

Book Review

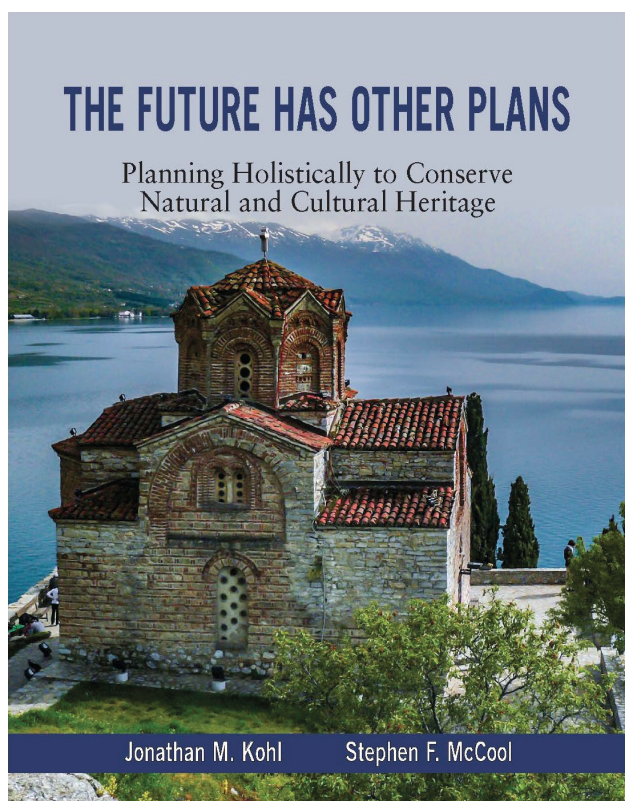
The Future Has Other Plans: Planning Holistically to Conserve Natural and Cultural Heritage, Jonathan M. Kohl and Stephen F. McCool. Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 2016. 320pp. \$44.95. ISBN 978-1-6827-5000-1

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Planning for parks and protected areas is becoming an increasingly difficult endeavour in a landscape that is ever changing. Planning for the uncertainties that our current world demands is needed now to address the more connected and informed stakeholders that are as much a part of the landscape as the natural and cultural features of the attraction site. The authors of *The Future Has Other Plans: Planning Holistically to Conserve Natural and Cultural Heritage*, argue that many of the current planning paradigms designed for addressing parks and protected area management have failed, and are not suited for today's

more dynamic world. The framework for this textbook, by Jonathan M. Kohl and Stephen F. McCool, is presented using an iceberg as a metaphor for how to get to the 'other side of complexity'. The authors use the iceberg to display that the majority of the complexity lays hidden, beyond what is clearly visible to the average planner, and that through a new, re-envisioned planning paradigm, a more holistic framework can be employed that better suits the demands of today's infinitely complex world. This book provides a timely, and needed analysis of current planning paradigms and how often times the end product, a plan, does not get implemented. For anyone who has ever worked on a planning project in a park or protected area, you will recognise many of the barriers to successful implementation and will be refreshed by proposed way forward presented by the authors.

The book begins by discussing the current park and protected area planning landscape. The authors define current planning efforts as existing in a 'PLUS world'. The PLUS world is predictable, linear, understandable, and stable. Kohl and McCool state that this is the dominant model in protected areas planning, and borrows heavily from a modernism paradigm that is rooted in scientific inquiry, and gave birth to rational comprehensive planning (RCP). The authors contend that the PLUS world, dominated by RCP, excludes too many actors that would yield a usable and viable plan; therefore, the DICE model is presented. The DICE world, rooted more in a post-modern perspective, is dynamic, impossible, complex, and ever-changing. This approach may lead to plans that actually get implemented, as opposed to plans in the PLUS world that end up on a shelf. One of the main tenets of the DICE world is the intentional and meaningful inclusion of diverse stakeholders in the planning process. The authors highlight this by stating that

‘to exclude constituencies from planning, and failing to forge consensus often equates to a nice plan that goes nowhere but on the bookshelf’ (p. 169). Although the DICE approach too has its limitations (e.g. does not fully take into account the influence of protected area laws, policies and mandates), this alternate way of viewing the planning process as more of a collaborative endeavour, and less of a controlled, top-down approach ‘makes life for the PLUS based planners exponentially difficult’ (p. 63). The authors recognise that this paradigm shift is a difficult proposition, but a strength of the book is this recognition. Additionally, the authors continually point out that the current way of planning is not working, so why not entertain a new way of doing things?

The authors strongly advocate that a paradigm change is in order, and that the way protected areas are being managed has lagged. Gone are the days of ‘experts’ making decisions based on their level of expertise. Yes, the authors argue, this input is still important, but other groups and stakeholders are now more engaged (and need to be engaged). A popular planning paradigm, the tourism carrying capacity model (TCC), focuses on visitor numbers (i.e. ‘magic numbers’) and ignores several of the factors that make up a DICE world. The authors call for the de-emphasising of this model, and advocate for Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) instead. LAC recognises ‘uncertainty, multiple constituencies with different values and objectives, limited resources, and complexity require collaborative, subjective, and learning based processes to produce at least temporary decisions’ (p. 72). Although it is important to perhaps move to a more inclusive and comprehensive planning process that de-emphasises ‘magic numbers’ based planning, the authors do not give the proper attention to the bureaucratic constraints that many agencies and organisations must work under (e.g. laws, policies, enabling legislations).

Another issue with traditional planning (based on RCP) is the reliance on boundaries and zoning. These political lines are coming down. The authors call for the removal of these lines, and for a more integrated approach. They advocate for bringing diverse groups together, not separating them. The incorporation of different worldviews is important (e.g. the inclusion of traditional knowledge in management plans). Kohl and McCool take this information and use it to set up the remainder of the text, using Integral Theory as their framework for the rest of the book.

