly applied and not contextualised in theory; papers reporting descriptive findings or based on routine protocols that provide valuable case studies but lack novelty; or research that is fairly straightforward and can be communicated fully in a short paper. Research Notes should not exceed 3 000 words, excluding the abstract and including the reference list and have no internal headings. The total number of tables and figures should be limited to no more than three.

Reviews critically evaluate and synthesise existing data and literature. Reviews should go beyond simply summarising the literature and may take forward debates, propose novel theory, highlight issues of public concern or expose important data gaps pertaining to important research questions. Reviews may be invited by the Editor-in-Chief, in which case the published paper is marked as an **Invited Review**. Invited Reviews are subject to the same peer review process as other reviews. As a general rule, reviews should not exceed 10 000 words, excluding the abstract and including the reference list. Authors may make a case for a longer review paper if the topic and available information warrant it.

Commentaries are short papers that provide well-substantiated viewpoints on issues of interest. Commentaries may critically analyse or explore the policy implications of recent research developments, and may provide alternative viewpoints. Commentaries should be thought-provoking and stimulate debate. Arguments should be substantiated with academic literature and not merely be based on personal opinion. Commentaries should not exceed 3 000 words, excluding the abstract and including the reference list.

Letters to the Editor are short discussions of recently published articles in the *African Journal of Range & Forage Science*. Letters to the Editor are accepted based on their relevance, wider interest, insights and timeliness. Letters should be submitted within six months from the final online publication date of the article under discussion. There is no word limit to Letters to the Editor, but authors are encouraged to keep their communications as concise as possible. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to shorten Letters.

Book Reviews are invited reviews of recently published books of interest to the journal's readership. Authors wishing to contribute a book review should contact the Editor-in-Chief.