

Urban River Restoration: Cities & Water

Conclusions from the 50th ISOCARP Congress and Personal Experience




Ambassador of the International Riverfoundation (IRF, Australia)



**General Rapporteur of 50th ISOCARP Congress (International
Society of City and Regional Planners) - Poland, September 2014**



Manager and Planner of River Restoration Projects



Architecture and Urban & Regional Planning Ltd.

Water is Everywhere

**Almost all cities around the world were built along rivers,
or along a coast of an ocean, sea or lake.**

**Waterfronts are actually everywhere!
They have a vital urban role and they are a major asset**



Deterioration of Rivers

During the 20th century many of the rivers have been polluted, deteriorated, and they lost their significant roles. The rivers became a nuisance to the urban environment

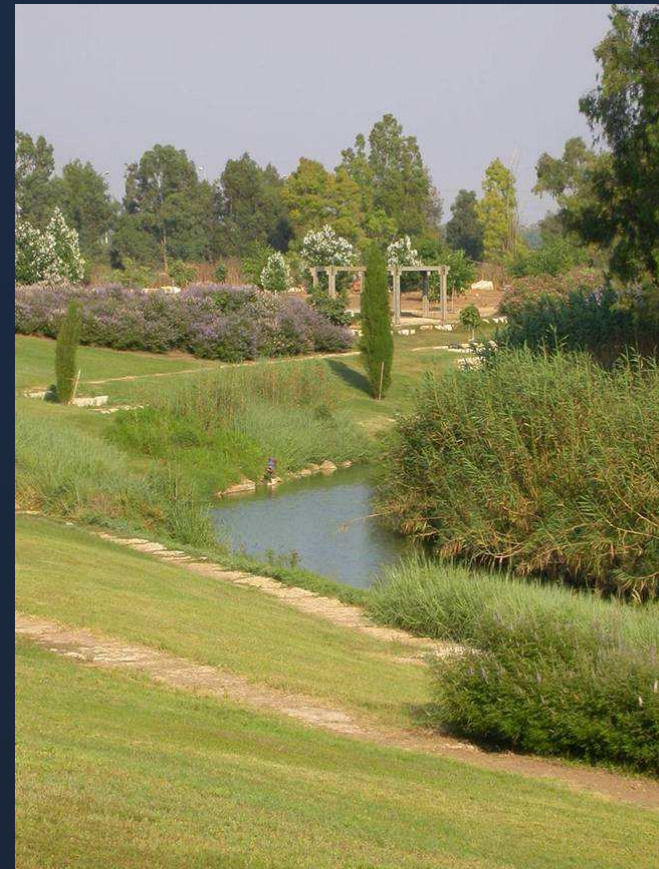


Restoration of Rivers

In recent years, major efforts of river restoration have brought many rivers back to life. Not only the big ones.



Before - 1996

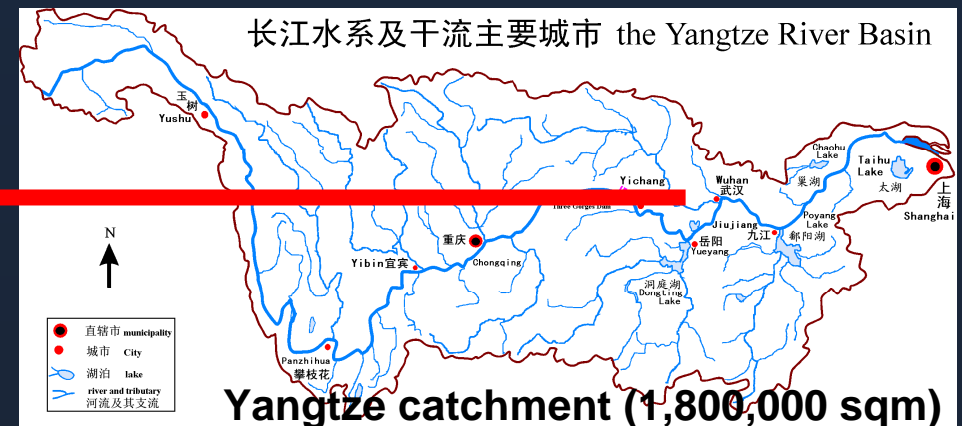
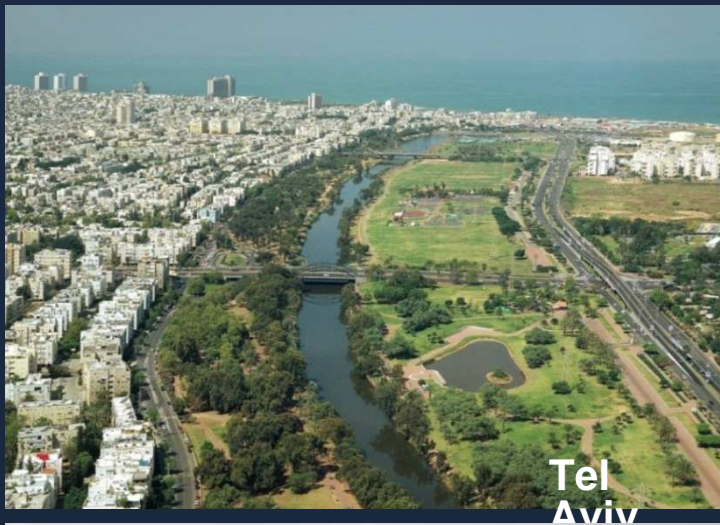


After - 2014

**Alexander River Cross border river - Collaboration between Israeli and Palestinian neighbors.
Planning and Managing: Arch. Amos Brandeis**

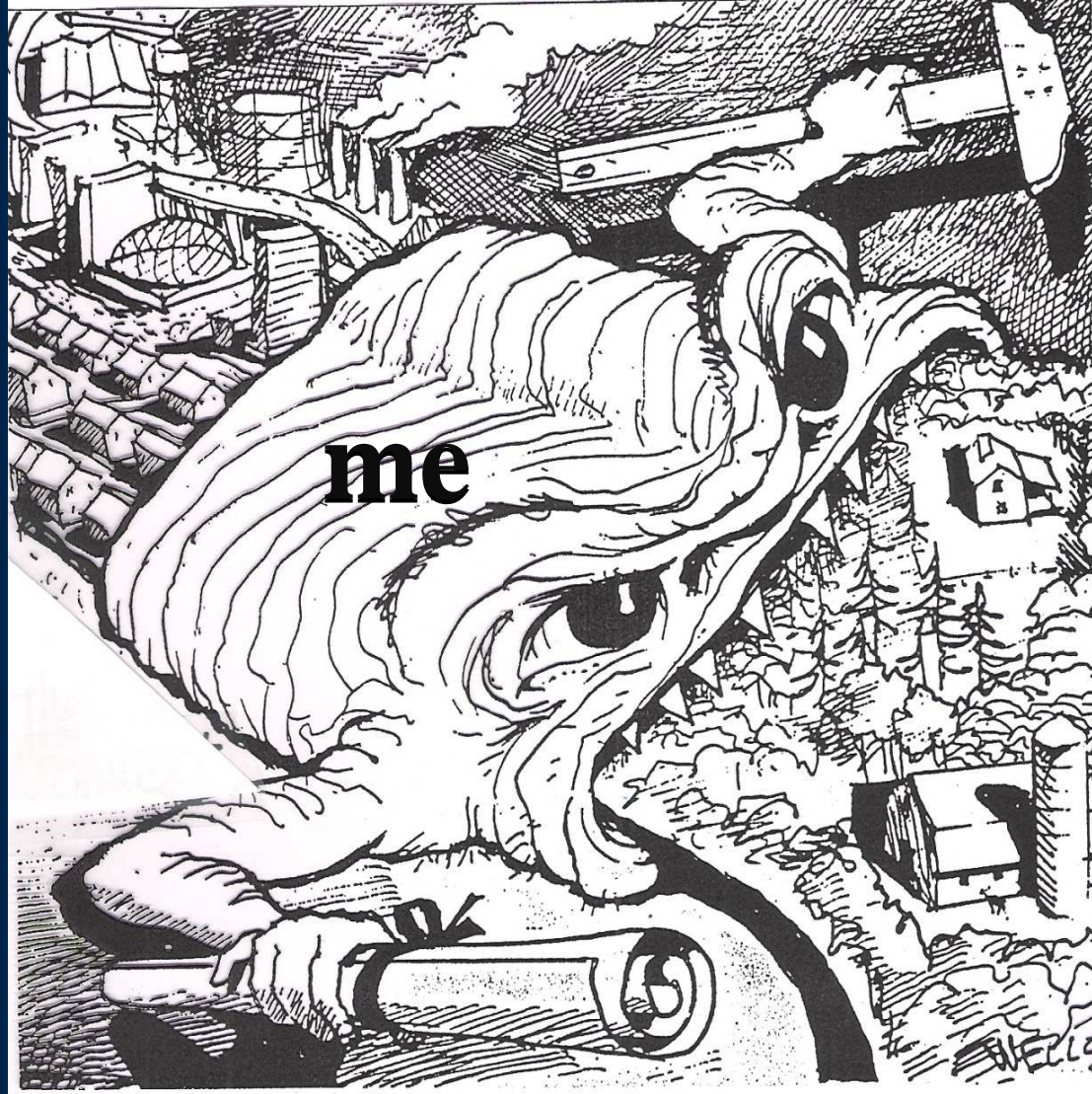
Restoration of Rivers and Urban Waterfronts

