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# A scoring matrix method for integrated evaluation of water-based ecosystem services provided by urban green spaces

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## Abstract

Increasing urbanization, landscape conversion and resources consumption represent, probably, the most important, visible and irreversible human-induced actions on Earth. In the last decades, these actions as well as climate change generate several pressures which impact on ecosystems. Urban ecosystem is particularly exposed to such pressures and it is therefore important to understand and assess how anthropic pressures are related to the provision of ecosystem services (ES). In particular we focus on green urban spaces at the local scale (i.e. urban parks), their connection to the hydrologic cycle and the provision of water-induced ecosystem services (WES). The approach is developed adopting a wide-minded holistic approach to comprehensively understand the links between anthropic pressures and WES production in two parks located in Turin (Italy), the Arrivore Park and the Michelotti Park. A scoring matrix is created with the help of biological, chemical and physical indicators collected in public available databases provided by local authority. The matrices reveal that in the two parks anthropic pressures are marked despite the different park collocations within the city contest and the different conditions. The more damaged WES are habitat maintenance, recreational services, provision of drinkable and non-drinkable water and erosion preven-

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tion. In the Arrivore Park hydromorphological alterations and urbanization represent the most important pressures while in the Michelotti Park water intakes, point sources pollution as well as hydromorphological alterations must be considered. The matrix should provide an easy tool to support policy-makers, public administrations and private companies to undertake sustainability actions within urban planning.

*Keywords:* Urban ecosystem, Ecosystem services, Water-related Ecosystem Services, Anthropic influence, Scoring Matrix

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## 1. Introduction

Ecosystems are large communities of interconnected living organisms that establish mutual relationships for the management of the environment where they live. They are generally classified into two types: natural and artificial. The former can reach their balance in almost complete autonomy, while the latter (i.e. urban, industrial, agricultural ecosystems) are deeply modified by human actions that change the environment assets to accomplish the needs of human beings. Anthropic activities modify the environment where people live and, in particular in the last decades, such activities have been more and more driven by climate change, population increase, increasing urbanization and the consequent conversion of large parts of natural landscape into artificial ones.

In this paper, we focus on the urban ecosystem as a mix of different biotypes: artificial, half-artificial and semi-natural (Beichler et al., 2017). Roughly speaking, in the first group we include buildings and infrastructures, in the second group we include private and public gardens, green spaces along streets and roads, cemeteries, parking lots, etc., while the last group consists of big parks, urban forests and protected areas (Wang, 2013).

19 One of the main characteristics of biotypes is their capacity to be a source  
20 of Ecosystem Services (ES). In the urban context, ES can be defined as  
21 the benefits that people obtain from urban biotypes (Millennium Ecosys-  
22 tem Assessment, 2003) or the elements of urban biotypes directly enjoyed,  
23 consumed, or used to yield human well-being (Boyd and Banzhaf, 2007).  
24 They generally improve people’s well-being, the safeguard of a territory and  
25 the protection of its resources (Bolund and Hunhammar, 1999). Following  
26 a well-established categorization (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2003),  
27 ES can be divided into four categories, i.e. provisioning, regulating, cultural  
28 and supporting, respectively. Provisioning ES is related to the supply of pri-  
29 mary goods for direct or indirect human use (e.g. food, freshwater, fibers,  
30 timber, etc...). Regulating ES concerns the preservation of the ecosystem bio-  
31 physical elements in order to guarantee the safeguard of natural functions and  
32 a good quality of life. (e.g. flood and erosion control, water purification, cli-  
33 mate and disease regulation, etc...). Cultural ES includes all the recreational,  
34 educational, spiritual, aesthetic and intellectual inspirations provided by the  
35 ecosystem (i.e. related to mental and physical health, tourism, culture, art  
36 and design, spiritual experience, etc...) while supporting ES makes the ex-  
37 istence of provisioning, regulating and cultural ES (e.g. nutrient cycling,  
38 habitat provision, enhancement of biodiversity, etc...) possible.

39 Although the definitions and classifications of ES are case-specific and  
40 purpose-driven, it is nowadays well recognized that ” *an ecosystem services-*  
41 *based approach is a way of understanding the complex relationships between*  
42 *nature and humans to support decision-making, with the aim of reversing*  
43 *the declining status of ecosystems and ensuring the sustainable use/ manage-*  
44 *ment/conservation of resources*” (Martin-Ortega et al., 2015)

45 The generation, nature and characteristics of ES mainly depend on the  
46 features of the environment and, in the context of the present work, on its



47 location and the presence of water. Water cycle is, in fact, deeply connected  
48 to the provision of ES because human well-being mostly depends on the state  
49 of natural capital and on flows in and between ecosystems that, in turn, de-  
50 pend on water behaviour (Martin-Ortega et al., 2015) Therefore, among the  
51 various ES, we identify the Water-related Ecosystem Services (WES) as the  
52 benefits obtained from all the services connected to water (Brauman, 2015).  
53 Consequently, all the ES which composition, function and structure are re-  
54 lated to water supply in the WES category fall. WES constitute essential  
55 services for humans as sources for drinking or irrigation use. Freshwaters  
56 are related to hydroelectric energy production, wastewater auto-depuration,  
57 climate regulation, sediment management, flood protection, fishing or recre-  
58 ational activities (Martin-Ortega et al., 2015; Pham et al., 2019).A ground-  
59 water system provides water and geothermal energy; it stores water during  
60 flood events that is then supplied during period of drought (Griebler et al.,  
61 2014; Tuinstra and van Wensem, 2014). WES are also connected to water  
62 behaviour in the hyporheic zone that regulates the physical, chemical and bi-  
63 ological characteristics of water in great part of the ecosystem (Boano et al.,  
64 2014).

