UNIVERSITÉ DES SCIENCES ET TECHNOLGIES DE LILLE
Faculté des Sciences Économiques et Sociales

THE GOVERNANCE OF ECOTOURISM AS A SOCIALLY INNOVATIVE FORCE FOR PAVING THE WAY FOR MORE SUSTAINABLE PATHS: THE MORVAN REGIONAL PARK CASE

THÈSE
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A mi familia querida

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ABBREVIATIONS

4D	Dossiers et débats pour le développement durable
ADEME	Agence de l'environnement et de la maîtrise de l'énergie
AFE	Association française d'écotourisme
AFIT	Agence française de l'ingénierie touristique
AFP	Agence France presse
AME	Autun Morvan Ecologie
ANIT	Agence nationale pour l'information touristique
ANVC	Agence nationale pour les chèques vacances
AREM	Association pour la randonnée équestre en Morvan
ASCI	Emerald network of areas of special conservation interest
ATEN	Atelier technique des espaces naturels
ATES	Association pour le tourisme équitable et solidaire
CAP	Common agricultural policy
CC	Communautés de communes
CDT	Comité départemental du tourisme
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CEDENOR	Centre de déchets non recyclables
CEMAT	Conference of Ministers responsible for regional/spatial planning
CEN	Consevatoire des espaces naturels
CFDD	Commision française du développement durable
CFP	Common fisheries policy
CGCD	Conseil général de la Côte d'Or
CGN	Conseil général de la Nièvre
CGY	Conseil général de l'Yonne
CIACT	Comité interministériel d'aménagement et de compétitivité des territoires
CIADT	Comité interministériel pour l'aménagement et le développement du territoire
CIDD	Comité interministériel pour le développement durable
CIEN	Comité interministériel de l'environnement
CIES	Commission interministérielle de lutte contre l'effet de serre
CIP	Competitiveness and innovation programme
CIPRNM	Comité interministériel de prévention des risques naturels majeurs
CNDD	Conseil national du développement durable
CORP	Conseil d'orientation, recherche et prospective
COVED	Société de collecte valorisation énergie, déchet
CPER	Contrat de plan État-Région
CPIE	Centres permanents d'initiatives pour l'environnement
CPTR	Conférence permanente du tourisme rural
CTE	Contrats territoriaux d'exploitation
CRB	Conseil régional de Bourgogne
CRT	Comité régional du tourisme
CV	Communautés des villes
DATAR	Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale
DDT	Direction du tourisme
DIACT	Délégation interministérielle à l'aménagement compétitif des territoires
DIREN	Direction régionale de l'environnement
DREAL	Direction régionale de l'environnement, de l'aménagement et du logement
EAA	Ecotourism association of Australia
EAFRD	European agricultural fund for rural development
EAGGF	European agriculture guidance and guarantee fund
EAGF	European agriculture guarantee fund
EAP	Environmental action programme
EC	European commission

ECFST	European charter for sustainable tourism in protected areas
EDEN	European destinations of excellence
EEB	European environmental bureau
EFF	European fisheries fund
EPCI	Établissement public de coopération intercommunale
ERDF	European regional development fund
ESF	European social fund
EU SDS	European Union sustainable development strategy
EU	European Union
EUROPARC	Federation of national and nature parks of Europe
FEMS	Fédération des écomusées et des musées de société
FFRP	Fédération française de randonnée pédestre
FNCRT	Fédération nationale des comités régionaux de tourisme
FNE	France nature environnement
FNGF	Fédération nationale des gîtes de France
FPNRF	Fédération des parcs naturels régionaux de France
GDS	Global distribution system
GFSFM	Groupement forestier pour la sauvegarde de feuillus du Morvan
GR	Grand randonnée
ICLEI	International council on local environmental initiatives
ICSU	International council of scientific unions
IIED	International institute for the environment and development
INSEE	Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques
IMF	International monetary fund
IPAMAC	Association inter-parcs massif central
IUCN	International union for conservation of nature and natural resources or World Conservation Union.
LA21	Local Agenda 21
LAURE	Loi sur l'air et l'utilisation de rationnelle de l'énergie
LJC	Le journal du centre
LOADDT	Loi d'orientation pour l'aménagement et le développement durable du territoire
LOATR	Loi relative à l'administration territoriale
LRDTR	Loi relative au développement des territories ruraux
LSRU	Loi relative à la solidarité et au renouvellement urbain
MATE	Ministère de l'aménagement du territoire et de l'environnement
MEDD	Ministère de l'écologie et du développement durable.
MEEDDAT	Ministère de l'écologie, de l'énergie, du développement durable et de l'aménagement du territoire
MN3V	Mission nationale vélo routes et voies vertes
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSDS	National sustainable development strategy
OCDE	Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques
ODIT	Observation, développement et ingénierie touristiques
OF-FEE	Office français de la fondation pour l'éducation à l'environnement
ONT	Office national de tourisme
OREB	Observatoire régional de l'environnement en Bourgogne
OTSI	Office de tourisme (OT) - Syndicat d'initiative (SI)
PACA	Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur
PAN	Protected areas networks
PDIPR	Plan départemental des itinéraires de promenades et randonnées
PLU	Plan local d'urbanisme
PNR	Parcs naturels régionaux
PNRM	Parc naturel régional du Morvan
PPDT	Programme pluriannuel de développement touristique
RTD	Research and technological development
SD	Sustainable development

SEA	Single European Act
SCOT	Schéma de cohérence territoriale
SDS	Sustainable development strategy
SNPN	Société nationale de protection de la nature
SPA	Special protection areas
SRDT	Schéma régional de développement du tourisme
TIES	The international ecotourism society
TO	Tour operators
TSG	Tourism sustainability group
UGMN	Union de groupes et ménétriers du Morvan
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations conference on the environment and development
UNDP	United Nations development programme
UNECE	United Nations economic commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations environment programme
UNWTO	United Nations world tourism organisation
VISIT	Voluntary initiatives for sustainability in tourism
WCED	World commission on environment and development
WCTE	World committee on tourism ethics
WTO	World trade organization
WTTC	World travel and tourism council
WWF	World wild fund for nature (WWF, the global conservation organization)
WWOOF	World-wide opportunities on organic farms
ZICO	Zone importante pour la conservation des oiseaux
ZNIEFF	Zone Naturelle d'intérêt faunistque et floristique
ZHII	Zone humide d'importance internationale

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Résumé de la thèse en langue française

Titre : « La gouvernance de l'écotourisme comme force socialement innovante ouvrant la voie à des perspectives plus durables : le cas du Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan »

Mots clés : développement durable, gouvernance, écotourisme, innovation socio-institutionnelle, aires protégées, parcs naturels régionaux, Morvan.

La problématique de la thèse et les questions de recherche

L'objet de cette thèse est d'approfondir la compréhension des interactions complexes entre nature et société. En partageant les préoccupations pressantes des partisans du changement social en faveur d'un développement plus durable, le but est d'élucider le caractère des maillages socio-institutionels qui conduisent à la construction de sociétés plus durables. Nous considérons la crise environnementale contemporaine comme le résultat d'une relation nature-société non durable, et par conséquent nous pensons que l'élaboration des réponses aux problèmes environnementaux majeurs sera nécessairement contingente à l'analyse de la réalité sociétale actuelle.

Le sujet de la thèse a été abordé à la fois sous un angle *théorique*, en construisant des passerelles entre les concepts de développement durable, gouvernance et écotourisme, et d'un point de vue *empirique* par une étude de cas sur le Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan. *L'objectif de cette thèse a été d'examiner le rôle et le contenu de la gouvernance du développement durable via l'analyse de la gouvernance de l'écotourisme et des aires protégées.* Plus précisément, trois questions principales ont guidé cette recherche : a) quel est le rôle de la gouvernance et son trait distinctif dans le processus conduisant à la construction d'une destination d'écotourisme et, de ce fait, en stimulant l'ouverture de voies territoriales plus durables ? ; b) comment la gouvernance modèle-elle la fabrication d'une destination d'écotourisme et encourage-elle (ou non) la durabilité ? ; c) comment les différentes formes de gouvernance sont cristallisées dans des territoires (protégés) durables, et notamment dans le Parc du Morvan ?

Cette thèse se situe dans le débat encore hésitant sur la nécessité de développer des perspectives de recherche interdisciplinaire, et notamment pour réfléchir au développement durable. Elle propose ainsi une approche socio-institutionnelle et territoriale originale pour aborder la problématique du développement durable par le biais de l'écotourisme et des territoires classés comme aires protégées.

L'approche conceptuelle a fait appel à la sociologie économique (Smelser and Swedberg, 1995a; Bourdieu, 2000; Steiner, 1999), à l'institutionnalisme économique et sociologique (Commons, 1934; Veblen 1899; Polanyi, 1944; Hollingsworth and Boyer, 1997; Hodgson, 1998; Söderbaum, 2000; Ramstad, 1986) et aux théories du développement spatial (Swyngedouw, 2005; Moulaert, 2000; Gonzalez and Healey, 2005; Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2008; Moulaert *et al.*, 2010), et aspire à construire un cadre de recherche socio-territorial qui révèle le rôle de la gouvernance, l'encastrement des institutions et la production « path-dependent » des territoires. Les différentes sciences sociales, grâce à leur capacité à situer l'être humain et les dynamiques sociales au centre de la réflexion sur la durabilité, ont beaucoup à dire sur les articulations des mécanismes sociaux, institutionnels, culturels, historiques, politiques et socio-économiques impliqués dans la vie d'un territoire. On pense que ces articulations sur lesquelles cette thèse se fonde offrent des explications intéressantes de la machinerie du contexte écologique contemporain.

