



Agrifutures

Permaculture Design Masterclass EBook

4. Management



The Approach

Within the Management module of the Permaculture Design Certificate course we go into the details of creating a permaculture themed business and applying the concepts to the development of a functional permaculture style farm.

Regenerative does not need to mean that a rewarding salary can not be obtained from production. Through adoption of successful strategies a rich and abundant life can be had by all in ways that do not tax negatively upon the environment.

Central to the provision of a right livelihood is a sound understanding of finance and business development and marketing to provide sufficient financial capital for an individual and family not just to survive, but thrive, grow, travel, explore, learn and grow.

If such a livelihood cannot be obtained from the land or a permaculture based enterprise then there will never be sufficient impetus from people to take up this lifestyle, particularly young people - who will instead become engaged and financially committed to quite a different lifestyle and occupation. And if there are not young people adopting a regenerative / Earth focused lifestyle then how will society in general transition towards a future that embraces this as a new way of living.



Principles

Permaculture production seeks to produce food of optimum quality and quantity, by holistic management of productive ecosystems. This approach endeavours to make the ecosystems sustainable and non-polluting of the environment, while providing a sustainable income to the producer, families and communities.

Some of the main principles and methods that are employed are:

- a. Foster beneficial processes and interactions such as occur in natural ecosystems, thus encouraging internal stability rather than heavy reliance on external control measures.
- b. Reduce external control to the absolute minimum required for maintaining the chosen state of production. Inputs used aim to work as far as possible in conjunction with natural cycles, rather than trying to dominate such cycles.
- c. Achieve cycles/flows of nutrients and materials that have as few losses as possible. This requires the conservation and recycling of nutrients and organic material.
- d. Sustain and enhance the fertility and life-supporting ability of the production medium, including its biological, physical and chemical components. For land-based production systems great emphasis is placed on the importance of soil organic matter, and soil flora and fauna.

A photograph of a stone staircase in a garden. The steps are made of light-colored stone and are set into a green lawn. A purple banner with the text "The Plan" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

The Plan

The objective of developing a management plan is to record the steps and measures undertaken in establishing a permaculture property. The recording of these ideas can then also be used as the basis for a formal application for organic certification.

Undertaking this formal process will also help crystallize ideas, allow for patterns to be more clearly identified and allow for better improvements to be made.

Some factors in establishing an management plan are:

- Maintaining and enhancing soil fertility.
- Water drainage, storage and irrigation.
- Boudaries.
- Control of possible pollutant sources.
- Maintain or enhance biodiversity on site.



The Community

The heart of permaculture as originally laid out by the founders was Earth care, people care and fair share. Two of these concepts (people care and fair share) highlight the importance of social structures in the design and operation of sustainable landscapes.

It is an unavoidable fact now that the development of landscapes and the rise in population has meant that no landscape has remained untouched by people. Instead the question is if we are to live in a human modified landscape how can we manage that landscape to produce a diverse, nutrient-dense, nutritious diet; within a landscape that nurtures the individual and community and in the process, restores and enhances natural environments to provide a habitat for a diverse range of species natural to that area.

The main ideas with development of a community is how to create mutually beneficial relationships between people and create an environment that fosters positive interaction while also is respectful of privacy. The modern society can be thought of being built upon the premise of individuals requiring very little from each other, which results in less social interaction and therefore social structure within communities.