



**Call for papers**  
**updated January 26, 2011**  
**International conference**

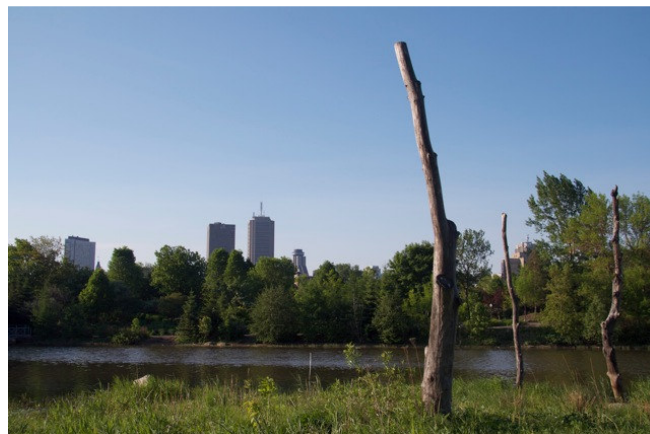
***Territory and Environment: from representations to action***

**Conference organized by UMR 6173 CITERES**  
**(CNRS - Université de Tours)**

**Tours (France)**  
**December 8-9, 2011**

**[English version](#)**

***(Version francophone disponible sur ce site)***



**New website :**

**<http://citeres.univ-tours.fr/environnement>**

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Scientific Partners





## Call for papers

### ***Territory and Environment: from representations to action***

**International conference, Tours (France)**

**December 8-9, 2011**

#### **CONFERENCE AIMS**

The aim of this conference is to produce an overview of research in Western countries over the last forty years on the theme “territory and environment”. It proposes to sum up the transformations that have taken place in the building and implementation of social (and spatial) representations, from the viewpoint of environmental issues. The idea will be to address the question of reciprocal influences, on the one hand of environmental issues on transformations of ‘territorial practices’ and on the other hand of effects on the environment of these spatial practices and their regulation. In this context, the organisers hope to focus discussion on the results of these transformations in actual practices, governance, decision-making processes and the various modes of intervention of political and technical actors – expert or not – taking part in the territorialisation of environmental policies and the ecologising of planning practices.

In order to get an idea of the interactions between social representations and public or collective action, discussions will be based on three analytical notions enabling us to question ongoing public action: scales of territorial intervention, social norms underlying representations and practices, and finally, instruments of government action. Many questions can be asked about the evolution of regulations between territorial and environmental practices – for some, a little more greenery and for others, a matter of profound changes. How has the environment suddenly come to play a role in the various socio-spatial spheres? How have ecological modernisation and “green technology” – by strengthening the technical and scientific dimensions of government action – transformed local management? To what extent has the introduction of environmental issues into planning policies modified decision-making processes? This conference – through case studies on interactions between representations and actions, between discourse and practice and an analysis of their reciprocal influence – wishes to examine the transformation of scales, norms, and the instruments of spatial and environmental policies.

In this context, the conference calls on researchers in the ecological and social sciences (geographers, ecologists, urban planners, developers, historians, economists, law specialists, political scientists, sociologists, ethnologists, etc.). In particular, we are interested in communications in the fields of public policies and actions, regulation concerning the uses of natural resources, processes of collective mobilisation on ecological-territorial issues and on matters of ecological inequalities. Discussions will focus on European territory with the comparative perspective of other Western approaches, North American in particular.

The organising institution of the conference is the CITERES Laboratory (*Cités, Territoires, Environnement et Sociétés* (CITERES, UMR 6173) of the CNRS and the Université François Rabelais in Tours (France). The conference is organised in collaboration with *l'Institut EDS de l'Université Laval*, the *Groupe d'Études Interdisciplinaires en Géographie et Environnement Régional* of l'Université du Québec à Montréal et le *Centre d'Étude et de Recherche en Sciences Sociales* of l'Université de Strasbourg. The scientific committee is composed of Brazilian, Canadian, Dutch, French, Italian, Mexican and Swiss researchers.

The working languages of the conference are English and French, the call for proposals is bilingual; simultaneous translation will be provided during the conference.

