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Inside outside: spatial planning and small islands

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Abstract

The paper explores the distinctive qualities of islandness, the challenges that islands frequently have in common, and it reflects upon the spatial interconnectedness that islands have within what Depraetere (2008) has characterised as the world archipelago. It then discusses the increasing recognition of the significant role that spatial engagement could play in mediating these relationships in an era of globalisation. The development of spatial planning as a concept that goes beyond the more traditional land use and development planning processes is discussed in the context of governance both within and between smaller islands. Drawing upon experiences of spatial planning in practice and the findings of a small scale pilot survey the paper reflects upon how far this increasing spatial awareness could inform policy and action in governance and globally sustainable development of smaller islands. The paper concludes that although there are distinct differences within the world archipelago there are significant opportunities to develop more integrated decision-making processes between small islands as well as within them.

Key words: islands, spatial, interdependencies, engagement, governance.

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Introduction

Islands are amongst the most fascinating places in the world and, while they enjoy great diversity of geographical and institutional characteristics, they also share many real global challenges. As Hay (2006, p. 31) says, “Islands are places – special places, paradigmatic places, topographies of meaning in which the qualities that construct place are dramatically distilled”. They have an important place and significance in the world’s social, environmental and economic future, but they are often seen and treated as isolated and separated in people’s minds and actions. This paper explores the critical challenges and issues facing smaller islands globally, and it reflects upon the opportunities that could be presented for increasingly integrated spatial analysis, planning and governance within what Depraetere (2008) has characterised as the world archipelago.

For many people, ‘planning’ conjures up the vision of an application for a development permit, or perhaps a plan or a document setting out a framework for future land use and development. In each case the image is partial, but it is true that the planning processes at work today are far too simplistic to tackle the complexity that is the reality of contemporary life. ‘Spatial planning’ is a relatively recent concept which seeks to go beyond the traditional approaches to land-use and development planning in order to develop deeper spatial capacities to shape the functional dynamics of places across the whole range of scales. As Albrechts (2004, p. 748) explains, the “term ‘spatial’ brings into focus the ‘where of things’, whether static or dynamic; the creation and management of special ‘places’ and sites; the interrelations between different activities in an area, and significant intersections and nodes within an area which are physically collocated”. The origin of this spatial approach owes much to the increasing levels of intelligence and appreciation of the complexity of local and global dynamics as well as the considerable disparities and conflicts that exist.

The risks raised by these disparities have been captured in the report *Global Strategic Trends* (MOD, 2010, p. 10) which stated that “The era out to 2040 ... is likely to be characterised by instability, both in the relations between states, and in the relations between groups within states”. Recognising the likely reality of changing climates, rapid population growth and resource scarcity, it concluded that “the struggle to establish an effective system of global governance, capable of responding to these challenges” (MOD, 2010, p. 10) will be of critical importance for the future. In such a struggle, wider regional and global spatial concerns may be the most significant for the future. As Baldacchino has observed, it is “impossible to properly analyse the economy of [islands] by restricting the analysis to just what was just happening on the island” (Baldacchino, 2008, p. 39), and “No state, group or individual can meet these challenges in isolation; only collective responses will be sufficient” (MOD, 2010, p.10).

This paper explores the distinctive qualities of islandness; the ways that they are seen or represented; the kinds of challenges that islands frequently have in common; the types of responses that have been taken to address them; and the institutional approaches that can

be found. It reflects upon the spatial interconnectedness that islands have within the world archipelago, and then discusses the increasing recognition of the significant role that spatial engagement could play in mediating such relationships in an era of globalisation. The development of spatial planning as a concept that goes beyond the more traditional land-use and development planning processes is discussed in the context of governance both within and between smaller islands. Drawing upon experiences of spatial planning in practice and the findings of a small-scale pilot survey, the paper reflects upon how far this increasing spatial awareness could inform policy and action in governance and globally sustainable development of smaller islands. The paper concludes that although there are distinct differences within the world archipelago, there are significant opportunities to develop more integrated decision-making processes between small islands as well as within them.

Islands and islandness

All those taking islands as a focus of study and a source of inquiry must recognise a number of ethical, intellectual and methodological considerations, including their own position in relation to islands and islandness and how islands are seen through different literal and metaphorical perspectives. The diversity of geographies, scales, contexts and relationships that islands have is great and the ways that they are seen by their occupants, users and observers is equally distinct. For example, as Baldacchino (2008, p. 47, citing Dahl and Depraetere, 2007, p. 64) says, “what may have been a small island off a mainland itself becomes ‘the mainland’ for even smaller islands”. Hong Kong represents a striking example where the main island of this Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China is the focus of an archipelago of 235 other islands of many different sizes, both inhabited and uninhabited. Islands are never quite separate places, being linked physically under the sea; connected to other islands or mainlands by bridges or causeways; and enjoying a wide variety of cultural and institutional affiliations. They are often critical staging posts on international routes, and their relationships with marine and terrestrial ecosystems form “ecological corridors linking major areas of biodiversity around the world” (United Nations, 1994, cited by the Commonwealth Foundation 2004, p. 5). Although often small individually, collectively islands represent a significant global presence where “.ten per cent of the world’s population live [and] nearly a quarter of all sovereign states” are found (Hay, 2006, p. 20).

The simple definition of an island “as a sub-continental land area surrounded by water” (Glassner, 1990, p. 47) and the images that are conjured up in many people’s minds belies the immensely diverse and distinctive nature of islands in reality. They are found across the surface of the earth in every possible climatic and environmental condition and in every conceivable socio-economic position. However, while these qualities of ‘islandness’ and the individual distinction and uniqueness of each island is immense, this is also matched by the great many characteristics that islands also have in common. Principal amongst these common characteristics is the island edge which Hay (2006, p. 21) explains is “central to constructions of islandness”. Such constructions are often created metaphorically but Baldacchino (2008) has illustrated how partial such appreciations often are. For example while “*the* central gripping metaphor within Western discourse” associates islands with the “attributes of small physical size and warm water”, a closer analysis reveals that “the distribution of islands according to latitude shows that most of them are located in temperate and sub-arctic zones of the northern hemisphere, *not* in the tropics” (Baldacchino, 2006, p. 40).

Islands are not inert geographical or physical objects; they are places where peoples and their history and culture, interact with dynamic and changing socio-economic and environmental forces; places of life and action where it is important to appreciate and value what is going on. This is not always easy as there is reticence towards outsiders and

“External observers are not privy to [the] intricate human webbing” by which islanders protect their information networks (Baldacchino, 2008, p. 43). Conversely the outsider, being unfettered by the “...straightjacket of community surveillance” (Weale, 1992, p. 9) may be able to speak and act more freely. While the voices of the islanders are critical, the voices of outsiders should also be valued as these may be equally “essential for island[er] survival” (Baldacchino, 2008, p. 50). The “paradoxical relationship between connection and isolation” (Gagliardi, 2009, p.43) that islands enjoy is also critical to the appreciation of both the challenges and opportunities. While certain challenges may be typical both intrinsically and extrinsically, each island experiences these in quite distinctive combinations and ways.

A number of characteristics and trends found in smaller islands were identified by Bass and Dalal-Clayton (1995, pp. 3-7) including isolation, vulnerable natural resources, high ratio of coastline to frequently limited land area, vulnerability to natural disasters, and complex geographies that often make it difficult to exploit land transport effectively. They recognised the strong traditions of husbandry of natural resources, but also observed that island ecosystems are often intimately linked with each other and are frequently vulnerable, with most extinction of human, plant and fauna populations having been on islands. Environmentally the risks are also great and while “small island states account for less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions [they] are among the most vulnerable locations to the potential adverse effects of climate change and sea-level rise” (Nurse and Sem, 2001, p. 845).

Demographically, islands are often characterised by small populations with limited skill pools; high population densities and demands upon resources; disequilibrium as a result of ‘commodity booms’ in sectors like minerals, timber, sugar, migrant labour and tourism; narrow economic bases and dependence on larger countries for goods, markets and investment (Bass and Dalal-Clayton, 1995). As Nurse and Sem (2001, p. 864) observed, “Most of the population, settlements, and economic activities are concentrated in areas where competition for space is acute and where fragile ecosystems, aquatic and terrestrial, coexist” and this competition for land, together with pressures from waste and pollution present major difficulties.

