Global Forum

Shaping the Future 2022

Föreningen Global Forum

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الجمعية العمانية للخدمات النفطية

Oman Society for Petroleum Services

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- **Dr. Alexandre Hedjazi has received a doctoral degree in Urban Planning from University of Grenoble in France and a Ph. D from School of Public Affairs – University of California Los Angeles (UCLA).**
- **Since joining the University of Geneva in 2007 , he has taught many courses on comparative politics, and organized multiple seminar series on the Caspian Sea, Regionalization and Urban development bringing scholars and practitioner to explore and discuss the nexus of development, security and the environment. Bridging his academic research and his knowledge of Central Asia and the Caucasus.**

Muscat Arab Digital Capital 2022

WATER AND HUMANITY

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From Multi-faceted Crisis to Co-benefit production

Lessons from Post-Covid recovery in Geneva

العاصمة العربية الرقمية

Muscat Arab Digital Capital

2022

WATER AND HUMANITY

1- Learning from Covid -Environmental Crisis Nexus

- Leaving Labs
- Place of mercantile commerce and economic production
- Places of proximity and social interaction
- Places of training in hybrid thinking and approaches that couple scientific knowledge with local practices, indigenous understandings and practices
- Places of training in virtues of patience, empathy, courage and ethical conduct
- Places of innovation and craft: reuse, reinvention, recentering of humans in places

Traditional tools of urban development unsuited to deal with intertwined current challenges (environmental , demographic change, public health etc.) and the need for integrated solutions.

Need for holistically planned socio-economic and ecological investment and integration of visions across various stakeholders.

Direct Urban Resources and flows towards greater resource efficiency: Energy, waste, water, food, transport.

Aim for greater Well being of current and future citizens and communities and acknowledge new socio-cultural dynamics and aspirations of the population.

2- Infrastructure in Cities are not enough to address multifaceted challenges and needs

Current approach is often a feel good one, esthetic and /or small interventions on urban infrastructures that were **built in a manner generally incompatible with the goals of GI.**

Cities have mostly not been designed with GI or nature's services in mind:

Modified topography

Modified hydrology

Modified soils

Lack of attention to weather and climate: wind patterns, sun, rain and more

3- Solution forward is **Integrated planning**

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Overall objective is to introduce a systemic and integrated approach in urban planning, which aims at improving urban livability and overall quality of life by:

- Assisting in the creation of a new urban reference framework.

- This involves defining best practices, know- how dissemination, input on policy and legal aspects, developing project financing based on interactions between the Built Environment and Infrastructures with Natural Environment in Cities while bringing citizens back in:

  - Co-Defining the problems,
  - Co-Designing the solutions ,
  - Co-implementing the strategies and policies
  - Co-monitoring the outcomes

4- Blue-Green-Grey Integrated approach to planning

- Conceptualising the city and its infrastructure - including the urban water system (blue assets) and its vegetated areas (green assets)

- As a living (eco) system, is transforming the existing divide between cities and environment into an integrated approach of nature based Blue-Green solutions while addressing the social conondrum of equity and equal access.

While…

- Enhancing the inclusivity, equitability and livability of cities,
- Regenerating deprived districts,
- Improving mental and physical health and quality of life for the citizens,
- Reducing urban violence and decrease social tensions

5- Integrated planning towards co-benefit production

Aire River ecological retrofitting Geneva

•- The poor quality of the Aire River natural environment and loss of biodiversity in the absence of natural habitat as a result of concrete channelization triggered the state authorities to launch a revitalization programme for the river and surrounding land.

•- The “SUPERPOSITIONS” multi-disciplinary group composed of architects, hydraulic engineers, civil engineers and biologists, developed a completely new retrofitting concept that aimed ecological retrofitting, environmental risk processing as well as populations wellbeing.

•Creation of New spaces for leisure and recreation for the population that can also be flooded in the case of heavy rain and protect neighbourhoods.

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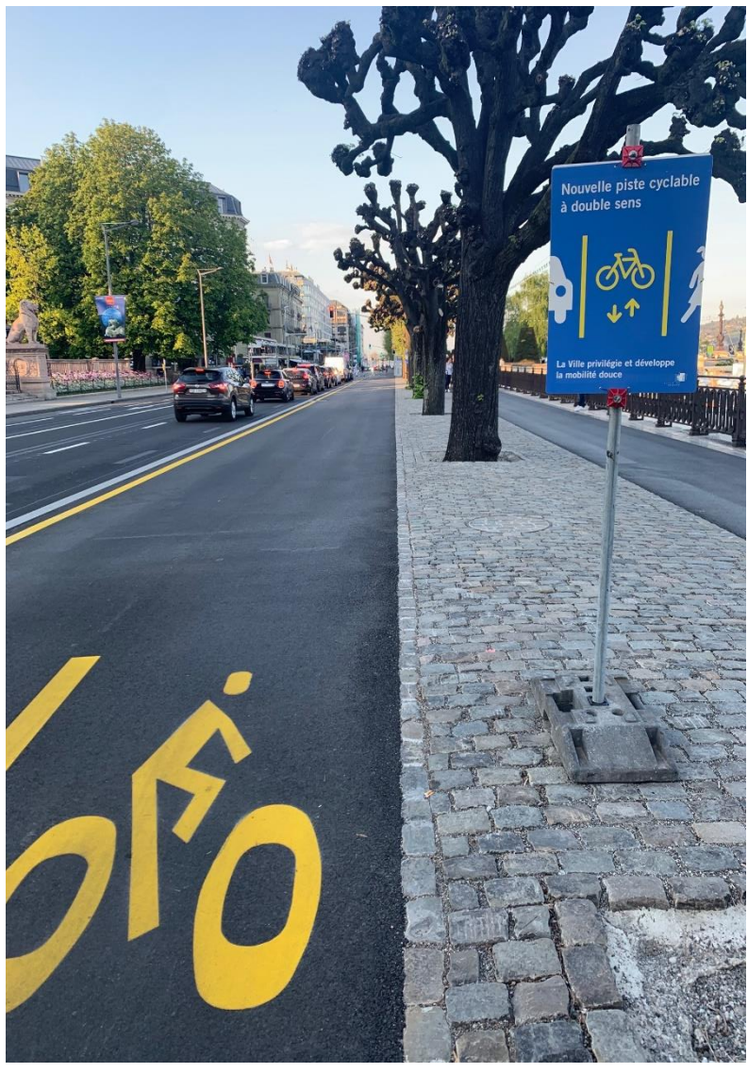
Plage des Eaux-Vives : Prolonged consultation approach to Restore lakeside wetlands, new recreation areas with new opportunity for local economy

Flexible and agile Governance to enable Lakeside Greater space for soft mobility, Pavement Permeability, extending urban biomass



Key Messages

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Cities will keep being engines of economic growth, environmental negative externalities and socio-economic divide if same planning tools are our references

For cities to reduce their impacts, they must recast the planning process

For this to happen, we can only change incrementally within a transition period.

We need to reduce energy and materials flows, and consider alternative models of growth while focusing the planning on people, place and environment.

We need to rethink cities – the resource consumption- the role of Natural environment and its link to the built environment

- THANK YOU -

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