

CDE2503 Cities in Nature: Socio-ecological perspectives for a sustainable and liveable urban environment

(Revised for AY26/27)

Introduction

Approaches to “cities in nature” underline the interlinkages of social and ecological processes to foster a sustainable and liveable urban environment, allowing nature to coexist or thrive with urban development through balancing the needs of various stakeholders/agents, human and non-human, while minimising the adverse impacts urbanisation and economic growth may pose on the environment and humanity. Such a pursuit emphasises the critical importance of systemic and cross-disciplinary thinking to understand and reflect on how social and ecological systems can inform altruistic urban interventions that address environmental challenges (e.g., climate warming, biodiversity loss, pollution, resource depletion) and societal challenges (e.g., well-being, food security).

For Semester 1 AY 2026/2027, the CDE2503 Cities in Nature course is collaborating with the Land Transport Authority (LTA) Singapore to reflect and reimagine how last-mile connectivity can perform socio-ecological functions to foster sustainability and liveability.

Course Overview

Maximum Class Size: 60 students

Lecture / Seminar Size: 60 students | **Venue:** EA-02-14 & EA-02-15

Module Leaders: Dr Rosita Samsudin

Teaching Assistant: Joshua Ong

Course Description

This course will aid students in understanding the principles framing the vision of Cities in Nature within the concept of Sustainable Environment, and how such principles shape urban approaches/interventions in fostering sustainability and liveability. Through real-world case studies, from Singapore and beyond, students will dive into the complex interlinkages of social and ecological processes within urban systems and glean insights into how to balance the needs of and challenges faced by different stakeholders/agents, human and non-human, in the pursuit of building an urban environment in which humans and nature can co-exist and thrive together.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand social and ecological principles framing the vision of Cities in Nature within the broader context of Sustainable Environment (e.g., climate resilience, use of limited resources) and Liveability.
2. Explain the interlinkages of social and ecological processes shaping urban approaches/interventions that foster a sustainable and liveable environment.
3. Recognise trade-offs and negotiations between stakeholders/agents in fostering a sustainable and liveable urban environment.
4. Engage social and ecological principles to inquire into and examine urban sustainability challenges and their impacts on liveability.
5. Apply social and ecological principles in framing recommendations to address urban sustainability and liveability challenges.

Course Timeline

The classes are held on **Wednesdays, 9 am – 12 pm** for AY26/27 Semester 1.

WEEKLY LESSON PLAN	
1	[12 AUGUST 2026] Lecture Introduction to Cities in Nature: Social and ecological principles for a sustainable and liveable urban environment
2	[19 AUGUST 2026] Lecture Greening the city for people and the environment
3	[26 AUGUST 2026] Lecture & Tutorial Water as an environmental asset: harnessing opportunity from challenges
4	[2 SEPTEMBER 2026] Lecture Bringing nature into everyday urban living
5	[9 SEPTEMBER 2026] Field lecture (location to be confirmed) Bringing nature into everyday urban living
6	[16 SEPTEMBER 2026] Lecture & Tutorial Fostering food security in a city in nature
RECESS WEEK	
7	[30 SEPTEMBER 2026] Lecture & Tutorial Harnessing nature's power: towards a low-carbon city

8	[7 OCTOBER 2026] Mid-term Project (Team) Presentation
9	[14 OCTOBER 2026] Lecture & Tutorial A city in nature: shifting values, shaping actions
10	[21 OCTOBER 2026] Field lecture @TuasOne (TBC) Sustainable waste management
11	[28 OCTOBER 2026] Lecture & Tutorial Rethinking the future of a city in nature
12	[4 NOVEMBER 2026] Tutorial
13	[11 NOVEMBER 2026] Final Project (Team) Presentation

Student Deliverables

The following will be the assessment breakdown of this module

1. Attendance & Participation [10%]
2. Assignment 1 (Individual) [10%]
3. Assignment 2 (Individual) [10%]
4. Mid-term Project (Team) [30%]
Comprises the following components:
 - a. Team [25%]
 - b. Peer Review [5%]
5. Final Project (Team) [40%]
 - a. Team [25%]
 - b. Individual reflection [10%]
 - c. Peer review [5%]