



Alicante, Spain & Virtual event

Urban Challenges and Sustainable Technological Revolution



Special Session Proposal

Islands as ‘socio-spatial laboratories’ for sustainable development

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Abstract

Islands are unique in both attractiveness and climate vulnerability; they are relatively isolated and ‘on their own’ compared to mainland areas, yet they are also more dependent and need to be well connected to other areas more than mainland areas. This makes islands ideal ‘laboratories’ for the analysis of social, economic and environmental sustainability, both methodologically and theoretically. Moreover, within the current global economic and social system, islands in many cases face economic, social, political and cultural marginalization. One way forward for islands is to cooperate with other islands and with the nearest mainland regions and communities. Cooperation can improve the options for managing islands and can raise capacity building in island communities.

This special session builds on recent joint research and teaching activities of the session convenors (including a new Erasmus Mundus international programme on Islands and Sustainability: <https://islandsmaster.eu/>) aims focuses on how islands and communities find effective ways to deal with the challenges they encounter in a sustainable way, and how they can develop their potential, by looking both within and beyond the specifics of individual islands. Island challenges are closely related to the key overarching themes of the conference: population developments, socio-spatial inequalities, governance and policies, economic challenges, quality of life, well-being, happiness, smart villages, landscape transitions, rural entrepreneurship, agricultural transformations, rural housing, energy transitions and climate change adaptation. ***Contributions to this session are expected to consider the importance (from a theoretical and/or empirical perspective) of insularity and islandness in relation to all these themes.***