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Sustainability, Complexity and Resilience: Insights from Complex Systems Approaches

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Message from the Guest Editor

Dear Colleagues,

The interactions between our engineering, social, urban and ecological systems is leading to their complexity to increase, with some forced adaptations happening at the interfaces of these diverse systems. As our scientific, social and technical understanding increases, the interactions become clearer. These adaptations change the nature and blur the boundary of the systems as we have known or designed them. Thus, the resilience of such systems translates as their ability to withstand the internal and exogenous pressures, some of which are possibly unknown at the design stage for human-made systems. In this scenario of balancing pressures, sustainability plays the role of ensuring such a balance is maintained, i.e., technical and policy innovations do not erode the natural and naturally emerging social systems to the advantage of those created by design. Thus, complexity, resilience and sustainability all have a stake in how our future will present itself, and it is in the understanding of this interplay that the key to ensuring such a future lies.

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