

Editorial

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Sustainable development governance has become an increasingly important area of academic research and practice recently. The need for sustainable governance structures that promote long-term stability is highly urgent given global challenges such as climate change, economic inequality and political instability on a significant scale. The articles collected in this thematic issue provide a comprehensive study of the legal, economic, and institutional mechanisms that form the basis for sustainable governance practices in different national and regional contexts. Presenting the contributions of leading scholars, this issue critically examines the interplay between law, policy, and institutional frameworks that drive sustainable development initiatives and shape sustainable governance in practice.

This themed issue on Sustainability Governance with its Legal, Economic, and Institutional Mechanisms is relevant for our journal as it addresses the urgency to rethink how societies manage sustainable development in a world affected by systemic risks and correlated crises. Climate change, demographic change, geopolitical tensions and economic instability place increasing demands on coordinated governance solutions that combine legal predictability, institutional adaptability and economic forethought. The contributions included in this issue demonstrate that sustainable development is not just an environmental concern, but a multidimensional governance approach that integrates law, economics and institutional design and determines the long-term stability of countries and regions. The publication provides critical insights into how models of sustainable governance can build social trust, ensure policy coherence and promote equitable development by examining a variety of national experiences, from Central Asia and Eastern Europe to broader horizons.

The issue contains a selection of studies on essential aspects of sustainability governance, all of which offer a unique outlook on the sustainable development challenges and opportunities in different sectors,

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regions and governance systems. The principal task of this compilation of articles has been to represent the multidisciplinary nature of sustainable development governance, with its legal, economic and institutional areas recognised as complementary and interlinked. It is important to acknowledge the significant contributions of the authors and to highlight the implications of their findings.

One of the central themes of this issue is the complex relationship between economic development and sustainability. Several articles explore the role of economic sectors traditionally associated with high environmental impact, such as the oil industry, in advancing sustainable economic models. For example, Kamran Abdullayev et al. critically examine the role of Azerbaijan's oil sector in driving economic diversification and fostering long-term sustainability. The paper outlines the challenging economic dependence on natural resources and the importance of fostering human capital development in the oil industry to ensure social stability and environmental sustainability through focusing on the country's efforts to build a more resilient economic model. In a rather related way, Emin Alirzayev in his study examines the financial sustainability of Azerbaijan's pension system, analysing the institutional and economic factors that determine its long-term viability. This paper contributes to the research on sustainable social security systems by providing a detailed analysis of the legal and methodological framework that regulates social security and provides valuable insights into how financial sustainability can be achieved in the context of demographic change and economic pressures.

Another aspect of sustainability governance highlighted in this issue is the importance of legal frameworks in supporting or restricting sustainable practices. One such example is the study by Nurbol Batyrbay et al. where the legal characteristics and classification of crimes against the order of governance in Kazakhstan are analysed. In this article, the authors examine how legal definitions and classifications of corruption and governance-related crimes influence the stability and resilience of governance structures. Through a comparison of Kazakhstan's legal norms with international standards, the article emphasises the necessity of legal reforms that align with international best practices, particularly in the area of combating corruption and ensuring the rule of law. The study also highlights the necessity of robust legal protections for public servants, as explored in Nurbol M. Batyrbay's et al. article, which examines criminal liability for attacks on law enforcement officers, military personnel, and other state agents. This paper reveals major weaknesses in legal protection of public officials in some countries and proposes legislative reforms aimed at

enhancing the resilience of state institutions by safeguarding those charged with ensuring the rule of law.

One of the most well-established features of sustainability governance is the ability of institutions to be responsive to crises and political transformations. The issue explores this through a comparative analysis of governance responses to crises in different national settings. Olena Dashkovska et al. in their article explore the role of sustainable governance practices in Japan and New Zealand in managing crises, such as the 2011 earthquake and the COVID-19 pandemic. The research demonstrates the fundamental role of long-term planning and the integration of sustainability-oriented policies in building resilience to potential crises by analysing how the above-mentioned countries have integrated sustainability principles into their disaster risk reduction strategies and health governance systems. On the other hand, the paper authored by Kalin Boyanov examines the role of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in addressing infrastructure deficits and promoting sustainable development in Bulgaria. The study defines the institutional and legal barriers to successful PPPs, based on case studies from the United Kingdom and Bulgaria, and offers policy recommendations to strengthen Bulgaria's infrastructure and public service delivery systems. It raises the importance of strengthening the institutional capacity and transparent legal framework to facilitate effective cooperation between the public and private sectors for sustainable development.

The theme of legal and institutional mechanisms in sustainability governance is further analysed in papers devoted to mediation and international diplomacy. Manshuk Kalshabayeva et al. contribute a comparative study of mediation systems in Kazakhstan and other countries, analysing how legislative frameworks and practical implementations of mediation procedures contribute to more sustainable dispute resolution practices. The article stresses the importance of updating national mediation systems to meet international standards with the overall intention of creating sustainable legal institutions capable of resolving conflicts effectively and fairly. The role of diplomatic mechanisms and confidence-building measures in fostering regional security and sustainable development in Central Asia is discussed in the article by Ganiy Karassayev et al. The authors of the article provide an overview of how diplomatic practices can contribute to long-term regional stability, sustainable economic growth and shared governance in an increasingly interconnected world through a detailed analysis of Kazakhstan's engagement with China and its role in regional organisations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

The issue additionally draws attention to the role of education and capacity building in promoting sustainable development. Hanna Yatsenko's

article on the role of business schools in the post-war recovery of national economies highlights how higher education institutions can contribute to economic resilience and sustainable governance, especially in countries that are constantly experiencing various conflicts and are trying to gradually recover from them. The author of the article makes a compelling case for the strategic role of education in fostering leadership, innovation, and sustainable economic growth by studying the American experience after the post-World War II period and analysing the challenges faced by business schools in Ukraine. Thus, this study reinforces the idea that education, particularly in fields such as business and public administration, serves a vital role in the formation of the future of sustainable governance.

Lastly, this thematic issue presents a critical analysis of the governance of sustainable development, summarising the legal, economic and institutional frameworks required to deal with current challenges. All the papers emphasise the interdisciplinary nature of sustainable development, drawing out the critical interplay between regulatory structures, economic strategies and institutional resilience. The authors provide understanding of how different governance structures can contribute to sustainability through exploring different national and regional experiences. The findings contribute to a deeper theoretical and practical understanding of governance for sustainable development, reinforcing the need for coherent interdisciplinary approaches that combine legal reform, economic adaptation and institutional innovation. This issue offers valuable insights for the academic community seeking to continuously advance sustainable development.