



# PhytoPharm: Advancing Efficiency and Excellence in Medicinal Plant Research

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## 1. Introduction

Welcome to the inaugural issue of PhytoPharm, the International Journal of Phytomedicine and Pharmacology. As the field of medicinal plant research continues to flourish, offering immense potential for sustainable healthcare solutions, PhytoPharm emerges as a dedicated platform to streamline the publishing process and elevate the quality of scientific discourse. We are excited to introduce this journal, which not only showcases groundbreaking research but also enhances the overall experience for authors and readers alike. The use of medicinal plants dates back millennia, from ancient texts such as the Ebers Papyrus in Egypt (circa 1550 BC) to Shennong Bencaojing in China (circa 770–475 BC), where plants formed the cornerstone of healing practices. Today, amid global challenges such as antibiotic resistance and a rise in chronic diseases, medicinal plants represent a vital resource for new innovative, effective, and safe therapeutics. With advances in technologies such as genomics, metabolomics, and network pharmacology, the field is at a pivotal moment—bridging traditional knowledge and cutting-edge science. PhytoPharm arrives at this opportune time to foster rigorous, interdisciplinary research that accelerates discoveries from the field to the clinic.

### 1.1. Empowering Researchers: Streamlined Submissions and Rapid Reviews

We recognize the value of your time and expertise in advancing medicinal plant science—from cultivation and ethnobotanical studies to phytochemistry, pharmacology, and commercialization. That is why PhytoPharm embraces Free Format Submissions, allowing you to submit your manuscript in any consistent style. Research indicates that the effort to comply with disparate journal formatting requirements represents a global 'hidden tax' on science, costing the research community over \$1.1 billion USD annually (Jiang et al., 2019). In the biomedical sciences alone, rigid formatting is projected to cause a cumulative delay of approximately 43,000 years in the public

dissemination of results by 2030 (Clotworthy et al., 2023). At PhytoPharm, we handle stylistic adjustments post-acceptance, so you can focus on what matters most: innovative research at the bench, in the field, or across interdisciplinary collaborations. In addition, we prioritize efficiency with a commitment to a 14-day review turnaround. This ensures your findings are shared swiftly with the global community, supporting timely progress in areas like drug discovery, biotechnology, and environmental sustainability (Bornmann and Daniel, 2010). Our dedicated reviewer team—comprising botanists, phytochemists, and pharmacologists—receives clear guidance to facilitate thorough yet expedient evaluations.

### 1.2. Building the Pyramid of Knowledge with Integrity

PhytoPharm is committed to strengthening the "Pyramid of Knowledge" by publishing studies that uphold the highest standards of scientific rigor. Our scope encompasses the full spectrum of medicinal plant research, including but not limited to, ethnobotanical surveys of indigenous remedies, phytochemical profiling of bioactive compounds, pharmacological evaluations of plant extracts, and commercialization strategies for sustainable herbal products (see our detailed journal scope). For instance, we welcome investigations into how plant-derived alkaloids might combat neurodegenerative disorders or how biodiversity hotspots can yield novel antivirals. To uphold scientific rigor, we apply a thoughtfully designed set of Criteria for Immediate Rejection (Desk Rejection) to manuscripts that fail to meet essential foundational requirements, such as missing botanical authenticity (e.g., no voucher specimens), incomplete phytochemical characterization (beyond basic extracts), or the use of non-scientific or metaphysical terminology. Please consult our full Desk Rejection Criteria for complete details. This approach allows us to focus peer review on robust, reproducible work that advances the field—whether through in-depth pharmacological insights or innovative applications in clinical trials and industry. By emphasizing physiologically relevant doses

and mechanistic depth (e.g., moving beyond simple antioxidant screenings), we foster contributions that truly enrich our understanding of medicinal plants' therapeutic and commercial potential.

### 1.3. Embracing All Outcomes: Overcoming Publication Bias

PhytoPharm celebrates the full spectrum of scientific inquiry, recognizing that well-designed studies with any outcome—positive, negative, or null—drive progress. Estimates suggest that positive results are published nearly three times more often than others, potentially skewing broader insights (Dickersin, 1990; Joobar et al., 2012). To counter this, we actively welcome sound methodologies regardless of their findings. This approach builds a more comprehensive body of knowledge and prevents unnecessary duplication of research efforts.

### 1.4. Our Streamlined Review Criteria

#### For Original Research:

- **Readability:** Clear, professional English to maximize accessibility and influence.
- **Reproducibility:** Detailed materials and methods that enable independent replication without the need for further clarification.
- **Novelty:** Contributions that add meaningful layers to the “Pyramid of Knowledge,” valuing all valid results.

#### For Review Articles:

- **Clarity:** High-quality English for effective communication.
- **Comprehensiveness:** Inclusion of all relevant literature, including contradictory findings, for a well-rounded perspective.
- **Objectivity:** Critical, evidence-based analyses of all applicable literature, free from promotional tones (Gernandt and van der Kooy, 2025)—focusing on bridging traditional knowledge with modern science.

### 1.5. A Vision for the Future

Guided by an international editorial board of experts in phytomedicine and pharmacology, PhytoPharm aims to become a flagship venue for transformative research. We envision fostering collaborations that address pressing issues, such as sustainable sourcing of endangered medicinal plants or integrating AI-driven predictions in phytochemical screening. By prioritizing open access, we ensure equitable global reach, empowering researchers in low-resource settings to contribute and benefit.

### 1.6. A Global Invitation

As an open-access journal, PhytoPharm is devoted to fostering international collaboration and equitable access to high-quality research in medicinal plants. We invite scientists worldwide to share their rigorous, innovative work—in any format—and

join us in shaping a vibrant, efficient, and inclusive future for phytomedicine and pharmacology. Whether submitting original research on a novel plant compound, a systematic review of ethnopharmacological practices, or a short communication on cultivation techniques, your contributions will help build a more resilient and evidence-based field. Submit today and be part of this exciting journey.

#### Declaration of competing interest

F. van der Kooy is the founding Editor-in-Chief of *PhytoPharm*. The authors declare that they have no other known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this editorial.

#### Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

The authors have not used AI or AI-assisted technologies in the preparation of this editorial.

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