Module 01: Introduction to Urban Ecology

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Lenses Handout

Center for Urban Resilience

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1. **Biodiversity lens**: You are concerned with questions about the number of different kinds of living things that are present in an area as well as how many of each different type there is.  
   (Biophysical driver/biological)

2. **Soil quality lens**: You are concerned with the physical characteristics of soil as well as the biological communities that live in the soil.  
   (Biophysical driver/chemical)

3. **Water quality lens**: You are concerned with issues around how much water there is, how clean the water is, who lives in the water, who uses the water and anything else which might affect the water quality.  
   (Biophysical driver/chemical)

4. **Energy Lens**: You are concerned with both how energy is moving through this ecosystem, the way in which energy is transformed from one form to another, such as what happens to the energy from the sun. Where does it go? Also you are concerned with questions about how does this site affect human energy consumption.  
   (Biophysical driver/physical)
5. **Political lens**: You are concerned with the politics of this site. Who owns the land? Who has an interest in this site? Are there competing interests for this site? Is the site controversial in any way?  

(Social driver)

6. **Historical legacies lens**: You are concerned with what has gone on in the past. How has this site changed over the years? What clues are there to the history of the site?  

(Social driver)

7. **Environmental justice issues lens**: You are concerned with issues about inequitable exposure to environmental problems or inequitable access to parks and green spaces. The Environmental Protection Agency defines Environmental Justice as: “fair treatment for people of all races, cultures, and incomes, regarding the development of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”  

(Social driver)

8. **Public health lens**: You are concerned with issues around the health of the public and how this site either positively or negatively impacts the health of the people who use the site or live nearby.  

(Social driver)