

D4.4. - Open Journal 1

D4.4 – Open Journal 1: Set-up of the first issue of the Open Journal

EU-CONEXUS ENABLES

Version 1.5

April 28th, 2025

[Acknowledgements and disclaimer](#)

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1. Executive Summary

As part of its strategic commitment to promoting scientific cooperation, innovation and knowledge dissemination, the European University Alliance EU-CONEXUS through project HORIZON ENABLES is launching a new open-access, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to sustainability issues. This ambitious initiative is in line with the Alliance's vision to build a transnational academic community focused on the sustainability of smart urban coastal areas and beyond, supporting both academic excellence and societal impact.

The proposed open access scholarly journal will serve as a central publishing platform for high-quality scientific content developed within and beyond the Alliance EU-CONEXUS. It will bring together the diverse expertise, research outputs and academic initiatives of all EU-CONEXUS partners, including students, early career researchers and established academics. The journal is intended not only as a space for scientific publications, but also as a dynamic ecosystem that fosters interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge transfer between the partner institutions.

2. Introduction of the Journal and history

Within the **EU-CONEXUS ENABLES** project one of the tasks was establishment of a high-quality, open-access, peer-reviewed journal dealing with sustainability-related topics, in the context of Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability (SmUCS). This journal will serve as a central platform for the dissemination of scientific results produced within the EU-CONEXUS alliance, including the results of summer schools, PhD theses, academic conferences and joint research initiatives.

EU-CONEXUS will involve all partner institutions in the development and editorial supervision of the journal and ensure that each university can contribute thematically selected content. This collaborative approach will enhance the visibility and accessibility of research conducted within the Alliance, promote interdisciplinary dialogue and support EU-CONEXUS' mission to promote sustainable and resilient urban coastal ecosystems through knowledge exchange and scientific excellence.

In line with the overarching objectives of the ENABLES project, this mission strengthens the capacity of partner institutions to conduct, exchange and engage with innovative research, while providing a structured opportunity for academic contributions addressing current and emerging sustainability challenges.

2.1. Previous activities

Based on the results of the EU-CONEXUS project RFS (*Research for Society*), the perception and need for an open science approach within the Alliance can be discussed comprehensively in several dimensions including motivation, challenges, obstacles and the general state of implementation.

Perception of open science among EU-CONEXUS partners

Before the idea of a journal for open science and open access publishing was implemented, a study was carried out as part of an earlier project. The aim of the study was to determine the level of knowledge and the needs of the research community with regard to such publications.

The predominant perception among EU-CONEXUS partners reflects a clear and committed recognition of the value and transformative potential of Open Science. A significant proportion (57.14%) fully agree that their motivation stems from a desire to advance science in general, and a further 35.71% agree — suggesting that for most, Open Science is inextricably linked to the broader goal of advancing knowledge and democratizing access to scientific knowledge.

Similarly, there is strong agreement (42.86% strongly agree and 42.86% agree) that transparency and the dissemination of various aspects of the scientific process — research design, data, results — are important motivations. This reflects an epistemological agreement with the principles of open science: visibility, reproducibility and public engagement.

Open science is also seen as a valuable tool for networking and building collaborative relationships: 35.71% fully agree and 42.86% agree. Interestingly, motivations related to career advancement or fear of negative career impacts are rather unclear — only a small proportion fully agree here, suggesting that researchers may still perceive institutional and systemic gaps in the way open science is formally recognized and rewarded.

Despite this positive outlook, several structural and cultural barriers remain. A majority (21.43% strongly agree; 64.29% agree) see the lack of funding as the biggest challenge. Limited recognition and reward for open science contributions was also cited as a significant problem, with 100% of respondents either fully agreeing or agreeing. This highlights the disconnect between Open Science contributions and traditional academic benchmarks such as the h-index or high-impact journal publications. The lack of an institutional and national policy for Open Science was cited as a major or moderate challenge by 92.86% of respondents. Concerns around intellectual property and ethical/privacy issues were also cited as moderate barriers, indicating ongoing uncertainties around data sharing protocols and legal implications.

Despite the challenges, there is a clear sense that EU-CONEXUS is making tangible progress. The majority rate the impact on the research community and society as positive (14.29% very positive, 64.29% positive).

However, the level of satisfaction with the open access policy and the integration of workflows is rather neutral and indicates areas on which the project could focus more. For example, only 14.29% are very satisfied with the current OA policy, and 35.71% consider integration into workflows to be only moderately successful.

Several strategic requirements can be derived from the results. Continued financial support is essential for sustainability, platform maintenance and wider accessibility. Academic funding and funding applications must officially recognize open access publications, data sharing and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The EU-CONEXUS RFS initiative demonstrated a high level of commitment and a strong underlying belief that Open Science is a valuable and necessary development in today's research culture. For EU-CONEXUS to serve as a leading example of Open Science in action, efforts must focus on systemic reforms — particularly in terms of recognition systems, policy frameworks and open science publishing activities.

By addressing these core needs, EU-CONEXUS can ensure that Open Science is not just an ideal, but a fully functioning and effective reality that improves the quality of research, accessibility and societal relevance across Europe and beyond.

On the road to Open Science: the need for an open access journal

Open science is a new approach to the way research is conducted, disseminated and shared. It promotes transparency, accessibility and collaboration across disciplines and societal domains and is in line with the principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI). Within the EU-CONEXUS ENABLES project, the implementation of open science is not just a trend, but a necessity. An important part of this approach is the development of an open access scientific journal focusing on SmUCS (Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability) topics. This initiative responds to the growing demand for publicly accessible research and strengthens the social mission of science.

