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1. AIMS AND SCOPE

Ecology Letters is a forum for the very rapid publication of the most novel research in ecology, research that is not yet in the public domain. Manuscripts relating to the ecology of all taxa, in any biome and geographic area will be considered, and priority will be given to those papers exploring or testing clearly stated hypotheses. The journal publishes concise papers that merit urgent publication by virtue of their originality, general interest and their contribution to new developments in ecology. We discourage purely descriptive papers and those merely confirming or extending results of previous work. Articles are published free of charge unless the author elects to publish their paper as open access via the OnlineOpen service.

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2. TYPES OF ARTICLES

- *Letters*: maximum of 5000 words in length (main text) and 6 figures, tables or boxes.
- *Ideas and Perspectives*: maximum of 7500 words (main text) and 10 figures, tables or boxes.
- *Reviews and Syntheses*: maximum of 7500 words (main text) and 10 figures, tables or boxes.
- *Technical Comments*: must address articles published during the last 6 months in *Ecology Letters*. Maximum 800 words and 2 figures or tables. Text boxes are not allowed.

Note: The specified word count is for the main text body excluding title, abstract, acknowledgements, references, table and figure legends, and appendices.

Letters represent original research findings in ecology and are the primary manuscript type of the journal. Emphasis is placed on new contributions to ecological theory, bodies of empirical knowledge or the practice of ecology. Contributions need to have a substantial nexus with ecology, and purely evolutionary or environmental science contributions that do not make contributions to general ecology are rarely published. Applied ecology manuscripts are welcome and should contribute to general ecological knowledge to fit within the scope of the journal as determined by its Editorial Board.

Ideas and Perspectives and ***Reviews and Syntheses*** are commissioned by one of two processes:

(1) Direct invitations from the *Ideas and Perspectives* or *Reviews and Syntheses* Editors, with consultation with the Editorial Board and Editor-in-Chief.

(2) Unsolicited proposals, which will be evaluated by the *Ideas and Perspectives* or *Reviews and Syntheses* Editors, in consultation with the Editorial Board and Editor-in-Chief, prior to a full submission. Proposals should be no more than 300 words long, describe the nature and novelty of the work, the contribution of the proposed article to the discipline, and the qualifications of the author(s) who will write the manuscript. Proposals should be sent to the Editorial Office (ecolets@cefe.cnrs.fr).

Manuscripts for *Ideas and Perspectives* and *Reviews and Syntheses* submitted without an invitation or an approved proposal will not be considered. Please note that our encouragement of a proposal in no way prejudices the quality of a submission, and all manuscripts are subject to our full evaluation procedures. Some encouraged manuscripts are rejected editorially, without peer review, if we believe that they are unlikely to receive sufficient reviewer support to merit publication.

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Ideas and Perspectives. *Ecology Letters* is particularly interested in novel essays expressing new ideas and perspectives that will appeal to a wide ecological audience. It is important that *Ideas and Perspectives* be focused on a topic of current interest. We are interested in new ideas, emerging frameworks, and controversial perspectives on hot areas of research. There is a need to present a view that is sufficiently complete to convince reviewers of the value of the contribution. There is the same expectation for the novelty of *Ideas and Perspectives* as for *Letters*. Those articles principally reviewing a topic, those that are just a statement of opinion, and those primarily discussing the author's own work will not be considered. Articles that are successful usually present a quantitative analysis, as a way of introducing a new perspective in ecology. Authors interested in submitting such a manuscript should first send a one-paragraph proposal (no more than 300 words) to the Editorial Office (see above).

Reviews and Syntheses. *Ecology Letters* seeks *Reviews and Syntheses* on fast moving and important topics that merit rapid consideration and publication. *Reviews & Syntheses* are freely available online. *Reviews and Syntheses* can include the traditional literature review, along with more quantitative meta-analyses, syntheses, and modelling approaches, so long as those are placed in a broad context appropriate for the topic being covered. *Reviews and Syntheses* are expected to be of broad interest to the readership of *Ecology Letters*, should focus on novel principles emerging over the past several years, and should include critical evaluation, synthesis, and/or prospects for future research directions. Authors interested in submitting such a manuscript should first send a proposal to the Editorial Office (see above).

