

SURFACE Online Conference November 16th – Chat.

Please also see the SURFACE project website and our publication:

<https://www.ufz.de/surface/index.php?en=43795>

<https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/19/8269>

Bavo Peeters: The roadmap for the new Soil Strategy has been published in the meantime. You can provide your feedback until 10 December here: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12634-New-EU-Soil-Strategy-healthy-soil-for-a-healthy-life>

David Evers: We created a "Guide to sustainable urbanization" as part of the ESPON SUPER project. This provides, among other things, results of our analysis of over 200 interventions in urbanization and land-use and 11 in-depth case studies. You can get it here: <https://www.espon.eu/super>

David Evers: We had problems working with Corine data to measure land take because very diffuse urban development is not very accurate compared to e.g. Global Urban Footprint data. Some large areas (e.g. near Antwerp) were coded as urban in 2000, so subsequent small-scale development wasn't recorded, making this area look like zero land take, which was not the case at all. This was less of a problem in the Netherlands, because the individual developments were generally large enough to be correctly coded in Corine.

Stijn Vanacker: @david from Flanders (Belgium) we fully can agree on that topic!

Christine Ruelle: Land reconverted from artificial to non-artificial functions is monitored on the basis of remote sensing data. So it does not address possible pollution, loss of biodiversity, etc.? The process of de-artificialisation may not be totally reversible... How to deal with these issues?

Pascal Lory: To reach "No net land take" by 2050, don't Europe need a new definition of land take (and untake)? There is currently an ambiguity between land consumption and land take.

Alois Humer: Precisely this has been discussed in a recent paper by the SURFACE team & external expert panel: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12198269>

Jana Bovet: I will touch this in my presentation

David Evers: The discussion of 'land take' unfortunately misses an important point: how land is being urbanized. Some urban forms are more sustainable than others. It's not only about density, but also car dependency, access to green, etc. Also not all agriculture is environmentally friendly, so land-take from intensive pig farming to a low-density suburb or urban green might could be beneficial in terms of pollution, etc.

Thomas Hartmann: Land take is now discussed mainly as a spatial phenomenon. But it is not a natural force - the demand-side of land take is not discussed so far. How can we reduce the demand land take (on the demand side)?

Ines Marinosci - ISPRA: Land take in Italy is assessed considering Land Cover section of the EAGLE nomenclature, class 1.1 Artificial Surfaces and Constructions . Permanent land take (similar to 1.1.1 EAGLE class). Reversible land take (similar to 1.1.2 EAGLE class). We monitor land consumption on S2 classification at 10 meter of resolution and we use also orthophoto at highest resolution

Damiano di Simone: is the transport sector (mainly roads) fairly evaluated as a driver of land take, or is it underevaluated because of the limited resolution in assessment of linear infrastructures?

Margot de Cleen: In the Netherlands we did a small survey to determine the need of soil and land coming forth from all our transitions, food, circular economy, food and agriculture and climate measures and housing; result: we need 3 x our land area! this asks for new/multiple land use concepts. and then even the fitness of soil isn't considered

David Evers: I'm a bit confused about the term 'driver' of land take. Your analysis assumes that the land cover outcome is the driver. When I think of drivers, I think of GDP and demographic development.

Judith Gifreu-Font: Starting from the need to limit land take, how to combine this need with: a) population growth (in Europe through immigration from Africa..); and b) the fact that there are countries, such as Spain, that have focused the core of their economic activity on construction activity?

David Evers: In the SUPER project we made maps comparing urban conversion as a ratio of other indicators. You see different types of regions. Some shrinking regions are expanding urban land use, while others are growing more compactly

Margot de Cleen: Differences are also defined by the population density

Alice Schröder: German Environment Agency (UBA) is currently working on a project on sustainable urban-rural partnerships. The focus of our analysis and recommendations is to be placed on the following „fields of demand“: living/housing, mobility, working as well as leisure and relaxation and their connections. Results will be presented at the UBA Forum mobile & sustainable in Nov. 2021.

Athena Yiannakou: To what extent the progress in no-land take that is observed after 2012 is attributed to economic reasons such as the crisis of the construction sector rather than to a specific 'no-land take' policy?

Christine Ruelle: Thanks to Mrs Evits for her answer to my question. It means that the indicator 'net land take' must be considered very carefully. Because if I understand well, a former industrial site where nothing is done except let the greenery grow again could be monitored as non-artificial. It means that it's very important to do diachronic analyses of data...

Damiano di Simone: @Judith: Italian data on land take and population trends shows that, in the last few years, land take and population growth/degrowth are perfectly decoupled

Gundula Prokop: Does Germany really measure the national sustainability target in acres (1 acre is approx 4.000 m²)?

