



The contamination of scientific literature: looking for an antidote

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Science may have very strong implications for society. The knowledge of the processes occurring around the society represents a good opportunity to take responsible decisions. This is particularly true in the field of geosciences. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, climate changes and many other natural phenomena still need to be further investigated. The role of the scientific community is to increase the knowledge. Each member can share his own ideas and data thus allowing the entire scientific community to receive a precious contribution. The latter one often derives from research activities, which are expensive in terms of consumed time and resources. Nowadays the sharing of scientific results occurs through the publication on scientific journals. The reading of available scientific literature thus represents a unique opportunity to define the state of the art on a specific topic and to address research activities towards something new. When published results are obtained through a rigorous scientific process, they constitute a solid background where each member can add his ideas and evidences. Differently, published results may be affected by scientific misconduct; they constitute a labyrinth where the scientists lose their time in the attempt of truly understanding the natural processes. The normal scientific dialectic should unmask such results, thus avoiding literature contamination and making the scientific framework more stimulating. The scientific community should look for the best practice to reduce the risk of literature contamination.