Technical Comments. *Ecology Letters* occasionally publishes *Technical Comments*, which represent important advances focusing on papers published over the previous 6 months in *Ecology Letters*. *Technical Comments* are accompanied by an abstract of no more than 50 words. The authors of the original paper are given an opportunity to reply. All *Technical Comments* are first reviewed by a member of our Editorial Board, and if deemed novel and of general importance, peer reviewed. Replies to *Technical Comments* are regarded as *Technical Comments*, and their publication is therefore subject to the same standards of editorial evaluation and peer review as are other *Technical Comments*. Authors must communicate their *Technical Comments* to the authors of the original paper prior to submission to *Ecology Letters* and must indicate that this action has been taken in their cover letter.

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Editorial Office

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3. SUBMISSIONS AND HANDLING OF MANUSCRIPTS

Submissions to *Ecology Letters* should be made online at [ScholarOne Manuscripts](#). On initial submission, authors can either submit separate text and figure files or a single .doc, .rtf or PDF file with embedded images. A PDF proof will be created automatically upon upload. Full instructions and support are available online from the submission site.

Ecology Letters will also consider referrals from independent review services such as [Axios Review](#). An independent review service like Axios Review allows authors to choose *Ecology Letters* as one of several “target journals”. The paper will receive anonymous external peer review overseen by Axios and its editorial board. Please note that the service is paid for by the author. An Editor at Axios Review then decides whether the paper is of sufficient novelty and importance to merit a referral to *Ecology Letters*. If so, the paper and the reviews are passed to *Ecology Letters* for editorial evaluation. Like all manuscripts received by *Ecology Letters* the manuscript is subject to journal’s full evaluation procedures. However the process should be able to be speeded up by having existing reviews in-hand and offers the ability for the reviews to be used by other journals should *Ecology Letters* be unable to publish the manuscript. If we agree that the paper is a worthwhile submission, we will ask the authors to revise their paper and submit via [ScholarOne Manuscripts](#), including a detailed 'response to reviewers' as a supplemental file. If the paper is not appropriate for *Ecology Letters*, it can instead be referred to the other target journals. This process helps authors find a journal that is interested in their manuscript, while simultaneously reducing the workload for both reviewers and journals. More details can be found at [Axios Review](#).

Ecology Letters does not have a standard LaTeX style file. Manuscripts submitted using LaTeX should be accompanied by a PDF version of the paper. Upon final acceptance for publication, authors will be requested to send their LaTeX source files accompanied by all figures in EPS or TIFF format and also any non-standard LaTeX style files used in the manuscript preparation.

We ask authors to provide a list of recommended and opposed reviewers, and to list any editorial board members with whom they are in conflict. Such lists are intended to help the journal process your manuscript expediently by helping us identify appropriate reviewers and avoid time lags by asking in-conflict individuals. The list is advisory to

the Editorial Board and while we generally respect reasons for excluding potential reviewers we will sometimes ask key people for advice and whether they are able to give it impartially. Sometimes such reviewers are the most capable of giving feedback that helps improve a manuscript. In identifying board members who might handle your manuscript we ask that you only name in-conflict individuals and the reason why they are in conflict.

Submissions to *Ecology Letters* must represent the independent work of the authors.

Note: Publication of your paper cannot proceed without receipt of the copyright form (see section on '[Copyright](#)')

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4. PUBLICATION ETHICS

On submission of a paper, authors must confirm whether any of the data or content is already in the public domain (e.g. in a publicly accessible pre-print repository or report), and all relevant sources must be cited. Additionally once a paper is accepted, in signing the CTA (Copyright Transfer Agreement) form the authors sign to represent that the contribution has not been submitted elsewhere for publication. Dual publication of an article is not permitted.

Any queries should be directed to the Managing Editor ([Nathalie Espuno](#)). This journal is a member of and subscribes to the principles of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

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5. AUTHORSHIP

The title page must contain a brief statement of *authorship*, which will be printed at the end of the article if it is accepted.

All authors must agree to submission of a manuscript, and each author carries a degree of responsibility for the accuracy, integrity and ethics of the manuscript and works described therein. Some authors, especially the lead author, are responsible for the integrity of the entire manuscript. Other authors are primarily responsible for the integrity and accuracy of methods or data they contributed. The lead author is responsible for ensuring agreement on such roles prior to submission.

