



17ème Congrès du RIODD

**Commons, communities, territories:
which pathways for the transitions?**

16 - 18 november 2022

Campus Condorcet - Aubervilliers

Call for thematic sessions

«*The issue of sustainability is not easy to address because we are confronted with a double jeopardy: the abusive exploitation of natural resources that endangers the balance of the climate and biodiversity, and the growing inequalities that condemn our ability to live together as a society*». (Eynaud, 2019).

Faced with the continuing destruction of ecosystems and social ties, we are witnessing the deployment of various forms of organisation of collective action and redefinition of productive activities that involve grassroots communities and territories (see Coriat, 2020, Slawinski et al 2019).

Whether they take place in small towns or in large metropolises, in the North or in the South, these plural collective initiatives aim to participate in the construction of a viable, sustainable environment. They are the bearers of organisational and socio-technical innovations. They sometimes rely on the reasoned use of new digital tools to extend cooperation between actors and/or communities (Vercher - Chaptal et al., 2021).

These initiatives constitute real laboratories for social and environmental transitions, capable of addressing the diversity of relationships between nature and human activities that are found throughout the world.

The commons theory, to which some of these field initiatives refer, can provide a relevant framework for interpretation. This field, opened by Elinor Ostrom in the 1980s, was concerned with exploring the conditions under which human communities inserted into different types of ecosystems can both live off the natural resources they take from these ecosystems and ensure their long-term reproduction (Ostrom, 1990), thus demonstrating a primary ecological concern.

Ostrom's approach demonstrates the existence of a diversity of self-organised forms of collective action, based on institutional arrangements that can, under certain conditions, produce their own identity and autonomy (Chanteau and Labrousse, 2013; Brondizio and Pérez, 2017).

The framework of the commons makes it possible to overcome the aporia of a conceptual model based solely on the opposition and/or complementarity between the market and the state and which has rendered invisible

a large part of the alternatives observed in the field of transitions. It allows, as well, for the articulation of a critical perspective and a pragmatic attention to emancipatory experiences (Sousa Santos, 2016). It has given rise to a wealth of research in many fields of social science (sociology, law, economics, geography, etc.). And, in a more practical sense, it can be considered as "a movement 'for', and no longer only a movement 'against'" (Laval, 2016).

Since the first commons described as 'natural-based' by Ostrom, the framework of the commons has expanded in many directions (see Cornu-Volatron, Rochfeld, Orsi 2017). It has integrated the informational and digital commons of universal access and has expanded to include research on living things and literary as well as artistic creations (creative commons). It now concerns a large number of fields (Hess, 2008), encompassing in turn the notion of the common goods. For a long time limited to 'natural' areas (rivers, oceans, the atmosphere, etc.), the commons are now, according to the work of the Rodotà Commission (2016), linked to fundamental human rights, which significantly broadens their framework and the possible extension of their application.

In sociology, in particular, reflection on the commons has focused on the 'common', considered as a political principle (Dardot and Laval, 2014), while recognising that it is the relationship to the living and to the planet that it is now essential to take into account more broadly in order to think about a sociology of the common (David and Le Dévédec, 2016).

For its 17th congress, the RIODD intends to take up the pluridisciplinary issue of the commons, communities and territories to explore the pathways towards the transitions that the current crises (ecological, economic, social) call for.

This subject is in line with the CEPN¹'s fields of expertise, which will be in charge of organising the conference. Moreover, it echoes the laboratory's Crises & Transitions programme, the work on the commons that has been carried out for several years², and it is more broadly in line with the field of the Federative Structure on the Commons of the University Sorbonne Paris Nord.

The expertise developed within the CEPN will also allow to complete - and/or to articulate - the analysis of transitions seen through the perspective of the commons with work on green finance or participatory finance, the consideration by central banks of the objective of environmental transition, or multi-agent modelling aiming at integrating the physio-financial and social constraints of the ecological transition.

The CEPN will benefit from the support of two external partners for the organisation of the RIODD congress: the IAE of Paris and the Ecological Accounting Partnership Chair³.

The connection between the field of the commons and that of transitions raises multiple questions and involves different levels of analysis.

These questions may, in particular, concern:

- The relationship between the commons and the State, especially within the territory:

Local and regional authorities, while sometimes at the root cause of environmental degradation⁴, can also participate in the empowerment and consolidation of initiatives implemented by communities in the areas traditionally recognised for defining the transition policies that they must carry out on their territory, namely transport, housing, renewable energy sources, water quality, food, etc.

Which forms of partnerships between commons and local authorities can be imagined for the benefit of transitions? Can the collaboration between commons and public actors contribute to linking socio-

1 Centre d'économie et de gestion de Paris Nord, UMR CNRS 7234.

2 Three major projects on the Commons have been piloted by the CEPN over the past ten years: [programme PROPICE](#), [programme EnCommuns](#), [programme TAPAS](#)

3 Chaire de la Fondation AgroParisTech (Fondation reconnue d'utilité publique). Academic partners: AgroParisTech, Université Paris-Dauphine, Université de Reims Champagne-Ardenne, Institut Louis Bachelier. <https://www.chaire-comptabilite-ecologique.fr>.

