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Procedural justice in extreme events management: what challenge for climate change adaptation strategies?

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Abstract (500 words maximum):

Although there are plans for adaptation to climate change in Europe (EU Adaptation Strategy, 2021) and in France (PNACC 2011-2015; PNACC 2018-2022), adaptation initiatives are driven at the local level, by the national authorities and the local authorities (Bertrand, 2013; Bertrand & Richard, 2014). Local action is justified by the socio-spatial characteristics that lead *in situ* forms of adaptation (Huitema et al., 2016). In the face of inevitable extreme events, local action builds regeneration development projects in at risk areas. Those projects severely limit construction, relocate activities and develop shock-coping functions (landscaped parks, urban gardens). Although they aimed at people safety, these initiatives generate opposition from communities. They raise questions of justice and challenge the acceptability of projects and policies (Gralepois, 2021; Rode, 2008, 2010).

Based on two French case studies, Ault (Somme) and Blois (Loir et Cher), the paper is proposed for axis 3 'Management, public policies, governance and strategy'. It is based on the SOLARIS project (SOLidarity in climate change adaptation policies), part of the Climate SOLSTICE JPI (2021-2024). SOLARIS questions the socio-spatial injustices linked to the implementation of extreme hydrological risk management policies, in a context of adaptation to climate change.



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The proposal analyses how local institutions integrate the mobilisation of inhabitants and communities opposed to adaptation initiatives in the face of extreme events. Exposed to severe risks (coastline reduction for one, and flood risk for the other), these case studies develop reconversion projects based on mandatory risk management documents which strongly constrain the possibilities of benefits for economic development.

The issues of justice raised by the inhabitants slow down the progress of the projects (degradations, spontaneous actions, legal recourse, public speaking out...). If certain types of argument are heard and integrated, other protests do not seem to influence the development. The literature and the first results of SOLARIS show that these arguments are made by marginalised people with few resources and powers. Their claims are hardly understood. These mobilisations, whether legitimised or delegitimised, threaten adaptation policies and underline the necessity to ground the concept of justice into concrete local policies and procedures.

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