Integrative framework for understanding urban ecological disservices

Jari Lyytimäki
jari.lyytimaki@ymparisto.fi
Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)

Risto Willamo
University of Helsinki

Petri Tapio
Finland Futures Research Centre

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Outline of the presentation

- What?
  Concept of ecological disservices
- Why?
  Importance for urban planning
- How?
  Need for integrative framework
Background

- Interest towards ecosystem services
- ULUB – small scale preliminary study (Alter-net)
- Work on integrative environmental frameworks (EPP framework)
Perspectives on biodiversity and lifestyle

Natural habitats

Ecologists

Urban settlements

Social scientists

Biodiversity

Ecosystem services

Lifestyle

Biodiversity

Ecosystem services

Lifestyle
Definitions for ecosystem disservices

- No widely agreed definition; most studies describe ecosystem "goods"
- Can denote negative effects of ecosystem degradation...
- ...or can be associated with "normal" functioning of ecosystems
- Possible definition: Functions of ecosystems that are perceived as negative
Disservices related to urban ecosystems I

- Aesthetic issues
  - Areas perceived as ugly (e.g. brownfields)
  - Irritating sounds, smells or behaviour (e.g. algae in water, pigeons, gulls, dogs)
  - Perceived dirtyness of nature (e.g. bird and dog excrements, decomposition of organic matter)
Disservices related to urban ecosystems II

- Safety, security and health issues
- Perceived unsafety (cf. darkness)
- Health risks
  - allergies (e.g. pollen, pet animals)
  - diseases (e.g. rabies, bird flu)
  - poor visibility (traffic)
Disservices related to urban ecosystems III

- Economic issues
  Direct damages (e.g. nesting holes, cleaning costs)
  Costs of controlling nuisance species
  Indirect costs (bad reputation, health risks)
  Maintenance costs of green areas
  Prevention of more profitable use of space
EPP-framework: approach

- Problem oriented
- Process oriented
- Interdisciplinary
- Holistic
On the spotlight:

- Should disservices be assessed?
- What are the most relevant (urban) ecological disservices?
- Should monetary value be put to ecosystem disservices?
- Continuous learning and education is needed
Thank you!

References and further information:
