

Projet SAVARID

Agence Nationale pour la Recherche (ANR)

(2011-2015)

Dans le cadre des appels à projets de l'ANR, le laboratoire PRODIG (CNRS) a associé des membres du CREDESPO à une proposition de collaboration scientifique internationale relative aux Peace Parks d'Afrique australe et plus spécifiquement orientée sur la zone de Hwange (Zimbabwe).

La réponse positive à ce projet qui porte précisément sur les « effets de l'augmentation de l'aridité et de la fréquence des sécheresses sur les systèmes socio-écologiques de savane dépendant de la biodiversité: scénarios exploratoires pour une aire protégée contrainte par l'eau de surface » est parvenue en septembre 2011. Il a pour but d'étudier les effets de l'aridification, anticipée en Afrique australe en raison des changements climatiques, sur la durabilité des anthropo-écosystèmes de savanes en périphérie des aires protégées.

Notre centre est donc partie prenante de cette recherche en partenariat avec d'autres laboratoires nationaux et internationaux dans un groupe de travail n° 4 consacré aux « pratiques humaines », sous la responsabilité scientifique de Nadia Belaidi, Prodig et chercheure associée au CREDESPO.

Notre démarche visera à constituer un corpus le plus complet possible non seulement des textes juridiques organisant le parc de Hwange (et par extension celui des zones limitrophes notamment le KAZA-TFCA dont le traité constitutif a été signé à l'été 2011) mais également la recension des pratiques et coutumes associées à la gestion/conservation/transmission des milieux naturels par les populations locales, l'ensemble étant inscrit dans un contexte historique et spatial évolutif dont la prise en compte sera également essentielle à la compréhension des relations entre les hommes et entre les hommes et la nature, entendue dans sa définition la plus large.

Des recherches bibliographiques ainsi que des missions de terrain sont prévues sur les quatre années de ce projet.

Les membres du Credespo associés à ce projet sont : Jean-Claude Fritz, Professeur émérite, Science politique, Raphaël Porteilla, Maître de conférences en Science politique, HDR, Julie Canovas, doctorante et Julien Barbosa, doctorant.

La problématique du projet est présentée en détail ci-dessous en anglais.

The growing number of complex socio-ecological crisis (Klare 2002, Adams 2004, White 2008, Faber 2008) and the progress on sciences (Costanza et al 2007, Steffen et al 2007) broke consciousness towards the freaks to environment. Biodiversity has now emerged as a central element to consider in the political and legal framework at the international environmental level. At stake in the field of development and the interaction of ecological and societal (social) processes are particularly discernible in southern Africa, notably in the area of Hwange (Zimbabwe) of a striking specificity and diversity/heterogeneity.

This area shows (quite) unique characteristics, when wishing to study the indicated problematic in relation to its history and its geography. If we consider space, it must be studied in a double reference, (first) as a sub-region of the sovereign State of Zimbabwe, thus a specific space of institutional reference, and then, as one element of a complex ecosystematical ensemble (whole), spreading across the borders principally over the Okavango area and the upper part of the Zambezi basin.

The acknowledgment of the exceptionally ecological interest of that unity (ensemble) is at the roots of the working out of a "Peace Park" (Ali 2007), the KAZA. The will to implement such a project reveals the taking into consideration of the potential of conservation and development on such of considerable superficiality, but it also leads to confront numerous challenges, which can only be fully understood by putting them back in the perspective of the historical dynamic of the region : plurality of colonial powers (no less than five), indetermination of the (political) borders (which led to territorial conflicts in which the International Court of Justice (ICJ) had recently to intervene), heterogeneity of administration regimes practised by the same colonial power (Beinart & Lotte 2009) (from protectorate to settlers colonization on the case of Great Britain). The transfer to Germany of the Caprivi strips at the end of the XIX^e century is highly significant since it contributed to the fragmentation of one ecological and social space, blocking the preexisting dynamics of circulation and breaking the bonds existing inside established societal and ecological ensembles.

Moreover complexity, diversity and heterogeneity have been affected by the struggles for decolonization which intervened in conflicting and belated circumstances compared to most of the rest of south of Sahara Africa, with considerable destructions and perturbations affecting human societies and biodiversity (Fritz J-C & G 1983, Fritz J-C 1991). The post-colonial history of several States area is comparatively brief, if we consider Francophone Africa (50 years) against 30 years for Zimbabwe, 20 for Namibia, 35, 30 or barely 10 for Angola according to institutional or political criteria used for defining.

