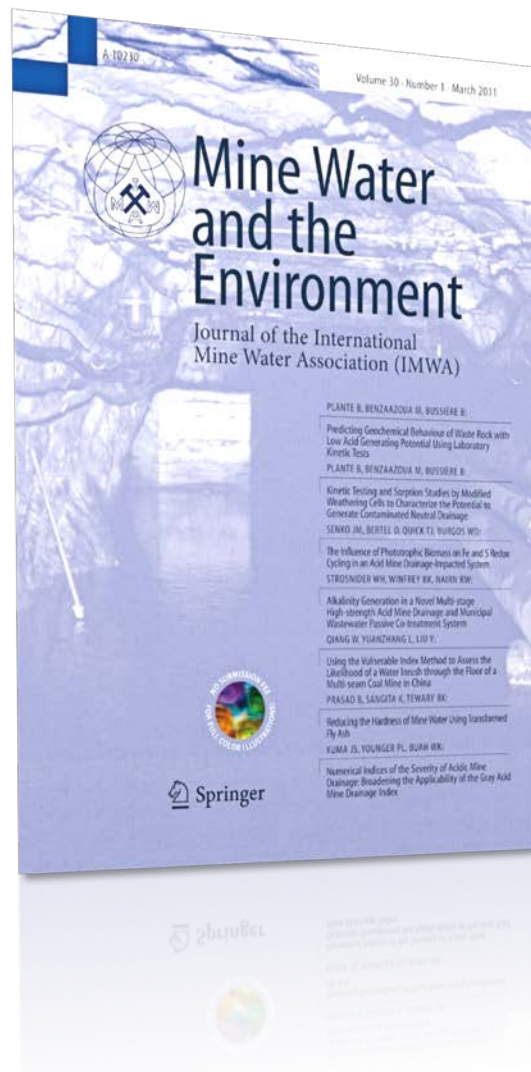


Mine Water and the Environment

Journal of the International
Mine Water Association (IMWA)



GUIDELINES FOR PEER REVIEWERS



Content

How to review for “Mine Water and the Environment”	4
Thank you	4
What to do first?	4
Taking care of language	4
What is our Audience and how to address this aspect	4
Choosing your review approach	5
Rejection and major revisions	5
How to communicate with the Editors and become a team member	6

How to review for “Mine Water and the Environment”

Thank you

Thank you for serving as a peer reviewer for *Mine Water and the Environment*. We are very grateful for your time and the effort that you provide. Indeed, your input is the key to our quality control and producing a journal that you, and all our other subscribers, want to read.

What to do first?

First and foremost, we are looking for your technical insight and input. So, please skim through the paper that has been assigned to you and see if you feel qualified to review it. If yes, please accept the assignment and review it within the time allotted. If you would like to review it but cannot do it by the assigned date, ask if you could have an extra week or so. If you cannot do it within that time frame, please turn down the assignment. If you do not feel qualified to review it, please let the editor who assigned the paper to you know that it falls too far outside of your areas of expertise, and let him or her know what kind of papers you would prefer to see. Also, please check to see if your skills are appropriately represented in our Editorial Manager system by signing in as a reviewer and looking again at the areas of expertise you presumably selected sometime in the past, as that is the sorting tool that we generally use to select our reviewers.

Taking care of language

Next, it is *not* your job to edit the English. Supposing that you can understand the research and the document well enough to give it a fair critique, please proceed to do that. For many, perhaps most of our authors, English is not their primary language, and we do not want you to worry too much about problems with grammar, tense, and syntax, as long as you understand what was done, how it was done, and whether the conclusions that the authors reached are reasonable and meaningful. If you are inclined to help the authors with their English, that would be wonderful and undoubtedly appreciated by the authors providing that your primary focus remains on the technical aspects. If the work is technically sound, the editors can and will help the authors with their English after the paper is closer to being accepted. However, if the English is so poor that it is difficult or impossible to understand what the authors are saying and to give it a fair critique, then you can and should state that, and suggest that the authors find a native English speaker or a professional translator to help them rewrite the text so that the paper can receive a fair review.

What is our Audience and how to address this aspect

This journal’s audience is international and multifaceted, with skills and interests in various aspects of mine water science and technology, including the ways that mine water affects the environment and what can be done to address the various problems caused by mine water. Many of the people who read this journal are researchers with a broad range of interests, while many others are practitioners, who are looking to this journal to learn about novel ways of solving the meaningful problems that they face. We try to satisfy both groups by publishing papers that bridge this gap and have the potential to interest all of them. Therefore, if the

research is too academic in nature and will only interest another researcher, please suggest that it be submitted elsewhere. The same is true of any research that will only interest people in the region of the world where the work has been done. However, if the results of the research, although academic in nature, suggest that it could someday have practical applications, then be sure to state that and explain why, so that the editors don't reject it based on another reviewer's comments.

In contrast, if the paper is very applied in nature, we may still want to publish it as a case study. We do publish such papers because they have a great deal of value to our practitioners, but generally as technical communications rather than as technical articles. So, if you received such a paper to review, feel free to suggest ways that it can be improved, but do not reject it. Instead, simply explain that it has been misclassified and should be considered as a Technical Communication, given its applied nature.

Choosing your review approach

Moving on, please look at the document, and if the research is interesting and well done, look for areas of the paper that can be improved. Feel free, if it is more convenient, to download their document in Word (by clicking on the text in blue at the beginning of the pdf version of the paper) and indicate how the document should be revised by using the "track changes" and comments options under the Review tab. We, and the authors, are looking for your constructive criticism. If your decision is that the paper is technically near-perfect the first time around, then you are, most likely, being too kind to the authors, and this is not helpful to them or to us. Could the paper be better organized? Is the abstract results-focused or does it include material that belongs elsewhere in the paper, such as in the introduction? Is the introductory material too basic? Many authors confuse the introduction of a technical paper with their thesis, where they were expected to show that they are familiar with the published literature and so include references that are not relevant and necessary. Alternatively, if the introduction does not adequately explain the problem and why the work is relevant and worthwhile, please say so. Also, the introduction should conclude by briefly (in one or two sentences) explaining the research, without detailing their methods and results or their conclusions.

Is the work novel? Is the paper interesting and if not, what could the authors do to make it more interesting? Are the methods and results clearly explained? Are the conclusions justified? Is the conclusion section merely repeating what has already been stated elsewhere in the paper? Is there published (or unpublished) work that you are aware of that the authors should learn about because it is relevant to their work or their conclusions? If so, please help them.

Rejection and major revisions

If the paper should be rejected, please do not be afraid to recommend that, but please make it clear why you are making that recommendation. And if the paper needs major revisions, please list them. If you recommend that the paper should be rejected in its current form but submitted again after it is revised, or that major revisions are necessary before the paper can be published, you can expect that we will once again call on you to look at the revised version of the paper to see if the authors have satisfactorily addressed your concerns, as well as those

of the other reviewers. It makes more sense to do this than to ask another reviewer to start from the beginning because you can review it the second time much more efficiently.

How to communicate with the Editors and become a team member

If you have any questions, please ask! Please e-mail the associate editor you are working with, and please copy me at Editor@MWEN.info.

Finally, once again, thank you for being a reviewer. And if you are not yet a member of IMWA, and thus a subscriber of *Mine Water and the Environment*, please consider joining our association. It only costs 60 Euros a year (and only 30 Euros a year for students), which basically pays for the costs of publishing the journal and our Society's expenses – our journal staff are all IMWA members who receive no remuneration for their efforts. Please go to www.IMWA.info for more information on the Association and how to join.

Best Regards,

Bob Kleinmann
Editor-in-Chief