



**ECOWEEK ONLINE CHALLENGE : The 15 Year Anniversary Edition**  
**October 2 – 4, 2020**

**NGO ECOWEEK celebrated its 15-year anniversary  
with an online challenge to inspire, challenge and innovate  
with lectures, design workshops and a virtual exhibition!**

**With activity in 17 countries, two online events that reached out to more than 20 countries  
and a network in 56 countries, ECOWEEK brought together young and established  
professionals for innovation and sustainable design, green buildings, Placemaking, social  
architecture, environmental activism, Circular Economy and more.**

Responding to the COVID-19 travel restrictions and the need to intensify environmental awareness, policy and action, ECOWEEK held on October 2-4, 2020 its second **online event** in collaboration with the EUNIC Tel Aviv cluster and the EU delegation in Israel.

The online event was opened by **Despoina Kouinoglou** landscape designer and ECOWEEK Associate who gave the framework of the day, and ECOWEEK founder and coordinator architect Dr. **Elias Messinas** spoke about the ECOWEEK mission and activity around the world. Speakers included keynote speaker **award-winning French architect Nicola Delon (Encore Heureux Architectes)**, and lectures by experts from Israel, Romania, Poland, Austria, Lithuania, Greece, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. **Nine 48-hour design workshops** engaged young professionals and students in architecture, design, landscape design, agronomy and other professions in projects around the world, which may lead to real interventions in place. A unique **virtual exhibition**, was created by a team of young architects and designers and coordinated by architect **Pavlos Symianiakis**, member of the ECOWEEK team. The exhibition aimed to express the values behind ECOWEEK, to represent 15 years with 15 pavilions, and to inspire with ideas on sustainable design, with the exhibition panels of 200 ECOWEEK design workshops in 17 countries.

Two ECOWEEK - EUNIC Tel Aviv lecture panels were moderated by architect and environmental consultant Dr. **Elias Messinas**, founder and coordinator of ECOWEEK, an adjunct senior lecturer at Holon Institute of Technology, Israel and University of Patras, Greece. A third ECOWEEK panel was moderated by architect **Sofia Passia**, a member of the ECOWEEK organizing team.

The lectures and workshops presentations were held on ZOOM on Friday, October 2 and 4 respectively, and were broadcasted live on Youtube. More details at <https://ecoweeek.online/>



**THE WORKSHOPS**  
**‘OVERCOMING THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS**  
**WITH (ONLINE) CREATIVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY’**

ECOWEEK has developed for the past 15 years a platform where young professionals and students meet experts and together they analyze the site, get to know the local stakeholders and develop in co-design frameworks ideas, diagrams, plans, and prototypes, many of which are implemented in on-site hands-on workshops. Since COVID-19, ECOWEEK had to adjust by seeing an opportunity to keep enabling these empowering, engaging and educating formats on online platforms, and keep creating as much as possible of an experience that is compatible with the physical workshop.

The first experiment took place in May 2020, where teams of young professionals and students worked with experts from around Europe on projects on circular economy in design. The second experiment took place in October 2-4, 2020, where also in collaboration with EUNIC Tel Aviv - the network of European cultural institutions Tel Aviv cluster, experts from around Europe, Israel and South America, were invited to lead the interactive ECOWEEK workshops. They worked with students and young professionals from Europe and Israel to produce ideas in **Thessaloniki**, Greece, **Vienna**, Austria, **Netanya** and **Ashkelon** in Israel, and **Sao Paulo** in Brazil. Projects included real projects with the aim to further develop them as prototypes and to be constructed in situ by local teams. Other projects included inspiring prototype ideas that could be applied in different urban contexts. Overall, the COVID-19 restrictions and the online ‘limitation’ were overcome to maintain the parameters that make the ECOWEEK workshops stand out: location and real context, community, and sustainable design.

Here is a brief summary of the ECOWEEK 2020 Online Workshops:

**W1: Rethinking the urban space in São Paulo through a sustainable approach**

Workshop leaders: **Luis Rossi**, **Nicolas Le Roux**, and **Paula Lemos** of the **COTA 760** office.

The workshop analysed an area in transformation in the city of São Paulo, Brazil, and drafted proposals to include sustainable solutions that can be implemented in the public space in different scales, using local materials, and addressing local needs. The aim was to study the complexity of the city in its existing form and social conditions and try to design proposals for a transformation towards a more sustainable and egalitarian urban context.



## **W2: Under the bridge**

Workshop leaders: **Ulrike Schartner** of the Gaubenraup +/- office.

The workshop developed ideas and strategies for a multifunctional building - including hoel - under the metro station in Aspern, Vienna. The terminal metro station in the newly erected district is situated on a bridge. The building will serve disabled persons and at the same time, it will offer opportunities for disabled persons to get employment in the hotel. The team investigated the programmatic requirements and considered how to link the project to the neighbourhood, so as to make it a positive contribution and to minimize the NIMBY phenomenon that is common in social buildings. The workshop was made possible thanks to the generous support of the **Austrian Cultural Forum** in Tel Aviv and the cooperation of ECOWEEK with EUNIC – Tel Aviv.

