

Friday June 26th, 2009: Tele-Conference Discussion
11.15-13.00 BKK, 13.00-15.00 JST
Tokai University (Tokyo) - UniNet (Thailand)

Landscape Architecture in Thailand.

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Abstract

Landscape architecture has played an important role in urban development worldwide for many years. It is now becoming an even greater necessity in the burgeoning cities in Southeast Asia, where globalization and free trade are stimulating rapid urbanization.

In the past two decades, many infrastructure "mega projects" initiated by multi-disciplinary organizations have bloomed in Bangkok and other big cities in Thailand. These projects have created ribbon development along transportation corridors, divided the urban fabric into pieces, developed on flood plains and wetlands, and been largely responsible for the imbalanced ecology of the region. Because many of these organizations are created for a single purpose, land utilization decisions are made without regard for neighbors, other involved organizations, or essential needs.

The best example in Thailand of this type of development is, of course, the nation's capital and principal city. Bangkok's registered population increased from 1.6 million in 1958 to 5.4 million in 1986, and was almost 8 million in 2006. The urbanized area of Bangkok has doubled in size, due to unplanned sprawl along major roads and canals, which occurs in a finger-like pattern. This results in inefficient land use that makes it difficult to lay down systematic and interconnected infrastructure networks. The Bangkok Comprehensive Plan (initially written in June 1999 and updated in May 2006) is targeted to accommodate a population of 10.2 million by the year 2019 and 11 million by the year 2022. It is, however, already out of date, and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) is trying to propose a new plan for the longer-term future.

The roots of the problem are the government's urban development policy, the limited capabilities of local authorities in regulating efficient land-use, and the lack of coordination regarding infrastructure management, land-use, and environmental protection. Additionally, there is poor enforcement of the city master plan, serious traffic congestion problems, lack of comprehensive master plan, controversies among stakeholders, and increasingly serious pollution problems that lower residents' quality of life. As Bangkok and other Asian "Mega cities" grow rapidly, the question is whether they can balance development and environmental protection in a sustainable way.

This is where landscape architecture can play a significant role

Landscape Architecture and Urban Development

Recent Situations in Thailand

- Royal flora expo, Chiangmai
- Suvarnabhumi (new) Bangkok International Airport and the (proposed) Aerotropolis
- Tourism Facilities : Hotels, resorts, Boutique Hotels
- Real estate
- Parks, Public space and urban re-development
- Natural landscape & Ecology
- In the globalization → Cultural landscape and controversies..



Royal Flora Expo

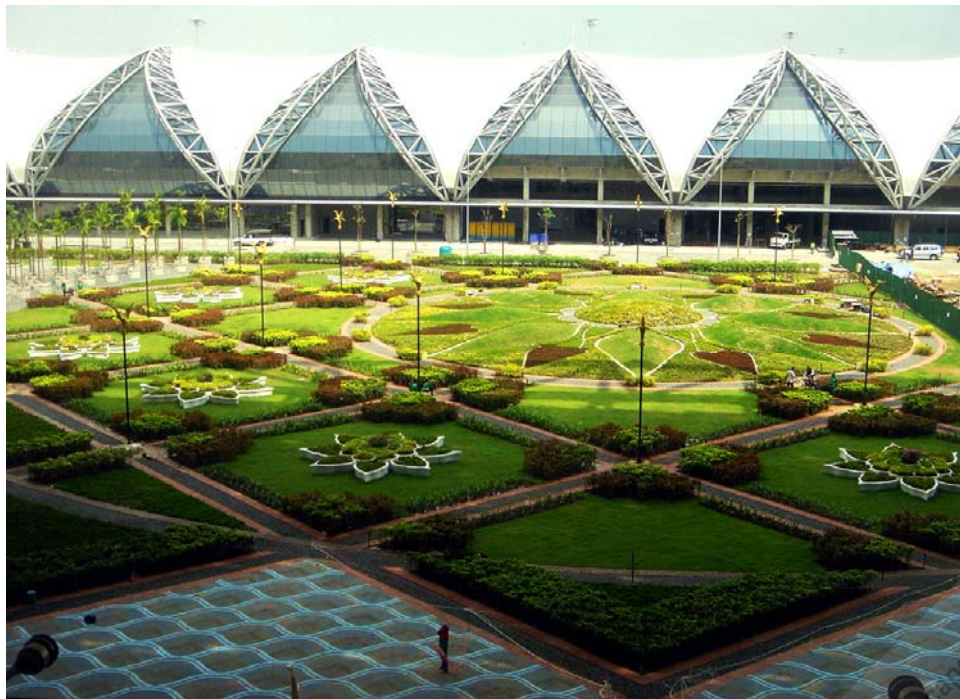
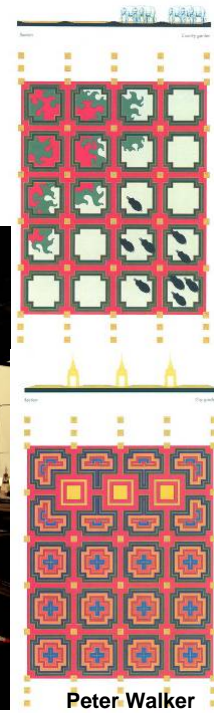


