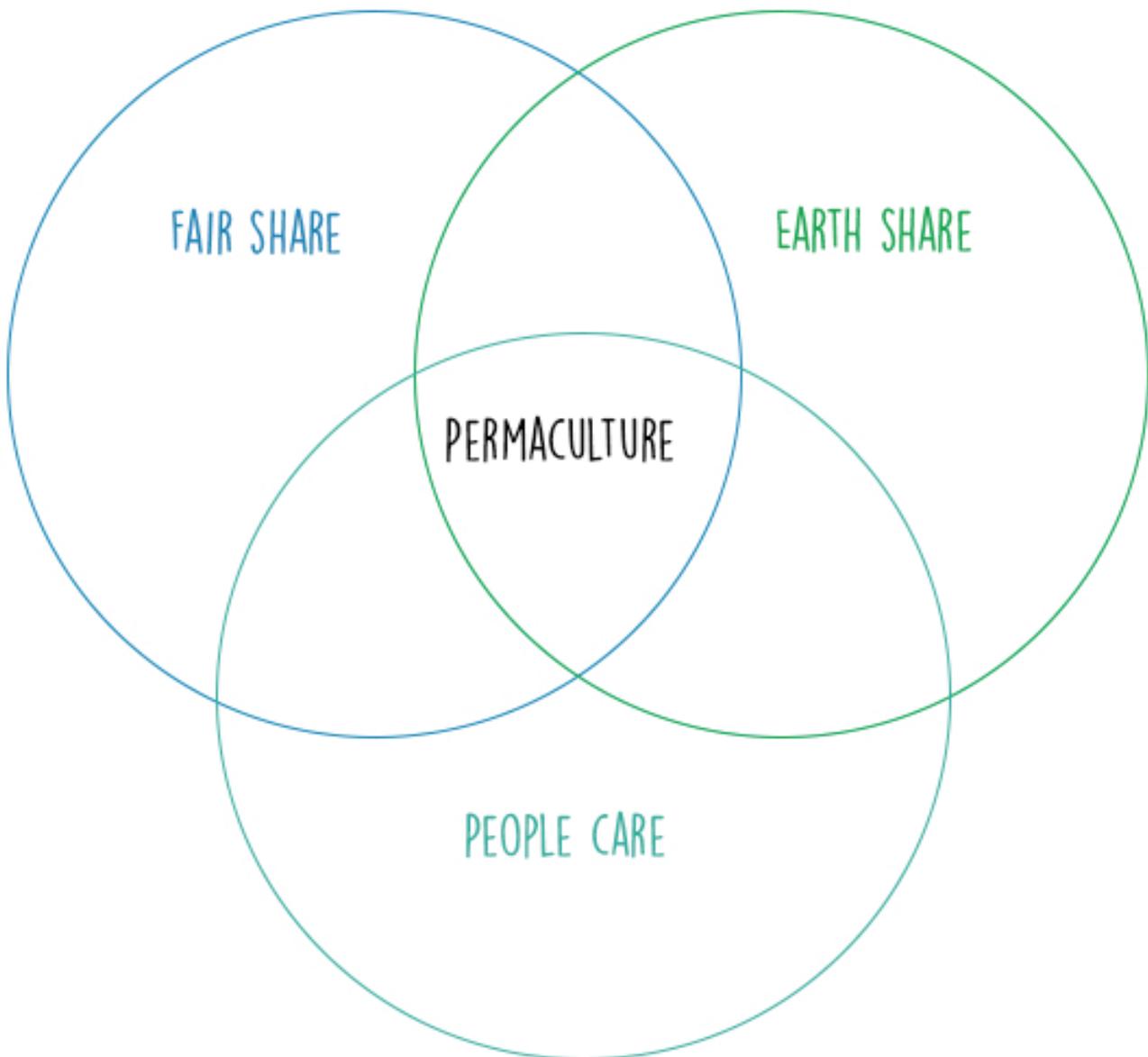


Permaculture Ethics And Principles

Permaculture is a set of agriculture and social design principles that aim to create a more sustainable society. Permaculture creates designed solutions for how we grow food, fibre, and animal products, catch and use energy, manage water and build communities.

