



AGRICULTURES
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Living territories to transform the world

P. Caron, E. Valette,
T. Wassenaar,
G. Coppens d'Eeckenbrugge,
V. Papazian,
Coordinators



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Éditions Quæ

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Cirad
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Foreword

If the ‘territory’ – in its broader sense of the French *territoire* – is the answer, what is the question? Why do we need to reshape the frameworks for governance we’ve inherited for living together on this planet? How would a stronger ‘territorial’ focus help us achieve more sustainable models of development as envisaged by the ambitious aspirations of the Paris Climate Accord and the Sustainable Development Goals? I can think of four good reasons which resonate with the arguments outlined in this timely volume.

First, to rebalance power. Too much power and too many resources have been sucked out of local economic circuits, sapping communities of the capital, people, and ideas needed to maintain a viable livelihood. We have not managed well the tensions between the growth in output and incomes promised by globalization, and its inevitable backwash which has churned up the societies, values and hopes of those on the wrong side of market forces. The highly uneven gains and losses from massive investment flows and extensive global supply chains have seen no counterpart in public action to buffer the damage and offer support. Governments individually have been unwilling to take on the unrivalled power now held by mega-corporations, and have refused to insist on payments to the public purse, which could help recompense the losers. As I write this in late 2016, the consequences of market ideology unchecked by social constraint have been made most painfully evident by the Brexit referendum result in the UK and the election of a populist President in the USA. With too many people sensing they’ve been left behind, a rallying cry of ‘Take back control!’ seems to offer a remedy. A more promising approach, using the territory as an architectural basis, helps establish an arena in which people feel connected to structures of power, and can see that it is possible to get things done. The territorial approach re-establishes a sense of agency and local citizenship, in contrast to national-level government, which has become both too complex and difficult, but also seemingly powerless in the face of larger global forces, conflict, and upheaval. If we did more things locally, we would help unravel some of the complexity at the national level.

Second, to build better and more resilient connections between institutions and ecological resources. All too often, vital ecological resources are split by administrative boundaries which make nonsense of the natural landscape. This is especially the case with rivers and wider watersheds, where the geographic integrity of the river basin is rarely matched by an administrative system with the powers required to manage upstream-downstream interactions. In poor and rich countries, many people have seen the impact of unexpected and devastating floods on their homes and farms,

on their cities and settlements. Climate change has led to more volatile rainfall, with extraordinary amounts of rain falling in a rapid period. In the village in central Mali where I am doing research, in mid-August 2016, 110 mm of rain fell in five hours, so that people were wading through waist-high water, and many of their mud-brick houses fell down. And back home in the UK, in December 2015, more than 340 mm fell over a 24-hour period in the north-west of England. It is very difficult to cope with such intense downpours, but pursuing a territorial approach would at least make it easier to plan land use in ways that limit future flood risk.

Third, to celebrate identity. If you take the high road from Penrith to Barnard Castle, you travel through the uplands of north-west England, with their characteristic windswept fells of rough grazing, criss-crossed by dry stone walls, snaking their way across the landscape. Each cluster of stone farmhouses and barns gives tangible expression to the cultural traditions of the western Pennine mountain territory. Whether you're in the Pennines, in the wide savannahs of Maasailand in eastern Africa, the high Andean mountain terraces of Peru and Bolivia, or amongst the stout white and red manor houses in the valleys and hills of Basque country in the Spanish Pyrenees, there's a sense of pride in common identity and heritage, as well as in shared struggles against hard times. This strength of rural solidarity is not surprising, since it is less than ten years ago that world population swung from being predominantly rural to urban. It can be no accident that, as global economic forces have become ever stronger, interest in local culture, identity and dialect has also strengthened greatly. As people, we often forget our animal heritage, but whether we like it or not, the role of territory and tribe remain hugely important, as a source of identity, and as means to determine who's in and who's out of the group. Somehow we need to build on the positive aspects of rootedness, identity and cultural traditions, and moderate those impulses on the other side of the coin which can be too easily harnessed to target 'the other'.

