The living in the socioecological transition 
from social controversies to research practices

Contributions of Environmental social sciences

“The time of the ecological transition” has come, and the expression has already been adopted in the fields of energy and economic policies. In addition to many existing academic works on these subjects, we must acknowledge the growing share of jobs associated with eco-activities (CGDD, 2016) and the management of this ecological transition by public policies and through legislation (e.g. the Energy Transition for Green Growth Act adopted on August 2015 by the French Council for Ecological Transition).

The approach of these transitional dynamics should not be limited to the energy, resource and economic themes. The social and environmental changes that they imply are transverse phenomena that require the mobilization of a variety of methodological tools in order to grasp all their components, be they normative, symbolic or cognitive, in all their dimensions in particular collective and individual. It is therefore all the social sciences of the environment that must contribute to question this transition which presents itself as "the opportunity to relaunch the search for a new articulation between nature and culture and to explore the multiple social phenomena that predict, in a disordered and contradictory way, the future of society" (Audet, 2015 : 11).

There are different ways to address this transition, the most frequent of which remains focused on the energy theme. This symposium proposes to shift this view in order to question the transformations of the nonhuman living from three angles: the new ways of categorizing the living and the practices associated with them; the transformations of the public space through the publicization of these new categorizations and practices; and our methods to grasp the living in the ecological transition. More generally, the aim of this symposium is to contribute to the analysis of the dynamics of contemporary social transformations of the living by extending the work on social and ecological change developed by social sciences research teams such as the Spaces and Societies team (UMR ESO CNRS) which brings this project.

Three areas of reflection will be specifically addressed:

1. New categorizations of the living and associated practices at the time of the socioecological transition and, more broadly, the evolution of relationships with the living through, for example, the controversy about livestock or the assignment of rights or values to animals, plants or natural entities, such as the status of Invasive Alien Species or the greening of cities;
2. The transformations of the public space related to the role given to the living in the socioecological transition: the way in which these questions are inscribed, shaped, debated and how they recompose the public and private spheres through emotions and collective mobilizations, for instance;
3. The impact of works about the living and public space on research practices, on the analysis of social and environmental change, and on the roles of researchers in society.
1. Transformations of living things

The objective of this axis is to question the socioecological transition in terms of a transformation of the relation to the living. Until the 1960s, this relationship to the living in our occidental and industrialised society was essentially thought in relation with productive activities where the living was known through the wild / domestic dichotomy. Today, this reading grid has gradually faded (Micoud, 2010): controversies over farm animals, hunting practices, the reintroduction of protected species, the multiplication of super-predators, genetic manipulations, made this categorization of the living animal and plant becoming fuzzy and object of social tensions. In addition, we can see through the notions of "critical zones", the Gaia hypothesis (Latour, 2016) or reflections about the anthropocene, a change in the very conception of our understanding of the living and our interdependencies with it.

This axis will allow questioning the new forms of categorization of the living and their related practices, to interrogate the features and the meanings of the status evolution of the living, but also the tensioning of these new categorizations between different social groups. For this purpose, the expected contributions will address:

- Environmental measures (management plan, restoration or control programs, etc.) through which status and roles are assigned to animals and plants referring to new forms of categorization of the living,
- Knowledge mobilized through these new categorizations and how they coexist with other categorizations, between hybridization, appropriation and resistance - how to think the diversity of relationships to the living while the globalization of environmental issues now confronts multiple ways of conceiving this relationship?
- The role of moral or sensitive commitments particularly carried out by activists and mobilized in the recognition of new categorization registers.

2. Transformations of public space

The aim of this axis is to think about the link between the living and the public space in the ecological transition. Studies such as those carried out in the 1990s by P. Lascoumes or M. Janicke showed the process by which environmental issues were originated changes in the public policy decision-making process, toward a broader territorialized decision building new interdependencies between actors and territories. At the same time, civil society acquired a legitimacy to make demands in public space, particularly through collective mobilizations, which became an accepted form of expression of citizenship, referring to debates around the emergence of a new democratic model (Bacqué and Sintomer, 2011).

