

**CEDESU 2021
2ND INTERNATIONAL
CITY AND ECOLOGY
CONGRESS**
WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF
SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT
December 2-3, 2021, Trabzon, Turkey

Proceedings Book

Editors

Prof.Dr.Öner DEMİREL

Assoc.Prof.Dr. Ertan DÜZGÜNEŞ



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URBAN PARKS AND CONSERVATION STATUS

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ABSTRACT

Urban parks are significant open and green spaces both to maintain the ecological balance of the city and to meet the recreational needs of residents of the city. Moreover, in terms of urban memory, urban parks are public places where the experiences that form the memory are obtained.

In Turkey, the concept of conservation and conservation statuses in urban areas has been discussed through the building structure and its surrounding. However, urban parks, that substantial pieces of urban areas ensuring the continuity of social memory from past to present are necessary to be conserved. In addition to maintaining the ecological balance of the city, the protection of these areas is crucial for preserving urban memory and ensuring that the social values related to the city are transferred to future generations.

In this context, the importance of urban parks shaping the cities from past to present was examined through examples and recommendations regarding their conservation status.

Keywords: Urban parks, conservation status, protected urban site, urban memory

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Ertekin (1992), urban parks are open green spaces that include facilities and opportunities to meet the active/passive recreational needs of people from all age groups in the city and also they should be at the focal points of the city to protect the ecological balance and to meet the recreational needs of the citizens (Özkır 2007).

Urban parks are areas that are used daily, where people contact nature and social interactions take place. Besides, they provide various environmental, aesthetic, and recreational benefits closely related to human well-being and quality of life (Huai & Van de Voorde 2022).

Urban parks are a part of the city's open green space system and generally have the same importance and functions as other open green spaces (Özkır 2007). It is possible to collect these functions under the headings of ecological, recreation, health, education, socio-cultural, social memory and belonging, aesthetics, economic, social equality, security and land organization (Table 1).

Table 1 Functions of city parks

Ecological Zhang, Sun, Shen, Peng & Che (2021). Peng et. al. (2021); Torabi, Lindsay, Smith, Khor & Sainsbury (2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Climate regulation (mitigation of the heat island effect, shading, evaporation) ✓ Improving air quality ✓ Noise reduction ✓ Surface flow regulation (increasing permeability) ✓ Habitat (step stone, shelter and feeding area)
Recreation Boyacı (2010), Tibesigwaa, Ntulib & Lokinaa (2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sports facilities, hiking, etc
Health Zhang et. al. (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mental ✓ Physical
Education Boyacı (2010); Tibesigwaa et al. (2020).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Environmental education ✓ Observation opportunity (history, culture, botany and wildlife)
Socio-cultural Boyacı (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Concerts, theater, and other events ✓ Social interaction
Collective Memory and Place Attachment Uludağ & Aycı (2016); Bazrafshan, Tabrizi, Bauer & Kienast (2021).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Creating collective memory (republican period parks, etc.) ✓ Creating an individual's memory and sense of belonging (place attachment) (e.g., historical parks)
Aesthetic Boyacı (2010).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Softening the sharp lines of building masses ✓ Appearance that changes with the seasons
Economic Boyacı (2010); www.npca.org (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tourism opportunities ✓ Increase in land and housing prices
Social Equality M'antymaa, Jokinen, Juutinen, Lankia & Louhi (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Providing recreational opportunities to low-income individuals
Security Bogar & Beyer (2015); Zhang et. al. (2021).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decrease in crime ✓ Emergency assembly area
Land Organization Boyacı (2010).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Connecting cities and the organic system (nature) ✓ Regulating mass-clearance adjustment ✓ Acting as a buffer between different areas ✓ Influencing the settlement characteristics and form of the buildings

Urban parks are important areas for the city due to their functions listed above, and these areas are public lands that should be taken under protection. In this context, the aim of this study is to make suggestions regarding the conservation status of urban parks in Turkey. Therefore, examples of the concept of protection in urban parks abroad, the protection status in the country's legislation and the place of the concept of urban parks in the country's legislation were examined, and suggestions were made regarding the protection status of urban parks in Turkey.

What Is Conservation? Why Do We Need Conservation?

Definitions related to conservation and protected areas are defined as follows in the Law No. 2863 on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets.

“Conservation” is the preservation, maintenance, repair, restoration, changes in functional operations in immovable cultural and natural properties; and preservation, maintenance, repair and restoration works in movable cultural properties. **“Protected area”** is an area that must be protected, which is effective in the preservation of immovable cultural and natural assets or their

protection in the historical environment (Kültür ve Tabiat Varlıklarını Koruma Kanunu [KTVKK], 1983).

As expressed in the definition of the concept of protection, one of the assets that require preservation, maintenance and repair is urban parks.

By defining the protection status of urban parks in the national legislation, the qualities, problems and possibilities of urban parks will be defined and the importance of these areas in the formation of social identity will be understood and internalized, and it will be ensured that they are an integral part of cultural identity.

2. THE CONSERVATION APPROACHES OF URBAN PARKS IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Within the scope of the study, the relevant parks and their legislation status were examined in order to reveal the understanding of conservation regarding urban parks at the international level. In this context, two well-known urban parks were selected among the examples of urban parks; Hyde Park and Central Park. These parks are important urban areas in terms of being the parks that have been talked about from the past to the present, both their history and other functions (recreational, ecological, social etc.). In this respect, the examination of these urban areas in terms of the concept of protection is important for revealing the conservation approach of the city parks in our country.

Hyde Park (England)

According to the laws of United Kingdom, every property belongs to the Royal family. Hyde Park is also owned by the Crown. Just as the royal palace is under protection, the same applies in the park. Thus, the general character of the park was preserved (Özkır 2007).