The economic characteristics of small islands are similar to those of small states, where physical and environmental vulnerability are matched by economic vulnerability but also potential resilience (Brigulio, 1995). There are frequently strong interdependences between economic activity and natural environment (Commonwealth Foundation, 2004, p. 6) but, as Bass and Dalal-Clayton (1995) believed, the economic ‘value’ of natural and endogenous resources is not always fully recognised in small islands. Sometimes the public sector plays a disproportionate role in island economies. While the diverse characteristics of islands are great in themselves, it is important to recognise that the dynamics of the exchanges between islands locally and globally are immense and this renders it “impossible to properly analyse the economy of [islands] by restricting the analysis to just what was just happening on the island” (Baldacchino, 2008, p. 39). These dynamics are driven by multiple transnational and global forces, including ‘Resource Frontier’ approaches to development founded on “... predatory natural resource use” (Bass and Dalal-Clayton, 1995, p.7).

Smallness and islandness are not invariably linked but “smallness is given an added dimension in the case of an island, and insular isolation can be considerably intensified if you are also small” (Newitt, 1992 p. 16). In small archipelagos “resource dispersal and physical scatter” (Baldacchino, 2002, p.5) can also be significant. Very few educational institutions focus upon the needs of small islands and professionals are often trained outside the region. In consequence, island manpower and skills can be inadequate to tackle the scale of the problems faced, often with only one person employed in each professional area, with the potential for valuable cooperation being inhibited by poor inter-island transport, facilities and

links (Bass and Dalal-Clayton, 1995, p. 19). However, with developments in communications technologies and social media, islanders today may be “more in touch with the worldwide web of human discourse than many others may be” (Hay, 2006, p. 22).

Today Islands are particularly significant in the ‘mobilitiescapes’ of many people worldwide (King, 2009, p. 57); but despite the distinction and distinctiveness that islands possess there is a real threat that global trade and movement could progressively diminish this richness. While Baldacchino (2006, p.3) noted that 13.1 per cent of the 812 UNESCO World Heritage sites are on, or are islands, the qualities of even these great monuments, let alone the myriads of valuable cultural endogenous resources, can be under threat and can be difficult to conserve. The danger that this presents was captured by Hay (2006, citing Putz, 1993, p. 53) recalling Cape Cod and observing that “All these places are becoming more and more alike”. Calvino captured the threat eloquently in *Invisible Cities* where the world becomes more and more the same and “only the name of the airport changes” (Calvino, 1996, p. 128). Small islands scholars and practitioners “are still coming to terms with ... the relevance of analysing organisational structures or processes in response to” the common denominator challenges of scale, isolation and insularity (Baldacchino, 2002, p.3) the temptation to classify and group islands is great. Such “snug, taxonomic subordination” (Baldacchino, 2008, p. 41) has significant dangers as it is quite easy to slip into unwitting characterisations through the casual or simplistic use of descriptors, for example interdependent, vulnerable, postcolonial. Thus researchers and practitioners must be alert to the ways in which this may belie the complexity of reality; although, like the subtle classification of clouds in meteorology, some synthesis of typologies can assist us in appreciating the complexities that islands and islandness present.

The historical, cultural and institutional development of islands shapes their position today and it is important to recognise this in any reflection upon their future. As King (2009, p.64-65) noted, islands have clearly had changing roles historically; he drew upon the typology offered by Warrington and Milne (2007) to explore the phenomenon.

- Islands of civilisation: for example Britain and Japan.
- Islands of settlement: for example New Zealand and Australia.
- Islands of plantation: Resource frontier islands: for example in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean.
- Islands as fiefs: Very peripheral and exploited by local and external elites: for example Sicily and Haiti.
- Islands as fortresses: for example Malta as the exemplar but also Hong Kong and Singapore during colonial eras.
- Entrepôt islands: Nodal points in trade routes: for example Malta and Mauritius.
- Islands of refuge: Offshore opponents of mainland powers: for example Cuba and Taiwan.

An island typology offered by Warrington and Milne (2007) and discussed by King (2009, pp.64-65).

King also identified a distinction between *Nodal* Islands, which “tend to attract and exchange population, leading to creation of cosmopolitan, hybrid and stratified societies, often with an ‘open’ mentality towards the outside world” and *Marginal* islands which “tend eventually to become areas of outmigration and depopulation” (King, 2009, p. 63). In both there can be a considerable reliance on the ‘informal sector’ of the economy which can open people up to dubious and illegal ventures, for example the “penetration of international drug-running cartels in many Caribbean countries’ underground economy” (Conway, 1997, p. 20).

Within the European Union (EU) Sanguin (2007) identifies five characteristics of small islands and, despite the tragedy of the partitioned island, there are significant insights into governance to be found. Anckar (2006), for example, has demonstrated that “islandness links in many instances to the choice of institutional settings”. A key finding of Anckar’s comparative analysis of the political institutions of small island states in relation to institutions in other states is that “The difference is [statistically] large enough to merit the conclusion that, more than other states, small island states have a democratic bent” (Anckar, 2006, p. 49) and that “it is islandness that contributes more than size to the choices of institutional approaches” (Anckar, 2006, p. 48).

- Islands with a clear central settlement and defined periphery: for example Malta and Madeira.
- Islands also having a range of sub-regional centres: for example Sardinia, Corsica and the Balearics.
- Polycentric islands where functional specialisation is developed: for example Sicily.
- Isolated islands on the outskirts: for example The Shetlands, Pantelleria and Lampedusa.
- Partitioned islands: for example Cyprus.

Five characteristics of small islands in the European Union (EU) identified by Sanguin (2007).

The diverse cultural and institutional natures of smaller islands are counterpoised against some shared characteristics, perhaps the most significant of these being the pronounced compression of ‘scales’ with both very local and wide national concerns being felt cheek by jowl. Baldacchino has discussed this ‘amplification by compression’ (Percy *et al.*, 2007, p. 193) and whereas continental and mainland situations may encompass vast territories within which a multiplicity of social and institutional hierarchies may be found, in smaller islands all of these hierarchies are ‘compressed’ into the much more immediate relationship.

Recognition of the issues and challenges that islands face is clearly important and, while islanders themselves that have always been most assiduous in their responses, there are also a number of wider international and institutional initiatives. This is not the place to attempt to review these responses in any depth but much is being done, albeit that there is more that could be done. There are “enthusiastic island initiatives of major international institutions” (Baldacchino, 2008, p. 41) including the United Nations (UN) Small Island Developing States [SIDS] programme and the World Bank small states forum; The Association of Small Island States (AOSIS); regional commissions in Europe and the Pacific; a number of impressive third sector bodies including the Global Islands Network (GIN) and the International Small Islands Studies Association (ISISA). There have also been a number of international responses to the wider needs and opportunities for islands, for example; the *Declaration of Barbados* (United Nations 1994); the *Mauritius Strategy* (2007); and the Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Global Change Project (CPACC) which is assisting in preparing the regions National Communications as required under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Commonwealth Foundation’s Citizens’ Education Action Learning (CEAL) Guide, and Citizens and Governance Toolkit (2009) can also play a useful role in the context of small islands. Academic journals also play an important part but, as Baldacchino (2006, p.8) has observed, they have tended in the past to give “loose and uncoordinated” attention to island studies. Overall, it can be argued that island studies and island affairs deserve much greater attention, more synthetic research and more spatially sensitive approaches within the world archipelago.

Many smaller islands have been vigorous and active in responding to challenges, although the responses open to them have sometimes brought their own difficulties and sometimes dependencies; for example by becoming dependent upon economic opportunities beyond the island, including migration, remittances, aid or bureaucracy, to maintain their levels of activity and economies. Some islands become reliant upon *migration, remittances, aid and/or bureaucracy*, or MIRAB Economies as they have been termed, have little of the endogenous synergies with the island and its people that are needed for sustainability in the longer term. Other islands have pursued development paths that depend upon banking, insurance, postage stamp sales, and tax-free financial markets which, as Ogden (1989) believes, could represent more durable models albeit heavily dependent upon external economic conditions.

