Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Anticancer activity of an extract from needles and twigs of Taxus cuspidata and its synergistic effect as a cocktail with 5-fluorouracil

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 11 August 2011

**Reviewer:** Wen-Hsiung H Chan

**Reviewer’s report:**

This report investigates the chemotherapeutic potential of an extract of Taxus cuspidata (TC) needles and twigs produced by artificial cuttage and its coeffects as a cocktail with 5-fluorouracil (5-FU) for cancer therapy. The study results found that the combinational use of the TC extract with 5-FU displays strong cytotoxic synergy in cancer cells and low cytotoxicity in normal cells. These findings suggest that this cocktail may be a potential role in cancer treatment. This manuscript is very important, interesting and well written. However, there are some minor questions need to be clarified in current format of manuscript.

1. The figure 2 showed the cytotoxicity and cell apoptosis measured by H & E staining, PI staining and TUNEL reaction. Experiments should measure the cell death modes using Annexin-V/PI staining by flowcytometry to detect what percentage of the dead cells were apoptotic versus necrotic or autophagy?

2. The subG1 phase of treated-groups should be showed and discuss in cell cycle investigation (Fig. 3).

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.