Call for Papers
Design with Nature at 50: Retrospect and Prospect
Special Issue
*Socio-Ecological Practice Research*
Frederick Steiner and William Fleming, Guest Editors
PennDesign
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

In 1969, Ian McHarg (1920-2001) published his landmark book *Design with Nature*. Through his advocacy of ecology as a basis for design and planning, the book fundamentally changed theory. He argued that ecological knowledge should guide how we shape the built environment. This theory spawned many practical applications from geographic information science and environmental assessment to new town planning and highway alignment. It also influenced diverse fields including the environmental sciences, law, geography, the social sciences, and the humanities. Through his writing, practice, and advocacy, McHarg fundamentally changed socio-ecological practice and research.

As consequential as *Design with Nature* was, considerable work remains for using ecology as a guide for the design and planning of the built environment. As a result, a special issue of the new journal *Socio-Ecological Practice Research* (edited by Dr. Wei-Ning Xiang), titled “Design with Nature at 50: Retrospect and Prospect,” will be published in 2019 to re-examine the past fifty years of design with nature, but, equally importantly, to look ahead at how ecological knowledge can be applied in this first urban century to produce healthier, safer, and just communities, landscapes, and regions.

The special issue of *Socio-Ecological Practice Research* is timed to commemorate the 50th anniversary of *Design with Nature*. Whereas McHarg is generally acknowledged as the father of ecological design and planning, his contributions are frequently misunderstood and/or misrepresented. The special issue will help clarify his legacy and to extend its reach into the twenty-first century.
The purpose of the special issue will be to highlight the foundational themes of McHarg’s theory and practice. In doing so, the special issue will seek to:

- Analyze McHarg’s position in landscape architecture, urban design, and regional planning;
- Discuss how social and ecological research and practices in fields that he pioneered have changed over the past half century;
- Review and critique aspects of McHarg’s legacy; and
- Re-position the relevance and significance of McHarg’s contributions for landscape architecture, urban design, regional planning, ecological restoration, and environmental ethics.

The special issue will emphasize articles that:

- Discuss the influence of McHarg’s concepts on past and current landscape architecture, urban design, and regional planning practices and scholarship—with emphasis on how such concepts have evolved and been re-applied;
- Re-visit McHarg’s ideas in the context of rapidly changing political and ecological environments; and
- Re-position McHarg’s legacy in relation to the significance and role of planning and design in today's complex, dynamic, and multi-cultural planet.
- Illustrate the contributions of McHarg’s theory and practice for contemporary socio-ecological scholarship and practice.
- Define and historically position conceptions and innovations pioneered in McHarg’s work, including but not limited to those pertaining to geographic information science, ecological inventory, and suitability analysis, and connect them to contemporary socio-ecological research and practice.
While leaving room for serendipitous contributions that bring new angles to the objectives of the special issue, topics fundamental to *Socio-Ecological Practice Research*’s readership will include:

- Ecological urban planning and design
- Regional landscape planning
- Geographic information science and Geodesign
- Planning theory and systems thinking

We intend to address these topics by focusing on six broad themes of McHarg’s work including:

- Ecological Surveys and Inventories
- Land-Use Suitability Analysis
- Town and Regional Plans
- Ecological Designs
- Green Infrastructure
- Digital applications (Geographic information science and Geodesign)

The special issue will be led by two guest editors: Frederick Steiner and William Fleming. Dr. Steiner was a student and collaborator of McHarg. He co-edited a book with McHarg and has written extensively about him. Dr. Fleming is the director of the new PennDesign Ian L. McHarg Center for Urbanism and Ecology.

The editors are looking for approximately two or three first-rate articles for each broad theme, understanding that the distribution may vary depending on the number and quality of the submitted final papers. The editors of the special issue will require all submitted articles to clearly define concepts to insure the highest degree of accessibility and understanding for readers. The special issue editors will also pay careful attention to the selection of keywords for each article in order to maximize the opportunity for these articles to be located and deemed of relevance for readers doing keyword searches.
We are now accepting proposals. The schedule for the special issue is as follows:

- Deadline for research paper proposals: October 30, 2018
- Selection of research paper proposals: December 15, 2018
- Research papers due: March, 2019
- Special issue published; September 30, 2019

Please submit your Proposal to Frederick Steiner fsteiner@design.upenn.edu or Billy Fleming wflem@design.upenn.edu