SURFACE Moderation : No, it is measured in hectares.

Judith Gifreu-Font: Thanks Damiano

David Evers: I'm interested in the study of transfer of development rights in Germany with respect to the 30ha target. I can read the German.

Surface (Admin): Please also see our publication: <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/19/8269>

SURFACE Moderation : Do you have any questions regarding Jana's input? Please put them in here, thank you.

Panicos Panayides: What factors or measures contributed to a reduction of land take in Germany over the last 20 years?

Damiano di Simone: Have you some indicator able to segregate the effect of active policies on reducing land take from the one due to economical crisis?

Lisa Oechtering: To Panicos: Very important question!

Judith Gifreu-Font: Does the local planning have to be approved by the higher administrations (Lander, State)?

Peter Lacoere: Can the 'no net land take' - goal be combined with the binding climate-goal of LULUCF 2021-2030? In national policy or European action?

https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/forests/lulucf_en

Boris Brkovic: Expansion of industrial and commercial sites, diffuse urban residential expansion and the expansion of construction sites were mentioned as the three main land take drivers. What incentives are being put in place to influence the behavior of both public and private sector actors that impact these three areas? For the private sector (my employer) the terminology (land take vs. land consumption) is not nearly as pertinent as concrete fiscal consequences to action/inaction and clear requirements during the bidding process.

Tobias Habermann: @Judith: in Germany, the zoning plan (which outlines spatial development in the municipality) must be passed by the higher administrative authority. The binding local building plans (developed from the zoning plan) however don't need to be approved. The latter also gives binding stipulations for compulsory compensation measures

Sigbert Huber: Is soil type or soil quality considered in the assessment of land take in order to know if low or high quality soils are converted to settlement areas?

Judith Gifreu-Font: Thanks Tobias

David Evers: This issue of profitability of land development is essential. In England municipalities generally don't receive much benefit from this, so they are generally less pro-development than, for example, the Netherlands where they share directly in the profits

Christine Ruelle: In the various MS represented here, is there always a consensus on the fact that all municipalities or regions must contribute to the 'not net land take' objective or are there MS where it is agreed that some regions/municipalities are allowed to keep developing some land (because of economic/demographic growth) while others have to undertake land (because of shrinking/economic decline)? In other words, at which level the 'not net land take' must be achieved?

Judith Gifreu-Font: In Spain, this benefit goes from 10% to 15% of the urban artificialization process

David Evers: Even though EU doesn't have competence for planning, it does have many policies that impact land use. EU policies could reflect more on their impacts on land use, like they now do regarding environmental impact. Perhaps via a territorial impact assessment?

Janet Askew: David Evers - in England, it is very much the concern of the municipalities to ensure that development is profitable due to the contribution that developers make through planning agreements

for additional infrastructure and social housing. So there is potential for municipalities to receive many benefits.

David Evers: It isn't quite as direct as in the Netherlands, where municipalities are directly involved in buying and selling land. Although I admit my knowledge of the UK may be dated.

Panicos Panayides: Are the presentations going to be available?

David Evers: I've noticed that the amount of land-take has accelerated in Britain since 2000

Thomas Hartmann: For everybody who want to continue the debate on land policy, law, property rights and some of the topics we touched upon, please check out the International Academic Association on Planning, Law, and Property Rights (www.plpr-association.org), where we had a roundtable on the SURFACE project at our last conference in Ústí nad Labem (CZ). There is a series of PLPR online sessions upcoming... for everyone who wants to contribute, check: <http://plpr-association.org/plpr2021/>

Janet Askew: Yes, David Evers - I noticed that myself in the graphs we saw. There is huge pressure from developers at present to build on green land - worse and more targeted than ever before. If you want to know more, I can let you know. Drop me a line

David Evers: And I noticed the pressure from central government as regards the housing targets

Janet Askew: That's teh subject of much controversy!

David Evers: We might be headed in the same direction in the NL.

Janet Askew: That's a shame - not good in England at present

Eva Ivits, EEA: Thank you all from my side as well from the EEA.

David Evers: The trick is to try to strike a good balance. Hard to do if different sectors impose their targets blindly on the planning system.

Eva Ivits, EEA: Id like to invite all of you to get in touch with suggestions and constructive critiques on monitoring land take and land recycling.

Shaswati Chowdhury: Thanks a lot for this great platform to listen, learn, and collaborate on the land take issue. Would keep track of all the new research projects and EU ventures that were mentioned

SURFACE Moderation: Thanks again to our presenters and to all of you for your active participation and valuable input to our workshop. All the best and stay healthy.