

5GH Foundation



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Author-Editor Conflict on Science of the Total Environment:

Cases of the GAO-LI-WANG-AHMED Group

We report cases of author-editor conflict on *Science of the Total Environment*. Two authors (GAO Li and LI Xuan) and two editors (WANG Qilin and Warish AHMED) were involved in these cases, which raise concerns about the quality, reliability and publication ethics of the journal and the papers published on it. We call for publisher's investigations on these and any further papers.

Individuals Involved in These Author-Editor Conflict Cases

GAO Li with South East Water Corporation and/or Victoria University. We identified "two" GAO Li on the papers published on *Science of the Total Environment*, one was affiliated to South East Water Corporation, and the other was affiliated to Victoria University. But some papers [1-2] suggest these "two" persons are a same one, because on these two papers [1-2], GAO Li was affiliated to both South East Water Corporation and Victoria University.

LI Xuan with University of Technology Sydney and/or University of Wollongong. According the information on a webpage [3], we consider the LI Xuan with University of Technology Sydney and the LI Xuan with University of Wollongong to be a same person. We also identified another (the third) LI Xuan affiliated to Victoria University, however, we find no evidence the third LI

Xuan affiliated to Victoria University is a same LI Xuan affiliated to University of Technology Sydney and/or University of Wollongong. Therefore, this report focuses only on LI Xuan with University of Technology Sydney and/or University of Wollongong.

WANG Qilin with University of Technology Sydney, associate editor of the journal.

Warish AHMED with CSIRO Land and Water, associate editor of the journal.

Coauthor-ship among the GAO-LI-WANG-AHMED Group

During the last five years, GAO, LI and WANG co-authored on several papers, including but not limited to:

(1) 10.1016/j.rser.2023.113502 (*Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 2023)

(2) 10.1016/j.jhazmat.2022.130213 (*Journal of Hazardous Materials*, 2023)

(3) 10.1016/j.watres.2023.120282 (*Water Research*, 2023)

During the last five years, LI and AHMED coauthored on at least one paper [4] (*Science of The Total Environment*, 2021).

Cases of Author-Editor Conflict

We identified 9 papers [1-2, 5-11] involved in author (GAO) - editor (WANG) conflict, 4 papers [12-15] involved in author (LI) - editor (WANG) conflict, and 2 papers [16-17] involved in author (LI) - editor (AHMED) conflict.

Author-editor conflict publications are those the handling editor coauthored with one or more of the authors in a same period (usually five years). The author-editor conflict raises concerns about the reliability of publications, because the handling editor may apply lower standard to them.

[1] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.161195

[2] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.158796

[3] profiles.uts.edu.au/Xuan.Li

[4] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.147947

[5] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.159541

[6] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.163145

[7] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.162714

[8] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.158434

[9] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.166761

[10] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2024.171231

[11] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.169441

[12] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.169025

[13] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.164290

[14] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.167678

[15] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.167031

[16] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.166410

[17] 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.164574

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