

REGENERATING A COLLAPSING WORLD: EFFECTING TRANSFORMATION THROUGH HEAD, HEART AND HANDS

The global polycrisis created by the interplays between global socio-political instability, increasing inequality, accelerating climate change, ecosystem loss, and pervasive pollution by the residues of the 2nd and 3rd industrial revolutions and the lifestyles they enable, is creating an unfamiliar and largely unknowable world in which the cities of our future will have to function. Nonetheless, crisis and collapse also brings opportunity for renewal as the cracks in old, dysfunctional systems provide fertile ground for the seeds of systems transformation to take root. However, creating an abundant and thriving future in which all members of the community of life can flourish, requires a radical change in how we see the place and role of humans in the future development of the global social-ecological system. In this lecture I will map the evolution of sustainability thinking and how this evolution is the result of a shift in worldview which provide new values and purpose. I will then discuss how a regenerative approach changes the processes and products of built environment design by integrating pathways laid out by the head (knowledge systems and reflection), the heart (values and attitudes) and the hand (praxis). Finally, I propose as a future research endeavour, exploring the possibility of a potential Sixth Industrial Revolution, rooted in concepts such as biomimicry, bio fabrication and circularity, that can regenerate the planet and transform our societies to create a radically different, live-affirming future in which all our descendants can thrive, not just survive.



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PROFESSOR

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Chrisna du Plessis is Professor, Chair of the School for the Built Environment and Head of the Department of Architecture, University of Pretoria, South Africa. Prof du Plessis holds graduate and post-graduate degrees in architecture from the University of Pretoria, a PhD from the University of Salford and an honorary doctorate from Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden. With more than 20 years' experience in sustainable human settlement development, both as practitioner and as researcher as the CSIR and, since 2011, at UP, she focuses on developing the principles and guiding frameworks for the practices of sustainable construction and human settlement development in a body of work that spanned the fields of housing, construction industry performance, urban/human settlement development and infrastructure design. Prof du Plessis led the Priority Theme Sustainable Construction of the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction (CIB) for almost two decades, and served two terms on the CIB Board, one as Chair of the Programme Committee. She has further served as juror for the LafargeHolcim Foundation Sustainable Building Competition, the European Solar Decathlon, and the FutureArc Sustainable Design Prize. Her current research concentrates on resilience and regenerative development and she published some of her thinking in the award-winning book *Designing for Hope: Pathways to regenerative sustainability*.

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ZOOM MEETING

11:30 AM – 12:20 PM



Division of Construction
Engineering and Management