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## **Preface**

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This issue consists of a selection of updated papers that were presented during the international conference entitled ‘The Mediterranean city facing climate change: innovation, investment, governance for a low-carbon city’ held in early 2008 in Athens. The general topic of the conference was adaptation and resilience to climate change in the Mediterranean cities, taking into account relevant threats and costs, but also benefits for business and the economy.

The conference was held in Athens on the initiative of the SDMed International Network, under the auspices of iiSBE, CIB, UNEP and the French Embassy in Greece. The SDMed network is an Athens-based international ‘think-and-do tank’ involved in questions of environmental change, strategic planning and sustainable development, territorial cohesion and place-based development, with special focus on the Mediterranean region.

This issue consists of three parts. The first one focuses on the impact of climate on urban form and design. Beginning with Salat and Nowacki, who focus on lessons to be learned from the Mediterranean urban civilisation, the part is completed with modern evidence coming from travel behaviour as a function of urban form in Athens by Milakis as well as heat island impacts in densely built urban environments by Lau, Yang, Tai, Wu and Wang.

The second part of the issue deals with lessons from the past as well as with current and future trends in sustainable housing and neighbourhoods. Sinou discusses the environmental design in domestic ancient Greek architecture, and da Silva and Ramos

focus on directives towards a sustainable urban rehabilitation process in old cities in Portugal. Kyvelou and Papadopoulos describe the ongoing movement for the creation of eco-neighbourhoods in Europe and the emerging South European typology.

The issue is completed with a final part, which presents legislative and financial mechanisms towards a low-carbon environment. This includes a paper in which Kyvelou, Marava and Kokkoni present the perspectives of local PPP action towards urban sustainability in Greece, with a further paper where Beriatos and Papageorgiou discuss current regulatory measures concerning sustainable planning and spatial policies for cities and built up areas in the country. A final paper on environmental impacts typology is presented by Boubaker, Djebabra, Bahmed, Chaabane and Leal Filho.

We hope readers will enjoy this special issue.