

Urban Green Commons

For all?

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Urbanisation continues, which entails huge challenges concerning sustainable solutions for the future. Urban greenery, such as parks, street trees, nature reserves and other green areas contribute in different ways to sustainable urban development.

These *urban green commons* should be accessible to all. However, we know that different societal groups use green areas to different degrees, due to real and perceived *access*. It is important that such social discrepancy is reduced which is studied in the field of *environmental justice*.

Of equal importance is that urban green commons are *multifunctional*, including both ecological and socio-cultural diversity. When diversity increases, more needs can be met at the same time as the adaptive capacity increases. Today we are building dense cities and green areas are decreasing which further increases the need for multifunctionality.

Creation of outdoor-gyms, soccer fields and plantations in urban green commons are examples of programming

This can also be informal as when the private sphere is extended by appropriating what was previously a common, e.g. through urban gardening. With *territorialisation* we refer to such processes where authorities, organisations, informal groups and individuals steer the use, and the user, of particular areas. These processes are already affecting many green commons, encompassing in total large areas and many potential users.

The aim of the research project is to study how different types of territorialisation affect access and use of urban green areas, and how these processes affect the social and ecological multifunctionality.

How have urban green commons changed over time? Who uses them and for what? Who does not use them and why?

For what purposes are green areas planned, designed and maintained and how is this understood and valued by different actors? How is territorialisation expressed and who gains – and loses – due to this? These and other questions are answered in this inter-disciplinary research project.

The research is conducted in close collaboration with authorities, organisations, social movements and individual users – and non-users – of green areas. The Järva green wedge in Stockholm, Sweden, is the geographical loci of the research, complemented by studies in other parts of Stockholm and in other cities around the world. The results will be of great relevance to different actors, and contribute to sustainable urban development, e.g. through new knowledge about navigating conflicts between urban land use interests.

More information at www.justurbangreen.com project name **Green Access**

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