Testing and sharing the experiences of potential responses is important, for example while Bass and Dalal-Clayton (1995, p. 8) argued that “it is not possible for islands to create new resource frontiers”, it can be seen that the declaration of 200-mile exclusive economic zones (EEZs) have actually done so. Also, as Nurse and Sem have discussed, a range of precautionary responses to sea level rise are being tested, for example in the Caribbean by new planning and building codes and land use policies, and also by the way in which Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) offers a “framework for resolving potential conflict among competing stakeholder interests” (Nurse and Sem, 2001, p.858). Clearly these potential responses must be critically tested to ensure that, as far as possible, they increase the effectiveness of adaptation measures and that they avoid “maladaptation (i.e. measures that increase exposure rather than decrease vulnerability)” (Nurse and Sem, 2001, p.846). Dodds (2007) has identified challenges facing sustainable development in island tourism and noted the way in which rejuvenation and development are frequently and inappropriately presented as sustainable, without really evaluating the performance credentials of those activities. In these cases, as in many others, change is conflated with progress. In these cases change is conflated with progress, and the prevailing belief that the environment is indefinitely capable of accommodating increasing GNP, growth and consumption presents serious risks (Girvan, 1991). The capacity to critically evaluate and judge potential strategies and responses to challenges is, therefore, of great importance. The small-scale pilot survey reported below has been undertaken to gain a clearer impression of the contemporary issues that smaller islands are facing and something of their capacities to respond.

Small islands survey – summary of data patterns

In order to place the broader pattern of issues and challenges that scholars have identified into the context of planning in small islands a pilot survey was undertaken in 2009-10, which aimed to explore the institutional contexts for planning and governance, and also to identify methodological issues for further research (Appendix 1). The research questions and survey format was developed in consultation with the Small Islands Working group of the UK Royal Town Planning Institute and it was informed by the work of scholars of small islands, in particular Baldacchino, Bass and Dalal-Clayton. The survey had two objectives: first to identify the key planning issues confronting islands; how important they are seen to be; and the extent to which they are being addressed in practice. Secondly it sought to explore the institutional context in operation and the position of planning and its capacity in practice. The results of the survey must be treated with caution as the sample size is extremely small and the islands surveyed are similar in being relatively well-developed and predominantly warm-water islands. Nevertheless the findings do begin to suggest key areas for further research and appropriate methodological considerations.

Informed observers of planning and related practice in a sample of twenty islands were initially identified and invited to take part in the pilot survey. Nine responses were received from the Mediterranean (Malta, Sicily and Cyprus); Northern European (Guernsey);

Caribbean (Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda); and the Indian Ocean (Mauritius). While only one response was expected from each island there were two responses from both Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

Key planning issues confronting islands; how important they are seen to be and the extent to which they are being addressed in practice

Demographically the key issue identified by the respondents was that of immigration pressure. Neither high birth rates nor declining populations were considered as significant issues. Ageing populations and population pressure were perceived as issues in some islands, but these issues did not emerge as a common theme. The main issue concerning employment in the islands is seen to be a significant skills deficit. Unemployment is recognised as a problem in some of the islands but limited participation of women in employment and child labour were not seen as significant issues. Heavy dependence on tourism and financial services were seen as key economic issues in most of the islands and many are seen to be heavily dependent on agriculture and fisheries, and also upon a few traditional industries.

The majority of respondents recognised a wide range of critical planning issues facing their islands and identified the following as being extremely or very important;

- Environmental protection
- Coastal zone management
- Marine spatial planning
- Climate change impacts
- Land-use pressures / conflicts
- Urban development
- Urban containment
- Heritage conservation
- Transport / traffic (internal)
- Economic development
- Water resource management
- Waste management
- Disaster planning

Spatial disparities between North and South or East and West, or between rural / urban areas, transport and external connectivity, and energy/carbon management were seen also seen as significant issues for some of the islands.

When respondents considered the extent to which the issues identified as important for their islands are being addressed, only two areas (economic development and disaster planning) appeared to be generally well addressed. While some issues were perceived to be well addressed in some islands, few issues were considered to be well addressed by the majority of respondents. The planning issues which were identified by a majority of respondents as not being well addressed or not addressed at all were;

- Waste management
- Traffic and transport (internal)
- Urban development
- Coastal zone management
- Climate change impacts
- Energy and carbon management

Responses to the following issues were rather more balanced with some respondents perceiving that they were being well addressed, while others felt that they were less well addressed;

- Environmental protection
- Marine spatial planning
- Land use pressures / conflicts
- Urban containment
- Heritage conservation
- Traffic and transport (external connectivity)
- Economic development
- Land use pressures / conflicts
- Spatial disparities – between N S E W or urban / rural

Seven of the 9 islands were identified as being vulnerable to natural disasters, with only Cyprus and Guernsey being identified as not being particularly vulnerable to such events. The major threats posed by hurricanes in the Caribbean and cyclones in Mauritius were identified as key issues by respondents from those areas.

Significant limitations in terms of strategic level planning were identified by the respondents, and comments included *“Strategic level planning is missing”, “A defined National Planning Framework does not exist”, “There needs to be proper development of a short and long term planning operation units”, “This leads to a fairly rigid reliance upon some outdated policies, especially some years after the background studies were completed”* and *“Pressure to get development applications done, resulted in the development planning department virtually grinding to a halt”*.

Responses to the position of marine spatial planning was mixed and, while one response noted that there *“is currently an internationally funded project to develop a management plan to protect existing reef environments there was little evidence of provision for marine spatial planning”*, another reported that *“There is no formally established policy or procedure for marine spatial planning”*.

A number of limitations of local level planning reported but, interestingly, the responses here also reinforced the need for rectifying the gap in strategic planning as a framework for local planning. One respondent noted the *“Absence of up to date strategic plans”* and another that *“There needs to be more detailed strategic plans and action area plans prepared that identify and determine the needs and aspirations of the local communities”*. One respondent reported that there is *“No statutory local level planning”*.

In terms of development control and management, the respondents identified a variety of limitations, one citing *“High population density, high levels of pressure in a relatively limited land area and needs for economic development to take place make the role of the planning authority and of planners highly sensitive”*. Another observed that the approach was *“Not transparent [but] slow, open to individual and political influence [with] inadequate guidelines from plans or standards, lack of participation by affected third parties and communities”*. Another felt that *“Planning is perceived to be a hurdle”*.

Our enquiry about the approaches to the implementation of planning initiatives taken in the small sample of islands elicited relatively limited responses, with one respondent reporting that *“The planning department has no implementation powers itself”*, another observing that implementation is promoted through *“Action Plans known as Outline Planning Briefs”*, and another through *“an Urban Improvement Fund and [also on] planning gain [or benefits to*

surrounding areas or needs based on contributions from developments]”. There was a general perception that implementation pursued by “*mainly development control*”.

Institutional structures; approaches to planning in practice and capacity.

The political systems and institutional structures in all the islands surveyed were identified as representative democracies nationally, with most having significant trans-national external political obligations or affiliations. While it was reported that there is some delegation of powers to a local level, conversely it was also noted that the national governments have not adopted decentralising or delegating approaches.

The respondents believed that the role of planning in their home islands was generally seen as a central / core activity in implementing public policy and that the aims and objectives of planning policy were widely recognised publicly. Respondents believed that planners are essentially involved in responding to and implementing public policy and with the regulation of development. There was strong common belief that planning is heavily constrained by political pressure. However, there were very mixed responses on how closely planners are involved with local communities or in developing the capacity of local people, and also the extent to which each island is dependent upon planning expertise from external professionals or consultancies.

The planning procedures employed in the sample islands involved providing a range of planning guidance, support and technical advice. There were very mixed responses concerning how well strategic planning is developed and reviewed in the sample islands, but generally it was perceived that there is a lack of clarity in this area. The deficiency was seen as a contributor to problems at the local level where planning is not seen to be responding effectively to local needs. Respondents noted that approaches to the implementation of planning initiatives in practice are not generally well established. Marine spatial planning is generally also seen to be a deficiency and there does not seem to be effective policy nor regulation at this stage. Significantly there was a broad concern that development control and management is not carried out in a sufficiently transparent manner which is widely respected by local people.

