

## Tree-mendous ideas

Downtown Seoul could be transformed by hopes for a huge Urban Skyfarm, plans are unveiled for a vast sustainable underwater tourism project in Dubai and the French city of Grenoble is to become home to a fleet of electric cars as part of an integrated public transport test project.

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### SKY'S THE LIMIT

Predictions that 80 per cent of the world's population will live in urban areas by the year 2050 have inspired the Brooklyn-based Aprilli Design Studio to conjure up plans for an 'Urban Skyfarm'.

The proposal, for a site in downtown Seoul, aims to deal with problems such as deforestation, land shortage and pollution by producing fruits and vegetables locally while simultaneously improving the local environment through water recycling, air filtration and renewable energy use.

The 160-metre-high Skyfarm would be made from lightweight steel with open joint aluminium cladding, and accommodate more than 144,000 square metres of green space, with its design based on the major components of a tree – the roots, trunk, branches and leaves.

Aprilli states that it would also be a net-zero energy facility thanks to the use of renewable power produced by solar panels and wind turbines covering around 3,200 square metres.

The company says: "Through lifting the main food production field high up in the air, vegetation has more exposure to natural sunlight and fresh air while the ground level becomes freed-up, with nicely shaded open spaces which could be enjoyed by the public.

"The bio mimicry of the tree form gives many structural and environmental advantages, forming a lightweight, efficient space frame that could host diverse farming activities.

"While the upper portions provide open-to-air farming decks for medium-based vegetation, the lower portions enclosed by the structural skin provide more controlled environments for solution-based leafy production."

The proposal also includes plans for a farmers' market, botanical garden, cafe and viewing deck.