Oliveira, E. (2018). [Review of the book *Sustainable landscape planning in selected urban regions* edited by Makoto Yokohari, Akinobu Murakami, Yuji Hara, and Kazuaki Tsuchiya]. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 40(6), 888-890. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07352166.2017.1396856>

Sustainable Landscape Planning in Selected Urban Regions, edited by Makoto Yokohari, Akinobu Murakami, Yuji Hara and Kazuaki Tsuchiya, Tokyo, Springer Japan, 2017; 265 pp. \$USD 105.02 (hardcover), ISBN 978-4-431-56443-0.

Sustainable Landscape Planning in Selected Urban Regions promises a multidisciplinary approach to the theoretical and practical linkage between urban planning and environmental issues in today's urban regions. The concepts of "sustainable planning", which mainly aims to optimize the allocation of land and human activities in a space-limited context (Geneletti et al., 2017), of "landscape planning", which is a part of public policy oriented at managing the environment (Hersperger et al., 2017) and "urban regions" which have been identified as key geographical areas in the context of ongoing climate change-related environmental pressures (Frank & Marsden, 2016) are empirically investigated throughout the book. Case studies, selected from across the world, investigate urban regions in Asia, Europe and North America that remain relatively less studied. This is a timely discussion as the desire "for sustainable living patterns, planning for sustainable and equitable cities and regions is a serious challenge" (Herath, 2017, p. 93) from Asia to Africa (Robinson & Varady, 2014) and elsewhere in the world (Chapple, 2015).

This book strengthens the literature on metropolitan ruralities, which has generally suggested a continuous disengagement between socioeconomically oriented advocates of regional planning and ecologically driven proponents. Frank and Marsden (2016) stress that this detachment impacts the relationships between rural and urban areas. Reflecting on this gap in the literature, the editors claim that disciplines such as "urban planning, urban economics and urban geography tended to consider agricultural and rural issues outside their research domain" (p. vii). The editors also state that, overall, urban studies "lack appropriate concepts, languages, tools and models for dealing with environmental and socioeconomic issues of today's urban regions" (p. viii). In this domain, UN-Habitat calls for strategic regional planning as a proactive mechanism to recognize the importance of fostering mutually reinforcing rural-urban linkages and leveraging the rural-urban nexus for development (UN-Habitat, 2015). The editors and authors harmonize their thoughts with the UN-Habitat in order to claim that urban and regional planning must "integrate broader landscape perspectives that take extended social and ecological systems into consideration" (p. viii). As it would be beyond the scope of this review to detail each chapter, I have instead engaged with those chapters in each part which, contribute most to existing literature.

Chapter 5 suggests that urban regions can be understood as being composed of three dimensions: (i) an "urban service network", (ii) an "eco-cultural network", and (iii) a "regional innovation network" (p. 49). The "urban service network" refers to a network of jobs in life services, including education, health, cultural and commercial services (p. 50). The "eco-cultural network" is a network of local culture and lifestyle fostered by local ecosystem services (p. 50), while the "regional innovation network" refers to regional spaces where close networks among various economic players, such as businesses, universities and government agencies, coexist in geographical proximity (p. 51). This chapter provides a degree of clairvoyance to the definition of urban regions because "the concept is used without being clearly defined, often intermingled or confused with other similar or complementary concepts" (Rodríguez-Pose, 2008, p. 1027). By highlighting that "the creation of unitary

regional governments or inter-municipal associations whose councils are directly elected is considered to be the most appropriate model of regional governance” (p. 56), the chapter also contributes to discussions on rescaling regional governance (Zimmermann & Getimis, 2017).