River restoration is on the catchment (basin) level.
Urban areas are usually just a very small part of the
catchment, even in the case of urban rivers



■ **20 years ago I was very young and naive...**

I thought river restoration is like preparing a drawing and a report



10 years ago I was less young and less naive...

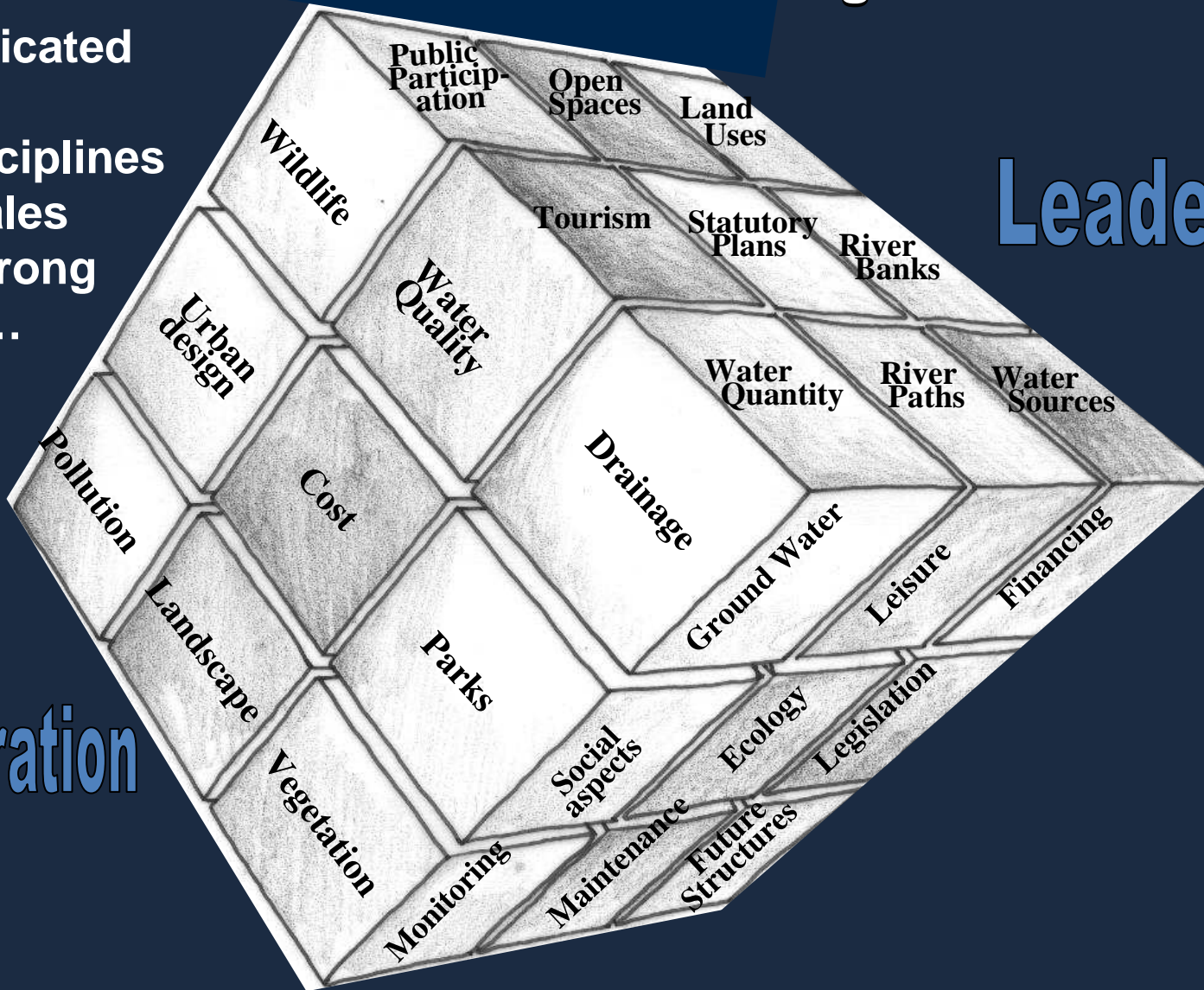
I thought river restoration is like assembling a complicated puzzle



Kishon River Masterplan. Planner: Amos Brandeis

I think river restoration is like solving the Rubik's Cube:

- **Complicated**
- **3d**
- **All disciplines**
- **All scales**
- **One wrong move...**



Leadership

Collaboration

All understand now the importance of the Rivers & Cities issues



Waterfront Planning Marathon

50th ISOCARP Congress, Poland, September 2014

- Antwerp, Fort Lillo, Belgium
- Auckland, New Zealand
- Basel, Switzerland
- Brasilia, Paranoa Lake, Brazil
- Gdansk, Poland
- Kaliningrad, Russia
- Trencin, Slovakia



Best project award: Auckland
Best presentation award: Trencin

The challenge is - how we create a real dialogue?

Sectors: Academic, Public and Private

Disciplines: River restoration planners and managers, Urban planners and designers, Architects, Environmentalists, Sociologists, Economists, Infrastructure planners, Landscape architects, Decision makers, etc.



Restored Rivers and Urban Waterfronts

The rivers flow through both historic and new parts of cities.
They can become an “Urban Celebration”



Mersey River, First Winner of the International Riverprize (1999)



Urban Waterfronts

**The place in the city for the people to meet and enjoy.
A huge urban potential**



Hong Kong Light and Sound Evening Show

What Makes Waterfronts Successful?

**Not only beautiful, but also alive.
Part of the urban structure and life.
What makes places successful?**



Hobart Waterfront, Tasmania

How to Plan a Successful Waterfront?

