



Some Observations and Recommendations on the Practice of Upper Level Urban Plans in Turkey in the Light of Sustainable Development¹

Planning Strategy for Sustainability

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dating back to Ottoman Empire period, urban planning has a long history of more than 150 years in Turkey. In tune with the spirit of the urban planning practice of the 19th century, physical plans as end products have been conceived as lower level project plans. At the second half of the 20th century, planning regulation underwent significant changes by distinguishing between different levels of planning. However, planning had been still conceived as a matter to be practiced only on a city scale with no emphasis on sustainability. Following the series of legislative changes made from 2003 on, a set of upper level plans were introduced. Though they were all called “Environmental Plans,” the area covered by them varied from a city to an urban region to the whole territory of a province, or even to a region comprising more than two or more provinces. These plans, in various respects, cannot be considered as strategic plans. The new approach rather than solving the prevalent problems of planning created a more chaotic environment by making lower level plans obsolete in practice.

This paper will consist of three parts. The first part will summarize the development of urban planning history of Turkey beginning from the second half of the 18th century by placing emphasis on different levels of plans. The second section deals with the existing local government and planning system in Turkey in the light of basic distinctions of comprehensive planning vs. structure/strategic spatial planning. The last part will identify and evaluate the problems encountered in the making of upper level plans and the reasons behind the existing misapplication. Finally, some proposals related to the future of the planning system in respect to the creation of sustainable cities in Turkey will be discussed.

2.0. PART I.

2.1. A Brief Historical Background

Significant reformist changes in various fields including urban planning took place in Ottoman Empire, the predecessor of the Turkish Republic, during the 19th century. The abolishment of Janissary Corps in 1826, followed by the reorganization of the administrative system, drastically opened the way towards the modernization of social life within the Empire. The *Tanzimat* (Re-Organization) period began with the proclamation of the Gülhane Imperial Edict in 1839 and proceeded with the promulgation of the *Islahat* (Reform) decree in 1856. These legal documents put an end to the supremacy of the Muslim population over minorities; guaranteed the private ownership of land and foreign capital invested in the Empire; introduced a secular judiciary system and brought about a comprehensive change in the administrative and institutional structure.

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The trade treaty signed with the Great Britain in 1838 -- and then extended to other capitalist European Countries -- opened wide up the doors of the Empire to European products with almost no tariff tax. It resulted in the collapse of whatever existed in the name of “industry” within the borders of the country in just a few decades. For the first time in its history the Ottoman state asked for a loan from Great Britain to cover its expenses. Following the defeat in the 1877-1978 Ottoman-Russian War and the immigration of the Turks living in Balkans to Anatolia in masses, the Ottoman State had no choice but to declare its bankruptcy. A new institution (*Duyun-u Umumiye*) -- independent of the Government -- was established to secure foreign loans. This institution was authorized to collect taxes directly and distribute the revenue to the creditors.

The semi-colonial state of the Empire, in economic terms, continued until the victory of the nationalist forces in Independence War and the signing of the *Lozan* Treaty, followed by the declaration of the new Republic in 1923.

2.2. Planning Legislations during the Ottoman Period

The first legislation in Ottoman Empire regarding urban planning – the Code on Buildings – was issued in this socio-economic milieu in 1848. However, its enforcement was limited only to the capital city of Istanbul, which was the primate city of the Ottoman Empire. More than ¼ of the urban population lived in Istanbul. With approximately 750.000 inhabitants, it was almost ten times bigger than the second biggest city, namely, İzmir (Erder,1978: 176).

Historically, during the centuries following the coming on the scene of the Ottomans³, all local municipal affairs were managed locally without the interference of the centre. This understanding changed drastically in the 19th century. Although it is possible to cite a long list of reasons behind the emergence of new legislative changes that allowed the centre to take an upper hand in creating a uniform pattern in the management of the local affairs, including urban planning in 19th century, it will suffice to cite the basic ones.

With its dense population, the urban fabric of Istanbul should be mentioned as the most critical example. In Istanbul, most of the housing stock was made out of wood and the city had an organic neighborhood pattern with narrow streets and cul-de-sacs. Therefore, it was prone to fires throughout the history. Besides fire hazards, the necessity for urban planning legislation arose from the need to enlarge roads for new mass transportation means, the need to create a new city center and develop prestigious residential quarters brought about by increased commercial relations with the metropol countries of the West (Tekeli,1998; 2010)⁴. Combined with the reformist movement in the Empire, particularly the reorganization and restructuring of the old institutions through legislative changes, urban planning also took its share of the multiple changes during this period.

