



Mapping social values for urban green spaces using Public Participation GIS: the influence of spatial scale and implications for landscape planning.

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Measuring social values for landscapes is an emerging field of research and is critical to the successful management of urban ecosystems. Green open space planning has traditionally relied on rigid standards and metrics without considering the physical requirements of green spaces that are valued for different reasons and by different people. Relating social landscape values to key environmental variables provides a much stronger evidence base for planning landscapes that are both socially desirable and environmentally sustainable. This study spatially quantified residents' values for green space in the Lower Hunter Valley of New South Wales, Australia by enabling participants to mark their values for specific open spaces on interactive paper maps. The survey instrument was designed to evaluate the effect of spatial scale by providing maps of residents' local area at both suburb and municipality scales. The importance of open space values differed depending on whether they were indicated via marker dots or reported on in a general aspatial sense. This suggests that certain open space functions were inadequately provided for in the local area (specifically, cultural significance and health/therapeutic value). Additionally, all value types recorded a greater abundance of marker dots at the finer (suburb) scale compared to the coarser (municipality) scale, but this pattern was more pronounced for some values than others (e.g. physical exercise value). Finally, significant relationships were observed between the abundance of value marker dots in parks and their environmental characteristics (e.g. percentage of vegetation). These results have interesting implications when considering the compatibility between different functions of green spaces and how planners can incorporate information about social values with more traditional approaches to green space planning.