

ECOWEEK 2012: Urban Communities + Affordable Living + Green Design

N GO ECOWEEK was born in Aegina, Greece in 2005. ECOWEEK was created with the mission to raise environmental awareness and to promote the principles of sustainability. ECOWEEK was born on the island of Aegina, as local community event, holding exhibitions and community activity at the Folklore Museum on waste recycling, renewable energy, energy conservation and ecological buildings.

After two successful years, ECOWEEK organized in 2007 events throughout Greece (Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras, Crete, Corfu, etc), and, as the film 'An Inconvenient Truth' came out, ECOWEEK invited **Al Gore** to speak on Climate Change, in cooperation with Megaron Plus.

Starting in 2008, ECOWEEK focused on 'green' buildings, and invited a series of leading architects from around the world: **Shigeru Ban, Ken Yeang, Bjarke Ingels, Rural Studio,** and **WHITE Architects**. In 2008 ECOWEEK held its first conference in Larnaka, Cyprus, and in 2010 held its first conference and 'green' design workshops in Israel, with the cooperation of Palestinian young professionals. In September 2011 ECOWEEK held its first conference and workshops in Milano, Italy, and in December 2011, in Athens, ECOWEEK hosted as keynote speaker environmental expert Prof. **David W. Orr**.



In 2012 ECOWEEK held its second international conference and 'green' design workshops in the Middle East, bringing again together Israeli and Palestinian students and young professionals, and young and established professionals and students from the US, Canada, Italy, Denmark, Greece, Poland, and Turkey. The ECOWEEK workshops developed 'green' design proposals for real sites in Jerusalem, Holon, Rishon, Azaryia (Bethany), Al-Wallajeh, Tiberias, and Zur Moshe. Some of this projects will be further developed and some may even be implemented after ECOWEEK.

In April 2011 ECOWEEK launched for the first time the ECOWEEK NETWORK (www.ecoweek.net), a platform for young professionals for the promotion of 'green' design and ecological buildings, already numbering more than 500 members in 30 countries around the world. In December 2011 ECOWEEK also launched the ECOWEEK GREENHOUSE, a platform for innovation and for social and environmental entrepreneurship for young professionals, primarily architects, landscape architects, designers and engineers. The GREENHOUSE was launched in Athens, Greece.



In February 2012 the ECOWEEK GREENHOUSE (www.ecoweekgreenhouse.org) it was also launched in Israel with the participation of students from the Holon Institute of Technology (HIT), who developed 'green' design proposals for the Jessie Cohen Community Center in Holon – a real project to be implemented in August 2012. The GREENHOUSE workshop took place during the ECOWEEK 2012 workshops.

E COWEEK 2012 in the Middle East in numbers:

More than 150 participants from 8 countries. More than 600 architects and architecture students from Israel and abroad attended the ECOWEEK events in Jerusalem, Holon, Rishon LeZion, and Zur Moshe (the expectation was far larger, but there were many cancellations due to the extremely bad weather). ECOWEEK included 8 'green' design workshops led by architects, landscape architects and designers from Israel, US, Canada, Italy, and Greece. ECOWEEK speakers were interviewed by Haaretz, Station 2, Xnet and other media printed and digital. The ECOWEEK workshop proposals are exhibited at the Jerusalem Municipality Building 1 Safra Square between March 15-31, 2012, and included in the ECOWEEK 2012 exhibition catalogue.

The ECOWEEK Workshops included projects in Jerusalem (Katamonim neighborhood), Holon (Jessie Cohen and bicycle route), Rishon LeZion (Ramat Eliyahu neighborhood), Tiberias (Scottish Church compound), Azaryia (Bethany – Shorouq Palestinian Women Society Center, phase 2), Al-Wallajeh (urban park), and Zur Moshe (urban interventions and rehabilitation of 2 public buildings). All projects were invited by the local authorities and or local NGOs, who acted as the 'clients' offering the students and young professionals the unique opportunity to work on something real and tangible, and very likely to see their ideas being further developed and, in some cases, implemented.

The ECOWEEK GREENHOUSE workshop, which consisted primarily of Interior Design students from the Holon Institute of Technology (HIT) took place for the first time in Israel in February 2012. The first assignment was to redesign parts of the Jessie Cohen Community Center in Holon. The project was done under the guidance of the director of the Community Center.

E COWEEK Evaluation:

On the last day of the ECOWEEK 2012 a 2-page questionnaire was distributed to the participating students and workshop leaders. Out of a total of approx. 150 participants, 53 questionnaires were completed and returned (a sample of 35%). These questionnaires will be processed and their responses categorized. As with previous questionnaires, their feedback will be taken into account towards improving the organization of future ECOWEEK events in Israel and abroad. A sample questionnaire is attached.

E COWEEK 2012 Photo Album:

Photos of ECOWEEK 2012 in the Middle East are posted in the ECOWEEK photo album page:

http://ecowee.netfirms.com/ecowee/press_room_photo_album_ecowee_ENG.htm

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