

ECO-CITY – SETTLEMENT OF THE FUTURE

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We live in a world full of challenges and opportunities at the same time. A fast paced urban life brings with itself the need of a greener environment and a healthier life. Owing to this, eco-city is one of the effective ways out under the existing realities.

The concept of the “eco-city” was born out of one of the first organizations focused on eco-city development, “Urban Ecology.” The group was founded by Richard Register in Berkeley, California in 1975, and was founded with the ideal of reconstructing cities to be in balance with nature.

An Eco-city is a human settlement modeled on the self sustaining resilient structure and function of natural ecosystems. The eco-city provides healthy abundance to its inhabitants without consuming more renewable resources than it produces, without producing more waste than it can assimilate, and without being toxic to itself or neighboring ecosystems.

In simple terms, an Eco-City is an ecologically healthy city. Eco-Cities are places where people can live healthier and economically productive lives while reducing their impact on the environment. They work to harmonize existing policies, regional realities, and economic and business markets with their natural resources and environmental assets.

One of the most famous environmentally friendly settlements is Tianjin Eco-City - a fascinating, 30 square kilometer development designed to showcase the hottest new green technologies and to serve as a model for future developing Chinese cities. Designed by Surbana Urban Planning Group, the city is being built just 10 minutes away from the business parks at the Tianjin Economic-Development Area, making for a commute that should be a breeze with the development's advanced light rail transit system. Even cooler, the community's expected 350,000 residents will be able to choose different landscapes ranging from a sun-powered solarscape to a greenery-clad earthscape to enjoy.

Eco-City will make use of the latest sustainable technologies such as solar power, wind power, rainwater recycling, and wastewater treatment/desalination of sea water. In order to reduce the city's carbon emissions, residents will be encouraged to use an advanced light rail system, and China has also pledged that 90 percent of traffic within the city will be public transport. The development also features some beautiful public green spaces.

The city will be divided into seven distinct sectors – a Lifescape, an Eco-Valley, a Solarscape, an Urbanscape, a Windscape, an Earthscape and Eco-Corridors. Surrounded by greenery, the Lifescape will consist of a series of soil-topped mounds that will counteract the towering apartment buildings of the other communities. To the north of the Lifescape, the Solarscape will act as the administrative and civic center of the Eco-City. Demonstrating the concept of a compact, multilayered city, the Urbanscape will be the core of the Eco-City, featuring stacked programs interconnected by sky-bridges at multiple levels to make efficient use of vertical space. In contrast to the Urbanscape, the Earthscape will act as a sort of suburb of the city, with stepped architecture that will maximize public green space. Last but not least, the Windscape will transform Qingtuozi, a century-old village surrounded by a small lake, into a venue for citizens to relax and recreate. The city's expected completion date is in 2020.

With this vision in mind, we believe eco-city will be an inseparable part of humans' future.

New Technology and Modern World: матеріали VII науково-практичної студентської конференції лінгвістичного науково-методичного центру кафедри іноземних мов, м. Суми, 22 травня 2013 р. / Відп. за вип. Г.І. Литвиненко. - Суми: СумДУ, 2013