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Towards a Circular Regenerative Urban Model





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EDITORIAL

Luigi Fusco Girard

The outcome of the United Nations Conference in Istanbul in 1996 was the *Habitat Agenda*, a global action plan for the sustainable development of human settlements.

In 2001, a plenary assembly was held at the United Nations in order to verify its effectiveness and implementation status all over the world.

Then, in 2002, the *Habitat Agenda* was published also in Italian by the Department of Architectural and Environmental Heritage Conservation in the book entitled *Habitat Agenda/Agenda Habitat. Verso la sostenibilità urbana e territoriale*, describing some experiences concretely realized.

Today the *Habitat Agenda* needs to be updated because it could not predict the extraordinary changes occurred over the latest 20 years.

Increasingly, the wealth of a country/region is represented by the wealth produced in its cities. However, cities are also major generators of entropy: they are the most significant source of pollution/environmental degradation, climate destabilization, etc., that adversely affect the health and the economic conditions, too. It represents a source of significant waste of resources and dissipation of wealth: an economic damage that, in the current conditions of crisis, is not affordable.

The starting point of the new urban regeneration strategies is the intertwine with the environmental strategies and with the regeneration of local economy ones.

On one hand, the above calls the search for a more efficient, effective and sustainable new organizational strategies, making it possible to minimize waste throughout the production cycle and consumption. The increased efficiency/effectiveness/productivity in the use of natural resources, achievable with the reuse, recycling and regenerating (i.e. circularization through virtuous and symbiotic processes of economic and ecological exchanges) reduces/minimizes emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases (with health benefits of ecosystem and people) and, at the same time, it is a source of economic benefits arising from the cost reduction of waste and of resources and modernization of the production system.

On the other hand, the above calls for a new national policy for the city (i.e. for local development) much more vigorous than the existing ones: in cities we build the future of societies. Cities should become the most important partners of the activities of the central government. The local (economic, urban, infrastructure, energy, environmental and health) planning becomes therefore a fundamental tool for the promotion of the development of the entire country.

The implementation of the "regenerative model" toward a human sustainable development requires new approaches and new tools. Urban planning should contribute to local economy, being much more based on an ecological dimension and sustained by social (third sector) economy.

Symbiosis between industries, between industrial and port areas, between port areas/industrial system and city, between the city and the territory can provide high environmental and economic benefits.

To manage them, new decision-making support systems and evaluation tools are required.

Cities may take on a care role in launching a smart sustainable development model, starting from local cultural resources for the activation of the creative processes of a circular economy through a synergistic approach, combining the economic, logistic and industrial activities, with the cultural heritage regeneration and the creativity of its inhabitants.

This issue of Journal BDC, starting from the synthesis of the final document of the Sixth Word Urban Forum (see Joe Ravetz, Luigi Fusco Girard and Lisa Bornstein, "Draft synthesis of the final document of the Meeting 'Port Cities as Hotspots of Creative and Sustainable Local Development", *BDC*, 2012, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 67-69), provides many theoretical and practical contributes about the implementation in urban development strategies based on the circular principles.

The paper of Luigi Fusco Girard is about the role of planning in enhancing the quality of the city landscape by the implementation of circular processes through symbiosis and synergies in the space/territory, also with the aim to offer some perspectives for the new Urban Agenda development.

Tsuyoshi Fujita, Satoshi Ohnishi, Dong Liang and Minoru Fujii propose a paper about the symbiosis between industries in a more general framework of eco-industrial development, assessing the experiences of Japanese cities.

Iben Vadstrup Holm is interested in the urban design symbiosis. She applies the circular principle in architecture (the hybrid architecture) linking technologies with living resources and social exchanges in an original proposal.

Christian Ost is interested in rehabilitation of historical districts in emerging countries, also in implementing the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) perspective.

Anna Pereira Roders provides a reflection on HUL, reviewing its implementation to address cities towards a sustainable urbanization.

Christer Gustafsson and Thomas Polesie analyze the returns of the circuits of investments in heritage conservation.

The topic of urban landscape is once again taken up by other authors: Alfredo Franciosa (in the perspective of its evaluation), Paolo Franco Biancamano, Serena Viola and Maria Rita Pinto (in the perspective of development), and Anna Onesti (with a specific case study).

Emil Malizia and Massimo Clemente papers face some specific aspects of urban regeneration: the production of places and waterfronts.

Rosa Anna Genovese discusses the rules for implementing the integrated conservation of cultural heritage in the 21st century cities.