65 Urbanization, cities expansion and increase in population generally mean  
66 an increment in impermeable surfaces, water pollution and hydro-morphological  
67 alterations (Grizzetti et al., 2016). As a consequence, there is a strong modifi-  
68 cation of the urban environment with a depletion of water resources, fragmen-  
69 tation of habitats and damaging of WES (Depietri et al., 2012). Therefore,  
70 in the target of more livable, sustainable and resilient cities, the knowledge  
71 of how human actions can influence the WES production plays a central role  
72 (Brauman, 2015; Schmalz et al., 2016)

73 Despite the fact that in the last years the quantification and evaluation  
74 of ES within urban areas have been vastly debated (Schneider et al., 2012;

75 Sabater and Tockner, 2010; Qiu and Turner, 2013; Montoya-Tangarife et al.,  
76 2017; Lyu et al., 2018), there is a lack of studies that deal with the influence  
77 of anthropic pressures on WES production especially on the smaller scales  
78 (Haase et al., 2014). Existing analysis and tools are often focused on large  
79 spatial scales (Qiu et al., 2017; Grizzetti et al., 2016; Zheng et al., 2016), and  
80 basin scale (Schmalz et al., 2016; Bai et al., 2011) and the WES are usually as-  
81 sessed through the evaluation of land cover as a proxy indicator (Sohel et al.,  
82 2015; Burkhard et al., 2014). Among various approaches we recall here the  
83 eco-hydrological approach SWAT (Soil and Water Assessment Tool) (Arnold  
84 et al., 1998; Karabulut et al., 2016)), the Integrated Valuation of Ecosystem  
85 Services and Tradeoffs model (InVEST) (Sand-Jensen, 2013; Keeler et al.,  
86 2012) or the conceptual framework Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response  
87 (DPSIR) developed by the European Environment Agency (EEA) (Lyu et al.,  
88 2018; Gregory et al., 2013).



Figure 1: Conceptual model of the proposed analysis.

89 In the present paper, we propose a scoring method that, with a holistic  
90 approach and the use of easy available data, quantifies the influence of hu-  
91 man impacts on the WES production on the local scale (i.e. on the urban  
92 park scale). To this extent, the method (see Fig. 1) conceptually identifies  
93 the drivers, i.e. the factor that lead the changes of chemical, morphologi-  
94 cal, hydrological and biological elements within the ecosystems (Peng et al.,  
95 2019). The drivers are successively related to the anthropic pressures that,

96 in turn, are able to influence the WES production and that it is possible to  
97 quantify with the help of suitable indicators.

98 The matrix-based approach is definitely not a novelty in the assessment  
99 of ES and it has been successfully applied to ES quantification in several case  
100 studies (Kopperoinen et al., 2014; Montoya-Tangarife et al., 2017; Burkhard  
101 et al., 2009; Kroll et al., 2012; Nedkov and Burkhard, 2012). The positivity of  
102 the matrix approach is due to its feasibility and its capacity to integrate dif-  
103 ferent data ranging from general to detailed information. The matrix-based  
104 approach can also be a valid alternative to GIS-based spatially modeling  
105 or hydro-ecological models especially when we need a first-level analysis for  
106 management purposes or the starting point for a decision making process.  
107 Frequently, in fact, the methods and tools for ES assessment are too com-  
108 plex and expensive or they require specialized knowledge that implies a long  
109 learning time (Olander et al., 2017).

110 Therefore this paper will develop, through the application of the proposed  
111 method, two real cases and the answer the following questions:

- 112 1. In urban context and with reference to urban green spaces on the local  
113 scale (i.e. urban parks), what are the anthropic pressures that influence  
114 the WES production?
- 115 2. Is it possible to identify some indicators that, with the help of existing  
116 and easily available data, are able to quantify such pressures?
- 117 3. Is it possible to obtain an easy-to-use, first level method, able to give  
118 useful information for the WES management in the urban green space?

## 119 **2. Method**

### 120 *2.1. Framework for WES assessment*

121 In the last years, the importance of ES safeguard as a core action for  
122 the improvement of people’s well-being has been greatly increased and, con-  
123 sequently, WES are more and more being incorporated into environmental  
124 policies (Karabulut et al., 2016). For example, in 2012, the European Com-  
125 mission adopted the seminal EU Water Framework and Floods Directive  
126 (WFD) that acknowledges the services provided by water bodies (European  
127 Commission, 2012). In the light of WFD and the already mentioned Mil-  
128 lennium Ecosystem Assessment (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2003)  
129 framework, we have selected nine WES provided by urban green spaces:  
130 habitat maintenance, flood protection, erosion prevention, water purification,  
131 carbon sequestration, water production for drinkable and non drinkable use,  
132 food provisioning and, finally, recreational services (Table 1). The selected  
133 WES are clearly related to water in different ways, directly or indirectly:  
134 water can be categorised as a provisioning service but water also represents a  
135 reciprocal link between ecosystem functions and people’s well-being. Water  
136 modifies the elements of the ecosystem and, at the same time, human actions  
137 and ecological processes change the attributes of water. (Sand-Jensen, 2013;  
138 Brauman et al., 2007)

139 The complexity embodied in the behaviour of water will also drive the in-  
140 dicators choice and it is therefore appropriate to adopt the hydrologic service  
141 framework proposed by Brauman (2015). The WES are categorized based on  
142 the benefits provided and it is easier to identify the ecological processes that  
143 mainly impact on the attribute of water. According to Brauman (2015) the  
144 hydrologic services have been organized in five broad categories (Table 1): (1)  
145 diverted water supply, i.e. the ”extractive uses” including public, industrial

WES	MA (2003)	Brauman (2015) categories				
		Diverted water supply	In situ water supply	Water damage mitigation	Spiritual and aesthetic	Supporting
Habitat maintenance	Supporting					X
Flood protection				X		
Erosion prevention	Regulation			X		
Water purification				X		
Carbon sequestration			X <sup>(a)</sup>			
Drinkable use		X				
Non drinkable use	Provision	X	X			
Food provisioning			X	X		
Recreational	Cultural				X	

(a) Formally not present into Brauman (2015)

Table 1: WES framework

146 and thermoelectric uses; (2) improvement of in-situ water supply, including  
147 hydropower generation, transportation, water recreation and fish production;  
148 (3) water damage mitigation, which includes regulating services such as flood  
149 prevention and erosion protection; (4) provision of water-related cultural ser-  
150 vices such as spiritual uses, aesthetic appreciation and tourism; and finally,  
151 (5) water-related supporting services, e.g. the creation of habitats for aquatic  
152 organisms and plants growth. Finally, we note that the carbon sequestration  
153 as a WES is not formally present in Brauman (2015) categories. We link  
154 it to the capacity of aquatic ecosystems to provide the carbon sequestration  
155 benefit and, in this perspective, we indicate the in situ water supply as the  
156 most suitable for carbon sequestration (Melaku Canu et al., 2015).