In this respect, putting aside early immature attempts at urban planning⁵, the *Ebniye Nizamnamesi* (Code on Buildings), issued in 1848 and revised in 1849, was the first legislation in urban planning which was put into effect in the capital city of the Empire. This legislation was limited to rather modest issues, such as the structural elements of buildings, e.g. enforcement of the construction of

³ Ottoman Empire's foundation goes back to 1300 a.d.

⁴ For a detailed study on the development of the legislative changes on planning during the 19th century, see also Selman, G.G. (1982), *Urban Development Laws and Their Impact on the Ottoman Cities in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century*, Unpublished Master Thesis, METU, Ankara.

⁵ “The first urban planning activities in the Ottoman Empire began at the end of 18th century. Engineer Kauffer of the French Embassy drew the first map of İstanbul according to the engineering standards in 1786, but there is no evidence of a decision for a development plan on it. So the first planning activity was probably the local plan prepared in 1802 for the surroundings of the Topkapi Palace by architect Melling who made 55 engravings and designed various palaces and buildings. According to Osman Nuri Ergin the planning of the Selimiye quarters, which was built by Selim III near Selimiye barracks with a street pattern of the grid iron order, was probably also made by Melling. The first plan for the entire Istanbul, following this local plan, was prepared during Mahmut II's reign by the German military advisor Moltke, who was the army's Chief of Staff during the war between the Governor of Egypt and Ottoman Empire. This plan, prepared in 1836-1837, had an important role in the development of urban development legislations, and was the first urban plan. The “ilmuhaber” dated 25 “rebiülahır” 1255 (1859) summarizes the planning decisions in Moltke's plan. The “ilmuhaber”, where certain urban development rules appeared for the first time, pioneered the enacting of the 1848 “Ebniye” regulation. The rules put forward by the “ilmuhaber” are very similar to the rules in the 1848 “Ebniye” regulation” (Tekeli, 2010:57 and Selman, 1982:74-75).

brick and masonry buildings; the banning of dead-end streets, the classification of the sizes of roads and heights of buildings; and some limitations related to architectural details of the buildings, such as dimensions of building consoles, heights of window shutters and awnings, thresholds and eaves. The most significant achievement of the code was the compulsory transfer of 25 percent of private land for public uses, with no compensation, in newly developed areas. The 1864 regulation, named *Turuk ve Ebniye* or the Code on Roads and Buildings had rules with wider coverage and extended the application of the rules to the all cities of the Empire. The 1882 *Ebniye* (Housing) Law was enacted following the establishment of the new local institutions, namely municipalities, throughout the Empire. It was comprised of a better organization of the previous codes' articles and introduced a new and local implementation and supervision system by means of municipalities. (Ergin, 1995)

However, as Tekeli puts, the planning practices at this stage were mainly local plans rather than plans organizing the urban areas as a whole. These local plans were prepared for the development of fire disaster areas, new settlement areas and the enlargement of transportation routes, and parks, a new land use brought by the modernization process. (Tekeli, 1998; 2010). In other words, planning was conceived merely as the physical restructuring of roads, houses and some public spaces. There was not a word in these regulations about the planning of the cities with their adjacent areas, let alone regional plans. Therefore, different levels of plans and their hierarchy were not an issue.

The 1882 Law on Housing stayed in effect after the establishment of the Republic (1923). The first planning law of the Republic, *Belediye Yapı ve Yollar Kanunu* (Municipal Roads and Housing), numbered 2290, was enacted in 1933. According to law, all the municipalities within the national borders were obliged to prepare city plans within a five-year period. Though it contained rather detailed rules regarding houses and roads, the understanding concerning the role and the functions of a city plan remained the same. Plans were conceived as local physical rearrangements without taking into consideration the environments of urban settlements, though for the first time in the planning history of the country, the scales of the maps and plans were mentioned in a hierarchy of 1/2000 and 1/500. Also, following their acceptance by the Municipal Council, plans had to be ratified by the organs of the centre.

Law number 6785, issued in 1956, called the “development law,” was the first legislation in the Republican period that had a rather comprehensive content in terms of planning, compared to the previous ones, which were limited to housing and roads. The law made a distinction between higher level “master plans” and lower level “implementation” plans. Implementation plans were detailed plans, and had to comply with the planning decisions brought at the level of master plans. Therefore, though still limited to the urban areas rather than covering their environs as well, for the first time in planning history of the country, different levels of plans and the hierarchy between them was recognized. As under law number 2290, plans accepted by the Municipal Councils had to be ratified by the Ministry before going into effect.