The legal framework includes a set of international, regional, national, sometimes local texts (instruments), also the practices and customs as they have been inherited, and as they survived through their evolution (D'Engelbronner-Kolff et al 1998, Fritz J-C, G, & Porteilla 1999, Hinz 2003, Oomen 2005, Berkes 2008). Therefore the reflexion must on that field take into consideration not only what is classically called the juridical "diversity" but also the notion of juridical "pluralism". To the question of hierarchisation/autonomisation of the juridical framework we have to add the diversity of the legal fields considered. Beyond the general debates on the notions of "sovereignty", "governance" and "regulation" (Miles et al 2002, Adams & Mulligan 2003), with all the theoretical and practical questions they include, it is a whole set of fields we have to consider, not forgetting their eventual incoherences and contradictions : the Environmental Law of course, but also the

political and administrative structure, the Land Law, the Development Law and the instruments of international cooperation whose internationally proclaimed purpose is to uphold (and realize) : welfare, peace and the protection of a healthy environment to leave (in all its richness) to the future generations. It is only with this in mind that we gave to a study and the potential and ambiguities of the Peace Parks, and specifically of KAZA in the area considered, all its pertinence.

Problematic

If the weight of the interests and of the balance of powers is omnipresent in the organization of human societies, the system of values also (McMurtry 2002, Mander & Tauli-Corpus 2005, Boutelet & Fritz 2005, Belaïdi 2008, Belaïdi 2011), too often forgotten or marginalized has a considerable influence: that is very obvious in many “non-occidental” societies and particularly for the “indigenous peoples”. The United Nations Organization has been founded on this (very) basis: the defense of certain values. The preambles of several legal instruments concerning the questions of environment and development have, at least during a certain period, reinvoiced with a special stress those proclaimed values (all turning around the ideas of justice, development, peace, cooperation, responsibility and accountability towards the environment and the future generations) (Jonas 1990, Brown Weiss 1993, Shrader-Frechette 2002). These values lead to the affirmation of certain principles.

The fight for the protection of biodiversity is inscribed in the heart of this vision as a key-element of the Human Rights in all their dimensions: personals, collectives touching the Humanity as a whole, with a full conscience of its being part of the planet and the cosmos. The principles attached to the quoted values must therefore promote an environmental justice (Low & Gleeson 1998, Miller & Westra 2002, Brechin et al 2003, Agyeman et al 2003, Boutelet & Olivier 2009), logically uniting social justice and ecological justice (“in” and “towards” nature). The notions of social and ecological justice are convergent towards a double approach of the sharing of the resources and of their protection, both quantitative and qualitative. The interactions are put in the forefront in a global perspective, strengthen the resilience and the resistance, in the socio-ecological system, by integrating the logics of cooperation and mutualism, sometimes underestimated in an economical context where the idea of competition is too often considered as the only possible reference, due to an ahistorical and asocial approach. Therefore, the important of the regional history cannot be underestimated (Ranger 1999, Alexander et al 2000, Pikirayi 2001, Alexander 2006).

The values discussed above are the structuring basis of environmental law and environmental policy and ought to appear as their guiding principles. However their writing down may present a character of generality and abstraction; that might at the best drainer the tenor completely, at the worse lead to a complete perversion of their initial meaning (Fritz G. 1997, Jasanoff 2004, Gulbrandsen 2008, Gupta & Van Der Zaag 2009).

To prevent any such misconstruction, we have to introduce into their analysis the term of contextualization, both in time and space. Only a critical reflexion (way of thinking) on the precise meaning of notions (governance, regulation, sustainable development, environmentality (Agrawal 2005), participation, etc.) or of strategies of management (Goldman 1998, Guruswamy & McNeely 1998, Hulme & Murphree 2001, Lockwood et al 2006) (Environmental Impact Assessment, Adaptive Integrated Management etc.) is able to show their accuracies and their limitations, but also to reveal the misunderstandings and conflicts that the procedures of evaluation adopted may engender

regarding both their efficiency and the signification of these policies. The reflexion on certain imprecise and eventually changing spaces (corridors, buffer zones, safari areas, trust areas, wilderness, etc.) must be conducted to take into full account the reality of the ecological and socio-political changes and better understand their dynamics and their interactions. The scientific concept on the legal categories (environmental security (Dalby 2002, Pirages & Degeest 2004), heritage, etc.) have to be reevaluated in order to make place for a certain flexibility necessary to apprehend the real with all its specificities/singularities, if these categories are to keep their heuristic accuracy.