## 157 2.2. Drivers and pressures

158 Forasmuch as a few ecosystem elements affect the characteristics of water  
159 that flows through it, a holistic approach is fundamental to understand the  
160 relationships between multiple human activities and ecosystems attributes.

161 In order to identify the drivers that are the most responsible for the ecosystem  
162 services changes, a definition from Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2003)  
163 is adopted. A driver can be natural, such as climate variability, extreme  
164 weather event and solar radiation, or human-induced, like climate change,  
165 land use change, air and water pollution, soil erosion, fertility change, fer-  
166 tilizer use, irrigation, introduction of alien species and harvesting. Natural  
167 and/or human-induced factors can cause direct or indirect changes on ecosys-  
168 tems: a drivers is "direct" if its actions relapse on the entire ecosystem pro-  
169 cess, while, on the contrary, an "indirect" driver affects one or more direct  
170 drivers (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). Therefore, to understand  
171 the relationship between the supply of WES and human pressures, the main  
172 Direct Drivers (DD) have been identified (Figure 2).

173 The DD include economic activities, land use, consumption and lifestyle  
174 patterns and climate change, which give rise to various pressures on the  
175 elements of the ecosystem. Figure 2 shows the eleven identified pressures  
176 that represent the ultimate results through which human activities act on  
177 WES production. The pressures can act directly on the characteristics of  
178 water (i.e. Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution or point source (PS) pollution,  
179 temperature), or can modify the balance of water (i.e. water intakes for  
180 drinkable or non drinkable use, urbanisation and occupation of flood plains,  
181 hydro-morphological alterations, sediment movements) or can indirectly act  
182 on water flow (e.g. introduction of alien species, intensive or illegal fishing,  
183 etc...).

### 184 *2.3. Indicators*

185 The definition of indicators able to quantify the influence of anthropic  
186 actions on WES production is the core of the proposed matrix method. The  
187 assessment and mapping of ES are highly complex because they are connected

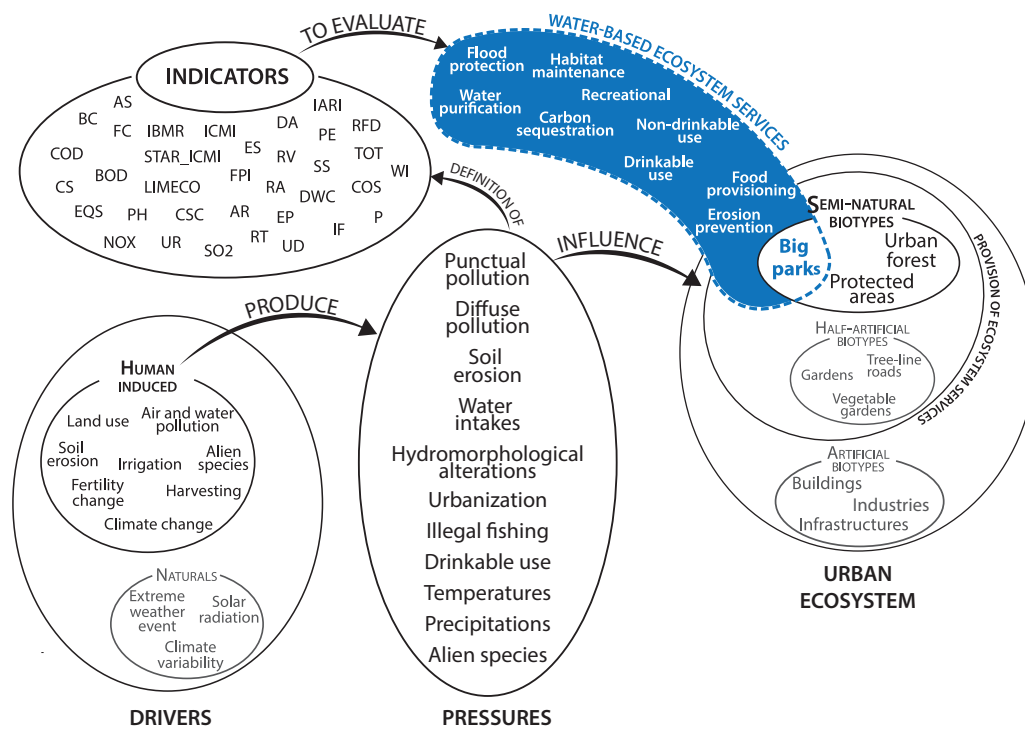


Figure 2: Holistic representation of the analysed processes. Anthropic actions and activities produce pressures that generate negative impacts within the urban ecosystem. The negative impacts turn into unfavourable influences on WES production. The degree of influences can be evaluated with the adoption of suitable indicators, which are then used to complete the scoring matrix

188 to each other and it is often not very easy to understand the impact of human  
 189 interferences on ecosystems (Carpenter et al., 1998; Qiu and Turner, 2013;  
 190 Bennett et al., 2009; Rall et al., 2017; Stürck et al., 2014). The ES assessment  
 191 is generally based on the biophysical parameters that are used for monitor-  
 192 ing, measuring and modelling the ecosystem functions (Shoyama et al., 2017)  
 193 while the links among ES are often addressed through specific indicators that  
 194 are able to detect the combined effects of different pressures. For instance,  
 195 dissolved oxygen and ammonium concentrations can be used to character-  
 196 ize the combined effects of climate change and urbanization (Astarai-Imani

197 et al., 2012). Applications of manure and fertilizers, as well as agricultural  
198 and urban runoff, have been used to characterize the sources of water pol-  
199 lution (Carpenter et al., 1998). In the same way, biophysical and economic  
200 indicators that derive from organic waste from households, untreated domes-  
201 tic sewage and nitrogen and phosphorus sources can be used to describe the  
202 human impact on freshwater ecosystem (Sand-Jensen, 2013; Keeler et al.,  
203 2012).

