Holcim Awards 2005

Ivatan Agricultural Campus, Itbayat, Philippines

Comment of the Holcim Awards 2005 jury for Asia Pacific

This project is given merit primarily because of the effort to directly involve local stakeholders in the decision making process for the project implementation. Also significant are the negotiations already made with government authorities to ensure the quality of the “residents’ concept.” Evidence is a commitment and willingness to confront difficult issues directly in the attempt to provide for social equity. Ecological concerns are also brought to the foremind with the call for regionally sourced materials and recycling of natural resources. Of equal interest is the scope of the project that is involves a considerable set of specifications for increasing the performative capacities of the existing landscape. The Foreseen economic scheme is ingenious in that it is not only accounts for the possible increase of agro-tourism to the region, but also proposes to incorporate tourists in the maintenance of the enhanced life cycle of the environment. Also commendable is the proposal of energy efficient public buildings on the site that intend to address the lack of employment in the chosen context. The project is convincing in its aesthetic sensitivity to the indigenous culture.

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Relevance to target issues (by author)

Synthetic materials are integrated, where necessary, with regionally sourced natural materials. Two synthetic products will be used.

Non-woven spunbonded polyester fabric wide range in porosity of different styles makes it suitable for liquid filtration as well as impermeable lining for canals and ponds.

Prefabricated structural drainage system: specifically for subsoil drainage of the turf roofs. Turf roofs are transfereable to any project, as long as sufficient moisture can be provided.

Dissemination of knowledge to stakeholders is automatic, since residents and other interested parties will take part in construction. Education will be provided for the occupants, whether they are Ivatans enrolled in the Institute/livelihood training programs or ecological-cultural tourists.

Ethical standards and social equity

Several rounds of community consultations at the village level were conducted by the Batanes government before formalization of the Batanes Master Plan. The residents’ concepts of the direction in which development should take place were discussed and studied, and the facilities that are included in the IAC are reflective of their needs as published in the province’s 10-yr development plan.

Ecological quality and energy conservation

Erosion is controlled by means of Coco-Pore Mats. woven coconut fibre mats will be placed on the soil and seeded to absorb sandrun impact. Seeding allows plants to grow even where the mats are present. Turf Roofs: to reduce storm runoff. Earth Dikes/Retention Ponds: With the exception of the limestones, all small earth dikes can be built around stormwater retention ponds. Graywater (e.g. wastewater from washing/bathing) will be recycled for irrigation of the farms and gardens. From the resewage, graywater will be filtered through sandboum placed in the bamboo pipe system. Graywater will then be diverted to a canal system that will transport the water to the vegetable gardens and farms. A micro wind turbine will be installed to provide the IAC with a renewable energy source.

Economic performance and compatibility

Almost all of the materials to be used will be regionally sourced. Most of the building materials will be extracted either from the island of Itbayat or Batanes province. The materials, with the exception of the limestone, are all rapidly renewable. Reeds and cogon grass grow abundantly on Itbayat island and the wood and bamboo to be used are typically harvested within a 10-year cycle or shorter.

Contextual response and aesthetic impact

Traditional Ivatan architecture will be employed in the IAC to preserve the disappearing cultural heritage and building methods of Batanes. The Tataya Grandstand re-calls the form of the traditional Ivatan boat. The campus is mixed-use, and the residences share facilities like kitchens, showers, and toilets. Buildings are provided with large windows to provide natural light and ventilation.