## CONFERENCE ISSUES

In the past forty years, the environment has become an increasingly important aspect of territorial public action. This has resulted in an increasing number of tools, plans, programmes and mechanisms devoted to the protection and conservation of milieus, resources and environmental dynamics. The territorialisation of environmental policies also goes along with a reconfiguration of the formulation and implementation of public decision through notions of assessment, participation, and new environmental governance – both on the local and regional levels.

However, though the notion of environment is more and more widespread, it is not a concept with a single meaning; the heterogeneity of concepts is one of the major factors of local conflicts. But whatever the approaches, *space*, its components and its actors seem to be the “raw material” of the environment.

Conflicting and differentiated concepts of the relation between man and nature were also influenced, during the 1990s, by the notion of sustainable development. This in fact led to a generalised taking into account of the environmental aspect in most planning policies. As a result, the notion of the environment broadened, going beyond the sole ecological approach to integrate economic and social considerations – some actors even thought there to be a risk of diluting the environmental objectives. Environmental policies are influenced by the growing importance of principles of localism and subsidiarity. They have developed in a very diversified manner, depending on local, regional, national and even international scales.

The ecologisation of spatial practices and the territorialisation of environmental practices are thus closely linked. These evolutions can be observed in most western countries and correspond to international negotiations related to biodiversity, to the maintenance of the integrity of ecosystems and the sustainable management of natural resources.

### ***The environmental aspects of spatial policies***

The ecologisation of territorial practices transforms the scale of government actions. On one hand, these practices increasingly integrate bio-geographic scales (catchment areas, mountain ranges, coastal and limnic areas, etc.) as relevant zoning of government action, and on the other, the local or regional level as a spatial scale of negotiation and formulation of public policy. These changes, brought about by the ecologisation of practices call into question the aims of planning policies: the aim of planning policies is traditionally to correct the social, economic and environmental imbalances between regions; however the egalitarian objective is questioned by the introduction of environmental value – local ecological characteristics that have become superior social values that must be protected. Taking into account the fact that environmental policies produce considerable constraints in the use of spaces, we can wonder about the conditions under which a localised action is better able than centralised decision to implement these environmental protection measures. To what extent are local actors able to regulate the effects of their choices on the various scales beyond their zoning and competence to intervene? Which mechanisms are able to address these issues of environmental and spatial inequalities on the various geographic scales?

We also see more and more environmental requirements in local and regional policies. This is the case with environmental labelling or ecological planning. Thus, mechanisms like green and blue belts (water or animal/plant stretches) introduced specific environmental objects as the basis for planning mechanisms alongside more traditional economic and social considerations. Questions linked to sources of pollution, to risks or to landscape amenities increasingly influence the construction of land use planning.

### ***Spatial dimensions of environmental policies***

The territorialisation of environmental policies is becoming more and more widespread: today, environmental protection is carried out via zoning processes. This is the case of many laws which, for example, view the environment as spatial compounds (mountains, coasts, etc) or milieus (damp, bio-topic, etc.) endowed with and recognized for their particular qualities. These milieus constitute particular territorial categories (national parks, biosphere reserves, etc), supported by specific institutional mechanisms such as ad hoc local agencies, advisory committees, etc. The zoning practices on which they are based result in a homogenisation of each zone and their differentiation in relation to the rest of the area, both on the symbolic and regulation level. Once included in a zone, environmental objects, species, milieus, ecosystems, are all endowed with qualities justifying the creation of the zone. Thus we come close to an “ideal-type” concept of space and their environmental values, whereas the prerequisites defining their limits often rest on partial, if not artificial generalisations.