D'un point de vue empirique, cette thèse repose sur une analyse intégrant aussi bien l'étude d'informations secondaires qu'une série de entretiens semi-directifs avec des acteurs connectés au territoire examiné *i.e.* leaders politiques, représentantes d'institutions publiques, associations culturelles et environnementales, touristes, communautés locales, micro-entrepreneurs d'écotourisme, résidents, etc. Ces entretiens sont orientés sur les théoriques combinant les différentes dimensions de la gouvernance de la durabilité telles qu'analysées dans les sources théoriques citées pour les différentes disciplines auxquelles on a fait appel. On souligne aussi les activités d'observation, les visites réalisées, les conversations informelles et la découverte (éco)touristique du territoire. On pense que la richesse des résultats empiriques de cette thèse est notamment liée au travail de mise en cohérence et dialogue entre ces différentes sources d'information.

Les concepts clés de la thèse : les liens entre développement durable, gouvernance et écotourisme

Le caractère sociétal de la problématique environnementale et du développement durable
Le concept d'encastrement social de Polanyi (1944) synthétise le point de départ fondamental de cette thèse qui nous a mené vers la construction d'une approche socio-institutionnelle et territoriale du développement durable. Une analyse des travaux des théoriciens sociaux réfléchissant à l'économie comme phénomène social a évoqué les rôles multidimensionnels et multifonctionnels que jouent les interactions sociales dans toute activité économique. Comme l'a souligné Bourdieu (1994, 2000), les structures économiques et les agents économiques sont des constructions sociales qui ne peuvent pas être séparées de l'ensemble de relations sociales qui constituent l'ordre social. A partir de là, le champ économique, modelé par des dynamiques socio-institutionnelles spécifiques, naît d'un ensemble

hétérogène de comportements humains, constructions symboliques et visions du monde, pluralité d'intérêts et mobiles profonds poussant l'action humaine, et ne peut pas être réduit aux intérêts économiques rationnels sans racines historiques.

Pour bien comprendre la production collective de réalités plus ou moins durables selon cette perspective, nous avons ciblé ce que Söderbaum (2000) appelle « la socialité de la problématique environnementale ». D'une part, cette socialité nous renvoie à la reproduction sociale du principe éthique (et de plus en plus biologique…) qui dit que sans écosystèmes sains la vie humaine n'est pas possible. D'autre part, cela signifie que les différentes voies vers l'accomplissement humain devraient être collectivement et démocratiquement construites selon les contraintes écologiques en transformation.

L'action collective et le caractère social de la thématique environnementale ont été interprétés dans cette thèse à partir des concepts de gouvernance et de développement durable, et notamment par l'analyse de l'écotourisme comme pratique sociale et les aires protégées. Le développement durable a été appréhendé en termes sociaux et donc analysé comme une *constellation dynamique de relations de gouvernance dans lesquelles les dimensions socio-économiques et écologiques de la durabilité se mettent en corrélation à travers le temps et à travers en combinant différentes échelles spatiales.* Cette approche se sert d'une lecture de la gouvernance qui souligne sa nature dynamique et sa capacité infinie à s'atteler aux défis de durabilité, renouveler des relations de gouvernance et stimuler l'innovation sociale favorisant des relations société-nature plus durables. C'est ainsi que ce que nous avons appelé *'durabilité socialement encastrée'* est le concept clé qui attribue au développement durable son caractère humain et social distinct. Dans cette tentative, la territorialité des destinations écotouristiques a été choisie comme le focus à partir duquel on réfléchit sur le développement durable et sa gouvernance.

Territorialité et gouvernance du développement durable

Cette thèse discute et confirme l'importance capitale des concepts de territoire et échelle lorsque l'on réfléchit à la territorialité du développement durable. L'approche socio-institutionnelle du développement durable appliquée dans cette thèse mobilise un concept de territoire que ne se limite pas à la dimension géophysique. *Les territoires ont été appréhendés en tant que cristallisations de relations sociales, des agences humaines et des systèmes politico-administratifs dans lesquels la gouvernance de territoires plus petits – avec leurs propres relations sociales – est ancrée dans les relations sociales d'autres plus vastes.* Ainsi, la durabilité de territoires dépendra des types de relations de gouvernance territorialisées et qui seront à leur tour affectées par la réalité géophysique. Dans un contexte multi-scalaire, les relations de gouvernance et par conséquent les territoires s'avèrent comme la matérialisation des multiples et changeantes interactions socio-institutionnelles

emboîtées qui agissent à plusieurs échelles spatiales et niveaux institutionnels. Cela signifie que les territoires sont simultanément affectés par la gouvernance d'autres territoires et qu'ils ont la capacité d'influencer les dynamiques de gouvernance et les institutions d'autres échelles territoriales.

Dans ce panorama multi-scalaire, le niveau de gouvernance locale a été identifié comme central en termes de durabilité. Plus précisément, l'identité des localités, leur culture et leur histoire portent ensemble un potentiel d'innovation socio-institutionnelle considérable, et de ce fait expliquent leur capacité à introduire des changements permettant une transition vers des formes de développement plus durables. De cette façon, on développe une vision de territoire centrée sur une 'place-likeness' des échelles et des territoires qui souligne leur caractère vivant, dynamique et sa nature changeante, portant la capacité de (re)produire de nouvelles échelles de gouvernance dans des horizons temporels différents. La mise en œuvre des trois dimensions du *concept d'innovation sociale* – satisfaction de besoins humains, des changements dans les relations sociales et développement de la capacité sociopolitique (voir Moulaert *et al.,* 2005) – à la lumière de la problématique du développement durable a donné naissance à un concept *d'innovation socio-institutionnelle pour la durabilité territoriale*. Cette innovation sociale fait appel à une *définition collective des voies de développement durable, à une innovation dans la gouvernance du développement durable et à l'amélioration des droits environnementaux – comme une base de droits pour la construction d'une nouvelle citoyenneté environnementale.* Ainsi, l'on peut considérer que des relations socialement innovantes, dans leur affinité indissoluble avec la nature, ont la capacité à produire ce qu'on appelle *« socio-nature embedded scales »* apte à nourrir les agendas de gouvernance des différents territoires avec des objectifs de durabilité et des droits environnementaux. Dans un contexte de *state rescaling* ces « échelles de socio-nature » coexistent et s'entrecroisent avec les dynamiques scalaires de la gouvernance de l'Etat et d'autres institutions.

La gouvernance du développement durable via l'analyse de l'écotourisme et des aires protégées
Nous avons choisi d'explorer les théories sur la gouvernance et le développement durable à partir du prisme de l'écotourisme et des aires protégées, notamment à cause des impératifs environnementaux substantiels auxquels l'écotourisme et les aires protégées se trouvent subordonnés. Etant données les caractéristiques écologiques des aires protégées et le fait que l'écotourisme dépende d'un environnement naturel propre pour assurer sa pratique, un des points de départ essentiels de cette recherche a été l'idée que dans des territoires d'écotourisme la relation société-nature est différente. Plus précisément, on pense que la relation que le gens tricotent collectivement avec l'environnement est plus vigilante, respectueuse, et donc définie par une convivialité et par le soin particulier de la nature. C'est pour cela que ces territoires offrent un contexte excellent pour analyser les défis, les opportunités et les potentiels de gouvernance liés à la problématique du développement durable.

Les aires protégées, sujet de films et des romans, véhiculent simultanément une image esthétique particulière et un symbolisme écologique forts. Suite à la naissance des premiers parcs naturels aux Etats-Unis au cours de la deuxième moitié du dix-neuvième siècle, à partir de la Second Guerre Mondiale, le nombre des aires protégées a considérablement augmenté (Lauchaux, 1980) et leur organisation institutionnelle s'est diversifiée. Plus tard, avec la crise des années 1970, l'apparition du concept du développement durable et l'ubiquité de la problématique environnementale ont renforcé la signification des territoires protégés pour les sociétés. En effet, avec l'industrialisation et l'urbanisation, les espaces naturels sont devenus des refuges pour ceux désirant être en contact avec la nature. C'est dans ce processus que le tourisme, et plus précisément la naissance de l'écotourisme, rejoint notre problématique de recherche. En termes généraux, la littérature sur le tourisme définit l'écotourisme comme un tourisme fondé sur la nature, sensible aux conditions environnementales et sociales, et géré selon des principes du développement durable (Blamey, 2001; Weaver and Lawton, 2007). Ainsi, l'écotourisme repose simultanément sur des écosystèmes purs et singuliers attirant des visiteurs, et par conséquence il dépend d'un système de gouvernance capable de garantir durabilité territoriale à long terme.

L'écotourisme et les aires protégées sont identifiés dans cette thèse en termes de territoires et des pratiques sociales plus durables et une gouvernance favorisant leur durabilité. Au-delà de leur diversité (voir Depraz, 2008), les aires protégées ne sont pas seulement des territoires soumis aux exigences de durabilité plus strictes et régulés par des lois environnementales plus exigeantes si on les compare avec des territoires non classifiés. Mais elles sont en premier lieu des territoires habités et visités par des individus et des groupes qui souhaitent ouvertement leur préservation. Raison pour laquelle, les territoires d'écotourisme sont identifiés comme des arènes privilégiées où on réfléchit et apprend sur les dynamiques socio-institutionnelles qui guident les sociétés vers de modèles de développement plus durables.