Fundamental principles with a universal vocation can and must accommodate differences induced by ecological transformation, organizations (particular): differentiated strategies of management of ecosystems are compatibles, or even could reveal themselves better adapted to a progression towards the universal purposes (objectives): (to put it otherwise, the cultural diversity is able to help the biological diversity, and vice versa). That would justify a reframing (starting back at its roots) of the approach of the “endogeneity” (COMPAS 2007, Salleh 2009), marginalized wide the social sciences since several decades in the context of the mondialisation).

The Hwange zone is, in all respects, a remarkable case for a study. It allows to work on a quite atypic experience, conducted in socio-political and economical contexts, apparently masked by strong restraining factors, but comparatively showing interesting results when confronted to the internationally dominant models of management (“man versus nature”, priority to a commercialized gestion, or their hybrid manifestations, avowed or not). It opens the possibility of a “scenarisation” linked to the evolution of certain constraints, but also to certain institutional or social options. Those choices induce in part the resources to be utilized, the modalities of their utilization, the organization of the landscape, the sharing of the resources (Moorsom et al 1995, Bassett & Crummey 2003, Homewood 2005, Amanor & Moyo 2008), (particularly surface water (Hoekstra & Chapagain 2008), vegetation and soils) between the human societies and the rest of nature and inside the human societies between the different groups and individuals who belong to them. The socio-ecological dynamics are difficult to figure out for, much too often the approaches and the instruments used to apprehend them are rigid and inappropriate, which is due to the confusion theory/abstraction and the fragmented visions of the world (Fritz G. 2009). We are left to face a (disjoncted) coexistence of a high level of generalization and particular analyses showing the influence of “reductionism”, or even “atomism”. The cyclical character of the ecological or sociological processes, the spatial mobility sometimes featuring them, lead to another vision of circulation which question certain conceptions of the division in zones or the function of fences and barriers (Fritz-Legendre et al 2000).

Scenarisation

Some scenarios are imaginable in the evolution at midterm of the society and at short term for the ecology, but they will not be dealt with here in a deeper way, only evoked and for two kinds of reasons. The first one is their fundamental contradiction with the human rights, the rights of the peoples, and those of the humanity (conceived as integrated in the nature), because their ethical and normative aspects. The second is their unsustainability (Hossay 2006), local as well as global. The extermination of the populations, their massive expulsion, their confining inside “reserves”, a new conquest of lands by agents of a “transnational” society, as well as the massive conversion of the ecosystems due to the introduction of a system of monocultures often implying a high water consumption are in contradiction with the given aims and the proclaimed principles.

At least three kinds of scenarios are imaginable according to the different territorial restructuring and socio-political reorganizations. The first one is linked to the (current) evolution of the region of North Matabeleland, putting the stress on the impact of climate change, soil aridity and water resources on the socio-ecological systems depending of the strategies choices made on the matter of development. The transformations in the Zambezi Valley around Victoria Falls, the water filling of the Gwayi River dam, the global interconnection of the province with the regional capital of Bulawayo are as many different potential processes likely to affect, following the political and management options, the complementarity on the imbalance of the internal structure. The politico-administrative decentralization and the resulting effective degree of local autonomy are the key factors of this scenario.

The second one is viewed in connection with the national political approach of sustainable development and environmental justice. It implies both the necessity to pursue the local experience of Hwange (and neighboring parks and areas) and to draw its lessons for the national management of natural resources. The matter is not to transpose or transfer the experience anywhere else, which anyway would not be in accordance to the given social or ecological realities, the diversity and the geographical localization of the concerned areas. However, the objectives and the basic principles, and even some proceedings could well inspire a national policy of management, affording the opportunity to conciliate the differentiation of the local management and the maintained coherence of the essential finalities.

The third scenario situates the socio-ecological system of Hwange inside the framework of a larger territorial restructuring, stretching with the construction of the Peace Park of KaZa across the state borders. The cultural and ecological diversity of this ensemble constitute a considerable potential as well as a daring challenge (Kareiva & Levin 2003, Pellow & Brulle 2005, Pezzullo & Sandler 2007) because of the different historical evolutions and politico-administrative particularities of the concerned States. So the scope of this project is innovative and ambitious, but its carrying out is very demanding, requiring a global multidisciplinary approach of the totality of the considered zone, the analysis of the different natural elements included and their connection with the policies of each different State, so as to ensure that globally the management of the transformations, whether imposed or freely determined remains in conformity with the pursued objectives.

Those scenarios are not necessarily in contradictions but they call for different priorities of the levels of analysis, specific modes of articulation of the answers to the socio-ecological dynamics, the specific dimensions in time or space, not to forget the hierarchisation, particular to each scenario, of the ends in view.