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A soil science to urban landscape planning: the case study of Naples and its surroundings

Antonio Carbone, Michela Iamarino, Fabio Terribile

The recent trends in territorial planning for safeguarding, management and arrangement of both landscape¹ and environment, emphasise that the basis of any planning choice is the analysis of all environmental features, but most importantly their interrelationships and the designation of the landscape value to be preserved, restored and/or re-evaluated. These relationships must also refer to the necessary balance between the physical-biological and the historical, cultural, aesthetical values of the landscape.

This approach must then give special emphasis to the environmental 'soil' component, considered both as 'natural parameter structuring the landscape' and 'the physical media' where the interrelationships and the exchanges between several environmental components and human activities take place².

Soil derived maps must consider soil both as an 'environmental good' to be preserved because of its intrinsic value and also as 'environmental component' to be included in the strategic evaluation assessment (Sea). This rationale obliges the soil scientist indeed to develop new multitasking soil information also addressed to the other disciplines experts.

Following such criterium the pedological investigation conducted for Ptcp of Naples was effected not only as 'a research of pedological singularities' (widely spread in the Neapolitan territory) but, above all, recognizing in the soil a 'constitutional component in the provincial

territory' and, as such, a structural factor.

This investigation enabled the production of few types of spatial information embodying the needed multitasking approach for analysing the interaction between human activities and natural processes: a map of the potential soil fertility in which it has been estimated some of the main factors affecting soil ability to produce biomass (i.e. organic matter, soil depth, andic properties); a map of the risk assessment concerning soil degradation combining two types of information: the potential vulnerability of soils to degradation processes (chemical, physical and biological); the estimation of the 'soil' as natural good evaluating the productivity function of soils, the ability of soils in regulating natural cycles and finally, the soil function as natural resource; a map of the fragmentation of the rural and open field territory representing a first robust attempt to evaluate, using a rigorous quantitative approach, the massive (and unsustainable) anthropic pressure typical of the landscape of Naples. These factors, along with the other natural and anthropic territory features, define a more general scenery of the 'environmental and landscaping terrain quality' of Naples's territory; starting from it, it is necessary to detect the quality objects to be reached with the commitment and the responsibility of the entire community.

Notes

1. In the meaning given to the term from the European convention of landscape (Cep 20/10/2000).

2. Strategic environmental assessment, directive 2001/42/Ce, European parliament and council (27/6/01).