Définit sous le prisme de la durabilité, *l'écotourisme se décline comme une pratique sociale multifonctionnelle et multi-dimensionelle impliquant une pluralité d'acteurs entrelacés avec une relation société-nature plus attentive et qui collectivement révèlent de possibles voies pour la production de territoires plus durables*. Entre autres, nous avons abordé la territorialité de l'écotourisme en soulignant la gouvernance de l'écotourisme comme un potentiel à améliorer l'apprentissage collectif, le savoir communautaire et le changement socio-institutionnel pour la durabilité. Dans ce contexte, les destinations d'écotourisme ont été représentées comme des *pépinières d'innovation socio-institutionelle portant le potentiel d'ouvrir des voies de développement plus durables. Elles ont été caractérisées comme étant gouvernées par des relations socio-environnementales plus proactives, capacitantes et durables*.

Le Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan

Le Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan est non seulement un parc, mais aussi une petite montagne rurale qui héberge un site reconnu comme Patrimoine Mondial, plusieurs sites du réseaux Natura 2000 et de nombreux villages pittoresques chargés d'histoire et de vestiges des civilisations qui ont habité ce territoire. En termes géo-physiques, le Morvan, situé au milieu de la Bourgogne, est une région de montagne étendue sur une surface de 513.400 hectares environ. Son système naturel héberge des ravins, des lacs et des fleuves habités par une flore et une faune particulières, ainsi que par des montagnes boisées et des vallées marécageuses. A cause de son altitude et ses sols granitiques, le Morvan a été perçu historiquement comme une sorte d'intrusion géologique, en décalage géographique avec la plaine environnante et les territoires calcaires qui caractérisent la Bourgogne.

D'un point de vue politico-administratif, le Morvan se situe à cheval sur les quatre départements Bourguignons – Côte d'Or, Nièvre, Saône-et-Loire et Yonne. Parmi ces quatre départements, la Nièvre est celui dont la superficie dans le Parc Morvan est la plus importante. Le Morvan rassemble environ 125 communes qui partagent des conditions géo-climatiques et des pratiques agricoles similaires. L'agriculture extensive, la forêt et l'écotourisme sont les activités économiques les plus importantes. En 1970, une partie considérable du Morvan a été classée Parc Naturel Régional. A l'époque, le Morvan comptait trente-trois mille habitants et l'économie locale avait stagné depuis la deuxième guerre mondiale. De même, une régulation s'imposait afin de protéger la biodiversité de ce territoire. Aujourd'hui, lorsque le Parc du Morvan fête ses quarante ans, il fait toujours face aux défis importants liés à l'existence d'un système de gouvernance multi-scalaire et multi-partenariale complexe issu de mouvements de *« up and down state rescaling »*, notamment depuis les années 2000. Les enjeux de gouvernance de ce territoire se rapportent aux caractéristiques du système de aires protégées françaises, dont le système des parcs naturels régionaux fait partie. A différence des parcs nationaux, le modèle de protection 'Parc Régional', créé par la DATAR à la fin des années 1960, a été conçu comme une institution de protection du patrimoine naturel et culturel adaptée aux territoires habités. En effet, il s'agissait de créer une institution capable de veiller sur le patrimoine fragile de certains territoires où la rigueur des normes de protection de parcs nationaux ne convenait pas aux espaces habités. Une des spécificités des parcs régionaux est leur ambition à protéger le patrimoine naturel et culturel local et de faire de cette protection un outil de développement territorial durable. Dans ce contexte, la mise en application de nouvelles formes de production et de consommation plus durables, notamment l'écotourisme, est congruente avec les objectifs constitutifs des parcs.

Quelques résultats et conclusions

Transformations dans la gouvernance du Morvan : d'une mosaïque territoriale désarticulée vers une reconfiguration de gouvernance fondée sur une   citoyenneté environnementale multi-échelles

A partir de l'analyse de l'écotourisme dans le Morvan, on découvre un territoire liant des forces de gouvernance *externes* et *internes* qui modèlent et produisent ensemble le caractère écotouristique distinctif de cette destination. Les forces de gouvernance externes, en faisant partie du système socio-institutionnel dans lequel le Morvan est encastré, se caractérisent par un pilotage et une gestion des conflits complexes autour de la durabilité territoriale. A travers l'observation des dynamiques territoriales qui affectent les aires protégées en Europe dans un contexte de territoires en changement, le cas du Parc Morvan nous montre que la restructuration de l'Etat français à travers la décentralisation des régions et la création de nouvelles institutions intercommunales est en conflit avec la durabilité de parcs régionaux. Autrement dit, le cas du Morvan révèle comment la prolifération d'institutions sous-nationales, malgré leurs objectifs de durabilité et de démocratie participative, a échoué dans la construction d'une articulation territoriale dont la durabilité des aires protégées dépend. En effet, à cause de la profusion de nouvelles juridictions d'Etat et d'institutions publiques, le Morvan a été institutionnellement fragmenté dans une grande quantité de couches territoriales qui se chevauchent. Cette profusion a produit une mosaïque territoriale dont les pièces manquent d'une articulation nécessaire au développement durable et sa gouvernance. Certainement, cette imbrication institutionnelle n'est pas limitée au Morvan ; cependant, il n'y a aucun doute que la complexité des mouvements de restructuration et de reterritorialisation s'est accrue en raison des caractéristiques biophysiques et sociopolitiques du Morvan.

En somme, le cas du Morvan montre comment la restructuration spatiale de l'Etat a non seulement produit des rivalités entre 'anciens' et 'nouveaux' territoires sous-nationaux poursuivant des objectifs de durabilité, mais aussi comment cette restructuration étatique a ressuscité d'anciennes divisions politiques qui vont aussi à l'encontre de la durabilité territoriale. Le cas des *pays* est emblématique à cet égard, parce que ces institutions reproduisent les lignes de démarcation départementales ; en effet, les quatre nouveaux *pays* ravivent les distances et les divisions entre le Morvan rural et les pôles urbains des départements. Lorsque l'on pense aux difficultés de gouvernance rencontrées dans le parc et les quatre *pays*, on peut conclure que l'incorporation du Morvan au Massif Central s'avère moins prometteuse que ce que les fonctionnaires du parc laissent entendre. D'une certaine perspective, cette transformation institutionnelle pourrait permettre au parc Morvan de passer au-delà des rivalités institutionnelles existantes ('scale jumping') et d'obtenir de nouvelles ressources pour le développement du territoire. Néanmoins, il n'y a aucune raison de croire que cette fusion institutionnelle produira 'magiquement' la cohésion territoriale durable que le Morvan a attendue avec impatience pendant des décennies. En effet, la cohésion territoriale et la durabilité requièrent une

fusion politico-administrative considérablement plus profonde. A cet égard, une question importante sera : comment les divers acteurs sont impliqués comme partenaires dans les démarches de consultation et de prise de décision des nouvelles institutions de gouvernance.

Comme le montrent les cas de Remilly, Chamboux, le Tour de Bourgogne à vélo, les cultures de conifères et la pratique de formes touristiques non-durables, entre autres, le parc du Morvan par lui-même ne réussit pas à garantir la durabilité territoriale. Néanmoins, comme le montrent Remilly et Chamboux, être institutionnellement impuissant ne veut pas nécessairement dire que le parc du Morvan ne jouerait pas de rôle dans la quête de durabilité territoriale. Brièvement, ces deux conflits qui ont suscité une mobilisation essentiellement réactive de la population locale ont produit deux nouvelles échelles de mobilisation socio-environnementale effective. Cet élément est particulièrement intéressant puisqu'il nous montre comment le conflit entre les institutions étatiques sous-nationales produit de nouveaux territoires de lutte fondés sur des convictions environnementales puissantes et symboliquement opérationnalisées par le statut de protection de la biodiversité d'un parc naturel régional. Enfin, Remilly et Chamboux illustrent comment d'un conflit entre des objectifs de développement économiques et de durabilité écologique naissent de nouveaux espaces institutionnels dirigés par 'd'autres que l'Etat' et qui cherchent à contrebalancer l'impact non-durable d'une mosaïque institutionnelle discordante.

Le pouvoir rhizoïdal de l'écotourisme dans la transformation durable de la gouvernance du Morvan

Une des principales conclusions de cette thèse est que la relation société-nature qui vitalise les territoires comme le Morvan et qui, par conséquent, va permettre le développement de l'écotourisme, joue un rôle central dans la fabrication des *nouvelles formes de citoyenneté innovatrices pour un développement durable*. D'une part, c'est sur cette singularité territoriale que l'écotourisme se fonde ; d'une autre, cette singularité territoriale, en faisant allusion à une socialité environnementale particulière, est reproduite et recréée par des pratiques socialement innovantes connectées à l'écotourisme.

L'étude de cas du Morvan prouve aussi que la gouvernance durable, fondée sur de nouvelles échelles de citoyenneté environnementale découle de pratiques sociales originales et innovatrices. Entre autres, elles peuvent prendre la forme de *leaderships proactifs* et persistants (Kubiack, Salamolard), la mise en œuvre de *codes de bonne conduite volontaire*, l'implémentation d'un type *d'agriculture durable* (comme en témoigne la ferme d'Elisabeth) et l'apparition de *nouvelles alliances* entre des institutions étatiques anciennes et nouvelles encouragées par des programmes européens (LEADER+, Charte Européenne de tourisme durable).

