The Research Project

The project „Urban Agriculture as an Integrative Factor of Climate-Optimised Urban Development, Casablanca“ (07/2005 - 03/2014) aims to analyse and examine to what extent Urban Agriculture can make a relevant contribution to climate-optimised and sustainable urban development as an integrative factor in urban growth centres. UA is understood as every form of formal or informal agricultural production within a city, whereby in the context of urban growth centres “city” equates to the urban region.

As a phenomenon of current megacity-specific development processes, we consider UA to be the whole spatial dimensions and dynamics of the development process in today’s urban growth centres which lead to new hybrid and climate-sensitive forms between rural and urban space. The result is a new form of reciprocal urban-rural linkages which shape the nature of future urban development and living conditions. The project therefore places the three dimensions of agriculture, urban development and climate change together in a new perspective framework, whilst simultaneously placing all three in a new operational constellation under the heading "governance".

The Book

This book demonstrates how agriculture can play a determining role in integrated, climate-optimised urban development. Agriculture within urban growth centres today is more than an economic or social left-over or a niche practice. It is instead a complex system that offers multiple potentials for interaction with the urban system. Urban open space and agriculture can be linked to a productive green infrastructure – this forms new urban-rural linkages in the urbanizing region and helps shape the city. But in order to do this, agriculture has to be seen as an integral part of the urban fabric and it has to be put on the local agenda.

Urban Agriculture for Growing City Regions takes the example of Casablanca, one of the fastest growing cities in North Africa, to investigate this approach. The creation of synergies between the urban and rural in an emerging megacity is demonstrated through pilot projects, design solutions, and multifunctional modules. These synergies assure greater resource efficiency; particularly regarding the use and reuse of water, and they strengthen regional food security and the social integration of multiple spheres. A transdisciplinary research approach brings together different scientific disciplines and local actors into a process of integrated knowledge production. The book will have a long lasting legacy and is essential reading for researchers, planners, practitioners and policy makers who are working on urban development and urban agricultural strategies.