

PROLOGUE:

Confronting Sustainability
Terence Young

INTRODUCTION:

A Geographical Perspective on Landscape Design in Arid Environments
James L. Wescoat, Jr.

Sun, Wind, and Water in the Arid Landscape
John T. Lyle

Aspects of a University Project and a New Town in Iran
Kamran T. Diba

The Preservation of Nature in the Alborz Ranges
G. Reza Pasban-Hazrat

Culture, Environment, and Sustainability: Theoretical Notes and
Reflection on a Community Park Project in Cairo
Abdelhalim I. Abdelhalim

Trees and the Desert: Village Protection in Northern Sudan
Paul Laird

Gardens in the Desert: A Landscape Architect in Saudi Arabia
Richard Bödeker

CONCLUSION:

Summary of Discussion and Future Concerns
James L. Wescoat, Jr.

CONFRONTING SUSTAINABILITY

Terence Young

According to Donlyn Lyndon, “sustainability” has become a “catch word of the times”.¹ Echoing Lyndon, Mike Pease writes that it seems that the word is appearing “everywhere”.² Certainly the landscape literature would lead one to this conclusion. Recent issues of such publications as *Landscape Design*, *Places*, and *The Urban Ecologist* have, for example, carried reports about the first meeting of the United Nations’ Sustainable Cities programme which included presentations from Senegal, Poland, China, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Chile; about “Green Korea”; a group working toward a sustainable Korean Peninsula; about the new Sustainable Development Centre in the United Kingdom; the President’s Council on Sustainable Development in the U.S.; and the World Congress of Architects’ “Declaration of Interdependence” calling for the profession’s dedication to achieving sustainable designs.

Despite this currency, however, the notion of sustainability is not without its history. A quick perusal of the literature finds glowing references to such lights as Louis Bromfield, Patrick Geddes, Ebenezer Howard, J.I. Rodale, and Rudolph Steiner. Intriguingly, these individuals all worked in mid-latitude, humid climates. Could it be that the pioneers in arid environments are absent from these hallowed halls because much of their work was not in English?

In addition to any biographical ancestry, it is clear that today’s sustainability has its roots firmly planted in the utilitarian resource management that began at the end of the last century. Progressive-era conservationists would recognise today’s sustainability as a child of the “sustained yield” concept for such renewable resources as game, fisheries, and forests. These early technocrats argued for levels of extraction that could be maintained without lessening future levels