5GH Foundation

PLoS ONE Retracted 93 Articles due to Potential Manipulation of the Publication Process

Up to June 26th, PLoS, a academic publisher in the United States, had retracted 93 articles on the journal "PLoS ONE" due to "potential manipulation of the publication process" and related issues, such as "peer review integrity" and "concerns about the authorship".

#	DOI	Published	Retracted	Editor	Institution	Issue
2	10.1371/journal.pone.0179671	2017	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
3	10.1371/journal.pone.0185567	2017	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
4	10.1371/journal.pone.0187513	2017	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
5	10.1371/journal.pone.0194302	2018	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
6	10.1371/journal.pone.0212177	2019	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
7	10.1371/journal.pone.0220471	2019	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
8	10.1371/journal.pone.0228844	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
9	10.1371/journal.pone.0232433	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
10	10.1371/journal.pone.0234068	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
11	10.1371/journal.pone.0234775	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
12	10.1371/journal.pone.0235980	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
13	10.1371/journal.pone.0236482	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
14	10.1371/journal.pone.0237994	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
15	10.1371/journal.pone.0238864	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
16	10.1371/journal.pone.0239628	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
17	10.1371/journal.pone.0239635	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
18	10.1371/journal.pone.0239849	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
19	10.1371/journal.pone.0239872	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
20	10.1371/journal.pone.0240492	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
21	10.1371/journal.pone.0240656	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
22	10.1371/journal.pone.0240663	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
23	10.1371/journal.pone.0241313	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
24	10.1371/journal.pone.0242253	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
25	10.1371/journal.pone.0242629	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
26	10.1371/journal.pone.0243105	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
27	10.1371/journal.pone.0243107	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
28	10.1371/journal.pone.0244404	2020	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
86	10.1371/journal.pone.0256542	2021	2025		Universiti Teknologi Petronas	potential manipulation of the publication process
76	10.1371/journal.pone.0250689	2021	2025		Ministry of Natural Resources North Sea Bureau	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
77	10.1371/journal.pone.0255737	2021	2025		Ministry of Natural Resources North Sea Bureau	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
78	10.1371/journal.pone.0256360	2021	2025		Ministry of Natural Resources North Sea Bureau	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
79	10.1371/journal.pone.0260883	2021	2025		Ministry of Natural Resources North Sea Bureau	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
80	10.1371/journal.pone.0261594	2021	2025		Ministry of Natural Resources North Sea Bureau	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
54	10.1371/journal.pone.0261437	2021	2025		Konkuk University	potential manipulation of the publication process
29	10.1371/journal.pone.0243108	2021	2025		Qingdao University	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
30	10.1371/journal.pone.0244403	2021	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
31	10.1371/journal.pone.0244617	2021	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
32	10.1371/journal.pone.0245097	2021	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
33	10.1371/journal.pone.0246403	2021	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
34	10.1371/journal.pone.0246404	2021	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
35	10.1371/journal.pone.0250130	2021	2025		University College London	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
36	10.1371/journal.pone.0251991	2021	2025		Qingdao University	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
37	10.1371/journal.pone.0255666	2021	2025		Qingdao University	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
38	10.1371/journal.pone.0258361	2021	2025		Qingdao University	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
39	10.1371/journal.pone.0258627	2021	2025		Qingdao University	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
90	10.1371/journal.pone.0270308	2022	2025		University of Bonab	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
88	10.1371/journal.pone.0271387	2022	2024		Central Queensland University	concerns about adherence to journal policies on authorship and systematic manipulation of the publication process
85	10.1371/journal.pone.0262398	2022	2025		Fuzhou University	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
84	10.1371/journal.pone.0263901	2022	2025		Universite d'Orleans	potential manipulation of the publication process
81	10.1371/journal.pone.0262230	2022	2025		Ministry of Natural Resources North Sea Bureau	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
73	10.1371/journal.pone.0264210	2022	2025		COMSATS University Islamabad	potential manipulation of the publication process
71	10.1371/journal.pone.0271017	2022	2024		Northeastern University	concerns about adherence to journal policies on authorship and systematic manipulation of the publication process
64	10.1371/journal.pone.0269575	2022	2024		Universidad de Almeria	concerns about adherence to journal policies on authorship and systematic manipulation of the publication process
63	10.1371/journal.pone.0269879	2022	2024		Universidad de Almeria	concerns about adherence to journal policies on authorship and systematic manipulation of the publication process
62	10.1371/journal.pone.0262586	2022	2025		Directorate of Rapeseed-Mustard Research	potential manipulation of the publication process
61	10.1371/journal.pone.0265026	2022	2025		Stellenbosch University	potential manipulation of the publication process
55	10.1371/journal.pone.0275422	2022	2025		Universiti Malaysia Sabah	potential manipulation of the publication process
53	10.1371/journal.pone.0272521	2022	2025		Hanyang University	potential manipulation of the publication process
91	10.1371/journal.pone.0292680	2023	2024		Universiti Tenaga Nasional	potential manipulation of the publication process
92	10.1371/journal.pone.0290719	2023	2024		Universiti Tenaga Nasional	one of a series of submissions for which we have concerns about potential manipulation of the publication process
87	10.1371/journal.pone.0293371	2023	2024		National University of Sciences and Technology	potential manipulation of the publication process
83	10.1371/journal.pone.0288072	2023	2025		Ukak University	potential manipulation of the publication process
70	10.1371/journal.pone.0289720	2023	2024		University of City Island	potential manipulation of the publication process and authorship
69	10.1371/journal.pone.0289251	2023	2024		Xidian University	potential manipulation of the publication process
67	10.1371/journal.pone.0295628	2023	2025		University of Pitesti / University Lucian Blaga of Sibiu	potential manipulation of the publication process
58	10.1371/journal.pone.0282158	2023	2025		Technische Universitat Wien	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
59	10.1371/journal.pone.0286913	2023	2024		Technische Universitat Wien	one of a series of submissions for which we have concerns about potential manipulation of the publication process
47	10.1371/journal.pone.0287416	2023	2025		The Islamia University of Bahawalpur Pakistan	peer review integrity and potential manipulation of the publication process
46	10.1371/journal.pone.0290694	2023	2024		Kebri Dehar University	one of a series of submissions for which we have concerns about potential manipulation of the publication process
42	10.1371/journal.pone.0291759	2023	2024		Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology	one of a series of submissions for which we have concerns about potential manipulation of the publication process
89	10.1371/journal.pone.0308021	2024	2025		University of Buea	peer review integrity, authorship, and potential manipulation of the publication process
82	10.1371/journal.pone.0301838	2024	2025		The University of Dodoma	potential manipulation of the publication process
74	10.1371/journal.pone.0292260	2024	2025		University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City	potential manipulation of the publication process and authorship
72	10.1371/journal.pone.0309242	2024	2024		University of Oklahoma	one of a series of submissions for which we have concerns about potential manipulation of the publication process and authorship
68	10.1371/journal.pone.0302034	2024	2025		University of Pitesti / University Lucian Blaga of Sibiu	potential manipulation of the publication process
66	10.1371/journal.pone.0295784	2024	2025		The Danish Center for Social Science Research	potential manipulation of the publication process
65	10.1371/journal.pone.0297559	2024	2025		University of Almeria	potential manipulation of the publication process
60	10.1371/journal.pone.0298534	2024	2025		Technische Universitat Wien	potential manipulation of the publication process and authorship. In addition, the integrity of the peer review process
57	10.1371/journal.pone.0307545	2024	2025		Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Roma	one of a series of submissions for which we have concerns about potential manipulation of the publication process
56	10.1371/journal.pone.0307014	2024	2025		Universiti Malaysia Sabah	potential manipulation of the publication process
51	10.1371/journal.pone.0296997	2024	2025		Central South University	potential manipulation of the publication process
52	10.1371/journal.pone.0304343	2024	2025		Central South University	potential manipulation of the publication process
48	10.1371/journal.pone.0311401	2024	2025		Cholistan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences	peer review integrity, authorship, and potential manipulation of the publication process
49	10.1371/journal.pone.0315105	2024	2025		Cholistan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences	peer review integrity, authorship, and potential manipulation of the publication process
45	10.1371/journal.pone.0309821	2024	2025		University of Raparin	potential manipulation of the publication process
44	10.1371/journal.pone.0297264	2024	2025		University of Galway / Anhui University of Finance and Economics	potential manipulation of the publication process
41	10.1371/journal.pone.0300209	2024	2025		University of Baltistan	potential manipulation of the publication process and authorship
40	10.1371/journal.pone.0300652	2024	2025		Zhejiang University of Technology	concerns about: Compliance with PLOS policies on Manipulation of the Publication Process and Artificial Intelligence Tools and Technologies. Compromised peer review. The use of terminology that differs from standards in the field
93	10.1371/journal.pone.0318750	2025	2025		University of Chittagong	compromised peer review, authorship, and potential manipulation of the publication process
75	10.1371/journal.pone.0317914	2025	2025		National University of Sciences and Technology	authorship and potential manipulation of the publication process
50	10.1371/journal.pone.0318523	2025	2025		Cholistan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences	peer review integrity, authorship, and potential manipulation of the publication process
43	10.1371/journal.pone.0312914	2025	2025		Vellore Institute of Technology	Manipulation of the Publication Process and Authorship
1	10.1371/journal.pone.0318848	2025	2025		China West University	peer review integrity, authorship, and potential manipulation of the publication process

