Editorial

Climate change is hot news. There is great concern about the origin of the change in global temperature, and policy makers are developing plans to reduce CO2 emissions worldwide. However, even if humans can mitigate CO2 levels in the atmosphere, the changes will continue for decades, or even centuries. Recently, there is much attention for adapting ourselves to the consequences of climate change. The predicted increase in sea level en extremes in precipitation justify the need for research in what is now called Delta technologies.

Less attention is paid to the consequences that climate change may have on our buildings. Buildings are designed for a lifetime of about 50 years or longer. In design, climatic effects are taken into account by applying design codes. These codes are based on analysis of past observations and do not include trends in climate influences.

The papers in this special issue of Heron consider this omission. They are position papers, written as a first attempt to understand the extent of the problem. In addition, research directions are proposed in order to quantify the problem and develop new solutions. In the first paper, the possible impact on our structural loads is discussed. Both wind, rain, snow and temperature are considered and strategies on how to adapt building codes for these effects are discussed. The second paper deals with the durability of building materials. Especially for monuments, the effects of climate changes may be of great concern. The third paper focuses on the effect of climate change on the indoor climate, and puts the effects to the building user in perspective.

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Guest editor