

Establishing ecological and social continuities: new challenges to optimize urban watershed management

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Abstract The (re)construction of the ecological continuity is stated as one of the main objectives of the European Water Framework Directive for watershed management in Europe. Analysing the social, political, technical and scientific processes characterising the implementation of different projects of ecological continuity in two adjacent peri-urban territories in Ile-de-France, we observed science-driven approaches disregarding the social contexts. We show that, in urbanized areas, ecological continuity requires not only important technical and ecological expertise, but also social and political participation to the definition of a common vision and action plan. Being a challenge for both, technical water management institutions and “classical” ecological policies, we propose some social science contributions to deal with ecological unpredictability and reconsider stakeholder resistance to this kind of project.

Key words ecological continuity; urban watershed management; small rivers; urban ponds; Green and Blue Corridors; Ile-de-France