Ces pratiques ont en commun leur gravitation autour de l'écotourisme en tant qu'un enjeu puissant dans la négociation institutionnelle sur la durabilité. L'écotourisme aide à calibrer les discours sur la gouvernance et le développement durable avec des arguments plus cohérents, concrets et faisables, utilisés par les partisans de la durabilité du Morvan. Cet effet de calibrage est observé même parmi les acteurs non impliqués directement dans le tourisme durable. Certainement, un objectif de durabilité pour le développement du tourisme a existé depuis la fondation du parc Morvan, et été confirmé plus tard par la création de plusieurs institutions publiques nouvelles dans ce territoire et qui manifestement ont des objectifs de durabilité similaires. Cependant, la spécificité de la pratique écotouristique dans le vingt et unième siècle est sa capacité à introduire des changements durables à d'autres échelles territoriales que celles qui sont directement concernées par l'écotourisme, tout comme son rôle dans l'enrichissement de la composition du plexus social qui gouverne des parcs comme le Morvan. De cette façon, l'écotourisme favorise une multiscalarité institutionnellement articulée – une échelle qui 'importe' des pratiques et normes de comportement d'autres et en exporte à son tour – et socialement habitée.

Les résultats de cette thèse dévoilent la portée *rhizoïdale* de l'écotourisme comme force socialement innovante favorisant l'émergence de voies territoriales plus durables. Le cas du Morvan montre comment l'intérêt contemporain pour l'écotourisme a produit de nouveaux espaces multi-scalaires de négociation entre différents acteurs de l'Etat, du secteur privé et de la société civile. Les processus qui ont mené à l'apparition de ce que nous avons appelé de *new empowering ecotourism loci* impliquent des acteurs de divers plumages qui, lorsqu'ils luttent pour la durabilité de l'écotourisme, contestent les structures et processus de gouvernance non-durables existantes. Ces processus dévoilent de nouvelles formes de pouvoir, notamment la production d'un apprentissage collectif, de savoir post-normal et de reconfigurations socio-institutionnelles qui remettent en cause les formes de production, de consommation et de régulation étatique et non-étatique non-durables.

La structure de la thèse

Cette thèse est organisée en six chapitres : trois chapitres théoriques à partir desquels ressort une approche territoriale et socio-institutionnelle du développement durable et de l'écotourisme (chapitres 1, 2 et 3) ; un chapitre sur les outils de recherche empirique, qui fait le lien entre la théorie et l'étude de cas (chapitre 4), et ; deux chapitres sur la gouvernance multi-scalaire du Morvan (chapitres 5 et 6). Le chapitre 5 aborde les échelles globale, Européenne, Française et Bourguignonne ; le chapitre 6 examine la gouvernance du Morvan dans sa multi-scalarité.

Le **chapitre premier** reconstitue l'histoire du concept de développement durable, dès les premiers débats opposant croissance économique, industrialisation et dégradation écologique, aux travaux

actuels qui se servent intensivement de ce concept. Une analyse de la littérature justifie une place centrale de la dimension sociale au sein de l'analyse du développement durable. Cette justification se fait en trois étapes. . D'abord, malgré ce qui pourrait être présenté comme une profusion excessive du concept du développement durable, couvrant un éventail de travaux qui vont des analyses économiques orthodoxes aux analyses sur la décroissance et l'écologie profonde, ce concept possède un potentiel important comme outil analytique et comme point de départ normatif multidimensionnel. Deuxièmement, aux cours des dernières décennies, on observe une prédominance de travaux qui alimentent les courants de la durabilité faible et de la durabilité forte, et qui favorisent respectivement les méthodologies économiques ou écologiques. La confrontation de ces deux approches avec les défis contemporains de durabilité offre des réponses plutôt inertes qui échouent à intégrer le pilier social du développement durable, effaçant sa signification et son rôle, et ainsi vident le développement durable de son caractère social original. Finalement, à partir de ces arguments émerge le besoin de construire une approche interdisciplinaire du développement durable qui redonne à la dimension sociale sa centralité originale.

Le **deuxième chapitre** part du constat que le pilier social du développement durable reste peu exploré et il adresse cette omission par la réinterprétation de la durabilité en termes de gouvernance. Cette réinterprétation se fait à travers la construction d'une approche théorique socio-institutionnelle, territoriale et multi-scalaire. Dans ce chapitre, on argumente que la construction de sociétés plus durables dépend de l'ensemble d'actions collectives sous-jacentes à la variété de maillages socio-institutionnels qui gouverne les sociétés à différentes échelles spatiales, du global au local. La gouvernance du développement durable concerne un contenu distinct nourri par la nature spécifique des normes de durabilité des territoires et qui concerne les rapports entre les perspectives normative/analytique, économique/sociale/écologique et équité intra/intergénérationnelle (articulation entre les différentes échelles temporelles et spatiales) de la durabilité. On compte deux conclusions centrales dans ce chapitre : i) la relation entrelacée entre gouvernance et durabilité, c'est à dire que la gouvernance du développement durable renvoie à un *défi*, un *processus* de dépendance du sentier– qui implique une pluralité d'acteurs et des interactions interterritoriales enchâssées (dans ce sens elle est elle-même susceptible au défi de la durabilité) – et un *résultat* ; ii) l'impact significatif des interactions humaines en termes d'innovation socio-institutionnelle et de renouvellement de relations de gouvernance en faveur de la durabilité.

Le cadre théorique énoncé est appliqué, dans le **troisième chapitre***, à l'écotourisme et aux aires protégées. Le but a été d'aller au-delà de l'approche standard du tourisme comme industrie, pour appréhender *l'écotourisme comme une pratique sociale multifonctionnelle portant un potentiel de durabilité considérable*. Le rôle des mécanismes socio-institutionels comme fondements de la pratique et du développement des différentes formes de tourisme, et notamment de l'écotourisme, est

mis en évidence. L'analyse plus approfondie des trois principes centraux de l'écotourisme – axée sur la nature, éducation et la durabilité –   a conduit vers une définition des *territoires d'écotourisme* comme des aires naturelles remarquables qui cristallisent des relations société-nature spécifiques, des agences humaines et des systèmes politico-administratifs multi-échelles. Ces destinations d'écotourisme sont aussi perçues comme des entités vives, comme des espaces de créativité et *loci* de savoir post-normal ; elles ont été par conséquent définies comme des berceaux d'innovation sociale portant un potentiel puissant de durabilité. La complexité sociale des destinations d'écotourisme – impliquant des touristes, des communautés d'accueil et des nouveaux arrivants, des agents publiques des aires protégées, des associations, etc. – forme un tissu social riche à partir duquel la gouvernance pour le développement durable est susceptible d'être promue. Etant donné que l'écotourisme rassemble une population plus sensible à la nature, les éco-destinations concentrent une combinaison d'intérêts, de valeurs et d'objectifs qui non seulement ont le pouvoir de mettre en question des pratiques non durables, mais qui peuvent aussi conduire à la production de nouvelles formes de négociation, dialogue et connaissance durables.

Le **quatrième chapitre** présente le cadre et la méthode de recherche empirique pour la réalisation de l'enquête de terrain et l'analyse de notre étude de cas. D'abord, il fournit des informations sur le territoire où la recherche de terrain a été appliquée, et il explique aussi comment les informations ont été réunies. Notre étude de cas a contemplé quatre étapes principales de recherche : i) l'analyse des principales caractéristiques des niveaux territoriaux pertinents à notre étude ; ii) l'examen de l'écotourisme et les éléments critiques de durabilité pour le Morvan ; iii) l'analyse de la gouvernance comme un processus articulé : quels acteurs et à quelles échelles spatiales interagissent et comment s'articulent, collaborent ou rivalisent-ils dans leur aspirations ? iv) l'étude de la gouvernance comme un produit territorial qui découle des interactions de l'ensemble d'acteurs et d'institutions impliquées à différentes échelles spatiales. Dès lors, les concepts de développement durable, d'écotourisme et de gouvernance ont été employés comme des lunettes interdisciplinaires pour examiner les principales transformations de la forme dont les sociétés traitent les défis de durabilité. La gouvernance est mobilisée comme un concept capable de saisir de façon dynamique les différentes interdépendances traitées dans la partie empirique de cette recherche.

Le **cinquième chapitre** développe une analyse historique et multi-scalaire du système de gouvernance en Europe, au niveau national, en occurrence la France, ainsi qu'au niveau régional et local à travers le cas de la Bourgogne. Même si la gouvernance est loin d'être limitée au domaine public du système de gouvernance des territoires, les institutions et les politiques publiques jouent un rôle très important dans le nouveau pacte environnemental « en construction » entre les citoyens. A travers l'observation du système français des aires protégées, ainsi que des régulations de la durabilité et de l'écotourisme, on a analysé deux changements majeurs dans le développement régional et local

en France. D'abord, la transformation d'une stratégie top-down vers un processus de restructuration de l'Etat qui est né à la fois de la prolifération d'institutions sous-nationales et des institutions européennes. Deuxièmement, la graduelle introduction du développement durable dans les politiques publiques est marquée par une alternance de phases dans la politique environnementale, dont l'une définit la territorialité et dans l'autre la dimension territoriale s'efface. Tous deux s'alternent et le développement durable marque le retour de la dimension territoriale. La fin des années 1990 est en effet emblématique à cet égard parce qu'elle symbolise l'approfondissement du « state rescaling », notamment à travers le processus de décentralisation et la naissance de nouvelles institutions interterritoriales de dimensions diverses. Une question qui nous semble importante est de savoir comment la gouvernance des parcs répond et s'adapte à cette nouvelle réalité d'organisation administro-territoriale. Par ailleurs, quels sont les effets potentiels de durabilité et de gouvernance des interactions provenant des nouvelles échelles de gouvernance et de leur interaction avec les niveaux global, européen, national et régional.

