

GREEN AREA EFFECT DURING HEAT STRESS PERIODS:
RESULTS FROM RESEARCH

Lafortezza R.¹, Davies C.², Carrus G.³, & Sanesi G.⁴

¹ Dept. Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge, England and Greenlab, Dept. of Scienze delle Produzioni Vegetali, University of Bari, Italy

² North East Community Forest and Newcastle University, Claremont Tower, Claremont Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 7RU, England

³ Scienze dell'Educazione, University of Roma Tre, Italy

⁴ Greenlab, Dept. of Scienze delle Produzioni Vegetali, University of Bari, Italy

sanesi@agr.uniba.it

<http://www.greenlab.uniba.it/sanesi>

Abstract

A collaborative research framework has been set up within the British-Italian Partnership Programme with the goal to investigate the psychological effects of urban forests and green spaces on city residents and green area users during periods of potential heat stress. The research took in consideration different types of green areas in the UK and in Italy. The primary question underlying the present study was: "do citizens living in very dense urban areas, like most cities in Italy and UK, during periods of possible heat stress perceive the psychological benefits by using green spaces?". Results indicate a significant and fairly strong negative correlation between "travel distance" and the physical and psychological benefits perceived by respondents. The longer the distance traveled by users to reach the green space the lower are the benefits perceived, especially those related with the psychological part of health and wellbeing. This could be explained by the fact that people coming from distant locations may not perceive the full benefits of green spaces. On the other hand, positive correlations emerged between "visit per week" or "hours per visit" with physical and psychological benefits, including "wellbeing". "Time of the day" and "Preference" (sun/shade) did not appear to be correlated with physical and psychological benefits.

Key Words

Climate change; Heat stress; Urban forestry; Environmental psychology; Green infrastructure