The islands surveyed reported a significant number of external affiliations and the case of Malta illustrates just how wide and numerous these can be, with affiliations with the EU as a Member State from 2004, and affiliations with the Australia Group, C, CE, EBRD, EIB, EMU, FAO, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICCT, ICRM, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC, MIGA, NSG, OPCW, OSCE, PCA, Schengen Convention, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, and WTO. It is clear that it is a valuable asset to be able to draw upon the expertise, support and resources of many different potential partners, and islanders are experts at playing on a whole range of external affiliations; but, as discussed briefly later, in some ways this wealth of external inputs sets up its own contradictions.

Summary findings

It is evident from the work of many scholars, and the findings of this small-scale survey, that there are many significant challenges confronting small islands and, despite many efforts, the capacities available to respond to them comprehensively is limited. While the traditional approaches to development control and development planning are more firmly developed, there seems to be less ability to promote and implement strategic policy. Institutional failings also appear create barriers within islands. Despite extensive networks and considerable

efforts, the levels of strategic collaboration between islands also seem to be somewhat short of their full potential. The paper now moves on to consider ways in which this potential could be approached and realised more systematically.

Making places: Mediating space?

The roles of planning and governance may be hotly contested even within individual states. It is not surprising, then, that the concept of wider spatial engagement and policy beyond borders is also contentious. Nevertheless, most of the significant challenges faced today cannot be addressed solely within narrow administrative boundaries, and wider perspectives are needed. This is not to say that many considerations and actions are not also important at the local level, but simply that these cannot achieve their full potential without broader spatial consideration and action. Before addressing these wider spatial concerns it is important to briefly explore experiences and practices at the local level, in order to be able to see the relationships between place and space more clearly. While initially this exploration concerns the development of planning, it quickly moves towards consideration of the spatial and communicative turns (Albrechts, 2004; Healey, 1992b) that have suggested new approaches to planning and indeed governance.

Approaches to planning have been developed and changed considerably over the last century or so, and in this it is instructive to reflect upon the changing epithets that have been used in the discipline. A very partial list would include; town and country planning, land-use planning, development planning and management, reconstruction planning, environmental planning, conservation planning, transport planning, countryside planning, and marine spatial planning; and each practitioner could add a number of others. Each epithet suggests a significantly distinctive character and purpose. A number of intimately related other activities and their descriptors, for example urban regeneration, neighbourhood renewal, urban design and several others also conjure up distinctive, if diverging, images and purposes in peoples' minds. While these terms may be seen as positive to many, there are probably many more for whom the mention of planning brings forward the image of permits, bureaucracy and restrictions. The idea of the plan is often captured in people's minds by the notion of the 'blueprint', or a detailed design or specification for a future state, building or organisation, but in the twenty-first century there is much more emphasis on guiding and shaping and less on deterministic control.

Examination of the international diffusion of planning reveals insights into the socio-political influences on the diverse ways systems have been adopted, imposed and refined, ranging from the synthetic borrowing found in major western countries to the authoritarian imposition that has been found in subjugated territories (Ward, 2000). Today a more heterogeneous picture is emerging with quite rapid changes in practice and many examples of selective borrowing from various sources (Home, 1997). The longer-standing 'traditional' approaches to planning, which are predominantly place-based, follow two broad types of approach in practice internationally; first a regulatory and codified system typical of North America and much of Western Europe; and secondly the discretionary approach typical of Britain and some of its former colonies (Booth, 1996). While in discretionary planning systems "there is flexibility in interpreting the public interest ... this is in sharp contrast to other systems which, more typically, explicitly aim at reducing ... uncertainty" by producing quite explicit principles and physical development plans (Cullingworth and Nadin, 2006, p. 1). The opportunities and challenges for strategic development planning presented in each of these systems are different, however increasing knowledge transfer, borrowing or synthesis is resulting in quite complex hybrids between these simplistic typologies. For example, Chapman and Cassar (2004) have observed the introduction of more regulatory design zoning and coding in development management in Malta in response to the challenges encountered in operating

the discretionary approach that had been adopted from British practice in drafting new legislation in 1992. A key driver for this change was the public perception of inequality and bias in decision-making in development management, but also the desire to provide stronger principles for contextual analysis and relationships.

Two powerful ideas have guided much thinking since the later part of the twentieth century; one concerning ways in which planning processes engage with civil society; another with ways planning could support spatial change and territorial policy. While these communicative and spatial 'turns' could provide powerful means of promoting spatial equity they have not, as yet, achieved their transformative potential. The communicative turn has been discussed most comprehensively by Healey (1992a, 1992b), having considerable influence on ideas in practice, albeit that the highly-motivated ideals espoused in theory have been harder to achieve in practice, even when they have been welcomed institutionally. Healey saw the approach as a means of "collective 'deciding' and 'acting' through intersubjective communication" (Healey, 1992b). As Carpenter and Brownhill have said, in some cases "Participation has become integral to the delivery of public services, as governments attempt to involve citizens in decision-making through processes of consultation and engagement" (Carpenter and Brownhill, 2008, p. 227). Booher and Innes (2002, p. 221) envisaged a "network power" shared by participants across a wider process" and, although this potential is as yet to be realised, a number of initiatives have shown the possibilities. Booher (2008) also makes a persuasive case for the value of citizen engagement "in the creation of urban places of quality" (Booher, 2008, p. 234) but it is important to note that there are spatial and political obstacles in practice, and many determinants of spatial opportunity and constraint at the local level derive from decisions taken at much wider spatial scales. Only if citizen engagement enables participation in these higher levels of strategic choice could they be said to be spatially equitable.

The spatial turn in planning aimed to go beyond land use and development planning to mediate the functional dynamics of places across the ranges of scale at which activity occurs. As Albrechts explained, the "term 'spatial' brings into focus the 'where of things', whether static or dynamic; the creation and management of special 'places' and sites; the interrelations between different activities in an area, and significant intersections and nodes within an area" (Albrechts, 2004, p. 748). The origin of this spatial approach owes much to the increasing recognition of the complexity of local and global dynamics as well as the considerable disparities and conflicts that exist between places. The spatial turn also embraced the idea of citizen engagement as a means of integration between sectors and scales. The EUROCIITIES research programme *Pegasus* explored a variety of approaches within prescriptive and discretionary planning contexts across Europe, including Birmingham, Genoa, Malmo, Seville, Oslo and Vienna. The report (EUROCIITIES, 2004, p. 4) concluded that "vertical and horizontal coordination [are] not sufficient" but that diagonal integration, as shown in Figure 1, is needed.

This ostensibly simple model of integration is intellectually powerful and beguiling in its clarity. However there are layers of complexity which must be appreciated in any attempt to bring about such integration in reality. While some form of planning has been undertaken in the development of human settlements for millennia, it is only recently that these have been embedded within institutional systems, and even more recently that the wider strategic choices facing regions and states (and beyond) have come to be seen as opportunities to develop more engaged processes of governance.

Planning can play dual roles by being proactive in facilitating and enabling beneficial change and, where necessary, regulating or controlling change in the wider interests of society. The mechanisms available are diverse and go far beyond those enshrined in statute to include guidance, intelligence and encouragement (Chapman and Larkham, 1992); and practitioners