The lead author shall be the first listed author on the manuscript unless indicated otherwise in the cover letter at the time of submission. Any changes to authorship after the initial submission need to be approved in a letter signed by all authors. All authors are expected to make a substantial intellectual contribution to a manuscript. Honorary authorships are discouraged: merely providing facilities, obtaining funding or heading a research group that houses authors are not sufficient reasons for authorship, nor is provision of a small amount of data collected primarily for purposes other than those in the manuscript.

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6. DATA SOURCES

Prior to submission of a manuscript, authors are responsible for having secured any required permissions to use data in their study. It is the policy of *Ecology Letters* that all published data sources must be referenced in the manuscript.

This reflects that data citations are important for the reproducibility of research and as an incentive to make data publicly available. In cases where there is both an original published paper and a citation for the data set then both should be cited.

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7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Ecology Letters requires that all authors disclose any potential sources of conflict of interest. Any interest or relationship, financial or otherwise, which might be perceived as influencing an author's objectivity is considered a potential source of conflict of interest. These must be disclosed when directly relevant or indirectly related to the work that the authors describe in their manuscript.

Potential sources of conflict of interest include but are not limited to patent or stock ownership, membership of a company board of directors, membership of an advisory board or committee for a company, and consultancy for or receipt of speaker's fees from a company.

The existence of a conflict of interest does not preclude publication in this journal. However, it is the responsibility of the corresponding author to review this policy with all authors and to collectively list in the cover letter and in the manuscript (under the Acknowledgments section) ALL pertinent commercial and other relationships.

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8. COVER LETTER AND NOVELTY STATEMENT

The covering letter to the Editorial Office should succinctly describe why the enclosed work is novel, exciting and of general interest in ecology.

Additionally, the covering letter should include a clear statement of exactly how the present manuscript is outstandingly novel relative to recent work by the author or coauthors cited in the present submission. At the time of submission, PDFs of any recent manuscripts or book chapters by the author or coauthors and cited in the present submission must be uploaded as supporting files. This includes all cited manuscripts by the author or coauthors published this year, last year, in press or submitted. These files are made accessible to referees with the understanding that "in press" and "submitted" manuscripts represent privileged communications which may not be cited or used in any way other than for reference while reviewing the current manuscript. If there is a particular reason why a file should not be made available to reviewers, please point this out and provide an explanation in the cover letter.

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9. DECISION TIMES

All editorial decisions are made within 8 weeks of submission. Please note that the above decision times apply to manuscripts once all the required material (all manuscript parts, cover letter, novelty statement, PDFs of recent cited manuscripts by all authors) has been received by the Editorial Office. Accepted manuscripts will usually be published within 3 weeks of receipt of corrected proofs.

10. PRESENTATION OF MANUSCRIPTS

Ecology Letters places great emphasis on its prompt and accurate review of submitted manuscripts. This requires that manuscripts be *concise* and *carefully prepared*: they must be complete, with all reporting of methods, results and citations fully checked and in final form. Figures and tables must be clear and well presented. All pages should be numbered consecutively. Manuscripts judged to be too hastily or poorly prepared will be rejected without the possibility of resubmission. The correct presentation of manuscripts is detailed below.

Manuscripts should be written in clear, concise and grammatically correct English. Authors for whom English is their second language should therefore have their manuscript thoroughly corrected by a native English speaker prior to submission where necessary. This may be on an informal basis through a colleague or acquaintance, or on a professional basis through a copy-editing service. To assist authors who wish to use a professional copy-editor, a list of independent suppliers of editing services can be found at the [Author Services](#) website. All services are paid for and arranged by the author, and use of one of these services does not guarantee acceptance or preferential treatment.

I. Title page

Statement of authorship: Contributions by authors should be listed on the title page and will be printed at the end of the manuscript. This statement should be appropriate to the study described in the manuscript and should clarify who designed the study, who performed the research, who provided new methods or materials, and who wrote the manuscript. We encourage concise statements such as “JW performed phylogenetic analyses, MH collected data, performed modeling work and analyzed output data, and PK performed the meta-analysis. MH wrote the first draft of the manuscript, and all authors contributed substantially to revisions.”

Data accessibility statement: The statement must confirm that, should the manuscript be accepted, the data supporting the results will be archived in an appropriate public repository such as Dryad or Figshare and the data DOI will be included at the end of the article.

