



World Forum on
Urban Forests
Mantova 2018

*PS 4.2 The Present -
Changing people*

City of Forests, City of Farms: The Governance and Discourse of Urban Sustainability in New York City

Lindsay K. Campbell, PhD

USDA Forest Service – Northern Research Station





World Forum on
Urban Forests
Mantova 2018

Context and Case Selection



New York City 2007-2015



PIIONEERED BY THE
ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

100

RESILIENT

CITIES

C40
CITIES
CLIMATE LEADERSHIP GROUP





Research Questions

1. Who are the actors involved in the **politics and governance** of urban forestry and agriculture and how do they participate in these practices?
2. What **discourses** of the environment and society are deployed in local sustainability plans and campaigns?
3. How does the materiality of the socio-natural urban environment affect policymaking and management practices?



Relevant Literatures

- **Networked environmental governance** (Rhodes 1996; Bulkeley 2005; Davies 2005, 2011; Baldassari and Diani 2007; Gustavsson et al. 2009; Connolly et al. 2013)
- **Power and decision-making in urban politics** (Bachrach and Baratz 1962; Molotch 1976; Logan and Molotch 1987; Logan et al. 1997; Stone 1989, 1993; Lauria 1997; Painter 1997; Gibbs and Jonas 2000; Mossberger and Stoker 2001; Lukes 2005; Mossberger 2009)
- **Discourses of sustainability and the urban environment** (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Peck and Tickell 2002; Swyngedouw and Heynen 2003; McCarthy and Prudham 2004; Castree 2005; Kaika 2005; Heynen et al. 2006; Perkins 2007; Jordan 2008; Perkins 2009)



Methods and Data

- **Semi-structured interviews** with key public, civic, and business leaders, snowball sample to saturation (n=65)
- **Discourse analysis** of policy documents and websites pertaining to: PlaNYC, MillionTreesNYC, Food in the Public Interest, FoodNYC, FoodWorks
- **Participant observation** of meetings, field practices, and significant sites
- **Social network analysis** of urban forestry and agriculture respondent networks



Politics & Governance

- Clear, ongoing role of government
 - Role of the mayor & mayoral candidates
 - Role of bureaucrats
- Networked governance
 - Varied role of civil society: elite access, grassroots commitments
 - Public-private partnerships
 - Coalition-building & rescaling around visions



Hybridity: MillionTreesNYC Public-Private Partnership

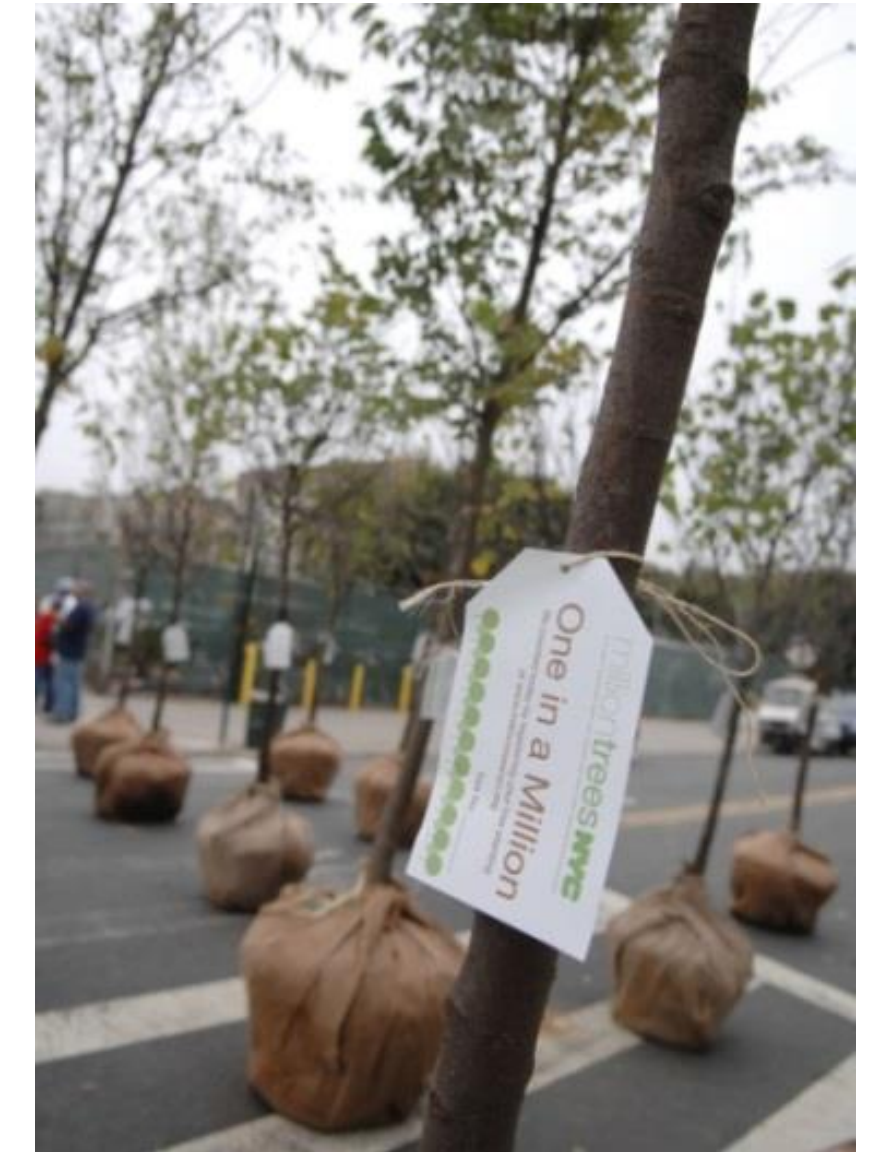


Networked, iterative food systems planning



Discourse

- **Quantification & commodification of nature**
 - Ecosystem benefits and services
 - But can be hard to measure what matters most
- **Green infrastructure & the 21st century city**
 - Efficiency, livability and mitigate the problems of the growing city
 - But what role for public in stewardship
- **Flexible storylines**
 - Large tents, many constituencies, build coalitions
 - But can elide tradeoffs



Counting trees & their benefits



Food system frame as a 'large tent'



World Forum on
Urban Forests
Mantova 2018

Conclusion: Co-creation of urban ecosystems





**World Forum on
Urban Forests**
Mantova 2018

Acknowledgements

- The USDA Forest Service supported this research.
- Thank you to all of the subjects who participated in this research through interviews, site visits, meetings, and casual conversations.
- Thank you to Cornell University Press, particularly my editor Michael McGandy.

lindsaycampbell@fs.fed.us

www.nrs.fs.fed.us/nyc

