



# Blue Urbanism: Exploring Connections Between Cities and Oceans

*Timothy Beatley*

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What would it mean to live in cities designed to foster feelings of connectedness to the ocean? As coastal cities begin planning for climate change and rising sea levels, author Timothy Beatley sees opportunities for rethinking the relationship between urban development and the ocean. Modern society is more dependent upon ocean resources than people are commonly aware of—from oil and gas extraction to wind energy, to the vast amounts of fish harvested globally, to medicinal compounds derived from sea creatures, and more. In *Blue Urbanism*, Beatley argues that, given all we've gained from the sea, city policies, plans, and daily urban life should acknowledge and support a healthy ocean environment.

The book explores issues ranging from urban design and land use, to resource extraction and renewable energy, to educating urbanites about the wonders of marine life. Beatley looks at how emerging practices like “community supported fisheries” and aquaponics can provide a sustainable alternative to industrial fishing practices. Other chapters delve into incentives for increasing use of wind and tidal energy as renewable options to oil and gas extraction that damages ocean life, and how the shipping industry is becoming more “green.” Additionally, urban citizens, he explains, have many opportunities to interact meaningfully with the ocean, from beach cleanups to helping scientists gather data.

While no one city “has it all figured out,” Beatley finds evidence of a changing ethic in cities around the world: a marine biodiversity census in Singapore, decreasing support for shark-finning in Hong Kong, “water plazas” in Rotterdam, a new protected area along the rocky shore of Wellington, New Zealand, “bluebelt” planning in Staten Island, and more. Ultimately he explains we must create a culture of “ocean literacy” using a variety of approaches, from building design and art installations that draw inspiration from marine forms, to encouraging citizen volunteerism related to oceans, to city-sponsored research, and support for new laws that protect marine health.

Equal parts inspiration and practical advice for urban planners, ocean activists, and policymakers, *Blue Urbanism* offers a comprehensive look at the challenges and great potential for urban areas to integrate ocean health into their policy and planning goals.

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