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**ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OF THE FACULTY OF GEOGRAPHY – ENVIRONMENT AT CROSSROADS:
SMART APPROACHES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE – ECOSMART
NOVEMBER 17-18, 2023**



The International Conference “Environment at Crossroads: SMART approaches for a sustainable future – ECOSMART”, took place between November 17-18, 2023 in Bucharest, Romania. The event represents the annual conference of the Faculty of Geography (University of Bucharest), being organized in 2023 by the Department of Regional Geography and Environment as the third iteration of the ECOSMART conference, being previously held in 2015 and 2019.

The opening ceremony was honored by the presence of Professor Marian Preda (Rector of the University of Bucharest), Professor Alexandru Nedelea (Dean of the Faculty of Geography) and Professor Mihai Răzvan

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Niță (Director of Department Regional Geography and Environment and Head of the Organizing Committee). The conference started with three plenary sessions, held by Professor Adina Eliza Croitoru (Faculty of Geography, Babes-Bolyai University; World Meteorological Organization, Research Board/Working Group on Research RA VI – The vision of the World Meteorological Organization on research: from top-research to support for member states), Professor Sorin Cheval (National Meteorological Administration – Climate-Resilient Development Pathways in Metropolitan Regions of Europe) and Professor Cristian Iojă (Faculty of Geography, University of Bucharest – 30 years of advanced research in nature conservation and urban ecology).

The conference aimed at providing a professional and scientific platform for scholars, academic staff and young researchers and stimulate to disseminate their findings in the wider fields of geography and environmental sciences. The conference goal was to debate the variety of contemporary topics and societal challenges through thematic sessions: applied geomorphology (contemporary morphodynamics, paleogeomorphology, soil cover, geomorphosites, hazard and risk assessment), GIS and remote sensing (models and techniques in Earth observation, digital cartography), weather and climate (applied climatology, weather risks, climate changes), water and society (water resources and management, water policies, hydrological risks), challenges of environment and human dimension (landscape analysis, recent environmental changes, biodiversity conservation), territorial, economic and social processes (urban and rural territorial dynamic, demography, economic and social processes) or geography teaching (didactic strategies and curricula, education).

The conference also included two workshops: SURE Workshop – Paradigm shift in urban ecology (organized in partnership with the Society for Urban Ecology) and Education Workshop – Bridging the Gaps in Geography Education (dedicated to geography teachers in the pre-university system). On November 18 there were two field trips: one focused on the aspects of urban ecology in Bucharest and the other on the historical dynamic and human-environmental interactions in the Prahova Valley – Sinaia.

The final schedule of the conference included 123 papers, from over 50 institutions from Romania and abroad (Austria, Germany, Italy,

Poland, Hungary, Turkey), with over 120 people being physical present in the spaces of the Faculty of Geography. The ECOSMART conference aimed at being an event with a low environmental impact, therefore all materials (conference program, diplomas, posters) were available only in digital format on the conference website at conference.geo.unibuc.ro. In order to encourage the presence of PhD students and young researchers there was no participation fee at the conference.

Abstracts of all the papers from the conference were published in a Book of Abstracts available on the official conference website. Full papers can be published according to their topic in journals such as: *Analele Universității Din București Geografie*, *Human Geographies-Issues*, *Journal of Environmental & Tourism Analyses*, *Journal of Urban and Regional Analysis*, *Revista de Geomorfologie*. Authors have full responsibility of fulfilling the publishing criteria of the journals.



DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.