

Guidelines to Authors

Malawi Journal of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Development Studies (MAJANDS) is a biannual, peer-reviewed, open access journal that publishes original research papers, short communications and review papers on the following subject areas:

- i. Animal and veterinary sciences;
- ii. Aquaculture and fisheries sciences;
- iii. Bio-resources systems, engineering and technology;
- iv. Biotechnology;
- v. Crop sciences;
- vi. Development studies;
- vii. Natural resources, energy and climate change;
- viii. Nutrition and food science.

1. Submission of manuscripts

1.1 Types of Articles

Original Research Articles: These should describe new and carefully confirmed findings, and experimental procedures should be given in sufficient detail so that the results can be reproduced by others. The length of a full paper should be the minimum required to describe and interpret the work clearly, most preferably 4-8 printed pages (about 12-22 manuscript pages).

Short Communications: Short Communication of preliminary but significant research results. These are results of complete small investigations or giving details of new models or hypotheses, innovative methods, techniques or apparatus. The style of main sections need not conform to that of full-length papers. Short communications are 2 to 4 printed pages (about 6 to 12 manuscript pages) in length.

Reviews: Submissions of reviews and perspectives covering topics of current interest are welcomed and encouraged. Reviews should be concise and no longer than 4 to 6 printed pages (about 12 to 18 manuscript pages). Reviews are also peer-reviewed.

1.2. Submission Process

Manuscripts for MAJANDS should be submitted to the following email address: majands@bunda.luanar.mw The submitting author, who is generally the corresponding author, is responsible for the manuscript during the submission and peer-review process. The corresponding author must ensure that all co-authors have been included

in the author list and that they all have read and approved the submitted version of the manuscript.

Authors must use Microsoft WORD to prepare their manuscripts. Please insert your graphics (schemes, figures, *etc.*) in the main text after the paragraph of its first citation.

1.3. Cover Letter

A cover letter must be included with each manuscript submission. It should be concise and explain why the content of your paper is significant, placing your findings in the context of existing work and why it fits the scope of the journal. Please confirm that the manuscript is currently not under consideration to be published in another journal.

2.0. Preparation of the manuscript

2.1. Manuscript layout and structure

Manuscripts should be typewritten in English. Any non-English words are prohibited in the papers (if not subject of the reported research). American or British usage is accepted, but not a mixture of both.

Your paper must use a page size corresponding to A4 which is 210 mm (8.27 inches) wide and 297 mm (11.69 inches) long. The margins must be set as follows:

Top and Bottom, 25 mm (0.98 inches)

Left and Right, 30 mm (1.18 inches)

The manuscript will be prepared using font size 10-12 with wide margins of 1.5cm lines. Number lines will be included in the left margin for the review process. All pages must be numbered in the bottom.

Research manuscripts should comprise:

- i. Front Matter* - Title, Author list, Affiliations, Abstract, Keywords
- ii. Research manuscript section* - Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusions
- iii. Back Matter* - Acknowledgments, Author Contributions, Conflict of Interests, References

2.1.1. Front Matter

These sections should appear in all manuscript types.

Title: The title of your manuscript should be concise, specific and relevant. When gene or protein names are included, the abbreviated name rather than full name should be used.

Author names and affiliations. Authors' full first and last names must be provided. The initials of any middle names can be added. Authors' names will be followed by an upper-script number indicating the affiliation(s) of the authors. Affiliations will be numbered and listed, and will include the full postal address, country and the e-mail address. An author may provide one or more affiliations if necessary, but all of them will be referenced by upper-script numbers. The corresponding author will be indicated with an asterisk (*) and should include contact telephone and fax numbers. If an author has moved since the work was done or was visiting at the time, a "present address" may be provided.

Abstract. The abstract should be a total of about 250 words maximum. The abstract should be a single paragraph and should follow the style of structured abstracts, but without headings: 1) *Background*: Place the question addressed in a broad context and highlight the purpose of the study; 2) *Methods*: Describe briefly the main methods or treatments applied; 3) *Results*: Summarize the article's main findings; and 4) *Conclusion*: Indicate the main conclusions or interpretations. The abstract should be an objective representation of the article: it must not contain results which are not presented and substantiated in the main text and should not exaggerate the main conclusions.

Keywords. Authors are invited to provide 4-6 keywords separated with semicolons (;). We recommend that the keywords are specific to the article, yet reasonably common within the subject discipline.

2.1.2. Research Manuscript Sections

- i. **Introduction:** The introduction should briefly place the study in a broad context and highlight why it is important. It should define the purpose of the work and its significance. The current state of the research field should be reviewed carefully and key publications should be cited. Please highlight controversial and diverging hypotheses when necessary. Finally, briefly mention the main aim of the work and highlight the main conclusions. As far as possible, please keep the introduction comprehensible to scientists outside your particular field of research.

- ii. **Methods and Materials:** This section should be divided by subheadings. Methods and Materials should be described with sufficient details to allow others to replicate and build on published results. Please note that publication of your manuscript implicates that you must make all materials, data, and protocols associated with the publication available to readers. Please disclose at the submission stage any restrictions on the availability of materials or information. New methods and protocols should be described in detail while well-established methods can be briefly described and appropriately cited.

