

## Editorial

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**Biographical notes:** Konstantinos L. Katsifarakis is a Professor of the Civil Engineering Department in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. He holds an Integrated Master's in Civil Engineering, Bachelor's in Geology, MS in Engineering Mechanics and Doctoral in Civil Engineering. His research interests include groundwater flows and contamination control, water resources management, optimisation techniques, low enthalpy geothermal energy, environmental impact mitigation, solid waste management, education of engineers and history of hydrology. He has authored more than 150 papers, and he has served as an editor of three books and seven conference proceedings. He has taught many undergraduate and graduate courses and has supervised more than 230 undergraduate and graduate diploma theses and nine PhD theses. He has served the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki as a Coordinator of the Environment Council, Director of Graduate Studies Program and member of University Board. He is currently the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering.

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In the eyes of many people, the overwhelming Covid-19 pandemic, combined with a looming financial crisis, may overshadow environmental challenges and the need for sustainable development. But this attitude is shortsighted. The new challenge is to achieve sustainability in its broader sense, paying to public health the attention it deserves. Moreover, we should not forget that protection of the environment is not a luxury that could be temporarily disregarded under the pressure of financial problems, but a basic prerequisite in order to overcome them in a viable way.

This special issue is a small contribution to the goals of sustainable development. It includes four papers. The first one bears the title: 'Innovative method for linking anthropisation process to vulnerability'. A. Capolupo and L. Boccia have studied the impact of human intervention, mainly through construction of terraces at the Amalfi Coast of Southern Italy. They introduce a novel vulnerability index and they present a methodology to analyse the evolution of human intervention and to link it to the vulnerability of the study area.

The second paper, 'Sustainable management approaches for underground heritage structures threatened by the environment and the human presence', deals with preservation of our cultural heritage. V. Kyriakou and V.P. Panoskaltsis have studied three painted Macedonian tombs in Northern Greece, and they have drawn very interesting conclusions, regarding in situ preservation of underground monuments.

In the third paper, 'Sustainable coastal zone management of Strymonikos Gulf: implementation of the analytic hierarchy process through an application designed using the programming language C# (sharp)', E.K. Oikonomou and E. Yiannakopoulou deal with integrated coastal zone management. They propose a methodology, based on multi-criteria analysis, which takes into account economic, ecological and social criteria for management plans evaluation, and they apply it to a coastal area in Northern Greece.

Finally, the fourth paper, 'A review article on vermibiotechnology and waste management' deals with organic farming through vermicomposting, namely producing of fertiliser from biodegradable waste using earthworms. K. Singh and D.K. Bhartiya conclude that vermibiotechnology is a sustainable practice, combining management of wastes with improvement of soil quality.

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