In this way, based on incomplete naturalist knowledge, environmental policies create categories which in their own right establish and spread a particular perception of the world based on ecological zoning. The generalised practice of environmental assessment before defining zones and enacting regulations results in a particular way of conceiving environment as well as space. Such conceptions are relatively clear cut: zoning functions according to an inclusion/exclusion method and is not very apt at integrating gradational

processes. Thus the implementation of environmental policy on a local and regional level, has a clearly normative effect. This social value is strengthened by the legal dimension and by zoning mechanisms. Law, therefore, plays an important cognitive role: by defining spatial environmental categories, law diffuses a particular representation of the world. It endows a local area with a social value, a quality. This movement goes along with a fragmentation of the environment into specialist knowledge and high-level techniques: space becomes an object of technical competences. Furthermore, this fragmentation and overlapping of zones leads us to question the coherence and compatibility of public policies.

## **COMMUNICATION PROPOSAL**

Three main axes are proposed in order to structure the issues to be addressed in papers.

### ***Axis 1. New scales of environmental and planning policies***

Increasingly, borders of ecosystems and environmental dynamics are taken as a basis for land use planning. Thus today, catchment areas of watercourses, landscapes, or of biogeographical units constitute areas recognized as relevant for land use planning. Furthermore, tools for the protection of ecosystems, such as biological corridors, or green and blue belts in cities, are from now on included in planning processes. Beyond being taken into account in planning, how has the integration of these scales modified local management practices, and how does it influence those practices today? How has the introduction of these dimensions renewed the nature of public problems and decision-making processes? Does the opening up of the public sphere twinned to these scales bring about a re-composition of stakeholders around decision? How have actors in decision-making changed, faced with the increasing “technicisation” of the objects and scales of government action? Are stakeholders repositioning themselves? Is an evolution taking place in their composition, in the content and modalities of negotiation? How do minority positions manage to have their say? To what extent are the new mechanisms introduced for that purpose effective? More fundamentally, the context of sustainable development has changed the formulation of land use policies: whereas previously, planning policies aimed at a greater balance of activities within a national area, sustainable development is now considered an instrument to be used to produce a better balance in the context of whole planet, as regards the environment in particular. Overall however, greater importance is given to issues linked to the internal sustainability of regions (viability of regions over time) than to questions solidarities between regions. What are the effects of the increasing autonomy of local and regional actors, resulting – in the absence of regulation – in more autarchic behaviours, to the detriment of greater solidarity between territories?

### ***Axis 2. The environment as a new norm for local policies***

The environmental question has become an essential component of public action, increasingly aimed at anticipating possible harm to the integrity of ecosystems caused by development. Thus we observe a gradual change in planning documents and policies. Whereas traditionally, it was a matter of foreseeing the evolution of a region, there is now the added responsibility of protecting natural heritage. This additional charge gives rise to a discrepancy between priorities and societal choices, curbing the latter for the sake of a more

curative and immediate vision of the effects of projects. In this context, we can wonder how new social and environmental norms influence the practice of law and legal doctrine, or the development of economic and agricultural policies. In this sense, we expect papers discussing the influence of environmental themes on discourse as well as on the regulation of natural resources uses. We are also interested in analyses of transformations in the social representations of local actors, related to the environment and territory. Comparative research on different Occidental areas is also welcome.

In this context, expert knowledge and local knowledge become intertwined thanks to mediation, while the participation of actors from different social spheres contributes to the co-construction of single and specific solutions. In development policies, the choice of eco branches (eco-construction, eco-energy, etc) or the taking into account of biodiversity, of landscape, and cultural valorisation, lead to a territorialisation of environmental action. These new practices of land use planning give rise to environmental issues interpreted and translated in a very diversified manner, according to local, regional, and national contexts. The relation to territory is differentiated according to its actors' representations of it and their particular relation to space, as well as to the way they consider the common "environmental good". These elements are important for the analysis of environmental governance.

### ***Axis 3. The renewal of government actions***

In most western countries, the reinforcement of the environmental aspects of land use policies and the spatial aspects of environmental policies takes place under four headings: planning, environmental assessment, economic instruments of environmental policies, and new local governance.

Planning is a diversified exercise carried out within the various national and sometimes regional legislative frameworks. Taking into account the environmental aspect in land use planning makes for increasingly complex practical solutions. One common example is whether it is better to give priority to compact urbanisation so as to save on natural resources and energy, or on the contrary, allow for some spreading out in order to favour the well-being of inhabitants. In various countries, the instruments being implemented propose a mixture, a coordination or integration of the various sectorial approaches between land use planning and environment. What are the effects of these organisational choices in terms of efficiency?

