Preface

The environmental aspect of transport has been one of the dominant issues on the political agendas for many countries and for a growing number of years. Likewise, it has received ample attention in the transport-orientated literature. Cynical pessimists may point out that the slow pace at which scientific progress seems to be made matches that of policy achievements. Optimists would point at successful policies, technologies and spatial planning concepts, which may not have led to a world-wide sustainable transport system – however defined – but at least give hope for the future.

This book aims to bring together contributions from various disciplines to the study of the broad field of ‘Transport and Environment’. The general questions involved in this field appear time and time again to be complex and multifaceted. Any strictly mono-disciplinary approach is therefore likely to miss out on important other factors that may eventually determine a certain solution’s or approach’s viability. Nevertheless, researchers in this field still often have some natural tendency to stick to their origins, and transdisciplinary communication and cooperation is witnessed less often than probably desirable. With this book, we hope to contribute to a more intensive communication across the boundaries of traditional sciences, by offering contributions from a policy analysis, economic, spatial analytical and technological background.

The infrastructure offered by the ‘Network on European Communications and Transport Activities Research’ (NECTAR) has proved to offer an excellent means for realizing our goal. The various contributions have been presented at one of the meetings of NECTAR’s ‘Transport and Environment’ cluster. Without NECTAR, this book would not have existed.

We thank the contributors and reviewers for the valuable time and effort they have put in this undertaking, which may not always have run as smoothly as originally envisaged due to our personal shortcomings. We hope that the readers and contributors, after reading this book, will agree that it was worthwhile waiting.

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