

ESR20-011 - The social equality of Nature-based Solutions to urban heat stress

Abstract

As the management of extreme weather events becomes increasingly important, climate adaptation strategies are paramount. However, current climate adaptation strategies often overlook aspects of social inequality or even risk exacerbating these. One example is the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS). These approaches can result in green gentrification; the displacement and exclusion of marginalized groups due to increased attractiveness and value of nearby property. The consideration of social impacts into climate adaptation policies represents a significant challenge because climate policies are usually determined independently from social policies (policy siloing). Our research project assesses the risks of green gentrification for the case of Vienna. The project furthermore develops a decision-making process that ensures socially equitable climate adaptation in an urban area. The proposed decision-making framework consists of three sequential stages: 1) climate risk assessment, 2) adaptation analysis, and 3) impact analysis with a focus on assessing the risks of green gentrification. This decision-making methodology is applicable to cities worldwide. The city of Vienna, Austria and NbS are used to illustrate how climate adaptation policy can be integrated with social policy to achieve socially equitable urban heat risk management, in particular by means of supporting social housing policies. We showcase that breaking current policy silos is necessary to achieve a socially equitable climate change adaptation strategy.

Scientific disciplines:

Applied geography (50%) | Environmental economics (20%) | Climate change (30%)

Keywords:

Social justice; Nature-based Solutions; green gentrification; heat

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Further links to the persons involved and to the project can be found under

<https://www.wwtf.at/funding/programmes/esr/ESR20-011/>