

## EDITORIAL

Hello Dear Reader, and welcome to the Volume 17, Issue 1 of The Palawan Scientist (TPS).

Are you still there? Or did you just turn the page on me? If you did, I understand: nobody reads forewords or editorials anymore. Worse yet, nobody reads journals anymore. In fact, an Indiana University study found that 50% of journals and scientific papers are never consumed by the public, except their authors, peers, and editors. Hubbard and Dunbar (2017) also cemented the fact that even experienced researchers rely on superficial reading when outside their field, as deep engagement depends more on prior knowledge and conceptual frameworks than on reading experience alone.

That's why I totally get it! To be honest, I can't recall the last time I read a journal cover to cover. Probably like me, most people who actually do consume journals do so per article - probably only reading the articles relevant to one's study. And that's a shame, because **each journal issue, when taken as a whole, holds a story.**

Oh...you're still here? That's amazing! Maybe some people *do* still read journals. For you, Dear Reader, I'll go on.

Each journal holds a story. If you go through the titles in this issue...you will *not* get that sense. At least, not right away. So let me tell you the story of this issue.

### The Story of, Nature, Society, and Variety

You might feel like there's no overarching story in this issue with research topics ranging from managing marine protected areas, to fermenting soy-fern, to different sandfish feeds, to evacuation behaviors during volcano eruptions. But that's because The Palawan Scientist is a **multidisciplinary journal**. It's SUPPOSED to capture a wide array of scientific developments from a variety of disciplines. And these developments and multi-disciplines, though seemingly unrelated, are linked through **the story of nature and society**. Nature is also a slurry of matter and forces, existing in infinite forms and constantly changing. Society is a cacophony of infinite variations of people interacting and changing each other minute by minute, second by second. So it makes sense that the approach to science (and its publication) must be multidisciplinary in order to paint a fuller, more accurate picture of our complex world. In this issue, **the variety IS the story.**

### The Story of Partnership and Sustainable Development

But if you *must* have an overarching theme to this issue, just think of two words: **partnership** and **sustainable development**. WPU is after all, "Your strong partner for sustainable development.

The study by WPU's very own brilliant team of Malolos et al. explored the **partnership** between Local Government Units and Funding Partners towards the **sustainable development** of Marine Protected Areas in Cagayancillo, Palawan.

The **partnership** of some of the brightest researchers in WPU in Sumbe et al. tested different feeds to grow sandfish in captivity, to maintain the **sustainable** harvest of this valuable but endangered sea cucumber species.

Susada's study connecting mathematical performance and psychological, physiological, and psychosocial factors point to the value of the **partnership** between educators and educational support practitioners towards a more robust educational **development**.

A study **partnered** by researchers (Opena et al.) from 3 Philippine Universities brings us research on soy-fern fermentation that could have implications in **sustainable** and healthy food production.

Lim and Anabo's study on evacuation behaviors of volcano-eruption affected households gives evidence to the importance of close **partnerships** between local communities and governments in the **development** of strategies for effective evacuation.

Doblas et al.'s study shows promise for a **sustainable** antioxidant and anti-inflammatory in a fern used as a traditional remedy in Bukidnon, Philippines.

A study on cooperatives, an important organizational **partner** for the grassroots level in **sustainable development**, were found by Mantig and Deriada to benefit from giving focus to intangible resources like structural, social, and spiritual capital.

The discourse analysis by Noval revealed the complexity of societal and **sustainability** issues we faced **together** as a Filipino community during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

And the 3 articles from Universities outside the Philippines show us that **sustainable development** should not be an isolated effort; it **takes all nations and cultures, partnering** in researches, spreading research results far and wide, and bringing together the local pieces of the puzzle of nature and society from all corners of the globe to build a bigger picture that could fuel local and global sustainable development efforts.

### **The Story of WPU and TPS**

This issue also tells the story of The Palawan Scientist (TPS) itself, and the University it continuously brings pride to, the Western Philippines University (WPU). You see, this particular issue of the TPS comes at the heels of **three achievements of WPU and the TPS**.

First, last March, WPU was awarded as the **sole winner of the Top-Performing MIMAROPA Universities in Research Production in 2024**, for being the only state university in the Region of MIMAROPA with scopus indexed research publications. For context, Scopus is a leading abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature used globally by researchers, institutions, and policymakers to assess the quality and impact of scholarly work. It is also one of the specific metrics in many international University Rankings. In fact, our Scopus publications is a major contributor to the second achievement of the University: we are the first and only MIMAROPA University to be **internationally ranked in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings**. And third, just, last April, 2025, **The Palawan Scientist itself has been accepted for Scopus indexing**.

These recognitions are testament to the 115 years of prolific scientific participation of WPU and the 12 (2014-2025) years of international level quality of the publications of the TPS. And with Scopus indexed research possible in our very own backyard, TPS can only skyrocket WPU in its scientific relevance and international rankings. **That all starts here, in this issue - the first issue of TPS since these 3 achievements**.

**That grand story** - the story of painstaking research and writing, of rigorous scientific screening and publication practices, of the countless echoes of thoughts and love put into every word, of the story of nature and society and variety, of a proud journal and University just trying to carve out its place in the world as a strong partner for sustainable development - **you would appreciate that story much more profoundly if you read this whole journal issue**.

**Oh...Wow! You made it this far! You deserve a treat!**

In an effort to encourage you to at least browse through the whole issue, I have hidden **10 numbers** in the title pages of each article in the issue. Putting them in order of appearance and preceding them with +63, this will make up a Philippines cellular number, which you are to message through Viber with the phrase “I am (NAME) and I read the whole Volume 17, Issue 1 of The Palawan Scientist! My email is (EMAIL)”. We will then get in touch with you for a **special surprise**.

So as you flip through this Volume 17, Issue 1 of the Palawan Scientist, I hope you enjoy the brilliant individual articles, and the proud story of the issue as a whole.

Happy reading! Happy number hunting! And to God be all the Glory!

**Amabel S. Liao, PhD**  
University President  
Western Philippines University