

## FOREWORD

*Scientists must publish.* It is said that a good research work is not really finished until you have written and published it, so it is available to other people.

This is how science evolves. Results must be communicated and discussed with the rest of the scientific community to be validated or refuted. Moreover, they need to be shared with the rest of society because science should benefit us all.

However, useful research is often locked inside institutions, published as internal reports only. Other interesting results lie in libraries as thesis and monographs, out of the reach of the scientific community. In many cases, this knowledge takes too long to come to light, if it is ever published as regular articles.

Scientific journals seem to have evolved in two different directions. On the one hand, the number of scientific journals has increased enormously. On the other hand, several of the most traditional and prestigious journals have become almost impenetrable for scientists based outside developed countries or away from science epicentres. A very high percentage of manuscripts submitted to these journals by scientists from other regions get the usual reply “your article is fine, but only of regional interest”.

At the same time, we suffer increasing pressure from Scientific Committees, Research Councils, Education Ministries, etc., to publish regularly and, preferably, in widely diffused, high standard journals, in order to receive funding or either obtain or secure a position as researchers, professors or even graduate students.

Thus, researchers might try to find a subject which is very new, cutting edge or of “global” interest, in order to get their articles easily accepted in a major international journal. Alternatively, results might be published in some minor, not well-known “local” journal. However, the latter option is often equivalent to writing an internal report for your University or Institute. Even more troubling, most journals take between 9 and 18 months to publish your articles.

The *Pan-American Journal of Aquatic Sciences* was founded with the idea of being agile and open-minded, welcoming good quality research articles - regional or not. We are even willing to accept articles in other languages than English, such as Spanish and Portuguese, to foster the communication and dissemination of interesting results among scientists and educated people in the three Americas and overseas.

So far, we have received a very good answer from the community and we are indeed grateful to our colleagues who submitted manuscripts and/or collaborate as referees and advisors. In a few months, we have received several articles and this first issue of the Journal includes just a few of them. Some others are still under revision and will be published in the following issues. Unfortunately, a small number of articles was rejected, although based solely on quality standards.

As long as the Pan-American scientists believe in their work and are willing to show their results, our journal will work hard to be a reliable gateway for their entry to the world of publications and to make their research available to the rest of the scientific community. Researchers will be able to spread the electronic version of their published articles and everyone is welcomed to download them freely from our website.

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