The title page must also contain:

The title page must also contain:

- the article title
- full name(s), affiliation(s) and e-mail address(es) of all author(s)
- a short running title (abbreviated form of title) of less than 45 characters including spaces
- up to 10 keywords for indexing purposes. It is very important that the keywords be chosen carefully
- the type of article (Ideas and Perspectives, Letters, Reviews and Syntheses, or Technical Comments)
- the number of words in the abstract, the number of words in the main text (excluding abstract, acknowledgements, references, table and figure legends), and the number of words in each text box
- the number of references
- the number of figures, tables, and text boxes

- the name and complete mailing address (including telephone and fax numbers and e-mail address) of the person to whom correspondence should be sent

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II. Abstract page

The abstract page should contain a short summary not exceeding 150 words for *Letters*, and 200 words for *Ideas and Perspectives* and *Reviews and Syntheses*.

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III. Main text (Sections b-d are required for *Letters* only)

(a) *Introduction*. The introduction should summarize briefly the background and aims, and end with a very brief statement of what has been achieved by the work.

(b) *Material and methods*. This section should contain sufficient detail so that all procedures can be repeated (in conjunction with cited references). A checklist is provided so that authors can check that their methods report details which our editors regard as essential (please refer to the [Checklist](#)). Where specific equipment and materials are named, the manufacturer's name, city and country should be given (generally in parentheses after first mention).

(c) *Results*. The Results section should present the experiments that support the conclusions to be drawn later in the Discussion. The Results section should conform to a high standard of rigour. Extended lines of inference, arguments or speculations should not be placed in the Results.

(d) *Discussion*. The Discussion section should be separate from the Results section. It allows authors to propose their interpretation of the results, and to suggest what they might mean in a wider context in general and relative to published literature. It should end with a clear statement of the main conclusions of the research, and a clear explanation of their importance and relevance.

(e) *Acknowledgements*. Acknowledgements should be brief and concise.

(f) *References*. See below for detailed information to in-text citations and Reference list.

IV. Citing references in text

In the text, references should always be listed chronologically and in full unless there are three or more authors. Example: Able et al. 1997; Able & Charles 1986; Lowe et al. 1986. For references made to papers with three or more authors, only the first name is cited, and followed by "*et al.*" For instance, Frank et al. 1986. References made to works by the same author(s) and publication year should be included after the year of publication. For instance James et al. 1986a, b. References should not be numbered in the text. Example of data citation in text: "Data available from the Dryad Digital Repository: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5061/dryad.XXXXX>".

V. Reference list

In the reference list, names and initials of all authors should be provided for papers with six authors or less. For papers with more than six authors, only the first six authors should be cited, and followed by “*et al.*”. References should be listed in the following standard forms:

- Journal articles
Last name, Initials. *et al.* (Year). Full title of article. *Abbreviated journal title* (standard abbreviations), Volume number, page range.
- Books
Last name, Initials. *et al.* (Year). *Full title of book*. Edition (only include this if not the first edition). Publisher, place (cities only except for USA and UK), pp. (page range)
- Chapters in books
Last name, Initials. *et al.* (Year). Full title of chapter. In: (*Full title of book*), Edition (only include this if not the first edition) { [ed(s).] [Editors(s) last name, initials] }. Publisher, City (Include state and country for USA and UK), pp. (page range).
- Data
Last name, Initials. *et al.* (Year). Data from: (*Title of article*). Dryad Digital Repository. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5061/dryad.585t4>.
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VI. Reference to unpublished works

- “In press”: nly permissible for papers that have been accepted for publication (documentary evidence oacceptance must be provided).
Example: Vázquez, D.P. & Simberloff, D. (2003). Changes in interaction biodiversity induced by an introduced ungulate. *Ecol. Lett.*, in press (accepted).
- “Personal communication”:
Citation must be accompanied by the names of all persons concerned. Any person cited as the source of a 'personal communication' must have approved the reference.

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11. SPECIFICATIONS

Text

Files should be formatted double-spaced with no hyphenation or automatic wordwrap (no hard returns within paragraphs). Please type your text consistently, for example take care to distinguish between '1' (one) and 'l' (lowercase L), and '0' (zero) and 'O' (capital o), and so on.

