

Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Ethnobiology and Conservation

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When we launched Ethnobiology and Conservation (EC) ten years ago, we were moved by the spirit of enthusiasm for the growth that ethnobiology had been experiencing (Alves and Albuquerque 2012). Despite the challenges clearly identified with the task of creating a new open-access journal, it was exciting. Since the creation of EC, we have sought to meet the highest level of academic rigor and editorial practices and achieve the quality requirements of the largest and most popular scientific databases internationally. As a result, the journal has grown significantly in a brief period and is today indexed and ranked by all major databases including Web of Sciences (WoS) and Scopus.

Over the past ten years, EC published a variety of papers on ethnobotany, ethnozoology, local knowledge, zoology, and conservation of nature. The themes addressed in the published articles are strongly aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within its 2030 sustainable development agenda (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>), reflected in Figure 1. It has generated scientific information that can contribute to certain outcomes such as the reduction in poverty, hunger, loss of biodiversity, water pollution, global warming, injustice, and decreased discrimination, among other problems that affect people and nature. Our first editorial (Alves and Albuquerque 2012) indicated that one of the main objectives of the journal would be to disseminate research results that may contribute to the conservation of both cultural and biological diversity (Alves and Albuquerque 2012), thus converging with several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In subsequent decades, ethnobiology will be more

relevant in assisting us to build pathways to reach sustainable development goals. To reinforce our compromise with this agenda, and on the occasion of our 10th anniversary, in the following months we will publish a series of opinion papers to stimulate the debate of researchers from different parts of the world and disciplines about topics such as city resilience, food security, and human health and well-being. We hope the entire scientific community can enjoy this opportunity to broaden their views about the role of ethnobiology in global challenges.

Our journal has attracted the attention of researchers from all continents, achieving the highest number of publications from Latin America and Europe, followed by North America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania (Figure 2). Based on the data obtained from SciVal (a tool for measuring metrics gathered from the Scopus dataset), 100 authors from 31 countries published in EC for the period 2012/2021. The highest numbers emerge first from Brazil, followed by Argentina, Mexico, the United States of America, Colombia, Canada, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy. Not surprisingly, most of the publications emanate from Latin American countries. This follows the same trend recorded in recent reviews that indicated the increase in publications in Ethnobiology in Latin America in the previous 15 years, reflecting the increasing activities of researchers, principally among Brazilians (Albuquerque et al. 2013; Alves et al. 2018). In the period (2012/2021), metrics from SciVal indicate that there were 165 publications in our journal and a Field-Weighted Citation Impact (measures citation impact weighted by field of knowledge) of 1.24. This means that it was 24% above the world average. Of these publications, 10.3% are in the Top

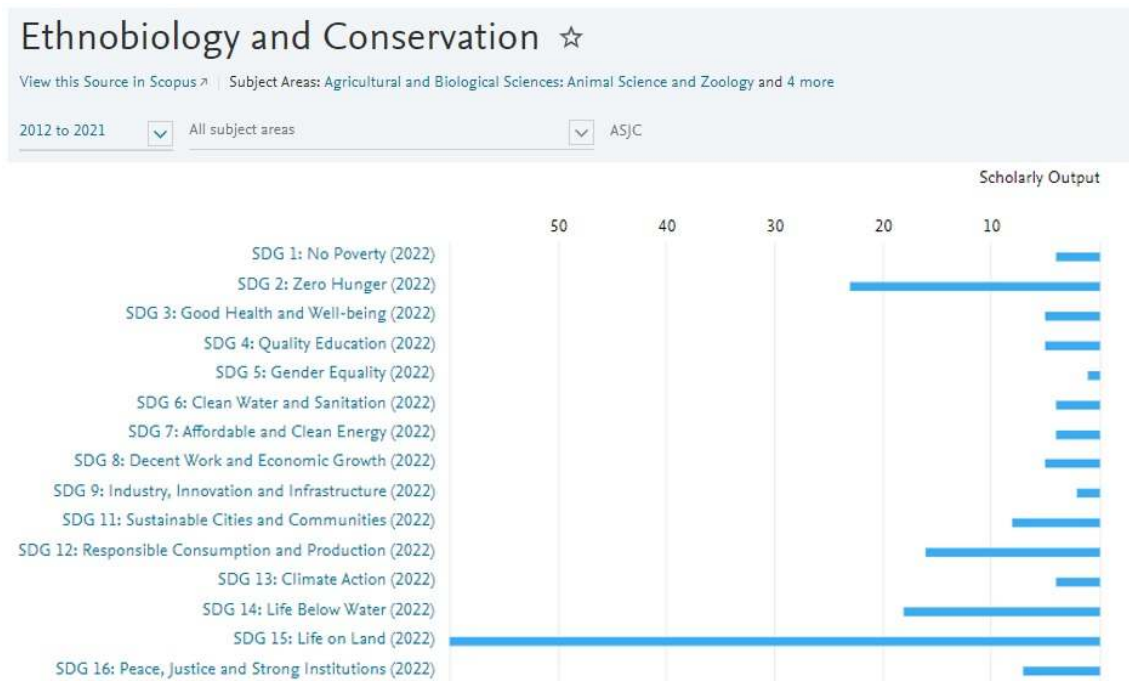


Figure 1. Distribution of output publications in Ethnobiology and Conservation according to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (per SciVal - period 2012-2021).

