

PERMACULTURE

a design system for sustainable human settlement



Permaculture is...

Permaculture is a system of design for sustainable human habitat — an approach to ecologically sustainable development which can be used by individuals, communities, business and government. It seeks to improve our quality of life while improving the social, urban and natural environments.

Wherever we live, we can start to make changes to reduce the environmental and social impacts of our lifestyles. At the same time, we can value quality of life over the ownership of more and more possessions and the waste and personal debt that brings. We aim for sufficiency, not the extreme of excess.

Permaculture design is a process of combining techniques from a wide range of activities such as organic gardening and farming, energy efficient building design, community economics, landscape design, environmental restoration, town planning and community development. It brings these together so they interact in ways that benefit people, conserve resources, make use of renewable energies and restore degraded landscapes.

A practice based on ethics

Permaculture is guided by three ethics:

- care of the Earth
- care of people
- making a contribution by distributing excess resources.

Care of the Earth and care of people go together — one cannot be achieved without the other. Making a contribution means distributing our surplus resources such as knowledge, skills, funds and materials to assist others provide their own life needs.



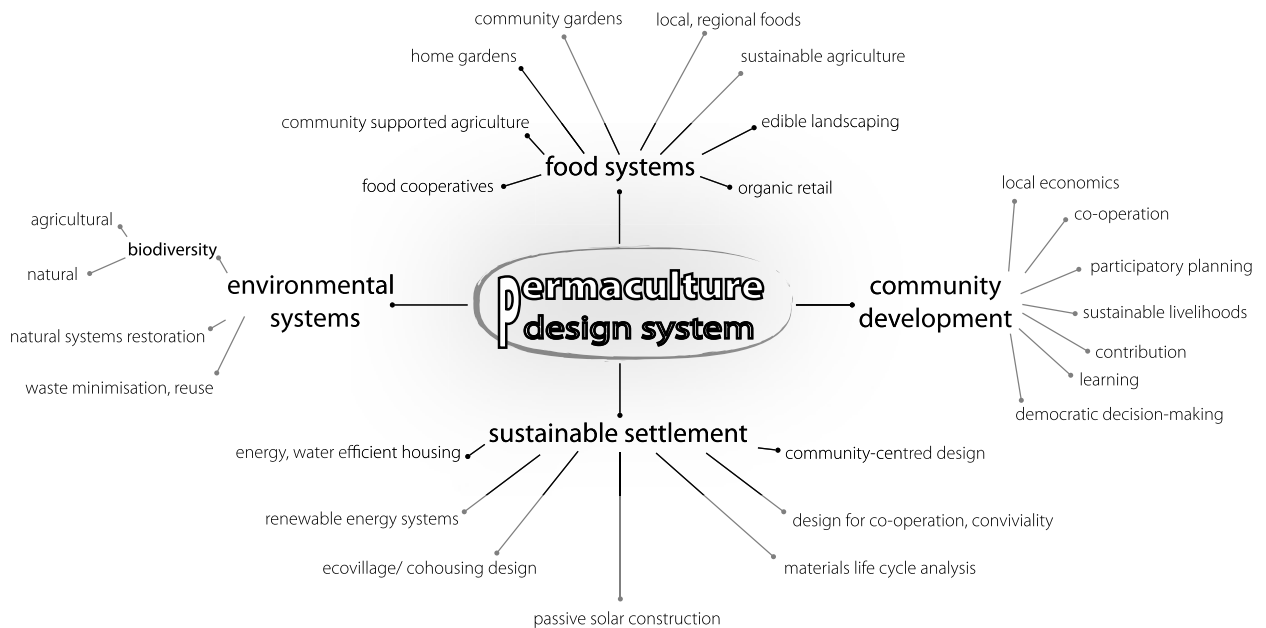
Practicing Permaculture is about innovative thinking...

- see solutions, not problems
- think about the long term consequences of your actions
- assist people to become self-reliant
- rebuild communities and promote community development
- use everything fully; recycle all wastes
- bring food production back into the cities
- restore degraded landscapes and soil fertility
- use diversity to encourage stability and readiness for social and ecological change
- cultivate the smallest possible area of land; design small-scale, energy-efficient intensive systems rather than large-scale, energy-consuming extensive systems
- use species native to the area where possible or naturalised species known to be beneficial
- reafforest the land

Permaculture... it's about modern living based on co-operation... about improving the places in which we live... it's about being engaged citizens rather than passive consumers



A design system for a positive future...



Permaculture supports community development and social enterprise, local economies, the design of the places we live for social and environmental amenity and the development of local food systems.

Food systems

You can grow some of your own food needs in your home or local community garden. If you are not interested in gardening, buy your food from a food co-operative, community supported agriculture scheme, farmers' market or organic retailer.

Sustainable settlement

Permaculture designers have been involved in the development of ecovillages, settlements designed to high standards of environmental amenity that encourage co-operation among residents.

In the design of dwellings and other buildings, Permaculture makes use of solar and other renewable energy technologies.

The design of places in which we live should be people-centred and include plenty of open space for recreation and community food gardens.

Low or zero cost places for people to meet are important components of settlement and urban design because they become venues for social interaction.

Environmental systems

Within the settlements in which we live we can include space for natural systems, whether existing or planted, that provide environmental services such as windbreaks, wildlife habitat, environmental restoration, food and timber.

In Permaculture design, we make use of reprocessed wastewater and other waste materials. Recycling and reuse are basic components in Permaculture design, which aims is to minimise the production of waste.

Community development

Individuals accomplish more when they voluntarily co-operate with others. Participatory planning and decision making are part of the Permaculture design system.

By buying local foods, services and products, we keep money circulating in the region before it is spent outside, assisting the development of local economies which help communities become more resilient. Excess personal and organisational funds can be placed with an ethical investment company or with a local, independent bank.

LETS (Local Energy Transfer System — a form of cashless or part-cash trading) and Time Banking encourage community-based trading, the maintenance of livelihood skills and the development of community linkages.



PRODUCED BY...

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TERRACIRCLE www.terracircle.org.au

TerraCircle is an international development consultancy working in the South West Pacific and in Australia in: food security, livelihood development, training in small scale sustainable agriculture, community health, project management.



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