Tables

Tables should be submitted as MS Excel or MS Word documents (or equivalent). Tables should be cited consecutively in the text, numbered with Arabic numerals (Table 1, Table 2, etc.) and should be grouped together at the end of the paper or in a separate file(s). Each table should be titled and typed double-spaced on a separate sheet. Units must be clearly indicated for each of the entries in the table. Footnotes to tables should be identified by the symbols * † ‡ § ¶ (in that order) and placed at the bottom of the table. No vertical rules should be used.

Figures

Figures should be cited consecutively in the text by Arabic numerals (Fig. 1, Fig. 2, etc.) and should be grouped together at the end of the paper or in a separate file(s). Legends should be typed double-spaced and grouped at the end of the paper. Line and combination figures should preferably be submitted in vector graphics format (e.g. either embedded as vector graphics in a Word document or saved separately in PDF or eps format). If this is not possible, they should be saved separately as pixel-based graphics at 600 dpi at the required print size, and they should be saved in TIFF (not jpg) format or embedded as such in Word. Photographic figures should be saved at 300 dpi in TIFF format, or jpg format with low compression. Figures should be drawn/submitted at their smallest practicable size (to fit a single column (82 mm), two-thirds page width (110 mm) or full page width (173 mm)). Over-sized figures will be reduced by the Production Editor. If figures are drawn larger than reproduction size, component parts such as symbols and text must be large enough to allow for the necessary reduction. For full instructions on preparing your figures, see our [Electronic Artwork Information for Authors](#) page and the [electronic artwork guidelines](#).

Text Boxes

Text boxes may be used for standalone definitions, equations, necessary explanations of concepts, a glossary (if needed only), and other *items that disrupt the flow of the manuscript or where repeated reference to them is necessary*. Text boxes can include equations and references (included in the main reference list), but not tables, figures or footnotes. Text boxes are limited to 750 words including a title. Items in text boxes that are not logically separate from the main text of the manuscript should be incorporated into the main text. A glossary should only be given if the language is complex enough that it may not be understood by the general readership of the journal or if requested by an editor for the journal. Text boxes should be cited consecutively using Arabic numerals (e.g., Box 1, Box 2). Text for text boxes should be given after figures at the end of the manuscript and the text should begin with a short descriptive title, for instance “Box 1: Calculation of a trophic complexity index.”

Scientific names

The Latin names of each species should be given in full. Scientific names should be given priority in the text, with colloquial names in parentheses if desired. Please make sure that the identity of species used in your paper can be verified, unless these are very well known (e.g., *Homo sapiens*, *Drosophila melanogaster*, *Escherichia coli*). If the data came from another paper where the species was identified, it must be cited. If fresh data are presented, the name of the taxonomist who identified the specimens should be given, as well as the name of the company or provider of the organisms (e.g., a culture collection or seed company) and/or the reference work used to make the identification. Lodgement of voucher specimens in a recognized museum is desirable, especially for taxa which are poorly known, and should be stated in the manuscript.

Mathematics

Wherever possible, mathematical equations and symbols should be typed in-line by keyboard entry (using Symbol font for Greek characters, and superscript and subscript options where applicable). *Do not embed* equations or symbols using Equation Editor or Math Type or equivalents, when simple in-line, keyboard entry is possible. Equation softwares should only be used for displayed, multi-line equations and equations and symbols that cannot be typed. LaTeX files are supported, but if submitting in this format authors should also provide an identical PDF file.

Units and symbols

Authors are requested to use the International System of Units (S.I., *Système International d'Unités*) where possible

for all measurements [see *Quantities, Units and Symbols*, 2nd edn, 1975, The Royal Society (London)]. Note that mathematical expressions should contain symbols, not abbreviations. If the paper contains many symbols, it is recommended that they should be defined as early in the text as possible, or within a subsection of the Materials and Methods section. Journal style is *not* to italicise Greek letters where these refer to variables.

Stable Isotope Data

Please refer to the following document ([here](#)) for instructions on the formatting of stable isotope information.

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12. COVER PHOTOS

Authors are encouraged to submit high quality cover photos to the Editorial Office when their paper is accepted for publication (JPG format, landscape orientation, c. 12 x 17 cm). If selected, a high resolution (300 d.p.i.) file is required, preferably in CMYK colour. Authors should provide a short legend and a photo credit, indicating to which paper the photograph relates to.