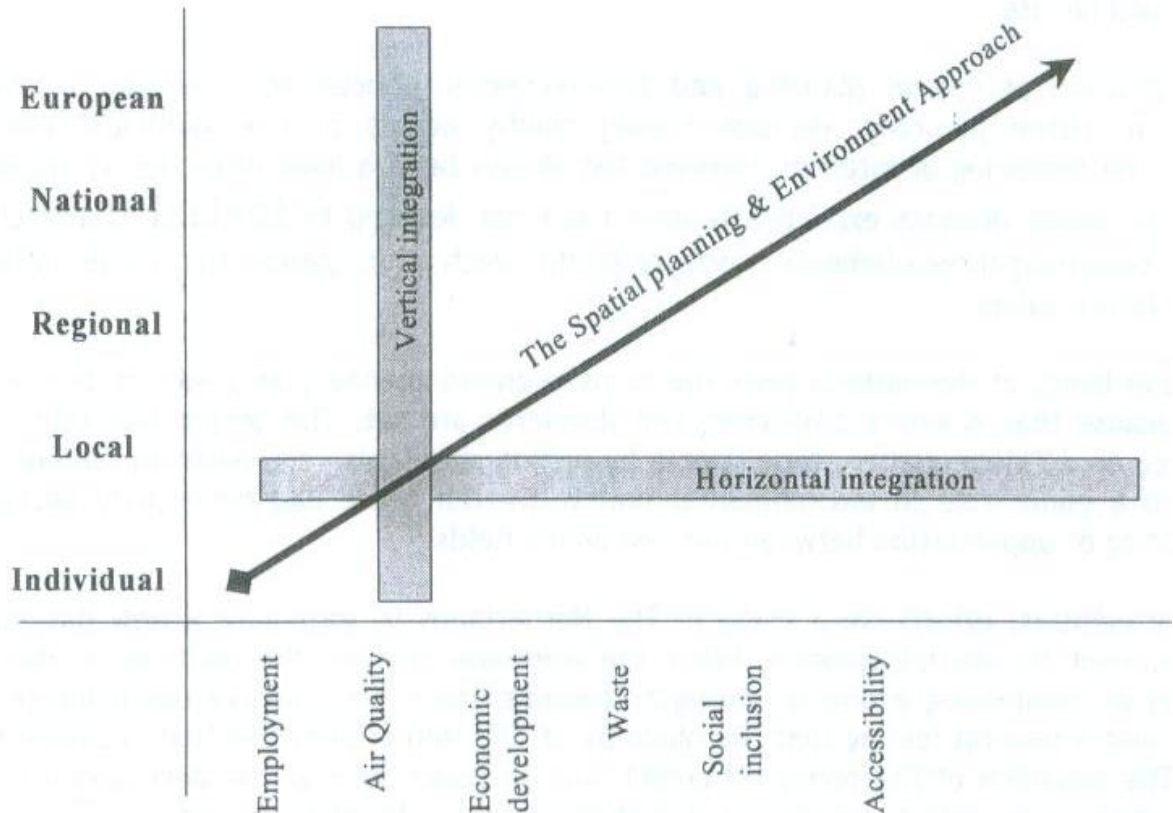


Figure 1 The Pegasus concept of 'diagonal coordination' (source: EUROCITIES, 2004, p. 4; reproduced by permission).

tread a delicate line in wrestling with the complex inter-relations that exist between social, economic and environmental issues on the one hand and the necessity to develop processes that deliver expedient practical solutions (Bruton, 1984). Tensions may arise between the spirit and purpose of planning and transitory political and institutional imperatives, and between sectoral and spatial scales of interest (Chapman, 2011) and these present central challenges for the future. As Cherry (1974, p. 79) observed, there is "simply not one way of doing things, not just one sense of action for the future, but a variety [depending] on the different assumptions and values held by the groups concerned".

Spatial engagement and the world archipelago?

Bass and Dalal-Clayton (1995) recognised that sustainable development strategies for small islands critically depend upon "sorting out which ... are local island issues and which deserve attention at the wider inter-region/island scale" (Bass and Dalal-Clayton 1995, p. 8) and that developing systems for analysing and monitoring present conditions and changes; engaging public participation in decision-making; equipping institutions to undertake multiple and integrative functions and reducing the isolation of island professionals are key steps. As the British-Irish Council concluded, there are a number of "benefits which regional neighbours can realise from collaborative spatial planning".

However, while the idea of integrating spatial analysis and decision-making has resonance in a world of increasing spatial interdependencies, there are real difficulties in gaining traction, even within the context of Western Europe where the concept at least has been widely

discussed. Stead and Meijers have discussed the barriers in a context where “sectoral policy integration is paradoxically almost never a high priority for key actors in government (thus presenting) real obstacles of low priority and opposition” (Challis *et al.*, 1988 cited by Stead and Meijers, 2009, p. 318). Scott (2000, p. 22) also argues that “States have no interest ... in describing an entire social reality ... [and] ... no administrative system is capable of representing any social community except through a ... greatly schematised process of abstraction and simplification”. Oversimplification presents a real difficulty for spatial integration because, as Weaver (1948) has shown, we are confronted by problems not only of increasing complexity but also by quite different types of complexity. He characterised these types of problem as ‘simple complexity’ where problems can be addressed through the physical sciences to devise practical applications and invention, like the telephone and rockets; ‘disorganized complexity’, where statistics and probability govern the development of information theory and so on to guide our understanding; and ‘organised complexity’ where human intellects and actions have the ability to influence the outcomes of those complex systems. The potential for our collective human intellects to address complex challenges is great, but this can only be achieved if sophisticated spatial perspectives are developed, before it would be possible to take decisions and actions that are widely beneficial in the long term.

Wilson has drawn upon Weaver’s ideas and develops the idea that power comes from the generation of ‘super concepts’ that transcend the theories of disciplines. He argues that we “must acknowledge complexity” and Ashby’s law of requisite variety which requires that control systems must be as complex as the systems which they are trying to control. Interestingly, Wilson (2010) observes that “this is why dictators simplify the systems that they are trying to control”. In the European Union, which aims to develop more equitable spatial relations, levels of intelligence are improving, partly as a result of the work of the European Spatial Planning Observatory Network (ESPON). However, there is a higher degree of political and professional contention about the degree to which the EU’s affairs and spatial development should or could be guided territorially and sometimes, and I argue quite wrongly, it is likened to the centralised command economies of which the USSR was perhaps the worst example. Two key agreements have set the scene for the debates and led policies and programmes in the EU. The earliest was the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) (CEC, 1999). The second, and more recent, agreement is the ‘Territorial Agenda of the European Union: Towards a More Competitive and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions’ (Territorial Agenda, 2007). A key feature of EU cohesion policy as noted by Faludi (2007) referring to the *Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion* (Council of the European Union, 2006) is the intention to respond to the particular needs and characteristics of specific places and distinctive local or regional geographical challenges. These debates, and the evolving responses in the EU, provide a useful background against which to consider the potential for the future application of spatial perspectives more widely, including the potential tensions between places and between spatial and hierarchical levels in the processes of governance.

As noted by Hooge and Marks (2001), the way in which regional assistance within EU structural programmes allows local authorities to bid directly for financial support, giving “... the Commission [direct] access to regional and local stakeholders, and *vice versa*” (Faludi, 2007, p. 4). This introduction of a new form of ‘multi-level governance’ (Hooge and Marks, 2001) which may by-pass governments nationally and potentially locally is an interesting and challenging development. It may indeed be the source of deep political tensions, undermining as it may seem to do some levels of a power hierarchy, and opponents tend to compare it with the rigid planning regimes associated with centralised control and command economies and they build on a general antipathy to planning by highlighting its bureaucratic and controlling image. While the EU territorial approach does highlight some of the real operational tensions, it also illustrates how strategic and spatial goals can be pursued across

levels of government and between governments, partly as a means of conceptualising potential spatial futures but also as a means of guiding structural investment decisions to address territorial interdependencies, regional disparities and to strategic investment and infrastructure. For smaller islands the potential value of this approach is great and, although the impacts to date are limited, there are signs of increasing attention and action.

The islands in the EU mirror the global archipelago in many ways, ranging as they do from the small and uninhabited to the highly developed and very densely populated, for example the Balearics with 184 persons per sq. km, Guernsey with 807 persons per sq. km, and Malta with 1,263 persons per sq. km. Despite their number and diversity, even within the relatively sophisticated territorial perspective of the EU, smaller island needs have not been well recognised, and approaches have "... been incremental and fragmented" (Moncada *et al.*, 2010, p. 61; Sanguin, 2007). A continuing problem has been the difficulty of obtaining reliable and comparable data despite the work of ESPON. However, there is a growing pressure for this lacuna to be addressed; and, as Moncada *et al.* (2010, p. 83) note, there are "a growing number of studies ... of sustainability issues in islands ... in the European context" (Eurisles, 2002, Sanguin, 2007), for example the Eurisles network has established a battery of indicators including measures of regional disparity.

