
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Panos Pardalos serves as a Distinguished Professor of Industrial and Systems Engineering at the University of Florida. Additionally, he is the Paul and Heidi Brown Preeminent Professor in Industrial and Systems Engineering. He is also an affiliated faculty member of the Computer and Information Science Department the Hellenic Studies Center, and the Biomedical Engineering Program. He is also the Director of the Center for Applied Optimization

Thomas Bournaris is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. He received his BSc in Agricultural Economics and MSc in Agricultural Economics both from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He works and has interests in agricultural economics, farm management and farm planning. He received his PhD from the Department of Agricultural Economics of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. His recent publications include papers in the *Journal of Environmental Management*, *Regional Studies*, *Land Use Policy*, *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* and *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment*.

Athanasios Ragkos is an Agricultural Economist. He obtained his PhD Diploma in 2008 from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Since then, he has taught several courses in Greek Academic Institutions. He has participated in 20 research programs (one of which as a coordinator) and has published 80 papers in peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings. His research fields include the economics of agricultural and animal production, environmental economics, the multifunctional character of agriculture and extensive/sustainable farming systems, project appraisal and sustainable rural development.

The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in agriculture, forestry, food and environment has dramatically changed the face of European agriculture. In that general context, informatics can play a key role in our days and especially in assessing the impacts of economic crisis, in the liberalisation of food markets and in climate change. ICT applications are nowadays integral to the operation of agribusinesses and farms but also provide room for innovation and support rural development.

This special issue of the *International Journal of Sustainable Agricultural Management and Informatics (IJSAMI)* includes papers dealing with these issues, which constitute updated and extended versions of the papers presented in the 7th International Conference on ICTs in Agriculture, Food and Environment (HAICTA 2015). The conference was held in Kavala, Greece, 17–20 September 2015 and was organised by the Hellenic Association for Information and Communication Technologies in Agriculture Food and Environment (HAICTA) with the support of its Northern and Central Greece Branch and in cooperation with several associated Institutions. HAICTA is the Greek Branch of the European Federation for Information Technology in Agriculture (EFITA). The selection of the studies appearing in this special issue was based on their relevance to the scope of *IJSAMI* and on the evaluation score of the full papers during the double blind peer review process by the Scientific Committee of the HAICTA Conference.

The nine papers appearing in this special issue cover a variety of topics on ICT implications in agriculture, forestry, food and the environment and provide insights regarding various aspects of production and consumption in the European continent. In particular, one paper focuses on the production side and especially on efficient sheep farm management using an innovative recording system. Two papers deal with the integration of ICT in environmental-friendly production, either in the form of green ICTs or in GIS applications for the support of transhumance, which constitutes a resilient and sustainable production system. Three of the contributions in this special issue examine markets and consumption patterns, namely the integrated management of supply chains, the consumption of localised food under the economic crisis and the demand in the emerging market for biomass in innovative environmental-friendly applications. Finally, three papers investigate education and policy issues, name the use of ICT in collaborative agroforestry training and the application of ICT in the promotion of cultural policies (UNESCO) and the design of efficient agricultural policies.