

Exploration Of Socio-Political Change In Natural Resource Management In Urban Areas

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Received: April 02, 2025

Accepted: April 20, 2025

Revised : April 16, 2025

Published: April 30, 2025

Abstract

Rapid urbanization in major cities has put great pressure on natural resources, leading to environmental degradation, reduced green space, and increased pollution and carbon emissions. This process led to a major change in the way societies managed natural resources, affecting their quality and availability. This study explores the influence of socio-political changes on urban natural resource management, with a focus on social dynamics, government policies, and the role of civil society and the private sector. The findings show that the imbalance between urban development and the preservation of natural resources often fuels conflict, while adaptive policies, green technologies, and nature-based approaches can be solutions to reduce environmental impacts. The study also identified that community participation and collaboration between sectors are essential to address the challenges of sustainable natural resource management. This collaboration will improve the efficiency of resource use and reduce negative impacts on the environment, ensuring the sustainability of natural resources for the future.

Keywords: Natural Resource Management, Urbanization, Green Technology, Sustainable Development Policy, Nature-Based Approach

1. Introduction

Rapid urbanization in various cities has increased the significant pressure on natural resources, both in terms of availability and quality. This process led to a major change in the way societies manage natural resources, impacting the environment and ecosystem sustainability. Increased extraction and consumption of resources such as water, energy, and land exacerbate environmental degradation, degrade the quality of available natural resources, and increase pollution and carbon emissions (Ahmed et al., 2020; W.-X. Chen et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2021; Nathaniel et al., 2020; Zahoor et al., 2022). Urbanization also changes land use patterns, reduces vegetation cover, and increases the risk of overexploitation of these resources (Wang & Wang, 2024). The impact of urbanization on natural resources varies, with some regions improving environmental quality through effective regulation, while others experience decreased production efficiency and resource quality degradation. Therefore, policies that encourage sustainable natural resource management, pollution control, and the development of environmentally friendly cities are needed to ensure the sustainability of natural resources in the future (Ahmed et al., 2020; Zahoor et al., 2022; Money & Money, 2024; Nathaniel et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2021).

The influence of social and political dynamics in big cities on natural resource management is very significant. Changes in social and political structures often affect the priorities of governments and communities in managing natural resources, with power imbalances and neoliberal policies hampering sustainable management, posing challenges in balancing



economic growth and environmental conservation (Judijanto et al., 2024; Kröger, 2020). The role of government policies, especially through digitalization and technological innovation, has been shown to improve greener and more sustainable resource management, although the impact varies depending on political conditions, location, and human capacity in individual cities (K. Chen et al., 2024; Shen et al., 2023). Social dynamics, such as cross-community relationships and dependence on natural resources, can worsen social cohesion and magnify the potential for conflict, reducing the effectiveness of environmental policies (Pisor et al., 2023; Tsopmo et al., 2024). A conducive business environment also plays an important role in driving green economic growth and reducing dependence on natural resources, through policies that support innovation and energy efficiency (Guo et al., 2024). Finally, people's level of trust in the government and their perception of the effectiveness of resource management greatly influences social acceptance of environmental policies, where transparent and participatory communication is key to building community support (Eriksson et al., 2023).

The imbalance between urban development and the preservation of natural resources often triggers conflicts, especially as a result of urbanization that increases land demand. Competition for land functions and limited resources exacerbate this conflict (Koller et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2022). Development policies without sustainability magnify the potential for conflict (Kings et al., 2024).

Table 1: Potential Conflicts and Solutions between Urban Development and Natural Resources Conservation

Sources of Conflict	Main Impact	Completion Efforts
Urbanization & land demand	Decline in open space, environmental degradation	Delineation of urban development boundaries (UDB)
Competition for land functions	Conflicts between sectors (settlements, agriculture, etc.)	Integrated land suitability assessment
Resource limitations	Inequity of access, decreased resource efficiency	Resource efficiency & multifunctionality
Development policy	Sustainability threats, socio-ecological conflicts	Sustainable development paradigm
Lack of public participation	Non-inclusive solutions, escalation of conflict	Participatory mapping & multi-stakeholder dialogue

Government policies play an important role in urban natural resource management, with sustainable development policies reducing dependence on natural resources (Liu et al., 2024). Civil society also plays a role as a guardian of the environment, while the private sector encourages technological innovation and sustainable investment (Johnson et al., 2020; Manu & Asongu, 2025). Environmental organizations contribute to cross-sector advocacy and collaboration (Bush, 2020). Adaptive and collaborative policy adjustments are essential to address socio-political dynamics and ensure sustainable management (Johnson et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2023).