3.0. PART II

The present law on development -numbered 3194, and titled, as the previous one, the “Development Law”- was issued in 1985. Although some amendments continue to be made to the law until, the basic body has remained unchanged. However, Development Law is not the sole legislation on development issues. Today almost 30 public institutions are authorized with preparing a plan in their respective fields, which occasionally produce chaotic/unregulated situations.

According to the current legislation, the highest level plans are “Regional Plans,” which are followed by “Environmental Regulation Plans,” “Master Plans,” and finally “Implementation Plans”.

3.1. Local Administrations in Turkey

Before going into detail with these plan types, a parenthesis needs to be opened to introduce the reader with a brief presentation on the local administrative system of Turkey.

Turkey is a unitary and centralized country under the terms of the Constitution. Very limited powers are given to the territorial administrative units, such as provinces and districts. According to the Turkish Constitution's Article 126; local administrative bodies are "public corporate entities established to meet the common local needs of the inhabitants of provinces, municipal districts and villages, whose decision-making organs are elected by the electorate as described in law, and whose principles of structure are also determined by law." The formation, duties and powers of the local administration are regulated by law in accordance with the principle of decentralization. "One of the unique characteristics of the Turkish public administration system is that, the above mentioned local governments exist side by side with field units of central government" (Polatoğlu, 2000: 104)

Within this legal framework, four types of local governments can be distinguished:

1. Special Provincial Administration (SPA)
2. Municipalities
3. Metropolitan Municipalities, and
4. Villages

The following table (table 1) summarizes the responsibilities, responsibility areas, administrative structure, revenue sources, and financial relation to center for each of these four types of local governments.

Table 1: Local Governments in Turkey

Local Administrations Features	Special Provincial Administration	Metropolitan (Greater) Municipalities	Municipalities	Villages
Responsibility	Preparation of Provincial Environmental plans, public works and settlement, soil conservation, erosion prevention, culture, arts, tourism, social services, kindergartens and orphanages, land procurement for primary and secondary schools, their building constructions and maintenance works, city planning, roads, water, sewage, solid waste management, environment, emergency aid and rescue services, forestation, parks and landscape works etc.	Preparing the annual budget and strategic plans of the municipality in coordination with other municipalities, environment action plans, infrastructure, city planning and design, landscape, health, maintenance and construction of public areas, licensing and auditing for various enterprises within municipal boundaries, transportation, establishing GIS systems, various environmental protection (regarding food, health, cultural heritage etc.) issues, municipal police services, water, solid waste treatment, disaster management etc.	City planning, water, sewage, transportation, GIS systems, environment and environment health, rescue and health services, municipal police services, cemeteries, forestation, parks and landscape, housing, culture and arts, tourism and publicity, youth and sports, social services, marriage services, vocational training, kindergartens, health etc.	Making necessary arrangements for various issues within the village such as drinking water facilities, eliminating risks factors that threat human health within village boundaries, construction of public areas (village guest house, mosque) within villages etc.
Responsibility Area	Areas outside municipal boundaries	Municipal boundaries	Municipal boundaries	Village boundaries
Administrative Structure	1.Governor 2.Provincial Council 3.Executive Board	1.Mayor 2.Provincial Council 3.Executive Board	1.Mayor 2.Provincial Council 3.Executive Board	1.Village head 2.Council of elders
Revenue Sources	1.General tax income from Central Budget (CG) 2.Revenues from the sale of SPAs own immovable	1.General tax income from CG 2.Own revenues; taxes, charges and fees etc.	1.General tax income from CG 2.Own revenues; taxes, charges and fees etc.	1. Some minor charges 2. Bank of Provinces and SPA credits
Financial Relation to Central Government	Receive 75-80% of their budget from CG	Receive 60% of their budget from CG (depending on population, development level, area etc.)	Receive 60% of their budget from CG (depending on population, development level, area etc.)	-

Recently, as a response to European Union's accession conditions, Turkey has made a number of changes in relation to its regional policy. These include the establishment of 26 new regions to form the provisional NUTS II classification in 2002. The 9th Five-Year National Development Plan aimed to

draw up the guidelines of an economic and social cohesion policy for 2007-2013, and to adopt the draft law establishing RDAs for 26 new regions in 2006. According to Kayasu (2006), “In Turkey, regional development policies have been developed in the quest to eliminate regional disparities, to accelerate local and regional economic development and to enable sustainable development. However, those policies developed towards particularly less-developed regions have not been very successful, mainly due to the lack of institutional capacity at the local/regional level, i.e. the lack of effective institutional structures at the local level as well as that of sufficient financial resources.”

