

Special Issue

Taking an Ecosystem Approach to Urban Habitat Conservation and Planning

Message from the Guest Editor

This special issue of Sustainability has two pivot points—first it advocates for an explicit ecosystem approach to urban ecology; and second, it argues for a distributed, decentralized approach to nature conservation. The first focus derives from a nested, scale-hierarchic processfunction view of nature, one that transcends the morphological limits of conventional nature depiction. A tree, for instance, is more than the aggregation of trunk, roots, branches, leaves and such, but instead is better knowable as the flows of carbon, nitrogen, water, and so on.

The second pivot point is about nature conservation as a distributed function. Rather than being satisfied with finding, bounding and naming large tracts of wilderness as pristine nature, what if we were to seek to conserve nature everywhere—take our manicured and groomed lawns and give them over to nature, find the byways and pathways around our high-tension cables and mindfully give them over to a purposive nature, one that intentionally makes for habitat that aims to help endangered species of birds and animals gain footholds everywhere.

Guest Editor

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