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of socio-political changes on natural resource management in urban areas, focusing on the impact of urbanization, government policies, and the role of civil society and the private sector. This research aims to identify the challenges faced in achieving sustainable natural resource management in the midst of urban social and political dynamics, as well as examine the possibilities of solutions that can be applied, such as green technology, nature-based approaches, and active community participation. Through this understanding, this research is expected to provide insight into how adaptive and collaborative policies can strengthen environmental sustainability in big cities.

2. Method

The method used in this study is literature review (Sutherland et al., 2024), where the author collects, analyzes, and reviews a wide range of literature related to socio-political change and natural resource management in urban areas. The literature reviewed includes articles, journals, policy reports, and books relevant to this topic, focusing on how urbanization, government policies, the role of civil society, as well as the private sector affect natural resource management. With this approach, the author aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics that occur as well as identify the challenges and opportunities that exist in the sustainable management of natural resources in large cities. The selected literature is expected to provide a clear picture of the impact of socio-political policies on environmental sustainability and how collaboration-based and technology-based solutions can address existing problems.

3. Results and Discussion

The Influence of Government Policies and Political Institutions

Social and political changes affect the management of natural resources in cities, with government policies, social dynamics, and political factors determining the effectiveness and sustainability of such management. Institutional design such as local autonomy, political stability, and investment policies play an important role in changes in land use and resource utilization (Deslatte et al., 2022; Tan et al., 2023). Effective government policies, the adoption of financial technology, and renewable energy improve resource management, while unmanaged urbanization increases the pressure on resources (Zhou et al., 2022). Community involvement and collaborative partnerships are important in the management of natural open spaces, but conflicts of interest and power imbalances can hinder community participation and exacerbate environmental crises (Adam et al., 2021; Pietta & Tononi, 2021).

Challenges Faced in Natural Resource Management

Natural resource management in urban areas often faces conflicts of interest between sectors, especially related to land use and green open space. Population growth and the need for infrastructure development are putting pressure on land, which fuels competition between green space, housing, and other economic sectors. These conflicts can be addressed with integrated management approaches and cross-sectoral policies involving various stakeholders, both government and non-governmental, to ensure sustainable and democratic management (Bressane et al., 2024; De la Mora-de la Mora & López-Miguel, 2022; Koller et al., 2022). In addition, unequal access to natural resources, such as water, green space, and productive land, is a major challenge. This unequal access, exacerbated by weak community participation and local community involvement, creates social conflict and worsens the quality of life of urban communities (Benti et al., 2021; Bressane et al., 2024; Narain & Ranjan, 2023).

High dependence on natural resources can hinder sustainable urban development. Rapid urbanization often leads to land degradation, degradation of environmental quality, and reduced green space, which has an impact on the decline of ecosystem services and people's quality of life (Atanasova et al., 2021; Pregitzer et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2020). In addition, limited data, funding, and public awareness about natural resource conservation are major obstacles. Institutional constraints, such as weak inter-agency coordination and lack of integrated policies, also hinder the management of natural resources in urban areas. The lack of understanding of the importance of collective action at the local level as well as the

involvement of communities and the private sector in planning and management still needs to be improved to create innovative and sustainable solutions (Benti et al., 2021; Bressane et al., 2024; De La Mora-De La Mora & López-Miguel, 2022; Narain & Ranjan, 2023).

Solutions and Innovations Proposed in the Literature

Solutions to address the challenges of natural resource management increasingly emphasize the application of green technology, sustainable development policies, and nature-based solutions (NBS). These approaches have been proven to improve efficiency, reduce environmental impacts, and support sustainable economic growth. Green technology focuses on improving the efficiency of natural resource use and reducing the ecological footprint, with innovations such as digitalization, AI, and big data helping to optimize resource management in critical sectors (Zhang et al., 2023). Policy support and cross-sectoral investment are urgently needed to accelerate the adoption of green technologies, which can reduce the impact of exploitation on the environment (Sembiring et al., 2025).

Sustainable development policies that emphasize green resource management have proven to support the green economy, with strict regulations, green financial incentives, and the allocation of funds for green technology research as key drivers (Hossain et al., 2024; Manigandan et al., 2024). Good coordination between renewable energy policies and resource revenue management is essential to achieve the SDGs targets, especially SDG-7 and SDG-13 (Atchike et al., 2024). Meanwhile, nature-based approaches (NBS), such as river restoration and urban agriculture, support biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change, while increasing food security and providing socio-economic benefits (Martín et al., 2020; Nassary et al., 2022). The success of NBS is highly dependent on social, institutional, and integration factors in good urban planning policies (Martín et al., 2020; Nassary et al., 2022).