No planning prescriptions. Every place is different.
Planning principles can be defined based on analyses of case studies.
These should be critically examined when planning a waterfront



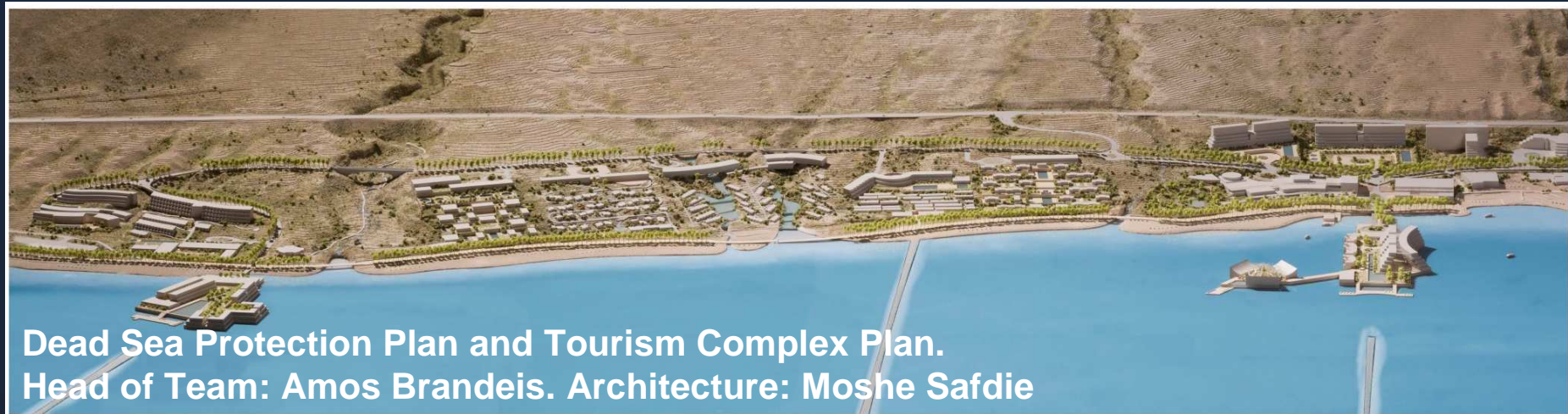
Barcelona



The Bund, Shanghai



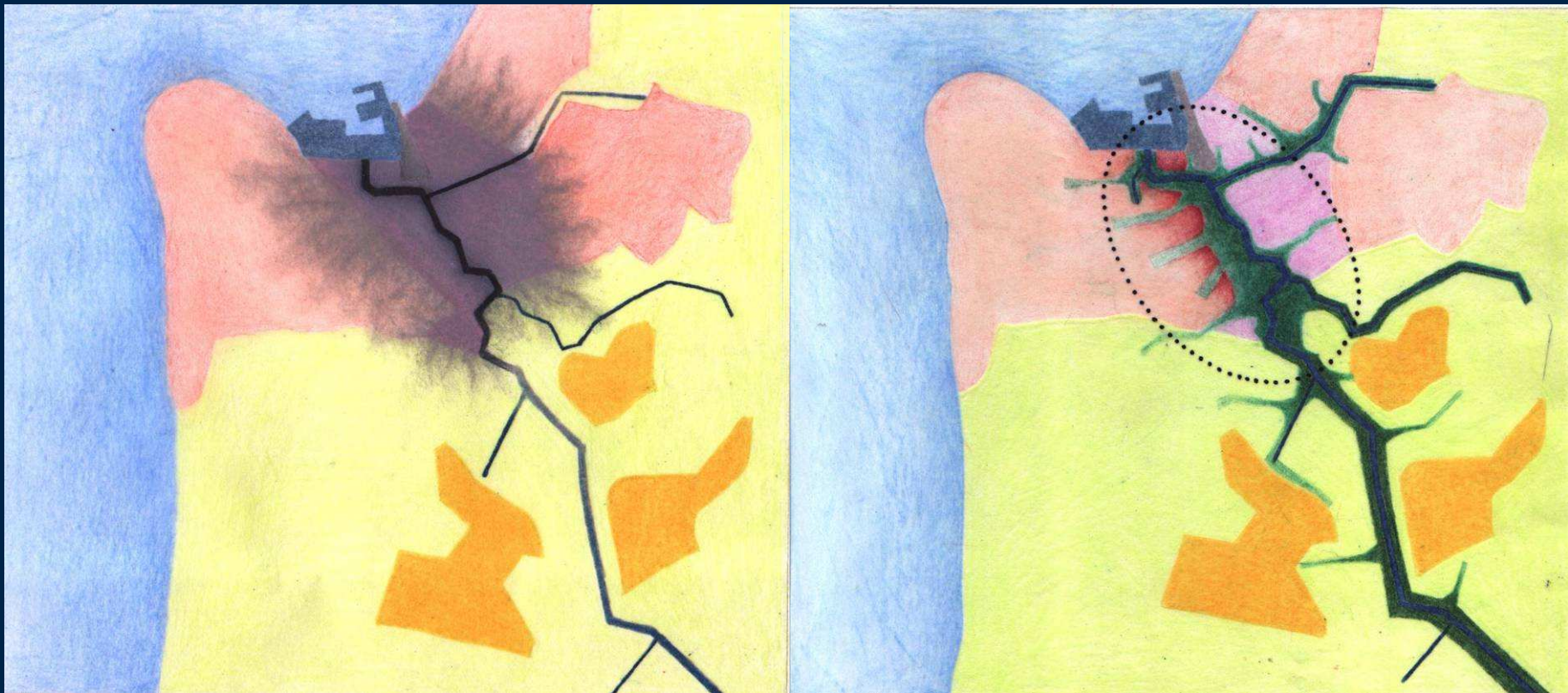
Source: Ynet



Dead Sea Protection Plan and Tourism Complex Plan.
Head of Team: Amos Brandeis. Architecture: Moshe Safdie

Planning Principles - Urban Planning Scale

**Planning must begin on Urban and even Metropolitan scale:
Planning, not only Urban Design, Architecture or Landscaping.
Definition of the role and vision on a wide scale**



