

Advances in Science, Technology & Innovation
IEREK Interdisciplinary Series for Sustainable Development



Francesco Alberti · Abraham R. Matamanda · Bao-Jie He ·
Adriana Galderisi · Marzena Smol · Paola Gallo *Editors*

Urban and Transit Planning

City Planning: Urbanization
and Circular Development

Third Edition



Advances in Science, Technology & Innovation

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ASTI series has now been accepted for Scopus (September 2020). All content published in this series will start appearing on the Scopus site in early 2021.

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Development


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Preface

It is now 50 years since the first world Earth Summit held in Stockholm (1972) and 30 years since the Rio de Janeiro Conference on Environment and Development (1992), whose Declarations played a crucial role in shaping global awareness of sustainability issues and the risks associated with an extractive model of economic development that irreversibly impacts the environment and climate balance of our planet. The notion of sustainable development, i.e., an alternative model of development that integrates the economic dimension with the environmental and social dimensions, and “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”, was formulated and disseminated worldwide by the Brundtland Report *Our Common Future*, published by the UN Commission on Environment and Development some 35 years ago (1987). Starting from these cornerstones, the scientific debate and the political initiatives taken at various levels—international, national, and regional—have been highly articulated and enriched over time with a growing involvement of the media, public opinion, and, recently, a strong assumption of responsibility by the youngest (the “future generations” who have meanwhile been born and clearly see the threats to their future), claiming that these challenges are translated into concrete actions and policies to correct the course followed so far since the Industrial Revolution. And it is in fact to the pre-industrial era that the Paris Agreement (2016) refers in defining as a virtuous target a limit of the global average temperature increase to 1.5° by the end of the current century. An ambitious target (which in any case will not prevent serious consequences on territories and populations worldwide) to be pursued through national and transnational strategies of ecological transition of settlements, economic activities in all sectors (starting with energy production), mobility, and transport (from urban to intercontinental).

As we said, much progress has been made, with peaks of innovation that would bring immediate benefits in many decisive fields, if they became the current standard. But we cannot deny that over the last 50 or 30 years, the awareness of the risks we face has had very little impact on the development trajectories of both the most industrialized and emerging countries. And cities, even those that have developed the most in recent years, are far from achieving the targets set by UN Sustainable Development Goal No. 11—“Sustainable Cities and Communities”. Not to mention mobility models, which in developing countries, where the demand for the transport of people and goods increases year after year at the highest rate, usually follow the bad examples of richer countries instead of exploring new, more sustainable paths. This confirms Enrique Peñalosa’s remark: “Transport differs from other problems developing societies face, because it gets worse rather than better with economic development. While sanitation, education, and other challenges improve with economic growth, transport gets worse”.

So, with each passing day, the challenge for a more sustainable future, instead of diminishing with the accumulated knowledge and awareness becomes greater. There is only one way to face it and make up for past and present mistakes: increase studies, spread knowledge, and good practices, so that they can take root faster. This is the mission that this publication and the series of which it is a part seek to respond to. The selected papers that form the chapters of the book constitute a small but significant repertoire of the best that is being done or could be done in the fields of urban and transport planning.

I sincerely thank all the authors, who, from different corners of the world, share the responsibility to ensure that the 50 years path toward a paradigm shift in our way of being-in-the-world continues, accelerates, and involves more and more fellow travelers, until it becomes a common path.

Florence, Italy

Francesco Alberti

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