Le **sixième chapitre** est consacré au cas du Morvan. Il offre une photo compréhensive des aspects socio-économiques et écologiques de ce territoire avec une attention particulière à l'écotourisme. La gouvernance dans le Morvan est examinée en soulignant les trois éléments suivants : i) l'impact de la restructuration de l'Etat ; ii) le rôle du Parc Morvan dans un contexte d'émergence de nouvelles institutions territoriales sous-nationales qui poursuivent des objectifs de durabilité similaires aux parcs régionaux ; iii) le rôle de l'écotourisme dans la fabrication de nouvelles échelles de gouvernance qui ont la capacité de donner du pouvoir aux groupes de la société civile locale qui réclament plus de durabilité. Brièvement, le cas du Morvan suggère comment la pratique de l'écotourisme a stimulé la création progressive de nouveaux espaces de négociation entre l'Etat, le secteur privé et la société civile, où de nouvelles structures de gouvernance partisanes de l'écotourisme durable confrontent et défient des dynamiques des gouvernance non-durables préexistantes. A travers l'analyse de neuf micro-études de cas, ce chapitre montre comment le développement de l'écotourisme pendant les dernières années a entrainé l'arrivée de nouveaux acteurs, y compris des écotouristes et des micro eco-entrepreneurs.. Le leadership, la mobilisation collective et l'action socialement innovatrice de ces acteurs ont joué un rôle significatif dans les changements du système de gouvernance en faveur de la durabilité territoriale, et ont donné naissance à ce que l'on appelle les « nouvelles échelles de citoyenneté environnementale ».

General introduction

This is a dissertation about the search for a deeper understanding of the changing and complex interactions between society and nature. Sharing the concerns of those untiring advocates of urgent social change in favour of more environmental sustainability, the overall goal is to elucidate more fully the character of the socio-institutional arrangements underpinning a transition towards the construction of more sustainable societies. The contemporary environmental crisis is considered here as a result of an unsustainable society-nature relationship, and therefore the understanding of, and finding solutions to major environmental problems will necessarily be contingent on the analysis of the current societal reality.

In this thesis the enounced problematic is addressed *theoretically*, by building bridges between the concepts of sustainable development, governance and ecotourism, and *empirically* through a privileged case study in the *Parc Naturel Régional du Morvan*. The main objective has been to examine the meaning and role of governance in sustainable development, and in particular for ecotourism in protected areas. Three main questions have guided this research: a) which is the role of governance and its distinctiveness in the process of building an ecotourism destination and, consequently, fostering more sustainable development paths in a certain territory? b) how does governance shape the building up of an ecotourism destination and encourages (or not) sustainability? c) How are these different forms of governance crystallized in specific sustainable (or non-sustainable) protected areas, and in particular in the Morvan regional park?

The approach of the dissertation

This dissertation should be situated within the still timid debate about the need to develop interdisciplinary research perspectives, and notably to address sustainability. Hence this work intends to propose an original socio-institutional and territorial research approach to address the sustainable development problematic throughout the lenses of ecotourism and territories classified as protected areas. The conceptual approach of this thesis draws on economic sociology (Smelser and Swedberg, 1995a; Bourdieu, 2000; Steiner, 1999), institutionalism (Commons, 1934; Veblen 1899; Polanyi, 1944; Hollingsworth and Boyer, 1997; Hodgson, 1998; Söderbaum, 2000; Ramstad, 1986) and spatial development theory (Swyngedouw, 2005; Moulaert, 2000; Gonzalez and Healey, 2005; Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2008; Moulaert *et al*., 2010), and aims at building a socio-territorial framework that brings out the role of governance, the embeddedness of institutions and the path-dependent production

of territories. Because of their potential to position human beings and social dynamics at the centre of the sustainability reflection, the different social sciences have a lot to say about the social, institutional, cultural, historical, political and socio-economic mechanisms of articulation involved in the life of territories. I believe that the academic contributions on which this dissertation relies offer interesting explanations for the 'stage machinery' of the contemporary ecological context.

The core concepts: sustainable development, governance and ecotourism

Sustainable development

Sustainable development is a normative and analytical concept contending that development can neither be analysed nor pursued without taking into consideration the indissoluble interactions between its social, economic and ecological dimensions (see Zuindeau, 2010). More precisely, sustainable development can be defined as an articulation of socio-economic viability, ecological sustainability and governance, which should simultaneously satisfy intra-generational and inter-generational equity imperatives. While doing so, the sustainability debate addresses a critic to the current capitalist system pursuing growth at any cost, and consequently turning a blind eye to the ecological and socio-cultural consequences of unlimited overconsumption of natural resources, environmental degradation and pollution, and abysmal socio-economic inequalities.

Sustainability 'ideals' have been stressed by different societies at different moments of world history. The publishing of the Brundtland report (1987) and the United Nations Rio Earth Summit (1992) are identified as two landmarks for the contemporary society's intention to build social consensus and political commitment, among the different states, on the necessity of moving towards an alternative societal model. One proof of the meaning of these events is the popularity of the definition of sustainable development as *"a kind of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"* (WCED, 1987). However, as examined in the following chapters, even if there exists a 'before' and 'after' these events, the sustainability concept remains underexplored. In spite of the large amount of publications on sustainability, some authors argue that much of this work is essentially normative in character and undertheorized compared to other related fields (Gibbs, 1996). In addition, among those attempts to theorize sustainability, much of the existing literature privileges methodologies belonging to the economic and ecological disciplines, unfortunately forgetting the central place that human beings and the 'social' occupied in early sustainability debates.

The insufficient theorization of sustainable development can be explained by the unsuccessful integration of the social sustainability dimension into the analyses, which has culminated into the

emptying out of the human distinctiveness from the sustainable development briefcase. Seeking to contribute to the elaboration of what could one day be a sustainable development theory, and at the same time re-positioning human beings and societal arrangements at the centre of the reflection, in this dissertation *I have opted for developing an approach to sustainable development where the social dimension retrieves its centrality through its reinterpretation in terms of governance.*

Building bridges between governance and sustainable development

A widespread idea among authors addressing governance is the recognition that contemporary societies are governed by a multiplicity of interdependent actors and socio-institutional arrangements. This argument means that not just formal agencies influence the pattern of life of territories (Goodwin and Painter, 1996), and consequently their sustainability, but also the range of institutional and individual actors from outside the political arena (Kooiman, 2003).

Broadly speaking, social sciences addressing governance have drawn attention to two main issues that have led towards state and governance restructuring. On the one hand, the literature refers to the renovation of the institutional position of the state (Eckerberg and Joas, 2004) and the birth of a multi-scalar state system formed by supranational and sub-national state levels. The central role of the nation state has been examined and (or) questioned by the works on the 'hollowing out of the state' (Rhodes, 1996), glocalisation (Swyngedouw, 2000), state rescaling (Brenner, 1999) and shift from government to governance (Goodwin and Painter, 1996). While some of these works have characterised this transformation emphasizing the growing disengagement of the state since the 1980s, because of globalisation and application of neoliberal ideologies, another body of literature contends that it is not a matter of pure disengagement of the nation-state, but rather a restructuring from which a multi-level system of governance has emerged (Kern and Buckley, 2009). However, even with this multi-scalar context, authors like Swyngedouw (2000) argue that the national state level continues being a very important scale of regulation and negotiation among actors and institutions. On the other hand, a considerable body of literature highlights the processes through which 'others' than the state have been (and/or should be) incorporated into decision-making and policy formulation, expecting that their inclusion will increase effectiveness in the search for sustainability. The group of the 'others' might include associations, firms, local and supra-national institutions, NGOs, formal and informal networks of people, etc. (Kooiman, 2003). Within this context, various works have stressed the role of the local governance scale and the need to include civil society participation in environmental policy-making (Chautard *et al.,* 2003; Buckingham-Hatfield and Evans, 1996). Nonetheless, it seems important to underline the fact that much of the research dealing with sustainability and participative democracy at the local scale level seldom addresses localities in their interrelation and nestedness with the other governance levels. In fact,

works dealing with the multi-level governance of the environment and biodiversity are more recent (see Rauschmayer *et al.*, 2009a).

In this dissertation I deal with both the normative and analytical side of the concept of governance. Starting from the concepts of territory, place, institutional embeddedness and scale, the reinterpretation of sustainable development in terms of governance has converged into an integrated analysis of the sustainability question from a multi-scalar, multi-state and multi-partner perspective. From the global to the local, I deal with the role of the different governance levels, the forms of articulation among the involved scales and the impact of governance rescaling on sustainability, as well as with the role of the local scale level in the production of new places/scales of negotiation and social innovation (see MacCallum *et al.*, 2009) for more sustainability. To this purpose, the governance of sustainable development is addressed dynamically, meaning that its role evolves through time and according to different territorial contexts. It thus holds a limitless potential for addressing processes and outcomes connected with the governance of sustainable development.

The governance of sustainable development via the analysis of ecotourism and protected areas

I chose to explore theories on governance and sustainable development through the prism of *ecotourism* and *territories classified as protected areas*, basically because of the substantial environmental imperatives to which ecotourism and protected areas are in theory subordinated. Given both the ecological characteristics of protected areas and because ecotourism relies on clean natural environments for its practice, one main starting point of this work is that in places where ecotourism occurs the nature-society relationship is different. More precisely, I argue that the relationship people collectively knit with their surrounding environment is more vigilant, more respectful, and defined by a distinctive friendliness and care for nature. For that reason, these territories offer an excellent setting to look at the main governance challenges, opportunities and potentials connected with the sustainability problematic.