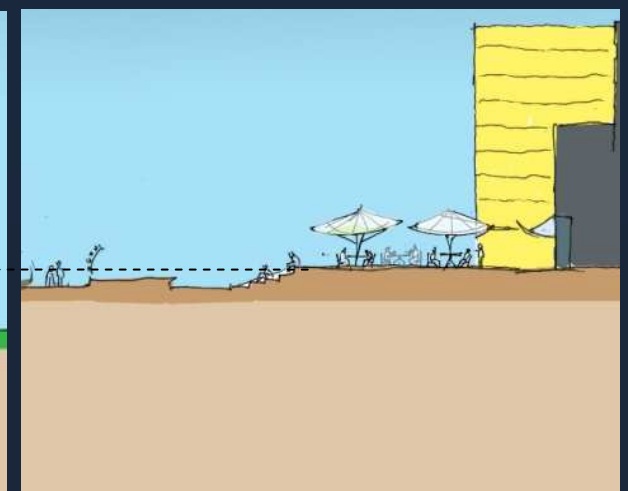
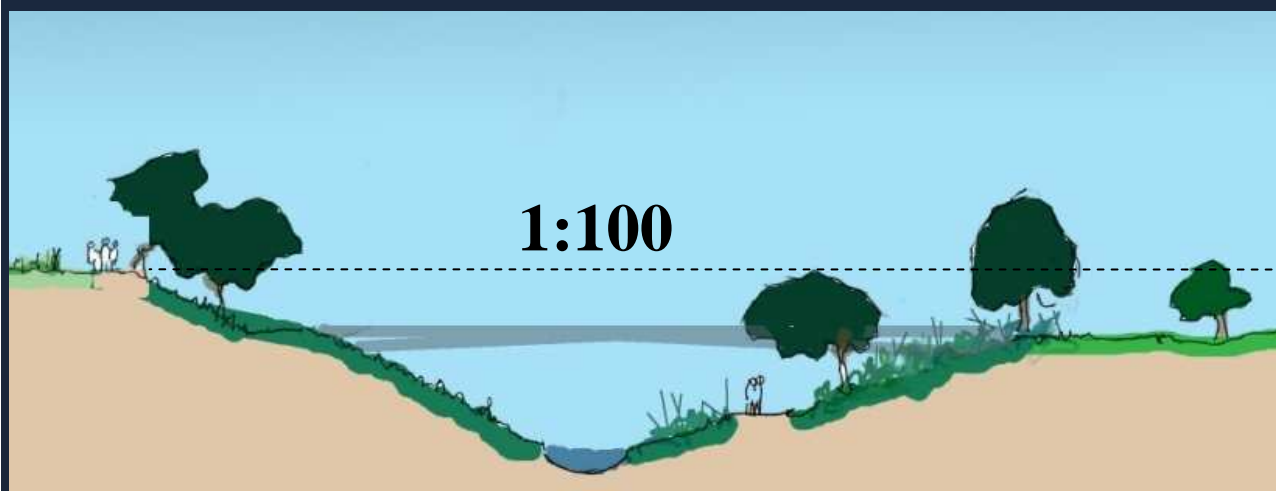
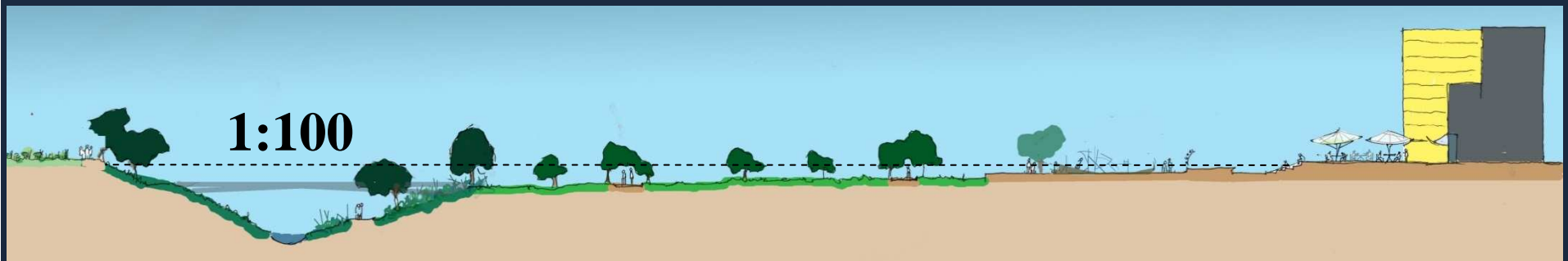
Kishon River, Israel

Planning: Arch. Amos Brandeis

Floodplains and Building Restrictions



Should be addressed in relation to catchment level, and be integral part of the plan



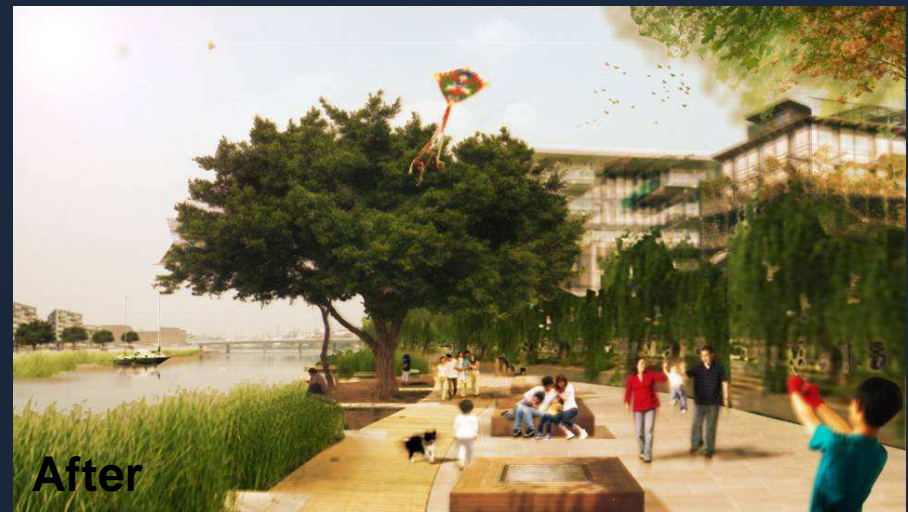
Ayalon River Plan, Israel. Planner: Amos Brandeis

