

Editorial

By next November 2025 I will be retired with issue 80 of 2025 after 33 years since I began working for Webbia as an Assistant Editor. This year also celebrates the 120 years since foundation of Webbia in 1905.

It is not easy to write this editorial addressed to all those who, especially in recent years, have supported Webbia with their scientific contributions. I still remember when I began working on the journal in 1992: those were still years in which composition and printing did not use particular technologies and managing a magazine was still a very patient and delicate approach. A world where editorial predation was unknown.

Those were the years when scientific journals were not yet crushed by the inexorable logic of editorial metrics and that “*devilish number*” called Impact Factor, which led to a real extinction of many historical journals. It was a world where scientific production looked more at quality than quantity with often related consequences on the global academic world. Everything changed and not only for intrinsic reasons, but also for lack of experience, and many historical magazines became extinct giving space to other more pervasive and predatory editorial initiatives.

Webbia represents one of the pillars in the global scientific publishing scenario and that since its foundation, Webbia has represented a place of internationalization appreciated not only in Europe but particularly overseas.

The last decade has certainly been very challenging and has tested those who write with the aim of saving and improving a journal. All this was possible thanks to the experience of publishers like Taylor & Francis that for 6 years allowed an international improvement and was later followed by the current publisher Firenze University Press (FUP) that understood the potential of the journal.

I must recognize the role of those who believed, mainly from abroad, in the task that FUP and I had promised to accomplish. And in particular the synergy with the Centro Studi Erbario Tropicale that I personally managed for two terms of 4 years each in which it was possible to promote the journal also on the occasion of three International Symposia dedicated to Tropical Botany in Florence which attracted participants from the most important researchers in Tropical Plant Taxonomy.

In particular, I would like to express my gratitude to all the authors who have trusted and supported Web-

bia in the last decade, especially the young ones from abroad, and to the reviewers, not always available, who have made their cultural and scientific skills available to improve the quality of Webbia.

I can say that my experience with Webbia has not been easy, met often with critical moments, but it was worth fighting to make it a tool for taxonomic dissemination at an international level. I could not have worked productively without the help of the staff of FUP from the management to the fruitful collaboration with the copyediting staff that I sincerely thank Fulvio Guatelli, Alessandro Pierno and Riccardo Petrini who have always been present even in periods like the pandemic in which we have never stopped publishing punctually. An outstanding team truly! And what to say of the outcome performances obtained and supported by the OpenAccess accessibility guaranteed by FUP, making the journal more available for those who cannot afford to pay often excessive charges to obtain the dissemination of their papers especially in the developmental countries.

What to expect for the future? I hope that Webbia can continue to be a point of reference for many scholars of Plant Taxonomy and History of Botany, the basic botanical fields that, among other things, are suffering in the current scientific scenario made up above all of excessive specialization, with the loss of a global vision of plant diversity finalized for future generations in terms of knowledge and communication.

I sincerely hope to have contributed to giving editorial space and a support to the researchers in Plant Taxonomy, in particular to the young ones, who from Europe, Asia, through Africa to the Americas have demonstrated that there is hope for a rebirth of global Plant Taxonomy for a better future.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have been close to me in this professional experience. Thanks indeed!

....all that remains is to say and wish Webbia:

AD MAIORA SEMPER!

Riccardo Maria Baldini
Assistant Editor of Webbia (1992-2008)
Editor in Chief of Webbia (2008-2025)