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## The landscape ecology in territorial governance

Carlo Blasi, Vincenzo De Dominicis, Leopoldo Michetti, Riccardo Copiz, Chiara Centi

The landscape ecology derives from the meeting of geographers and ecologists. It is a discipline aimed at identifying territorial and landscape models able to make an effective and operative contribution to the discipline of planning. In this context the Italian school of synphytosociology has drawn up some original models based on the identification of areas that are homogeneous in their physical characters and which are subsequently qualified in floristic, vegetational and landuse terms; by means of hierarchical territorial classification, homogeneous sectors were defined, and these were then qualified in climatic and lithomorphological terms and also in vegetational and landuse terms. The research group on plant ecology and landscape ecology also assessed the state of conservation of the systems and subsystems identified, integrating naturalistic information with that linked with land use and with the history of the places. The index used (Index of Landscape Conservation, ILC) assigns a conservation value to the various typologies of the ground cover and land use map and thus assumes a value from 0 to 1 (the latter expresses the maximum state of conservation) as a function of the cover of the various typologies present. A first indication to emerge concerned the measurable ILC variations existing among the different systems. These variations are the result of man's ancient and recent *predilections*, for example for sandy hill systems or for the valley plains where a

considerable part of recent settlements have been situated.

A further important element of interest emerging from the studies of the countryside has concerned the variations in the ILC recorded in identical systems and subsystems, but located in different municipalities; the most recurrent situation is that in which the systems and subsystems of the Municipality of Siena show lower values than those in the adjacent municipalities. The studies have evidenced that Siena, certainly the SMAS municipality most privileged, by being richer in settlement quality, in rare services and in job openings, has paid for this privilege with a greater dissipation of environmental resources, and today directly and indirectly makes use of the resources of the environment and of the structural organization of the services and of the available housing in adjoining municipalities. Lastly, it was very interesting to discover that a large part of the current land use is still strongly linked to the nature of the substrata and to morphological variability. Siena also has a very particular characteristic in that, although greatly transformed; it retains a certain value in its state of conservation thanks to the use planning which in the course of time has considered it important to keep, also in the historic centre, elements connected with agricultural use and with a natural landscape rich in floristic and plant biodiversity.