The reasons for the open access journal

One of the main objectives of the EU-CONEXUS ENABLES project is to bridge the gap between academic research and its practical application in urban coastal areas. To achieve this effectively, open access publication is essential. Traditional academic journals often operate behind paywalls, which limits access to knowledge and excluding the communities that could benefit most from the innovative results — students, policy makers, stakeholders and the general public. An open access model counters this restriction by making research freely available, thereby improving knowledge transfer, engagement and impact.

In line with these goals, the creation of a popular open access journal on SmUCS topics, [Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability](#), represents a concrete commitment to the principles of open science. It enables research results to become part of a broader societal discourse that empowers stakeholders to take informed action and support evidence-based decision-making in coastal regions in Europe and beyond.

Journal structure: A collaborative and strategic effort

The development of the journal follows a carefully structured plan involving several EU-CONEXUS partner institutions. In the initial phase, the project partners conducted a comprehensive review to identify already published scientific papers on SmUCS topics by researchers within the consortium (OpenAIRE). To further enrich the journal's content and ensure that it aligns with project priorities, researchers were actively encouraged to submit new and original articles specifically targeted for publication. This includes contributions that reflect the diversity and innovation of research in the EU-CONEXUS partner institutions and ensure that the journal becomes a dynamic and evolving platform for scholarly communication.

The wider impact: a model for open scholarly engagement

The Open Access journal is more than just a publication; it is a symbol of EU-CONEXUS' commitment to open science. It provides an inclusive, interdisciplinary space for researchers, students, stakeholders and community members to access and contribute to knowledge relevant to sustainable development in coastal urban areas.

By breaking down barriers between science and the public, this journal strengthens trust in science, promotes citizen engagement and encourages co-creation of knowledge. It is a

model worth emulating for other universities and alliances seeking to translate research into societal benefit through open and accessible communication.

At a time when societal challenges require interdisciplinary, transparent and participatory responses, the open access journal EU-CONEXUS is a pioneering initiative. It not only supports the implementation of open science practises but also contributes directly to the sustainability goals and knowledge-based development of coastal urban areas.

Through collective editorial work, strategic choices in digital publishing and a consistent focus on accessibility, this journal will become a cornerstone of the EU-CONEXUS legacy — a bridge between science and society.

From a popular Epi-Journal to open access Journal: Supporting scientific dissemination in EU-CONEXUS

An overlay journal¹, [Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability](#), provides a valuable open access platform to promote scientific results within the EU-CONEXUS alliance. Based on preprints deposited in open archives, this format offers a cost-effective, research-oriented alternative to traditional publishing. It supports scientists, promotes open science and simplifies the editorial process by curating existing content rather than publishing calls for papers.

The main aim of the previous (overlay) journal was to present the latest research results from the EU-CONEXUS laboratories and provide insights into the latest developments to a local and international audience. It contributed to building a common research identity between the partner institutions.

However, to better meet the evolving needs of the research community and to increase the visibility and impact of EU-CONEXUS scientific work, a transformation of that journal into a fully-fledged open access scholarly journal was considered. Such a journal would maintain the core values of open science while offering greater editorial flexibility, international indexing capabilities and the ability to publish original peer-reviewed articles.

This transition would reflect the consortium's commitment to the dissemination of high-quality research, the autonomy of researchers and the strengthening of a common European research culture.

This initiative is also a clear sign of the ongoing commitment and continuity in the reflection practices and activities that EU-CONEXUS dedicates to strategic planning and development. It underlines the long-term vision of the alliance and its commitment to building sustainable structures that foster innovation, collaboration and institutional growth at the partner universities.

¹ An **overlay journal** or **overlay ejournal** is a type of open access academic journal, almost always an online electronic journal (ejournal), that does not produce its own content, but selects from texts that are already freely available online.

3. Coastal resilience and sustainability: A new Journal for interdisciplinary excellence

3.1. Overview and mission

Coastal Resilience and Sustainability (CoReS) is an international, interdisciplinary, diamond open access scholarly journal launched under the auspices of the EU-CONEXUS Alliance and with strong institutional support from the University of Zadar. It is published biannually and aims to serve as a collaborative hub for scientists, researchers, professionals and students working on sustainability and resilience in coastal regions.

As environmental pressures, climate change and socio-economic challenges increasingly impact coastal communities, this journal provides a critical platform for innovative research, policy assessment, technological advancement and cultural reflection. The journal is in line with the EU-CONEXUS project ENABLES, which promotes excellence through innovative academic ecosystems.

The establishment and development of the journal Coastal Resilience and Sustainability is formalised by Research Council decision and through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between

- University of Zadar (host institution)

Co-host partners:

1. Universitatea Tehnică de Construcții București (UTCB)
2. Frederick University FU (FredU)
3. Geoponiko Panepistimion Athinon (AUA)
4. La Rochelle Université (LRUniv)
5. Fundacion Universidad Catolica de Valencia San Vicente Martir (UCV)
6. Klaipėdos Universitetas (KU)
7. Universităt Rostock (UROS)
8. South East Technological University (SETU)
9. Odeskiy Nacionalniy Universitet Imeni I.I. Mechnikova (ONU)

This MoU strengthens alliance-wide cooperation, defines clear roles and creates a sustainable path for the journal's growth.

Example of MoU is attached to the end of this Deliverable.

3.2. Main objectives

Main objectives of the Journal are:

- To provide an easily accessible, **high-quality** platform for the publication of innovative research and results in the field of sustainability.
- **Promote and support open science** practices in all EU-CONEXUS partner institutions.
- **Highlight the scientific results** of EU-CONEXUS summer schools, doctoral programs, research workshops and conferences.