Fourth, to re-establish the urban-rural nexus. Compare the 1950 map of West Africa with that for 2010, and you can see the extraordinary mushrooming of small towns which has taken place across the region. While capital cities have also expanded, the most striking feature of the map is the way that hundreds of small towns have sprung up in rural areas. These towns have massive impacts on neighbouring landscapes and livelihoods, generating multiple flows of people, goods, services, money and ideas between small and large settlements, local and municipal market places, and businesses in town and village shops. Getting the best from these urban-rural links needs to be at the heart of a territorial approach.

So there are many strong reasons why the territory should be the foundation stone for constructing a more sustainable planet. None of the Sustainable Development Goals will be achieved without engaging in the design and implementation of local actions. It's not the only building block, since a bottom-up process needs to meet a top-down set of public policies that interlock with each other. It's like an architect and builder working together. Success in achieving an ecological transition will need ambitious public investment in common resources, such as the institutions

and infrastructure that support a low-carbon transition¹. As with common property resources, a territorial approach has to be nested in a set of hierarchies, inter-related and operating at different scales.

The term ‘territory’ is necessarily imprecise, since the exact scale or geographical space depends on the purpose chosen. We live in a less-than-ideal world, so pragmatism is important to identify the lowest scale at which we can achieve many of the goals sought. As an Anglo-Saxon, the term ‘territory’ risks misunderstandings, but I take it to mean ‘a geographical space as appropriated and perceived by individual or collective actors’ (Chapter 33 of this volume), rather than the much more limited meaning it normally has in English, describing an area fought for and protected by an animal, bird, or conquering power.

As contributions to this volume show clearly, if the territory is to have any force in making decisions and taking action, it needs to be equipped with power and resources. The decentralization process followed in many low income countries since the 1990s shows that local government is seriously hampered when few if any powers are transferred. They may have significant responsibilities but, without some financial autonomy – such as local levies, control over land use, a tax on key resources –, the promise of decentralized governance risks being an empty shell, hollowed out by higher-level government preferring political advantage above a practical response. Defining the boundaries of what constitutes a territory needs to take into account the need for a viable fiscal system. Reliance on funds from national government perpetuates central control, and makes local government highly vulnerable to political swings. Somehow central governments need to recognize that stronger, more powerful local bodies lead to a stronger more resilient economy and society, as well as to a reduction in the complexity of their own responsibilities and tasks.

Camilla Toulmin

Senior Fellow IIED

Professor, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

1. Gaël Giraud, interview 30 November 2016 in *Télérama* no. 3490.

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The goal of this book is to address the territorial issue in all its diversity, in particular by a beneficial recourse to an interdisciplinary dimension. In order to do so, we have drawn on the experience and expertise of authors from diverse and complementary domains. We have encouraged a dialogue – made possible by the fruitful and long partnership between Cirad and AFD – between perspectives of the research community and of actors of development.

Our thanks are therefore addressed to the authors, who are listed at the end of the book. We also warmly thank the publishing team, Éditions Quæ and Cirad's Communication Service for their patient and unwavering support. We also thank the reviewers, the members of the steering committee and the editorial committee.

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Introduction

The present enthusiasm for the term ‘territory’, a concept in which interest has continued to grow steadily over the past 30 years, is not fortuitous. It has arisen due to the increasing complexity of a globalized world, uncertainties about the future of resources, growing inequalities and conflicts. To make some sense of current world reality, we propose a territorial approach, beyond and in addition to an approach based on networks. This can be applied to an administrative territory – a framework for the exercise of power – or to a territory defined by a sense of belonging or by a collective project.

Territories are spaces of coordination between actors in which new forms of governance are conceived that are conducive to development and to the strengthening of solidarity. We want to focus our attention on this vision – which we readily admit is not systematic: on a resolutely optimistic and committed conception of the territory as a vector of sustainable development.

This book summarizes and draws lessons learned from experiments conducted by more than 150 CIRAD and AFD researchers and officers together with their partners. It is divided into three parts. The first sets the stage and offers justification for the use of the concept of the territory. The second part presents a wide range of experiences that shed light on the territory’s contributions to sustainable development. The last part showcases methods and tools for intervention and support for territorial development.

