



The City Region

'By descending from source to sea we follow the development of civilisation from its simple origins to its complex resultants. It takes the whole region to make the city. As the river carries down contributions from its whole course, so each complex community is modified by its predecessors.'

'Civics as Applied Sociology,' in *Sociological Papers* (1905), p. 105

Geddes argued that the significant unit of ecology and economy is the city region – the city and its watersheds; it should therefore be the unit of planning, and not the political boundaries that define most planning authorities. This logic has informed the formation of Scotland's four regional Strategic Development Planning Authorities, of which Tayplan, based on the Tay river valley, is one. City and region are in a relation of mutual dependence: the region supplies the city with materials, water and power; the city supplies the region with goods, trade and knowledge. This relation is captured in Geddes' Valley Section diagram, based on the Tay and Forth rivers. Geddes used the Valley Section to correlate the industrial practices that transform landscapes – like mining and farming – with the regional landscape. It thus reflects Geddes' interest in understanding the adaptive relations of people to the environments they inhabit.