- **Increase the visibility and impact of the work carried out within the Alliance** at both European and global level.

The journal plans to publish two issues per year:

- **A thematic issue**, curated and coordinated by the partner institutions, focusing on emerging or critical issues in the field of sustainability.
- **An open issue supporting the dissemination of research results** from EU-CONEXUS events such as conferences, summer schools, joint workshops and results of PhD theses.

Each issue will reflect the diversity of research interests and strengths of EU-CONEXUS partners, with topic proposals submitted by member institutions to ensure broad representation. A cross-institutional editorial board will facilitate the peer review process to ensure scientific rigor and the highest publication standards.

3.3. Benefits and impact

Benefits of newly started Journal are:

- **Promote cross-border collaboration** by involving researchers from all partner universities in the editorial, review and publication processes.
- **Improves the academic and professional development** of early career researchers and PhD students through the opportunity to publish in a recognized international journal.
- **Strengthens the brand and visibility of EU-CONEXUS** as a hub for excellence in sustainability research.
- **Supports sustainable academic publishing through an open access model** that promotes inclusion and transparency in scholarly communication.

With the launch of this journal, EU-CONEXUS demonstrates its leadership in the European Higher Education Area and provides a model for joint publication initiatives worthy of emulation. The journal will not only serve as an outlet and repository for scientific papers but will also reflect the collaborative and interdisciplinary spirit of the Alliance.

This contribution is a strategic milestone in strengthening the long-term sustainability and academic impact of the EU-CONEXUS alliance.

3.4. Editorial and technical framework

The Editorial Board, Editor-in-Chief and Executive Editor were nominated by each University representative in the Alliance and voted by the Research Council for the mandate of 4 years to ensure sustainability and continuity of the work.

For the first mandate (2025-2029), nominated and elected members are as follows:

Editor-in-chief: Prof. Drahomira Cupar, PhD, University of Zadar, Croatia

Executive Editor: Prof. Paris Fokaides, PhD, Frederick University, Cyprus

Technical Support (OJS): Employed administrative staff of the University of Zadar

Editorial Board:

- Tomislav Šarić and Lena Mirošević (University of Zadar, Zadar, Croatia)
- Florin Bode and Costin Ioan Cosoiu (Technical University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania)
- Michalis Komodromos (Frederick University, Nicosia, Cyprus)
- Stefanos Kalogirou (Agricultural University Athens, Athens, Greece)
- Mickael Coustaty, Georgeta Bordea and Petra Gomez-Krämer (La Rochelle University, France)
- David Millan-Esteban, Juan Sapena and Beatriz Salesa (San Vicente Martir Catholic University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain)
- Gintvilė Šimkonienė and Erika Župerkienė (Klaipeda University, Klaipeda, Lithuania)
- Felix Beske (Rostock University, Rostock, Germany)
- Mike Kinsella and David Kane (South East Technological University, Waterford, Ireland)
- Valentina Yanko and Olena Smyntyna (Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Odesa, Ukraine)

The Editorial Board is complemented by a joint editorial board composed of representatives from the EU-CONEXUS partner universities, ensuring broad geographical representation and interdisciplinary consultation.

The Editorial Board members share the responsibilities of acquisition of the articles, disseminate information about the open calls for issues, and regarding their own research field, have the responsibility to choose appropriate reviewers.

3.5. Subject areas and scope of CoReS journal

The journal is meant to be multidisciplinary, to cover wide range of areas covered by the Research Institutes of EU-CONEXUS Alliance. That includes topics in the fields of technology, environmental sciences, humanities and social sciences. Key subject areas include:

1. Energy Efficiency and Building Performance

Research on improving energy performance in buildings, including innovative technologies, policy frameworks, and energy retrofitting strategies.

2. Renewable Energy Systems and Applications

Studies on renewable energy technologies such as solar, wind, and offshore systems, with an emphasis on integration and scalability.

3. Sustainability and Life Cycle Assessments

Exploring life cycle methodologies for evaluating the environmental and economic performance of materials, technologies, and systems, species distribution in relation to varying environments.

4. Smart Energy Systems

Topics like the Smart Readiness Indicator (SRI), smart grids, and IoT-enabled energy management solutions that contribute to smart and sustainable communities.

5. Social and Cultural impact on Environment

Outdoor sports and environmental impact, sports culture and environmental education, sustainability in sports events, sports culture and environmental education, circular economy and sustainability, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and environmental impact, green markets and consumer behaviour, environmental management in business, environmental psychology, climate change and mental health, pro-environmental behaviour, quality of life and well-being of citizens, environmental education in schools, the role of teachers in promoting sustainability, pedagogical approaches to environmental change, ecocriticism and cultural representation, climate fiction and cultural narratives, the impact of literature on environmental awareness, environmental rights and social justice, environmental regulation and cultural perspectives, legal frameworks for climate action, ecotheology, religious ethics and environmental stewardship, religious movements and environmental activism, sustainable leadership, responsible consumption, cultural heritage and wellbeing, green marketing

6. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change in Coastal Areas

Research on climate change adaptation strategies for coastal cities, innovative solutions for enhancing coastal resilience, sustainable management marine ecosystems and biodiversity conservation, ecosystem modelling, exploitation of coastal resources.

7. Blue Growth and Development of Coastal Communities

Research on sustainable blue economy models, including marine biotechnology, fisheries management, smart aquaculture and coastal agriculture.