In the first part, we explore the upsurge in the use of the word ‘territory’ in the discourses on development, concomitant with that of the expression ‘sustainable development’ (Chapter 1). We argue that territories are conducive to sustainable development because of the opportunity they offer to integrate environmental, social and economic objectives and to strengthen the capacity of multiple actors to coordinate and define together the orientations to be pursued. In Chapter 2, we explore the current dynamics of the reconfiguration of rural territories, with a particular focus on Africa. Finally, Chapter 3 outlines the challenges that territories can help address: revamping public action to strengthen regulatory capacities, managing space-based resources and thus contributing to economic development, and organizing the local management of renewable resources held in common.

The second part is devoted to a collection of brief case studies, linking concrete observations, methodological contributions and lessons learned. This diversity of experiences and studies from different continents reflects a plurality of territorial

configurations, actors and projects at different scales. It illustrates how actors, mechanisms, scales and scopes of action interact in the development of rural spaces in the Global South. The chapters in this second part show how configurations and regulations produced by the actors involved in territorial development projects are drivers of change. Thus, Chapters 4 to 8 show the value of organizing the territory to manage resources and Chapters 9 to 13 of organizing it for production. Chapters 14 to 19 show the importance of organizing it to provide services. Chapters 20 to 24 explore how to mobilize the territory as a resource; and, finally, Chapters 25 to 30 propose the mobilization of the territory as a basis for designing public policies.

In the third part (Tools, methods and incentives for territorial development), we illustrate the importance of implementing methods and deploying resources to understand and act on territorial processes, and to accompany the actors involved. Each chapter focuses on a specific aspect of this support: fostering territorial dynamics (Chapter 31), assessing production systems at the territorial scale (Chapter 32), remote sensing and spatial modelling (Chapter 33), territorial observatories (Chapter 34), financial instruments and mechanisms for developing rural territories (Chapter 35), support for decentralization (Chapter 36), and territorial foresight (Chapter 37).

In its Conclusion (chapter 38), the book defends the idea that the territorial approach is a privileged path to achieve sustainable development. The rediscovery of the local scale and its mobilization in order to reconstruct the global one, and thus remake the world, are affirmed as a political project as well as a challenge for research and development institutions. We call for a renaissance of rural territories so that they are able to provide their inhabitants and, more globally, the whole world the full gamut of the economic, social and environmental functions and services essential to peace and social cohesion: well-being, food and nutritional security, human and environmental health, anticipation of and adaptation to climate change, energy transitions, distributed economic growth and decent employment, equity, reduction in migratory tensions, and anticipation and prevention of disputes and conflicts.

Part 1

The territory and the challenges of sustainable development

CHAPTER I

Why and how the concept of ‘territory’ can help in thinking rural development

Patrick Caron

WHY THE GROWING INTEREST IN THE WORD ‘TERRITORY’?

The concomitant interest in the term ‘territory’¹ and the expression ‘sustainable development’ is not fortuitous. It has grown due to concerns about the environment and the degradation of resources, increasing inequalities, and tensions and conflicts resulting from hunger, poverty, destitution, migrations, etc. The transformations of rural societies and the risks they face have become issues for intense discussions, passionate debates and preoccupations. They have given rise to reservations of all sorts, on the one hand, and commitments to sustainable development, on the other.

The unprecedented demographic, political, economic and social changes and the intensification of flows and movements through rural areas have rendered obsolete the disciplinary and action frameworks that have been mobilized thus far. These dynamics raise valid and concrete questions about the modes of exploitation, production and reproduction of resources, their appropriation and their use. They call for a relook at the distribution of wealth, the organization of the supply of agricultural products, flows between cities and the countryside, and availability of infrastructure. They call for a revamping of land-use policies and for tax reforms as well as for the reorganization of administrations and services, and of the support of the agricultural sector, etc.

