

Eco-City: A step towards Environmental Sustainability

'City' when we use the word, the first picture that we imagine is a place with lots of modernity, urbanization, industrialization, infrastructural development, that are mostly responsible for pollution and environmental degradation. But it could be positive word for the nature of some modification that is recently used by the scholars as "Eco-City."

In this modern world every nation is racing and developing as their economic capacity, and here also the north south debate is getting priority rather than the environment. It causes climate change, and as climate change is a social issue, it should be tackled intelligently because it is linked with survival. Mother Nature could be saved, and the modernity also would be acquired if the nations are adopting the Eco city concept as the first step towards acquiring sustainable environment and tackling climate change.

Eco city means the development of the cities considering the nature and sustainability.

According to [Ecocitystandards.org](http://www.ecocitystandards.org); an Eco-city is a human settlement modeled on the self-sustaining resilient structure and function of natural ecosystems. An eco-city seeks to provide healthy abundance to its inhabitants without consuming more renewable resources than it replaces. It seeks to function without producing more waste than it can assimilate or recycle for new uses or than nature can dilute and absorb harmlessly, and without being toxic to it or neighboring ecosystems (What Is An Ecocity? – Ecocity Standards. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.ecocitystandards.org/ecocity/>).

Eco city refers, sustainable city that mostly focuses on environmental sustainability; as sustainability refers economic, social and environmental aspects. Cities consume most of the natural resources as well as produce the major portion of the waste product in the world. Cities are more responsible for producing greenhouse gases that cause global warming than any other places. Therefore to make the world sustainable, cities have to play the principal role. Thus priority is now given to new and old cities to be sustainable. Professionals who have direct contribution regarding this topic like architects, urban designers, planners have been keeping this as their priority while designing a building, developing an area or planning a city.

Eco-Cities of the World

World Bank Report states that; Cities are considered to be living organisms rather than just settlements. Like any organism, they consume energy to function and then they produce waste. Cities in developing countries are growing at a much higher rate than the ones in developed countries (Ashique-Uz-Zaman, 2010).

In 2015 Meredith Carey wrote the report on eco-friendly cities of the world. Where he focused on some cities that have made eco friendliness a priority and mandate. After studying 120 cities in Europe, Latin America, Asia, North America, and Africa, he mentioned the list given by Green City index regarding the definitive list of cities where protecting the environment is a way of life. The study looked at cities around the world, with concerns about CO₂ emissions, alternative transportation options, water and waste management, and environmental governance.

The top five Eco-cities of the world are:

Vancouver, Canada:

The city is regarded as a star when it came to CO₂ emissions and air quality and scored in the top 10 of each classification. With an extensive network of bike routes, pedestrian-friendly public spaces, and community gardens, Vancouver is an eco-tourist' paradise. Vancouver plans to diminish emissions by 33 percent by 2020, upholding its commitment to hydropower and promoting green energy alternatives.

Curitiba, Brazil:

The only South American city took place in the list; Curitiba has consistently been ahead of the game when it comes to being green. Since developing the world's first rapid-transit bus systems in the '60s, the city's eco-friendly advances have continued to grow. Now they are up to an eco-friendly metro system (The Most Eco-friendly Cities In The World - Photos - Condé ... (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2015-11-20/the-five-most-eco-friendly-cities>).

Copenhagen, Denmark:

Always found in the top eco-friendly cities, in 2014 Global Green Economy Index also gives the city top place regarding eco-friendly. The entire city is accessible to cyclists, almost every resident lives within walking distance of public transport of some kind, and energy-generating windmills dot the sea off the city (The Most Eco-friendly Cities In The World - Photos - Condé ... (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2015-11-20/the-five-most-eco-friendly-cities>).

Cape Town, South Africa:

The African City is at the forefront of the continent's green living movement. The first to use the country's commercial wind farm, the city is additionally encompassed by natural landmarks, like Table Mountain and Lion's Head, promoting a healthy, outdoor mentality for those living in Cape Town.

San Francisco, California:

North America's greenest city, San Francisco is off the charts for green living with one of the highest recycling rates in the world. The city government has committed to promoting eco-friendly programs, projects that support sustainable economy considering the environment. And many neighborhoods today host their own farmers' markets to capitalize on San Fran's proximity to California's finest farms.

In the context of Eco-city or sustainable city we can find the first world is in the first places as economic sustainability is also another fact to preserve the environmental sustainability. And with this concept, the North South Debate comes, but we have to consider the environment first then the debate. We hardly find any developing or under developed country having eco-city, but they are trying their best with the existing capabilities to have a self-sufficient environment-friendly sustainable city. The developed world's support is also needed, but the environmental summits are not able to fulfill their aims. Recently President Trumps (USA) decision to withdraw from the Paris agreement is another failure of environmental summits bondage and commitments.

Eco-City and sustainable city having Urban Design, it should be friendly, have enough access to open green space for walking, basic urban services, and affordable housing. A bio-Geographical feature of Eco-City includes the management of resources and materials as well as the use of clean, renewable energy. Resident's access to safe and clean water, healthy foods are also included in Bio-Geographical features. The concept includes a social culture that ensures the community participation regardless the socioeconomic status. Ecological concern indicates the city's commitment to sustaining and restoring the biodiversity of local, regional and global ecosystems, including species diversity, ecosystem diversity, and genetic diversity. Nowadays we can see the cities are trying to acquire sustainability by adopting roof top gardening, using solar energy, waste, and water management, adopting sustainable town planning and implementing model towns in different parts of the world including under developed and developing nations. These initiatives are helping to acquire environmental sustainability.

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