Spatial Planning System in Turkey

As mentioned above, in terms of purposes and spatial coverage, the current legislation identifies three basic levels. The highest level plans are “Regional Plans” which are followed by “Environmental Plans,” and “Development Plans,” the latter being comprised of “Master Plans” and “Implementation Plans”. Although local governments are the major authorities in making and ratifying the spatial plans, various centrally organized public authorities are also endowed with legislative powers in planning.

The table below (Table 2) summarizes the planning hierarchy in the Turkish legislative system.

Table 2: Planning Hierarchy in Turkey

TYPE OF PLAN	PLANNING AREA	SCALE OF THE PLAN	AUTHORITY IN REPARATION OF THE PLAN	RATIFYING AUTHORITY	LEGAL BASE
<i>Regional Plan</i>	Region	Not Identified	Prime Ministry (State Planning Organization)	Prime Ministry (State Planning Organization)	Development Law No.3194
<i>Environmental Plan</i>	Region and Basin	1/50.000 or 1/100.000	Ministry of Environment and Forest	Ministry of Environment and Forest	Environment Law no.2872 Revised by Law no. 5491
<i>Provincial Environmental Plan</i>	Area within the borders of a province	Not Identified	Provincial Special Administration	Provincial Special Administration and the related municipality/ metropolitan municipality	Provincial Special Administration Law No. 5302
<i>Master Plan</i>	Area within and the adjacent of the borders of municipality/ metropolitan municipality	1/5.000 1/2.000	Municipality/ Metropolitan Municipality	Municipality/ Metropolitan Municipality Council	Development Law No.3194
<i>Implementation Plan</i>	Area within and the adjacent of the borders of municipality	1/1.000	Municipality	Municipal Council	Development Law No.3194

Source: Ersoy, 2006.

In 1985, for the first time in the planning history of the country, regional plans as a distinct planning level were legislated in Development Law numbered 3194. In fact, before the promulgation of this article in Law, several regional level plans had been prepared by the State Planning Organization (SPO). However, those plans were not implemented due to the lack of legal empowerment (Keles: 2006). The existing Law, on the other hand, did not specify the details related to content and procedural issues. Therefore, though the term “regional plan” and the responsible level of government (SPO) in its preparation is specified in the Law, because of the lack of above mentioned items, they remained as a set of suggestive documents for regional socio-economic issues, indicating sectoral development without embracing guiding spatial imperatives for lower-level physical plans.

The “Environmental Plan” takes place in the second level of the planning hierarchy. Though, as a term, it has existed in the section devoted to the “definitions of the plans” in the Development Law since 1985, it became operational after the promulgation of the related regulation in 2001. Environmental Plans are designed as upper-scale plans in the hierarchy and defined in Law no.5491 as

plans to prevent pollution created from meeting the residential, working, recreational, transportation etc. needs of the urban and rural population by taking into consideration the principle of sustainability and the balance between the conservation and use. Following the principle of hierarchical integrity, the provision rules that lower level plans must abide by the environmental plans which are to be prepared in regions or basins for the geographical area of more than one province at the scales of 1/50.000 or 1/100.000.

Provincial Environmental Plans should also be included within the category of “upper level plans.” They are prepared by the Provincial Special Administrations for the whole area covered by the province. Though the scale of the plan is not mentioned in the law, they are prepared at the scale of 1/25.000 and over.

While Environmental Plans and Provincial Environmental Plans are considered upper level plans in the hierarchy, like the lower level land use plans, they are basically concerned with the physical development of urban areas by identifying the detailed location and the area needed for different land uses and the overall distribution of physical and social infrastructure and pattern of transportation, rather than by dealing with the sustainable socio-economic development of regions, basins or provinces. Furthermore, as rigid and prescriptive documents, they cannot be regarded as strategic plans that suffice to provide a strategic perspective and framework for future development. In a way, they can be viewed as magnified in scale versions of the master plans that we shall be discussing below.