- iii. **Results:** This section may be divided by subheadings. It should provide a concise and precise description of the experimental results, their interpretation as well as the experimental conclusions that can be drawn.

- iv. **Discussion:** This section may be divided by subheadings. Authors should discuss the results and how they can be interpreted in perspective of previous studies and of the working hypotheses. The findings and their implications should be discussed in the broadest context possible. Future research directions may also be highlighted.

- v. **Conclusions:** The conclusion section is not a summary; it is a belief based on your reasoning and on the evidence you have accumulated. This is the place to share with your readers the conclusions you have reached because of your research.

2.1.3. Back Matter

- i. **Acknowledgements:** All sources of funding of the study should be disclosed. Please clearly indicate grants that you have received in support of your research work.

- ii. **Author Contributions:** For research articles with several authors, a short paragraph specifying their individual contributions must be provided. Authorship must be limited to those who have contributed substantially to the work reported.

- iii. **Conflicts of Interest:** Authors must identify and declare any personal circumstances or interest that may be perceived as inappropriately influencing the representation or interpretation of reported research results. If there is no conflict of interest, please state "The authors declare no conflict of interest." Any role of the funding sponsors in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results must be declared in this section. If there is no role, please state

“The funding sponsors had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, and in the decision to publish the results”.

- iv. References:** Harvard Referencing System will be used for all references and citations in the main text and in the Reference Section. We recommend preparing the references with a bibliography software package, such as *EndNote* or *ReferenceManager* to avoid typing mistakes and duplicated references.

3. Figures and tables

Figures and Tables should be placed at the end of the manuscript and should be numbered (Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3, etc.). Figures will include both graphical layouts and photographs. Figures and tables will be designed to be readable and reproduced at 1-column (8.5 cm) or at wide format (18 cm).

If possible, text in the figure will use Arial font.

Please, do not:

Supply images that are too low in resolution or are optimized for screen use.

Submit graphics that are disproportionately large for the content.

Supply images with text too small or too large. Try to use fonts approximately at the same size of text fonts.

All figures will have a caption (not included in the figure) immediately below. All tables will have a caption (not included in the table) immediately above. Figure and table captions will include a brief title and a short description of the illustration. All symbols and abbreviations used in figures and tables will be explained in the caption, so that they may be read independently of the main text.

4. References

Every reference cited in the text must be listed in the references section and *viceversa*. Software references must also be included.

4.1. Citations in the text

The reference list should be arranged alphabetically. Citations should include only published articles or books or those in press. Papers in press should be cited as “in press”, copies of the publishers’ letters of acceptance should accompany the papers for review. The references within text should appear as follows: Kassam (2010) or

Masangano and Jere (2002) or Chonde *et al*, (2000) or for many citations as Njoloma, 1998, Singa, 2001, Kaunda, 2002. Within the same sentence, they should be in chronological order. Author's own unpublished data should be cited as "unpublished data". Personal Communication and unpublished data should not appear in references section. List references alphabetically by author and then chronologically. The year of publication follows the authors' name. Differentiate two or more publications by the same author or set of authors in the same year by adding lower case letters after the date (e.g. Mchakulu 1999a,b). Journal names can be written in full or abbreviated according to the conventional abbreviations such as those published in the *Serial Sources for the BIOSIS Data Base*.

4.2. Reference style

Reference to a Journal publication:

Safalaoh, A. C. L. 2001. Village chicken upgrading programme in Malawi. *World's Poultry Science Journal*. 57: 179-188

Luis, O.J. and A.C. Ponte. 1993. Control of reproduction of the shrimp *Penaeus keratherus* held in Captivity. *Journal of the World Aquaculture Society* 24:31-39

Reference to a book:

Kaunda, E.K. and G.F. Salanje. 1990. *An Introduction to Fish Diseases Epidemiology*. Dzuka Publishers, Blantyre, Malawi. 548pp.

Reference to a chapter in an edited book:

Mettam, G.R. and L.B. Adams. 1994. How to prepare an electronic version of your article. In Jones, B.S. and R.Z. Smith. (Eds.). *Introduction to the electronic age* (pp. 281-304). New York: E-Publishing Inc.

5. Peer Review Process

To ensure quality, all papers submitted to MAJANDS will undergo a full double blind refereeing process in which:

- Each paper is sent to 3 experts, one of which is the corresponding editorial board member while the other 2 are external, for peer review;

- The reviewers recommendations determine whether a paper will be accepted/accepted subject to change/subject to resubmission with significant changes/ rejected;
- For papers which require changes, the same reviewers will be preferably used to ensure that the quality of the revised paper is acceptable.

Proofs and Reprints: Electronic Gallery proofs will be sent via e-mail attachment to the corresponding author as a PDF file. Gallery proofs are considered to be the final version of the manuscript. With the exception of typographical or minor clerical errors, no changes will be made in the manuscript at the proof stage. Because the MAJANDS will be published freely online to attract a wide audience, authors will have free electronic access to the full text (in PDF) of the article. Authors can freely download the PDF file from which they can print unlimited copies of their articles.

Copyright: Submission of a manuscript implies; that the work described has not been published before (except in the form of an abstract or as part of a published lecture, or thesis) that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere; that if and when the manuscript is accepted for publication, the authors agree to automatic transfer of the copyright to the publisher.

For style and format please consult the most recent issue of MAJANDS.