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13. PROOFS AND OFFPRINTS

Proofs will be sent as PDF files to the corresponding author. Only corrections and essential changes should be made at this stage. Authors will be charged for extensive alterations. To avoid delay in publication, corrected proofs should be returned to the publisher *within 48 hours of receipt*. The Editors reserve the right to make minor modifications to manuscripts that do not conform to accepted standards. Such alterations will always be submitted to the authors for approval at the proof stage. Free access to final PDF offprint of the published article will be provided to the corresponding author, and will be available via Wiley Author Services only. Please register for free access by visiting [Author Services](#) and enjoy the many other benefits the service offers. PDF offprints may be distributed subject to the Publisher's terms and conditions. Paper offprints may be purchased if ordered via the method in the instructions that will accompany the proofs.

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14. EARLY VIEW PUBLICATION

Ecology Letters is covered by Wiley's *Early View* service. *Early View* articles are complete full-text articles published in advance of their publication in a regular online issue. Articles are therefore available as soon as they are ready, rather than having to wait for the next scheduled online issue. *Early View* articles are complete and final. They have been fully reviewed, revised and edited for publication, and the author's final corrections have been incorporated. Because they are in their final form, no changes can be made after online publication. The nature of *Early View* articles means that they do not yet have volume, issue or page numbers, so *Early View* articles cannot be cited in the traditional way. They are therefore given a Digital Object Identifier (DOI), which allows the article to be cited and tracked before it is allocated to an issue. After publication in an online issue, the DOI remains valid and can continue to be used to cite and access the article. More information about DOIs can be found at <http://www.doi.org/faq.html>.

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17. DATA ARCHIVING AND REGISTRATION OF SEQUENCES

Data are important products of scientific enterprise, and they should be preserved and remain usable in future decades. Ecology Letters requires, as a condition for publication, that the data supporting the results in the paper will be archived in an appropriate public repository such as Dryad or Figshare. Whenever possible the scripts and other artefacts used to generate the analyses presented in the paper should also be publicly archived. Exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief, especially for sensitive information such as human subject data or the location of endangered species.

Authors will be required to complete a data accessibility statement for all accepted papers.

Further guidance is available at <http://olabout.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-826764.html>

DNA sequences published in *Ecology Letters* should be deposited in the EMBL/GenBank/DDJB Nucleotide Sequence Databases. An accession number for each sequence must be included in the manuscript.

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18. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Submission of a research article to *Ecology Letters* implies that the authors are prepared to distribute freely (or at a nominal price) to academic researchers for their own use any materials (strains, clones, antibodies, etc.) used in the experiments described. An investigator who feels that reasonable requests have not been met by the authors should correspond with the Editor-in-Chief.

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19. ONLINE SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Supporting Information can be a useful way for an author to include important but ancillary information with the article. Examples of Supporting Information include additional tables, data sets, references cited within the Supporting Information, figures, movie files (less than 5Mb), audio clips, 3D structures, and other related nonessential multimedia files. Supporting Information should be cited within the article text, and a descriptive legend should be included in each Supporting Information file. It is published as supplied by the author, and a proof is not made available prior to publication; for these reasons, authors should provide any Supporting Information in the desired final format.

Note: Placing data sets in online supporting information should not be treated as an alternative to depositing datasets in permanent public archives. Please find full instructions on the preparation of Supporting Information for *Ecology Letters* [here](#). For further information on recommended file types and requirements for submission, please visit: [Author Services \(Supporting Information\)](#).

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20. ARCHIVE POLICY

Please note that unless specifically requested, the Publisher will dispose of all hardcopy or electronic material submitted 2 months after publication. If you require the return of any material submitted, please inform the Editorial Office or the Production Editor as soon as possible.

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22. REFERRALS TO THE OPEN ACCESS JOURNAL *Ecology and Evolution*

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Appendix

SUPPORTING INFORMATION GUIDELINES

What is Supporting Information?

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“... (see Appendix S2)”

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In particular, authors should ensure:

- All legends/captions are informative, and are labelled correctly (e.g. Appendix S1, Table S1, Figure S1).
- The data presented are accurate.
- Text passages are grammatical and punctuated correctly.
- The **journal style is followed throughout**, including for lists of supporting references.

