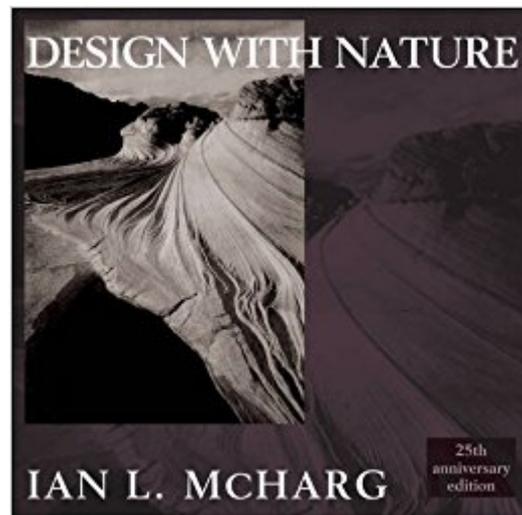


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# Design With Nature



## Synopsis

"In presenting us with a vision of organic exuberance and human delight, which ecology and ecological design promise to open up for us, McHarg revives the hope for a better world." --Lewis Mumford ". . . important to America and all the rest of the world in our struggle to design rational, wholesome, and productive landscapes." --Laurie Olin, Hanna Olin, Ltd. "This century's most influential landscape architecture book." --Landscape Architecture ". . . an enduring contribution to the technical literature of landscape planning and to that unfortunately small collection of writings which speak with emotional eloquence of the importance of ecological principles in regional planning." --Landscape and Urban Planning In the twenty-five years since it first took the academic world by storm, *Design With Nature* has done much to redefine the fields of landscape architecture, urban and regional planning, and ecological design. It has also left a permanent mark on the ongoing discussion of mankind's place in nature and nature's place in mankind within the physical sciences and humanities. Described by one enthusiastic reviewer as a "user's manual for our world," *Design With Nature* offers a practical blueprint for a new, healthier relationship between the built environment and nature. In so doing, it provides nothing less than the scientific, technical, and philosophical foundations for a mature civilization that will, as Lewis Mumford ecstatically put it in his Introduction to the 1969 edition, "replace the polluted, bulldozed, machine-dominated, dehumanized, explosion-threatened world that is even now disintegrating and disappearing before our eyes."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I can't believe I am the first to review this book. It was one of the most important books in my library when it first came out over 25 years ago and I still refer to it once a year or so. Ian McHarg pioneered both a "logical" way to approach human enterprise within the natural world, and the analytic/presentation methodology which is now used by virtually all planners. At least the technical aspects of the methodology are used; the real struggle to understand the principals behind prioritizing land use is still ongoing. If you're looking for some clear and easy to understand directions to help get us out of the mess we've made of our world, "Design With Nature" is a good place to start.

Recently re-issued in a 25th-anniversary edition, this book has obviously retained its position. Why? Because it is *the* place to begin an environmental impact statement. It should be on the bookshelf, and engraved in the heart and mind, of anyone connected with, or concerned about, planning for the future. McHarg takes the simple idea of overlay maps--which may contain any type of information--and builds up a procedure for making the difficult trade-offs involved in resolving competing ideas about land use. No local community should be without a set of McHarg overlays. Any citizen group concerned about the actions of a 'developer' should be able to prepare its own overlay for the town's McHarg base map, showing its assesement of areas that need protection and areas that are suitable for the proposed use. This may not make everyone happy, but it at least guarantees that the issues and specific sites are understood by all, and that specific concerns have been fairly addressed. Buy this book for your town planner.

This was an important piece in the development of ecological perspective for urban/environmental design and planning professions. It is a classic and should be familiar to anyone concerned with environmental issues as they relate to development.

Ian McHarg's Design with Nature revolutionized landscape planning just at the time when the modern built environment was being recognized for its devastating effects on natural systems. McHarg devised techniques for planners to envision not just the finished product of human development, but its complex interaction with watersheds, wildlife habitat, viewsapes and anything else that could be represented as a layer on a map. Fast forward to today....Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are complex databases that organize information into the "layers" that McHarg proposed. GIS analysis has found its way into urban planning, oil spill response, wildfire

management, epidemiology, endangered species management, socio-economic analysis and many other forms of spatial planning and design. Maps that are products of GIS analysis are digital versions of the tissue and mylar overlays of McHarg's vision and technique. This book is essential reading -- not because planners aren't using its ideas (almost universally, with GIS, they are) but because they don't understand GIS's debt to McHarg's pioneering thinking.

A "classic" in the field of Landscape Architecture and still well worth reading closely. We knew the Jersey Shore which got developed and then wiped clean by a hurricane in the 1960's. Ian's graduate students and he worked with the State of New Jersey on code recommendations for Long Beach Island during the immediate aftermath. This book contains a lot of the key insights that emerged from the experience as well as a strong dose of observations and recommendations from a true Master.

If you want to read about what happened almost exactly 50 years ago when a large hurricane hit the Jersey shore, breached the dunes, and washed away entire communities, buy this book. The book also explains how to preserve the ecology of the ocean shore, and where and how to build to avoid future disasters like hurricane Sandy. Maybe when the next large storm comes we will have done it right. Incidentally, this pioneering work on the subject has many fine charts and illustrations, some of it in color.

I was first introduced to this book in 1970 at the time of the first Earth Day Event. I was studying at a university in Appalachia and was exposed to reclamation of land laid barren by strip mining. My roommate was studying to be an architect and introduced me to this book that he was using for one of his courses. I was so fascinated by the concepts in the book I just had to purchase my own copy. I grew up in urban wastelands of industrialized Detroit and Cleveland and always wondered if there was any such thing as urban planning or land use planning. Ian McHarg assured us it was possible and necessary. All the books written since in this field stand on the shoulders of this giant. Sadly, the author passed away in March of 2001 from pulmonary disease, likely acquired as a boy in industrialized Glasgow Scotland. Anyone interested in Sustainability and Green Design should have this in their library.

McHarg basically invented GIS overlays and this book is a fantastic study of some of this mans prominent contributions to the land planning/design professions Not to mention, he was a pioneer in

understanding ecological patterning as a means of landscape design process. What a classic. I am always surprised how few know of his work.

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