Feel Green Design

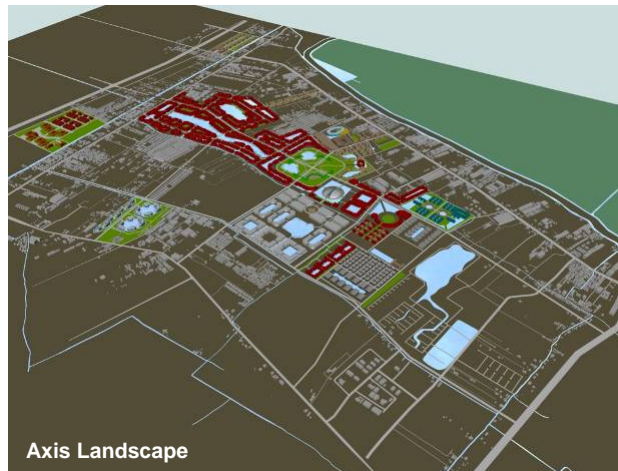
Landscape Architects:
around 300 landscape
architects, and 30
firms registered.



SBIA & the Aerotropolis



The Proposed Aerotropolis



Noble Development



Real Estate

High-medium Income Housing



Resorts



Naka Boutique Resort & Spa



By Group3

Resorts



By : Wood Bagot

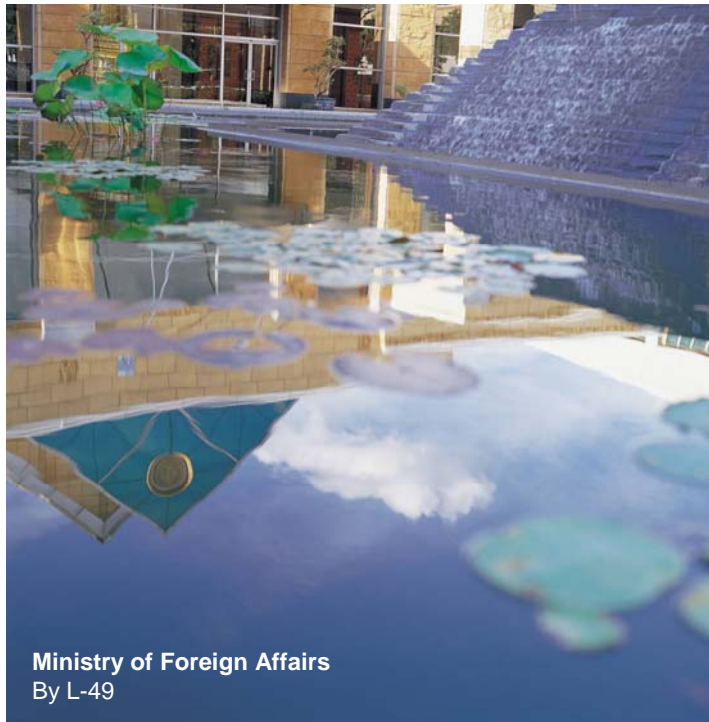


By : JPLA



Golf courses

By Duforgreen



Offices

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
By L-49



Thai Life Insurance
By Rafa



Doi Tueng
Arboretum



By Group-3



Benjakitti City Park

By PL-Design



The 3 city parks @ Chatujak



By PL-Design

Slam Paragon Shopping stores @ CBD



By PL-Design

Urban Voids and The wonderful proposals



Makasan & Pahonyothin



Still many..
Urban voids
existed



Poor Visual quality : Need an Urban landscape architect?



By Kraisak Choonhawan (Politician)

Cultural Landscape?





Conserve the rich
bio-diversity &
Ecology



The Fear?!

Source :

ก. น. Magazine Oct 2008

A Popular CSR activity :
Mangrove reforestations



..Way to go..



Ariya Aruninta (2008) , "*Landscape Architecture in Thailand, Series: The State of the Profession around the World.*" Topos Magazine #62, March 2008