Variation of Findings Based on Socio-Political Context

Socio-political contexts affect well-being, inequality, and various other aspects of social life. In a country with a strong and fair rule of law, inequality in access to welfare can be reduced (Olivos & Jin, 2023). The political context also plays an important role in childhood violence incidents, where child protection policies can reduce the risk of violence (Ulke et al., 2021). In addition, political changes affect ideologies within organizations, such as in humor magazines in Turkey, as well as corporate political activities, which are influenced by who controls the government (Mui et al., 2024; Öztürk, 2021). Work-family conflicts also vary according to cultural contexts, with collectivist societies showing a weaker relationship between such conflict and life satisfaction (Allen et al., 2020). Differences in socio-political contexts between countries of origin and destination increase risks in international business, while political and social analysis can yield variations in findings depending on the approach used (Lindner & Puck, 2023; Mathur et al., 2023). Finally, university experiences, especially in the arts and social sciences, can change the political values of graduates, reflecting the influence of social and academic contexts (Scott, 2024).

Table 2: Variation of findings based on socio-political context

Socio-Political Context	Key Findings
Rule of law	Reducing power-related welfare inequality
Political system (West Germany)	Increases the risk of childhood violence, especially in women
Political/ideological changes	Influencing the persistence of ideological traces in cultural organizations

Socio-Political Context	Key Findings
Control of the ruling party	Changing the pattern of corporate political activity
Cultural values (collectivism)	Weakening work-family conflict relationships with satisfaction
The socio-political distance of the country	Increased risk and information asymmetry for international companies
University experience	Increasing liberal social values in graduates

DISCUSSION

Natural resource management in urban areas is often hampered by conflicts of interest between sectors, especially in limited land use. Competition between the needs of green space, housing, and other economic sectors can exacerbate environmental degradation, which is increasingly complex with rapid population growth (De La Mora-De La Mora & López-Miguel, 2022; Koller et al., 2022). In response to this, an integrated management approach and cross-sectoral policies are essential to achieve a balance between development and environmental conservation. Effective coordination between various stakeholders—whether government, the private sector, or society—is key to ensuring sustainable and democratic management of resources (Bressane et al., 2024). The implementation of policies that integrate the various needs of this sector can reduce conflicts and increase the efficiency of land use.

Unequal access to natural resources, such as water, green space, and productive land, is a major problem that exacerbates social inequalities and quality of life in big cities. This unequal access is often influenced by socio-political factors, which create a gap between the richer and the less fortunate (Narain & Ranjan, 2023; Bressane et al., 2024). This inequality can worsen the quality of life and trigger social conflict, which ultimately affects the effectiveness of environmental policies. For this reason, more inclusive and participatory urban planning is essential to ensure that all groups of people have equitable access to natural resources and green open spaces.

High reliance on natural resources for urban development often exacerbates environmental problems, such as land degradation and deteriorating air quality. Poorly managed urbanization can exacerbate ecosystem damage and increase pollution, which in turn affects people's quality of life (Pregitzer et al., 2020; Atanasova et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2020). The solution to overcome this lies in the application of green technology and nature-based solutions (NBS). Green technologies that focus on resource efficiency and ecological footprint reduction have been shown to reduce the negative impacts of resource exploitation (Sembiring et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2023). NBS, such as river restoration and urban agriculture, provide solutions to address ecosystem degradation, increase urban resilience to climate change, and provide socio-economic benefits (Martín et al., 2020; Nassary et al., 2022).

Socio-political dynamics influence the way different countries or regions manage natural resources and the policies that are implemented. In countries with strong rule of law, as found in several international studies, inequality in access to welfare is more minimizable, reflecting the importance of institutional roles in natural resource management (Olivos & Jin, 2023). Political changes also affect ideological patterns in corporate organizations and political activities, which in turn impacts the way resources are utilized (Öztürk, 2021; Mui et al., 2024). In the business sector, differences in socio-political context between countries of origin and destination can increase risks for international companies due to differences in existing legal systems and policies (Lindner & Puck, 2023). Therefore, adaptive and responsive policies to socio-political changes and cross-sectoral collaboration are indispensable to achieve more efficient and sustainable resource management.

4. Conclusion

Natural resource management in urban areas faces various challenges caused by complex socio-political dynamics, including access inequalities, conflicts of interest between sectors, and high dependence on natural resources that further exacerbate environmental damage. Rapid urbanization adds pressure on natural resources, reduces green space, and increases pollution, which in turn threatens the sustainability of ecosystems. To address these challenges, an integrative and sustainable approach is needed, including the application of green technologies, sustainable development policies, and nature-based solutions (NBS). This solution is proven to improve the efficiency of natural resource use, reduce environmental impact, and support a green economy. However, the success of natural resource management is highly dependent on adaptive and collaborative policies, involving a wide range of stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, and communities. Policy adjustments that are responsive to socio-political changes and community participation in urban planning and management are also critical to ensuring equitable access to resources and environmental sustainability. Sustainable management of natural resources in urban areas requires synergy between policies, technology, and active community participation to ensure that economic growth and environmental preservation can go hand in hand.

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