

Ecology literature dominated by men in a handful of countries

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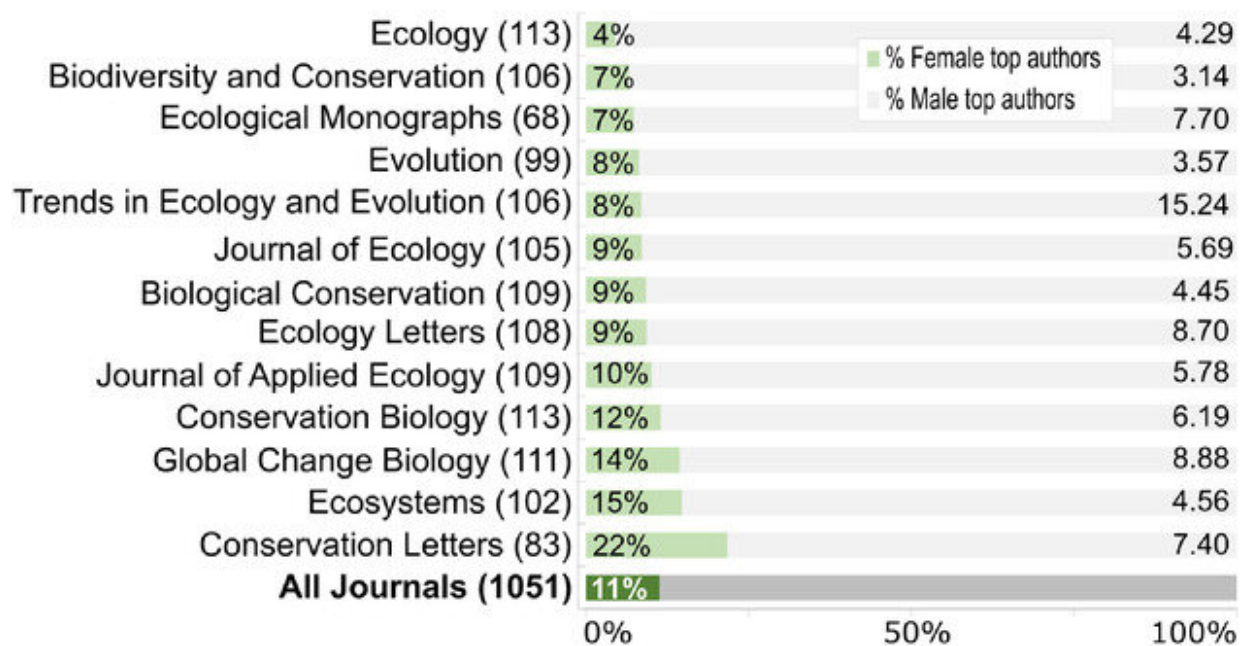
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Publishing in peer-reviewed scientific journals is crucial for the development of a researcher's career. The scientists that publish the most often in the most prestigious journals generally acquire greater renown,

as well as higher responsibilities. However, a team involving two CNRS researchers has just shown that the vast majority of scientific articles in the fields of ecology and conservation biology are authored by men working in a few Western countries.

They represent 90% of the 1,051 authors that have published the most frequently in the 13 major [scientific journals](#) in the field since 1945. Three quarters of these men are affiliated with institutions in just five countries (the United States, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Germany). However, there are signs of improvement, as women are increasingly among the authors that publish the most, representing 18% of the youngest authors, whereas they represent only 3% of the oldest ones. The geographic diversity of the countries in which authors work also increased markedly by 15% since 1980.

Published in *Conservation Letters* on 2 March 2021, this study calls for combating the process of discrimination engendered by the publication system by proposing concrete measures to halt the overrepresentation of men and Western countries.



Female and male top-publishing ecologists per journal. This overview shows the relative proportions of female and male top-publishing authors (in %) in 13 leading ecology journals (n of individual top-publishing authors in parentheses) over the entire period of the study (1945–2019). The impact factor of each journal (2018) is provided at the right end of each bar. Of these 13 journals, 4 journals were in the field of conservation biology, 2 were in the field of evolution, and 7 were ecology journals. Credit: *Conservation Letters* <https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12797>

More information: Bea Maas, et al. Women and Global South strikingly underrepresented among top-publishing ecologists. *Conservation Letters* doi.org/10.1111/conl.12797

Provided by CNRS

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