204 Table 2 shows the list of the 35 selected indicators. First of all, they have  
205 been chosen as a natural consequence of the previous adopted analysis that,  
206 starting from WES and DD, is able to identify the pressures that anthropic  
207 actions carry on WES production in the context of an urban green space.  
208 The presence of the indicators in well-established directives (for example the  
209 Water Framework Directive) has been also considered a mandatory quality  
210 for the indicator itself. Finally, we preferred using indicators quantifiable  
211 with data provided by public and easily accessible datasets. This latter to  
212 avoid the direct use of experts' judgements and, as much as possible, to reduce  
213 the degree of subjectivity, that is often an obstacle for the comparison of  
214 different methods applied in different contexts. Table 2 reports the name and  
215 the acronym of each indicator as well as the main quantities measured or an  
216 indication of the physical quantity used to quantify the indicator itself. The  
217 table also shows the parameters ranges that are often provided by databases  
218 with non-numerical categories (e.g. good, poor, sufficient, significant, not  
219 significant, compromised, not compromised, etc...).



Table 2: Indicators classification. Type: Biological (B), Chemical (C), Hydromorphological (HM), Morphological (M), General (G). When not differently specified the ranges are: High (H), Good (G), Sufficient (S), Poor (P), Bad (B), not Good (nG), Elevated (E), Medium (M), Low (L), Significant (Si), not Significant (nSi), Compromised (C), not Compromised (nC). For datasets see Section 4.1

Acronym	Name	Type	Dataset	Measured quantities	Range	Reference
AS	Alien Species	B	APW	Presence	Si-nSi	Pejchar and Mooney (2009)
BC	Birds community	B	PRND	Biodiversity assessment	C-nC	-
FC	Fish community	B	PRND	Biodiversity assessment	C-nC	-
IBMR	Organic Macrophytic Index in River	B	APW	Macrophyte	H-G-S-P-B	Erba et al. (2009)
ICMI	Intercalibration Common Metric Index	B	APW	Diatomee	H-G-S-P-B	Giorgio et al. (2016)
STAR-ICMI	Standardisation of River Classification - Intercalibration Multi-metric Index	B	APW	Macrobenthos	H-G-S-P-B	Spitale (2017)
ES	Ecological Status	B-HM	APW	Integrated index	H-G-S-P-B	Carballo et al. (2009)
DA	Dam Alterations	HM	APW	Anthropic impact	Si-nSi	Gabbud and Lane (2016)
IARI	Index of alteration of the hydrological regime	HM	APW	Regime deviation	H-G-nG	Rinaldi et al. (2017)
PE	Permeability	HM	APW	Hydraulic conductivity	$10^{-9} - 10^{-3} m/s$	Pisinaras et al. (2016)
RFD	Relative Flow-rate Deficit	HM	WPP	Water quantity	+% - -%	Smokorowski et al. (2011)
RV	Riparian vegetation	HM	APW	Modifications	Si-nSi	Weissteiner et al. (2014)
SS	Suspended Sediments	HM	APW	Sediment concentration	Mg/l <sup>(a)</sup>	Vercruysse et al. (2017)
TOT	Time Of Travel	HM	GP	Time	1week-1year	Pisinaras et al. (2016)
WI	Water Intakes	HM	APW	Numerosity	Si-nSi	Gabbud and Lane (2016)
FPI	Flood Plain Intersection	M	GP	Urbanization in flood area	E-M-L	Morris et al. (2005)
RA	Riverbed alterations	M	APW	Anthropic impact	Si-nSi	Sabater and Tockner (2010)
COD	Chemical oxygen demand	C	APW	Organic biod. matter	$25 mg/l^{(b)}$	Benedetti et al. (2008)
BOD	Biochemical oxygen demand	C	APW	Organic biod. matter	$125 mg/l^{(b)}$	Benedetti et al. (2008)
CS	Chemical status	C	APW	Chemical quality	G-nG	Cesa et al. (2013)
EQS	Environmental Quality Standard	C	APW	Specific pollutants	H-G-S	Balsotti and Governa (2013)
LIMeco	Pollution Level by Macrodescriptors for the ecological status	C	APW	Nutrients, oxygenation	H-G-S-P-B	Valeriani et al. (2015)
PH	Acidity/basicity index	C	APW	hydrogen ions concentration	0-14	Steinberger and Wohl (2003)
AR	Agricultural Runoff	G	APW	Anthropic impact	Si-nSi	Taboada-Castro et al. (2012)
COS	Contaminated sites	G	APW	Numerosity	Si-nSi	Caniani et al. (2015)
CSC	Carbon soil content	G	GP	Carbon topsoil	% <sup>(c)</sup>	Kuittinen et al. (2016)
DWC	Drinkable Water Consumption	G	WPP	Anthropic impact	Si - nSi	Li et al. (2016)
EP	Extreme Precipitations	G	APW	Rainfall intensity	Numerosity <sup>d</sup>	Blasco et al. (2015)
IF	Illegal fishing	G	APW	Anthropic impact	Si-nSi	-
P	Precipitations	G	WPP	Historic of precipitation	%	Blasco et al. (2015)
RT	River Temperature	G	WPP	Temperature alteration	°C	Steinberger and Wohl (2003)
UD	Urban Wastewater	G	APW	Anthropic impact	Si-nSi	Hussain et al. (2015)
UR	Urban Runoff	G	APW	Anthropic impact	Si-nSi	Schneider et al. (2012)
NOx	Nitrogen Oxides	G	GP	Total emission	t/year <sup>(e)</sup>	Driscoll et al. (2001)
SO2	Sulfur dioxide	G	GP	Total emission	t/year <sup>(f)</sup>	Driscoll et al. (2001)