Storm Water and Flood Protection

Should be addressed during waterfront redevelopment



Before

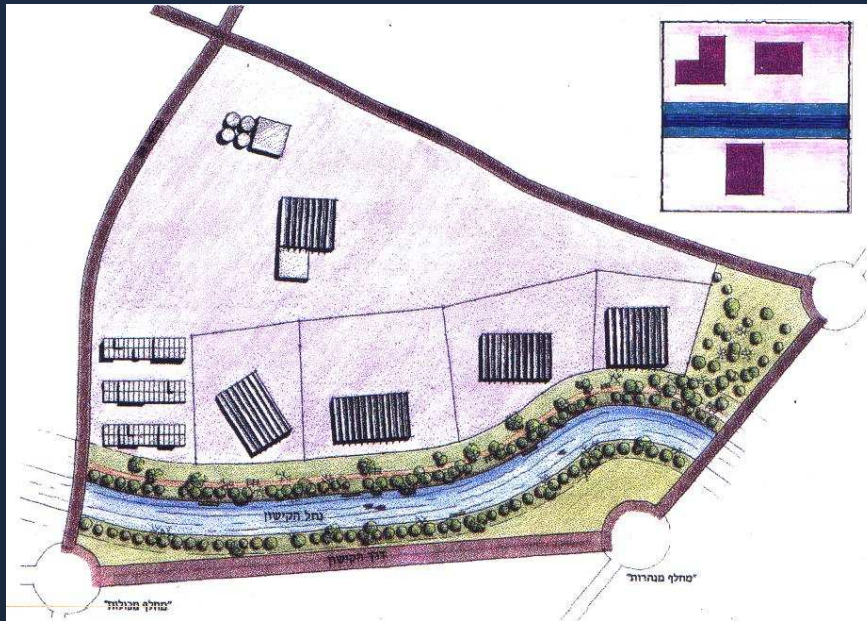


After

Shantou planning workshop (UPAT) - ISOCARP, 2013. Team Leader - Amos Brandeis

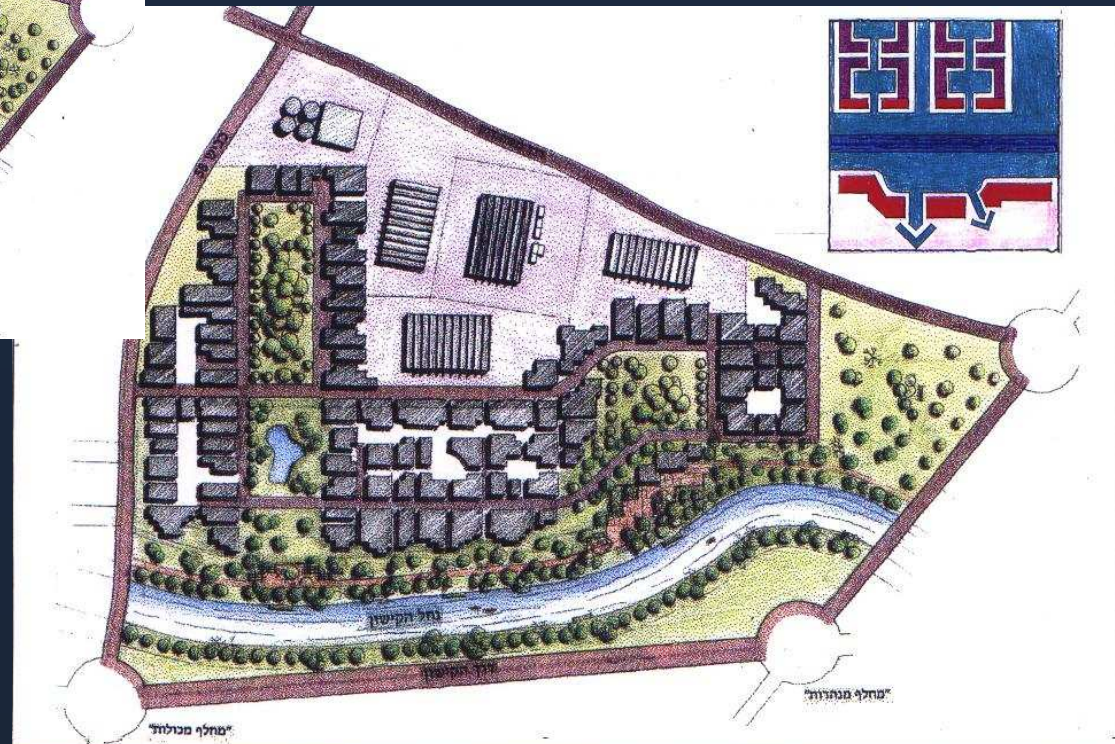
Mixed Uses and Variety of Urban Activities

Mixed uses are essential to make a place alive 24/7.
Liveable cities are based on the presence of people...



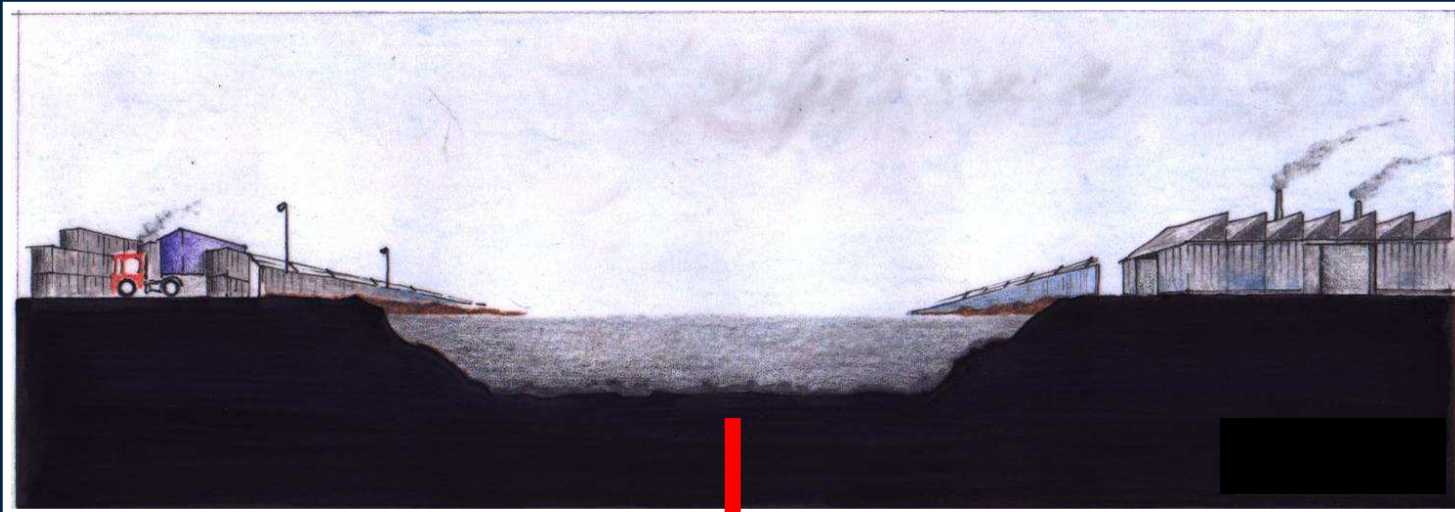
Kishon River, Israel

Planning: Arch. Amos Brandeis



Public versus Private

The waterfront belongs to the public.
Open, accessible, free entrance, continuous



Proportions

Human proportions of buildings, squares, and open spaces



Public Participation

The best (and actually the only) way to plan an urban waterfront, is with the people who live there and use/will use the place. They can best define what they need and want & what are the key values



Pushchino, Russia



Shantou, China



El Amrani Bedouins, Israel



Burkina Faso, Africa

The Water is the Resource

The People should experience and feel the water close as possible



Bangkok, Thailand



Gothenburg, Sweden

Open Views to the Water

The water is the show. Water is always changing. Fascinates people



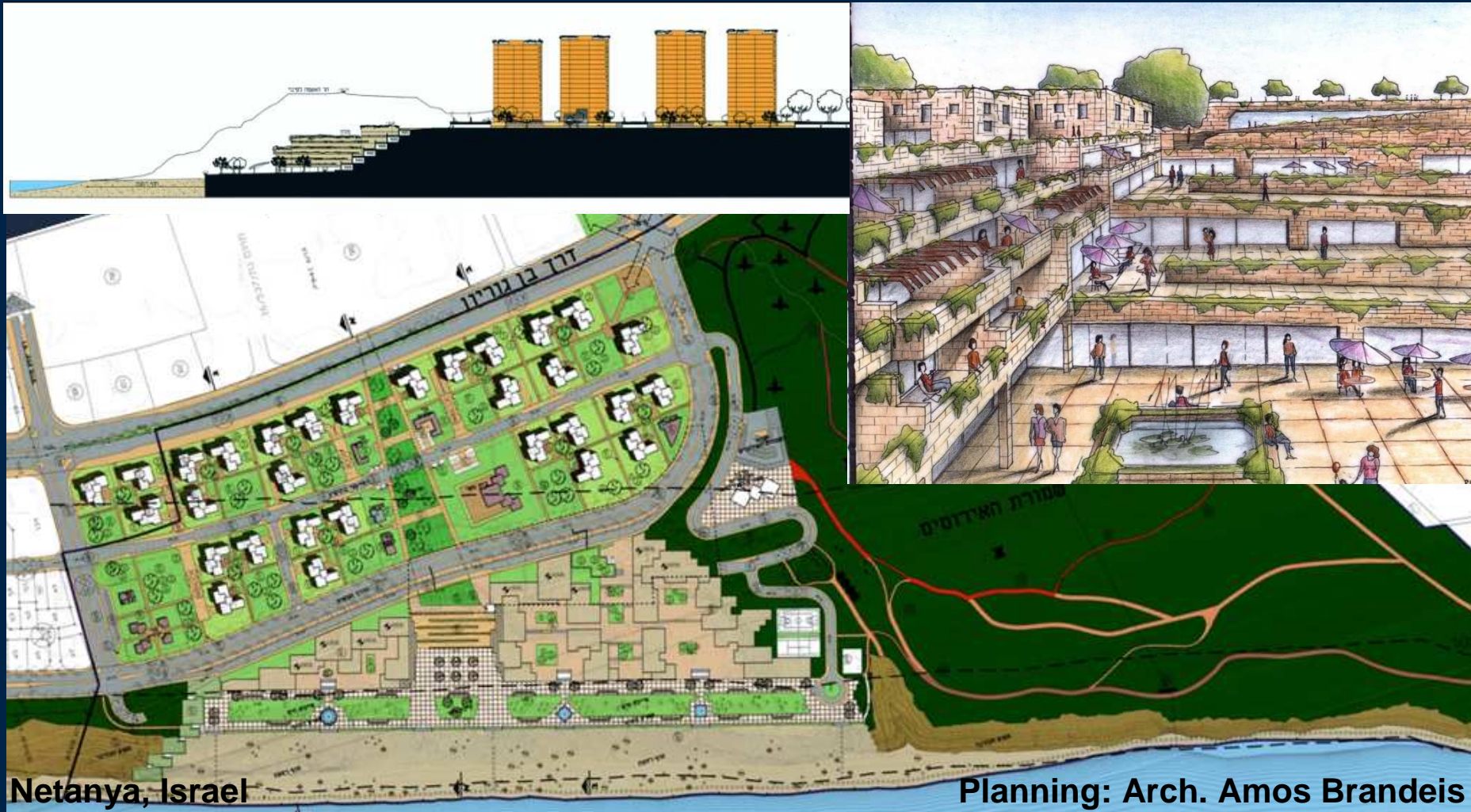
People Always Face and Enjoy the Waterfront



