

Changing the change

Design Visions, Proposals and Tools

An international conference on the role and potential of design research in the transition towards sustainability

Torino, 10th - 11th - 12th July 2008

Organised by Co-ordination of Italian Design Research Doctorates with
Conference of Italian Design Faculty Deans and Programme Heads.

In the framework of WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL TORINO 2008 | © ICSID
An ICSID initiative of the IDA.

Jia Yun and Feng Shu [jkherbs2005@yahoo.com.cn; jumoi2001@yahoo.com.cn]
Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, College of Design, China

Chen Xu-jun [cxj@eco-nanling.com]
Guangdong Zhongheng Group, Nanling Ecotourism Development Company, China

LOCAL CULTURE CONSERVATION, ECOLOGICAL TOURISM AND DESIGN EDUCATION

**A comprehensive experiment and study of regional sustainable
development in China**

Abstract

The comprehensive experiment of regional sustainable development is a kind of cross-over social experiments. It aims at pushing forward the local culture conservation, exploring the diversified modes of local economic development, widening the field of vision of higher design education, building up the concept of sustainable development, providing opportunities for the corresponding teaching practice and popularizing the ecological and cultural tourism according with *The Green Globe 21 Standards* for sustainable tourism by synthesizing the local resources, creative design and the effective pattern of commercial operation.

Radical social changes have taken place in China in the past 30 years. A single economic development mode is pursued, which leads to tremendous changes in both the main trend of social value concepts and people's lifestyles. Along with these great changes, the varied local traditional culture and crafts are withering away rapidly, thus the situation of local culture conservation is quite severe. Since the ecological tourist areas and their environs in China are mostly backward in economy at present, the original ecological environment and cultural features are retained in varying degrees. Therefore opportunities are provided to do the experiments which can integrate the conservation of extant local traditional culture, techniques and communities with the practice of carrying out the standards for sustainable tourism and the explorations of the economic development mode with distinctive local features.

This experiment research should be carried out in three phases:

1. Make the on-the-spot investigations in the relevant regions of South China on local tangible and intangible resources. Partly financed by Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts and Guangdong Zhongheng Group, Nanling Ecotourism Development Company, the involved professors and graduate students learn from the methodology of cultural anthropology to investigate the present conditions of knitting and embroidering in part of Yao nation of North Guangdong regions and Dong nation of North Guangxi regions, as well as the conditions of local bamboo resources and crafts in North Guangdong, Middle Guangdong and west Hunan regions.
2. Make full use of aforementioned resources during the period of product design and product development, especially focus on designing the tourist souvenirs and consumer goods which conform to the current aesthetic standards and functional demands. The involved professors of Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts will launch this phase in relevant to the project courses of graduate and undergraduate students, or take in social professional designers and students from other design domains by organizing public activities such as project workshops.

Changing the change

Design Visions, Proposals and Tools

An international conference on the role and potential of design research in the transition towards sustainability

3. Organize the effective production and commercial operation. Referring to the operating pattern of social enterprises and taking the start-up money and management platform provided by Nanling Ecotourism Development Company, the local manpower as well as the necessary technical processes will be utilized, and the profits will be realized by selling the tourist souvenirs and consumer goods. By doing so, not only the quality of local people's lives can be improved but also the entire vitality of the local community be aroused, thereby the goal of pursuing sustainable tourism and regional development can be achieved.

Design plays an important part in this experimental frame which has a clear aim. But the present design education in China is incompetent for this significant task because of its structural problems. Modern industrial materials and high technology means are concentrated on alone in the design education for a long time, which leads to forming the homogeneous education system and almost entirely disregarding the possibility of utilizing local materials, knowledge and techniques to solve problems, whereas the experience of sustainable design teaching will be accumulated and the practical opportunities will be provided by doing this experiment.

In the course of this experiment, the well-prepared work of broadcasting will be proceeding with the help of various media; thereby the achievements in this experiment will become a replicable operating pattern which can be popularized to other regions. By doing so, the concept of sustainable development can be put into practice and the existent value of these integrated achievements can be embodied in modern society.

Keywords: Local culture; Ecological tourism; Design Education; Sustainable Development

References

Zhuge Ren, Yu Yiwu, He Zhaohe, Chen Xujun, Liu Jingyan, Li Ming, (2006) Green Globe 21 Standards for Sustainable Travel & Tourism, Science Press, Beijing, China

Ministry of National Folk Arts Development Center, (2007) China on the Protection of Non-material Cultural Heritage, Beijing Normal University Press, Beijing, China

Wang Miao, Keep the Roots: (2006) Zhejiang Non-material Cultural Heritage Protection in the Forefront of Thinking, Zhejiang University Press, Hangzhou, China

Leong. B.D., Manzini, E., (2006) Design Vision on the Sustainable Way of Living in China, Lingnan Art Publishing, Guangzhou, China

Kotler, P., (2006) Corporate Social Responsibility: Public Welfare Undertakings Develop More Business Opportunities, Machinery Industry Press, Beijing, China

Hailand,W.A., (2006)Cultural Anthropology(10th Edition), Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Publishing House, Shanghai, China

Wu Chen, (2007) A Handbook of Social Enterprises, Transition Social & Economic Institute, www.zhuanxing.cn

The Abstract Translated by Liang Min