

GEOSCIENCES AND URBAN SPRAWL: THE CASE OF BUENOS AIRES METROPOLITAN AREA (ARGENTINA)

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In developing country cities ineffective urban land management resulted in soil, water and landscape degradation, occupation of hazard-prone areas and loss of green spaces and agricultural lands. In Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area (AMBA) lives more than 13 million inhabitants and have suffered an rapidly growing in this century, embracing less than 6000 square kilometers. This growing had lacked of any urban plan so negative impacts (over population and environment) arosed in last decades. Floodings, surficial and subterraneous water contamination, soil degradation (physical and chemical) and waste landfills are enviromental main problems. An sytematic policy is desperatly need in order to solve and revert some of these negative features. In Buenos Aires area development, despicted unquestionable role in environmental problems studies, Geociences were a negleted contribution excepting scarce cases. Lack of tematic mapping and different pouposes zoning appears as main deficiencies in Geosciences contribution to enironmental balanced growing of Buenos Aires. To prevent further degradation, goverments should exert some degree of control over land use and development, achieving a balance beetween urban development and environmental protection. The present contribution deals with AMBA main environmental problems, features, causes and impacts, with the objective of apport to strategy, policy and investment statutement.