



Urbanization, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: Challenges and Opportunities: A Global Assessment

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Urbanization is a global phenomenon and the book emphasizes that this is not just a social-technological process. It is also a social-ecological process where cities are places for nature, and where cities also are dependent on, and have impacts on, the biosphere at different scales from local to global. The book is a global assessment and delivers four main conclusions:

1. Urban areas are expanding faster than urban populations. Half the increase in urban land across the world over the next 20 years will occur in Asia, with the most extensive change expected to take place in India and China
2. Urban areas modify their local and regional climate through the urban heat island effect and by altering precipitation patterns, which together will have significant impacts on net primary production, ecosystem health, and biodiversity
3. Urban expansion will heavily draw on natural resources, including water, on a global scale, and will often consume prime agricultural land, with knock-on effects on biodiversity and ecosystem services elsewhere
4. Future urban expansion will often occur in areas where the capacity for formal governance is restricted, which will constrain the protection of biodiversity and management of ecosystem services

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