These topics aim to promote the dialogue between technological innovation and societal values and to build a bridge between technology, politics, education, humanities and ecology.

The journal welcomes a variety of submissions:

1. **Research articles:** Significant novel contributions with clear and robust methodology. Data and results must be thoroughly validated and discussed in detail.
2. **Review articles:** Comprehensive, balanced, and updated synthesis of existing research. Evaluate accessibility and clarity for a broad scientific audience.
3. **Technical papers and resources:** New or significantly improved techniques applicable to coastal resilience. Clear and detailed descriptions enabling reproducibility.
4. **Case studies:** Practical relevance, well-supported by literature, clear lessons learned. Must include detailed methodological descriptions allowing replication.
5. **Short communications:** Brief, original insights with immediate relevance and impact.
6. **Book reviews**

Each submission will undergo a double-anonymous (double-blind) peer review process to ensure impartiality and scholarly rigour.

The main language of the journal is **English**, but authors are encouraged to include extended abstracts in their respective languages of the EU-CONEXUS Alliance to promote multilingualism and wider dissemination.

3.6. Access, licencing and ethical framework

The journal will implement diamond open access model of publishing, which open access with no article processing charges (APCs). All articles will be published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY). All content will be immediately available upon the publishing on the University publishing platform MorePress which is running on the Open Journal System (OJS).

The Editorial Board of the journal is committed to ethical publishing practises and data protection and ensure compliance with GDPR.

Peer review is a mandatory step for maintaining high scientific standards and ensuring integrity, accuracy, and relevance in research. CoReS journal will adhere strictly to ethical guidelines established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). It will also put in place all necessary Ethical policies and statements, including the Statement on usage of the generative Artificial Intelligence tools in the writing process.

The launch of the Coastal Resilience and Sustainability journal is the result of a critical need for:

- **Connecting academic disciplines** to address climate and societal challenges in coastal regions.
- **Promoting equitable, open access to research**, especially in underrepresented coastal communities.
- **Improving scientific collaboration within EU-CONEXUS** to increase the visibility and impact of research.
- **Supporting early career researchers** and interdisciplinary outputs from EU-CONEXUS-led initiatives such as summer schools and joint doctoral programmes.

At a time when coastal resilience is not only a scientific imperative but a global necessity, this journal aims to shape, support and promote meaningful academic contributions—based on openness, collaboration and excellence.

MorePress: A strategic publication platform at the University of Zadar

MorePress is the official electronic publishing platform of the University of Zadar, developed to support the dissemination of academic and scientific content through open access journals. It is based on the internationally recognised Open Journal Systems (OJS) software developed by the Public Knowledge Project (PKP), which is one of the most widely used journal management and publishing systems in the world and Open Monograph Press (OMP) system developed for the books (Figure 1).

MorePress provides a robust, flexible and user-friendly infrastructure for editorial teams, reviewers, authors and readers. It plays a key role in promoting open science principles and supporting the academic mission of the University of Zadar by ensuring the visibility, accessibility and long-term preservation of scholarly publications.

