

# BOOK REVIEWS

## EcoMasterplanning

Ken Yeang, John Wiley and Sons Ltd, 2009

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Climate change has become a serious global threat due to our misuse of the planet.

The uncontrolled use of natural resources, the accelerated melting of the polar ice caps, the consequent rise in sea level and the callous destruction of the world's forests, are revealed in an almost daily barrage of reports and statistics. How can we intervene? What can architects do?

Some of the answers can be found in the Ken Yeang's book: EcoMasterplanning.

The book talks about the biointegration of built environment with natural systems. It differs from conventional planning, in that it is premised upon the protection and enhancement of existing ecosystems.

EcoMasterplanning presents an innovative approach to masterplanning, based on the ecological concept of physical planning as an environmentally benign and seamless biointegration of four infrastructures that are categorised by the author as:

- grey infrastructure or engineering infrastructure: includes all the large urban engineering systems necessary for the support and functioning of any human urban development, including roads, drains, electricity, telecommunications, street lighting and solid waste disposal which should not be

the usual conventional engineering system but sustainable systems;

- blue infrastructure or the water management system: sustainable drainage scheme for the management of surface water runoffs, ensuring the management of the conservation of water within the built environment and its context;
- red infrastructure or human infrastructure: includes the built forms, enclosures, recreation spaces and the pedestrian networks as well as governmental, social and economic system;
- green infrastructure or eco-infrastructure: fundamental to the ecomasterplan because it serves to sustain clean air and water, to create a greater habitat for sharing resources among species, to provide channels for species movement and interaction, as well as a wider range of other development opportunities for flora and fauna.

The book was published by John Wiley and Sons in April 2009. In a highly visually driven format, it is organized with foreword, introduction and over 20 case studies from around the world including 3 in Europe, 1 in North America, 3 in Oceania and 13 in Asia.

EcoMasterplanning points towards a better future for planning.

It recognises that the essence of an appropriate response resides in a deep understanding of the role and responsibilities of the masterplanner towards adopting an affirmative ecological approach to planning design.

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