EDITORIAL

The present Volume II, No 1 of IJME concludes the set of two special issues devoted to shipping related papers presented at the 8th World Conference on Transport Research (WCTR). The Journal wishes to express again its deep appreciation to the two Guest Editors of the issues, Helen Thanopoulou and Manolis Kavussanos, for their meticulous editorial efforts. The next issue, edited by Ernst Frankel and Alain Verbeke, is devoted to ports, and it also includes some of the best papers in the field presented at the same conference.

As already reported in the previous issue, the 9th World Conference on Transport Research will be held in Seoul in the summer of 2001. In preparation for this major triennial event, the Special Interest Group on Maritime Transport and Ports (SIG2) is holding an international workshop in Genoa, aiming to assess the state-of-the-art in maritime transport research, identify future research directions, and strengthen the links among maritime transport researchers around the world. Together with the University of Genoa, the Port of Genoa and the Italian Association of Transport Economists, IJME strongly supports this event as it clearly furthers its objective to advance *maritime economics* as a distinct and well defined branch of applied economics (for deadlines, more information on the workshop, SIG2 and its future activities, see announcement in the end as well as the Group's homepage: www.isemar.asso.fr/sig2/index.htm).

Now in its second year, IJME is finding its place on the shelves of all major libraries around the world and is becoming standard reading and reference material for the serious researcher, academician, professional and student of maritime economics. The number of papers in the journal portfolio, waiting for publication, take IJME well into 2001, while a number of thematic special issues are also being planned in addition.

Emphasis on solid applied research on maritime economics is IJME's paramount objective. In this respect, the Rotterdam School of Economics of Erasmus University is striving to achieve the accreditation of IJME as a top ranking peer-review journal by the Royal Academy of Sciences in the Netherlands and similar organisations abroad. In addition, and in pursuance of the above objective, the Editorial Office is in discussions for the introduction of two yearly prizes for the 'IJME paper of the year' and for the 'best PhD of the year' completed internationally. More on these will be reported in the next issue. In the meantime, and on the occasion of the arrival of the Year 2000, the Editorial Office would like to thank all editors, authors, referees and readers of IJME for their support to the journal and wish them all the very best for professional achievement and personal fulfilment.

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