

INTEGRATING INFORMATION ON OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES INTO URBAN LAND USE MONITORING AND PLANNING

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Abstract

Green areas and opportunities for outdoor recreation close to nature are very important to urban residents. As many urban regions are undergoing rapid structural transformations, also requirements and pressures on recreational areas change. In urban land use planning and the implementation of plans, recreational and green areas are not always taken adequately into account. The challenges are to measure the sufficiency and values of the areas, to plan them comprehensively as large entities and as parts of the urban structure, to make recreation comparable with other land use demands such as new traffic and building developments, and to link the planning of areas to the organization of their use. All this requires location-based information on recreation opportunities and their qualities coupled with geographic and statistical information e.g. on population groups, urban structure, and land cover, as well as research findings on people's needs, and locally gathered qualitative information on places and routes valued and favoured by people.

The aim of our study is to examine how information on outdoor recreation opportunities and green areas can be integrated into the monitoring of land use and built environment and used together with other types of information. We focus on the information systems for monitoring urban structure and people's living environment that are maintained in Finnish environment administration and used also in regional councils and municipalities. We consider what kind of tools and methods are needed in dealing with the information and how to develop indicators and interpret them. Finally, we discuss possible ways to apply analysed information to the planning of urban areas.

Key Words

Outdoor recreation opportunities, green areas, urban land use planning, information systems, monitoring of the built environment