10% of the most viewed and 15.8% among the most cited publications internationally (Top 10%). The impact of EC publications is also evidenced in citations (average of 9,2/publication), demonstrating the importance and relevance of EC in the field of Ethnobiology and Nature Conservation.

Over the years, we have seen the role of studies on the relationship between human beings and nature increasingly exalted in academic and political debates. The feeling is that ethnobiology could leave the marginal field of science, how it continues to be judged in some countries, to acquire a central and autonomous role in its construction as a science. However, there is substantial conservatism in academia, which is at odds with the scientific spirit and enterprise. This conservatism appears in different ways: sometimes in misunderstanding the interdisciplinary spirit of ethnobiology that allows dialogue with different disciplines, and currently, in the same sense, the movement of privatization of the discipline that advocates that ethnobiology is the epistemological exclusivity of a single field of knowledge. In this sense, we have seen a spectacular transition from understanding ethnobiology as a field of knowledge situated on the border between the natural sciences and the social sciences to an area of knowledge with fluid boundaries.

Understanding ethnobiology as an interdisciplinary science poses many epistemological and theoretical challenges, but they are surmountable if aca-

dem practitioners of science have constructive dialogue and accept that there are different methods of studying a phenomenon. In other words, diverse academic styles produce knowledge on the frontiers of the relationship between humans and nature (see Albuquerque 2022). Thus, more than ever, we need a philosophy of ethnobiology that allows us to advance our understanding of these differences, as advocated by Ludwing and El-Hani (2020). In this direction, EC joins its sister journals to diversify the scope of publications in the area allowing “diverse” research to find “diverse” spaces to perpetuate itself. Perhaps, one of the criticisms the journal received over the years was that it did not prioritize the publication of research that only represents lists of species (containing quantitative indices or not). Each year, EC has also become a space for self-criticism in the field of ethnobiology (Albuquerque 2013; Albuquerque & Alves 2020; Gonçalves-Souza et al. 2020; Soldati and Barros 2020; Ferreira Júnior 2020; Ladio 2020; Albuquerque and El-Hani 2021; Zank et al. 2021; Dahdouh-Guebas and Vandebroek 2021). We defend our stance that any research, whether more aligned with a methodological/naturalistic or ethnographic design, must be rigorous and robust on the advances it intends to provide.

EC also began their own exercise in self-criticism by reflecting on inequalities in science. We objectively began a process to renew our editorial board, seeking

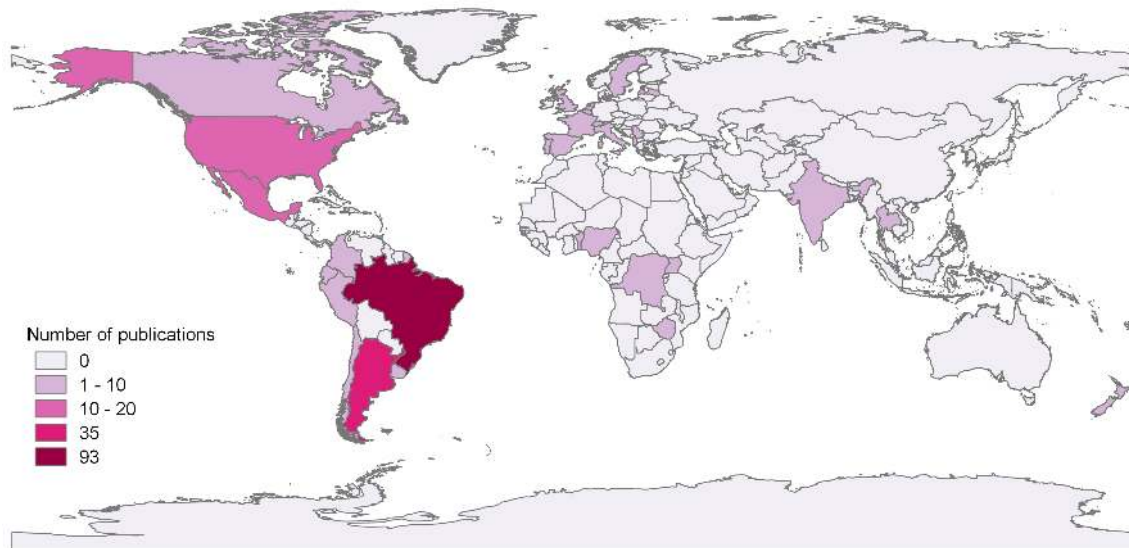


Figure 2. Distribution of published articles in Ethnobiology and conservation per continent between the years 2012 and 2021.

more balance in its composition, whether in terms of gender or the geographic origin of our members. In addition, we have implemented a clear policy of discounting the publication fee and recognizing the voluntary efforts of our editors and reviewers. Perhaps one of the most important steps was the creation of new sections for types of papers, including Policy Briefs. The idea to create this section stems from the recognition of political ethnobiology as a strategic field for the development of a more socially engaged ethnobiological science (D'Ambrosio 2014; Wolverson *et al.* 2014). Thus far, and unfortunately, we have not received contributions to this section, which can be submitted in the native language of the author, to meet the imperatives of decolonizing science. During its first decade, EC met a world immersed in a series of social, political, economic, and cultural issues, including anti-science ideologies and movements that intensified attacks against scientists and scientific research. Despite the challenges, EC promptly became a well-known journal in a short time and had several conquests that deserve sincere celebration. These accomplishments were possible due to the work of editors, associate editors, editorial board members, and the contributions we received from authors worldwide. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of them.

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