The Peri-Urban Interface in Developing Areas: approaches to sustainable natural and human resource use

Developing Areas Research Group
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Module 1. Wednesday 3 September 1545 – 1800hrs
Chair: Duncan McGregor

Introduction

1. Putting environmental science for the peri-urban environment in the policy context: the SCOPE peri-urban environmental change project. I. Douglas

2. The inevitable illusiveness and relativeness of 'sustainability' in the peri-urban zone of African cities: Livelihood options by the urban poor of industrial effluent use in Zambia. T. Bowyer-Bower

3. Livelihoods from dairying enterprises for the landless in the peri-urban interface around Hubli-Dharwad, India. R.M .Brook, P. Bhat & A. Nitturkar

4. The environmental and social impacts of peri-urban irrigated vegetable production around Jos, Nigeria. F. Harris, m. Pasquini, J. Dung & A. Adepetu

Module 2. Thursday 4 September 0900 – 1115hrs
Chair: Donald Thompson

5. The Governance of Infrastructure Service Provision in the Peri-Urban Interface of Metropolitan Regions J. Davila & A. Allen

6. Re-evaluating people-environment relationships at the rural-urban interface: How sustainable is the peri-urban zone in Kano, northern Nigeria? R. Machonachie & J.A. Binns

7. National Highway by-pass and its impact on Hubli-Dharwad Peri Urban Livelihoods K Shindhe

8. Horticulture and Market Information at the Interface K. Lynch & N. Poole

9. Promoting the interests of the poor in the peri-urban interface: The experience of ITDG L. Stevens & R. Berger

10. Development and resource Exploitation in Gampaha, Sri Lanka A. Narman & N. Dangalle

11. Conflict and co-operation in peri-urban Accra K. Gough & P. Yankson

Module 3. Thursday 4 September 1545 – 1800hrs
Chair: David Simon

Discussion and questions from Module 2

12. Community-Based Waste Management Strategies: Peri-Urban Interface Kumasi, Ghana A.M. Bradford, D.F.M. McGregor & D.Simon

13. Sustainable development indicators for peri-urban areas: a case study of Mexico City R Diaz-Chavez

14. A co-management approach to watershed management: peri-urban Kumasi, Ghana D.F.M. McGregor, D.A. Thompson & D.Simon

15. Hidden Livelihoods? Natural Resource Management and Urban Development Policy. C Twyman

Discussion and Conclusion

Report

The peri-urban interface in developing areas is characterised by intense pressure on natural resources in the context of increasing human activity. The purpose of this Developing Areas Research Goup meeting, held as part of the Royal Geographical Society/Institute of British Geographers' annual conference, London, September 2003, was to draw together the range of research being undertaken by geographers and others on the natural and human resource problems of the peri-urban zone in developing areas. This research ranges widely geographically and thematically but is characterised by a focus on sustaining livelihoods in the face of increasing pressures on land, and on the progressive transition from rural to more urban land use. The 15 papers presented at this meeting therefore addressed the impacts of rapid urbanisation on the natural resource base of land and water, on livelihoods and on poverty in the peri-urban interface.

A significant focus of the paper sessions was on the implementation of sustainable solutions to the problem of reconciling human needs and pressure on resources. Empirical case study material from a range of peri-urban environments in Africa, South Asia and Latin America illustrated the range of problems commonly encountered there.

In the opening session, Douglas (Manchester) put into context the peri-urban environmental change activities of the SCOPE network, and emphasized the contribution which could be made by environmental scientists in developing sustainable strategies for peri-urban land use. Bowyer-Bower (Kings, London) presented a critical analysis of what constitutes the peri-urban interface in African cities, while Brook *et al.* (Bangor) examined the potential for developing livelihoods from dairying enterprises, based on their research around Hubli-Dharwad, India. Harris *et al.* (Kingston) examined the environmental and social impacts of peri-urban irrigated vegetable production around Jos, Nigeria.

Module 2 opened with a synopsis by Davila & Allen of the research into the governance of infrastructure provision being carried out at DPU, London. Five metropolitan regions (Dar es Salaam, Chennai, Mexico City, Caracas and Cairo-Giza) are being focused on. Maconachie & Binns (Sussex) identified the most significant forces in shaping the process of peri-urban change, and analysed the relative sustainability of peri-urban livelihood strategies, around Kano. Shindhe (SDM College of Engineering, Dharwad) examined the effects of inadequate planning on the disruption to livelihoods of a major road bypass in Hubli-Dharwad, and suggested strategies to avoid this in future. Lynch & Poole (Kingston) reported on their research into market information constraints among horticultural farmers in Tanzania, Ghana and Zimbabwe.

Stevens and Berger (ITDG) presented a synopsis of ITDG's approach to developing sustainable livelihoods for the peri-urban poor, and illustrated their paper with case studies of urban agriculture and sand extraction in Kenya, Sudan and Zimbabwe. Närman & Dangalle (Gothenburg) analyse the negative ecological and social development processes brought about by foreign investment in peri-urban Gampaha (part of metropolitan Colombo), Sri Lanka. Gough & Yankson (Copenhagen) presented five detailed village case studies in the peri-urban area of Accra, which together indicate the complex nature of peri-urban change processes.

Module 3 started with a report by Bradford *et al.* (RHUL) on the potential of community-based waste management strategies for tackling the waste disposal problems around Kumasi, Ghana. Diaz-Chavez (Aberystwyth) put forward a framework for developing indicators of sustainability for use in the peri-urban interface of Mexico City. Returning to Kumasi, McGregor *et al*. (RHUL) illustrated a flexible co-management approach to peri-urban watershed management based on low-cost or no-cost principles. Finally, drawing on case studies from across southern Africa, Twyman & Slater (Sheffield) showed how an understanding of the dynamics of urban based natural resource-related livelihoods provides lessons for sustainable development of the peri-urban interface.

A valuable feature of the case studies presented was their coverage of very different institutional, political, environmental, economic and socio-cultural situations. They thus shed light on the ways in which the 'peri-urban' is constructed and perceived in these contexts and how peri-urban zones 'fit' into the respective administrative and policy frameworks. In turn, this is of great importance in determining the appropriateness of existing policies or the formulation of new ones.

In order to take forward this research agenda, the conveners are seeking commercial publication of the proceedings of the meeting. By setting out and synthesising this range of case studies from different tropical areas, commonalities will be drawn out which underline the close relationship in peri-urban zones between the physical environment and its resources on the one hand, and human pressures on the environment on the other.