An Evolving Landscape
Challenges and Opportunities for Landscape Architects in China

DESCRIPTION

Facing monumental environmental challenges, landscape architects working in China have an opportunity to reverse ecological degradation and reconnect people to the landscape. This session candidly examines recent work from Turenscape and Sasaki, discussing successes and missed opportunities in the planning and building of high quality and functional landscapes in China.

Project case studies presented will highlight national scale environmental challenges and the potential for landscape architecture as an agency for positive environmental change, from site scale interventions to national scale conservation planning.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Learn how landscape architects practicing in China are working to address the country’s unique environmental challenges
- Understand the challenges and successes of integrating green technologies and landscape infrastructure concepts
- Gain insight into issues such as the fledgling nursery industry, and collaborating with often unskilled landscape contractors
- Examine strategies to reduce landscape maintenance costs while working with natural processes

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

I. Introduction: Context, Challenges, and Design Opportunities
   A. National scale environmental challenges: water, urbanization, and agriculture
   B. Power, economics, and cultural challenges of working in China
   C. Opportunities in an evolving landscape
      1. From site to eco-regional context
      2. Introduction to case studies

II. Agriculture and Open Space at the Landscape Planning Scale
    Songzhuang Creative Clusters, Beijing
    A. State of agriculture in China
    B. Integrating agriculture into a changing economy
    C. Agriculture as landscape infrastructure

III. Landscape Infrastructure:
    Risk Management, Environmental Quality, and Investment
    Jinan New District, Jinan
    A. Development challenges along the Yellow River
    B. Designed to flood – water management and ecological planning
    C. The value of open space and holistic design

IV. Creating Place and Restoring Ecology
    Jiading Park, Shanghai
    A. Yangtze River hydrological context
    B. People and place – location and access
    C. Transforming place — sustainable reuse of site materials
    D. Design, construction, and management an ecological perspective
       1. Existing ecological conditions
       2. Challenges of on-site soils
       3. Water quality challenges
       4. Construction techniques
       5. Beneficial impacts (and challenges)

V. The Evolving Perspective of Designed Landscapes
   Recent Turenscape Projects
   A. Integrating ecological function and productivity
   B. Challenges of environmental degradation
   C. Communicating and maintaining design intent

VI. Discussion / Q&A
Dr. Kongjian Yu, FASLA
Dr. Kongjian Yu is the President and Principal Designer at Turenscape. He has won numerous international awards for his ecologically and culturally sensitive projects. Kongjian has been a professor of architecture and landscape architecture at Peking University since 1997, and the founder and dean of the University’s Graduate School of Landscape Architecture. Dr. Yu is also a visiting professor of landscape architecture and urban planning and design at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, where he received his Doctor of Design Degree in 1995.

Michael Grove, ASLA
Michael Grove is a Principal at Sasaki Associates and leads the firm’s Shanghai office. His 15 years of global experience embraces a wide range of project types including regional plans, urban districts, and waterfronts. Michael collaborates with planners, urban designers, and ecologists to restore damaged ecosystems, understand local cultural influences, and balance social equity with economic development. His work has been recognized with awards from Architectural Record and the ASLA. He has presented on sustainable landscapes at Greenbuild, the Urban Land Institute, and the ASLA in addition to lecturing at numerous universities throughout the US, China, and Mexico.

Anthony Fettes, Associate ASLA
Anthony Fettes is a Landscape Ecologist at Sasaki Associates with more than 10 years of combined experience in landscape design, ecological restoration, and environmental monitoring. His experience brings a unique perspective to design projects, assisting fellow designers and planners to broaden the ecological role and function of their designs. Prior to joining Sasaki, Anthony contributed to several National Park Service Natural Resource Technical Reports while working for the New Mexico Natural Heritage Program. He received his MLA from the University of New Mexico in 2010.