Editorial

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Dear *IJSM* reader,

With significant effort on promoting Life Cycle Engineering as a scientific domain, over the years, the CIRP (International Academy for Production Engineering) has been acting as a catalyst through its major initiatives on fundamental and applied research dedicated to sustainable product development and manufacturing around the globe. Over the past decade the CIRP Committee on Life Cycle Engineering and Assembly emerged from these efforts as an instrument for continuous international research collaboration in this domain. Especially when manufacturing-related issues are concerned, the wide body of knowledge related to production processes and methods available within the CIRP community has proven a valuable repository supporting systematic research dedicated to sustainable manufacturing.

The annual *CIRP Life Cycle Engineering Conference* series facilitates communication of innovative ideas, scientific methodologies and new research findings in this domain beyond the boundaries of the CIRP. This special issue contains a selection of expanded versions of papers presented at the *International CIRP Conference on Life Cycle Engineering, LCE2006* held in Leuven, Belgium in May 2006. Based on the results of a thorough review procedure, supported by the *LCE2006* scientific committee, authors of selected papers, covering a wide range of topics related to ecodesign and sustainable manufacturing, were invited to submit enhanced papers.

As guest editors we hope this special issue will contribute to a wide visibility of the selected publications, effectively contributing to the ongoing quest for a more sustainable approach to manufacturing.