At the institutional level the second report on economic and social cohesion, *Unity, solidarity, diversity for Europe, its people and its territory* (CEC, 2001) recognised that "nearly 95% of the population of EU island regions is eligible for support under Objectives 1 or 2". The report also concluded that "In the case of the smaller islands, accessibility is the main problem which makes it difficult to maintain economic activities which are competitive and a young work force with a high level of education [and that even though the] largest islands are much better integrated into the rest of the EU economy ... many are at present reliant on structural support to catch up with other parts of the Union" (CEC, 2001, s. 3.5). As Baldacchino and Pliejel (2010: 89) illustrate through the case of Kõkar in the Åland Islands, and data collected by the ongoing EUROISLES project, the EU "is seeking ways of determining the development potential of Europe's lagging regions, which include various islands". Within the research community the economic vulnerability indices developed by Brigulio (1995) and the Environmental Vulnerability Index (Kaly *et al.*, 1999) referred to by Nurse and Sem (2001, p. 845) have formed a valuable basis for subsequent work and have partly contributed to the "Final list of 16 Sustainable Development Indicators proposed by Moncada *et al.* (2010, p. 75) for the EU 25+3 Islands".

The evolution and development of spatial perspectives in practice has been a lively subject of research and the UK during the late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries makes a particularly illuminating case to examine, as it is there that the notion of spatial 'planning' has been, and continues to be, hotly contested. This is not the place to examine the experiences to date in any detail but it is instructive to reflect upon the key issues that have emerged. For example, during the early years of the new century alongside the legislative reforms there can be seen to have been something of a renaissance for planning, and the vigorous adoption of spatial planning as a means of achieving policy integration and co-ordination and the promotion of sustainable development (Rydin, 2003). Gallent (2008) explored the changes and observed that it struggled "to balance a devolution of power to communities with the need to retain strategic oversight, and to exercise central control where necessary" (Gallent, 2008, p. 308). Drawing upon the ideas of Newman (2007, p. 27) who saw these efforts as "an attempt to renew local democracy and give communities greater power in decision-making through a process of governance" and Booher and Innes (2002, p. 221) who envisaged a "network power' shared by participants across a wider process", Gallent went on to explore how these ideas were being played out in reality, and concluded that while regional and local planning systems had developed relatively effectively that this had exposed the "fundamental

challenge (of) resolving the inherent friction between these two systems and securing some form of hierarchical consensus” (Gallent, 2008, p. 321).

Allmendinger and Haughton (2007) have suggested that the approach was envisaged to avoid the danger of ‘actor dominance’ and to ensure institutional boundaries did not prohibit or hinder delivery mechanisms, but in reality the spatial approach in the UK has fuelled the political backlash presently being experienced. It is not appropriate to discuss the nature of the responses in detail but it is instructive to consider the main characteristics of what is a very new direction, in which the twin ideals of the Big Society and Localism have set the context for significant legislative changes, including the abolition of the regional tier of government with all its statutory economic and planning responsibilities; the intention to devolve local planning making powers to local communities and/or businesses; establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships with economic development roles in selected sub-regional areas; and an intention to declare a number of Enterprise zones where local business ‘taxes’ are reduced and planning requirements relaxed. Clearly these more recent political and ideological developments have steered very sharply away from integrating and coordinating goals, at least in an open and transparent process, in favour of the sort of laissez-faire style espoused in the 1980s by the Thatcher administration. The changes are not merely procedural as they significantly alter the geometry of the power relations between different spatial scales and sectors. Sadly these wild swings in UK public policy clearly undermine the credibility and judgments’ come to within the political arena from which ever ideology and may undermine the credibility of representative democracy.

The distribution and exercise of power is sensitive and “those who write about planning ignore power all together, as if it did not matter, or more ominously, as if it mattered so much that they dared not even raise the question” (Booher and Innes, 2002, p. 221). But the geometries of power are a central consideration for the pursuit of spatial equity because national and corporate organisations may use “remarkably sophisticated ways to reinforce spatial structures of social control, cultural and racial oppression, and political economic advantage” (Soja, 2010, p. 632). Albrechts (2004, p. 751) argued that we should “move away from the idea of government as the mobilizer of the public sector and the provider of solutions to problems, towards an idea of governance as the capacity ... to search for creative and territorially differentiated solutions ... through the mobilisation of a plurality of actors with different, and even competing interests, goals and strategies”. The complexity of networks and isolated interests that exist over layers of spatial scales are, however, not easy to engage with, and in practice a variety of surrogates for this have been adopted. The institutions within and beyond statutory structures of government also set up their own dynamics and arenas of influence, and clearly do not capture wider spatial dynamics or engagement synthetically. As Swyngedouw (2005) noted, “assigning ‘holder’ status to an individual or social group is not neutral in terms of exercising power” (Swyngedouw, 2005, p.1999). Even where democratic values are democratic values are strongly espoused it is clear that institutional rescaling can result in “new constellations of governance articulated via a proliferating maze of opaque networks, fuzzy institutional arrangements, ill-defined responsibilities and ambiguous political objectives and priorities” (Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 2000). Nurse and Sem (2001, p. 867) have interestingly discuss the misconception that government should be the principal agent for delivering adaptation measures in smaller islands and conclude that as this “will be carried out by individual stakeholders and communities [then] government’s primary role is to facilitate and steer the process ... [integrating] adaptation strategies with other sectoral and national policies”. Investigating the roles and relationships between governments and with multiple ‘holders’ (Schmitter, 2000) presents a critical area for future research, as for the interrelations between planning, Governments and governance the rights, space, knowledge, share, stake, interest, and status ‘holders’ have a critical place.

Organised complexity and the world archipelago?

The complexities of relations between smaller islands, even within relatively small regions of the world, present multiple issues and choices and it would not be possible to envisage being able to control decision-making and action. However it is argued here that with wider spatial engagement and by the “vast combination of efforts” urged by Weaver (1948, p. 544) it may be possible develop a powerful influence upon the complex global systems that shape the destinies of many smaller islands.

Gagliardi (2009) has explored *islandness* as a metaphor for organisational design and, by drawing also upon metaphorical comparisons with *landscape design*, claims that “Harmony ... arises where ... care is given to ensuring that the structures which can be preordained are given fixed form as to creating spaces that favour the development of forms whose evolutionary pathways we can only guess at” (Gagliardi, 2009, p.45). Gardeners will immediately appreciate the importance of allowing all their plants to develop their full potential, and that an enabling structure is vital if they are to be able to do so.

The use of spatial planning concepts is becoming more widely evident in practice, for example “a non-statutory framework for cooperation on spatial planning [including] integrating future data sets” (Marrs, 2011, p. 14) has been prepared for consultation between the governments of the South and the North of Ireland. The British-Irish Council (2009) has noted that as “many spatial, or geographic, relationships extend beyond boundaries there is real value in inter-regional sharing of knowledge and objectives” and also that the benefits that regional neighbours can realise from improved collaborative spatial planning has the capacity to bring together many factors in order to consider how we can best take advantage of them. This sort of cross-border, interregional and transnational cooperation has been promoted in Europe in several ways, but perhaps the most significant for spatial policy is the Interreg programme. This seeks to promote cooperation between public, private and third sector actors through collaborative working and research on issues of shared importance and significance. These activities may be concerned with policy and strategy but also focus upon promoting or achieving action on the ground. An important, and possibly central, aim of the programme is the promotion of transnational networks and relationships between the partners as both a practical benefit and the development of cohesion through the development of co-learning communities. The Interreg programme, working through a number of wide geographically distinct regions of the EU, opens calls for new proposals for projects or programmes which are assessed against published overall themes for the next funding period which is typically two or three years. The projects and partnerships supported are very diverse and it is only possible to give a flavour here (see Box 1) but they do indicate the variety and value of Interreg experiences and potential opportunities for wider co-learning within the global archipelago.