Luzern, Switzerland

“Amphitheatre” with Open View to the Water

The water must be visible from as many buildings and public spaces.
The people are the spectators

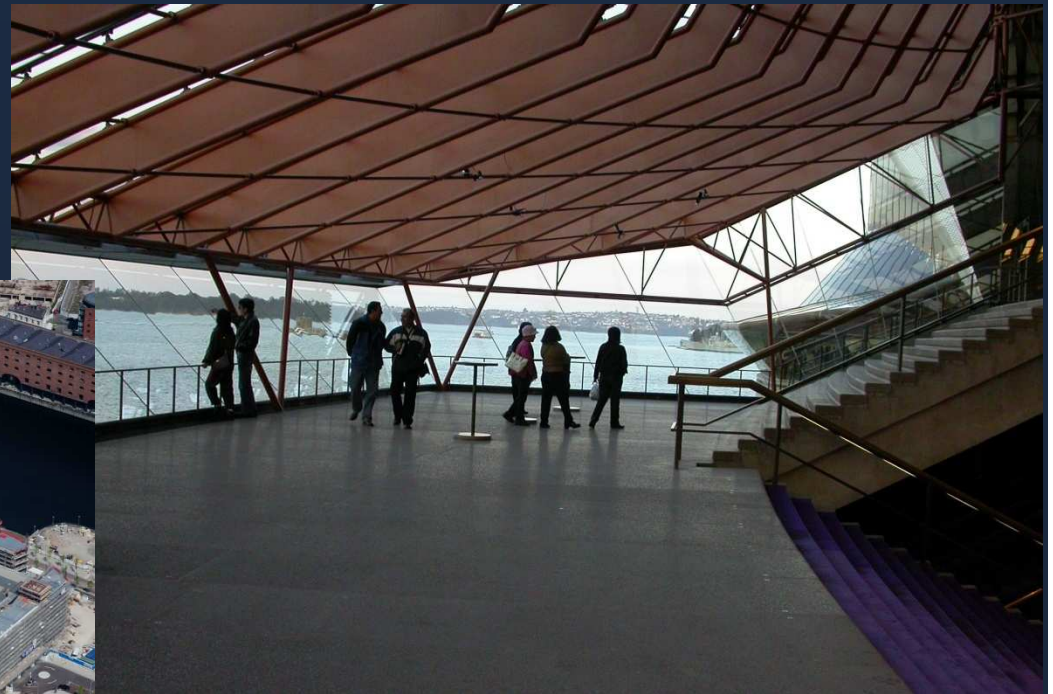


Transparent Waterfront

The buildings should be transparent and use the advantages of looking at the water and the promenade.
No “sealed” buildings on the water edge



USA



Sydney Opera, Australia

Promenades

**Promenades are for People. Not for cars to run.
A place to enjoy, relax, walk, run and cycle**



Northbank - Brisbane, Australia



Southbank - Brisbane, Australia

Outside Seating

Promenades, terraces, food & view



Freemantle (Perth)
Australia



Budapest, Hungary

A Livelihood Promenade



Amsterdam, Netherland

Urban life...
A place to enjoy.
A celebration...



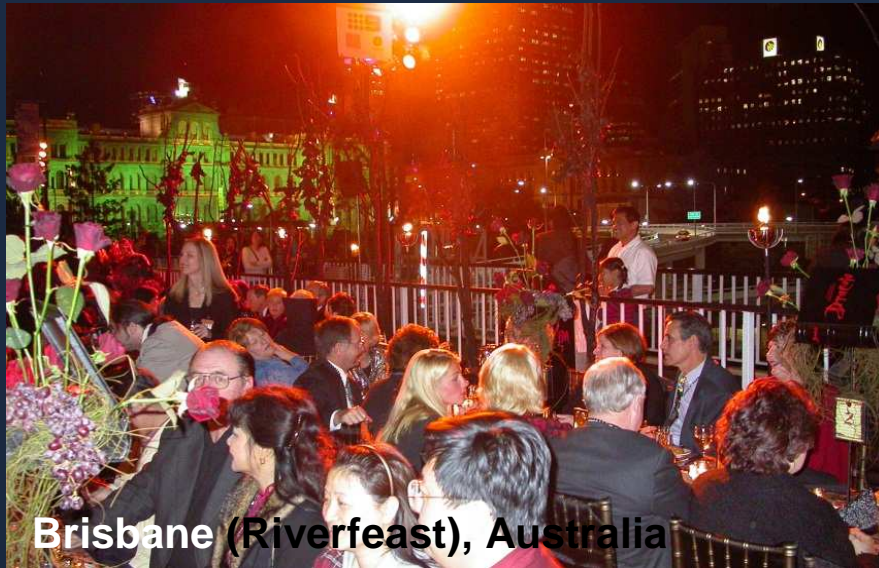
Freemantle, Australia



Bergen, Norway

24/7

Alive 24/7. Urban celebrations start at night...



Brisbane (Riverfeast), Australia



The Bund, Shanghai, China



Sydney, Australia



Pudong, Shanghai, China

People Friendly

People friendly attitude. This place is for people...



Local & Regional Values - History and local cultures matters!

Respect, preservation and strengthening of local values and atmosphere



Hobart, Tasmania

Local Flavor



Bergen, Norway



Working Waterfronts

Preservation of activities: fishing, ships & boats, docklands, small businesses, etc.



