

Handling allegations of research misconduct

1. Scope

This policy applies to any allegation of research misconduct in manuscripts submitted to Pomorstvo (pre-publication) or in articles already published by Pomorstvo (post-publication). Misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- fabrication, falsification, or manipulation of data, images, or results,
- plagiarism or redundant/duplicate publication,
- significant undisclosed conflicts of interest or inappropriate authorship/contributorship,
- failure to obtain required ethical or institutional approvals for research,
- any other behaviour that significantly undermines the trustworthiness of the scholarly record.

2. Principles

Pomorstvo commits to the following principles:

- Integrity of the scholarly record.
- Fairness and confidentiality for all parties involved.
- Transparency of process by publicly documenting its processes.
- Co-operation with relevant institutions and journals.
- Taking corrective actions (e.g., correction, retraction, expression of concern).

3. Contact

The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for receiving, assessing, and coordinating responses to misconduct allegations. Allegations may be submitted by authors, reviewers, readers, institutions, or other third parties, and may be anonymous (while noting that anonymity may impose limitations on the investigation). On receipt of an allegation, the Editor-in-Chief will acknowledge receipt, document the allegation, and proceed to initial assessment.

4. Initial assessment

The initial assessment determines whether the allegation is within scope (i.e., pertains to conduct or reliability of research, peer-review, publishing, or authorship) and whether there is evidence warranting further investigation. For complex or serious cases, the Chief Editor may convene the Editorial Ethics Committee (EEC), comprised of at least two Editorial board members not previously involved with the manuscript/issue, and (if needed) an independent advisor with ethics expertise. The Editor/EEC will decide whether to dismiss the allegation or to proceed with a full investigation.

6. Investigation and decision-making

If the matter proceeds to investigation, authors (and where appropriate their institution) will be asked to respond in writing to the allegation, providing relevant data, documentation, and explanation. The Editor/EEC may seek additional evidence or consult external experts. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Editor/EEC will make a decision, communicate it to all relevant parties, and determine what remediation, if any, is required. Possible outcomes include:

- No further action.
- Publication of correction/erratum.
- Publication of an expression of concern.
- Retraction of the article.
- Notification of author's institution/funder as appropriate.

7. Confidentiality, record-keeping & transparency

All documentation will be maintained securely by the journal for at least 5 years. While the journal will protect the confidentiality of individuals involved, any outcomes that affect the published literature will be publicly noted and linked to the original article.