(a) from 200 mg/l maximum allowed according to the WFD

(b) maximum allowed according to the WFD

(c) classes: (1)0-1,0% (2)1,1-2,0% (3)2,1-4,0% (4)>4%

(d) An extreme event is an event with rainfall intensity greater than 10mm/20min

(e) classes: (0)0-115 (1)115-432 (2)432-1055 (3)1055-2321 (4) 2321 - 5252 (5)>5252

(f) classes: (0)0-62 (1)62-257 (2)257-654 (3)654-1846 (4)1846-9149 (5) >9149

220 The indicators are divided into three macro categories according to litera-  
221 ture and directives analysis: i.e. biological, hydro-morphological and chemi-  
222 cal parameters (in some cases the same parameter can be included in different  
223 categories). In a fourth group (G), we included the indicators that do not  
224 clearly belong to the other categories. The biological indicators are mostly  
225 related to the ecological status of the ecosystem and they can summarize the  
226 environmental stresses and their causes. The hydro-morphological indicators  
227 are, in particular, linked to the alteration of natural assets, the alterations of  
228 nutrient and hydrologic cycles and the decay of environmental biodiversity  
229 (Sand-Jensen, 2013). Chemical and Physical parameters are often linked  
230 to the presence of microorganisms and/or substances which could provoke  
231 environmental damages or endanger people's health. Finally, the general pa-  
232 rameters refer to indicators that are not included in WFD; however, they  
233 constitute useful information to assess the anthropic pressure impacts on  
234 WES.

### 235 **3. Matrix**

236 The effects of anthropic pressures on WES production have been sum-  
237 marized in the matrix proposed in Table 3. The two matrix axis report the  
238 selected WES and the anthropic pressures (see Figure 2), respectively. In  
239 each intersection between rows and columns, we collocate the various indi-  
240 cators (see Table3). In this way, the matrix immediately gives some useful  
241 indications. First of all, it is possible for an indicator to be present in more  
242 than one intersection, or it is possible for an intersection to be void. In the  
243 first case, the presence of different indicators testifies the multiple links there  
244 are between the different pressures and their effect on WES and it leads  
245 into an integrated comprehension of the complex relationships. On the other  
246 hand, a void cell suggests no influence or a lack of information that could be

247 filled in with the outcomes of a new measurement campaign and can indicate  
248 an indirect way for future investments.

249 Operatively, we rank the indicators on a scale from 0 to 5 where the values  
250 represent the classes "no influence (0)", "low influence (1)", "low-medium  
251 influence (2)", "medium influence (3)", "high influence (4)" and "very high  
252 influence (5)". Consequently, when in a cell there is a single indicator we  
253 use the value of the indicator itself. On the other hand, when in a cell there  
254 are more than one indicator, we calculate an average value and, in this case,  
255 a fractional value is possible. The values are also reported with a color-like  
256 scale ranging from white (0) to red (5) to give an immediate vision about  
257 the level of influence of the pressure on the WES. The cells with no-value are  
258 reported in blue color. The "no-relation" between WES and pressures are  
259 represented within the matrix with the violet color.

#### 260 **4. Study areas**

261 The proposed scoring matrix method has been applied to two urban flu-  
262 vial parks. They are located in Turin (Italy - N45°4'45" E7°40'34") that  
263 covers a surface of 13.010 ha and has a population of 878.074 inhabitants  
264 (Total Turin Metropolitan Area 682000 ha with 2278000 inhabitants). Turin  
265 is a city characterized by a moderate continental climate (Köppen-Geiger  
266 classification *Cfa* - humid subtropical climate (Oliver, 2005)) with mild win-  
267 ters, hot humid summers and quite abundant precipitations (average pre-  
268 cipitation 981 *mm* per year; average precipitation days 80.9 per year). The  
269 topographical landscape is mostly flat and hilly and, from an urbanistic point  
270 of view, the Roman origin and the expansions as a consequence of Industrial  
271 Revolution (19th century) and Economic Boom (from the 1950s to the late  
272 1960s) are well recognisable; the latter in particular was due to a big expan-  
273 sion of the automotive industry. Four rivers flow through Turin: Po, Dora

Table 3: Relationship between Indicators for anthropic pressure impact and WES. Gaps in this table identify intersections where there was actually no suitable indicators to assess the influence of anthropic pressures on WES production. Moreover, the recurrence of an indicator in one or more intersection is due to its relationships with the analysed WES.

Anthropic Pressures	Water-based Ecosystem services								
	Habitat maintenance	Flood protection	Erosion prevention	Water purification	Carbon sequestration	Drinkable use	Non drinkable use	Food provisioning	Recreational
PS pollution	COS-UD- CS-BOD- COD	-	-	BOD- COD	-	CS-COD- UD	CS	COS-CS	COS-CS
NPS pollution	ES-UR- LIMeco	-	-	ESQ- LIMeco- UR-AR- STAR- ICMI- ICMI	-	ESQ- UR-AR- LIMeco	ESQ	ES- STAR- ICMI- LIMeco- ESQ - PH	ESQ
Soil erosion	SS	-	SS	SS	-	SS	-	-	SS
Water intakes	WI	-	-	-	-	-	IARI-WI	-	-
Hydrom. alterations	IARI-RA- RV	RA-DA- RV	RA-RV	RV-IBMR	RV	IARI	-	RA-DA- IARI	RA-RV- IARI
Urbanisation	FPI-BC- NOX-SO2	FPI	FPI-SO2- NOX	-	CSC	PE-TOT	TOT	SO2-NOX	FPI
Illegal fishing	IF	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drinkable use	-	-	-	-	-	DWC	-	-	-
Temperature	T-RT	-	-	-	-	-	-	T-RT	T
Precipitations	P-RFD	EP-RFD	EP	RFD	-	P-RFD	RFD-P	-	RFD-P
Alien Species	AS-FC	-	AS	-	-	-	-	FC	AS

274 Riparia, Stura and Sangone. They represent important natural elements  
275 within the city context. Despite the increasing urbanization, the landscape  
276 transformation and the growing infrastructures, Turin offers a wide assort-  
277 ment of parks, historical gardens and green infrastructures and with its 21.7  
278 square meters of green areas per inhabitant, it is one of the greenest cities in  
279 Italy (ISTAT, 2014; Treepedia, 2019) and several fluvial parks contribute to  
280 WES provision.

