On the occasion of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, SDMed Observation, Planning & Eco-innovation presents the International Conference

**Nature & Culture-based strategies and solutions for cities and territories**

*An idea whose time has come!*

**26, 27 & 28 November**

Main Venue: Panteion University, 136 Syggrou Ave, 17671 Athens

**PRESS RELEASE**

The rich natural and cultural heritage is a defining element of the place identity. It brings communities together and builds shared understandings of the places we live in. It is also a very useful territorial resource, key component of the territorial capital of regions that can enhance social cohesion, employment and economic growth and stimulate place-based policies.

Since 2018 is the European Year of Cultural Heritage, events are planned all over Europe to encourage people to discover and engage with Europe’s cultural and natural attractions, so as to enhance our sense of a European belonging. The European Year is an occasion to reflect on the place that cultural and natural heritage occupies both in our lives and for territorial development and to often alert about the need to protect such unique values for the future generations. It is thus evident that nature and culture as an indivisible whole is an idea whose time has come! This means that natural and cultural heritage should be recognized, understood, planned and managed together! This may be besides a driver of efficiency of place-based policies.

In this context, natural and cultural attractiveness of cities and territories and the achievements of culturally and naturally creative cities, territories nations and industry will be fully discussed in the international Event entitled "Nature and Culture-based strategies and solutions for cities and territories: an idea whose time has come!" organised by the international non-profit entreprise “SDMed Observation Planning and Eco-Innovation” and supported by Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences and the School of Applied Arts and Culture of the University of West Attica, on 26, 27 & 28 November 2018, in Athens.
Nature and culture-based solutions are often less costly, more resilient and more effective in the long term, they can create jobs and economic growth, they can promote sustainability and frugality of cities and territories.

The event is not strictly European. It is aiming at bringing together scientists and cities and territories from all over the world that plan or implement innovative nature and culture-based solutions, thus creating a world-wide forum of exchange. Scientists, academia, policy-makers, representatives of cities and regions together with entreprises, private and social ones and citizens will meet in order to discuss key themes like:

- Natural and tangible and intangible Cultural Heritage as Strategic Territorial Development Resources
- Linking natural and cultural heritage
- Natural and cultural heritage: planning, management, governance, marketing, funding
- Marine natural and cultural heritage
- Cultural heritage, archaeological sites, monuments and lighting
- Soundscapes, Lightscapes, Nightscapes as elements of the culture of the places
- Shaping places with nature and culture
- New mapping and surveying technologies for natural and cultural heritage Geographic Information Systems – PPGIS

Emphasis will be given to the Mediterranean region with its rich natural and cultural diversity, both terrestrial and marine. Thus, the Conference will also host the MED Social & Creative community featured by TALIA (Territorial Appropriation of Leading-edge Innovation Actions), the Interreg-MED Programme's horizontal project promoting the coherence and impact of modular projects addressing the topics of Cultural and Creative Industries and Social Innovation. The community aims at connecting social and creative innovators in the Mediterranean to consolidate and share new models of development.

Also as a follow-up of the ECHOPOLIS International 2013 & ECHOPOLIS National 2017 forums organised by SDMED in the past years, in the context of this inter-disciplinary Event soundscapes considered as part of natural and cultural heritage will be broadly discussed. The heritage and identity character of urban soundscapes and landscapes has been recognized recently. An example is the inscription of the Jemaa El Fna Square on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage that has introduced or encouraged a new heritage register based on the consideration of oral expressions as they unfold in the urban space. More generally, sounds are part of the cities and the places, part of their sensorial landscape, of their identity. They are one of the urban markers, just like the visual landscape. The relationship between soundscapes, heritage and attractiveness (including tourism) remains to be further explored.
The Conference is addressing to **scientists and practitioners from all the traditional disciplines dealing with natural and cultural heritage** (territorial planners, architects, landscape architects, engineers, light and sound designers, geographers, historians, oceanographers...) but also to **computer scientists/engineers, digital humanities researchers, creative industries-heritage professionals, museum specialists, human-computer interaction practitioners, and creative industries professionals.**

**Organizing Committee**
- Stella Kyvelou, Associate Professor, Deputy Head of the Dpt of Economics and Regional development, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences
- Vassilis Kefis, Professor, Dean of the School of Sciences of Economics and Public Administration, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences
- Georgios Assonitis, Union of Hellenic Chambers of Commerce & Industry, TALIA, INTERREG-MED
- Georgios Benetos, President of INSULEUR
- Despina Stenou, Vice president, SDMed Observation, Planning & Eco-innovation
- Nikitas Chiotinis, Professor, Dean of the School of Applied Arts and Culture, University of West Attica

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ENDORERS (to completed )

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