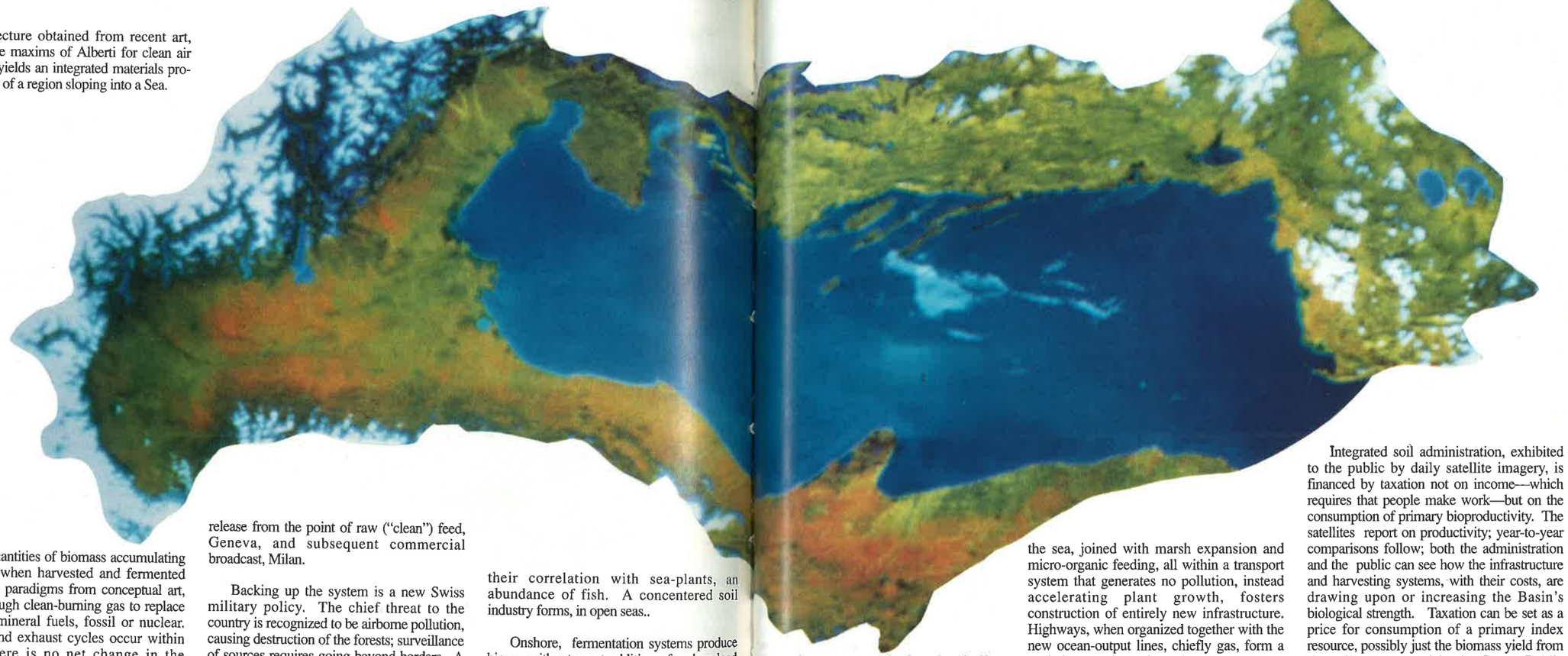
ADMINISTRATION OF THE ADRIATIC

Architecture obtained from recent art, fulfilling the maxims of Alberti for clean air and water, yields an integrated materials program for all of a region sloping into a Sea.



Giant quantities of biomass accumulating in the Sea, when harvested and fermented according to paradigms from conceptual art, produce enough clean-burning gas to replace all present mineral fuels, fossil or nuclear. Regrowth and exhaust cycles occur within months: there is no net change in the atmosphere. No Greenhouse Efffect, no smog, no acid rain, no consequent deforestation or alpine-soil loss—all meeting the demands of scientists, convening in Venice and London during the recent Biennale, to cut fuel emissions—i.e., change industry—60% "now, or else."

The entire system is televised from Switzerland. There, panoptic bioproductivity readings received every six hours are integrated with an evolving data base from less frequent but more specific satellite overflights. French data from Toulouse, US and Japanese data from Fucino, baseline Soviet high-resolution data from Munich, all flown in by the new Swedish JAS supersonic fighter to central processing (Bern/ Zurich/ Geneva) or to research centers conducting specific projects (e.g., Udine, re agricultural runoff, or Venice, re congestions of algae for harvest in the lagoons, or Zagreb, for sea circulation), allow timely production of video-recorded, multi-spectral, multi-sensor, multi-temporal reports—ready for TV release from the point of raw ("clean") feed, Geneva, and subsequent commercial broadcast, Milan.

