1. Background and topics

Diverse processes of transformation, which lead to altered urban functions and new local needs and opportunities, constantly influence cities. Interpreting these different development processes and identifying and realizing opportunities are growing challenges for urban governance and planning. There are exciting prospects for creating more sustainable and liveable urban environments because cities are focal points for creativity that provide possibilities for technological, organizational and social innovations. The importance of cities in achieving sustainable development was established as an international movement after the Earth Summit in 1992. Today, towns and cities, all over the world, are engaged in projects and activities to move towards sustainable development.

There is also a range of international organizations and programs dedicated to promoting sustainable cities and communities. In spite of increased awareness and ambitions, there are few powerful initiatives that decisively shift urban development in a sustainable direction. A complex array of reasons are responsible for this situation, including: a lack of urgency of getting on with the changes that are needed and therefore inadequate political, business or broader social support; fragmentation in research activities as well as in urban practice and planning; and a significant separation between science and practice. Research on “Sustainable Urban Transformation” is not well integrated and it is often confined within specific disciplines. Practitioners, such as architects, developers and planners, are similarly disconnected from each other and researchers. As a consequence, urban sustainability research has contributed to the exploration of a number of new and important phenomena on the one hand, while on the other, it has resulted in further fragmentation within scientific research efforts and the “real” world.

There is however a wealth of “real-life” experiences with urban transformation and sustainability. These examples often attract interest from international visitors, who seek inspiration for their own city development plans. In connection with the diffusion of sustainable city initiatives, international collaboration among cities is increasingly urgent for learning from each other and for accelerating the rate of “Sustainable Urban Transformation” based upon sharing experiences about sustainable and innovative projects. An important cross-cutting theme in this Special Issue is that showcases of sustainability in cities of different sizes, types, contexts and importance deserve attention. A comprehensive and dynamic database of all such cases is needed to show lessons from positive and negative experiences and findings.

The emerging concept of “Sustainable Urban Transformation” places the emphasis on understanding cities as a source of possibilities, promoting active collaboration among diverse stakeholders (particularly researchers and practitioners), and integrating different perspectives and bodies of knowledge and expertise. This Special Issue on “Sustainable Urban Transformation” calls for contributions that advance knowledge and understanding related to a range of topics, including: governance and planning, innovation and competitiveness, lifestyle and consumption, resource...
management and climate mitigation and adaptation, transport and accessibility, buildings, and social interaction and public space. Contributions can address some or all of these dimensions. Contributions that address relevant issues that are creatively beyond these categories will also be welcomed. Authors are encouraged to highlight and explore examples of city initiatives that clearly document “walking the talk” of sustainable development.

**Governance and planning:** It is imperative to ask how it is politically, economically and administratively feasible to establish and achieve ambitious targets for sustainable cities. There is a need to analyze and practice different strategies including effective strategic planning, which is guided by an integrated set of policy instruments. Such efforts should be inter-connected across sectors and be adapted and contextualized for the specific urban and national policy agenda to ensure empowerment, engagement and collaboration of all stakeholders.

**Innovation and competitiveness:** There are significant policy challenges and management issues facing cities and municipalities with regard to how to reconcile growth and to maintain or restore the local and global environment. Innovation and clean technology are considered as necessary conditions not only to achieve “green” growth but also as keys to fostering urban competitiveness in a globalizing economy. Therefore, sustainable urban economic development must encourage symbiotic relationships among industries, governments, universities and citizens to ensure sustainable management of human, ecological and economic capital.

**Lifestyle and consumption:** Research related to socio-economic and cultural development in the urban setting is important and needs to be further developed to effectively support the planning, testing and implementation of sustainable urban governance strategies. The negative implications of over-consumption are particularly evident in cities. By defining an improved quality of life and creating visions of sustainable lifestyles it will be possible to outline how to design, support and govern more sustainable cities.

**Resource management and climate mitigation and adaptation:** Research focused on socio-economic and cultural development in the urban setting is important and needs to be further developed to effectively support the planning, testing and implementation of sustainable urban governance strategies. The negative implications of over-consumption are particularly evident in cities. By defining an improved quality of life and creating visions of sustainable lifestyles it will be possible to outline how to design, support and govern more sustainable cities.

**Transport and accessibility:** The transportation sector accounts for significant environmental and social impacts. Sustainable urban transport research has focused on specific problems such as pollution, road safety and on various measures and their effects. However, in order to create sustainable mobility in the urban context, a more integrated approach is needed, which simultaneously addresses energy security, environmental and social impacts, accessibility issues, urban conditions, and equitable economic development.

**Buildings:** The challenge for the building sector is to create affordable, attractive, comfortable and sustainable buildings, which help their occupants to mitigate contributions to climate change, utilise renewable energy, reduce excessive material consumption as well as incorporate principles of reuse, whilst adapting to changing environmental realities. The efficiency of the proposed strategies also requires an understanding of human behaviour and consumption in the context of the built environment.

**Social interaction and public space:** Urban development planning increasingly focuses upon the revitalisation of districts and city centres, urban public spaces and the inter-connection of fragmented urban landscapes, and to develop a continuous and welcoming web of humane liveability within the urban experience. This encompasses preserving existing green spaces and integrating new green and blue structures into cities in innovative ways that stimulate social interactions.

### 2. Contributions and instructions

The development of this Special Issue will follow a two-step process. Firstly, extended abstracts of 300–500 words should be submitted to Elsevier's EES system for review by the guest editors. Authors are asked to submit their papers via this platform (see: www.ees.elsevier.com/jclepro/). Please select Article Type “Urban Transformation” when submitting a paper. Secondly, the guest editors will provide feedback to the authors of those abstracts they select for potential inclusion in this Special Issue. Through their feedback, they will guide and challenge the authors to develop and submit full papers for peer review and potential publication within this Special Issue of the Journal of Cleaner Production. The whole process will utilize Elsevier’s EES system.

Full papers should be approximately 6000–8500 words. Book reviews (500–1000 words), documents on educational initiatives (3000–5000 words), and conference reports (1000–2000 words) are also welcome. The documents should be for a broad audience. Upon receipt of full papers, reviewers will be selected to provide peer reviews. Upon receipt and acceptance of the revised papers based on reviewer’s and the guest editor’s feedback, all papers will be published in this Special Issue. Papers should be developed based upon the editorial guidelines provided in the instructions for authors for the Journal of Cleaner Production (see: www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journaldescription.cws_home/30440/authorinstructions).

### 3. Schedule and deadlines

- **15 October 2011**: Submit extended abstracts of 300–500 words.
- **15 November 2011**: Feedback by guest editors to authors of the abstracts.
- **15 March 2012**: Submit full papers of 6000–8500 words.
- **15 June 2012**: Peer review process and provision of feedback to authors.
- **30 September 2012**: Submission of final papers.
- **30 October 2012**: Final decisions on the selection of papers in the Special Issue.
- **30 November 2012**: Publication of the Special Issue online and in hard copy.