In this perspective, the expected communications will show the contribution of the nonhuman living to this transformation of the public space by focusing on the publicization processes of the stakes related to this nonhuman living. In particular, they will examine the processes by which environmental claims or sensitivities shift from the private sphere to the public sphere and vice versa. We thus expect contributions questioning:

- The gradual process of international, European or national adjustments between the circulation of injunctions and models of action on the living from public actors, and their appropriation by civil society, sometimes with forms of resistance,
- The role of emotions, sensitivities or specific tools, such as digital technologies, in collective mobilizations and, more particularly, their role in the collective construction of claims or public action concerning the living things,
- The material transformations of the public space by the arrival of the non-human living through the vegetalization or the animalization of the city, from the point of view of collective, militant or public actions, as well as those of the inhabitants.

### 3. Transformation of research practices

The objective of this axis is to qualify and question the effects of these previous developments on the dynamics of research in the social sciences and especially in sociology. The environmental theme and the emergence of new fields such as transitions or environmental humanities, which question the living, overturn the instituted disciplinary categories and the internal logics of the disciplines: it questions both the institutional, cognitive and methodological dynamics of the construction and the legitimization of knowledge.

We will discuss socioecological changes, in their relation to the living, within this process of renewal of scientific practices. This concerns the activity of researchers, increasingly subject to interdisciplinary and citizen science imperatives, but also their interactions with the actors of the social and environmental changes they are studying. It also concerns the formalization and interlinking of their results with the knowledge produced by others, individuals or organizations, both in the context of global knowledge sharing and in the multiplication of local initiatives.

We propose to examine the evolution of research practices within the following themes:

- The contribution of research streams studying the living, such as environmental humanities or transitions studies and their effects on research dynamics, in particular concerning the new hierarchies of disciplines, the research axes in the environmental social sciences and especially the methodologies derived therefrom,

- The transformations of research practices on the living caused by the growing importance of certain unifying themes in the social sciences of the environment, mainly interdisciplinarity, complexity, uncertainty or innovation,

- The new postures of researchers, both in terms of acculturation to the diversity and complexity of the issues they are studying, as well as their involvement in research objects, for example in a logic of "involved" research (Jollivet, 2015),

- The evolution of research process on the living in relation to social and ecological transition, the generalization of participatory approaches and the dynamics of citizen science.

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**Symposium organization:**
- Proposals for oral presentation or poster sessions should be submitted by December 15, 2017, with a length of 8,000 to 10,000 characters. They must be sent to: transvivant@sciencesconf.org
- Contributions will be in French or in English. Selected contributors could send their visual presentation (e.g. slides) two weeks before the symposium for translation in French. The presentation could be whether in French or in English.
- The symposium will take place in three local institutions: at Agrocampus Ouest and in Rennes 1 and Rennes 2 University.
Scientific comity:
- Ridha Abdouleh, sociologist, University of Sfax, Tunisia
- Anne Atlan, ecologist, CNRS, UMR 6590, ESO-Rennes, France
- René Audet, sociologist, UQAM, Canada
- Rémi Barbier, sociologist, ENGEES, Strasbourg, France
- Guilherme C. Borges, psychosociologist, Fondation Oswaldo Cruz, Brasil
- Philippe Boudu, sociologist, UMR ESO-Rennes, Agrocampus Ouest, France
- Antoine Doré, sociologist, INRA, UMR 1248 Agir, France
- Corinne Gendron, sociologist, UQAM, Canada
- Nathalie Hervé-Fournereau, lawyer, CNRS, UMR 6262 IODE, France
- Marie Jacqué, Sociologist, UMR 151 IRD-AMU, LPED, France
- Fabienne Joliet, Geographer, Agrocampus Ouest, UMR CNRS ESO, France
- Sylvie Ollitrault, political science, CNRS, UMR 6051-ARENE, France
- Véronique Van Tilbeurgh, Sociologist, UMR 6590, ESO-Rennes, France

Informations:
- Response to the proposals: February 15, 2018
- The symposium will be held in Rennes, June 20 to 22, 2018.

Website: http://transvivant.sciencesconf.org