Protected areas, often subject of films and novels, carry simultaneously a particular aesthetical image and a potent ecological symbolism for societies. After the birth of the first parks in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century, from the First World War onwards, the number of protected areas considerably increased (Lachaux, 1980) and their institutional designs diversified. Later, in the 1970s crisis, the advent of the sustainability concept and the current ubiquity of the environmental discussion reinforced the significance of protected areas for societies. In short, with industrialization and urbanization nature spaces came to be a shelter for those desiring to stay in touch with nature, either as permanent residents or visitors. It is within this process that tourism, and more precisely the birth of ecotourism, enters this reflection. Broadly speaking, the literature on tourism defines ecotourism as a kind of tourism that is essentially nature based, sensitive to environmental and

social conditions, and managed according to sustainable development principles (Blamey, 2001; Weaver and Lawton, 2007). Ecotourism thus leans on clean and special ecosystems to attract visitors and, at the same time and for that reason, depends on a system of governance able to guarantee territorial sustainability in the long term.

Summarizing, ecotourism and protected areas are identified as spaces where more sustainable social practices and governance favouring sustainability might easily emerge. Beyond the variety of existing protected areas (see Depraz, 2008), these are not only places submitted to higher sustainability exigencies and regulated by more demanding environmental regulations compared to unclassified territories. They are also territories to a great extent inhabited and visited by people openly wishing their preservation. For these reasons, ecotourism places are identified as privileged arenas to reflect and learn about the socio-institutional dynamics conducting societies to more sustainable societal patterns.

The Morvan regional park

The Morvan regional park in France is not only a park but also a small rural mountain hosting a world heritage site, several Natura 2000 protected sites, and numerous charming towns keeping vestiges of the various civilizations and cultures that have inhabited this territory. Geo-physically, the Morvan, located in the middle of Burgundy, is a mountain region encompassing an area of about 513.400 hectares. It is characterized by the presence of ravines, lakes and rivers inhabited by a varied flora and fauna, as well as by woodlands in high zones and wetlands in valleys. Isolated from the rest of the region, given its altitude and granite soil composition, the Morvan has historically been perceived as a sort of geological intrusion, contrasting greatly with the surrounding flat areas and sedimentary lands of the rest of Burgundy. From a politico-administrative viewpoint, the Morvan's surface extends over the four Burgundy departments, with Nièvre being the largest within the total surface area. The Morvan brings together about 125 communes that share similar geo-climatic conditions and farming practices, with extensive agriculture, forestry and ecotourism as main economic activities.

In 1970 the Morvan was classified as a regional park, although the park's perimeter does not completely coincide with the Morvan mountain. In addition, the Morvan had thirty-three thousand inhabitants and its economy had stagnated since World War II. In addition, biodiversity regulation was needed to protect the local ecosystems. Today, this forty-year-old regional park faces important challenges due to disarticulations in the multi-scalar system that governs its territory. Challenges are also related with the particularities of the French system of protected areas to which, among others, the *parcs naturels régionaux* belong. Unlike national parks, the regional park model, created by the DATAR in the late 1960s, was conceived as a more suitable governing institution for inhabited

territories with a remarkable natural and cultural heritage. Although these territories needed protection, given the fact that they were populated, it was not possible to apply the protection standards fixed for national parks with the same rigour. The particularity of these parks is that both protection and enhancement of the local natural and cultural heritage should be used as a means to promote sustainability. In accomplishing this aim, the growing search for more sustainable forms of production and consumption, and in particular ecotourism, is congruent with the institutional roots of these parks.

MAP 1: FRENCH REGIONAL PARKS AND THE MORVAN

Source: Parcs Naturels Régionaux de France (2008a).

In short, the characteristics of the Morvan, the specificity of the regional park model and the long tourism trajectory of France make of the Morvan park a very interesting case to interrogate the concepts of ecotourism and protected areas from a sustainability and governance perspective. It allows exploring what exactly means for people living in Europe issues like environmental protection, sustainability, territorial equity and the development of economic activities with low environmental impact, as is the case of ecotourism. I believe that ecotourism and regional parks can provide significant understanding of collective action inspiring more sustainability.

A brief overview of the dissertation

The main topics enounced in this introduction and the research questions guiding this dissertation presented in p. *xxiii* were answered in six chapters (see figure 1):

FIGURE 1: THE GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION
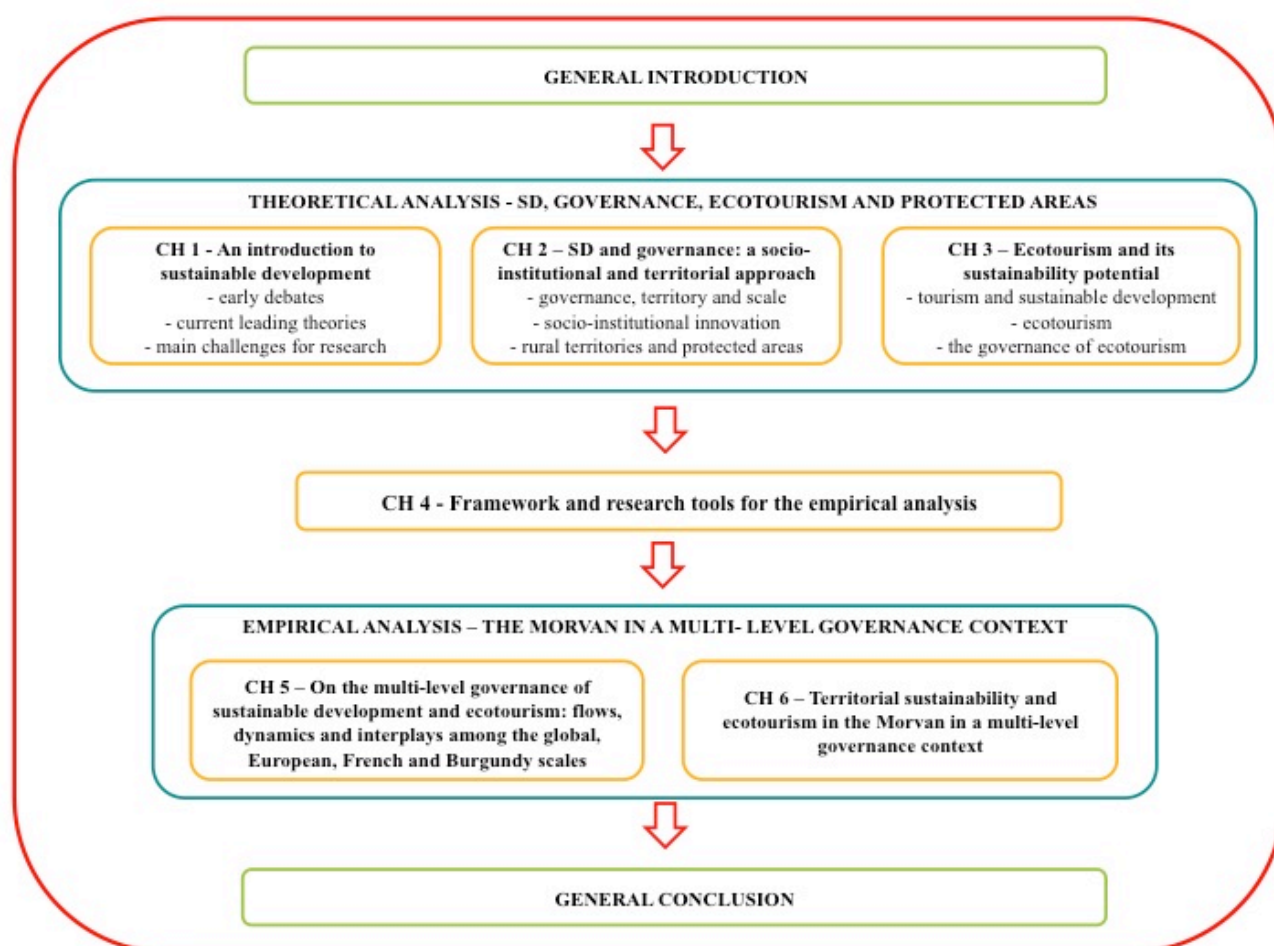
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Chapter I retraces the history of sustainable development, from the first debates opposing economic growth, industrialisation and ecological degradation, to current times analyses characterised by an intense utilisation of this concept. An examination of the literature suggested three main considerations upon which this dissertation is founded. First, in spite of what might be called an excessive conceptual profusion of *sustainable development*, ranging from orthodox economic analysis to radical degrowth or deep ecology proposals, this concept holds a high potential as an analytical tool and normative starting point. Second, over the last decades there has been a predominance of works feeding either the weak or the strong sustainability perspective, respectively privileging economic or ecological methodological disciplinary logics. The confrontation of these two approaches with important sustainability challenges delivers rather inert responses that fail to integrate the social

sustainability pillar, blurring its meaning and role, and thus voiding sustainable development of its social distinctiveness. Finally, from these arguments resorts the need to develop an interdisciplinary sustainability approach where the social dimension will recover its centrality.

Chapter II starts from the assumption that the social sustainability pillar remains underexplored, and deals with this omission through the reinterpretation of sustainability in terms of governance. This is done by means of building a socio-institutional, territorial and multi-scalar approach. The chapter develops the argument that paving the way for more sustainable societies depends on a whole set of collective actions underlying the variety of socio-institutional arrangements governing societies at different spatial scales, from the global to the local. More precisely, the governance of sustainable development has a distinct content nourished by the specific character of sustainability dimensions in particular territories: normative/analytical, economic/social/ecological and intra/inter-generational equity (articulation among temporal and spatial scales). Two conclusions emerge from this chapter: *i)* the intertwined relationship between governance and sustainability, meaning that sustainable development is a governance *challenge*, a path dependent *process* – involving a plurality of actors and nested inter-territorial interactions – and *outcomes*; *ii)* these outcomes refer to the effect of human interactions in terms of socio-institutional innovation and renewal of governance relations in favour of sustainability.

