



## **Resilience and renewal of public policies for flood risk management. Between globalized approach and localized stakes. Is there still a place for threat ?**

BERTRAND BALDET

University Toulouse 1, LEREPS, Toulouse, France (bertrand.baldet@univ-tlse1.fr)

The uncertainties due to climate changes are often evoked in order to explain the increase of natural threats. This study aims to explore the dynamics that are at work within the systems of actors dealing with policies for flood risk management and to introduce the evolutions of public action in this field. We will be showing that there are two different levels of changes. The first mutation is based on the integration of (...). This evolution, albeit it isn't specific with policies for flood risk management, contributes nevertheless to a renewal recognition of the threat. Secondly, we will indicate that the approach of flood risk changed by itself, it is more « including ». In nowadays, to be able to understand natural risk one needs a positioning all-embracing which is not confined to the hydraulic dimension. To be able to manage the threat one needs to reconsider all the activities of the valley and to put forward a new approach of the natural environment.

In order to explain that changes, we will use the resilience concept. In outline, resilience is defined "as the measure of a part of system's capacity to absorb and recover from occurrence of a hazardous event" (Timmerman). This concept allows to describe the system stability and the capacity to confront change and to manage uncertainty. The uncertainties due to climate change, the troubles to identify the hazards, the multiplicity of representations about the stakes that have to be protected are a lot of factors which make the flood risk management more complex and lead the system of actors to regular adaptations.

This analysis is based on a ethnographic study, we met local government actors, ecological associations, riverside residents associations, experts.... These actors have to manage the floods of the « Touch ». This river is located in south of France, it crosses his valley (...) before to reach the Garonne near to Toulouse.

An historic (view) of the management of the river will lead us to understand the current situation and to show the auto-organisation capacity of the system. We suggest by « system » a whole set of elements localised in the valley. So, we refer to social, economical, politic, technic and natural factors involved with the flood risk management.

For a long time, the « Touch » was only considered like a « irrigating canal ». Beforehand, it crossed only farmlands and his management was entrusted to a riverside residents farmers association. However, during the last decades, the zoning of the downstream banks had changed and some villages (d'autrefois) were been densely urbanized and are now considered as great towns. So, the approach of the threat along the river was renewed. According the new configuration, an intercommunity union was created – which gather together all the districts crossed by the Touch – and substituted the farmers association. The approach of flood risk was moved : the management of the threat was « private » but with the creation of the intercommunity union became « political » and « public ». Nowadays, the main stake is to operate a balanced management of the flood risk in order to allocate a well-proportioned constraints. The banks zoning – an agricultural upstream and an urbanized downstream – cause an opposition between farming world which has to be defend and urban population which needs protection. The public policies for flood risk management have to juggle between various requirements and deal with conflicting interests – we will see that public policies try to rethink agricultural practices (a decrease of irrigation, planting hedges...) and urbanization dynamics.

The concept of resilience can explain the activities of the intercommunity union and the practices of the actors around it. The working of this organization based on a balanced representation of the riverside cities – every city is represented by two delegates whatever the size of the city – allows the integration of various stakes (agricultural, environmental, urban...). In spite of heterogeneous situations – (...) – we will see that the global approach of the valley permits the integration of risk, the spreading of the culture of risk and allows the auto-organization of the system.