These sorts of co-learning initiative are valuable as, while spatial thinking does offer powerful opportunities to conceptualise and pursue more integrating approaches to governance, in practice it is hard to understand even for practitioners and politicians. While it is true that there are the real potential benefits in “integrating the key planning drivers such as climate change, biodiversity, economic development, housing need and social cohesion within a multi-scalar network” (Scott, 2010, p. 326), these prove difficult to achieve in reality. Extending opportunities for co-learning within the global archipelago may constitute one of the key opportunities for the future. Drawing upon Wenger’s (2000) concept of “communities of practice”, Rydin (2007, p. 369) recognised the importance of “knowledge workers” in supporting the co-generation of knowledge. While applying this concept to the knowledge and learning in the field of environmentally sustainable construction in London planning

<p>MESH</p> <p>This project aims to establish a framework for mapping the marine habitats of northwest Europe through the development of internationally agreed protocols and guidelines for seabed habitat mapping and the generation of the first compiled marine habitat maps for the north-west Europe Interreg III B area.</p>
<p>Corridesign</p> <p>In this project teams from Holland, Germany, Belgium, France and two in the UK examined megacorridors as cross border bundles of infrastructure which could be understood as axes of economic development, urbanisation and as a spatial, institutional and governance issue.</p>
<p>ECTN - European Cultural Tourism Network</p> <p>The aim of ECTN is for regions with an interest in developing cultural tourism to share experience and good practice for regional economic development and job creation. By definition, good practice implies cultural tourism projects and policies that have positive impacts (economically, socially and environmentally) and contribute to sustainable regional development.</p>
<p>AMICA - Adaptation and Mitigation – an Integrated Climate Policy Approach</p> <p>AMICA is looking at ways to address climate change at local and regional level. The project seeks to increase the effectiveness of climate policy and strike a balance between precautionary and responsive measures to deal with both the causes and the short and long-term consequences of this global phenomenon.</p>
<p>The North Sea Region Programme 2007-2013</p> <p>The project will focus on the development of new and sustainable energy-related technologies and strategies on islands around the North Sea Region. Three development clusters that focus on sustainable energy in relation to mobility, water and materials will create relevant networks and deliver sustainable innovations for the islands' environments. Incubator centres on the partner islands will foster further development and implementation.</p>
<p>Baltic Gateway - Integrating the Seaways of the Southern Baltic Sea into the pan-European Transport System</p> <p>In the Baltic Gateway project, regional and local authorities, ports, transport authorities and private stakeholders in seven countries, joined forces to develop a common transport strategy. The strategy addresses, for example, efficient use of rail, road and short sea shipping services in the region.</p>

Box 1: A sample of projects supported under EU Interreg Programmes

departments, Rydin (2007) draws out some significant lessons concerning the development of communities of practice specifically and professional praxis more generally. The concept of “knowledge spanners” is most interesting, as it is envisaged that these will “range across

different networks, taking knowledge with them and transforming it in the process” (Rydin, 2007, p. 369). While islands face similar challenges globally and islandness conjures up resonant metaphors internationally, “islanders [may find] themselves hard put to reflect openly on their predicament” (Baldacchino, 2008, p. 44) and it may be that such communities of practice could play a significant role in drawing the diversity of inside and outside perspectives together.

The insider-outsider relationship can also be recognised in institutional and organisational settings and it is particularly significant when considering the development of real transdisciplinary interaction (Winder, 2003) that extends beyond interdisciplinary disciplinary work to engage wider communities of interest and processes of engagement. It is important that our conceptions of research and social learning should “privilege commentary from the inside out (rather than the outside in)” (Baldacchino 2008, p. 49) and it must be fundamentally about working with and for communities. An example of this intention can be found in Seattle, where a social learning process was employed in the creation of sustainable development code books. The processes observed by Holden (2008) reveal much about the potential of social learning; the challenges that are faced; and how the obstacles can be addressed. It is not possible to explore these in depth here but an important finding is that the “Emphasis on learning mitigates the focus on power relations as primary determinants of policy outcomes” (Holden, 2008, p. 6) and that the “process was effective in generating cohesion within the group such that it came to best resemble a community of enquirers” (Holden, 2008, p. 35). As Newels (1990, p. 9) observed “If we are to view planning as a mechanism which facilitates and stimulates the processes leading to sustainable growth and one which is concerned with the equitable distribution of the benefits of growth, we have to recognise the need for interactive, participatory planning”.

Smaller islands can be seen “as critically placed nodes within much broader dynamics linking wider spatial realms and processes [at the] global in scale” (King, 2009, p. 77) and they present the opportunity for comparative explorations and development at the more local scale. As Baldacchino (2006a, p. 9) has noted, “there is much academic and public policy mileage yet to be made ... by looking critically and comparatively at small island experiences and at ‘pan-island’ approaches to similar challenges”. Indeed as Depraetere (2008, p. 4) has suggested, “islands may become bellwethers [*sic*] of international environmental and cultural policy”. In this, “Processes are ... more relevant than structures, and design could be more appropriately seen as a social process and as a dialogic exploration during which differing views of the world, cognitive maps, strategies and interests are set against each other and mediated” (Gagliardi, 2006, p.4).

It is not long since Bass and Dalal-Clayton (1995, p. 2) claimed that “Little attention has been paid to the experiences of smaller islands and micro states”, but today an increasing recognition of the potential for greater synergy of planning and action between smaller islands is recognised. As Gagliardi (2009, p. 47) has claimed, islands can be “extraordinary testing grounds for new forms of territorial governance and new organizational forms”, and as Hay (2006, p. 20) says “...islands have taken the lead in the development of innovative forms of governance”. Indeed in many ways they can be seen as an opportunity for further innovation in institutional organisational design, where “the capacity of islands to lead [might lead to] the generation of resolutions to intractable global problems” (Hay, 2006, p. 21). While the findings of this study suggest that more will be needed to translate the potential into a reality where processes of learning and governance develop and respond to both the internal and external interdependencies of smaller islands there may be opportunities “...where many of the issues which need to be faced in considering paths towards sustainable development are most sharply brought into focus” (Bass and Dalal-Clayton 1995, p. 2).

The challenges that this presents for research are complex as the dynamic populations of an island's temporary residents, visitors and diasporas (Baldacchino, 2008) are compounded by the even greater dynamics of movement within the world archipelago. However as Camilleri (2002, p. 136) has noted, research in small islands does have the potential to achieve nationwide coverage "without having to resort to sampling techniques". While local research is not always regarded as highly locally, as research from 'outside ... international recognition accorded to local research ... has considerably improved (its) standing (with) local policy makers" (Camilleri, 2002, p. 135). Critically, as many of the challenges being faced are presented by the many decisions that are made outside the islands themselves, "Developing appropriate planning methodologies for small islands must be given a very high priority" in order for them develop the influence needed to "internationalise decision-making as much as possible" (Villamil, 1977, p. 9).

Conclusions

The challenges facing the world archipelago are considerable and the potential opportunities and responses raise complex and dynamic socio-spatial issues. This paper only touches upon a fraction of the questions being faced today, but it is hoped that this partial overview will contribute towards wider reflection on the potential of smaller islands "as testing grounds for new forms of territorial governance and new organizational forms" (Gagliardi, 2009, p. 47). The recognition of the wider potentialities and interdependencies is not new, for example Conway refers to the wider "hemispheric Pan-Caribbean community of peoples" (Conway, 1997, p. 23) and this broader perspective is vital to the appreciation of the origins of many of the impacts experienced in small islands. Continental areas also present complex tensions and potential synergies between local, regional, national and transnational scales, but the 'cascade' of overlapping scales between places and stakeholders - their responsibilities and interests - can be confused or obscured. In contrast, smaller islands experience a compression of scales in which spatial questions can be felt more immediately, and the intrinsic challenges facing sustainable development may be seen and experienced in sharper relief.

