

Bioregional Design

A manual

- 1 Don't build, reorganise
- 2 Extend the lifespan
- 3 Learn from the oldest building
- 4 Reuse, grow, then dig
- 5 Look for tacit knowledge
- 6 Continue the material network
- 7 Never stop prototyping
- 8 Design the act of building
- 9 We act on behalf of the generations after us. Consider this when you draw.

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1 Architecture is not always the right answer. You may not need to build. You may not need to use any local resources at all. A reorganisation of functions can be enough to make the existing work.

2 Look at what is already built and reuse these structures. Unused buildings can be adapted to accommodate new functions. We have such a large and continuous stock of underused structures, let's efficiently use and improve them before anything else.

3 Understand the potential of the resources, material networks and techniques surrounding a new project. Investigate the oldest buildings and structures in the region. These buildings are archives of what the local bioregion can provide.

4 When choosing a material for a project, first ask what can be reused, to avoid extraction of new matter. Then consider what can be grown in the bioregion, prioritising renewable and biodegradable materials. Finally, determine what can be excavated locally and design for it to be reused.

5 Local crafts(wo)men and their knowledge will embed your project in the region. Rediscover them in the local crafts centre or folk art museums. These are unexpectedly inspiring places, if one knows how to look.

6 The materials one works with should not be understood as off-the-shelf products, but rather as part of a network of actions and transformations. Some parts of those networks have been lost or need updating. Try to conceive these missing links and let your architecture be the agent of these processes.

7 Understand your design as a prototype, a source of inspiration and knowledge for the industry, for others and yourself. Sampling and prototyping is vital to convince clients and other stakeholders of the value of non-certified materials. But choose your challenges strategically, as they will demand much of your energy.

8 The act of building focuses the energy of many people on one goal. Use this momentum to create new links in material networks, develop prototypes which can inform future builders and open construction moments to allow the transfer of knowledge. Design this process of construction, as the process can define your outcome and, by extension, your architecture.