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Perspective Essay

Landscape as medium and method for synthesis in urban ecological design

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Abstract

“Landscape” refers both to a conceptual field that examines how humans affect geographic space and to real places, and the word has both analytical and experiential implications. Pairing the analytical and the experiential enables landscape to be a catalyst for synthesis in science and for insight in urban ecological design. Emphasizing that science is fundamental to ecological design, this essay broadly interprets urban ecological design to include intentional change of landscapes in cities, their megaregions, and resource hinterlands. The essay offers two laws and two related principles for employing landscape as a medium and a method for urban ecological design. The laws observe that landscapes integrate environmental processes and that landscapes are visible. Two related principles explain how these inherent characteristics can be used to

effect sustain ability by using landscape as a medium for synthesis and in a method that invites creative invention.

Highlights

â–° Designed landscapes include all landscapes intentionally made by people â€“ not only places that appear to be designed. â–° Ecological design is defined as: intentional landscape change to achieve and protect ecosystem services. â–° This requires a foundation in science. Science is more relevant when it is conceived to speak to ecological design. â–° Landscapes integrate environmental processes, and landscapes are visible. This empowers design-science synthesis. â–° Consequently, landscape is a medium for science-society synthesis and a method for environmental invention.



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Keywords

Synthesis; Planning; Sustainability; Scenario; Visualization; T ransdisciplinary

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Landscape as medium and method for synthesis in urban ecological design, therefore, irreversible inhibition is expensive.

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