The potential synergies between local and global, insiderness and outsiderness, present a fundamental challenge for spatial understanding, but the development of wider processes of engagement in social and institutional learning through communities of practice and social media could enable the challenges to be tackled more effectively and equitably. Here it is argued that if these processes are to be beneficial they need to address two distinct, albeit intimately interrelated, dimensions. The first is the wider strategic global scale where many critical drivers of the fortunes of the world archipelago are created. The second is the local strategic and tactical scales where all of the practical impacts of both global and local forces are felt. While recognition of this very simplistic polarisation is an important starting point, it alone is insufficient and it must also be seen that there are complex mereologies between them. The recognition the complexities that are intrinsic to the multiple mereological relationships to be found in practice, is important. Mereology was conceived by Stanisław Lesniewski (1886-1939) and can be characterized as a theory of collective sets and it is a theory of relationships between *parts* and *wholes* (Gruszczynski, 2010). This is not the place to explore these in any depth, but this is a critical area of further research. As discussed earlier, many challenges are shared by smaller islands, but each island experiences these in its own unique and distinct combination, and each issue offers the opportunity for shared learning and collective initiative both between islands as well as within them. At this stage it may be helpful to identify some of the considerations that deserve attention, but each needs more intensive exploration. For example as discussed earlier the multiple affiliations that many smaller islands enjoy globally already enable mutual support, co-learning and networking on shared concerns and issues, but are these developing their full potential to

achieve synthetic spatial responses that benefit all? As Baldacchino (2006a, 2008, 2010) and Gagliardi (2008) have shown, small islands present significant opportunities for institutional learning and organisational development but that, while the existing networks and affiliations are valuable, more can be done. Here it is argued that between islands a real focus on the pursuit of spatial equity would benefit the world archipelago synthetically, while co-learning on shared issues between networks of smaller islands directly experiencing those issues would be effective more directly in local places. However this ostensibly simple, and perhaps incontrovertible, proposition presents great complexities in reality as there are a multiplicity of overlapping spatial scales, analytical frames, administrative jurisdictions, identities and associations, holders, networks, functional churns, disciplinary orientations, instruments and implements, and geometries of power that need to be appreciated and addressed.

It is argued, therefore, that the development of approaches that are capable of mediating tensions and grasping opportunities should be the central goal of scholars, practitioners and policy makers in pursuit of equitable sustainable development. It is not intended that this focus upon the world archipelago would in any way ignore or deny the intimate and vital relationships that also exist with mainland and continental areas, merely that islandness deserves a particular attention which would assist in improving our ability to understand and shape organised complexities and spatialities in widely beneficial and sustainable ways. To take one example, while the impacts of tourism upon small islands are clearly felt most immediately in each individual island, the drivers of this originate much more widely and often far from the islands themselves. As Conway (1997, p. 20) notes, “the governments in the Caribbean ... have come to rely on this complex, multi-faceted ‘global’ industry”, and he suggests that “the threat posed by unplanned and managed cruise-line tourism appears considerable”. The ability of small islands to appreciate more fully and collectively mediate the many impacts that challenges like present could be increasingly critical in the future. As systems that set the local-global nexus into sharp relief, where the compression of scales can be seen within the wider arena of global sustainability, smaller islands present a unique opportunity to explore innovative approaches to place making and spatial governance; by development of effective place making (and spatial governance) inside; and developing new forms of spatial governance (and sharing experiences of place making) between islands. While this notion could be characterised by some as centralist, or even fascist (Soja, 2010), that is not the intention and indeed the motivation is quite the reverse, founded as it is upon an idea of equitable spatial engagement. No idealised end state is envisaged, rather an approach “whose evolutionary pathways we can only guess at” (Gagliardi, 2009, p.45).

The Declaration of Barbados highlighted the need for international cooperation and partnership in confronting the responsibilities and the challenges faced by small island developing states. It also called for “functional cooperation and sharing of information and technology at regional and sub-regional level, to support strengthening institutions and building capacity”. While this functional and regional focus is clearly vital, as island interdependencies become even greater, an equal focus at the spatial and global scales is now necessary. Although modern sea and air travel offer increasing physical connectivity, and the world wide web can enable interpersonal connectivity and exchange, there is still evidence that many people continue to work in relative isolation and that common issues and experiences today are not always being shared effectively. The work of initiatives like the Global Islands Network as “a hub that connects and coordinates efforts to help ensure a healthy and productive future for islanders”, as well as the work of the *Island Studies Journal*, plays an important role in overcoming such issues and their effectiveness deserves to be spread more widely.

The recognition of the interconnectedness and interdependencies between small islands, while initially galvanised by the common threat from sea level rise (Bass and Dalal-Clayton,

1995) is increasingly being seen to extend to a much wider range of issues including global spatial dynamics, not simply as a matter of academic interest but as “a matter that affects the very nature of our existence” (Sandford, 1994). While small islands are united in difference and distinction, it is also true that their individual and collective futures may be more effectively sustained if they are united in action; and spatial thinking could play a significant role in making this possible. There is considerable value in developing wider opportunities for islands to share comparative experiences of place making locally and also to explore the interdependencies and potential synergies between them. While the sharing of place making experience is likely to have the most immediate and perhaps most obvious impact, it is the potential for long-term mediation of spatial equity, and the clarification of what this actually means, that will have that most profound impact upon the sustainable development of the global archipelago and also their continental counterparts.

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Planning in Small Islands Survey

The Commonwealth Association of Planners and the Small Islands Planning Task Group of the Royal Town Planning Institute International Development Network are interested in planning in Small Islands.

Your response to this survey would be very much appreciated, and the knowledge that you can provide will be valuable in the development of planning globally.

Q1 Please state the name of the island, or islands if an archipelago.

The key planning issues affecting the island(s):

Q2 To what extent are the following demographic issues significant within the island(s)?

	<i>Very significant</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Little or no significance</i>
Ageing population	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High birth rate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Declining population	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Population pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immigration pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other demographic issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q3 What, if any, are other significant demographic issues within the island(s)?

Q4 To what extent are the following employment issues significant within the island(s)?

	<i>Very significant</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Little or no significance</i>
Unemployment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skills deficit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limited participation of women in employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child labour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other employment issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q5 What, if any, are other significant employment issues within the island(s)?

Q6 To what extent are the following economic issues significant within the island(s)?

	<i>Very significant</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Little or no significance</i>
Being heavily dependent on agriculture & fisheries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being heavily dependent on a few traditional industries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being heavily dependent on tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being heavily dependent on financial services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other economic issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q7 What, if any, are other significant economic issues within the island(s)?

Q8 How important do you believe the following planning issues are which face the island(s) today?

	<i>Extremely Important</i>				<i>Not at all important</i>
Environmental protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coastal zone management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marine spatial planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change impacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spatial disparities - between N S E W or urban/rural	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land use pressures / conflicts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urban development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urban containment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heritage conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Traffic & transport (internal)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Traffic & transport (external connectivity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy / carbon management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water resource management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waste management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disaster planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q9 What, if any, are the other major planning issues facing the island(s) today?

Q10 To what extent do you believe the following planning issues are which face the island(s) today are being addressed?

	<i>Very well addressed</i>				<i>Not addressed at all</i>
Environmental protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coastal zone management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marine spatial planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change impacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spatial disparities - between N S E W or urban/rural	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land use pressures / conflicts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urban development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urban containment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heritage conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Traffic & transport (internal)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Traffic & transport (external connectivity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy / carbon management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water resource management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waste management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disaster planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q11 Is the island(s) considered to be vulnerable to natural disasters?

Yes

No

If so, please indicate which natural disaster(s) it may be vulnerable to.

The island's political system and institutional structure:

Q12 Trans-nationally, does the island(s) have any external political obligations or political affiliations?

Yes

No Go to Q14

Q13 If Yes to Q12 - please briefly describe the external affiliations.

Q14 **Nationally, is the island a representative democracy?**
Yes Go to Q16
No

Q15 **If No to Q14 - please briefly describe the political system.**

Q16 **Are any powers delegated to a local level?**
Yes
No Go to Q18

Q17 **If Yes to Q16 - please briefly describe the powers at local level.**

Q18 **Does the national government adopt a highly decentralising and delegating role?**
Yes Go to Q20
No

Q19 **If No to Q18 - please briefly describe the role of the national government.**

Q20 **What other institutions play a significant role in public affairs and planning and what are their roles?**

Q31 Are there well established approaches to the implementation of planning initiatives in practice?
Yes
No Go to Q33

Q32 If Yes to Q31 - please briefly outline the approaches used to the implementation of planning initiatives.

Q33 Is a range of planning guidance, support and technical advice available?
Yes
No Go to Q35

Q34 If Yes to Q33 - please briefly give examples of the planning guidance, support & technical advice available.

Q35 And finally, approximately how many qualified planning personnel are employed within the public sector in the island(s)? _____

Thank you for you help with this research study.