Integral Theory asks the reader to re-envision how planning operates and how planners see the world. The authors state that ‘... all prior stages have one thing in

common: they think their way of seeing the world is the correct way’ (p. 108). The authors continue to say that past paradigms should not be completely dismissed, but that all future paradigms will be built upon past paradigms (at least in part). The four quadrants of Integral Theory can be interpreted for park and protected areas planning, and are Psychological and Spiritual (upper left), Physical and Behavioural (upper right), Cultural (lower left), and Natural and Social Systems (lower right) are all tied to together and work interdependently. The authors clearly state that to not consider all quadrants together, is to leave out forces that work against planners. The authors also make it clear that planners and managers need to be aware of what influences their decisions, such as attitudes, beliefs, experience, and intentions. The authors provide detailed ways that this theory can assist in overcoming barriers such as lack of commitment, lack of ownership in the process, low stakeholder involvement, placing too much of a premium on science-based decision making, and overcoming bureaucratic obstacles (e.g. lack of trust). Three main techniques are provided as suggestions for engendering success: respect stakeholders’ beliefs, attitudes, values and fears; prepare stakeholders for co-creation in the planning process; and promote stakeholder empowerment and psychological development. By incorporating these techniques, and avoiding common pitfalls, planners may be able to avoid ‘post-planning stress disorder’. The authors propose that these barriers can be overcome through the application of Integral Theory, as this theory can provide planners with the understanding that if we fail to incorporate several different perspectives in the planning process, plans are much less likely to be implemented.

The authors coin the term ‘post-planning stress disorder’ which conventional/traditional planning efforts can induce. This ‘condition’ often results from the ‘disappointment with the process or lack of implementation’ (p. 143). This is a term that many planning professionals can identify with, have likely experienced themselves, and would like to avoid in the future. The authors argue that RCP places too much emphasis on outside knowledge (e.g. consultants or hired experts) that takes away the community voice, and provides a convenient scapegoat if the planning process fails in any way. However, oftentimes the effort to involve communities and/or stakeholders is done to satisfy external requirements (e.g. laws and policies), and not facilitated in a genuine way to provide meaningful engagement by the stakeholders, which in turn may yield useful information for the planning process. The authors provide an example, using SWOT analysis, of how often

these processes provide little useful information, and that planners may in fact be using these techniques incorrectly. The authors state that claiming these outreach efforts as participatory, when in fact they are not, is dangerous and counterproductive. Oftentimes, the lack of true participation and input from stakeholders is part of the old way of planning, where cultural considerations are frequently overlooked.

Kohl and McCool continue the journey around the iceberg by focusing on cultural barriers to planning and implementation. As has been a theme throughout, breakdowns in communication and the lack of involvement of diverse groups is a typical obstacle in the process. However, the idea that RCP has particular impacts on the process is clearly presented. A top down approach, and the resistance to acknowledging that planning is a dynamic process that needs to embrace change, are major limitations of RCP as presented by the authors. The authors suggest that many conditions may exist to promote organisational change that will rely less on RCP, and more on adaptive, inclusionary planning processes. The authors state that adaptive management cannot just happen, some of these conditions may need to exist for change to be implemented. Additionally, structures need to be put in place to foster new ways of thinking, such as learning infrastructures within an organisation, and the ability to experiment, innovate, and practice new techniques. This is difficult to do in large bureaucratic institutions that tend to oversee protected areas, which carry with them a great deal of inertia that is hard to overcome.

The authors conclude their discussion about the four quadrants of Integral Theory by discussing how planning can and should be more holistic. Again, a comparison of RCP and more inclusive protected area management is provided. Here the authors pose a new way of seeing the planning world, in which 'forces arise from four concurrent, interacting, fundamental perspectives. No forces are excluded from this framework; solutions arise from the simultaneous management of these forces that lead to plan implementation and more effective management' (p. 211). Additionally, the authors suggest that 'planning is a means of arriving, not a final destination' (p. 220) and that 'plans are collective, not individual works, in order to catalyse constituent community commitments and implementation' (p. 220). This is a welcomed alternative to more 'traditional' takes on the planning process.

The book concludes by asking the reader to revisit the iceberg analogy and to embark on a journey around the bottom of the iceberg on an upward trajectory to a new

paradigm. This journey will require the shedding of comfortable ideas, beliefs and habits, and require practice to avoid falling back into old habits. The authors also warn the reader about blaming outside forces, and perhaps faulty planning efforts on the inability to implement plans (e.g. lack of money, time, personnel, information and political will). The authors continue to promote holistic planning through engaging diverse groups (both in and outside of organisations), building consensus, integrating multiple forms of knowledge, and plans to implement continuously. This last point is one that melds many components of the book. The authors come back to a main theme throughout the book that planning is not a top-down, static process. Rather the planning process should be inclusive, dynamic, and should engage as many groups of people as necessary to complete a plan capable of implementation. Many of the ideas presented in this text are contrary to how planning is conducted, and will certainly cause some to re-evaluate how they do their work. A major contribution of this book is the idea that implementation (the ultimate goal of the planning process) does not begin when the plan is printed and placed on the bookshelf. Rather, implementation begins the moment the plan is conceived and is present through every step of the planning process. This may be the main thrust of the entirety of this book, which the authors summarise as, 'just because we ignore forces that influence implementation [of plans] does not mean they go away. On the contrary, they work against us below the surface, out of sight and out of mind. Until it is too late' (p. 109).