Several academic editors were listed on multiple retracted articles as the handling editors. Among those 93 articles, 38 articles were handled by [redacted] with University College London and/or Qingdao University, and 28 articles were handled by LV Haibin with Ministry of Natural Resources North Sea Bureau, China.

It is interesting to note that other 13 articles handled by [redacted] were retracted due to "peer review integrity" and other issues [1], while other 6 articles handled by LV Haibin were also retracted due to similar reasons. Indeed, 51 of 54 articles (the number of 53 in the previous report [1] is incorrect) handled [redacted] have been retracted, and ALL articles handled by LV Haibin also have been retracted.

Other academic editor, such as Sheikh Arslan Sehgal, Praveen Kumar Donta, Magdalena Radulescu etc., were also listed as handling editors on multiple retracted articles.

In addition to those 93 articles whose retraction notes specifically mentioned "potential manipulation of the publication process", larger number of articles were retracted due to "concerns on peer review integrity", which also indicates that the publication process was manipulated.

The publications of those articles can date back to 2017 and earlier, and some were published in this year (2025), suggesting that the publisher and its journals are still under the attracts from the paper-mill.

It is also note that the problematic articles published in 2021 and earlier were exclusively handled by [redacted] and LV Haibin (excerpt for one were handled by Bawadi Abdullah), however, the problematic articles published more recently were assigned to different academic editors.

For each academic editor, (except for [redacted] and LV Haibin), the problematic articles were a small proportion of their editorial contributions. Therefore, it is difficult to determine whether those academic editors were parts of the paper-mill, without detailed disclosure from the publisher/journals about their investigations.

However, up to now, the publisher did not disclose how the publication process was manipulated, and whether the academic editors who handled the manuscripts intentionally got involved in the cases.

[1] 5GH-WuGH-2025.000064
