Abstract

This thesis studies how urbanization influences green space distribution, people’s expectations from urban nature in parks, and the management of urbanite expectations from urban nature in parks. A diversity of methods including satellite remote sensing, Geographical Information Systems, social surveys and Social Network Analysis tools has been used to study the interrelationship between the pattern of vegetation distribution, perception and accessibility. This study has been conducted in Delhi, which experienced unprecedented growth in recent decade. The results of the study show that, spatially the vegetation decreases from the city core towards the periphery. Temporally, there is overall decrease in vegetation since 1986. The city core has also experienced the greatest amount of vegetation clearing and fragmentation over time due to infrastructural expansion. However, the city periphery showed vegetation increase and a decrease in fragmentation due to recent compensatory tree plantation in these peripheral areas. Public institutions are instrumental in protecting the green space and limiting its fragmentation in the city core. Surveys of park visitors revealed that almost all respondents felt the need for more green spaces in Delhi. Visitors valued parks mainly for environmental, psychological and health benefits, even though they have very limited biodiversity awareness. This study reveals the importance of large, well maintained, accessible parks in a crowded metropolis like Delhi. Finally, Social Network Analyses of four parks was used to analyse the relationship between the network indices of social networks of park management and park performance. Results shows the importance of having a dynamic leader, the need for the maximization of the interaction of the co-workers in the park, leading to shared learning and good communication between the managers and the workers of the parks. The ideal combination of these would help well managed parks, capable of providing satisfying park experiences for urban visitors. The findings can help managers of urban nature to better plan and design urban greenspace. It also contributes to the limited information on people's perceptions of and requirements from urban nature in cities of the global South.