

Health: The Design, Planning and Politics of How and Where We Live

- **Paper / Proposal Title:**

Green Up The City! - Do urban greening initiatives lead to green gentrification in the Netherlands?

- **Format:**

Presentation and paper

- **Author(s) Name:**

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- **University or Company Affiliation:**

Wageningen University and Research, Netherlands

- **Abstract (300 words):**

Urban greening initiatives have become an important tool for local governments and urban planners to upgrade impoverished neighbourhoods. While green areas are known to contribute to improved health and well-being of residents, there may also be a less positive effect to the greening of neighborhoods. Worldwide such initiatives have been shown to lead to green gentrification. Green gentrification refers to the displacement of low-income families and small companies as a result of greening initiatives.

Green gentrification can be seen as an environmental justice issue: having equal access and/or exposure to environmental goods and bads, regardless of race, origin, or socio economic status. Most prior research about environmental justice in the

Netherlands has focused on the distribution of environmental disadvantages, such as exposure to air pollution, rather than the benefits such as access to urban green areas.

The aim of the current study is to explore to what extent green gentrification is an issue in the Netherlands. We have explored whether green gentrification causes environmental injustice in the Netherlands. Environmental injustice can form a precursor for urban health inequities.

We defined underlying mechanisms of the process of green gentrification and investigated three case study neighbourhoods, located in Amsterdam, Arnhem and Amersfoort. The cases were selected based on the presence of recent increase in average income and ongoing greening initiatives. In-depth interviews were conducted with residents, local experts and civil servants of the municipality.

We concluded that green gentrification is currently occurring in the Netherlands, but is not as pronounced and doesn't cause environmental injustice to the same extent as in foreign cities, such as New York or Berlin. Gentrification can be triggered by both actual greening as a result of an increase in 'green' awareness amongst the residents. We have found no evidence of gentrifying purposes in strategic planning of municipalities.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

The current research project was part of an eight-week interdisciplinary, intercultural academic consultancy training (9 ECTS), which is part of every MSc program at Wageningen University. The current abstract was a joint effort between the student team, two supervisors and commissioner. It is an example of community based learning, real live education.

Judith de Bree

Judith is an MSc student enrolled in the Biology major Conservation and Systems Ecology at the Wageningen University. She focusses on the interaction between nature and society and is passionate about bridging the gap in between. She has a Bachelor degree in Biology and a 2nd degree teaching certificate. For her MSc thesis she investigated the impact of global climate change on tropical rainforests in Panama.

Maartje Heijmans

Maartje Heijmans is an MSc student in Nutrition and Health specialising in Nutritional Physiology and Health Status. She holds a Bachelor in Bio-Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Evgenia Michailidi

Evgenia is an MSc student of Organic Agriculture at Wageningen University. Her specialisation is in Agroecology and her thesis research focuses on the interaction

between ecosystem services and cover crops. She has a Bachelor degree in Plant Sciences. Although her background is in natural sciences, she also likes to explore the social aspect of sustainable development, including environmental justice.

Robert Mihail Negru

Robert Negru is an MSc student in the field of Forest and Nature Conservation, with an interest in Ecology and Animal Behaviour. During his Bachelor of Science (BSc) completed with a 2:1 in United Kingdom, Robert studied Environmental Management and successfully conducted his thesis on Brown Bear dietary behaviour within the Southern-Carpathians. Upon his BSc graduation, he enrolled in an internship programme conducting wildlife monitoring of large carnivores in Romania.

Iris Pelgrim

Iris Pelgrim is an MSc student in the field of Nutrition and Health with a specialisation in Molecular Nutrition and Toxicology. She has interest in broadening her knowledge on the relation between human health and the branch of social sciences.

Allert Smit

Allert Smit is an MSc student in the field of Biology and is specializing in Animal adaptation and behavioural biology. He has done a Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Forest and Nature Conservation with a major in ecology.

Carlijn Wentink

Carlijn Wentink is a lecturer and researcher at the Health and Society Group of Wageningen University. She takes social science perspective on health development in the relationship between people and their built and natural environment. Her specific focus is on health promoting environments, salutogenic architecture and environmental justice issues. Most of her work is inspired by an EcoHealth approach, systems thinking and salutogenesis. Additionally she works on better designed teaching and learning by working on innovation in education.

Wim de Haas

Wim de Haas is senior researcher at Wageningen Environmental Research. He works also at the Rathenau Institute that encourages public and political opinion forming on social aspects of science and technology. His research focuses on circular governance and planning in urban regions. He has a special interest in concepts like environmental justice and the just city as planning principles. He published also on the role of language, genre and metaphor in spatial planning. He has practical experience with land use planning and rural policy in different positions in the Dutch Government and was member of the team that recently developed the National Science Agenda of the

Netherlands.

Josette Jacobs

Josette Jacobs is an assistant professor at the Philosophy group of Wageningen University. Since Wageningen is a practical oriented university, the chaired group of Philosophy focuses primarily on practical topics, such as the social acceptance of new food technology. Since the 1990s, Josette has been fascinated by the hermeneutic philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer, which she has used to offer insights into how different parties can resolve dilemmas concerning the sustainable use of scarce natural resources. Her current project, however, is related to a different subject, namely Education for Sustainability, to be precise.