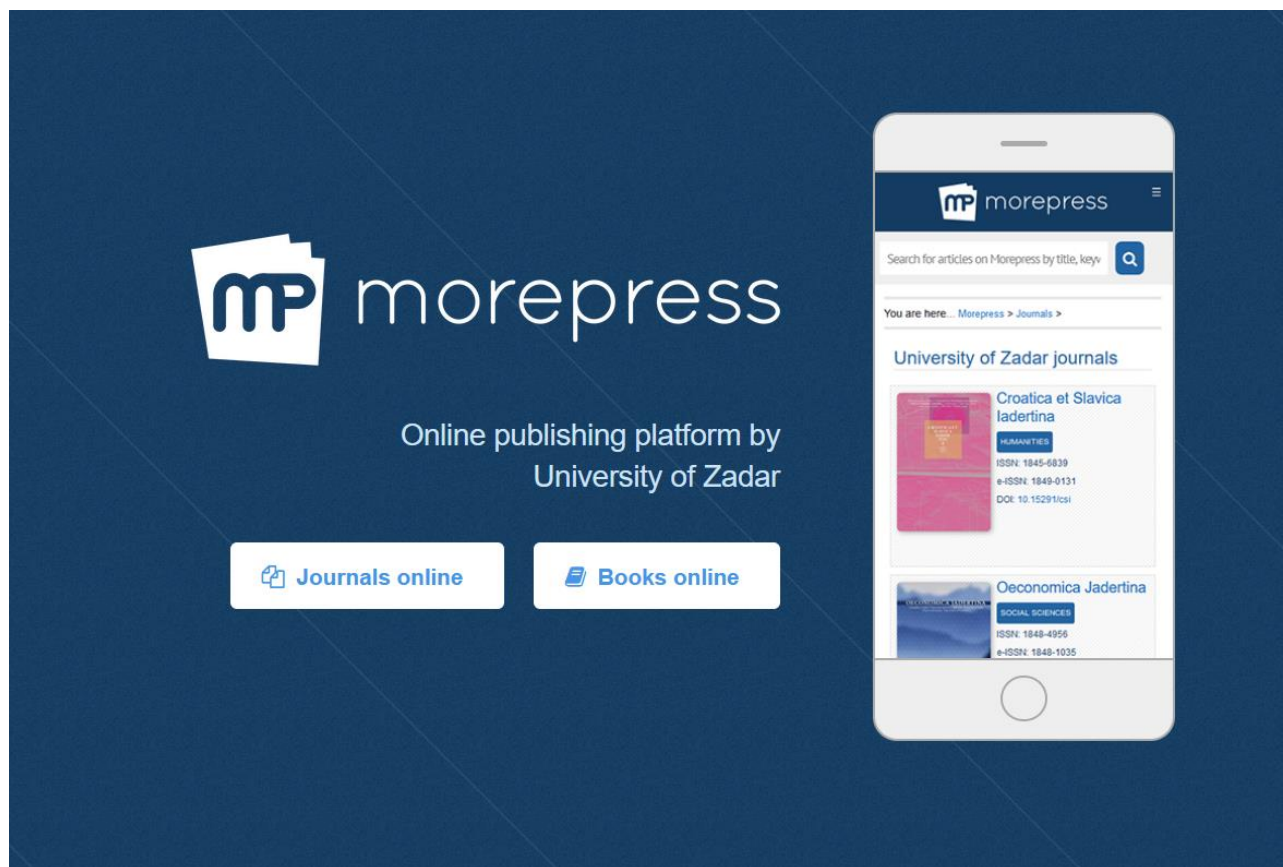


Figure 1. Landing page of the MorePress platform

Key features and benefits of the MorePress platform

All journals hosted on MorePress operate on a diamond open access principles, i.e. they offer free access to readers and no publication fees to authors. This ensures maximum dissemination of research results, especially for scientists from underrepresented or resource-limited regions. The platform adheres to international publication standards and protocols: DOI assignment via Crossref, indexing in international databases (DOAJ, Hrcak, Scopus, etc.), interoperability of metadata via the OAI-PMH protocol, licencing under Creative Commons (e.g. CC-BY). These functions ensure that journals published via MorePress comply with the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable).

MorePress enables: end-to-end editorial management from submission and peer review to editing and publication; customizable review models (e.g. double-blind, open peer review); integrated communication tools for efficient coordination between authors, editors and reviewers. Hosted and maintained by the university's IT department, the platform guarantees reliable hosting and backup of all content, regular system updates and maintenance, secure storage in compliance with GDPR regulations, long-term digital preservation and archiving.

Decision of using MorePress as a publishing platform for CoReS journal answers the strong demand for advocacy in adhering to the Open Science principles in general.

In order to use outputs from previous EU-CONEXUS EU funded projects, elected Editorial Board of CoReS used digital artwork done by students to prepare visual identity of the journal (Figure 2). Since the visual was only used to create the layout in the system, final proposal will be chosen after the round of voting.



COASTAL RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

OPEN ACCESS SCHOLARLY JOURNAL





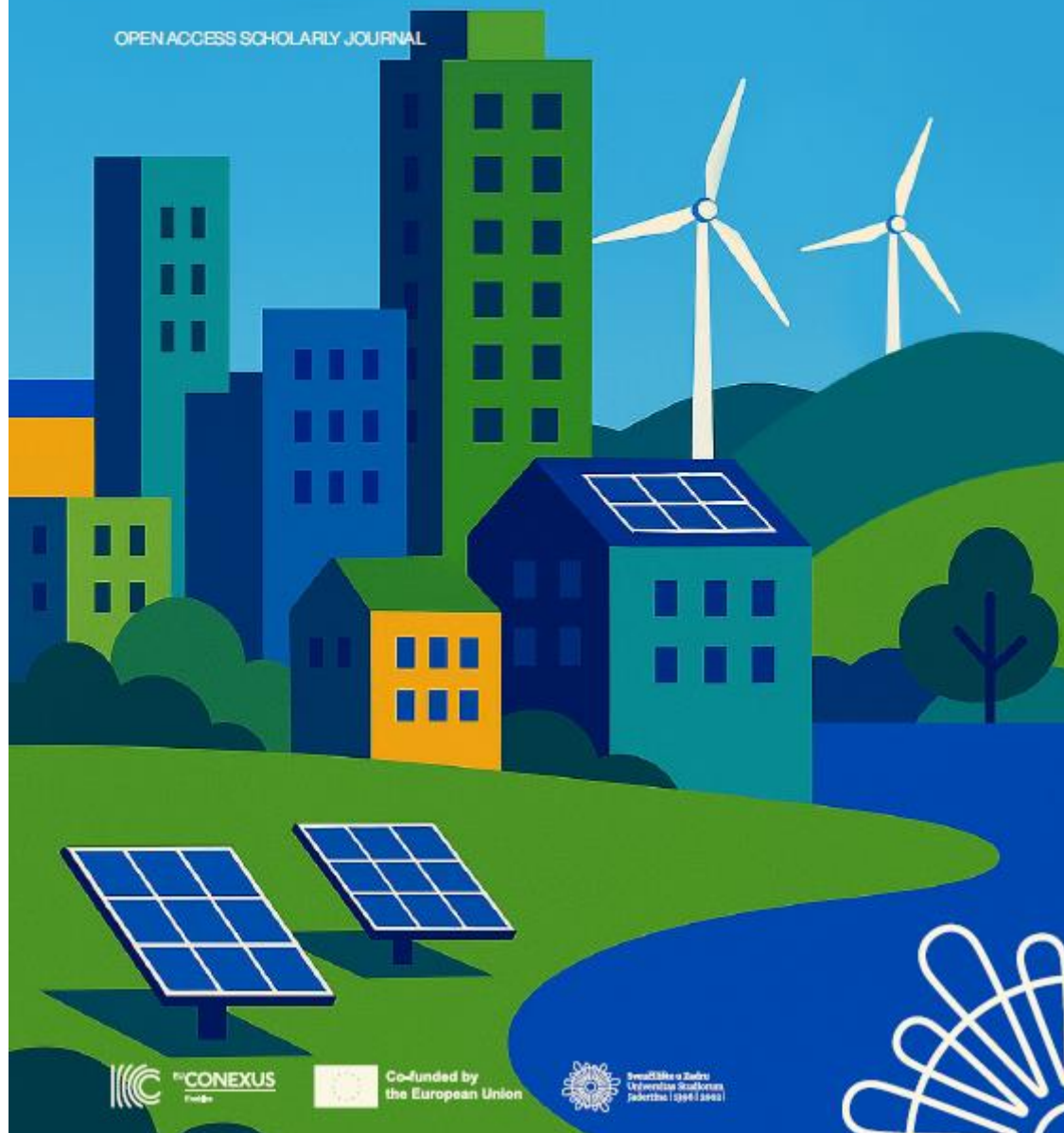
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COASTAL RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