Chapter 8 mirrors a worldwide issue: the shrinkage of farmland. That said, the chapter reports on the “massive farmland conversion that has taken place in Yogyakarta, Indonesia” (p. 85), from which several lessons can be drawn by policymakers in the rest of Asia and beyond. This chapter mirrors the preoccupations of a recent study warning that, in the future, farmland will face threats not only from climate change, but also from the massive urban expansion (d’Amour et al., 2016). The chapter demonstrates that farmland has been intensively converted for residential uses in the city of Yogyakarta, owing to unregulated development of housing complexes, while proposing possible approaches to tackle this issue, although the authors could have been more ambitious and explored potentially new governance arrangements and urban policies to meet the twin goals of urban development in order to house a growing urban population and preserve prime cropland. I concur with d’Amour et al. (2016), who suggest that good governance is a necessary condition for successfully shaping a sustainable urban expansion. To fulfil this aim, urban policymakers and planners in Indonesia, the rest of Asia and worldwide must play a crucial role in managing urban growth.

Chapter 17 is focused on how urban agriculture could have a significant impact on the social, ecological and spatial systems in and for urban regions. Based on a series of case studies on the urban regions of Detroit, Philadelphia, New York and Toronto, the chapter identifies four directions for urban agriculture: (i) vertical farming, (ii) growing in urban voids, (iii) growing systems and (iv) going public. The chapter presents interesting examples of urban agriculture installations and community gardens, which will inspire urban studies professionals, as well as grassroots associations and civic-minded individuals, to embrace such agriculture movements and contribute to an overall change in the mindset concerning the sustainable use of landscapes. By saying this, I agree with the chapter authors when they state that “urban agriculture has the potential to play a critical role in urban sustainability”, as well as “to help to create more socially just and sustainable food systems” (p. 211).

The book ends suddenly. I would expect and highly recommend that such an empirically informed book would provide the readers with a summary of the key findings, particularly on the possible contribution of strategic planning to a more balanced relationship between rural and urban areas in Asia and beyond. Despite this drawback, the book provides innovative ways of thinking about the linkage between planning and environmental quarrels. Furthermore, it also makes a significant contribution to urban affairs scholarship. I would recommend this book to all researchers, policymakers and planning practitioners engaged in searching for effective solutions for future sustainable urban and rural development.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

References

- Chapple, K. (2015). *Planning Sustainable Cities and Regions: Towards More Equitable Development*, New York, Routledge.
- d'Amour C., Reitsma, F., Baiocchi, G., Barthel, S., Güneralp, B., Erb, K.-H., Haberl, H., Creutzig, F. & Seto, K.C. (2016). Future urban land expansion and implications for global croplands. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, early edition: 1–6 DOI: www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1606036114
- Genelettia, D., La Rosa, D., Spyra, M., & Cortinovis, C. (2017). A review of approaches and challenges for sustainable planning in urban peripheries. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, online first, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2017.01.013>
- Herath, S. (2017). Book Review: Planning Sustainable Cities and Regions: Towards More Equitable Development. *Urban Policy and Research*, 35(1), 93–96, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08111146.2017.1261644>
- Hersperger, A.M., Mueller, G., Knöpfel, M., Siegfried, A. & Kienast, F. (2017). Evaluating outcomes in planning: Indicators and reference values for Swiss landscapes. *Ecological Indicators*, 77(-), 96–104. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2017.02.004>
- Robinson, M.V. & Varady, D.P. (2014). Book Review: Urban Sustainability: A Global Perspective; Good Urbanism: Six Steps to Creating Prosperous Places. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 36(5), 941–943. DOI <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/juaf.12086/pdf>
- Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2008). The rise of the “city-region” concept and its development policy implications. *European Planning Studies*, 16(8), 1025–1046. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09654310802315567>
- UN-Habitat (2015). *Issue Paper on Rural-Urban Linkages*. Retrieved from https://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-10_Urban-Rural-Linkages-2.0.pdf
- Zimmerman, K. and Getimis, P. (2017). Rescaling of Metropolitan Governance and Spatial Planning in Europe: an Introduction to the Special Issue. *Raumforschung und Raumordnung*, online first, DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s13147-017-0482-3>

Eduardo Oliveira
Swiss Federal Research Institute (WSL)
Birmensdorf, Switzerland
eduardo.oliveira@wsl.ch
<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8838-2493>