Editorial

Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage in the City, a Sustainability Perspective

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The 21st century urges us to analyze urban problems and revise its components. Cities in the past followed various evolutionary paths depending on the level of development of the society, its ideology, or financial factors. In the past, the key was self-reliant and polycentric production, services, commerce, and finance. What is essential today in more complex socio-environmental systems [1] is to strengthen efforts to improve the quality of life and support residents throughout the transformation is activities aimed at implementing changes to create a socially-friendly [2,3] and climate-neutral built environment [4,5], which in parallel, maintains achievements of previous generations and cultural heritage [6–8]. A place that is at the intersection of these two spheres is a city. It is the focal point of human life on our planet and where critical socio-ecological challenges lie [9]. Therefore, city is a space where adaptation to climate change action will have to take place [10], and integrated spatial sustainable development should be implemented [11–13].

All the above-mentioned issues require involvement and a lot of activities on different levels. One of the leading institutions is the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), which is a non-governmental international organization dedicated to the conservation of the world’s monuments and sites [14]. ICOMOS has started working on the ‘ICOMOS SDGs Policy Guidance’ in 2018, which is a flagship initiative “aiming to provide a robust and versatile resource to all kinds of stakeholders, within and outside of the heritage community, on the role of cultural heritage in sustainable development” [14]. Following the concept of integration of cultural heritage and sustainable development, the scientific committee of the XXVII Conference in the Series of Garden Art and Historical Dendrology, IX International Edition titled “Urban Ecology and Cultural Heritage in the City” has proposed topical scope combining two basic, yet highly relevant, issues that affect the cities today, the natural and urban environment viewed from various angles and through different relations. This Special Issue gathers selected papers which, despite different scientific perspectives and methodological approaches applied, have similar denominators. Main themes appearing in all 22 articles published in this Special Issue refer to cities and urban areas, their development, green and public spaces, trees and water, visual and functional features of space, gardens and built environment, as well as the local character of discussed cases and their use over time (Figure 1).
In this Special Issue, you can find recent and multidisciplinary studies focusing on four main pillars, which are:

- natural and cultural heritage covering conservation activities in urban and suburban zones, urbanscape and heritage relationships [15–21],
- ecological solutions in urban development and management [22–24],
- urban and land use planning, urban composition and impact of historical conditions on the modern city development [25–30],
- gardens and parks, their maintenance and use, ecosystem services served [31–36].

We believe that all collected studies presenting such an interdisciplinary approach will result in added value by sensitizing specialists from many fields to the need to use a complex approach in creating sustainable cities and regions.

**Author Contributions:** All authors equally contributed to editorial preparation. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Acknowledgments:** The cooperation under XXVII Conference in the Series of Garden Art and Historical Dendrology, IX International Edition titled “Urban Ecology and Cultural Heritage in the City” and Special Issue on “Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage in the City, A Sustainability Perspective” in *Sustainability* was supported by scientific activity conducted within the Leading Research Group: Sustainable Cities and Regions at the Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Science, the Chair of Landscape Architecture at the Cracow University of Technology and the Department of Spatial Management and Landscape Architecture at the University of Agriculture in Krakow.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.
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30. Khadour, N.; Al Basha, N.; Sárospataki, M.; Fekete, A. Correlation between Land Use and the Transformation of Rural Housing Model in the Coastal Region of Syria. *Sustainability* 2021, 13, 4357. [CrossRef]

31. Jagiello, M. Do We Need a New Florence Charter? The Importance of Authenticity for the Maintenance of Historic Gardens and Other Historic Greenery Layouts in the Context of Source Research (Past) and Taking into Account the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Idea (Future). *Sustainability* 2021, 13, 4900. [CrossRef]

32. Ludwig, B. Baroque Origins of the Greenery of Urban Interiors in Lower Silesia and the Border Areas of the Former Neumark and Lusatia. *Sustainability* 2021, 13, 2623. [CrossRef]

33. Ludwig, B. The Greenery of Early Modernist Housing Estates: The 1919–1927 Wałbrzych Agglomeration. *Sustainability* 2021, 13, 3921. [CrossRef]

34. Makowska, B. Practical Functioning of a Sustainable Urban Complex with a Park—The Case Study of Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center in Athens. *Sustainability* 2021, 13, 5071. [CrossRef]

35. Krzeptowska-Moszkowicz, I.; Moszkowicz, Ł.; Porada, K. Evolution of the Concept of Sensory Gardens in the Generally Accessible Space of a Large City: Analysis of Multiple Cases from Kraków (Poland) Using the Therapeutic Space Attribute Rating Method. *Sustainability* 2021, 13, 5904. [CrossRef]

36. Hodor, K.; Przybylak, Ł.; Kuśmierski, J.; Wilkosz-Mamcarczyk, M. Identification and Analysis of Problems in Selected European Historic Gardens during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Sustainability* 2021, 13, 1332. [CrossRef]