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Announcement: New Reporting Guidelines for Stable Isotopes

Willi A. Brand,¹

Stable isotope measurements increasingly are being used in anthropology, atmospheric sciences, biology, chemistry, environmental sciences, food and drug authentication, forensic science, geochemistry, geology, oceanography, and paleoclimatology. To minimise confusion in expression of stable isotope results, the Commission on Isotopic Abundances and Atomic Weights (CIAAW, see <http://www.ciaaw.org/>) of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) announces guidelines and recommended terms for stable isotope measurements (Coplen 2011). These guidelines were initiated by CIAAW and are now available after six years of discussion and more than 30 reviews. They are intended to assist in stable isotope manuscript preparations and reviewing in the many diverse scientific fields in which stable isotopes are used. Important aspects include delta and epsilon definitions, suggestions for figure headings and axis labels, definitions for fractionation factors, and extensive lists of recommended, as well as deprecated examples of expressing isotope-science quantities and symbols. Some highlights include:

- The symbol delta (δ) is a legitimate SI quantity symbol and therefore should always be printed in italic font (BIPM 2006).
- Following the 8th edition of the SI Brochure (BIPM 2006), delta definition equations should avoid extraneous numerical factors, such as the factor of 1000 in the traditional delta definition. Rather, delta should be defined as a coherent quantity equation (BIPM 2006). An example for stable carbon isotope measurements is:

$$\delta^{13}\text{C}_{\text{standard}} = \frac{R(^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C})_{\text{unknown}} - R(^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C})_{\text{standard}}}{R(^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C})_{\text{standard}}}$$

- The symbol epsilon (ϵ) should not be used to define a delta with a factor of 10000 to imply that units are part per ten thousand. Instead, writers should use delta and express values in part per ten thousand (pptt), which should be defined in the text.

These guidelines (Coplen 2011) are now freely available. The 8th edition of the SI Brochure (BIPM 2006) should be required reading for science students.

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http://www.bipm.org/utis/common/pdf/si_brochure_8_en.pdf. Last accessed on 6 December 2011.

Coplen, T.B. (2011). Guidelines and recommended terms for expression of stable-isotope-ratio and gas-ratio measurement results, *Rapid Commun. Mass Spectrom.*, 25, 2538–2560.

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Checklist for reporting experimental details in manuscripts

We have added this checklist to the Author Guidelines to encourage authors to check the information reported for each study before submission. Authors should check that their methods adhere to this checklist of reporting standards and that essential details are provided in their Materials and Methods section. The methods in the main body of an Ecology Letters paper should contain sufficient detail for a general reader to understand the study, and for a scientist to successfully repeat the study. Additional details can go into online supplements. The checklist provides categories of relevant information which “must” or “should” be reported. “Must report” applies to the issues of treatments, replication, location, timing, spatial and temporal scale, and “should report” applies to context-specific information on the background of the experiment.

Criterion	Field	Lab
Experimental Design (treatment factors and interactions, design structure [e.g., factorial, nested, hierarchical], nature of replication)	Must	Must
Definition, nature and size of the experimental units	Must	Must
Type of statistical tests used, covariates (explanatory factors) tested, posthoc or planned comparisons carried out, definition of statistical metrics if different from commonly accepted terms	Must	Must
Location of the experiment (latitude, longitude, elevation or depth)	Must	N.A.
Timing of the experiment (start date, end date, duration, justification for duration)	Must	Must
Description of organisms manipulated or analyzed ⁽¹⁾	Must	Must
Context-relevant conditions ⁽²⁾	Should	Should
Context-relevant magnitude of treatment ⁽³⁾	Should	Should
Sampling schedule and processing (timing, frequency, storage, measurement)	Must	Must

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(1): The organisms must be described in a concise but unambiguous way. It has to be clear whether single-species, natural or artificial communities were used, and whether certain classes (e.g., size or age classes, taxonomic groups, inbred or selected lines) were in- or excluded. For lab experiments, this can include origin of the organisms, pre-experiment cultivation, inoculation protocol, reference to identification literature.

(2): Which conditions are to be reported depends on the context of the study. Some conditions are necessary to report for almost all experimental studies (e.g., temperature). Others depend on the type of organism, for instance light conditions (intensity, light:dark cycle) for studies on autotrophs, depth for aquatic systems, or on the type of treatment, for instance resource concentrations for fertilization studies.

(3): Manipulation of a factor in an experiment can only be interpreted against the background in the experimental control. Thus, the manipulation of resource supply should give control and treatment values for these resources, exclusion treatments should be interpreted in light of the ambient abundance or biomass of the organism group excluded, and so on.

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