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URBAN SYMBIOSIS
IN THE AQUATIC PUBLIC SPACE

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the concern on urban waterfront development in Indonesian cities. This is a new frontier for urban design and planning and also a new challenging task to solve the conflict between land-based habitation values. By considering the lessons of previous golden age Indonesian waterfront cities it could be recognized its ‘message’ for the current and future practice of aquatic public space in the context of archipelago country and marine continent.

Keywords: water-based, urban symbiosis, aquatic public space, hybrid, sustainable.

INTRODUCTION

The spatial history of Indonesian coastal cities was originally planned as a waterfront city. However, in the modern period the accelerated urban growth was dominated by over utilization on land and the waterfront area acts as a repository for problems beginning with the larger cities area and a result of environmental, social and economic problems, especially the inadequate or obsolete urban drainage services and transport infrastructure.

The waterfront cities have experienced a significance change of urban structural pattern. Reconsidering the danger of urban environmental disaster and the tendency of globalization of economy as well as the competition and considered the tendency of rebirth the waterfront city, the new urban policy attempted to redirect the growth of city toward aquatic frontier area.
FROM WATER-BASED TO LAND-BASED CITY?

Concerning the morphological city in the earliest period, which was located on the waterfront area, the most distinctive features are swampy mud land or mangrove forest, low-lying land networks of rivers and canals. The instinct of the urban people was thus water-based and this gave rise to an urban symbiosis in the form of aquatic society.
In the next generations the metamorphosis of waterfront cities from a water-based to a land-based development seems complete. Urban people move, market shift and environment change. These changed since roads have been constructed and since unprecedented severe floods have occasionally and "land-based" in the changing environment of Indonesian waterfront cities seems to be a challenging task to rethink how to create an environment that would instill some deeper values in the context of environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and social sustainability.

To what extent are waterfront developments parts of a scenario for sustainable urban future (Indonesia is an archipelago country, marine ‘continent’, and the waterfront urban design is its very heart).

**Figure 3. Multifunction of Aquatic Public Space**

**AQUATIC CORRIDOR SPACE**

The spatial history of waterfront city’s form is about two types, the older city on the water and the newer city on land which both consider the aquatic space as a bloodline for the city. The roles of waterfront area in the form of lake, river and coastal relate to the form of lake, river and coastal relate to several aspects including physical, environmental and management and political aspects.

The aquatic public space performs several functions for the urban life. It produces a large amount of water to supply urban daily uses and being a urban wastewater recipient, a gateway and waterfront, on open space and activity area and a balance to the ecological system of the
urban environment. The urban settlement originally mainly lining the main waterways has gradually moved and expanded on to the surrounding land. It causes the larger interaction between "water and land" spatial structure. The multifunctional area of aquatic corridor space serve various kinds of activities for different groups of people with the extension of the conflict between aquatic and land culture which need the efforts to negotiate a symbiosis and to reintroduce a balance of urban ecosystem.

This is a new frontier for Indonesian urban design and planning and also a new challenge over the conflict between water-based and land-based perspective in the changing environment. It is hoped that the scenario may generate more hybrid and more sustainable urban environment.

Figure 4. Environmental Problem of Aquatic Public Space

PROPOSED SCENARIO FOR AQUATIC HABITATION PLANNING

In the context of Indonesian habitation, the relationship between human and nature is perceived as intimate and beneficial for human. Thus, nature is not to be overcome, and human being is to symbiosis with nature. The context of symbiosis with the aquatic public space in urban area in urban area include living spaces, work places, social and cultural habitation.
The global pressure and land-based impositions have shown a changed adaptation to the environment. What then has survived? It is a challenging task to rethink how we could create a new frontier of aquatic habitation through preserving their spirit and rehabilitate their scene in a symbiotic manner with the land-based habitation.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 5. The citywide linkage of land and water frontier**

The concept of designing urban aquatic public space consists of three areas, i.e.: waterscape planning, waterfront area: access to water and transitional area, and waterfront activities.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 6. The Concept of Urban Symbiosis in the Aquatic Public Space**
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