

Editorial Preface

Frank Stowell, University of Portsmouth, Portsmouth, UK

Welcome to Volume 2 number 2 of the *International Journal of Systems and Society*. In keeping with our policy of membership 'involvement' in the development and content of our journal I am delighted to welcome Gandolfo Dominici as the guest editor for this special edition. The papers included in this edition are a small selection of [and revised] papers delivered at the Business Systems Lab [BS Lab] conference in Rome in 2014. In this edition we have a variety of topics including one paper in which the use of Systems Dynamics in marketing is discussed, another dealing with the thorny problem of knowledge sharing – of particular relevance in companies where experienced staff leave on early retirement packages, modelling sustainability in social-economic systems and organisational sustainability. We have a book review, *Viable Systems Approach (VSA) – Governing Business Dynamics* and the last word to complete the edition.

It is worth drawing your attention to the BS Lab conferences, which are held annually in Italy and attract a large delegation of Systems theorists and practitioners from across Europe and beyond. The conferences provide another opportunity for the Systems community to meet and enjoy listening and learning about the experiences of colleagues applying a systems ideas to a variety complex problems. Gandolfo, who is the president, has produced some pleasing venues and attracted a wide variety of Systems based papers. The friendly nature of the conferences encourages delegates to mix and exchange ideas in an informal setting as well as the formality of the presentations themselves. The conferences are well supported by significant systems thinkers who provide support for the various conference committees.

SUSTAINABILITY

Readers of this journal will remember that the Systems Practice for Managing Complexity and the UK Systems Society have joined forces to represent *Systems* as a part of the city of Bristol's role as the European Green Capital for 2015. This joint conference provides an opportunity for colleagues to show how Systems can contribute in a variety of fields to the important 'goal' of sustainable cities. Indeed one could argue if there is any project on sustainability that could be undertaken sensibly without an input from the Systems community. If there was ever a need for holistic thinking, sustainability provides us with a prime example. It seems to me if ever the

Systems community needed to make its ideas and thinking more widely appreciated there is no better time than now. Nominated conference topics include, but are not confined to, papers and posters related to:

- Scenarios, futures thinking and operational resilience
- Vision development, goal-setting and strategic planning
- Monitoring and evaluation against goals – constructive processes
- Mapping, modelling and decision support in goal setting
- Implementation of information technologies to support goal seeking
- Knowledge, big data and data analytic approaches
- Ethics, inclusion and social justice – the boundaries of systems
- Goals and strategies for convergence – equity within planetary limits
- Sustainability - recycling, reuse and waste management
- Communication and social media

This conference offers a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to show what is possible when everybody comes together to inspire, create and achieve a shared vision. It is your opportunity to showcase your work, debate and learn from others.

Frank Stowell
Editor-in-Chief
IJSS