Green Ways in Green Cities:
How far are we from green cities?

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Objectives of GREENSETTLE

- To encourage the development of green cities and settlements in remote border areas
- To contribute to the long-term spatial development of the area
- Proposing a balanced progress of economical and social requirements
- Address the environmental and economic impacts of cities
- Tackle environmental challenges and promote the use of environmental technologies

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The concept of eco-cities

- Eco-cities date back to 1975
- A group of visionary architects and activists created **Urban Ecology**
  - Mission: urban planning, public participation, balance with nature
  - In 1985 redesigned a street in Berkeley California – Milvia "slow street" – safe for bicyclists and to walk

- Further, defined a common framework of eco-cities
  - low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive

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Key elements of eco-cities

- **Urban planning and land-use**
  - *Pleasant and safe to live at – work, services and recreation also considered*
- **Traffic and transportation**
  - *Allow biking and walking, strong emphasis on public transport, no noise*
- **Energy**
  - *Energy saving is key, ideally carbon neutral*
- **Water**
  - *Water saving and efficient sanitation infra*
- **Waste management**
  - *Efficient waste collection, promoting recycling*
- **Social justice**
  - *Equal opportunities for minorities, women, disabled*
- **Economic well-being**
  - *Support ecologically sound business*
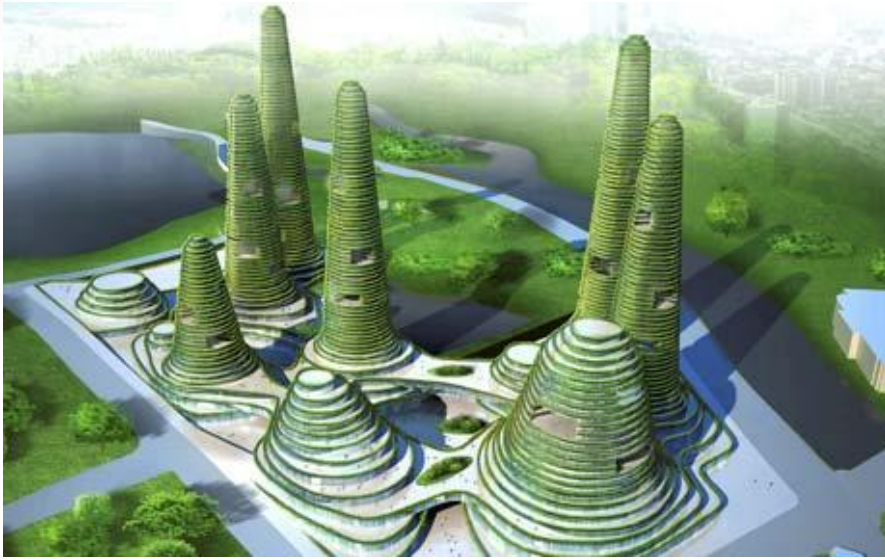
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Ecocities can save the world?

- UN long-term vision: eradicate poverty and inequality, consume sustainably, combat climate change, respect planetary boundaries

- By 2030, the world will need at least 50 % more food, 45 % more energy and 30 % more water

- At the same time we need to cut CO_2 emissions by half

  - *Different problems, same solution?*
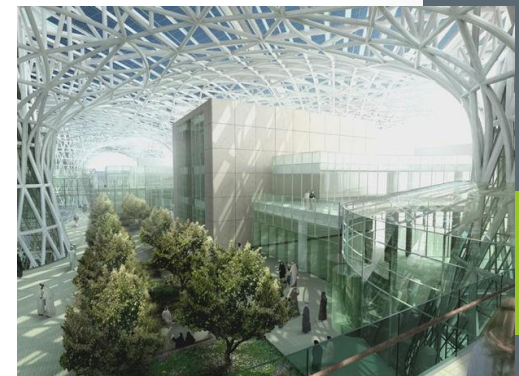
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Eco-cities: attractive and green?

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Good attempts

- Eco-villages (e.g. Övertorneå)
  - Small size, self-sustained, devoted inhabitants, sometimes low-tech
    - Brilliant ideas, cannot support population of 9 billion
- Partial Ecocities (e.g. Kempele ekokortteli)
  - Energy self-sustained, carbon neutral… or … water purification idea or… innovative waste solutions, etc.
    - Good start, tend to be showcase, provide motivation
    - But how to continue?
- "Fancy Ecocities" (e.g. Masdar eco-city)
  - Impressive architectural solutions, plenty of green areas, high-tech, futuristic
    - Tend to require immense amounts of investments
    - Tend to design cities to be built "from scratch"

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So how far we are from eco-cities?

- Far.
- But then again:
  - *"All great achievements in human history began as a vision before becoming a reality"*
- From the UN report:
  - *"In 2030, a child born in 2012 will turn 18. Will we have done enough in the intervening years to give her the sustainable, fair and resilient future that all of our children deserve?"*
- Perhaps we should just decide that we want to have eco-cities in 2030 and the question then should be: what needs to be done to achieve this goal?
  - *"Cities and local communities have a major role to play in advancing a real sustainable development agenda on the ground"*

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IMAGINE IF EVERYONE WAS
THIS PASSIONATE
ABOUT THINGS THAT ACTUALLY MATTER

Thank you all!