Introduction to special issue on iMESH 2013

Tariq M. Khan
Brunel Business School, Brunel University, UK
	tariq.khan@brunel.ac.uk

International and Middle East Conference on Sustainability and Human Development: iMESH 2013

The International and Middle East Conference on Sustainability and Human Development (iMESH 2013) was organised to address some of the most pressing problems in the Middle East region. Issues of sustainable development, diversity management, equality and human rights, wellbeing, globalization and education were the main themes of the conference. Although development in the GCC area over the past decade has accelerated to near unsustainable levels, and progress in terms of the move away from energy focused economies has shown significant levels of achievement, there is still the major concern of a lack of appreciation for the smaller picture – local communities and individuals. With development comes demand for expansion of industry and greater demands on natural resources. Innovation leads to greater opportunities but also to a wasteful society, which continually strives to replace and improve but without the justification of necessity. The call for participation solicited submissions from twenty countries. Naturally, with a topic concerning human development, there was considerable interest from researchers working in developing countries, or those whose research focused on the developing regions of the world. Regardless of the origins of papers, there was clearly strong interest in the themes of the conference, and the variety of submission areas demonstrated the wide range of interests among researchers in this field. In addition to the submitted papers, three invited keynote presentations were delivered. Each of the keynotes was chosen because of its concern with the business world, and in particular, with the ways that business can and has supported the sustainability agenda. A wide range of submitted papers were presented that cover important issues such as architectural design, built environment, human resources, diversity and equality, business processes, complex industrial systems, sustainable cities, financial crisis, strategic planning, social movements, curriculum design, cultural factors, multiculturalism, Islamic principles, and corporate social responsibility. Collectively, this special issue and the next (Volume 1, Issue 2) provide a collection of the most mature papers included in the conference. Many different perspectives on the central issue of sustainability are represented, which goes to demonstrate the high level of interest within the Middle East for the continued wellbeing of the region.