Built Heritage

A delicate integration of built heritage and new development



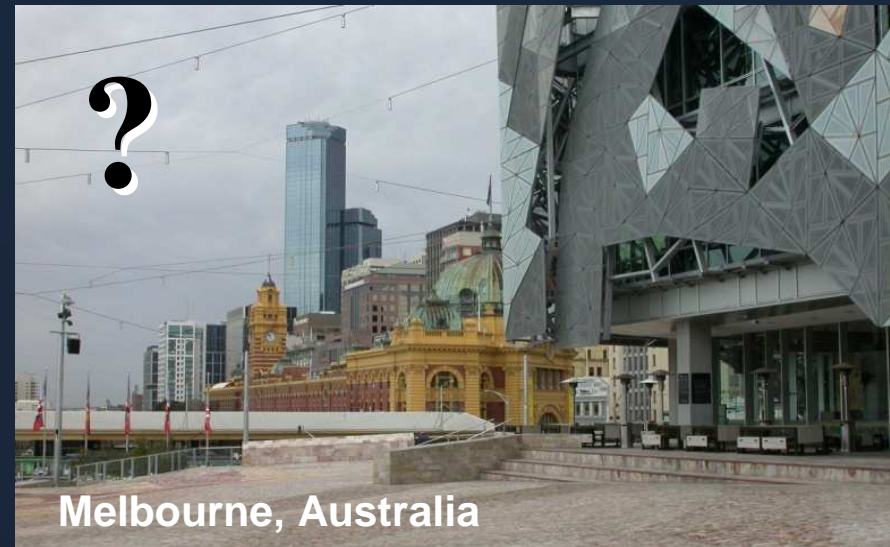
Bergen, Norway



Bergen, Norway



Melbourne, Australia



Melbourne, Australia

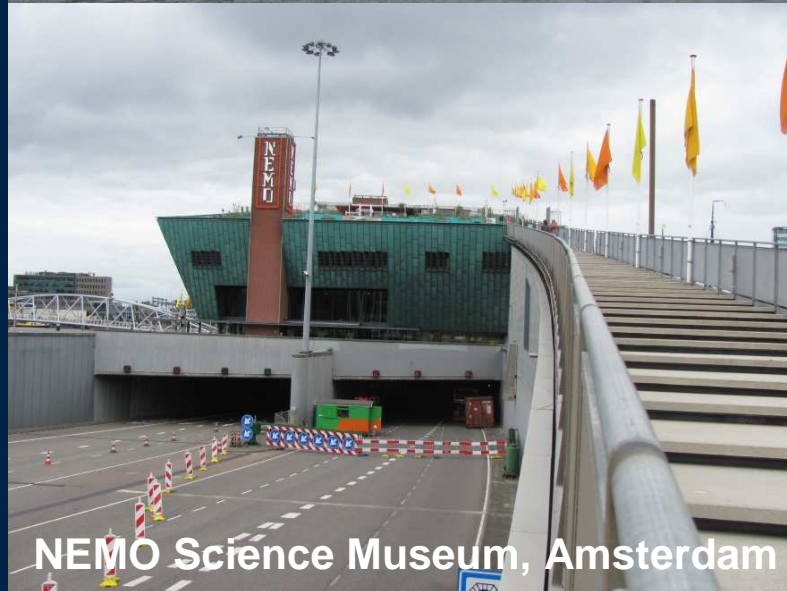
Existing Urban Patterns and Buildings

Restoration of urban patterns and buildings, with waterfront orientation, and creation of attractive flavor and sense of entity



Public Institutions

Important public buildings on the waterfront, to attract local people and tourists, and become a lively place



NEMO Science Museum, Amsterdam



London



Maritime Museum, Perth, Australia

Urban Landmarks / Icons



Connections to Built Urban Environment

“Green Fingers” into the depth of the urban surrounding pattern - parks, boulevards, paths, bicycle routes, axis, etc.

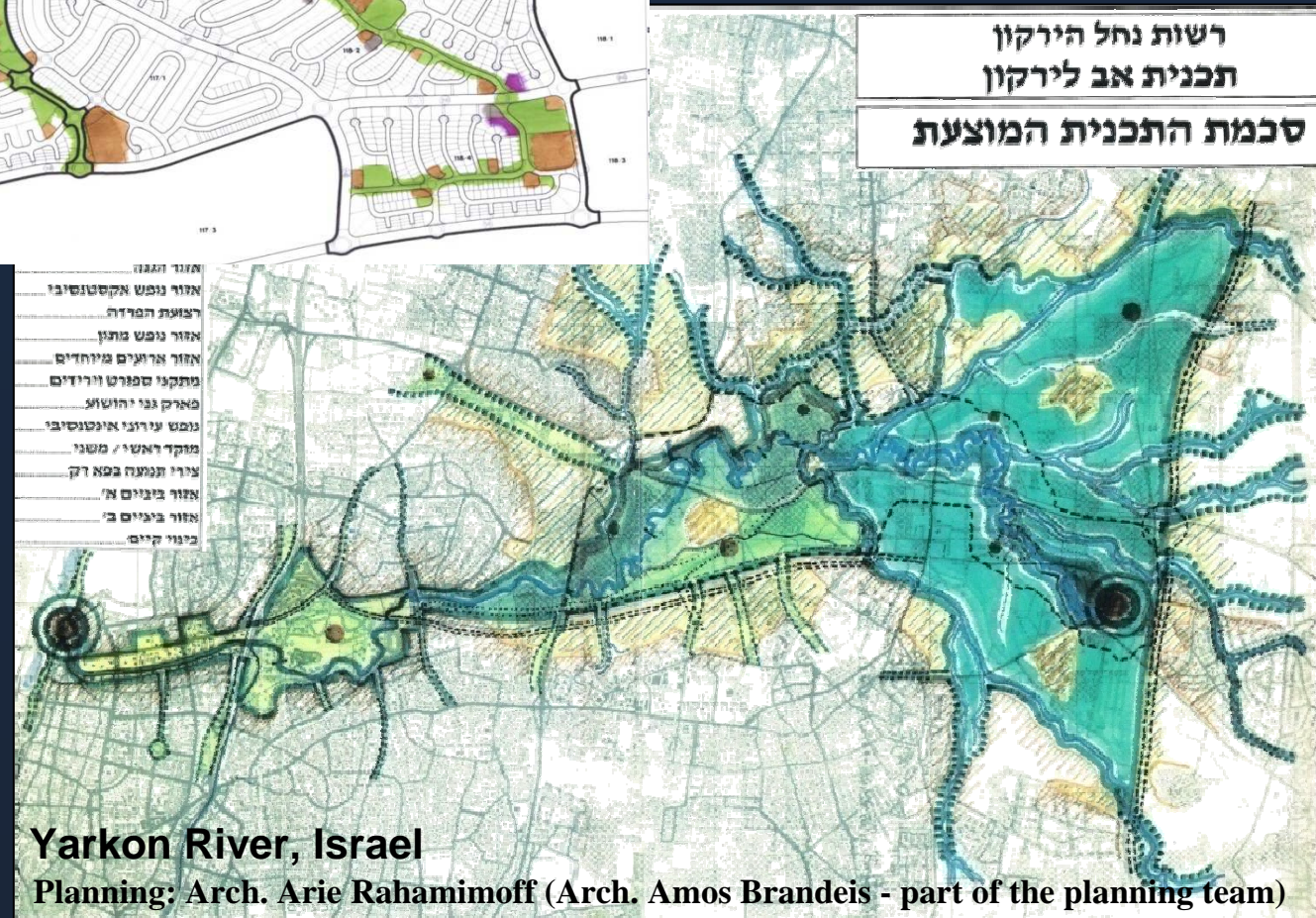


Rahat, Israel

Planning: Arch. Amos Brandeis



Freemantle, Australia



Yarkon River, Israel

Planning: Arch. Arie Rahamimoff (Arch. Amos Brandeis - part of the planning team)

Landscaping

High quality and people friendly landscaping.
Climate sensitive. Use of local plants. Good maintenance



Art



Copenhagen, Denmark

Urban Nature

Design of some areas in the middle of a city, where people can feel in nature. A pause from the urban pace



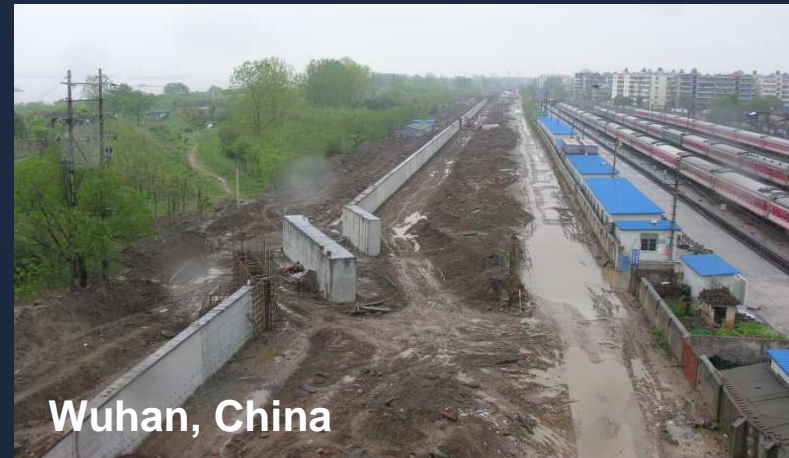
Yarkon River in Tel Aviv

Overcome Challenging Linear Infrastructures

Plan innovative ways to connect cities to their waterfront, despite challenging linear infrastructures (or just not to place them there in the first place...)



