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SS: Soundscape in Standardization

Title

Does it make a difference to have soundscape standards?

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Abstract:

Soundscape investigations remarkably gain in importance. Due to the holistic concept of soundscape there is a broad diversity of methods and tools in this field ranging from non-participatory observational methods over narrative interviews to the use of more or less fully structured questionnaires. This large variety of used methods and tools for data collection impedes the comparability of studies and the aggregation of data over different soundscape investigations to perform meta-analyses. In order to reach consensus about how to measure soundscape appropriately, a set of established and acknowledged soundscape methods and tools is needed. In this regard, soundscape standards one the one hand can stimulate discussions about pros and cons of different soundscape methods and tools and on the other hand could provide a common basis, where researchers and investigators can start from. The extensive application of standards can lead to new insights into the shortcomings and drawbacks of the standards, which can provoke necessary revisions in the future. However, in the context of the soundscape approach it might be justified to ask in general whether a holistic concept can be subject to standardization at all without violating the principle of holism. The paper will discuss the implications of standardizing soundscape methods and tools from different point of views.

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