



Lo-TEK Design by Radical Indigenism

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Taschen, Los Angeles, CA, 2020, pp. 420

This book by a landscape architect explores how local solutions to particular environmental problems, often adopted in remote parts of the planet by indigenous peoples, have a much wider relevance today, and might be alternatives to western technological solutions that can have their own destructive implications. (TEK here means traditional ecological knowledge.) Watson has compiled 18 case studies, split into the separate categories of mountains, forests, deserts and wetlands, based on 10 years of travelling and interviewing anthropologists and scientists as well as indigenous peoples. She records, for example, how traditional methods of rice growing on hill slopes in Bali have proved more lastingly productive than the 1970s 'Green Revolution' based on pesticides and fertiliser, which in a few seasons led to declining yield, a degraded soil and return of the pests.

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