

Hong Kong ASA Spring 2012
Special Session „Soundscape and its Application“
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Title:

The link between soundscape perception and attention processes

Abstract:

In order to understand the perception and evaluation of soundscapes, it appears mandatory to concentrate not only on constellations of sources and their contributions to the acoustic environment, but also to consider attention processes towards sound sources. It is widely known that a listener can easily focus on a certain source and can suppress the noise of other sources, which is called cocktail-party effect. It is assumed that this effect greatly influences the general appreciation of the whole soundscape. However, the process, why people focus on certain sound sources and how this influences the overall evaluation, has to be explored.

A detailed knowledge about the (often subconscious) focussing on sources in multi-source soundscapes would be very helpful for design purposes, to attract deliberately attention to certain sound sources leading to positive feelings for the majority of soundscape visitors.

Laboratory results dealing with the effect of source attention and its impact on soundscape evaluation were already published. In these surveys it was found that the processes, in which way the global impression changes due to the attention attraction to certain sources, seem to be complex. The paper will focus now on in-situ assessments and will show new results gained in field experiments.

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