

Workshop on Green Urbanism in India

The hot and arid climate of Gujarat is a challenge for any architect and designer. Professor Steffen Lehmann (Professor of Sustainable Architecture, CCI) has just returned from India where he taught a one-week workshop entitled “Green Urbanism – Designing Sustainable Cities” at the Anant National University (ANU) in Ahmedabad, Gujarat (West India).

The participants were 55 fellows enrolled in the ANU Fellowship Programme, which is a prestigious new initiative to build capacity and expertise in the built environment of India. The fellows were selected from 6 Asian countries.

They worked on three brownfield sites in the Bopal-Ghuma area located on the peri-urban outskirts of the city of Ahmedabad. It is often forgotten that the periphery has rapid and out-of-control development because the focus is mostly on the urban core.

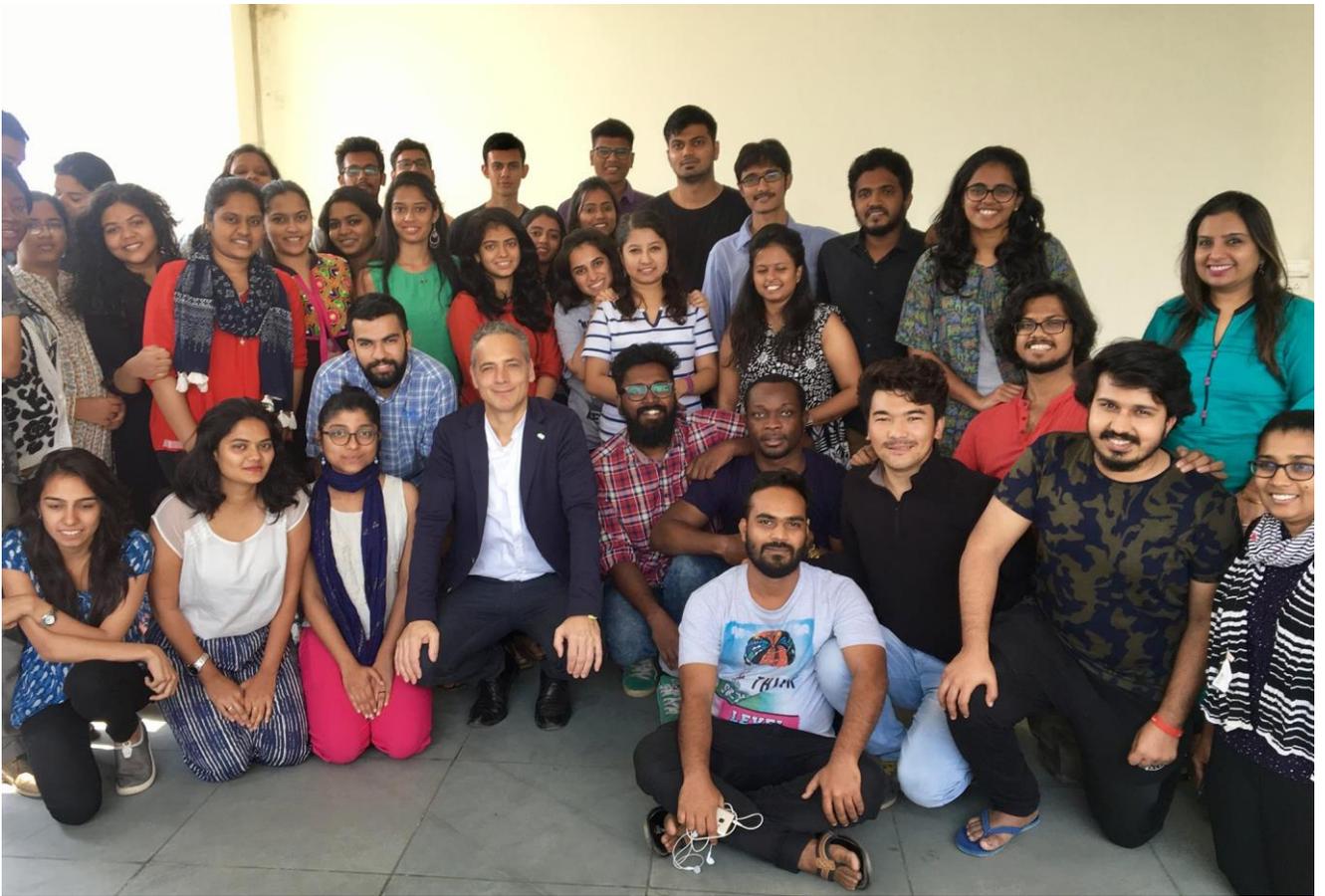
The participating fellows selected one of three workshop themes:

- Increasing access to green space: living + working + green space brought together, with new types of energy-efficient multi-generational or micro housing.
- Integrating new low-carbon mobility concepts: a hub for public transport and urban services.
- Inventing a mixed-use brief: implement in one building as many Green Urbanism strategies as possible including food production, energy generation, water harvesting.

India’s population is over 1.25 billion people and the country is rapidly urbanising. A transformational paradigm shift in planning is necessary to accommodate the new urban residents in sustainable cities. In 2011, India was 31 percent urbanised; by 2031, it is forecast that India will be urbanised 50 percent, with over 600 million people living in urban conditions.

Professor Lehmann said:

“In 2018, approximately 34 percent of the total population in India lives in cities. This workshop explored the notion of ‘green urbanism’, which extends the concept of the resource-efficient city to include optimising all urban material and energy flows. The urban challenges India is now facing are far too big for one single discipline alone (the Architect) to resolve them. New partnerships and sharing of experiences, evidence and best practice is increasingly important to ensure better decision making, and to overcome the lack of reliable urban data. I was particularly impressed with the strong capacity of participants to work well together and professionally develop a large amount of work in a relatively short time.”



The ANU Fellows participating in the Green Urbanism workshop, February 2018