While accompanying the countries of the Global South as they became independent and driven by the goal of helping them catch up economically and socially, the ideology of development was initially based on the paradigm of the welfare state. However, beginning in the 1980s, the watchwords promoted by international institutions within the framework of the Washington Consensus called for

1. Used here and in the rest of the book in its meaning of the French word *territoire*, which encompasses a broader scope – including that of a social construct – than that normally attributed to it in English. See also Foreword to this book by Camilla Toulmin, Box 1.1 in this chapter and Caron (2015).

the disengagement of States. Justified by the political failures or economic bankruptcies of some States, they were also fed by the ideology of popular participation, coupled with demands for democracy and the need to strengthen civil society institutions. In this context, 'the promotion of local development and the policies of decentralization [...] are based on the hypothesis that relations of proximity will better serve the needs of local populations' (Tonneau, 2003). This is especially true in the case of the management of rural areas, for which an abundant body of literature reveals the benefits of increased involvement of local actors, participants and stakeholders (d'Aquino, 2002; Benoît *et al.*, 2006; de Janvry and Sadoulet, 2007; OECD, FAO, UNCDF, 2016). However, some observers did note the limits of participatory democracy and the risks of its instrumentalization.

The need for new regulations emerged in the late 1990s at both local and global levels. The uncertainty that arose about the future – which had long been assumed as necessarily better – and the multiplicity of centres and forms of decision making forged a new context for action. The risks of imbalances that could result from a sole reliance on an extremely volatile – and supposedly 'self regulatory' – market began raising the issue of other ways of guiding transformations in society and the agricultural sector. Even if it remains a political invention, the notion of the public good seemed to make sense and gained rapid and wide acceptance.

This quest for the public good is being accompanied by a rediscovery of the places and the institutional forms necessary for its promotion, not only at the global scale (e.g., Paris Agreement on climate change and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development) but also at the local level. At the local level, the State, with its intention of disengaging itself, seeks replacements to stimulate initiatives, guarantee the supply or preservation of public goods, and solve emerging problems. Public action is in search of collective action.

Going beyond the reductive acceptations of 'good governance' and 'good practices', new forms of governance must be invented, based on original ways of regulating fragmented social systems. For example, the management of rural spaces and living resources brings together a set of actors with different objectives in a flexible system that has very little or no hierarchy (Soulard, 1999; Perrier-Cornet, 2002). In this sector as in others, the complexity of the issues involved, the reduction of the means of action and the fragmentation of actors and actions undermine the legitimacy of public actors because of their poor ability to resolve emerging problems. Scientists find themselves in the same boat: the assurance of experts and technicians is belied and gives rise to controversies and criticisms of scientific results (Theys and Kalaora, 1992; Godard, 2001, 1993).

This fragmentation of stakes and powers calls for increasingly complex mechanisms of non-hierarchical coordination and arbitration, whether to solve problems of health, the environment, local economics, or those resulting from exclusion, etc. We move from a goal of government of rural spaces by a single authority to a set of governance processes in which all the actors involved exert a part of this now-shared authority, one that is therefore difficult to grasp. Power relations seem to be supplemented, and sometimes replaced, by new forms of negotiated solidarity (Godard, 1993; Lascoumes,

1994) (professional, territorial, of neighbourhood, of class, of user communities, of common interests, etc.). The territory appears to be an eminently suitable field of application of these new processes of governance.

THE TERRITORY: A USEFUL NOTION BECAUSE OF ITS CAPACITY TO ACT ON REGULATIONS?

The territory makes it possible to understand sustainable development in an appropriate way (Zuindeau, 2010). Irrespective of its size or scale, it promotes the integration of different stakes and activities. The territory and territorial development, understood as the 'capacity of the actors located in a territory to exercise control over its changes and its future' (Deffontaines *et al.*, 2001), are being widely promoted today. It is even surprising to see this reading of the term, much broader in scope than its conventional and specific meaning in English (Caron, 2015), emerge in certain studies in English (Quan, 2008), sometimes via a detour to studies by Latin American colleagues (Schejtman and Berdegué, 2004; Sepúlveda *et al.*, 2003) who came to it from literature in French (Box 1.1 'Landscape' – E. Torquebiau).

In the sense of a social construct (Brunet *et al.*, 1992; Lévy, 1999), the territory – endowed with a historical root, reflecting the identity, including the symbolic identity, of a group (Lévy and Lussault, 2003; Di Méo and Buléon, 2005) – emerges as an essential element of new modes of action resulting from the weakening of hierarchical coordination. The changes observed within territories are the result of the advent of new actors, of the evolution of the State's role and of the tensions resulting from confrontations between actors.