The theoretical framework is applied in **chapter III** to ecotourism and protected areas. The aim was to go beyond the standard approach to tourism as an industry, in order to apprehend ecotourism as a multi-functional social practice carrying the potential to foster sustainability. The role of socio-institutional mechanisms as the basis for the practice and development of different forms of tourism, and notably of ecotourism is highlighted. Further exploring the three main ecotourism principles (nature based, education and sustainability), ecotourism destinations and their place-ness are defined in this dissertation as remarkable natural areas condensing specific society-nature relations, human agencies and politico-administrative systems that are embedded in wider governance scales and power structures. These destinations are also seen as living entities, spaces of creativity and loci of environmental post-normal knowledge, and consequently defined as cradles of socio-institutional innovation carrying a strong sustainability potential. The social complexity of ecotourism destinations – involving ecotourists, host communities and outsiders, public officials related to protected territories, associations, etc. – composes a rich social tissue from which sustainable governance might be promoted. As ecotourism congregates people with a special affection to nature, eco-destinations meet a combination of interests, values and objectives that might challenge unsustainable practices, and lead to new forms of negotiation, bargaining and knowledge.

Chapter IV presents the research design and methods employed for the case study analysis. It provides information on the territory where the methods were applied and also explains how the information was gathered. Four main research steps were included the case study analysis: i) study of the main features of the relevant territorial levels; ii) study of ecotourism and critical sustainability issues in the Morvan Park; iii) study of governance as an articulated process: who interacts and how do they articulate in aspirations, collaborate or compete? iv) study of governance as a territorial outcome, resulting from the interactions of the ensemble of actors and institutions involved at different spatial scales. In this empirical part of the research, the concepts of sustainable development, ecotourism and governance are employed as interdisciplinary lenses for examining major transformations in the way societies deal with sustainability challenges. Governance is mobilized as a concept able to grasp in a dynamic way the various interdependencies treated in the theoretical analyses of sustainability and ecotourism.

In **chapter V** develops a historical and multi-scalar analysis of the governance system in Europe, at the national scales, and especially in France, followed by the regional and local levels through the Burgundy case. It argues that even if governance is far from being limited to the public side of the systems of regulation of territories, public actors and policy seem to play a significant part in the new environmental pact 'under construction' between human beings. Giving special attention to the French system of protected areas, and sustainability and ecotourism regulation, two major shifts in regional and local development in France are examined. First, a movement from a top-down strategy towards a process of state rescaling arose from the simultaneous proliferation of sub-national and European institutions. Second, the gradual introduction of sustainability into the policy framework, alternating phases where environmental policies have been territorially conceived, with others where this alliance has been interrupted. The last years of the 1990s are quite emblematic because they symbolise the deepening of state rescaling, notably through decentralisation and the birth of new inter-territorial institutions of varied dimensions. One relevant question here is how the governance of parks responds and adapts to this new territorial reality, and which are the sustainability and governance effects of the interplays stemming from the new governance scales and their interaction with the global, European, national and regional levels.

Chapter VI focuses on the Morvan case and provides a comprehensive socio-economic, institutional and ecological picture of this territory, with a special attention to ecotourism. Governance in the Morvan is analysed according to three main points: i) the impact of state rescaling and restructuring; ii) the role of the Morvan park in a context of rising new sub-national territorial institutions pursuing similar sustainability aims as those of regional parks; iii) the role of ecotourism in producing new governance scales that empower local civil society groups advocating for more sustainability. Summarizing, the Morvan case suggests how the novel practice of ecotourism has led towards the

progressive creation of new spaces of negotiation between the State, the private sector and civil society members, where emerging governance structures advocating for sustainable ecotourism challenge pre-existing forms of unsustainable governance. By examining nine 'Morvan micro-cases', it is shown how the development of ecotourism during the last years has entailed the arrival of new actors, including ecotourists, micro-tourism business owners, organic farmers, among others, whose actions are guided by a strong affection to nature and considerable environmental knowledge. The leadership, struggle and socially innovative action of these actors have been essential in introducing governance changes for more territorial sustainability, and giving birth to what might be called new 'environmental citizenship scales'.

Chapter I - An introduction to sustainable development: early debates, current leading theories and main challenges for research

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on sustainable development. The main purpose is to trace the historical evolution of this concept, from the first discussions opposing economic growth, industrialisation and ecological degradation occurring in the 1960s and 1970s, to current times characterised by an intense and extended utilisation of this notion by different social sciences and its application to various economic sectors, territorial levels and analytical approaches. I argue that the birth and later institutionalisation of sustainable development is a result of the convergence of several socio-institutional dynamics including the rise of environmentalists' movements, the leading initiatives of global governance, especially international United Nations' institutions since the 1960s, and the later examination of this concept from different academic viewpoints. As a result, the contemporary omnipresence of sustainable development is somehow controversial, hosting both radical critical approaches and broad interpretations of ecological challenges. I argue in this chapter that despite these controversies, this concept holds interesting potential as an analytical tool for examining the current interrelation between the socio-economic and environmental dimensions of development, and also as a normative starting point stressing the importance of mobilising analytical frameworks in dialogue with the normative desired values of equity, justice and democracy. Among the several characteristics that define the concept of sustainable development, in this dissertation I focus on the role of governance, defining sustainable development as a major governance challenge. In sum, this chapter provides a general framework on sustainable development that will be mobilised in chapter two to develop an analysis of sustainability from a territorial and governance perspective.

This chapter is structured in seven sections after this introduction. In section two I look back to the origins of the concept of sustainable development, reviewing from early civilisations' cosmologies to the emblematic international events and documents of the second wave of environmentalism. In section three I provide a preliminary theoretical presentation of the concept of sustainable development for which I examine its key dimensions, pillars and principles. More specifically, I present sustainable development as a concept where analytical and normative ontologies converge as the conjunction of economic viability, ecological sustainability, social equity and governance, as well as a notion aspiring to the double objective of intra and inter-generational equity, thus referring to

territorial and spatial articulation. Section three situates the topic of sustainable development in the wider context of economic thought and its interrelation with other disciplines such as biology and ecology. I then in section five analyse the contemporary coexistence of varied visions addressing sustainable development, which range from orthodox methodological approaches to strong ecological ones. After this comprehensive panorama, in section six I present the focus and theoretical perspective chosen for this research, meaning its inter-disciplinary, socio-institutional and territorial effort, as well as its governance focus for the analysis of natural protected areas hosting ecotourism practices.

FIGURE 2: OUTLINE CHAPTER ONE
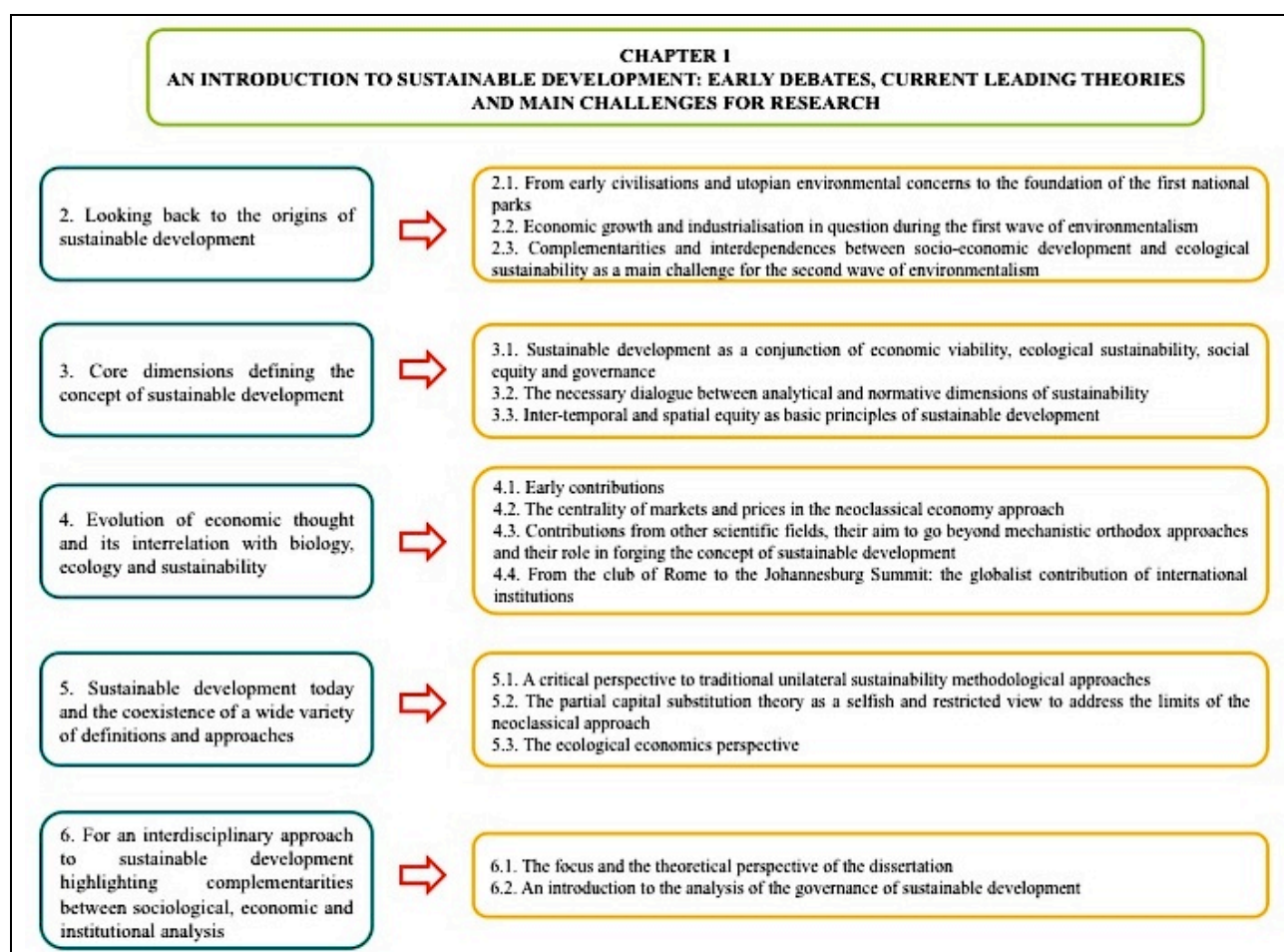
Source: author