As of 2017, the Royal Park Agency was established under the Ministry of Culture, Media, and Sports. These two organizations work together for activities such as park management and fundraising (*Hyde Park Management Plan [HPMP] 2014*).

Central Park (United States)

In the United States, parks are protected by local NGOs, councils, and municipal cooperation. Central Park in New York City (NYC) is protected by the Central Park Conservancy. This private entity was established under a contract with the City of New York (government) and NYC parks. The organization in question is a non-profit organization and raises funds through donations. The organization meets all the needs of the park (maintenance, garbage management, visitor method, maintenance of architectural structures, etc.) (centralparknyc.org, 2021).

In addition to these sample parks, the Historical Urban Public Parks Doctrinal Text by the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) has been examined. The text was prepared by the International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscape (ISCCL), one of the 28 technical advisory committees established under the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) ICOMOS.

The statement includes descriptions of Historic Urban Public Parks, values and special character defining elements of historical urban public parks (spaces, landscapes, plants and landscapes), conservation and management of historically important parks, design adaptations that can be applied at the universal level, and explanations about the place of the statute. (Anonymous 2017).

3. CONSERVATION STATUS IN OUR COUNTRY

Areas that need to be protected, including natural and cultural assets in the country's legislation, have been taken under protection by the Law on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets, the Law on National Parks, the Decree on the Establishment of the Special Environmental Protection Agency, and the regulations pertaining to the aforementioned laws. The concepts related to the protection of natural and cultural assets in the said legislation are given in Table 2. Although these concepts are divided into two as natural assets and cultural assets, the Special Environmental Protection Area includes areas with protection value in terms of both natural and cultural assets.

Table 2. Concepts related to the protection of natural and cultural assets in the country's legislation (KTVKK,1983; Arkeolojik Sitler, Koruma ve Kullanma Koşulları [ASKKK], 1999; Korunan Alanların Tespit, Tescil ve Onayına İlişkin Usul ve Esaslara Dair Yönetmelik [KATTOİUEDY] 2012.)

NATURAL ASSETS	CULTURAL ASSETS
National Park	Historical Protected Site
Natural Protected Site (I. Degree Natural Protected Site, II. Degree Natural Protected Site, III. Degree Natural Protected Site)	Archaeological Protected Site (I. Degree Archaeological Protected Site, II. Degree Archaeological Protected Site, III. Degree Archaeological Protected Site)
Nature Park	Urban Protected Site
Natural Monument	Urban Archaeological Protected Site
Nature Reserve	
Wetland	
Wildlife Development Site	
Special Environmental Protection Area	

Among the concepts given in Table 2, the concepts related to the protection status of natural assets occur at the upper scales and generally have national or international, national and world-wide ecological importance, are sensitive to environmental pollution and degradation, and include species and natural events that contain distinguished examples of natural events. It covers areas or elements that are expressed with concepts such as the absolute necessity of protection.

Concepts related to the protection status of cultural assets include areas created by people of importance on both a local and global scale. In the scope of the study, the mentioned concepts were taken into consideration while considering the protection status.

4. THE PLACE OF THE URBAN PARK CONCEPT IN THE COUNTRY LEGISLATION

The laws and regulations in which the term of 'urban park' is expressed in the legislation of the country have been examined. In this context, Spatial Plans Construction Regulation, Planned Areas Zoning Regulation, Municipal Law, Coastal Law, Regulation on the Implementation of Coastal Law, Bosphorus Law and Regulation on Land and Land Arrangements were found. The concepts related to open and green spaces in the relevant legislation are green space, park, playground, picnic and entertainment (recreation) area, recreational area and national garden. It has been determined that the concept of urban park is only mentioned in the Regulation on Land and Land Arrangements. There is no specific definition of a city park in the said regulation. In

these regulations, the closest discourse to the concept of urban park is the national garden. Apart from these expressions, there is no classification for open and green areas (pocket park, neighborhood park, etc.) in Turkey legislation.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Currently, there is no legislation in our country that includes classifications for green areas and there is no study on the protection status of these areas. Green areas in cities are within the jurisdiction of municipalities; therefore, all decisions regarding green areas are at the disposal of the municipalities. In this context, the relevant administration takes all decisions regarding green areas and can make any changes they want. Especially city parks that are important for the history of the city may suffer from this situation.

One of the best examples of this situation is Gençlik Park in Ankara. Gençlik Park, which is one of the important parks of the Early Republic period, displays a very distant appearance from its past appearance due to the changes it has undergone over time. This situation has led to the forgetting of the social and spatial practices that make up the collective memory. As of now, the traces of the city have been erased and the urban memory has been lost (Uludağ & Aycı 2016).

In the legislation, the concept of urban park is discussed as a conservation status in urban areas. However, the concept in question generally deals with the cultural structure and its environment, not green areas or urban parks alone. Urban parks are rare areas when viewed from the perspective of the city, with both natural values (ecological) and cultural values (historical value, urban memory, cultural activities, etc.) contributing to the city and should be evaluated in this context.

As such, it may be appropriate to evaluate the urban site under the concept of protected site in the legislation. Expanding the definition of the concept of urban sites and urban parks can also be evaluated within this concept. In this context, in addition to the protection of historical city parks, today's modern city parks should also be evaluated within the framework of their protection status. Although modern city parks have not taken their place in historical processes, their contributions to the city are areas that should be protected with both natural (ecological) and cultural values.

Within the scope of the relevant legislation, the service areas, sizes, functions of the parks should be defined and classified. In addition, studies should be carried out to establish the necessary standards (historical, ecological, social memory, etc.) in order to protect these areas. The conservation status of the city parks to be determined as a result of these studies will be a guide for the studies and decision mechanisms related to urban design.

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