Generally speaking, coordinated processes are developing, which include planning, environmental assessment and public participation. How are the various tools, and also the conflicts generated by their use, integrated in local policies? How is the spatial and temporal multi-scale approach to the environment understood and put into practice? What are the various sectorial goals, and spatial and time scales that the parties in the process deem relevant to the projects and - as these "boundary judgments" tend to differ from one another - what boundary spanning strategies can be used to overcome such divergent perceptions about what the project is all about? What importance is given to an analysis of the utility of the project? What is the role of conflicts linked to environmental objects in decision-making processes?

Furthermore, the increasing use of economic instruments to regulate and limit the use of natural resources challenges the territorial dimension of practices associated with environmental policies: to what extent and in what ways do the implementation of ecological taxes, a market of emissions permits trading, or different ways of application of the “polluter pays” principle – participate, as accelerators, brakes, revealers, etc of environmental and local policies?

Despite the implementation of environmental policies at the local level, through protected areas and techniques of ecosystemic conservation, the generalisation of inventory practices and compensation projects, there is no evidence of a notable improvement in the state of natural and urban ecosystems. To what extent and depending on what processes do collective mobilisations for environmental issues produce effective institutional and private answers? Does the inter-communal or regional scale, which is becoming stronger in various European and North American countries, bring innovating solutions to the governance of the environment? Contributions will show the results and limits of institutional policies and collective actions integrating environmental dimensions as well as political, cultural, regulatory, technical and social factors favouring or limiting the effectiveness of these practices. Particular importance will be given to the analysis of innovation in these domains.

#### **PRACTICAL INFORMATION (NEW DATES)**

Launching of call for contributions	December 1, 2010
Deadline for sending summary of proposals	March 18, 2011
Decisions of scientific committee	May 2, 2011
Deadline for sending of complete & definitive texts	September 30, 2011
Deadline for sending Power Points for presentations	November 21, 2011
Conference in Tours	December 8-9, 2011

Proposals for communications, in English or French, should be sent on or before May 2, 2011.

Proposals should not exceed 2 pages and should include precise identification of author(s). They should include an identification of the axis or axes concerned and be sent using the proposal form downloadable on the conference site.

Requests for information and proposals for papers will be sent to the following address: [territoire-environnement@univ-tours.fr](mailto:territoire-environnement@univ-tours.fr)

You will find further information on the conference website:

<http://citeres.univ-tours.fr/environnement>

The complete texts of accepted communications (45-55,000 characters, spaces included) should be received by September 30, 2011.

Roughly 60 communications will be accepted, for plenary or thematic sessions. The accepted scientific communications will be published in book form and as thematic dossiers in scientific reviews.

**The conference will be held in Tours (France), December 8-9, 2011.**

## PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

### Thursday, December 8, 2011

9:00 - 9:30	Welcome - Registration
9:30 - 10:00	Introduction to the conference
10:00 - 11:30	Plenary session 1
11:30 - 1:00	Thematic sessions A (3 parallel sessions)
<i>1:00 - 2:30</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
2:30 - 4:30	Thematic sessions B (3 parallel sessions)
<i>4:30 - 5:00</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
5:00 - 7:00	Thematic sessions C (3 parallel sessions)
7:30	Apéritif

### Friday, December 8, 2011

8:30 - 9:00	Welcome
9:00 - 10:00	Plenary session 2
10:00 - 12:00	Thematic sessions D (3 parallel sessions)
<i>12:00 - 1:30</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
1:30 - 3:00	Thematic sessions E (3 parallel sessions)
<i>3:00 - 3:30</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
3:30 - 4:30	Plenary session 3: round table
4:30 - 5:00	Conclusion
5:00	End of conference

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Antonio Azuela, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico, Sociology  
Hans Bressers, University of Twente, Netherlands, Policy Studies and Environmental Policy  
Jean-Paul Carrière, Université de Tours, France, Spatial and Urban Planning  
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#### **ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE**

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