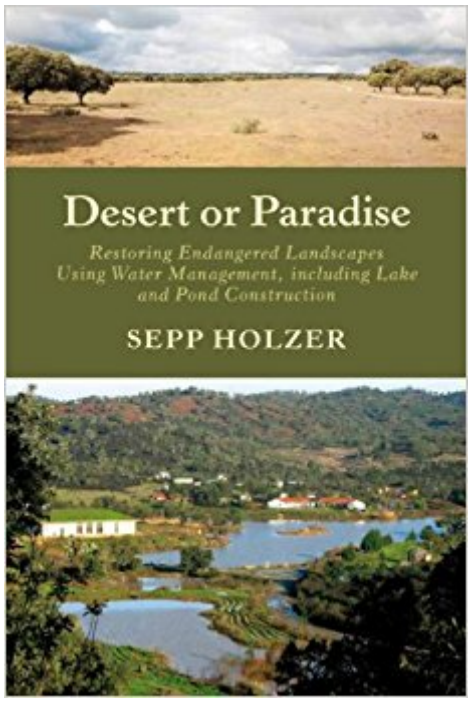
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Desert Or Paradise: Restoring Endangered Landscapes Using Water Management, Including Lake And Pond Construction



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Synopsis

Sepp Holzer farms steep mountainsides in Austria 5,000 feet above sea level. His farm is an intricate network of terraces, raised beds, ponds, and waterways, well covered with productive fruit trees and other vegetation, in dramatic contrast to his neighbors' spruce monocultures. Fans of Sepp Holzer have come from all over the world to see the productivity of his farm, a veritable permaculture paradise. His first book, Sepp Holzer's Permaculture, offers a detailed guide to what Holzer has achieved on his farm. Many readers might have wondered-but how can we achieve this on a global scale? Luckily, his newest book, Desert or Paradise, examines Holzer's core philosophy for increasing food production, earth health, and reconnecting mankind with nature, applied to reforestation and water conservation across the world. Through years of consultation with other countries, Holzer has developed a core philosophy for reconnecting mankind with nature even in arid or otherwise "lost-cause" regions. He details a process he calls "Grundierung," a term from painting meaning "base coat," which goes into great detail the importance of water, and Desert or Paradise offers his concept and guide to construction of large water reservoirs in arid, rainfall-dependent regions with examples from Greece, Turkey, Spain, and Portugal. Holzer describes the ecological and economic benefits of these changes, as well as the use of a variety of plant and animal species for further integration and regeneration of the surrounding areas, including reasons for reforestation and the cause and use of forest fires. Holzer also outlines his ten points of sustainable self-reliance and how these methods can help feed the world, such as the need to regulate the water budget, eliminate factory livestock farming, bring more fallow or unused areas into production, enlarge crop areas by using terracing and Holzer-style raised beds, regionalize instead of globalize, fight for land reform and engage in community building, go back to the ancient farming wisdom, and change the educational system. Also included are Holzer's ideas on beekeeping, humane slaughtering, nature spirits, the loss of roots in our society in general, and in politics especially.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

ForeWord Reviews- "Many climatologists are concerned that the recent spate of drought across several parts of the world is likely to become the new normal, which would prove particularly challenging for farmers, but will also affect everyone from city planners to rural landowners. Creating well-regulated water usage systems and better agriculture production methods are crucial for preventing widespread collapse or water shortages, and Sepp HolzerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s excellent thoughts on the topic provide a handy guide for the type of solutions that are needed. Well known in the field of sustainable agriculture, Holzer first introduced his innovative water-retention ideas inÃ Â Sepp HolzerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Permaculture,Ã Â a handbook of small-scale, integrative farming techniques that drew on HolzerÃ¢â ¬â„¢s experience as a farmer in Austria. Much like that useful volume,Ã Â Desert or ParadiseÃ Â contains a wealth of practical tactics that can help prevent desertification, reverse poor water policies, and even create areas rich with orchards and crops. In his new book, Holzer offers examples from countries like Russia and Portugal to demonstrate the breadth of landscapes that can be healed with a greater emphasis on natural water management. He covers an immense range of topics, including using pigs to restore forest-fire areas, constructing ponds with proper shallow zones, restoring hydrological balance in the world, and abolishing industrial livestock farming. Despite the wide range of topics he covers, Holzer creates a cohesive, well-argued, and persuasive handbook that aims to help people Ã¢â ¬Å“restore paradise.Ã¢â ¬Â• For Holzer, restoring the earthÃ¢â ¬â„¢s balance isnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t about economic development and squeezing a few more seasons out of an exhausted stretch of land. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s about a long-term and beneficial view of the world as a resource. He encourages farmers to become rebels, gardeners to become advocates, and everyone to become more self-reliant and community-minded. In a lively, accessible style, Holzer manages to address the issue of endangeredÃ Â landscapes while offering guidance to the home gardener and small-scale farmer. By blending big-picture thinking and achievable local-level results Holzer elevates his book far above a how-to or polemic. He seems the voice of reason in a world where a disconnect from nature is imperiling land, water, and people."