OPEN ACCESS SCHOLARLY JOURNAL



EU **CONEXUS**
ENABLES



Co-funded by
the European Union



Nacionalni institut
za statistiku
Republike Srbije
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Figure 2: First cover design proposals

The Editorial Board prepared all the necessary documents and elements of the journal before sharing them with the technical support who prepared the layout of the journal in the system.

Those elements include:

- About the journal
- Author guidelines
- Reviewer guidelines
- Code of ethics
- AI statement
- Publication ethics and malpractice statement
- Call for submission
- Editorial board members

Since the goal of the editors and Editorial Board is to create a respectable journal and to ensure the content of the journal is indexed in all relevant databases, special care is given to set up the journal in advance with the criteria for inclusion in those databases (e.g. Scopus). Before reaching the developmental stage to apply for inclusion in Scopus, CoReS will be included in the [Hrčak](#), Croatian national portal for OA journals and in [DOAJ](#) – Directory of Open Access Journals, and other relevant databases.

When considering for indexing, journals are usually evaluated according to 5 criteria:

- Editorial policy

- Content
- Prestige of the journal
- Regularity of publication
- Online visibility

The Editorial Board will have the responsibility to keep the criteria at the highest level to ensure inclusion of the journal into relevant databases.

Among first tasks, CoReS journal after the publishing of the first issue will apply for the ISSN number.

Technical support was provided by the University of Zadar Publishing Office who set up the website for the [journal](#).

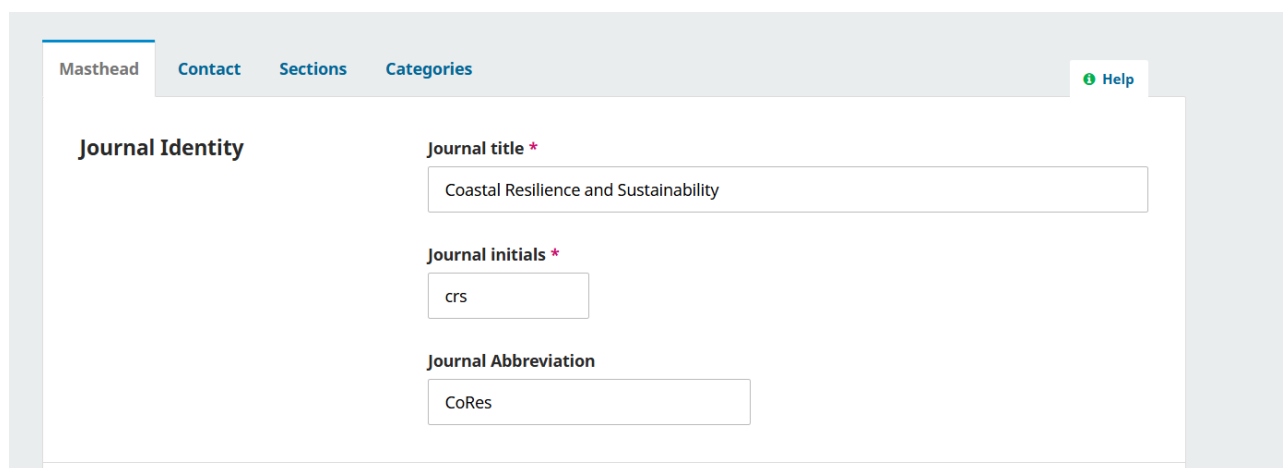


Figure 3: Journal information page in the MorePress

Sample webpage *About the journal* is shown on the Figure 3.

Call submissions is prepared for the first issue of the journal. In the early stages of the development of the journal, it is crucial that Editorial Board disseminate Call for submissions and to engage in the process of finding potential authors.

Therefore, even before the official Call for submissions was published, two manuscripts were received (Figure 4). These contributions fit well with the thematic focus and methodological standards of the journal. Their quality and relevance suggest great potential for the long-term sustainability of the journal.