“Development Plans” stand at the third level in the hierarchy of plans. Development Plans pertain to the developmental future of the city. They determine which uses are permitted in which area and the characteristics of the development (e.g., the height of buildings). These plans determine how current areas are developed and, more importantly, how future areas will be developed. In accordance with the Development Law, each municipality is required to create and seek approval for a Development Plan. Many factors go into the creation of Development Plans, which are comprised of Master and Implementation Plans.

Master Development Plans are prepared abiding to the physical layout within upper-level plans and are comprised of strategies and decisions for the distribution of different land uses considering the plan area, the population and building densities. They are expected to be prepared at the scale of 1/5.000, although in metropolitan urban areas it may go as high as 1/25.000. Implementation Development Plans are prepared in accordance with Master Plans, and include rules for implementation and construction guidelines.

4.0. PART III

The above five tier plan hierarchy can be divided into two groups, namely, “upper-level plans,” which include regional plans, environmental plans and provincial environmental plans, and “lower-level plans,” or development plans. Those in the first group are expected to be strategic spatial plans, while those in the second group can be prepared as traditional blueprint land use plans.

As is well known, strategic spatial planning has again become fashionable in the Western World in recent years (Friedman, 2004; Faludi, 2000, Albrechts, 2004). While traditional land use plans are basically concerned with the physical development of the urban areas by identifying the locations and areas needed for different land uses and detailing the overall distribution of physical and social infrastructure and the pattern of transportation, strategic plans suffice to provide a strategic perspective and framework and for future development. Rather than being rigid and prescriptive documents, strategic plans are expected to provide the setting for the process and to frame the activities of the stakeholders. At that stage, basic precautions in relation to the sustainability of the planned urban area are to be taken.

The following table (Table 3) summarizes the basic differences between the strategic and traditional comprehensive plans.

Table 3: Differences Between The Strategic And Traditional Comprehensive Plans

	Rational Comprehensive Planning	Strategic Spatial Planning
<i>Responsibility in Preparation of Plans</i>	Plans are prepared by bureaucrats in public agencies in a hierarchical manner. Planning is carried out in centralistic way.	Plans are produced under the coordination of a private or public agency by an organizational network with horizontal and equal relationships among the stake holders.
<i>Legal Status</i>	Plans are legally binding.	Plans do not have to be binding. They may also be prescribing voluntary action.
<i>Plan Borders</i>	Plans abide by the administrative borders.	There is no need to abide by the administrative borders since institutional or sectoral relations in spatial terms may override such borders.
<i>Form of Plans</i>	Plans are made on existing maps and the distribution, size and the forms of different land uses, population densities and transportation network are shown on them.	Plans have an explanation report as its integral part, composed of strategies of vision, policy, program and targets on sector and theme basis in addition to a scheme on maps.
<i>Content Of Plan</i>	Basically it is a physical plan, considering other sectors only indirectly.	Plan considers social, economic, cultural and organization issues rather than physical ones.
<i>Time Scope</i>	Plan is prepared for long term.	Vision is for long term. However, with reference to vision several short term projects are designed.
<i>Planning Process</i>	<p>A.) Planning process consists of several successive steps (the process of realizing a problem, establishing and evaluating planning criteria, creating alternatives, implementing alternatives, and monitoring progress of the alternatives) and they are connected with feedback loops.</p> <p>B.) In designing the future, the previous trends and the rate of development of different sectors are expected to continue into the future. Therefore, extrapolation techniques are widely employed.</p>	<p>A.) The key processes of a typical Strategic Planning Process generally include the following steps: developing a Vision & Missions for the plan, analysis of the planning environment (SWOT Analysis, etc., are employed), deciding on Strategic Objectives and selecting Strategic Options, establishing resource allocation, implementation of the Plan, review of the execution. (http://EzineArticles.com/588763)</p> <p>B.) Planer is prepared for unexpected and unwarranted situations. Therefore, the plan is flexible and it suffices to present an inconclusive/indefinite frame.</p>
<i>Participation in Planning Process</i>	The related public institutions are asked for input that is limited to their fields of expertise. Public participation is limited to negative input in the form of objections to the plan during the announcement period.	At each stage of the planning process participation of the stakeholders is required. A deliberative planning process is essential.
<i>Representation/notification of Plan</i>	Representation/notification in detail. Definitions and notation can be transferred without a significant change to lower scale plans.	Schematic representation. It is sufficient to notify/present only the main decisions, trends and relationships at the highest level in the plan.
<i>Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Plan</i>	Implementation, monitoring and evaluation is conducted by the public authority that ratify the plan.	At the stage of implementation and monitoring, participation of all the parties taking part in the preparation of the plan is required.

