Urbanization, land use, and sustainable development in China

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More profound knowledge about urban land use and expansion is needed to better understand the growth and sustainability of Chinese cities. This special issue is dedicated to addressing land use and environmental issues arising from the urbanization process, and aims to identify and model the mechanisms of land use and environmental changes. It draws from papers that were presented in the sessions titled “Urbanization, Land Use, and Regional Development in China I, II, III” at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers in New York, February 24–28, 2012. In addition, we have also collected papers presented at the “International Conference on Urbanization and Development in China” held at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, August 26–28, 2011, and through an open call for papers. Articles published in this special issue have all successfully gone through a very selective and rigorous anonymous peer-review process in order to secure a fairly high standard and a good balance between the different topics, debates, and study regions. This special issue has thus contributed to the broadening of the geographical scope and scale of research.

This special issue is situated in the broad trends of academic enquiry on modeling urban growth and land expansion in China. Specifically, this research furthers the study of local variations on urban growth patterns with

recently developed geographic information science (GIS) spatial analysis techniques such as geographically weighted logistic regression, and interprets urban growth patterns through the analysis of institutional change and on-the-ground field experiences. This special issue has also further attempted to incorporate socio-economic variables and expand the coastal cities-based research to interior cities. While the focus of this special issue is urban land expansion, it also explores a wide range of associated topics, including the characteristics of environmental problems and how this is related to China’s urban transition.

This issue is a collection of 9 papers selected out of many candidate ones from the two conferences and open call for papers. Due to quality control and space limitation, some of the submitted manuscripts had to be rejected. We thank all those who submitted their abstracts and papers. We greatly appreciate the prompt action from both authors and reviewers, which allowed the timely publication of this special issue. Finally, our thanks also go to Dr. George Christakos, SERRA’s Editor-in-Chief, who helps us achieve the realization of this special issue.

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