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Publishing House of the University of Agriculture in Krakow
31-425 Krakow, al. 29 Listopada 46
Tel.: (+48) 12 662 51 57 or 12 662 51 59
E-mail: wydawnictwo@ur.krakow.pl
www.wydawnictwo.ur.krakow.pl
E-mail: gll@ur.krakow.pl
www.gll.ur.krakow.pl

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FOREWORD

We place in your hands the next issue of our journal. It is devoted to the complex subject matter of planning and development in the mountain and foothill areas of our country. The articles selected refer to current problems in these areas from the social and cultural to planning and engineering. The subject matter of mountainous areas is extremely important for Central and Eastern Europe due to the urgent need for the development of the Carpathians. Like the Alps of Western Europe, they should become a generator of socio-economic growth and the mainstay of natural and cultural resources.

The first article focuses on the planning of spatial development of mountain areas, in terms of the needs and aspirations of their inhabitants. The second article examines the essential topics of the role of engineering, utilities and energy infrastructure in shaping the quality of the development of the Carpathians. The third article discusses the issues related to the protection of the genetic resources of Polish mountain sheep. The subject matter of planning, in terms of the mining areas in the Polish Carpathians, is covered in the fourth article. The following article gives a comprehensive analysis of the determinants of agricultural policy and its impact on the mountainous and hilly areas in Poland. Detail clarification of this problem is presented in the sixth article which focuses on the impact of European funds on rural areas development in Małopolska. The last article explores foreign tourism, which is a current and important topic for the development of the Carpathians.

As is well known, mountainous areas are close to a quarter of the Earth's surface area and the population living there or in their close proximity are a little more than a quarter of the population of our entire planet. This is one of the main reasons why mountainous and hilly areas are important and a very viable research topic. The inspiration for this research is a very rich cultural-resources portfolio. In their full range these natural resources are quite often uncontaminated by civilization's progress. However, along with future development, we must also examine the limitation of this development and the difficult economic conditions in agriculture and forestry.

A specially valuable direction of research could be an attempt to analyze the possibility of implementing in the Carpathians the solutions that were used in the Alps. These solutions could contribute to the development of an infrastructure, to the improvement of system solutions of spatial planning and land management and help in the socio-economic development or provide additional protection against natural disasters. We

hope that this issue of GLL will be an inspiration for the cooperation and exchange of ideas in these areas. And perhaps some of the Carpathian solutions will also enrich the approach to solving developmental problems in the Alps.

Prof. dr hab. Urszula Litwin
Dr Jacek M. Pijanowski