## **W3: InCommOn-kyklos urban sustainability and circularity Lab**

Workshop leaders: **Vivian Doumpa, Olga Saliampoukou, Ilias Papagiannopoulos, Mara Angelidou, Eleni Intzidi, and Marina Koumoutsakou.**

The workshop weaved together approaches, methodologies and tools from placemaking, participatory planning and community building, while adding content from circular economy and sustainable urban development. The site that was chosen was located in the area of Ano Poli in Thessaloniki, Greece. There the workshop team identified underused places in the area, addressing them as underused resources of the urban environment, to be utilized to improve the urban experience and to give new usable spaces to the surrounding communities.

## **W5: Restoration 360o : A versatile building restoration approach**

Workshop leaders: **Ioanna Mikrou, Dimitris Nanos, Charis Karantzias (BLIND Studio), Grigoris Koutropoulos, Charis Theocharis (BOULOUKI Team).**

The focused on the restoration of a two-floor stone masonry building in a village near the city of Larisa, Greece. A traditional building, located in a traditional settlement, stone-built, two-storey high, with a small surrounding area that ends in a river. One of its special characteristics is that on the ground floor, part of the masonry is a piece of rock. The group aimed to decode the history of the building, such as the traditional settlement genius loci and the traditional construction techniques used. Also, to understand the needs of restoration, to define the works needed, the techniques to be used, the ecological aspects of the project, for example the use of materials without cement, to imagine the complete form of the structure and to transfer this experience



to a digital medium. Further, the group identified the need to address a local produce that was a reason for pride in the village: its local tomatoes which were once greatly in demand.

#### **W6: Circular Sanitation Models**

Workshop leaders: **Lena Beigel** and **Georg Sampl** of EOOS firm

The workshop addressed the environmental challenge posed by the global population growth and food production. They will lead to a growing demand for fertilizers, relying on nitrogen and phosphorus, within the near future. While most nitrogen-based fertilizers are produced industrially, societies may be the solution for natural production: sanitation facilities could provide a reservoir for naturally produced fertilizers. Based upon these insights and EOOS NEXTs ongoing efforts in improving the world's sanitary situation, the team investigated circular design and business models around a novel, closed system for sanitation. The proposal aimed to develop a network of locally produced fertilizers, by diverting human feces from the sewage to storage and production units in each separate apartment building. The workshop was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Austrian Cultural Forum in Tel Aviv and the cooperation of ECOWEEK with EUNIC – Tel Aviv.

#### **W7: Unlocking the in-between**

Workshop leader: **Sophia Vyzoviti**

The workshop considered the case of Thessaloniki, Greece as a local yet generalizable paradigm, and intended to investigate sustainable ways to invigorate neglected open-air spaces that lie hidden, in-between, robust urban figures. These spaces, became greatly in demand during COVID-19 lockdowns. The workshop team sought to create a cartography of these spaces and produce a representation that unveils their latent potential as public spaces. The scenarios tackled issues of urban re-naturalization, communal practices related to placemaking and activist tactics of doing more with less, engaging circular economies. They focused on the performativity of design artifacts unfolding their environmental affordances in the creation of urban ambiances that trigger and sustain their conviviality. The online workshop was conceived as a breeding ground for ideas for constructed installations to be further developed during the planned ECOWEEK 2021 workshops on Aegina, Greece.

#### **W8: The forest city and the therapeutic garden**

Workshop leaders: Dr. Elias Messinas and Iris Givoli Faiman



The workshop was inspired from a campaign in Israel to establish 100 therapeutic gardens in medical establishments throughout the country, aiming to produce modular elements, treatment facilities for vegetation care, for underprivileged populations (elderly, mentally handicapped, blind, disabled, etc.). As part of the workshop, the team analyzed a pilot site Mental Health Center Lev Hasharon in Netanya, Israel.

### **W9: Samson and Delilah Eco-Beach Project in Ashkelon**

Workshop leader: Gil Peled

The workshop focused on a real project initiated by Eco-challenges, together with various partners, aiming to promote eco-tourism practices and sustainability awareness among residents and visitors along a spectacular 13-kilometer beachfront of the Mediterranean coastal city of Ashkelon in Israel, with its biblical past, thriving present and a promising future. The team investigated the programmatic requirements and developed a preliminary, yet detailed, design for two pavilions that will serve the coastal life guards and other functions for the bathers. The design investigated the reuse of materials - such as wood and used car tires - and the sun path for adequate shading to serve the installation.

### **ABOUT ECOWEEK**

ECOWEEK is a non-profit organization, established in 2005 by architect and social entrepreneur **Elias Messinas**, with the passion to change peoples' habits and the mission to raise environmental awareness and to promote sustainability. Based in Greece and Israel, for 15 years ECOWEEK has been engaging, training and empowering more than 4000 students and professionals from 56 countries with inspiring speakers and challenging design workshops. ECOWEEK has become for many young professionals a unique experience and a turning point to their growth and career.

ECOWEEK **Organizing Team**: Elias Messinas, Despoina Kouinoglou, Pavlos Symianakis, Sofia Passia, Vicky Panagiotidou, Eleni Mantika, Nafsica Mouti, Margarita Kyanidou, Ina Patsali, and Theodora Passia.

ECOWEEK **Exhibition Team**: Pavlos Symianakis, Evgenia Dickins, Mehmet Kisa, Artemis Korovesi, Foteini Masiala, Despoina-Elisavet Michaelidi, Flaka Pergjegaj, Çlirimtare Syla, Bijona Trakaniqi, and Anjeza Vokshi.

**More Information** : <https://ecoweek.online/>

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