281 The two selected parks are located along two rivers and in different urban  
282 contexts. The first area is the *Arrivore Park* (hereinafter *Arrivore* ) and it  
283 is located in District 6 (Figure 3). Agricultural and recreational activities  
284 were common activities inside the park but with the expansion of the city,  
285 the park was abandoned until 1983 when the city administration started a  
286 rehabilitation project. The park extends on 58 ha and it is located along the  
287 Stura right riverbank. The park is characterized by hydrogeological instabil-  
288 ity and water pollution due to the nearby presence of landfills, an incinerator  
289 and industrial activities. The park is also characterized by a great natural  
290 value, especially for the avifauna that finds a shelter and defense here during  
291 the migratory period. Within the *Arrivore* cycle paths, there are equipped  
292 rest and sport areas and a children playground. Furthermore, 170 allotment  
293 gardens were realized in the park during the rehabilitation project and their  
294 social importance for the safeguard of the territory is a core element for the  
295 urban development planning.

296 The second area is the *Michelotti Park* (hereinafter *Michelotti*), a long  
297 linear park (10,7 ha) located in District 7, between the Po right riverside and  
298 the Superga Hill (Figure 4). It is characterized by meadow grass footways,  
299 tree lined roads and a central parking space. Valuable trees like *Platanus*,  
300 *Gingko Biloba* and *Tilia cordata* characterize the entire park. The fluvial  
301 fauna is characterized by the presence of birds, bats and fish.

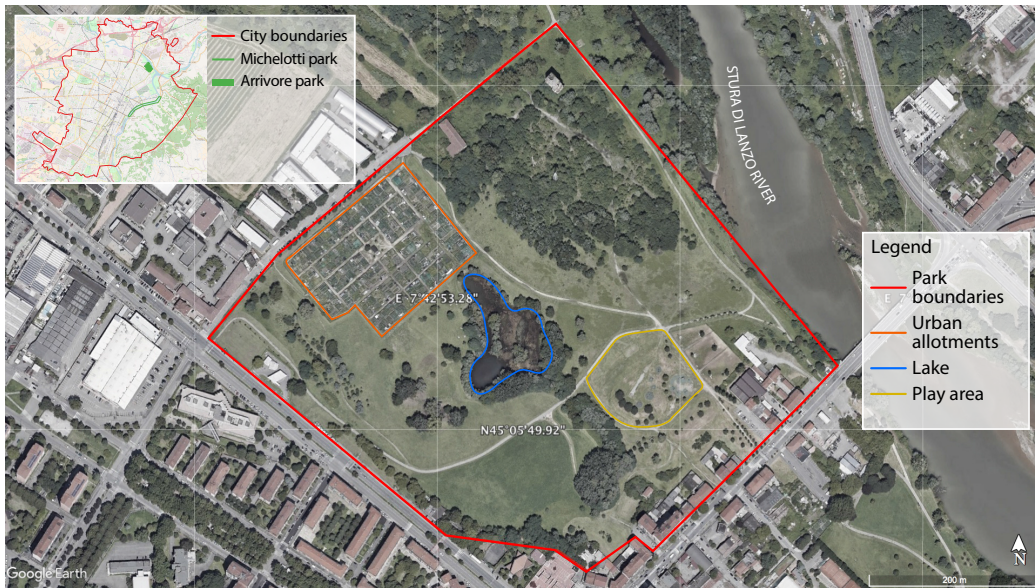


Figure 3: Arrivore park is composed of urban allotments, one small lake fed by groundwater, a play area for children and several pedestrian and bicycle paths.



Figure 4: Michelotti Park is characterized by a long linear extension. It is mainly composed of meadow grass footways and a little play area can be found near the centre of the park.

#### 302 4.1. Data sources

303 One of the scopes of this paper is the use of open access data already avail-  
304 able in public databases. For this aim we collected data from several sources  
305 provided by local and national authorities. The datasets are easily accessi-  
306 ble throughout web apps that make information straightforward and quick  
307 to consult. In particular, we used data provided by ARPA Piemonte We-  
308 bgis ([webgis.arpa.piemonte.it](http://webgis.arpa.piemonte.it)), Geoportale Piemonte ([www.geoportale.piemonte.it](http://www.geoportale.piemonte.it)), Piedmont Regional Naturalistic Database ([www.regione.piemonte.it/bdnol/RicercaAction.do](http://www.regione.piemonte.it/bdnol/RicercaAction.do)) and Water Protection Plan report ([www.regione.piemonte.it/web/temi/ambiente-territorio/ambiente/acqua/](http://www.regione.piemonte.it/web/temi/ambiente-territorio/ambiente/acqua/)). In Ta-  
312 ble 2, the datasets are indicated with the acronyms APW, GP, PRND and  
313 WPP, respectively.

### 314 5. Results and discussion

315 Table 4 shows the results of the proposed matrix method for the quan-  
316 tification of anthropic influences on WES production. For the sake of com-  
317 parison, the *Arrivore* results and the *Michelotti* results are reported in the  
318 top and bottom part of the table, respectively. The values are also reported  
319 in a color scale (the darker the red, the higher the influence). In the table,  
320 the blue cells refer to "no data" cases while the violet cells describe the sit-  
321 uation in which there is no direct link between the anthropic pressures and  
322 the WES.

