

# Urban Innovation + Green Design

Διεθνής Συνάντηση Σχεδιασμού & Παρέμβασης International Happening for 'Green' Design & Intervention

Thessaloniki, Greece | April 2-8, 2012

# ECOWEEK 2012: Urban Innovation + Green Design

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 is a Greek NGO which was born on the island of Aegina, as a 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, in December 2011, in Athens, ECOWEEK hosted as keynote speaker environmental expert Prof. **David W. Orr**, and in 2012 in Thessaloniki, German architect, expert in alternative construction, **Gernot Minke**.

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, and in April 2012, ECOWEEK 2012 took place for the second time in Thessaloniki, Greece, bringing together professionals, young and established and students, from Greece, UK, Italy, Serbia, Norway, Germany, and Turkey. The ECOWEEK workshops not only developed 'green' design proposals for real open public spaces and public schools in Thessaloniki, but they actually managed to implement small scale in-situ interventions in four sites in the city. This was an experiment done for the first time in Greece, which is now in the process of being replicated in other sites and other cities throughout Greece – and abroad.

n April 2011 ECOWEEK launched for the first time the ECOWEEK NETWORK (<a href="www.ecoweek.net">www.ecoweek.net</a>), a platform for young professionals for the promotion of 'green' design and ecological buildings, already numbering more than 600 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



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and engineers. The GREENHOUSE (www.ecoweekgreenhouse.org) was initially launched in Athens, Greece, in February in Holon, Israel (with the redesign of a community center in a low-income neighborhood) and in April it was launched for the first time in Thessaloniki, with the design of a public High School in a low income neighborhood.

# **COWEEK 2012 in Thessaloniki in numbers:**

More than 120 participants from 4 countries. More than 300 architects and architecture students from Thessaloniki attended the ECOWEEK events in Thessaloniki. ECOWEEK 2012 included 9 'green' design workshops led by architects, landscape architects, industrial designers, and environmentalists from Greece, UK, Germany, Italy, and Turkey. ECOWEEK 2012 also managed within one week, and despite rainy weather, a financial and social crisis and a budget of less than 50 euro (!), reclaiming unused materials in storage by the Municipality or used tires and palettes, to implement 4 of the design proposals in situ, in cooperation and full coordination with the Municipality of Thessaloniki, and through the voluntary (hard) work of the participating students, workshop leaders, ECOWEEK associates,



volunteer groups such as Thessalonistas, children and parents. About 20 cyclists joined the ECOWEEK bicycle site visit to the ECOWEEK sites on Sunday April 8, starting from Aristotelous Square, escorted by the police and local media.

ECOWEEK speakers and ECOWEEK in general was covered by the local media, including newspapers and TV. The ECOWEEK workshop proposals will be exhibited at the Tel Aviv Architectural gallery ZEZEZE in June-July 2012.

The ECOWEEK Workshops included the following sites in Thessaloniki: Eleftherias Sq., Papanastasiou Sq., Amoulianis Street, Kleanthous Sq., and the 21<sup>st</sup> Nursery School, 4<sup>th</sup> Technical High School, 6<sup>th</sup> High School, 30<sup>th</sup> High School in Harilaou and one group worked with Prof. Minke inside the Goethe Institute campus.

The ECOWEEK GREENHOUSE workshop, led by UK environmental expert Benjamin Gill of BioRegional, and Greek architect and landscape architect Thomas Doxiadis, focused on two sites: the 6<sup>th</sup> High School and a site to become the first urban vineyard in Thessaloniki (Ampelonas). Upon completion of ECOWEEK 2012 in Thessaloniki, these two projects will be further developed and led towards implementation in cooperation with the Municipality of Thessaloniki.

### **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. 120 participants, more than 100 questionnaires were completed and returned (a sample of 83%). These questionnaires will be processed and their responses categorized. As with previous

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questionnaires, their feedback will be taken into account towards improving the organization of future ECOWEEK events in Greece and abroad. A sample questionnaire is attached.



# **COWEEK 2012 Workshop proposals:**

The 'green' design proposals of the ECOWEEK 2012 in Thessaloniki Workshops are posted in the ECOWEEK Workshops page:

http://ecoweekconference.org/files/ecoweek2012 THESS/workshops.html



#### **COWEEK 2012 Photo Album:**

Photos of ECOWEEK 2012 in Thessaloniki are posted in the ECOWEEK photo album

http://ecoweek.netfirms.com/ecoweek/press room photo album ecoweek ENG.htm



#### COWEEK 2012 Media:

Press releases of ECOWEEK 2012 in Thessaloniki are posted in the ECOWEEK Press page:

### Greek:

http://ecoweek.netfirms.com/ecoweek/press\_releases\_ecoweek\_GR.htm

# English:

http://ecoweek.netfirms.com/ecoweek/press releases ecoweek ENG.htm

Press clips of ECOWEEK 2012 in Thessaloniki are posted in the ECOWEEK Press page: Greek:

http://ecoweek.netfirms.com/ecoweek/press\_clips\_ecoweek\_GR.htm

English:

http://ecoweek.netfirms.com/ecoweek/press\_clips\_ecoweek\_ENG.htm



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ECOWEEK contact details are posted here:

http://ecoweek.netfirms.com/ecoweek/contact\_ecoweek\_ENG.htm





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