Adapted from Gedikli, 2007.

As pointed out above, in the Turkish case, upper-level plans, which include Regional Plans, Environmental Plans and Provincial Environmental Plans, are expected to be strategic spatial plans. However, the way plans are prepared, the planning process followed, the content of the plans, the notifications/representation of the plans, the implementation of the plans, etc. do not conform to the rules of strategic spatial planning.

First, I would like to compare the definitions of upper-levels plans as given in the related codes. Since there is no legal definition of “Regional Plan” in the Turkish legislative system, the mere existence of the term in Development Law No. 3194 brings no binding power concerning the preparation of Regional Plans for any public authority. SPO Establishment Law No. 540, on the other hand, makes the organization responsible only for the preparation of “regional development programs.”

According to the Environment Law, on the other hand, Environmental Plans are prepared on the national level according to the principle of sustainable development, by considering the balance between conservation and built areas in order to prevent environmental pollution that may occur in the meeting of the urban and rural population's housing, work, recreation and transportation needs. They guide the lower-level plans and are prepared at the scales of 1/50.000 and 1/100.000. However, the "Regulation on Environmental Plans" No. 27051 issued by the Ministry of Environment and Forest in 2008 defined Environmental Plans as plans which are made in conformity with the National Development Plan and Regional Plans and contains land-use decisions for settlements that pertain to housing, industry, agriculture, tourism, transportation etc. In other words, the definition given in the Development Law is repeated.

Master Development Plans, that we considered above in the category “lower-level plans,” are defined in Development Law as plans that are drawn on cadastral maps and prepared in accordance with upper-level plans and comprised of different land use decisions, transportation system decisions, and consider population and building densities for the future of the settlements. In making master plans, comprehensive planning techniques are followed.

The similarity of the legal definitions of the above-described plans has resulted in the plans being applied similarly in practice. The planning process followed, the preparation of the plans, the content, representations, notifications and legends of the plans, the techniques applied, the monitoring and evaluation stages etc. are almost the same in the upper-level environmental and lower-level master plans. In both cases what is produced at the end are blueprint plans at different scales.