Backing up the system is a new Swiss military policy. The chief threat to the country is recognized to be airborne pollution, causing destruction of the forests; surveillance of sources requires going beyond borders. A Space Force is conceived, combining aggressive surveillance with public exposure, for all of Europe—in liaison with ground stations in Sweden and Norway. The JAS, highly maneuverable conducts on-command reconnaissance and, where welcome, pinpoint site bombing or nutrient air-drops—for ecological revitalization. All imagery are real-time processed according to visual-field studies of Sharits and Lewitt.

Offshore, the accumulation of algae has long been a "problem": it cannot be harvested fast enough. With a reduction in upland use of fertilizers, then introduction of larger species of algae, nutrients are taken up by larger fronds, in deeper water, for better access. Circular rigs holding the fronds, since rotatable, reduce storm damage. Movable holdfast rings, based on concepts from Acconci and Oppenheim, allow for weekly harvests—automatically, or in labor-rich countries, by divers—with no reduction in rates of solar energy conversion. Not only is gas obtained; also, fine chemicals and, given their correlation with sea-plants, an abundance of fish. A concentered soil industry forms, in open seas..

Onshore, fermentation systems produce biogas without a net addition of carbon load to the atmosphere. These are joined with reverse systems for production of micro-cellular organisms—known in Italy as bioproteins—from mixed gas outflows of combusted urban wastes. The organisms are supplied chiefly to fertility zones throughout the Basin, singled out by satellites as reduced-activity marshes or estuaries, for uptake through the food chain into nutrient transfer systems of migratory animals. Haacke identified this as Live Random Airborne Systems. Consequences of buildup extend beyond the Adriatic, linking it up as part of Europe with Africa. The governing paradigm for biochemical engineering: Josef Beuys' Fat Corner, which mandates that all life-assimilable materials downgrade to and upgrade from a hydrocarbon phase.

Upland territories revert to what a young Venetian woman demanded recently: a return to the ancient role in human society, of "caccia," of savage life on savage land, in concurrence with, and social hunting or fishing upon, higher species. The habitat is returned to pre-agricultural vitality. Harvestable yields per hectare per year increase. The military "campaign" is re-defined. Further to requests made by the governments of Algeria, Iraq and Iran, we show with procedures from Arte Povera how the integrity of territory can be secured with systematic surveillance and predation upon wild species in no-man's lands. The bulk of farmed land, until now directed to inefficient and anti-ecological feeding of domesticated animals, reverts to the wild. Those in the military can do as "savages" did: get the game. Marshlands, linked with each other along migratory paths, become factories of bioproductivity; as seen by aerial sensors, they are vibrant color fields, the prime regional indicators of wealth; habitat regains its one-time vigor. Land-use patterns of domestic agriculture—a prime cause of recent climate and ocean decline—greatly reduce in area. We start in the lagoons—near Venice.

Current metropoli, notably Milan, appear as sores on the evapotranspirative fabric. Delivery of gas and rawstuff from the sea, joined with marsh expansion and micro-organic feeding, all within a transport system that generates no pollution, instead accelerating plant growth, fosters construction of entirely new infrastructure. Highways, when organized together with the new ocean-output lines, chiefly gas, form a capital-generating spine. The megastructural linear cities first conceived by Futurists, and most popularized in the 60s, become both ecologically and economically feasible as air rights above transport routes, made verdant by "emissions" from biogas engines, effect a low-cost, rapid-traffic response to sprawl. "Strip development" evolves into mega-skeletal development, affording a proliferation of "architecture without architects" using the "raw loft" as substrate--for containers, tents, graffiti, plug-in fixtures and modules. "Buildings" are superseded by armatures. Sometimes they course over terrain; often, more efficient, they are wedged into the hills, above the flats, like ancient cave settlements. In this Basin, three corridors intensify along three slopes near flats: Trieste/Venice/Verona/ Brescia/ Milan; Rimini/Bologna/Turin; along the coasts. With lightweight canopies supporting vegetation over the gas-conveying frames, cities become oxygen-rich forests, more concise, less interfering with the movements of animals in their prairie or marsh habitat..

Integrated soil administration, exhibited to the public by daily satellite imagery, is financed by taxation not on income—which requires that people make work—but on the consumption of primary bioproductivity. The satellites report on productivity; year-to-year comparisons follow; both the administration and the public can see how the infrastructure and harvesting systems, with their costs, are drawing upon or increasing the Basin's biological strength. Taxation can be set as a price for consumption of a primary index resource, possibly just the biomass yield from the soil concentered in the Sea. Public finance thus promotes efforts towards energy self-reliance (e.g., direct solar or hydrogen), conservation and architectural innovation.

This project was solicited by a government organization during a UN-sponsored environmental conference in Venice in 1989. It is being organized in Milan, Cologne, Belgrade and Bari by the Ocean Earth Construction and Development Corporation

Peter Fend