

ReIMAGINING LANDSCAPES

IDENTITY . APPROACH . STEWARDSHIP



13th ISOLA CONFERENCE, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, INDIA.
FEBRUARY 8-9 2019

HOSTED BY  **ISOLA**
KERALA CHAPTER

As India and the world confront the challenges of rising waters, fragile ecosystems, extreme climate events, polluted cities, rapid, unplanned development and degraded environments, equitable healthy living environments and continued ecological appropriateness have become critically endangered. The self-healing capacity of natural systems is becoming severely threatened.

The role of the landscape architect transcends boundaries, in integrating intangible values of culture, people, places, land, water, air, context and site-specific conditions into ecologically healthy places to meet present and future challenges. Landscape architects play a critical role in synthesizing a range of professional expertise and skills and are best trained to function as members and heads of multi-disciplinary teams that can work on healing the Earth.

We come from a rich tradition of ecological wisdom and landscape aesthetics; a tradition that can help us direct, distinguish and protect the ecological processes that will define the future of the land and our habitats. The state of Kerala is symbolic of the juncture at which landscape architects stand today. Unquestionably God's own country, its ecological heritage is abundant yet finite and fragile. How we will address the ecological processes inherent in this land, and across the world, through practice and academia, in the years to come, will be our lasting legacy as a profession.

The intent of the conference is to learn from pioneers, share with our peers, and educate policy makers in the role that landscape architects in India must play; a role that places us at the forefront of ecological processes and design practice. Ecological democracy combines the forces of ecological science and participatory democracy to design urban landscapes that enable us to act as communities that are resilient rather than imperiled. To understand also how a landscape reacts to a change or disturbance over time on its own or how human intervention can help it, can help us imagine ways of mitigating the effects of future disturbances. It is vital to understand how ecological process is addressed by designers across the globe, as it is to study how Nature adjusts to changes over time.

A few landscape and planning related professionals around the globe have been using ecological principles and processes to guide and inform their work. It is time to learn from them, as well as from the almost-lost cultural practices that for centuries have been using the Earth's natural processes and rhythms as a basis for development and design. It is time to study, design and create landscapes with ecological processes as their primary function. ■