

A Changing World

Challenges for Landscape Research

Landscape Research has been established as an interdisciplinary field dealing with complex environmental processes at multiple spatial and temporal scales. During the course of its history, various societal, technological and philosophical stimuli have shaped Landscape Research, e.g. the declaration of Landscape Ecology in the 1930s and contemporary global technological and societal developments.

Modern landscape research presently uses mathematics, statistics and advanced simulation techniques to combine empirical observations with known theories from ecology, physics, geography, social science and so on. Knowledge is thus updated and quantified via models that are used for estimation, hypothesis testing, prediction and assessment of scenarios. Advances in the computational sciences (e.g. fast computers and vast array of software), space science (e.g. remote sensing) and biological sciences (e.g. genetics) as well as new perspectives in the social sciences play important roles. Research findings are implemented in conservation management, urban planning and global change mitigation strategies.

This book identifies emerging fields and new challenges that are discussed within the framework of the 'driving forces' of Landscape Development. Rather than offering a comprehensive overview of all fields of Landscape Research, the book addresses 'hot topics' emphasizing major contemporary trends in these fields.

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