

D o s s i e r E d i t o r i a l

Sustainable landscape planning and safe environment

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I am delighted to be able to serve as a guest editor of this issue that has provided an opportunity for me to read various topics that interest young scholars of my native land. I must share with the readers that I was very impressed with the range of topics and how well authors were able to keep up with the current and emerging literature well beyond the borders of their country. This is not surprising since the Internet has connected the World as never before and these young scholars as definitely well informed and they are able to adopt the professional knowledge, skills, and abilities from abroad into as viable alternatives into current problems of Turkey.

In general terms all types of planning try to accomplish three goals:

1. To meet events that we expect to see happen.
2. To prevent events that we do not wish to see happen.
3. To make events that we wish to see happen.

I would like to provide a brief explanation of these goals. The first goal deals with events that are repeat periodically and some are unavoidable such as we observe hot summers, or cold winters, droughts, earthquakes or other natural hazards. Similarly, people are born, grow old and eventually die. Every spring brings new growth in nature and new opportunities for humans. As planners and designers we engage in professional activities that prepare us for cold winters, hot summers, and occasional long droughts because we know that these events are a part of the climate and as humans we have no control over them. We design housing that withstand earthquakes with a reason, we avoid placing housing in floodplains to prevent loss of life and resources. In other words, planners and designers mitigate negative effects and take advantage of positive opportunities of these events that we expect with some regularity. However, planning and design would be simply boring and non-creative if all we do was to operate under the first two goals of meeting and prevention. To me real excitement comes with the third goal of accomplishing events that we wish to see. As planners and designers our professional endeavors provide opportunities to deal with all three of these goals.

By now you must be wondering why I am sharing these goals and theory with you. It is because this issue has eleven articles that addresses to all three goals. As such I believe that we have an excellent variety of topics that are current/timely and relevant to Turkey.

Ebru Erbař Gürler in her article entitled “Shifts in public open space notion by new landscape contexts” discusses how our perception of urban spaces has been changing over the time. Her discussions clearly point out how planners and designers create new images of cities that once was considered only a wishful thinking.

Sinem Gürevin and Y. Çağatay Seçkin in their article entitled “Resilient cities and adaptation case study: Chicago metropolitan area” share their observation about how City of Chicago plans to deal with the climate change and make a resilient city by accomplishing all three goals simultaneously.

Birge Yıldırım and Meliz Akyol in their article entitled “Reestablishing the relation of Istanbul with Bosphorus” discuss their proposals unite the city and its people with its most important natural resource the Bosphorus. This article perhaps deals with the third goals more than the other two but still offers several hints to avoid losing whatever connection, real or implied, remains.

Mehmet Akif Erdoğan, Hayriye Eşbah, and Süha Berberođlu in their article entitled “Modeling land use/land cover conversion risk” provide us with model that has quantitative as well as qualitative means of balancing future land use needs and show us what may happen if we continue to practice as usual.

Sultan Gündüz and Gülşen Güler Aytaç in their article entitled “Nature based zoning got the coastal area of Bursa” also provide us with a land use model related to coastal zone management based on not only natural resources but also cultural resources as a direct reflection of their connectivity to the nature. Turkey as a large peninsula that has extensive coastal zones and problems as such similar studies are needed for sustainable growth and development.

Yasin Çağatay Seçkin and Nazire Papatya Seçkin in their article entitled “Landscaping for earth-sheltered housing: A study on mud-roofed houses in Anatolia” provide us with a quick study of mud-roofed houses that still remain as one of the most sustainable and traditional practices when used correctly both in Turkey and abroad.

Meltem Erdem and Hüseyin Dirik in their article entitled “Landscape change and rural policy: An identity base approach to rural settlements” discuss a descriptive approach to identify landscape characteristics of rural settlements to be used for sustainable development practices and planning.

Dinemiş Kuşuluođlu and Gülşen Güler Aytaç in their article entitled “Interface between urban and rural: determination of use status for Göktürk Forest Nursery” discuss the interrelationship and dynamics between a large metropolitan area and surrounding rural areas through a quantitative approach to offer alternatives for more sustainable future planning.

Meliz Akyol, Hayriye Eşbah Tuncay and Sara Demir in their article entitled “Creating social and ecological environments with community development for resilient cities” discuss critical relationship between social and ecological environments and their application to planning and design.

Fatma Ayçim Türer Başkaya in her article entitled “Urban stream enhancement - revisiting urban streams of Istanbul” proposes an interdisciplinary team approach to rehabilitate five urban streams in Istanbul that have been subject to several flooding and environmental, social and economic devastation.

Muhammed Ali Örnek in his article entitled “Exploring the potential uses of computer games in landscape architecture education” discusses educational uses and role of computer games in landscape architectural education and suggests that virtual planning, design and construction of our ideas are best way to experiment, enhance our creativity while avoiding real damage to environment, life or property.

It is important to note that these articles have been carefully read and reviewed by scholars and professionals beyond the borders of Turkey. Yet the ideas that were discussed in these articles were not foreign to the readers. One common comment shared by reviewers was that they were very pleased to see all authors shared a common concern for the natural and cultural resources and offered pro-active and optimistic proposals to mitigate observed negative impacts in the contexts and topics discussed. I would like to conclude with a personal statement and hope that all of these ideas would be heard by the decision makers to serve to the environment and public which are the real stakeholders of this journal.