



THE MANY DIMENSIONS OF ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

Carolina Murcia

Disciplines evolve as new tools are developed, conceptual foundations are refined, and new challenges appear. The field of ecological restoration is no stranger to such an evolutionary process. It started with questions such as: "how do I speed the recovery of this piece of land so that it resembles what it used to be before it was destroyed or disturbed?" The focus was a single ecosystem, and the reference was that piece of and a few decades before. Today, the focus on a single ecosystem is no longer relevant, and the reference state defined by how it looked like before the disturbance has been challenged. The need to recover large areas of land, in the context of climate change, is driving how the discipline evolves. The necessary involvement of their disciplines from the social and economic sciences is also driving how we approach restoration. This has generated a multiplicity of approaches and new, and often radical, conceptual developments, which can have the benefit of promoting a diverse field, but that are also generating great confusion among policy and decision makers. This talk analyzes this evolution and the issues associated with the many dimensions of a new ecological restoration.