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EDITORIAL: MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES: CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

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This *Special Issue* is a compilation of research papers presented during 'Marine and Environmental Sciences International Postgraduate Colloquium (iMESPC)', held on the 27 - 28th November 2017 at the School of Marine and Environmental Sciences (PPSMS), Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT). The purpose of this Special Issue is to present and promote research findings of PPSMS's academia on experimental ecology, biodiversity, physical and chemical research of marine and terrestrial organisms, in relation to their environment as well as legal instrument for the protection of marine endangered species. This *Special Issue* complies a total of 17 papers, covering three primary field of focus, i) Physical and Environmental Chemistry; ii) Ecology, Biodiversity and Conservation; and iii) Law and Policy.

The first section of this *Special Issue* delves into the area of physical and chemical research findings. Papers here presented deals with occurrences of chemicals in the air, soil and water environments as well as the effects of metal accumulation towards marine organisms, particularly from the South China Sea. In addition, we include a paper on nanotechnology that reveals the findings of potential material in the field of Green Chemistry for designing environmentally sustainable product. An interesting paper on beach morphodynamic classification provides substantial information for sustainable management of coastal geomorphology is also presented in this section.

The second section of this *Special Issue* is the most exciting part where majority of the papers presents the outcomes and reviews on ecology, biodiversity and conservation, which include monitoring of function and services of ecosystems for both terrestrial and aquatic organisms. Diversity of organisms were studied documenting from foraminifera, invasive phytoplankton and zooplankton species from ballast water, coral reef benthos, bivalves and entomopathogenic fungus of Malaysia. Together with the important findings and outcomes, we believe the contributions of these papers will hopefully lead to the establishment of integrative observations and assessments of Malaysian biodiversity, which requires understanding the status of biodiversity for effective conservation and sustainable use in this region.

Last but not least, third section covers Law and Policy, which is likely of interest for environmental lawyers and those involved with environmental governance. Despite presenting a single paper in this section, we hope that the paper will be useful for the government officials particularly on marine environmental law, which focuses on the current Malaysian legal framework in protecting and preserving the Marine Endangered Species (MES) and their habitat.

To meet the future needs and challenges in marine and environmental sciences, we hope that the information presented in this *Special Issue* will be beneficial to researchers, academicians and related stakeholders interested in the biological and socio-economic information of marine and environmental sciences. All of the papers presented are significant for sustaining the marine and terrestrial ecosystems, which can benefit the local community holistically and global community generally.

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Our sincere gratitude to the authors for their valuable time in preparing their research findings to be documented in this *Special Issue* and to the reviewers for their constructive criticism on the manuscripts that vastly improved the quality of output. We hope the readers will find every paper interesting and informative.