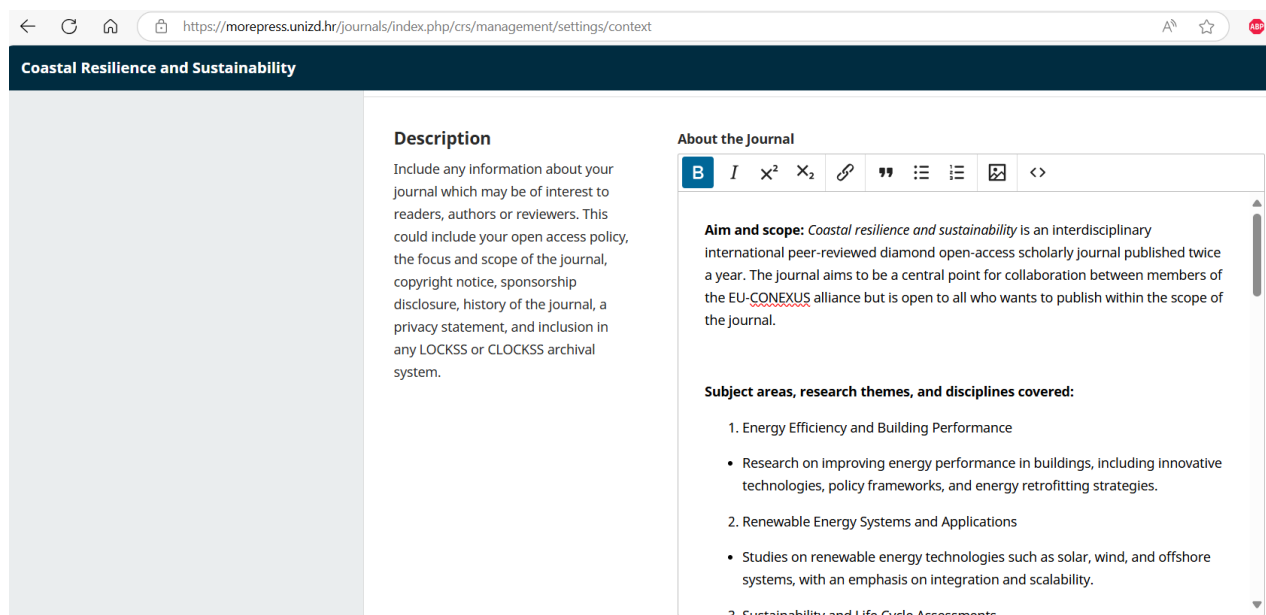


Figure 4. Sample webpage: About the journal

Figure 5 shows the layout of the OJS system. OJS system has simple and clean setting and even though University of Zadar offers full support on the platform, developers of the system constantly work on the updates and University of Zadar ensures that the system is always up to date, and following the newest stable versions of the platform. Even though OJS based platforms for managing journals is used within the Alliance, University of Zadar plans to give basic training to the Editorial Board members for the usage of the OJS to empower them to utilise the system for handling the submissions' review process and publishing process.

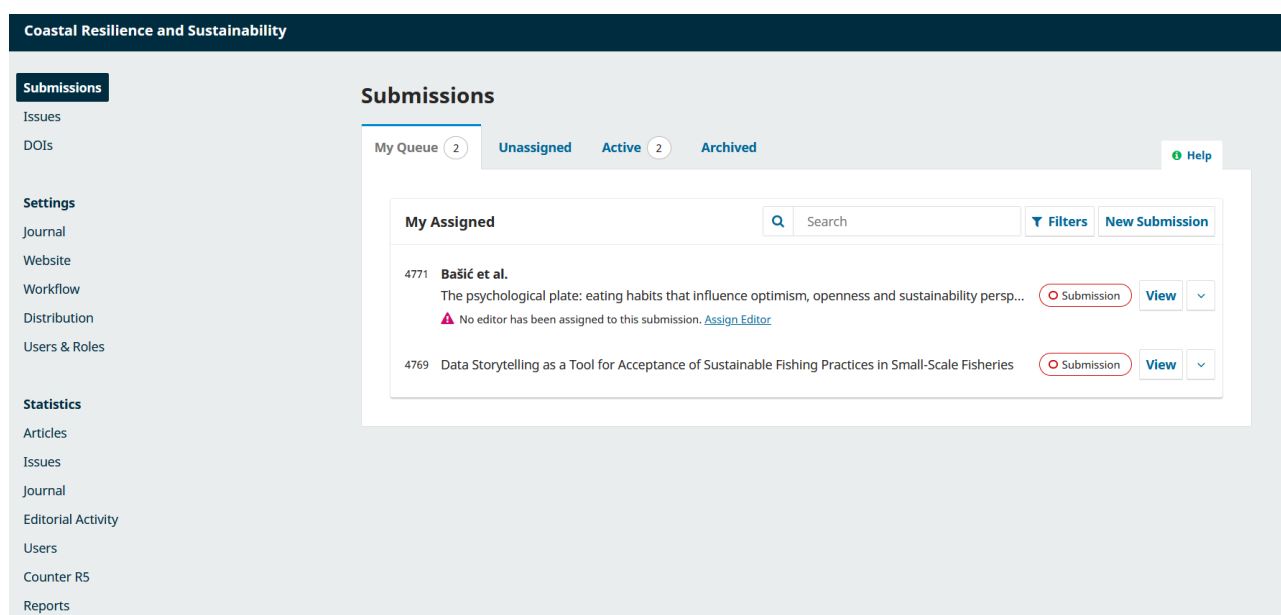


Figure 5. Submission page of the first paper submitted to the CoReS journal

First two submissions include titles:

- *Data Storytelling as a Tool for Acceptance of Sustainable Fishing Practices in Small-Scale Fisheries*
- *The psychological plate: eating habits that influence optimism, openness and sustainability perspectives*

5. Conclusion

For new journals such as **Coastal Resilience and Sustainability**, hosting on MorePress ensures credibility and institutional backing through affiliation with the University of Zadar. Integration into the EU-CONEXUS digital infrastructure enables a sustainable publication model during and after the ENABLES project. In addition, MorePress reflects the commitment of the University of Zadar and the EU-CONEXUS alliance to open science, multilingualism and digital innovation and positions the university as a key player in scholarly communication in Croatia and across Europe.

