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Designing, Building, and Inhabiting the City as Shaping the Ecosystem

Abstract

The juxtaposition of nature and culture has been in a process of dissolution for a long time. Man, as the determining factor, has interfered with geological and biochemical processes to the extent that the globe has become a human system with embedded ecosystems. With that, the relationship of natural and human-made environments has fundamentally changed. The dichotomy of natural spaces and the city, as the cultural achievement of man, is called into question. The differences dissolve not only because natural and urban spaces mix, but also because they form a new systemic whole. Nature, supposedly outside of the city, disappears and becomes an inherent component of the urban metabolism, which creates, as an open system in steady interaction of human system and ecosystem, a new second nature. This understanding of the current Earth epoch as the Anthropocene opens up new perspectives for the city-shaping disciplines.

The article asks how architects, landscape architects, and urban designers can act productively in the transition to the Anthropocene, and exemplifies with projects of the office *SMAQ* how urban landscapes and agglomerations can be designed, activated, and inhabited with human-eco-systemic delight.

Keywords

Urban Design, Ecosystem, Anthropocene, Ecocene, *SMAQ*