

# Preface

With increasing human interferences to the earth system, most landscapes are no longer natural but rather are an integration of both natural and culture systems. Landscape ecology, as an interdisciplinary science, is originated from the integration of geography and biology to study landscape structure and function, and has now evolved to seek relationships between humans and nature. Although the important role of humans on the environment and its sustainability has been recognized, their coevolving relationships have not been well connected yet. A more comprehensive understanding about the nature–culture entangled systems could be obtained by taking the advantages of the special theoretical and methodological frameworks of landscape ecology. For example, landscape services and biocultural diversity of landscapes are new research areas. At the same time, during the past years, landscape modeling has made advances by including pattern–process interactions, and the concepts and approaches of landscape ecology is more extensively applied in landscape planning, management, and policy.

There came an excellent chance to raise concerns and to identify opportunities related to the intensified relationships between nature and culture for landscape ecologists. The 8th IALE World Congress was held in the capital of the ancient oriental country—China on August 18–23, 2011, Beijing. The theme of the congress was “*Landscape Ecology for Sustainable Environment and Culture*”. The country has a rich cultural legacy in the long history and complex human-landscape relations. Especially in recent decades, it experienced dramatic economic development, which aggravated the conflicts between human and environment—similar problems exist in many other countries and regions globally. It is the first time that IALE held a meeting in a developing country and the congress was attended by about 1,000 participants from more than 47 countries or regions.

The theme of the congress is proposed as the title of this book. This volume includes a selection of papers presented in the 8th IALE World Congress but not excluding other interested groups or scholars. We hope that this book will replenish the existing literature and provide useful information to the scholars or students in the fields of landscape ecology, geography, ecology, environmental sciences, and sustainability studies. The chapters are grouped into three sessions with the main topics focusing on:

- Part I. Concepts and Approaches
- Part II. Landscape Modeling
- Part III. Landscape Planning and Management

The congress would not be that successful without the support from many organizations including International Association of Landscape Ecology (IALE), Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC), State Key laboratory of Urban and Regional Ecology, WWF China, Chinese Ecosystem Research Network (CERN), and Chinese Ecological Restoration Network (ER-China). We would like to thank the contributions of the International Partnership Program for Creative Research Teams of “Ecosystem Processes and Services” supported by Chinese Academy of Sciences and China’s State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (CAS/SAFEA) and to Springer for considering publication of this book.

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