Unearthing the role of soils in urban climate resilience planning – a commentary

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Introduction

- **Urban soils are essential infrastructure** providing hydrology, pollutant attenuation, vegetation support, and other critical ecological services
- Urban soils are often **framed and managed as a hazard** in resilience planning, excluding the potential of soils as an amenity
- **How do we broaden the framing of urban soils in resilience discourses to realize their full potential as essential infrastructure?**

Methods

- **Conducted a preliminary review of resilience plans** for the 50 largest cities in the United States, to assess how urban soils are framed.

Results & Conclusion

- **Widespread negative framing** of urban soils and heavy focus on contamination/remediation across policy documents & literature
- **General lack of emphasis on urban soils management principles or value,** with some exceptions - despite easily accessible contradictory evidence
- **Benefits of soil are unrealized and underutilized** due to negative framing

Key Recommendations

- **Reframe soils in municipal planning and management** from simply hazardous to an integral part of infrastructure for climate resilient cities
- Remediate hazardous soils with the goal of **transforming them into amenities**
- **Ensure benefits of soils are fairly distributed through an equity-centered approach** by recognizing root causes of unjust systems and inclusive planning
- **Greater funding for active management of soils** is needed, as most urban soils-funding is focused on cleanup of contaminated industrial sites
- **Enhance investment for soil resilience and health** such as: increased funding streams, robust monitoring research, and comprehensive localized policies