

## LANDSKABELIGE BYMODELLER – AFDÆKNING, POTENTIALER OG UDVIKLING

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Nature protection- and biodiversity improving measures usually makes use of specific zoning and reservations in the countryside, we then choose to call nature. Animals and plants are however indifferent towards zoning - they focus on habitats. At the same time, a massive amount of urban green areas seem uninspired and useless. A potential synergy seems to lie right in front of us.

EU- and UN-treaties have been renegotiated in 2010 to counter the global decrease in global biodiversity. One of the key obstacles for success however, is that large nature projects are expensive, and nature planning is often conflicting with other uses, especially in countries like Denmark, where area usage for farm- and wood production is high. For urban planning, the big question thus seems: How can design and planning of our urban landscapes support a global ambition of preservation of our global biodiversity, and what are the architectural consequences of this?

Parallel to this present challenge, two paradigms within urban theory have emerged, landscape urbanism, and its newer sibling, ecological urbanism. Here landscape planning and -architecture is seen as the frame for urban programmes and natural properties. As a result, the urban and the natural become interdependent. This dissertation will be dealing with how to plan and design our urban landscapes with special attention to promoting biodiversity, and just as relevant, how is this being handled within current architectural practice.

Landscape urbanism and ecological urbanism draws on post-modern architectural movements in the 1980's as well as landscape ecology, also primarily from the 1980's and onwards. They have their connections back

to landscape ecologists like Ian McHarg in the 1960's to Richard Forman in the 1990's and architects like Rem Koolhaas and Bernard Tschumi in the 1980's to James Corner in the 2000's. The main focus is not on what is actually built but instead, the focus is on managing a process of change, and adjusting accordingly on an on-going basis. Architectural ambitions are best met by focusing on manoeuvring in a qualified way, than by focusing on a masterplan that will never materialise as expected. To landscape- and ecological urbanism, landscape architecture is the practice that can accomplish this, and thus structuring urban development in a sustainable way.

Through architectural and landscape ecological analysis, different architectural competitions will show how the issue of biodiversity is being addressed as well as trying to unfold whether there are specific aesthetic properties of biodiversity. Three contemporary Danish architectural competitions are being analysed in-depth: Ålborg Øst, Vejle Søndermark and Kokkedal. In addition to these, a number of perspectival cases are presented, which in different ways relate to the three, in order to relate to any shortcomings the analysis may reveal. The cases are also contextualised to the Danish planning system, that is being analysed in order to assess strengths and weaknesses in relation to improving biodiversity in an urban setting.

The analysis shows five key points that apply to biodiversity in the urban planning represented by the competitions and legislation. First of all, on several occasions there is a mismatch between what is being drawn, and what is being put forward as landscape ecological effects. Secondly, there seems to be a lack of landscape ecological professionals working within the competition teams. Thirdly, there is a challenge when it comes to the modes of representation in the proposals, as they are too static to visualise ecological processes. The plans also seem to have a high degree of redundancy between scale levels indicating a landscape project primarily at a higher scale level. The fourth point relates to the processual context of dealing with competitions in urban planning. Biodiversity needs to be explicitly addressed in competition briefs as well as valued in the feedback between the two phases in the two-phased setup and the final jury's report. As a consequence, ecological knowledge needs to be represented and used in the jury's work. The fifth and final point of the overall analysis, lies within the planning legislation, in this case, the Danish. Automatic reactions are built into the legislation that are counter-productive, and there are potentials within using the existing legislation in new ways on different scale- and process levels.



Whether you are working as a planner on the municipal level, or as a private consultant, there are plenty of opportunities to promote biodiversity. Some of the strategies need new practices and legislation, and some can be implemented within the existing legislative framework. There seems to be a misunderstanding present, that planning for nature is best being done on a large scale, and outside the context of the urban realm. This is as wrong as it is to pretend that we aren't dominating our environment through densification, another popular sustainability strategy. Including biodiversity as a key dimension in urban planning and -design presents an alternative sustainability strategy. An increased knowledge of landscape ecological principles, can and should be integrated in municipal- and local-planning levels as well as in the specific designs of urban developments. As a consequence, biodiversity as a strategy can be part of any intervention in almost any urban context - and should be.

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