323 As expected, the urbanization context causes a significant influence on  
324 WES production in the two considered parks. Despite the different colloca-  
325 tion (the *Michelotti* is closer to the city center, while the *Arrivore* is located  
326 in a more industrialized area), the impacts of human presence and activities  
327 are marked. Moreover, there are similarities and differences between the two

328 parks. The most harmful pressure for both parks is the "hydromorphological  
329 alterations" that show a medium-high (*Michelotti*) and a high level (*Arrivore*)  
330 of influence. The high anthropic influence on WES, for both parks, concerns  
331 also habitat maintenance and recreational, followed by food provisioning,  
332 erosion prevention, and drinkable use. Non-drinkable use, water purification,  
333 flood protection, and carbon sequestration result in a low-medium influence.



Table 4: *Arrivore* (top) and *Michelotti* (bottom) fluvial park matrices. Indicators are on a scale form 0 to 5 where the values represent the classes "no influence (0)", "low influence (1)", "low-medium influence (2)", "medium influence (3)", "high influence (4)" and "very high influence (5)"

Pressures	Water Ecosystem Services (WES)								
	Habitat maintenance	Flood Protection	Erosion prevention	Water purification	Carbon sequestration	Drinkable use	Non drinkable use	Food provisioning	Recreational
<i>Arrivore</i>									
PS pollution	2,2	-	-	1	-	3,25	3	3	3
NPS pollution	3	-	-	3	-	3	4	2,2	3
Soil erosion	0	-	0	0	-	0	-	-	0
Water intakes	2	-	2	-	-	-	3,5	-	-
Hydromorph. alterations	5	4	5	5	4	5	0	4	4,6
Urbanization	3,25	3	3	-	1	1	2	3	3
Illegal fishing	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drinkable use	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
Temperatures	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1
Precipitations	1	1,5	3	1	-	1,5	1,5	-	1
Alien species	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	4,5	5
<i>Michelotti</i>									
PS pollution	3	-	-	2	-	3,75	4	4,5	4,5
NPS pollution	3,3	-	-	2,83	-	3	3	2,4	3
Soil erosion	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	1
Water intakes	5	-	5	-	-	-	5	-	-
Hydromorph. alterations	4	3	3,5	4	4	5	0	3	4
Urbanization	2,5	2	2,66	-	0	1	2	3	2
Illegal fishing	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drinkable use	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
Temperatures	2,5	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,5	1
Precipitations	2	1,5	3	2	-	2	2	-	2
Alien species	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	4,5	5

334 In the *Arrivore* (Table 4-top), it is clear that the highest influences are  
335 caused by morphological alterations related to morphodynamic changes in  
336 riverbed, riverbank works, weirs constructions and vegetation management.  
337 Moreover, the indicators show a medium-high influence exerted by urbaniza-  
338 tion, NPS pollution and PS pollution and the presence of alien species. The  
339 PS pollution especially damages the recreational and the provision services.  
340 Specifically, the medium influence of the PS pollution is due to the presence  
341 of contaminated sites, within the *Arrivore*, related to ex-industrial areas and  
342 ex-illegal occupation of the park during the last years (Regione Piemonte,  
343 2019). The presence of contaminated sites within the *Arrivore* constitutes  
344 a risk for the safeguard of surface water and groundwater because meteoric  
345 water facilitates the erosive action, with the consequent transport and infil-  
346 tration of contaminants into aquifers. Additionally, the *Arrivore* holds 170  
347 urban allotments. The presence of contaminants into soil and water could  
348 also have a negative impact on people, who make use of cultivated veg-  
349 etables. Information collected from the previously cited datasets show that  
350 groundwater, within the entire territory of Turin, present a strong presence of  
351 hydrocarbons pollution. Adopting a wide holistic perspective, it is clear that  
352 groundwater contamination implies multiple trickle-down impacts related to  
353 provision of drinkable and non-drinkable water with a consequent impact  
354 on people's health, conservation of aquatic environment and safeguard of  
355 biodiversity.

356 In the *Michelotti* (Table 4-bottom), the highest influences are caused,  
357 more or less, by the same pressures than the *Arrivore*, but the values are dif-  
358 ferent. The PS pollution shows a medium and high level of influence, (range  
359 3.75-4.5, higher than *Arrivore* values). The score difference is related to the  
360 higher presence of urban drains within the river Po , which influences nega-  
361 tively the services provision (left part of the matrix). On the other hand, in

362 the *Michelotti*, the water intakes exert a very high influence on erosion pre-  
363 vention, habitat maintenance and drinkable use. Hydroelectric intakes alter  
364 the environmental flow of the river Po, inducing temperature increase, oxy-  
365 gen decrease and damaging of auto-depuration mechanisms. Consequently,  
366 the entire aquatic environment of *Michelotti* is subjected to negative influ-  
367 ences which cause changes in fishing communities and alteration of aquatic  
368 flora (see PRND dataset). Notwithstanding the proximity of the *Michelotti*  
369 to the city centre the influence of urbanization is lower than in the *Arrivore*,  
370 (the range score is 1-2.66 corresponding to low-medium influence) and, analo-  
371 gously, the hydromorphological alterations result in a medium-high influence,  
372 concerning only the riparian vegetation alterations.

373 The two matrices also show that the pressures caused by anthropic ac-  
374 tivities, which mainly influence the provision of WES, are related partly to  
375 the position of the park with respect to the city centre and partly to the  
376 environmental management. For instance, both the riverbeds have experi-  
377 enced critical modifications, like the removal of natural elements and/or the  
378 channellisation with concrete embankments. The natural balance is there-  
379 fore compromised with the consequent loss of the organisms reproductive  
380 ability and biodiversity. Furthermore, in the fluvial context an important  
381 role belongs to the riparian vegetation, which has the capacity to carry out  
382 important WES such as the regulation of water temperature, the retention  
383 and regulation of sediments, the filtration of pollutants from runoff, the flood  
384 and erosion protection and the infiltrations in the aquifer. (Nava-López et al.,  
385 2016; Caro-Borrero et al., 2015).

