Opportunities for urban farming: The case study of Paranthan town in Killinochchi, Sri Lanka

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Abstract
In the middle of the economic crisis, the management of urban farming represents a key challenge for improving ecological performances within the city. Indeed, agricultural areas have a great potential in terms of urban re-generation, fostering a city's resilience and its energy efficiency, even in the perspective of climate change hazards. Further agricultural areas are also crucial for social opportunities and new job creation in the perspective of integrating both ecological and urban services in the framework of more competitive (and attractive) cities. According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) definition of ecosystem services as constituents of well-being (MEA, 2005), this paper presents a case study that addresses urban agricultural areas can be act as an ecological infrastructure for the city. The study is structured as a research case study and focuses on a former agricultural area in the city center of Paranthan, Killinochchi. This is an almost agricultural area being an important city's landmark. Despite the abandonment of crops, the agricultural land use is still typical of the area and it represents a core potential to provide ecological and urban services for the city. The study discusses a demonstration project aimed at assessing comprehensive viability for managing agricultural use in order to protect the natural soils and updating both urban and ecological services (such as waste management, social security, sliding risk reduction) through a non-conventional public service policy. The results of this research reveal comprehensive viability of the urban farming by implementing integrated model for urban design for Paranthan Town, Kilinochchi that takes together the instance of upgrading ecological performances in the city with the need of create new jobs and economic opportunity.

Keywords: Agricultural area, Comprehensive viability, Ecosystem services, Urban farming, Urban re-generation

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