

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

**LIVING**  
**ECOSYSTEMS**  
CLIMATE, ECOLOGY,  
FOOD AND WELL-BEING

AGRIGENTO

11/12 MARCH 2026

MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO REGIONALE "P. GRIFFO"



# LIVING ECOSYSTEMS

Proceedings of the International Conference

**Agrigento, 11–12 March 2026**

Zeus Hall — “Pietro Griffo” Regional Archaeological Museum  
Valley of the Temples Archaeological and Landscape Park

**Edited by Dario Russo**

## **Scientific Committee**

Alessandro Andreini – Gonzaga University, Firenze  
Mario Bisson – Politecnico di Milano  
Antonio Labalestra – Politecnico di Bari  
Carmelo Mezzasalma – CTS Accademia di Studi Mediterranei  
Dario Russo – University of Palermo

## **Conference visual identity**

Roberto Palermo

## **Volume design and typesetting**

Michele Boscarino

**© 2026 Palermo University Press, Palermo**

ISBN 978-88-5509-876-2 (print) – ISBN 978-88-5509-877-9 (online)



Università  
degli Studi  
di Palermo



ACCADEMIA DI STUDI MEDITERRANEI  
AGRIGENTO

parco **valle dei templi** agrigento



REGIONE SICILIA  
Assessorato Beni Culturali  
e Identità Siciliana



REGIONE SICILIA  
Assessorato Regionale  
Dipartimento dell'Istruzione  
e della Formazione Professionale



---

# Contents

PREFACE — Dario Russo

## Institutional Opening

**Santino Lo Presti** Direttore dell'Accademia di Studi Mediterranei

**Salvatore Caccamo** Prefect of Agrigento

**Calogero Alberto Petix** Office IV – Territorial District of Agrigento

**Fausto Giambra** Educating for Wellbeing: Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

## SESSION 01 FRAMING THE THEME

14 - 15

**MARIO BISSON**

Introduction to Session 01 – Framing the Theme

16 - 23

**FEDERICO M. BUTERA**

One Health: Keeping Agriculture within Planetary Boundaries

24 - 27

**RŪTA VALUŠYTĖ**

One Health: Keeping Agriculture within Planetary Boundaries

28 - 51

**DARIO RUSSO**

Ecology and Human Destiny in the Techno-Anthropological Circle

---

---

# SESSION 02

## FOOD, CULTURE AND SYSTEMIC DESIGN

52 - 53

**DARIO RUSSO**

Introduction to Session 02 – Food, Culture and Systemic Design

54 - 57

**HIROYUKI ANZAI**

Between “Zero Kilometres” and “Zero Time”. A Comparison of Italian and Japanese Food Cultures

58 - 71

**CARLA LANGELLA**

Gastro-Physical Design. Multidimensionality of Food

72 - 85

**MARIO BISSON**

From Everyday Practice to a System of Values. Design, Food and Active Ageing between Body, Space and Service

86 - 95

**GIORGIO DE PONTI**

Hyper-Local Loop: Designing Impermanence. Bio-based Materials and Systemic Innovation for the Sicilian Agri-Food Heritage

---

# Introduction to Session II

## Food, Culture and Systemic Design

Dario Russo

The second session of the conference opens with a reflection on the role of design within contemporary transformations, and in relation to the themes of ecology and food systems. At first glance, the association between design, food, and environment might appear improper – especially if design is understood in its most widespread sense, tied to the form of objects. Contemporary design has, however, progressively expanded its field of action, configuring itself as a discipline capable of operating on complex systems.

One speaks today of systemic design, strategic design, service design, and policy design: domains that attest to how the project no longer concerns solely the configuration of artefacts, but the organisation of relations, processes, and decisions. In this sense, design can be understood as a “hinge” discipline, capable of connecting different forms of knowledge and activating forms of integration between traditionally separate fields.

A useful conceptual reference for understanding this transformation is the figure of the “royal art” evoked by Plato: a practice capable of orienting and coordinating other techniques, deciding when and how to deploy them. Design, in this perspective, contributes to defining the framework within which problems are posed and addressed, before intervening on them directly.

A reflection on the term “technique” also makes it possible to question a distinction often taken for granted: that between the technical and the artistic dimensions. The term derives from the Greek *techne*, which denotes at once art and operative capacity. Design positions itself precisely in that hybrid space where aesthetics and function are profoundly intertwined.

The hybrid nature of design translates into an intrinsically transdisciplinary vocation. Unlike multidisciplinary approaches – which involve the co-presence of multiple disciplines – or interdisciplinary ones – which favour their interaction – design tends to produce new syntheses in which disciplinary boundaries are transcended. The result is a novel configuration capable of generating perspectives that exceed the sum of the knowledge involved.



The conference is conceived as a space for critical dialogue and construction, not for the exposition of already consolidated knowledge. The contributions presented should be understood as stimuli, hypotheses, and points of view to be discussed and, where necessary, challenged. The audience – and students in particular – is called upon to play an active role, participating in the process of knowledge elaboration.

This approach responds to the need to restore to design a public function capable of bearing on social and cultural processes. In a historical moment characterised by systemic crises, the project cannot limit itself to responding to contingent needs: it must contribute to orienting transformations, assuming a responsibility toward the future.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# **LIVING ECOSYSTEMS**

CLIMATE, ECOLOGY,  
FOOD AND WELL-BEING