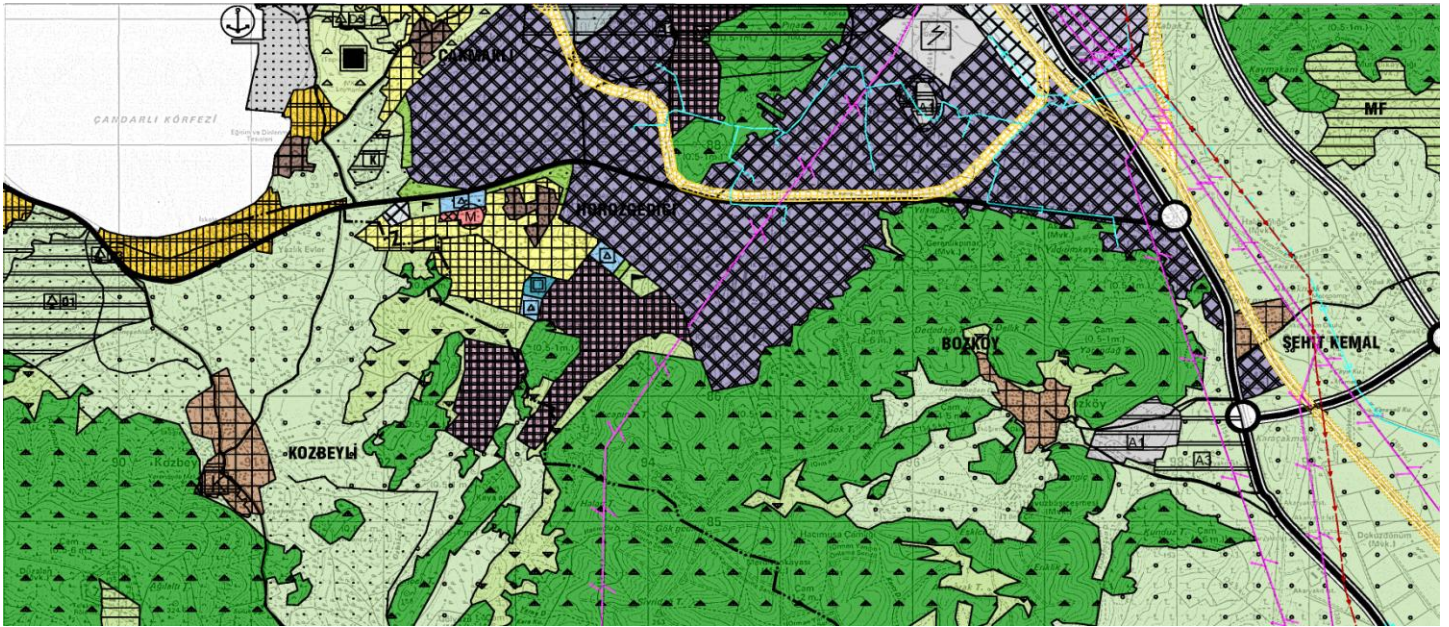


Figure 2: The same section of the Metropolitan Region in the Environmental Plan, Scale: 1/25.000

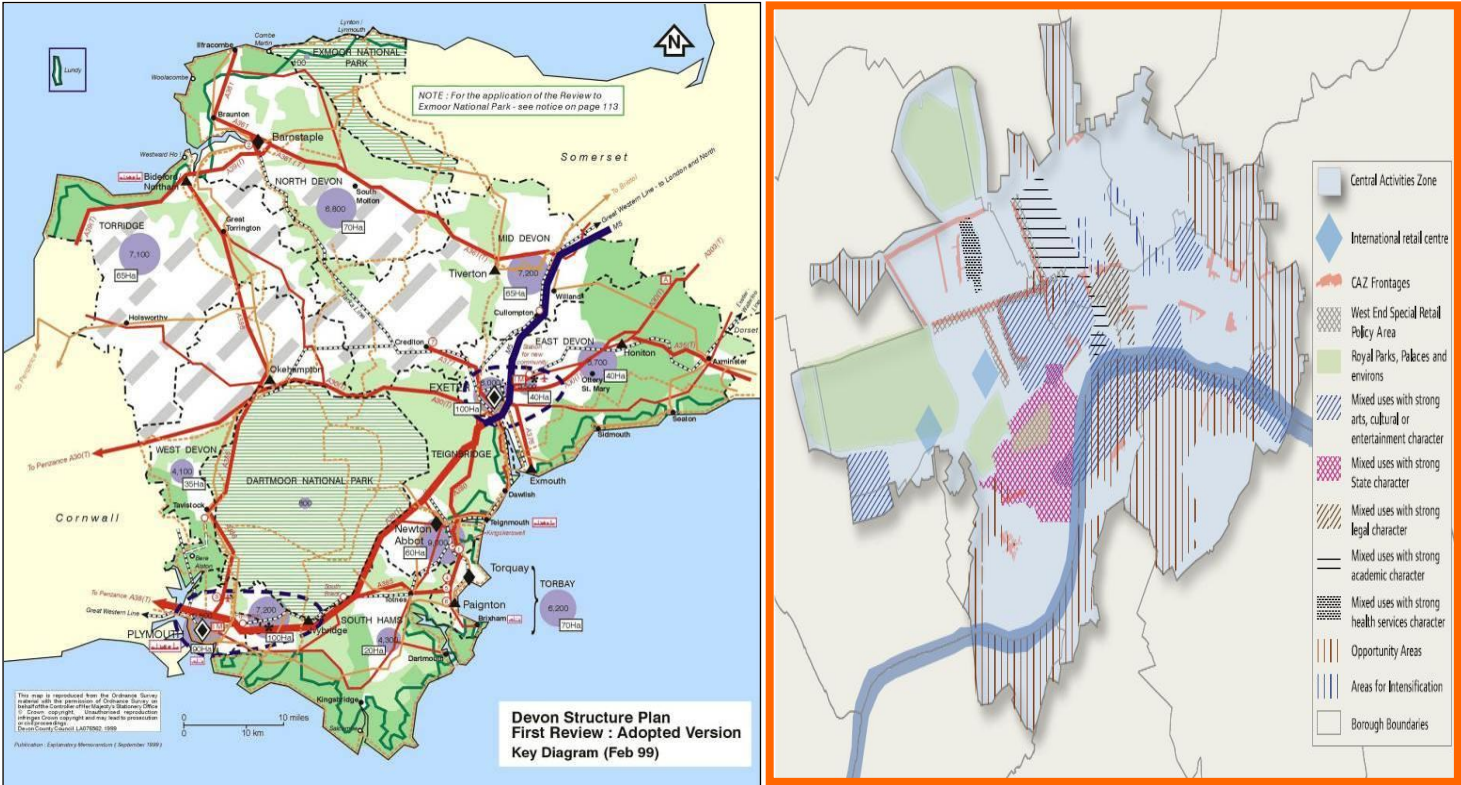


Figure 3: Strategic/structure plans prepared for the county of Devon (Left) and the metropolitan area of London (right)