Josef ("Sepp") Holzer was born in the province of Salzburg, Austria. He is a farmer, author, and an international consultant for natural agriculture. He took over his parents' mountain farm business in 1962 and pioneered the use of ecological farming, or permaculture, techniques at high altitudes (1,100 to 1,500 meters above sea level) after being unsuccessful with regular farming methods. Called the "rebel farmer" because he persisted in these practices despite being fined and even threatened with prison for practices such as not pruning his fruit trees (unpruned fruit trees survive snow loads that will break pruned trees). He has also created some of the world's best examples of using ponds as reflectors to increase solar gain for passive solar heating of structures, and of using the microclimate created by rock outcrops to effectively change the hardiness zone for nearby plants. He has also done original work in the use of Hugelkultur and natural branch development. He is conducting permaculture ("Holzer Permaculture") seminars at his farm and worldwide, while continuing to work on his alpine farm. His farm now spans over 45 hectares of forest gardens, including 70 ponds, and is said to be the most consistent example of permaculture worldwide. He is author of several books and the subject of the film The Agricultural Rebel. He works nationally as permaculture activist in the established agricultural industry and works internationally as adviser for ecological agriculture. He is the author of Desert or Paradise: Restoring Endangered Landscapes Using Water Management, Including Lake and Pond Construction, and Sepp Holzer's Permaculture: A Practical Guide to Small-Scale, Integrative Farming and Gardening.

Was very much in line with my expectations on what to expect from Sepp Holzer writing on conversion of dry landscapes to more normal grasslands or silvopasture landscapes. Could have been backed up with some dimensional drawings on placements. Tendency to say " read the landscape" rather than explain how he does it in each specific location - and key variables within that location. An enjoyable read overall for anyone starting on the topic or looking for additional material to support their actions on increasing water within their existing landscape.

Let me start this review by describing what this book is not. This is not a book that describes how to build a pond. This isn't a book that describes how to grow lemons in the Alps.The book gives Sepp's principles for restoring land. First, he describes how the land becomes degraded. Secondly, he explains that water is the key to the fix. Thirdly, he describes ways to use the water to effect change.There are diagrams and real world examples. Sepp also gives instructions for building equipment he uses, such as the monk, ring waterer, etc. Example plans for a farm are given.This is

a great book. My only knock against it would be translation. The english is muddy in a couple places.

Love this book. Like Mr Phiri of Africa and Pieter of Groasis we think alike. Their ideas can change the world. This book goes on my bookshelf.

Great book that showcases a lot of Sepp's work with water management using retention spaces.

Apart from being a fascinating story (as his other books are as well); the practical information given, such as how to build ponds so they maintain themselves (long ponds oriented toward the wind, with multiple levels of depth); the shocking story of the desertification spreading across southern Europe; and the sensible, balanced approach to healing whatever bits of nature you can, are more than worth the price of the book.I suspected the pond I wanted to design was going to turn into a scummy, stagnant mess, but didn't know what to do about it. Now I do.His explanation of how governments actively create havoc and damage by their policies, and discourage good land management won't cheer you up, but they are informative.In my own area, homeowners are not allowed to cut more than three 8-inch diameter trees a year without government permission, whether they own 1/10 of an acre, or ten acres. This, despite the fact that the forest is choked and overgrown. The trees are so overcrowded (often only 3 or 4 feet apart) that they are spindly and weak, and we often have forest fires.All of Sepp Holzer's books are worth having, and keeping on your bookshelf as a permanent reference.

Inspiring, smart, and quite practicalVery good and approved solutions for world decay

All of Sepp Holzer's books are great, this one is no exception.

So, I bought this book thinking I'd learn plenty of ways to turn a landscape into a catchment system... There was maybe one or two chapters even relevant to the title of the book. Sepp goes on and on about the industrial food system, big corporations, far-out mushroom-shaped..water catchment apparatuses, animal husbandry. What does all this have to do with water management again? Seems like he jammed all these pictures and his opinions on everything in the world into the book just to fill up enough space to boost it up to a really hefty 200 pages of terribly written reading.I read plenty of books, some which I love enough to buy 2nd and 3rd copies of to give away because

I consider them indespensable knowledge. I felt like this book was more or less a total waste of time.

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