EDITORIAL PREFACE

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE NEEDS FOR LOW—IMPACT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

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The inspirations for this volume of ALAM CIPTA relate closely to the pressing needs to design our environment for sustainable living. Our earth is fast becoming urban. While progress and development are most welcome, the dominant forces of urbanisation inevitably link with economic activities, their surrounding hinterland and over vast expenses of our social and physical environment. Negative urbanisation impacts and the quest for sustainable development have motivated professionals and academics to revise our conventional approaches and search for new innovative solutions at par with current technology. For the first time, we proudly announced that this volume includes twelve quality works from our local and international peers, creating diversity of examples from different contexts. Some of the papers selected for this volume were derived from Sustainable Tropical Environmental Design Conference 2011 (SusTED 11), which focused on the underlying needs for sustainable and quality living amidst the complications of changes in global climate and irreversible urbanization.

Papers presented in this volume are grouped into four sections:

The first section in this volume presents discussions on developing criteria and indicators in built environment practices as well as in creating green urban open spaces. To create a better living environment, there is a need to deliver sustainable building practices. Some practices include: more effective and efficient public-private partnerships, more gardens and parks in the city, and using criteria and indicators to assess our practice on designing and creating our built environment.

The second section highlights interesting studies in integrating local climate, culture and conditions in built environment. The recent interest in bringing back the environmentally-responsive features of vernacular architecture indicates paradigm shift in thinking. There is the need to consider local and users' needs in designing and developing built environment that respect both natural systems and local culture. Such consideration would reduce some social and economic costs for housing transformation.

The third section consists of works highlighting the importance of exploring users' needs and perceptions in the provision of public amenities. The fact that green outdoors could offer psychological restorations for users and the role of plants in enhancing outdoor thermal comfort is not new. Successful urban design and built environment closely related to users' satisfaction, therefore, identifying users' needs and requirements is vital.
The last section presents wider issue of climate change and greening the city. Urban life has already creating stressful working environment and the

need to cater increasing population has led to encroachment of green areas whether in the city or at the periphery. We need more effective and efficient built environment solution to be implemented at all governmental levels and by practitioners. Adaptation and mitigation measures could alleviate impacts from the phenomena of climate changes including increase of urban heat island, heat waves, flooding and drought.

Ideally, this volume is a synthesis of works from professionals from various parts of the world who have been actively involved in issues discussed, providing practical solutions for the built environment for more sustainable living. We believe that with continuously searching for solutions, the built environment in the future will be significantly different from what we produced today, and hopefully, we can avoid creating environment that continuously destroy nature's capacity to support our future generation.

ALAM CIPTA editorial team welcomes submissions in the form of original papers, review papers, case studies, research reports, commentaries, technical notes, book reviews and conference news. We call on the support of academics and practitioners to review papers for the journal. We invite all readers and potential contributors to join ALAM CIPTA, sharing and disseminating knowledge and experience for a better world through built environment.