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6. Memorandum of Understanding

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING on the establishment and publication of the joint scientific journal EU-CONEXUS COASTAL RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is concluded between:

1. Sveučiliste u Zadru (UNIZD), represented by Rector Prof. Josip Faričić, PhD (hereinafter referred to as the "host institution"), acting as the designated host institution for the scientific journal Coastal Resilience and Sustainability and as one of the publishers, and
2. Universitatea Tehnică de Construcții București (UTCB)
Frederick University FU (FredU)
Geoniko Panepistimion Athinon (AUA)
La Rochelle Université (LRUniv)
Fundacion Universidad Catolica de Valencia San Vicente Martir (UCV)
Klaipedos Universitetas (KU)
Universit t Rostock (UROS)
South East Technological University (SETU)
Odeskiy Nacionalniy Universitet Imeni I.I. Mechnikova (ONU)

which are members of the EU-CONEXUS Alliance and are hereinafter jointly referred to as the "co-publishers".

Art 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to establish a cooperation agreement for the production, hosting and management of a joint scientific journal Coastal Resilience and Sustainability within the EU-CONEXUS Alliance. The journal will be hosted on the digital platform of the University of Zadar and will promote open access scholarly publishing in line with the objectives of the EU-CONEXUS ENABLES project-Promoting Excellence through Innovative Eco-systems.

Art 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. The host institution (University of Zadar) will:

- (a) Provide free and open access to the electronic journal through its digital platform for the duration of the EU-CONEXUS ENABLES project– Promoting Excellence through Innovative Eco-systems (31st January 2029.)
- (b) Provide the technical infrastructure, including access to a journal management system, and ensure 24/7 availability of the journal, except for routine maintenance and unforeseen technical problems.
- (c) Appoint a technical administrator to assist the editorial staff with operational requirements, training and technical troubleshooting.

- d) Provision of DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers) for published content and facilitation of indexing in relevant scientific databases.
- e) Provide long-term digital archiving of published articles in compliance with FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) principles.
- f) To inform the co-publishers at least six (6) months in advance if it intends to discontinue the hosting service for the journal.

2.2. The publishers (EU-CONEXUS partners) will:

- (a) Establish and maintain an editorial board responsible for content selection, peer review procedures and journal policies.
- (b) Provide and maintain the journal's scope, editorial guidelines, guidelines for authors and peer review process in a separate document (Annex 1).
- (c) Submit all journal content (articles, abstracts, metadata) in the appropriate format and ensure compliance with open access publishing standards.
- (d) Ensure that all copyright agreements with authors are in place, including the necessary permissions for reuse of copyrighted material.
- (e) Take full legal and ethical responsibility for the content published and indemnify the host institution against any legal claims related to the journal's content.

Art 3.

ADMINISTRATION AND DECISION MAKING

- a) The Journal shall be managed by a Joint Editorial Board composed of representatives of each EU-CONEXUS partner institution.
- b) The Editorial Board defines the editorial policies of the journal, including submission criteria, peer review standards and publication ethics.
- c) Major decisions on the journal's guidelines, changes to the platform or its discontinuation shall be taken by majority vote of the EU-CONEXUS Research Council on the proposal of the Joint Editorial Board.

Art 4.

FINANCING AND COSTS

- a) The journal will be set up and maintained free of charge for the duration of the EU-CONEXUS ENABLES project – Promoting Excellence through Innovative Eco-systems.
- b) In case of funding needs (e. g. platform upgrade, additional indexing services), the partners will discuss and agree on financial contributions according to the budget allocated to the project.
- c) Authors will not be charged article processing charges for the duration of the ENABLES project. Changes to the financial plan after completion of the project will be included in the journal's sustainability plan.

Art 5.

TERM AND TERMINATION

- a) This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force on the date of its signature and shall remain in force for at least the duration of the EU-CONEXUS ENABLES project - Promoting Excellence through Innovative Eco-systems (31st January 2029.)

- b) At the end of the project, the host institution and the publisher may negotiate an extension or a transition plan for the journal.
- c) Either party may terminate this agreement by giving six (6) months' written notice.

Art 6.
GENERAL PROVISIONS

- a) This Memorandum of Understanding is a non-legally binding agreement intended to outline the cooperative framework for the establishment and maintenance of the Journal.
- b) Any disputes shall be settled amicably through discussions between the parties.
- c) The Memorandum of Understanding may be amended in writing by mutual agreement of all signatories.

SIGNATURES

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, Sveučilište u Zadru (UNIZD)]

Name: Prof. Josip Faričić, PhD

Title: Rector

Date:

SIGNATURES

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, Universitatea Tehnică de Construcții București (UTCB)]

Name:

Title:

Date:

SIGNATURES

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, Frederick University FU (FredU)]

Name:

Title:

Date:

SIGNATURES

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, Geoponiko Panepistimion Athinon (AUA)]

Name:

Title:

Date:

SIGNATURES

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, La Rochelle Université (LRUniv)]

Name:

Title:

Date:

SIGNATURES

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, Klaipėdos Universitetas (KU)]

Name:

Title:

Date:

SIGNATURES

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, Fundacion Universidad Catolica de Valencia San Vicente Martir (UCV)]

Name:

Title:

Date:

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, Universität Rostock (UROS)]

Name:

Title:

Date:

SIGNATURES

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, South East Technological University (SETU)]

Name:

Title:

Date:

SIGNATURES

Signed on behalf of:

[Authorized Representative, Odeskij Nacionalnij Universitet Imeni I.I. Mechnikova (ONU)]

Name:

Title:

Date: