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EDITORIAL ARTICLE

From roots to canopy: Ten years of *Ecocycles*

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Abstract – Eleven years ago, in 2013, the European Ecocycles Society was created to establish a transdisciplinary scientific platform for the new, regenerative concept of sustainable development. Although the first issue of the Society's new journal *Ecocycles* was published in 2015, organization and editorial work started in June 2014 to publish original research and review articles concerning the intricate system of ecological cycles, Earth-system dynamics, and environmental, cultural, and socio-economic aspects of sustainability. Until now, our journal has published more than two hundred scientific papers. These publications have been read and cited by a great number of researchers in all corners of the world. *Ecocycles* is now indexed, and its scientific impact is tracked by international databases (i.e., Scopus, Scimago, DOAJ, and others).

In this editorial paper, we would like to commemorate and celebrate the achievements of *Ecocycles* during its ten-year existence and look forward to future opportunities and challenges.

Keywords – *Ecocycles*, open-access scientific journal, tenth anniversary, European Ecocycles Society

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INTRODUCTION

This paper marks the tenth anniversary of *Ecocycles*. Here, the founding editors reflect on the journal's origins and development over the past decade and explore its contributions to research on all aspects of the systems of ecological cycles. We discuss impactful publications and significant research themes covered by *Ecocycles* during its tenure. Furthermore, we reflect on the journal's global influence in promoting environmental sustainability and its role in shaping the areas of material cycles, climate change, and ecosystem dynamics, including social, cultural, and economic aspects. We conclude the paper by considering future directions in ecocycles research.

MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Ten years ago, we described this journal's inception and founding principles in the preface of its very first issue (Komives and Nemethy, 2015). *Ecocycles* was established to publish original research and review articles on ecological cycles to cover a broad range of theoretical and

practical subjects. Although *Ecocycles* covered a very wide range of scientific subject areas from the beginning, the complex ecosystem approach became more pronounced. Thus, previously less discussed issues of wildlife management, nature conservation, conservation of cultural heritage, environmental sociology, landscape management, human ecology, circular economy, and environmental politics and policymaking gained more attention. Today, the journal facilitates meaningful scientific discourse, fosters inter- and transdisciplinary research, and contributes to critical environmental debates. *Ecocycles* has been a platform for groundbreaking studies on emerging environmental science topics, critical issues of global change, and conservation science, embracing even the relevant socio-economic and cultural aspects of sustainability.

The journal started publishing papers submitted by members of the European Ecocycles Society (EURECYS, founded in 2013). From the beginning, the journal published two issues yearly, with *ca.* ten papers in one issue. After 2017, due to the growing scientific interest and contribution to the wide range of interconnected fields covered by

Ecocycles, there has been an strong upward trend in the number of submissions. Simultaneously, the Editorial Team decided to raise the journal's scientific standards, leading to a lower acceptance rate of submissions (Figure 1).

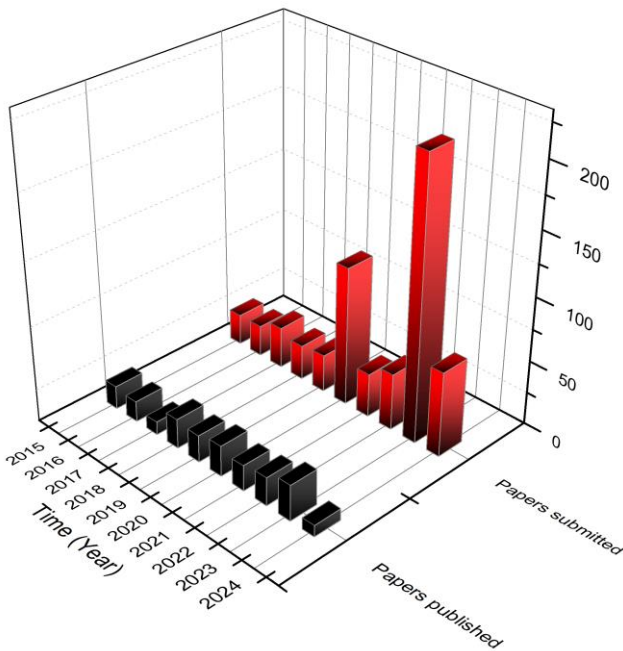


Figure 1. Number of papers published in *Ecocycles* ([Dimensions](#), data accessed 06.11.2024).

PUBLISHING PROCESS

At the very beginning, the [Editorial Team](#) decided to follow the open-access policies, peer review enhancements, and the digital platform for the broadest possible dissemination of research. Since its establishment, the journal has been hosted by the well-built, stable, and dependable [Open Journal Systems](#) (OJS) software created and continuously developed by the [Public Knowledge Team](#) of Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Canada. OJS has been providing a solid, highly dependable background for our journal that helped us greatly through the initial technical difficulties by streamlining the editorial flow and improving the quality and access to our published academic research. All scientific publications in *Ecocycles* have been identified by a unique DOI number assigned by [Crossref](#). *Ecocycles* is open to publishing special issues on its core topics. One example is the Special Issue at the 2022 World Conference of the International Ragweed Society that was held in Budapest, Hungary (Makra, 2022).

The journal's essential publication and indexing data are summarized in the Supplementary section of this paper (with links and references). Here, we only refer to individual contributions and their influence on their particular research fields and acknowledge their contribution to the growth of the journal's readership and impact. We present data that were collected with the help of [Harzing's Publish or Perish](#) software (Harzing, 2023). The yearly number of citations for papers published in *Ecocycles* is shown in Figure 2, and the ten most cited papers are listed in Table 1. The shortlist of the most popular fields of science includes circular

economy, aquaponics, agriculture, environmental pollution, climate change, and its environmental and social impacts.

COMMUNITY AND COLLABORATION

We thank many friends and colleagues who made the initiation of *Ecocycles* possible. In particular, we are obliged to all members of the [Editorial Team](#) who saw the perspectives of the journal and decided to join in. We are privileged to have the unreserved support of this team. Furthermore, we acknowledge the contributions of the reviewers, authors, and the *ecocycles* community. Their collaborative efforts had been essential to the journal's success and made it possible to develop a robust international scientific community around it.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

During the last ten years, the landscape of scientific publishing has changed rapidly, creating multiple challenges for the journal. Maintaining high academic standards, widespread visibility and impact, institutional funding and sponsorships, and ensuring rigorous peer review were of primary importance. We have been working hard to ensure the quality and integrity of published research and adapting to technological advancements. Furthermore, we are continuously shaping the journal's strategies and policies to navigate the evolving field of copyright and intellectual property laws to ensure authors' rights and accessibility.

ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

Today, *Ecocycles* is well-established in the academic world. It is read and cited worldwide and attracts submissions from many countries.

Ecocycles has been listed in the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#), in [Scopus](#), and in [Scimago](#) since 2016, 2021, and 2022, respectively. In addition, the journal's impact reaches beyond academia; it includes influencing policy, practice, and public understanding of ecological and environmental issues. Our journal has numerous media and social media mentions, policy document citations, and public debate contributions.

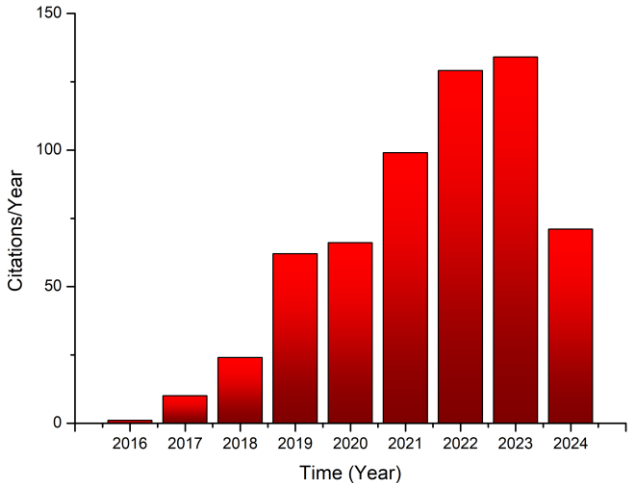


Figure 2. Number of citations for papers published in *Ecocycles* ([Dimensions](#), data accessed 06.11.2024)

Table 1. Ten most cited papers published in *Ecocycles* (2015-2024) *

Title	Reference	Citations
Nutrient supply of plants in aquaponic systems	(Bittsanszky et al., 2016)	57
Role of wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) in environmental cycling of poly- and perfluoroalkyl (PFAS) compounds	(Hamid and Li, 2016)	54
On the sustainability of aquaponics	(Konig et al., 2016)	42
Aquaponics business in Europe: some legal obstacles and solutions	(Joly et al., 2015)	33
Ecological impact of Rohingya refugees on forest resources: remote sensing analysis of vegetation cover change in Teknaf Peninsula in Bangladesh	(Imtiaz, 2018)	28
Big Data and its impact on agriculture	(Ribarics, 2016)	26
On glyphosate	(Komives and Schroder, 2016)	21
Anthropogenic soils: general aspects and features	(Dazzi and Papa, 2015)	18
Towards climate-smart agriculture: How does innovation meet sustainability?	(Takacs-Gyorgy and Takacs, 2022)	15
EU policies: New opportunities for aquaponics	(Hoevenaars et al., 2018)	14

* From the database of Crossref (accessed via Harzing's Publish or Perish software on August 6, 2024)

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

Future directions for *Ecocycles* include different thematic focus areas and special issues to enhance the journal's reach. Thus, in response to numerous suggestions and positive feedback from our readership, *Ecocycles* is expanding its focus beyond natural sciences to include new inter-disciplinary fields. These new areas of focus will encompass environmental economics, sociology and environmental justice, environmental law and policy, sustainable urban planning, environmental education and communication, public health and the environment, ecotourism and sustainable tourism, ethics and environmental philosophy, climate change adaptation and resilience, environmental technology and innovation, indigenous knowledge and environmental management, environmental psychology, environmental history, and environmental art and literature.

While we are excited about this expansion, we want to assure our readers that the journal's primary focus will remain on natural sciences with particular emphasis on earth system science, since this complex discipline embraces all of the aforementioned new areas.

By including new fields, we aim to enrich our content with papers of exceptional quality, originality, and novelty. These contributions will be selected with care to ensure they are fact-based and uphold the scientific rigor, logical coherence, and clarity that our readership expects.

We are keen to improve the quality of the papers we publish; this is the only way to strengthen our journal. Therefore, this expansion will be gradual, and the Editorial Team will continuously monitor its effect on the journal's attractiveness, prestige, and scientific impact to ensure that *Ecocycles* remains a leading publication in the field.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Finally, we want to acknowledge those who contributed to the journal's success and extend an invitation to the broader scientific community to contribute to the journal's future editions. EURECYS, our publisher, and the Editorial Team are equally committed to raising the quality of research we publish in *Ecocycles*, broadening the journal's scope, and attracting submissions from all parts of the world. Anticipating continued support from our authors, reviewers, and readers, we are highly optimistic about the next ten years of *Ecocycles*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank all founding members of the Editorial Team for their continuous involvement. Special thanks are due to Professors Loretta Li (University of Vancouver, Canada), Carmelo Dazzi (University of Palermo, Italy), Bosse Lagerqvist (University of Gothenburg, Sweden), Hijran Yavuzcan (Ankara University, Turkey), May East (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom), Albert Mas (University Rovira i Virgili, Spain), and Giuseppe Lo Papa (University of Palermo, Italy).

We also thank the [Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences](#) for archiving the full-text papers published in *Ecocycles*.

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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES AND DATA

The journal's current [Scopus Cite Score Tracker](#) value is 1.2, and its [SciMago Journal Value](#) is 0.18 (Q4). Summary publication and citation data are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Publication and citation data* for *Ecocycles* (2015-2024)

	Number of papers	Number of citations
Google Scholar	205	1046
Crossref	190	532
Dimensions	191	615
OECD's OpenAlex	204	683

* Compiled by the [Harzing's Publish or Perish](#) software on August 6, 2024.

[FlagCounter](#) (set up on December 20, 2017, and accessed on August 6, 2024) indicates that the journal's webpage had more than a quarter million views by over one hundred thousand visitors from 177 countries.



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