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14 March 2023

Warning about a Suspicious Website Denouncing MDPI Journals

Scholars have reported a suspicious website (predatoryreports.org) that has made false claims against the legitimacy of MDPI journals. The anonymous website in question lacks transparency and rigor in its evaluation criteria, and has an apparent bias against MDPI and open access publishing.

At MDPI, we recommend the use of well-known and transparent sources, such as **Think.Check.Submit** and indexing databases like **Web of Science**, **Scopus**, and **DOAJ**, and **PubMed** for evaluating journals. MDPI's journals are indexed within discoverable databases, with many journals experiencing a yearly increase in Impact Factor and publication volume, primarily due to the quality of service we provide authors. We invite you to look through our journals, our Editors-in-Chief and Editorial Board Members, our editorial processing page, as well as browse and read some of the latest articles published. Feel free to check the journals, data and information we provide and decide if our journals are suitable for your research.

Predatoryreports.org provides no objective and justifiable reason for releasing a blanket statement across MDPI journals and we are concerned about examples of derogatory language used in some of the posts. We find it difficult to accept their personal *opinion* of MDPI journals which disregards widely accepted sources such as the Web of Science and Scopus.

On 6 April, the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) released a statement on the subject of fake journals. COPE reminds authors and institutions to "treat lists of predatory (or fake) journals with the same degree of scrutiny as they do with the journals themselves. Lists that are not transparent about criteria used should not be relied on." The statement also holds that "such lists may perpetuate systemic bias and include journals with limited resources but which are legitimate journals with the best intentions."

Predatoryreports.org lists the following characteristics of “predatory journals (open access) publishing” which we would like to address:

- Accepting articles quickly with little or no peer review or quality control, including hoax and nonsensical papers.

Our editorial process guidelines can be found [here](#). There is an additional post on [predatoryreports.org](https://predatoryreports.org/news//mdpi-peer-review-problem) which details publishing a paper despite the reviewer recommending rejection <https://predatoryreports.org/news//mdpi-peer-review-problem>. This report is from 2015; since then, we have introduced a new policy where if an academic editor supports a decision to accept a manuscript despite a reviewer recommending rejection, a second independent decision from an Editorial Board member or the Editor-in-Chief will be requested.

- Notifying academics of article fees only after papers are accepted.

Article processing fees and a breakdown of costs are listed on our website [here](#). Additionally, authors are asked to confirm the article processing charge following submission.

- Aggressively campaigning for academics to submit articles or serve on editorial boards.

We encourage academics to join our boards and submit their research; however, this is standard practice and includes the possibility of unsubscribing.

- Listing academics as members of editorial boards without their permission, and not allowing academics to resign from editorial boards.

We always confirm appointments to the board and our board members can choose to step down at any time. Roles and responsibilities as well as appointment terms can be found [here](#). We understand that time commitments may change over time and board members may no longer be able to serve on the board.

- Appointing fake academics to editorial boards.

We provide thorough information for all our editorial board members and perform checks to ensure their displayed information is correct and accurate; an example can be found [here](#). When signed in, the emails of the editorial board members are also displayed.

- Mimicking the name or web site style of more established journals.

MDPI has a clear naming strategy, with most of our journals being short names, in the plural, that directly refer to the field. Exceptions to this are journals published on behalf of societies or acquired journals, where the name of the journal is dictated by the society or the previous publisher.

- Making misleading claims about the publishing operation, such as a false location.

All of our locations are listed on our website and contact information is provided [here](#). Please feel free to contact us if you would like to visit us at one of our Global offices.

- Using ISSNs improperly.

Our ISSN information is correct and accurate. MDPI journal ISSN numbers can be found [here](#) and checked [here](#).

- Citing fake or non-existent impact factors.

All of our impact factors, listed on the websites of journals, are correct and accurate. This information can also be checked on the Journal Citations Reports (Clarivate) [here](#).

- Boasting about being "indexed" by academic social networking sites (like ResearchGate) and standard identifiers (like ISSNs and DOIs) as if they were prestigious or reputable bibliographic databases.

On our indexing and archiving page for each journal, we provide only relevant databases where the journal is indexed. An example is shown [here](#).

As a pioneer in open access publishing with over 25 years of experience, MDPI has revolutionized the publishing industry which has propelled us to become the largest open access publisher. MDPI is an active and recognized member of valuable industry initiatives such as **COPE**, **OASPA**, **STM**, and meets the industry-wide criteria for open access journals, **as proven by its coverage in DOAJ**. With over 900 institutional partnerships, publishing 15 journals on behalf of societies and supporting nearly 190 learned societies and organizations worldwide, this is a reflection of the trusted relationships and quality service that MDPI provides the scholarly community.

Throughout 2022, over 100,000 MDPI research papers were mentioned in prominent news outlets such as *National Geographic*, *The Washington Post*, *Forbes*, *The Guardian*, *BBC*, *CNN*, *Time*, and *Harvard Business Review*.

With over one million articles published, thanks to the support of our esteemed reviewers, editorial board members, and hardworking colleagues across our global offices, we are deeply embedded in the academic community and are a reliable source for the research community and general public alike. In 2022, we granted nearly 400 awards in pursuit of supporting and encouraging early career researchers, a total prize sum amounting to about 580,000 Swiss Francs (CHF). We will continue to support researchers through our awards.

We take feedback seriously and welcome transparent criticism to improve the ways we optimally serve the academic community. However, we encourage researchers to rely on trusted industry standard sources and question the legitimacy and reliability of this website and opinion blogs spreading erroneous news with a clear agenda against MDPI and open access publishing, when making informed decisions based on their publishing needs.

Update (February 2024): A post in Cabells' The Source blog has brought to light an alarming scheme orchestrated by the individuals behind the predatoryreports.org website. Their efforts reportedly included an attempt at soliciting a bribe from Cabells to cease the use of the copyrighted Predatory Reports name. Additionally, they attempted to extort money from individual publishers, including MDPI, in exchange for removing their names from the blacklist. The individuals managing this website do not seem to prioritize integrity.

Update (October 2025): The website previously referenced here as predatoryreports.org now operates under predatoryjournals.org. Based on the site's own contact details and continuity of content, we understand this to be the *same source* under a new domain. Our assessment above remains applicable—please refer to the analysis in this announcement.

If you have any concerns or further questions regarding trusted sources and how to evaluate the legitimacy of journals, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#). We value and welcome comments from researchers and are always looking to improve based on their input.

MDPI Communications
Contact

This announcement was updated on 11 April 2023 to refer to the COPE Statement and on 14 February 2024 to refer to Cabells' "The Source".



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