### 386 5.1. *Critical analysis*

387 The aim of the proposed method is to analyse the anthropic impact on  
388 a set of specific Ecosystem Services, the Water-related Ecosystem Services,

389 in two fluvial urban parks. In literature, generally, the problem is being ad-  
390 dressed focusing on what type of services and in what quantity they have  
391 been provided by an ecosystem. To overcome this limitation we propose a  
392 method that can produce useful indications for urban planners and parti-  
393 tioners (Kopperoinen et al., 2014; Montoya-Tangarife et al., 2017; Burkhard  
394 et al., 2009; Kroll et al., 2012; Nedkov and Burkhard, 2012). At the same  
395 time, the method has to be carefully applied bearing in mind some issues.

396 According to Schröter et al. (2014), for example, an important question  
397 concerns the matrix complexity and its ability to identify the capacity of ES  
398 provision over time. This is related, in particular, to ecosystem management  
399 actions that can change the ES production. Moreover, the choice of ES is  
400 not always clear because it can be tricky to cover the entire diversity of  
401 ES within a single framework or within macro categories (i.e. provision,  
402 supporting, regulating, cultural): in literature it is possible to find different  
403 frameworks and visions (see, for example, Robinson et al., 2013; Carpenter  
404 et al., 2009; Brauman, 2015).

405 In addition, the measurement and assessment of ES require the definition  
406 of suitable indicators, which are related to ES nature. For this purpose, it  
407 is fundamental to individuate data, which are often both descriptive and  
408 quantitative. According to Dick et al. (2014) the ES assessment on the  
409 local scale is often linked to stakeholders and/or experts consultation to  
410 better understand the needs of local communities. Differently, the results on  
411 a large scale are data-driven to capture the temporal and spatial changes.  
412 Therefore, as asserted by Burkhard et al. (2014), the relation between the  
413 object of interest and the indicators has to be significant for the particular  
414 ecosystem service examined.

415 In this perspective, our method is partially helping to address the above  
416 mentioned problems. It provides an easily tool based only on public and easy

417 available data. Moreover, multiple indicators have been used to estimate the  
418 anthropic influence on WES. Our method suggests that the use of a large  
419 number of indicators is useful because the indicators can have a direct or  
420 indirect relationship with to WES and, on the other hand, data availability  
421 is not always homogeneous in the same area.

422 Nevertheless, in the proposed matrix there are cells in which the "no  
423 value" has been assigned. At first glance, the absence of value could be  
424 considered an equivalent of "no influence". This may actually be due to a  
425 lack of available data that makes it difficult to define the appropriate in-  
426 dicators. For example, specific datasets regarding the "carbon storage" or  
427 the "erosion protection" for the two parks has not yet been developed by  
428 regional authorities resulting in the impossibility to define specific useful in-  
429 dicators. To evaluate the impact of anthropic pressures on these WES, a  
430 set of data related to alteration of riparian vegetation, numbers of extreme  
431 precipitations, occupation of the flood plains by urbanization, water intakes  
432 and presence of alien species (in particular mammals, which can increase the  
433 erosion bank) have been chosen. Specifically, the indicators are minimally di-  
434 rectly correlated with the WES but they are greatly indirectly related to the  
435 erosion protection. This aspect could also be improved helping policymakers  
436 and environment institutions to individuate the environmental sectors which  
437 need more data collection.

## 438 **6. Conclusions**

439 Nowadays the climate change, the increase of urbanization and popula-  
440 tion, with the consequent artificial conversion of large parts of natural areas,  
441 have strongly modified the urban environment. Fragmentation of habitats  
442 and damaging of WES have occurred and it is consequently of seminal im-  
443 portance to know how much the human actions can influence the WES pro-

444 duction. Additionally, there is a lack of studies that deal with the anthropic  
445 pressures in WES production especially on the local urban scale. To this  
446 extent, a new type of scoring method has been developed to quantify the hu-  
447 man pressures impacts on WES production and provision on the local scale.  
448 Anthropic pressures have been linked to direct and indirect drivers to provide  
449 an assessment of anthropic influence on WES within two fluvial urban parks.  
450 Available data from authorities and literature have been used to identify the  
451 most suitable indicators for the evaluation process. The method therefore  
452 aims to provide a quick and easy tool for the quantitative evaluation of WES  
453 losses and damages and to evaluate how the anthropic pressures negatively  
454 influence the provision of such services. The method is also based only on  
455 public and available data, which make the results comparable, accessible and  
456 objective as much as possible.

457 The analyses and the method are strengthened by adopting a wide-  
458 minded holistic approach, in order to completely understand the numerous  
459 relationships between nature and humans inside a green urban space. The re-  
460 sults obtained describe on one hand how much every pressure could affect one  
461 or more WES. On the other hand, the assessment through the matrix allows  
462 to understand which human activities have caused (or could cause) the worst  
463 damages to a fluvial urban ecosystem. The matrix could be useful to drive  
464 land policy-makers, public administrations and private companies to under-  
465 take sustainability actions within the urban planning. The proposed scoring  
466 matrix, in fact, could improve the decision process inside urban planning  
467 because the matrix allows to quickly identify (1) the elements to safeguard  
468 urban ecosystems, and (2) the aspects to enhance the citizens well-being. Fi-  
469 nally, the method could be improved and applied in different urban contexts  
470 and, in particular, before and during the decision-making process in order  
471 to develop a correct and sustainable city-plan. Moreover, we would like to

472 compare larger datasets with a different temporal extension to obtain a more  
473 detailed analysis framework and a possible evolution of the parameters. In  
474 this perspective, the method allows to outline new environmental analyses  
475 able to collect more data to fill the lack of indicators and to improve the  
476 matrix efficiency.

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747 **List of Tables**

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749 2 Indicators classification. Type: Biological (B), Chemical (C),  
750 Hydromorphological (HM), Morphological (M), General (G).  
751 When not differently specified the ranges are: High (H), Good  
752 (G), Sufficient (S), Poor (P), Bad (B), not Good (nG), Ele-  
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776 3 Arrivore park is composed by urban allotments, one small lake  
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