

The Scale of Permanence

P.A. Yeomans originally defined the Scale of Permanence

The Scale of Permanence was developed in the 1950's in Australia, the driest continent on the planet. Originally instituted as a system of water management, it concerns not simply water management, but all aspects of a site. Originally defined by P.A. Yeomans, the creator of the Keyline system of agriculture in Australia, the scale of permanence has since been revised to include more efficient responses to the particular needs of the landscape in question. Yeoman's original scale is as follows:

1. Climate
2. Landform
3. Water supply
4. Roads
5. Trees
6. Permanent buildings
7. Subdivisional fences
8. Soil

Bill Mollison, the creator of the Permaculture system, took this a step further:

1. Climate
2. Landform
3. Water supply
4. Farm roads
5. Plant systems
6. Microclimate
7. Permanent buildings
8. Subdivisional fences
9. Soil

The scale of permanence most commonly used in current times was developed further by David Jacke; here it is with some additions:

1. Climate
2. Landform
3. Water (in general)
4. Access and circulation
5. Microclimate
6. Buildings and infrastructure
7. Zones of use
8. Soil (fertility and management)
9. Aesthetics
10. Culture, Economics, Political, Social, Spiritual