*Flōt: An Offshore Community for the Maltese Islands*

Through a process of analysis and understanding of existing coastal communities along the Eastern coast of the Maltese Islands, it became clear that the development of these villages and cities along and beside the sea was becoming highly erratic, unhealthy and most importantly, unsustainable. The frantic construction processes dotting coastal areas like Sliema, St.Julians and Bugibba has resulted in communities which are extremely dissatisfied with their surroundings and their built environment. This is also coupled with the fact that issues of climate change and sustainability need to be addressed within the coming years, in order to safeguard the very existence of these communities.

These issues together prompted the development of a master plan for the Maltese Islands whereby the sea could be seen as a resource to used and not *exploited*: the proposal for the construction of an offshore, floating community off the coast of Malta, in particular, along the coast of Xghajra. A perennially polluted site, Xghajra provided the perfect slate for the development of this community: a community that would showcase alternative methods to land reclamation, promote sustainable living and consumption, and encourage built environments and habitats that exist in harmony with nature, and also ensure the comfort and satisfaction of their residents.

The Offshore Floating Community – or Flōt – combines all aspects of human life, allowing for modular growth as the need arises: the community is designed to provide ease of access to and from the Maltese Islands, food and nutrition to residents using sustainable farming methods, well-being and recreation centres for residents, commercial premises to generate income for the community, marine research centres to ensure and maintain a balance with the surrounding marine life and to regenerate marine communities in the area of Xghajra, sustainable methods of water and waste management and also ensuring that the everyday workings of the community are powered by renewable and sustainable energy supplies such as solar and wind energy.

The community provides alternate possibilities to current construction methods, and aims to be designed to be able to withstand changes in sea levels due to climate changes, whilst slowly changing lifestyles and methods of consumption to maintain the symbiosis between human communities and marine communities.