Examples of the plans given above (Figure 1 and 2) depict the similarity of the plans as produced for a settlement at different scales. Both plans give a picture of the same particular settlement and its environs taken from a section of a larger plan area. The plan given in Figure 1 is taken from an Environmental Plan prepared at the scale of 1/100.000 while the one in Figure 2 is from a Master Plan on a 1/25.000 scale. As can be seen from the pictures of the plans given below, both plans are blueprint plan types and the distinction between them is insignificant. When one compares these Turkish plans to a Strategic Plan and Environmental Plan prepared in England (See Figure 3), one can

see how great a distinction there can be in the conception of upper-level and lower-level plans than there is in the Turkish case.

Unlike the Turkish plans, which show a detailed number and definite borders of the land uses, in the British plans a limited number of uses are shown on the plan in a rather schematic and sketchy way. This is sufficient to guide the lower-level plans only for the very basic uses being taken into consideration and gives primacy to the sustainability issue.

The well known planning principle of hierarchical integrity among different level of plans is unfortunately misinterpreted by bureaucrats and practicing planners, which is one the reasons behind this malpractice. Hierarchical integrity of plans rules that every plan is required to contain detailed information conform to its scale, while abiding to the fundamental planning decisions given on the higher plans. Therefore, lower level plans should not be conceived as magnified copies of higher level plans. (Ersoy, 2000).

Conclusion

Turkey has a more than 150 year-long history in urban planning, dating back from Ottoman Empire. During this period, urban planning practice conceived physical plans as end products. As an ideal type, these were blueprint plans providing a set of prescriptions for actions developed by the planners. They were regulative and legally binding documents, that is, the whole of spatial development, down to the building level, needed to conform to the details put down in the plans.

Since the year 2000, several changes have been made through planning legislation that has introduced new tiers in upper-level planning and emphasized the sustainability principle which was lacking or not effectively utilized previously. The preparation of those upper-level plans also involved different tiers of government at varying scales. In practice, however, the upper-level plans prepared to-date has not been dissimilar to lower-level spatial Master Plans. A century long tradition of preparing Master and Implementation Plans of blueprint type has continued in to the making of upper-level plans. Upper-level plans, on the contrary, should be qualified as strategic or structural plans, thus having a totally different conceptualization.

In Turkey, the creation of new and more planning levels gave way to the disappearance or obsolesces of the rest of the plans because of the detailed land use decisions presented on the plans. This is partly due to the planners established way of making plans by following the detailed rules given in the related legislations. However, it is also the result of the rapid implementation of the upper-level plans without having prepared well-developed and detailed legislation related to the content of upper-level plans, their representations, notifications, legends etc. This precipitance in implementation of the upper-level plans resulted in serious perplexity, both for authorities and for the people subject to those plans.

According to well established planning principles in the legislation and in implementation, integrity in the planning hierarchy rules that plans are to be prepared in accordance with upper-level plans and must abide by the decisions rendered in the upper-level plans. Since the upper-level plans, as prepared, consisted of such detailed land use decisions, it became possible to zoom in on those spatial decisions down to the parcel level, by using the appropriate computer software. Therefore, without having to wait for the preparation of the lower-level plans, landlords, in particular, could apply to the courts for the annulment of plan decisions brought for their plot of land. The preparation of lower-level plans became obsolete, because it simply involved repeating the land use decisions made at upper levels by following the rule of hierarchical integrity among different levels of plans.

This mis-conceptualization has to be corrected before it becomes a common practice, which in the long run might cause the planning system to become unsustainable, and obsolete in Turkey. To remedy the existing unsustainable situation, the steps to be taken can be grouped into two parts. Firstly, problems/abuses encountered in practice should be investigated and clarified by considering these findings together with an in-depth study of new planning trends and applications in the world, including the planning process, the preparation of plan contents, representations, notifications and

legends, techniques, monitoring and evaluation stages etc. at each level of planning. Secondly, in light of those findings, the present planning legislation should be revised by redefining in detail each type of plan in terms of aim, content, function and form. Otherwise, the existing unsustainable and chaotic situation will harm and deeply damage spatial planning in Turkey.

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