

Walindi Point - An adaptive architecture for the tropical climate zone

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Architecture is the product of a process that remains ongoing with varying intensity for the duration of the building's lifetime. For most of the time architects design for the foreseeable needs of a client or user group. How do you design for a future that is largely unknown? This thesis is an investigation in how to build for unpredictable futures, and is based on a real project that I chose to undertake without compensation: The design of a small scale resort on an island on Lake Victoria, Uganda. The place will be geared towards a domestic clientele, and aspires to become a pioneering showcase of the lake's potential for tourism- which is currently underappreciated. The clients are hoping this can help improve the local economy, that is now struggling with unemployment because of depleting fishing resources. Due to limited financial resources the development will have to take place gradually over time, and is prone to change both in scale and program given the uncertainty of the economical viability of the project. This calls for an architecture that has the capacity to alter its spatial and programmatic configuration, without substantially disrupting the building's architectural, technical and functional qualities. In this respect, an adaptive solution is inherently sustainable, as the possibility of lasting through time is one of the key aspects of sustainable development. Together with the specific climatical, logistical and communicational conditions, this has been the main parameter driving the project. My intent is that the thesis will serve as a motivator for the development in question, and also be a contribution to the discussion about the role of the architect in the developing world.