Permaculture Ethics

The ethics at the heart of permaculture are the ideas of “earth care”, “people care” and “fair share”. On the Venn diagram below, you will see that permaculture is about the intersection of these three ethics.



Permaculture Ethics And Principles

Permaculture Principles

The following 12 principles shape a permaculture approach to design. In this case, you will also find examples of how these principles might be applied when designing a community garden:

Permaculture Principle	Example in a Community Garden Context
1. Observe and Interact	Before designing your garden, spend time in the space you are going to use - preferably at different times of the day and in different seasons and weather conditions - to understand the conditions of your space (e.g. which areas get the most sunlight, where there might be ephemeral water courses, which parts are shaded in the afternoons etc.).
2. Catch and Store Energy	Have you heard the saying "Make hay while the sun shines"? By collecting resources when they are abundant, we can store and use them in times of need. This could mean using solar panels and batteries to catch and store energy for lighting, or using water tanks for storing water, or using worms for converting waste into compost.
3. Obtain a Yield	This principle is about making sure you get something meaningful out from the work that you put in. Permaculture stresses the need for plants that are functional; those that provide us with food, fibre or medicine. It is important to note that planting something that you find beautiful is also important as enjoyment can also be considered a 'yield'.
4. Apply Self Regulation and Accept Feedback	This principle is about taking little steps, then stopping and evaluating what you achieved, and listening to other people's feedback and opinions. For example, you would start slowly and talk to your community about what they would like and need from a community garden, and you would learn from what has worked and what hasn't, both in terms of garden design and community engagement.
5. Use and Value Renewable Resources and Services	This principle is about reducing your dependence on non-renewable resources by making use of natural processes and animal behaviours. This could mean helping to improve soil health naturally rather than through the use of chemical fertilisers, or providing conditions that encourage birds and insects for pest control and pollination.
6. Produce No Waste	Waste is really just stuff that has ended up in the wrong place. This principle is about trying to reuse those resources in useful ways so that you don't waste anything. This could mean setting up compost bins and worm farms to convert household waste matter into compost for your garden.
7. Design From Patterns to Details	By stepping back, we can observe patterns in nature and society. These can form the backbone of our designs, with the details filled in as we go. We can design gardens according to the natural features that are already there, such as sunshine and shade, water courses or the presence of animals.

Permaculture Ethics And Principles

8. Integrate, Don't Segregate	This principle is about putting the right things in the right place, so relationships develop between them and they support each other. For example, soil + water + tomato seed can equal a whole crop of tomatoes! Understanding that the relationships between things is as important as the things themselves is critical to a healthy and productive garden.
9. Use Small and Slow Solutions	This principle is about using small and slow systems solutions that are easier to maintain than big ones. Small scale actions tend to be more adaptive to local needs, more respectful of nature and you will be able to see the consequences of actions for easily. This might mean keeping your community garden small, even though people beyond your community want to get involved and want it to be bigger.
10. Use and Value Diversity	Have you heard the saying "Don't put all your eggs in one basket"? Diversity reduces vulnerability to a variety of threats. In addition to creating an interesting garden, having a range of crops in your garden will mean that if one crop fails for some reason, you still have others that will probably be productive.
11. Use the Marginal	This principle is about where the most interesting events take place. A Marginal area is a place where two different environments connect; in the case of a community garden it might be where the edge of the garden space meets a local reserve or a sports ground. Rather than seeing this space as an edge to be ignored, embrace this space!
12. Creatively Use and Respond to Change	Things are always changing. This principle is about carefully observing, and how when intervening at the right time, we can use change to create positive impacts. In part this principle applies to planning for known changes, such as the seasons, and planting for these changes. But it's also about being prepared to adapt to other unforeseen changes.