

Designing Ecological Communities

DEFINITION:

A community is a cohesive collection of elements—living and non-living—which have relationships and connections between each other. Although some of the connections may not be apparent or obvious, they contribute to the overall energy and continuity of the community. Discrete eco-systems and their myriads of components are intertwined within an ecological community; in the context of designing ecological communities, humans are an integral component. It is at this interface between humans and their natural, built and ethereal environments that Ecological Communities are designed so all participants have equality and freedom of expression. An Ecological Community is based on **Natural Laws**—which govern what is sustainable, respectful and fun.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:

The key words guiding and explaining the design process to create ecological communities are -

- Integrated and co-ordinated
- Cohesive
- Inclusive
- Egalitarian
- Holistic
- Respectful
- Enduring
- Nourishing
- Inspiring
- Educational
- Closed-loop system
- Passive solar
- Aspect orientation
- Systems thinking

DESCRIPTION:

An Ecological Community is always inter-connected; when described from the human perspective one is always aware of the weather, the sounds of birds, the rustling of grasses, the arrangements—or absence—of clouds, the changes in leaves, the movement of water, the buzz of insects and the calls of frogs.

When living in an ecological community one is not only aware of but continually monitoring the ebb and flow of energy—and knowing the origins and resources used to create that energy.

An ecological community confines energy use to a minimum and incorporates autonomous and renewable sources. This is to ensure continuity and minimise the effects of fossil-fuel resources with their finite capabilities. An Ecological Community is designed to incorporate and allow—not just put together.

Incorporating the Elements

From time immemorial, the Elements have been respected as components of **Natural Law**.

The elements have inspired designs for cities, gardens, recreation travel and engage the senses so living to the fullest is enabled. The senses are sight, touch, smell, taste, sound, humour, balance, direction, common, rhythm, temperature / warmth, ego, language, concept and self-movement.



Earth



Fire



Air



Water

Within an Ecological Community, equality refers to recognition of all eco-systems and their need to co-exist within a built, human environment. An example is spiders; western cultural characteristics now regard spiders as invasive creatures to be exterminated. However, in the holistic sense, spiders are an indication of a healthy and functioning eco-system. As well as being predators of insects, they are preyed upon by birds and lizards and all are integral to the complete food-life-cycle. It is up to humans to learn about these vital systems which create our quality of life and upon which we rely for our own wellbeing.

The Taxonomy of an Ecological Community

Earth

Security
Nourishment
Energy
Abundance
Shelter
Materials
Anchoring
Horizontal
Vertical
Warming
Cooling

Animals

Companions
Food
Labour
Pollinators
Amusement
Dreamings
Stories
Indicators
Predictors
Transport

Gardens

Sanctuaries
Food
Nourishment
Dance
Art
Perfume
Shelter
Shade
Rolling
Sitting
Contemplating
Cascading
Vertical
Abundance
Honest
Xeroscape

Fire

Energy
Warmth
Cooking
Spirituality
Protection
Danger

Water

Aesthetics
Spiritual
Food
Hygiene
Therapy
Soothing
Ambience
Cooling
Heating
Transport
Music

Houses

Sanctuaries
Shelters
Dwellings
Personal
Art
Music
Sharing
Dining
Sharing
Expression

Sun

Energy
Light
Heat
Strength
Power
Food
seasons

Air

Movement
Nourishment
Energy
Breath
Lungs
Skin
Hair
Mouth