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##### **CHECKLIST FOR REVIEWERS**

**Title of the manuscript:** **The causes of European hornbeam seed dormancy and methods of breaking dormancy**

………………………………………..

**Author (s):** … ZHU Zun-ling1,2,\*, XU Yuan-yuan2, WANG Sa2

…………………………………………………….

# No of the manuscript: …691……………………………..

Deadline for the receiving of your review: 30 days after the receiving of the manuscript

**Please consider main points A and B. Please DO NOT CONTINUE TO REVIEW the manuscript if:**

**- the answer to point A.1 is NO**

**- the answer to point A.2 is YES**

**- the answer to point B is LOW.**

**A. Relevance of the paper.**

***1. Is the subject of the manuscript within scope of the journal?***

**X□** Yes

**□** No

***2. Previous publication of the material***

**□X** No

**□** Yes. What and where………………………………………………………………...

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

### B. Scientific and practical importance of the data

**□** High

**□** Adequate

**X□** Low – See comments Please see below.

### C. Scientific quality

***1. Are the data in this manuscript new?***

**□** Yes

**□** No. Comments:…………………………………………………………………………

***2. Is the manuscript clearly written and well-organized?***

**□** Yes

**□** No. Comments:…………………………………………………………………………

***3. Are the Abstract and the Key words adequate?***

**□** Yes

**□** No. Suggestions:…………………………………………………………………………

***4. Does the Introduction state the aim of the research and present knowledge?***

**□** Yes

**□** No. Comments:…………………………………………………………………………

***5. Materials, methods and study design***

**□** Adequate

**□** Improvement needed. Suggestions:………………………………………………

**□** Inadequate. Comments:…………………………………………………………

***6. Results and Discussion***

**□** Properly drawn with regard to methods and data

**□** Should be adjusted – Suggestions: ………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

**□** Insufficiently supported – Comments: ……………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………….

***7. Are the tables and figures titles and legends presented well and necessary?***

**□** Yes

**□** Improvement needed. Suggestions:……………………………………………………

**□** No. Comments:…………………………………………………………………………

***8. Data and statistical treatment***

**□** Adequate

**□** Improvement needed. Comments:……………………………………………………

**□** Inadequate. Comments:………………………………………………………………

***9. Have all relevant literature been cited***

**□** Yes

**□** No. Suggestions:…………………………………………………………………….

**E. Recommendations (after corrections)**

□ The paper should be published as it is now, or with minor editorial changes

□ The paper could be published after minor revision, and need not be re-reviewed

□ The paper could be accepted after major revision according to the comments

□ Rejected

#### If adjustments or revision is recommended

□ The writer is allowed to contact me (sign both copies of this checklist)

□ I want to be anonymous (sign only one copy of this checklist)

□ I am not willing to review this paper again (revision)

Please add further comments.

The literature review primarily concerns dormancy effects and types. The title of the paper states “……**and methods of breaking dormancy**” but there is no literature review concerning overcoming dormancy save for “**and *Sinojackia xylocarpa* (Shi et al. 1999)has a similar mechanism and requires low temperature stratification to germinate**”. Fast forward to the Conclusions and Discussion and the results are not discussed in the light of other published material. Not one reference is mentioned.

Consider the references themselves and none of the references meet the instructions for POP journal. Additionally, there is no reference for Kentzen and Amen. There is no such reference as Paula M. Carpinus L.2008. Furthermore, Oppenheimer.(1922).H. etc. is incorrect. The punctuation and formatting of all references does not comply with journal standards. The references cited are insufficient and incomplete; no reference to MacDonald 1986.

The scientific value of the paper per se: It does not add to the body of knowledge. For example, it has long been known that *Carpinus betulus* suffers from hard seed coat dormancy and that the standard measures to overcome it are: Warm moist stratification 8 weeks; Cold moist stratification 8-12 weeks or sowing seed while still green. This is published in: Practical Woody Plant propagation for Nursery Growers by Bruce MacDonald. The authors only used warm moist stratification for 30 days, so germination is not likely to occur. A more appropriate title of the paper might have been “Investigating chemical inhibitors during dormancy which prevent seed germination of *Carpinus betulus* or something along those lines. This could be an interesting area where an investigator elicits the reasons why endogenous chemicals control dormancy. But then there is hard seed coat dormancy too!

The materials and methods: There is no experimental design described. It is impossible to repeat the various short experiments based on the information supplied. There are too many imponderables insufficiently described. For instance, in section 2.2.1, line 87. “The seeds were removed from the water every 3 hours”. How many seeds were removed? Line 99: “The filtrate was dried at 35˚C using a vacuum rotary evaporator apparatus, rinsed with distilled water and obtained a 50 ml subsample of the filtrate”. Rather ambiguous. There are no methods detailed as to how the statistical analysis was carried out. The graphical results are presented in Excel files and come without titles or legends or statistical annotation. Furthermore, the graphs print out on either two or three A4 pages which do not allow the reviewer to see them easily

This paper is not at the reviewer stage, it is merely at the first draft correction stage.

Given its extremely limited scientific value, both in terms of the topic per se and how the paper was written and presented, I see no reason why it should be accepted for publication even if were to be revised. Thus, revision and re submission is not an option. The information concerning the effects of dormancy on *Carpinus* and the method/s required to overcome it are well known and practiced by nurserymen who produce such seedlings.