

Mapping Tranquil Landscapes with Social Media Data. a Case Study in the Context of Sustainable Transformation

Marcel Kindsvater and Markus Schaffert (Germany)

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SUMMARY

Landscapes promote health and have a therapeutic effect on people. These effects can stem from multiple factors, including the tranquillity that a landscape exudes. In this respect, it is reasonable to nurture such effects and to preserve landscapes that provide an atmosphere of tranquillity. For this purpose, however, it is necessary to identify and locate such places.

Collecting on-the-ground data across large areas is costly and time-consuming. We therefore use data from the photo-sharing platform Flickr to examine where people experience tranquillity in two rural areas in Germany. The study shows that social media data can provide a complement to spatial data from official bodies, since they indicate accessible places where tranquillity is consumed. However, they neither disclose the most tranquil places of an area, nor do they result in complete spatial coverage.

We discuss the method against the background of renewable energies' expansion in the Pfälzerwald region. The discussion shows that the method needs to be improved significantly before it can provide reliable results for this scope. Nevertheless, we believe that the idea of processing social media data in order to make hidden recreational uses visible should be communicated to practise at an early stage.

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