4 This is due to their emissions of polluting gases and the artificialization of the land that they cause.

environmental transition and democratic transition, under what conditions?

- The commons and the question of governance:

In her early work on natural resource-based commons, Ostrom points to the need to rely on small collectives. The small size of collectives facilitates deliberation and compliance with rules, and encourages the attention that everyone can pay to the environment.

The issue of environmental transitions concerns large-scale resources (seas, oceans, atmosphere, climate, etc.) that are intended for the general public. Their constitution as 'commons' therefore raises the question of the solutions that can be proposed to ensure their governance (cf. Coriat 2021; Frozel Barros 2019; Tordjman, 2021).

The increasing pressure on natural environments and biodiversity, despite the multiplication of normative and governance frameworks at national and international level, shows the need to initiate and coordinate actions at other scales, particularly at local level.

In order to overcome the shortcomings of centralised management applied to a problem of multi-actor collective action, Ostrom has proposed a polycentric governance scheme in his latest work, consisting of articulating several levels of governance located in as many places as necessary and linked together.

Which governance mechanisms capable of integrating and combining a plurality of levels and places of coordination of collective action can be imagined to address transitions? How can they be implemented?

- Concrete arrangements for a 'commons' management of socio-environmental transitions

The issue of transitions, particularly for the protection of ecosystems, is known to be played out at an inter-organisational level. This raises the question of the institutional arrangements and management tools that need to be developed, specifically adapted to the heterogeneity of the problems of collective action and decisions that actors must face in order to obtain tangible results in terms of environmental performance (Mermet, 2018; Barbier et al., 2020).

This discussion is being conducted in the domain of accounting tools, via recent work in 'ecosystem-centred management accounting', which focuses on the collective, inter-organisational governance of biodiversity (Feger and Mermet, 2017, 2021; Feger et al., 2021).

These new ecological accounting systems, centred on the perimeters of socio-ecosystems, aim to support the negotiation, structuring and management of commitments between actors around environmental problems⁵.

In terms of institutional arrangements, the innovation represented by the status of 'Cooperative Society of Collective Interest' (*société coopérative d'intérêt collectif - SCIC*) is particularly noteworthy. Created in France in 2001 to promote the production or supply of goods and services of collective interest with a social utility character, this status facilitates the representation and participation of a diversity of stakeholders and the construction of cooperative ventures open to the territories.

In what way and to what extent can new mechanisms such as these serve as dialogue and mediation tools between actors with contrasting, often opposing, perspectives on the future of territories? To what extent can they support the emergence of commons modes of governance, and help the actors of the transition to remain attentive to the tensions that may exist between the requirement to achieve ecological preservation objectives and the consideration of environmental and social justice issues? How can they ultimately enable public and/or private actors to become involved in these new forms of common management while preserving the deliberative dynamic that is characteristic of the commons and necessary for the clarification of the general interest and its defense against private interests?

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⁵ They also appear today as an essential complement to the ecological accounting of companies and public actors (Rambaud and Chénet, 2021).

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TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

The selection process of the proposals consists of two steps:

- 1- The proposal of thematic sessions, to be submitted before 01/03/2022.
- 2- The proposal of abstracts, in response to the calls for papers (thematic sessions and "varia") which will be launched on 11/03/2022 (to be submitted before 18/05).

This call only concerns the proposal of thematic sessions which are previously submitted to the scientific committee of the congress for pré-selection.

Thematic sessions can be:

- 1 **"Closed sessions"**, built on the basis of a set of contributions gathered by a scientific coordination (individual or collective), for example in the framework of a collective research.
- 2 **"Open sessions"**, des **sessions « ouvertes »**, which are accompanied by a specific call for contributions written by a promotor(s).

The coordinators of the selected thematic sessions will organise the double-blind evaluation process of the papers submitted for their session, in collaboration with the scientific committee of the congress which will validate the list of accepted papers. The session coordinators will chair their session at the congress.

The RIODD congress has a multidisciplinary positioning. Any research in the fields of humanities and social sciences, engineering sciences and life sciences will be considered with interest.

Proposals for thematic sessions can focus on the specific theme of the 2022 Congress or on any other theme related to the challenges of sustainable development and transitions for organisations.

NB: A call for "varia" papers will also be proposed to researchers wishing to participate in the congress but whose work does not fit into any open thematic session.

You wish to propose a thematic session?

Two forms must be completed and sent before 01/03/2022 to riodd2022@sciencesconf.org

- Form A to fill in the thematic session proposal (intended for the congress scientific committee)
- **Form B to fill in the call for papers for the session (only for "open" sessions) which will be circulated after validation of the session by the scientific committee).**