

Editorial

The South Pacific Journal of Natural and Applied Sciences (SPJNAS) is an international journal of **The University of the South Pacific (USP)** dedicated to the latest advancement of natural and applied sciences and provides a platform for scientists and academics in diverse areas of research.

The University of the South Pacific is the premier provider of tertiary education in the Pacific region and an international centre of excellence for teaching, research consulting and training on all aspects of Pacific culture, environment and human resource development needs. *The year 2018 marks USP's 50th year of service to the Pacific Islands. SPJNAS is a valued part of celebrations in this very special Golden Jubilee Year of USP.*

SPJNAS is USP's open access, peer-reviewed, multidisciplinary, scientific journal that publishes original research findings, review articles and short communications. The journal focuses on academic excellence, research rigidity, knowledge distribution, and reciprocated scholarly efforts in order to endorse theoretical, experimental and applied research at national and international levels, especially in the South Pacific region. The journal plays an important role in the question of how regional sustainable development is possible. Therefore, research on regional issues has always been a hot topic in the field of sustainable development. The present issue of **SPJNAS** contains five quality research papers on topics of applied interest and they are summarized below.

The first paper analyses the spatial distribution of 'long-horn' beetles (Cerambycidae: Coleoptera) in the Fijian archipelago. The results of this study confirm that the species-area relationship hold for Fijian Cerambycidae. It is recommended that additional research is required to fully catalogue the current Fijian fauna. The second paper in this issue is on evaluation of nutrient uptake of selected cover crops and biochar on the yield advantage of two taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) cultivars in Samoa. This study concludes that optimum taro yields can be obtained under mucuna fallow only without any additional inputs of chemical fertilisers.

A comparative investigation of body mass index (BMI) of tertiary students of the South Pacific origin is reported in the third paper which concludes that in the Pacific region change in lifestyle is needed to decrease unhealthy weight of students. The fourth paper presents intercropping short duration leafy vegetables with pumpkin in subtropical alluvial soils of Bangladesh. All the intercropping systems tested in this study performed better than sole cropping. However, the cultivation of spinach with pumpkin was found to be the best option with regards to higher productivity, better land and time utilization, as well as maximum economic return for the recently developed alluvial soils of Bangladesh. The fifth paper in this issue of **SPJNAS** is on effects of organic amendments on sweetpotato (*Ipomoea batatas* L.) crop yield in a calcareous sandy soil of Samoa. The results showed that all organic amendments significantly increased total storage root and marketable storage root yields of sweet potato crop as compared to yields of the control.

I hope that readers of **SPJNAS** will find these articles of great value. I would like to thank the authors for their contributions to this volume/issue of **SPJNAS**, and to acknowledge the kind

cooperation of associate editors and the reviewers for their time, and in maintaining the high standard of the journal. I also wish to acknowledge the continuing support of the Dean of the Faculty of the Science, Technology and Environment (FSTE), Assoc. Prof. Anjeela Jokhan and the Associate Dean, Research & Graduate Affairs, FSTE, Prof. Sushil Kumar. My sincere thanks to Ms. Janice Mani, for her expertise in formatting the papers for the journal, and to Ms. Helen Malin (CSIRO Publishing) for her help in various ways.

Finally, the deepest gratitude is to the Vice Chancellor & President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra for signing the MoU with CSIRO Publishing to integrate **SPJNAS** into its portal and make it an open access journal whereby the research findings of the contributing scientists are readily accessible to interested readers.

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