Furthermore, and thanks to the ambiguities inherent in the interest it evinces, the territory imposes itself as framework for coordination between multiple and fragmented actors in situations of asymmetry and with divergent interests. It is a space for harmonizing various objectives (Gumuchian *et al.*, 2003), local as well as global. For some, it is an arena of sustainable development because of its capacity to coordinate multiple actors to define together the orientations to pursue. It is also a space for negotiation (d'Aquino, 2002) for finding coherence between the dynamics of local development and public policies. New forms of governance can thus be invented and tested in a territory: coordination between producers and users of a shared resource, and linkages and synergies between different users of the same space. From a sectoral point of view, the territory makes it possible to link the expectations of a social group and the ability of agriculture to respond to them. As for its economic aspects, thanks to the proximity to and types of social capital that constitute it, the territory can also be a form of organization that can internalize certain transaction costs, minimize economic risks, facilitate learning processes, leverage traditional know-how and knowledge, and ensure quality control of a product or a form of production. These characteristics make it a veritable asset of the production process (Angeon *et al.*, 2006; Pecqueur, 2004; Gumuchian and Pecqueur, 2007; Courlet and Pecqueur, 1992; Boucher, 2004). Indeed, the territory itself becomes a resource. And territorial dynamics themselves become factors of change, modifying social processes and actor

behaviour, for example, as in the case of geographical indications for agricultural products. They lead scientists to renew concepts and analytical frameworks in a way specific to each discipline, such as for agronomy (Caron, 2005).

But is the territory just a portion of space demarcated by its boundaries? A framework for action? A space for organizing production? A marker of past evolutions or a set of resources? The term conceals a diversity of objectives and intentions, encompassing both the administrative territory and the administrative action that takes place in it; the territory promoted or decreed by the State as the site of a project to be built; and the territory constituted around a collective action and to which a sense of identity is attached (Antheaume and Giraut, 2005).

Going beyond this convenient polysemy, most authors agree in emphasizing the feeling of identity expressed by a territory's inhabitants and the existence of institutions that ascribe it with meaning and provide it with governance. Vanier (2009) thus defines it as a 'set of processes undertaken by systems of actors [...], by social and political organizations, by *ad hoc* mechanisms and procedures, by power relations and generated tensions, by economic and structural determinants, by existing generic configurations and/or specific emerging configurations.' It becomes a processor of change. A territory is well and truly governed. That is what makes it a territory: there exists a set of coordinations to regulate a fragmented social system and to act or react to the transformations taking place. The governance of a territory thus makes it possible, or not, to debate the ways and means of sustainable development, of which it is, at the same time, both the vector and the consequence.

Furthermore, emerging territorial forms can be regarded as the beginnings of new organizational models capable of providing answers to a particular problem and able to be leveraged, potentially from a perspective of sustainable development, on a wider scale. These various elements make the territory into a regulatory entity (Boyer, 1986), in the same way as the State or the market, at the interface between collective action and public action and linking local dynamics to global ones (Caron, 2011). It can stimulate local initiatives in a perspective of development, including at more encompassing scales and with impacts at a global level, drawing inspiration from elsewhere or involving the territorial actors in wider initiatives. In an essay calling for the conception of inter-territoriality, Vanier (2008) describes the territory as a 'space socially constructed and appropriated to the point of constituting, at the same time, an identity referent, a regulatory framework and a delimited arena for public action.'

In the agriculture and forestry domain, this growing interest in the territory is driven by a preoccupation to take spatial levels of organization into account that are more encompassing than the level at which the domain's practices are implemented, whether or not they concern factors that influence decision making or induced effects, especially environmental ones. This interest manifests in the English literature by the emergence of a similar terminology. We sometimes speak of the 'landscape' (landscape research, global landscape forum, etc.). However, the notion of territory is distinguished, on the one hand, by the potential multiplicity of scales to which it refers and, on the other, by its social and institutional dimension – both visual and ecological. This is what led David Nabarro, adviser to the UN Secretary-General, to refer to the 'peoplescape'.