Budapest, Hungary



Wuhan, China



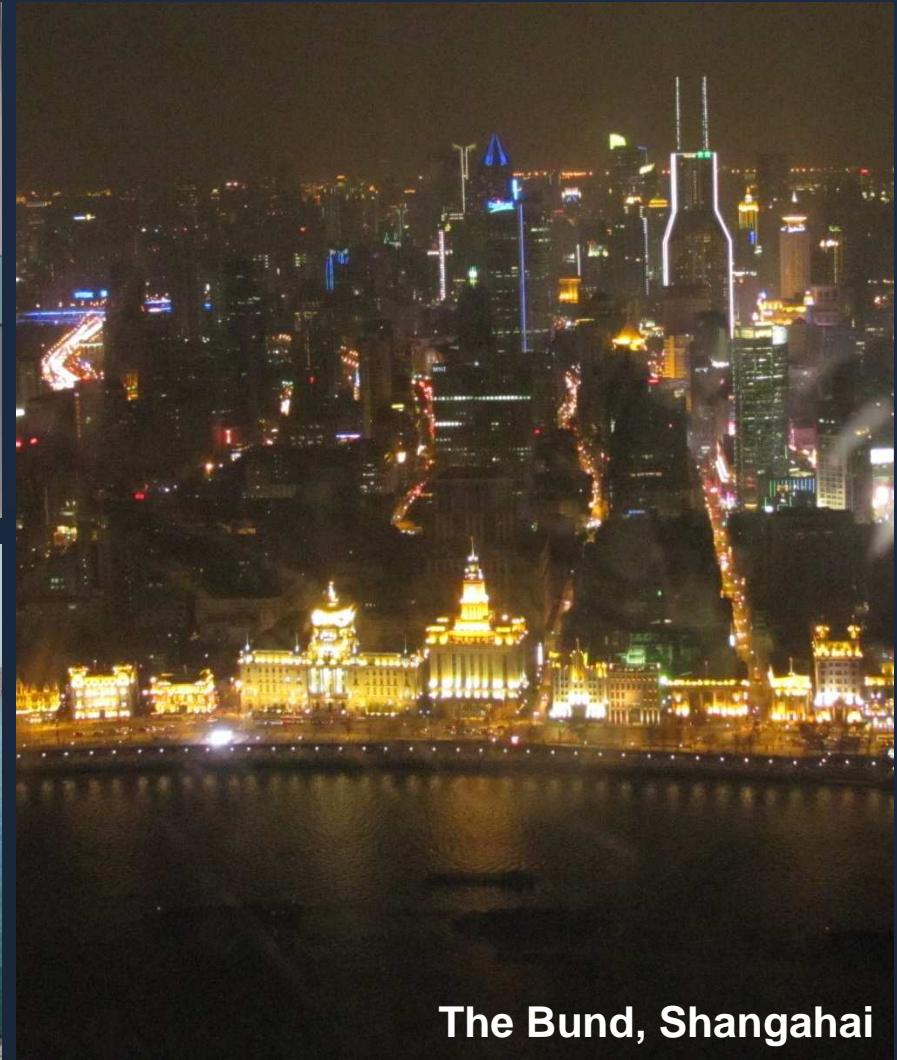
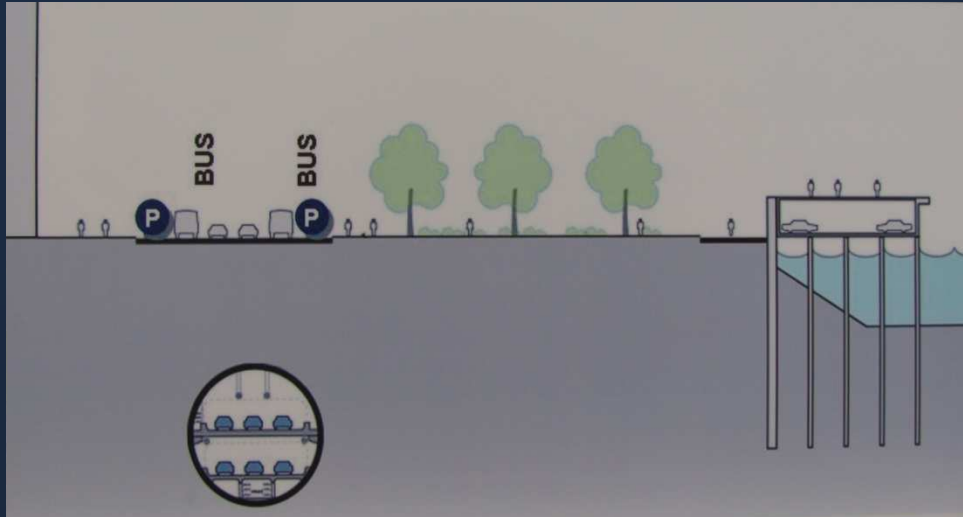
Bergen, Norway



Spain

Overcome Challenging Linear Infrastructures

Plan innovative ways to connect cities to their waterfront, despite challenging linear infrastructures



The Bund, Shanghai

Uniqueness

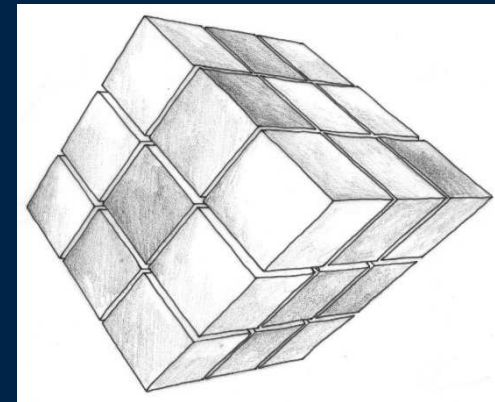
Riverfestival - world known international river city



Brisbane, Australia

Conclusions

1. **Urban River Restoration issues are relevant to all planners of all disciplines, and all regions. Real continuous dialogue and integration is essential!**
2. **Urban rivers and waterfronts are globally undergoing restoration to gain accessibility, recreation and aesthetic values**
3. **Crucial both in areas blessed with sustainable water resources, and in areas which suffer from severe water shortage or floods**
4. **Cities and water issues are:
global, but also local
cross-border and cross-region
multilevel and multiscale
comprehensive, inter and trans-disciplinary
very complicated and challenging**



Conclusions

5. **Urban rivers and Waterfronts are an extremely important urban asset - they can become an “Urban Celebration”.**
6. **Successful case studies champion urban development, economic growth, environmental and ecological sensitivity, integration of drainage issues, and contribute to a liveable and sustainable cities.**
7. **Most successful examples of waterfronts represent: Good planning, Creativity, Innovation, Comprehensiveness, Sense of Place, Delicate balance, Uniqueness, and... Patience.**
8. **Principles for successful planning of waterfronts can be defined, but should be critically examined, as every place is different.**



Conclusions

9. This congress will hopefully provide us with:

awareness

knowledge

knowhow and tools

sensitivity

passion

to face the challenges in our daily professional life, and
improve dialogue and collaboration between all
disciplines.

10. This issue proves again: Planning can make a difference!

But...



Dreaming about the future can be exciting,
but in planning, good execution is everything.

Photo at Singapore City Gallery

Finally...

11. River Restoration projects require:

Optimism

Leadership

Cooperation



www.RestorationPlanning.com

Thank you!