

# What is Permaculture?

## *Defined:*

Permaculture (the word, coined by Bill Mollison, is a portmanteau of permanent agriculture and permanent culture) is the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. It is the harmonious integration of landscape and people — providing their food, energy, shelter, and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way. Without permanent agriculture there is no possibility of a stable social order.

Permaculture design is a system of assembling conceptual, material, and strategic components in a pattern which functions to benefit life in all its forms.

The philosophy behind permaculture is one of working with, rather than against, nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless action; of looking at systems in all their functions, rather than asking only one yield of them; and allowing systems to demonstrate their own evolutions.

*Permaculture Research Institute (<http://permaculture.org.au/what-is-permaculture/>)*

## *Core Permaculture Values*

**Earthcare:** recognizing Earth as the source of all life and recognizing that mankind is part of Earth, not apart from it.

**Peoplecare:** supporting & helping each other live in ways that harm neither ourselves nor the planet & develop healthy societies.

**Fairshare:** using Earth's limited natural resources in ways that are equitable and wise.

*- Bill Mollison / David Holmgren*

## *Twelve Principles of Design*

The core of permaculture has always been in supplying a design toolkit for human habitation. This toolkit helps the designer to model a final design based on an observation of how ecosystems interact.

Observe and interact

Obtain a yield

Use and value renewable resources and services

Design from patterns to details

Use small and slow solutions

Use edges and value the marginal

Catch and store energy

Apply self-regulation and accept feedback

Produce no waste

Integrate rather than segregate

Use and value diversity

Creatively use and respond to change

*- David Holmgren*

## *Some Personal Observations about Permaculture:*

Learning how to sustainably use nature to our benefit

*- Mike Mullin*

Permaculture is rationality.

*- Robert Swanson*

Permaculture is the practice of living ethically on our planet.

*- William Kearns*

Permaculture is an example of a natural way to live our lives in a harmonious state with all earth's creatures.

Permaculture is about awareness, intuition, observation, intention, and action.

*- Gabe Gaul*

Permaculture is a community creating a healthy & viable environment

*- Laurie Fleming*

Permaculture is about creating bits of paradise where you live.

*- Michael Pilarski*

Zero waste in every aspect! In the garden, in the households, in the business, in society!

Innovative, intuitive technology and values.

*- Margaret Ruhl*