

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Caracas, Venezuela, showing a dense urban area with a mix of low-rise and high-rise buildings. A cable car is visible in the foreground, suspended over a lush, green forested hillside. The city extends to the edge of the forest, illustrating the interface between urban development and natural landscapes.

Natural systems and their human uses are of central importance in urban regions, where diverse greenspaces and built spaces of essentially equal value spatially intertwine. With land planning, socioeconomics, and natural systems as foundations, this book combines urban planning and ecological science in examining urban regions. Writing for graduate students, academic researchers, planners, conservationists, and policy makers, and with the use of informative urban-region color maps, Richard Forman compares 38 urban regions from 32 nations, including London, Chicago, Ottawa, Brasilia, Cairo, Beijing, Bangkok, Canberra, and a major case study of the Greater Barcelona Region. Alternative patterns of urbanization spread (including 'sprawl') are evaluated from the perspective of nature and people, and land-use principles extracted from landscape ecology, transportation, and hydrology are stated. Good, bad, and interesting spatial patterns for creating sustainable land mosaics are pinpointed, and urban regions are considered in broader contexts, from climate change to biodiversity loss, disasters, and sense of place.

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Cover illustration: Venezuela, Caracas, forest-covered mountains above city.
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