2. LOOKING BACK TO THE ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2.1. From early civilisations and utopian environmental concerns to the foundation of the first national parks

Sustainable development, and more precisely the preoccupation of societies with their environment, has a history of conceptual evolution that long precedes the well-known Brundtland Report (WCDE, 1987; see Mittler, 2001; Matagne, 2003; Vivien, 2001). The environment and the utilisation of natural resources have been subjects of importance for almost all societies, ranging from Ancient civilisations' preoccupation about forest depletion in Mediterranean areas, to the environmental catastrophe pushing the Mayan Empire towards its decline (Wheeler, 2004). Further, authors such as Henderson (1991) and Estes (1993) state that it is reasonable to link the conceptual origin of sustainable development with religious and magical rituals of the world's earliest people, and more specifically with ceremonies pleading to deities for environmental-renewal, rain in case of drought and fructiferous harvests (Frazier, 1922 cited in Estes, 1993 provides several examples). These practices reveal a cosmology stressing on the importance of living in harmonious balance with nature in order to guarantee the survival of human beings. Indeed, such cosmologies can still be observed in contemporary references to the earth as Gaia, a living goddess (Estes, 1993), in Shamanism and in Latin American indigenous cultures such as the Chilean Mapuches.

However, it was indeed during the industrial revolution, in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the impact of human action against ecological limits became more dramatic, driving among others, the utopian and romantic visions that pointed out the virtues of nature as an antidote to industrialisation. While for John Muir different forms of nature were the terrestrial manifestation of god, for Keats, Shelley and other romantic poets nature was seen as a spiritually rejuvenating alternative to industrial society (Wheeler, 2004). This vision is related to the term "sublime" present in both poetic and philosophical literature of that time, which is full of sense of wonder at the grandeur and power of nature. Sublime is a term with a long history, used either as an adjective or a noun to express a tension between an intense aesthetic pleasure that steams from the displeasure of fear or horror. Among others, Romantics used the word sublime to elevate the taste for ruins, the Alpine, storms, deserts and oceans, as well as the supernatural and impressive. Keats in his letters to Richard Woodhouse named the sensibility towards nature as the 'wordsworthian or egotistical sublime' (see White, 2009).

More specifically concerning the idea of sustainability and conservation of natural resources, the eighteenth century forestry practices and the notion of sustainable yield appear as precursors (Mittler, 2001). In the book *Man and Nature* (1864), George Perkins Marsh intended to raise awareness concerning forest depletion in England and France, and the risk that this situation could entail human

decline (Wheeler, 2004). A few decades later, the European forestry ideas exerted an important influence in forging the basis of the conservationist movement in the USA, after Pinchot imported and promoted a utilitarian approach to the management of forests. In contrast, preservationists such as John Muir, a major force in the foundation of the Yosemite National Park and the Sierra Club organisation[1] (Weaver, 2001b), adopted a biocentric perspective, rejected economic rationalisation and tried to established an alternative system of values for protecting nature (Vivien, 2005). An alliance between the two approaches, utilitarist and biocentric, came about with the foundation of the Yellowstone (1870) and Yosemite (1890) national parks in the USA (Hays, 1959 quoted in Vivien 2005 p. 19).

2.2. Economic growth and industrialisation in question during the first wave of environmentalism

The idea of sustainability was originally developed within a biological and physical framework, in response to the understanding that natural resources were finite (Meadows *et al.*, 1972). From the post-war period to the beginning of the 1970s, during the so-called *Trente Glorieuses*, world attention was centred on economic growth and accumulation of physical capital, with mass consumption and neglect of other crucial aspects related to the human, social and environmental spheres of life. After the first signs of degradation, the economic system started to be questioned, becoming subject of debate of various international organisations, scientific publications and an engine for the birth of the first worldwide environmentalist social movements (Matagne, 2003; Brunel, 2004; Estes, 1993). Books such as *Road to survival* (William Vogt, 1948) and *Our Plundered Planet* (Fairfield Osborn, 1948) were among the firsts works to alert the public about the effects of industrialisation on the environment. Later on, during the 1960s, another set of environmental publications contributed to feed these discussions. The most quoted significant examples are *Silent Spring* (Rachel Carson, 1962) exposing the dangers of pesticides, *The Population Bomb* (Paul Erhlich, 1968) developing a neo-Malthusian thesis about risks related with population growth, *Only one Earth* (Barbara Ward and René Dubos, 1972) and of course the *Meadows Report* (Meadows *et al.*, 1972). In the field of planning theory, the contributions of Lewis Mumford (1968) developing a vision of the city as an organic community surrounded by undeveloped lands which was organised at a human scale to satisfy human needs are also considered influential (Wheeler, 2004). Further, the periodic American publication *Mother Earth News*[2] is an interesting example of environmentalist and anti-establishment initiative born during 1970s which remains active today. During these years several emblematic institutions were born, among them the World Wildlife Fund (1961), the Club of Rome (1968), the Friends of the Earth (1968) and the UNESCO conference for rational use and conservation of Biosphere (1968). The year 1972 marked a turning point in the reflection about sustainability, notably with the first UN

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[1] The Sierra Club is one of the most powerful associations of nature protection in the USA.
[2] See www.motherearthnews.com

Conference on Environment and Development, known as the *Stockholm Conference*, and the publication of the *Meadows Report* by the Club of Rome. Wheeler (2004) reminds us also of the publication of *A Blueprint for Survival* by Goldsmith (1972)[3] during the same year that criticized the non-sustainable character of industrial life. After the Stockholm conference, Sachs (1972) stated that despite critiques and suspicion regarding this meeting, it was possible to extract a positive outcome. Stockholm, for Sachs (1972), opened a new discussion about the international responsibilities in serious long-term problems derived from an uncontrolled use of the planet's resources. Furthermore, Sachs (1972) makes a strong critique of the difficult socio-economic situations of non-developed countries and he contends that a healthy human environment requires eliminating poverty, exclusion and inequalities of all world nations (Sachs, 1972 p. 737). However, the most resonant results come from the Meadows Report, which concluded that natural resources were exhaustible, growing scarce and industrialisation was irreversibly damaging the earth.

The combination of scientific work, environmentalism and the birth of diverse social movements proposing an alternative paradigm emphasizing spiritual, environmental and human values over profit, rationality and economic progress, has been characterised as the first wave of environmentalism (Pearce, 1993; Jafari, 1974). Subsequent to the Stockholm Conference, the imperatives of nature protection and ecologic sustainability gradually started to be included in the policy agenda of different countries. During the 1970s, we witnessed the creation of the first ministries of the environment or state agencies, and the launching of the first two European Environmental Action Plans in 1972 and 1977. Even if these institutions faced considerable bureaucratic constraints shadowing their inauguration (Baker, 1989), their births constitute an important landmark in the history of the governance of the environment and sustainability. Also, institutionalisation of environmental actions is far from being restricted to the public sphere. Responses coming from civil society emerged during this period as well, notably with the birth of Greenpeace in 1972 and the European Environmental Bureau in 1974. More than thirty years later, Greenpeace is today the world's biggest environmentalist NGO and it is entirely financed by its three million members and volunteers. Originally the main concern of Greenpeace was condemning nuclear essays and arguing in favour of the protection of menaced species; today it has widened its action to the protection of oceans and forests, and the prevention against the propagation of genetically modified crops (Agence Page 30, 2007). The campaign to protect whales is identified as one of the most symbolic successes of Greenpeace, which ended in 1982 with the launching of a world moratorium against whale hunting.

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[3] The Ecologist is another anti-establishment magazine born in the 1960s and currently playing a key role in environmentalist journalism. For instance, the refusal in 1998 of the regular printer to published the issue entitled "The Monsanto Files" (Volume 28, No. 5, Sept/Oct 1998) caused varied reactions in the milieu (http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-55127529.html) and gave birth to websites denouncing this decision, as well as electronically publications of the content of this issue (see http://linux.nodo50.org/ecologist/).

On the other hand, the rise of environmental awareness cannot be dissociated from several environmental and human disasters, including the nuclear bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the oil spill at Amoco Cadiz and the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor leak at the end of the 1970s, and the Bhopal and Chernobyl catastrophes near the mid-1980s. Furthermore, scientific research detected the Antarctic ozone hole, climate change, biodiversity depletion and natural resources exhaustion, with the 1973 economic and political crisis being an emblematic moment of energy collapse and a powerful reason for mobilising numerous social groups. In line with this argument, Estes (1993) underscores the direct relation existing between social and environmental movements, and the institutionalisation of the concept of sustainable development, identifying several independent movements that finally converged in the 1992 Rio meeting: the early environmental and ecologist movements in North America and Europe; the anti-war and anti-nuclear movements in North America and Europe; the 'world order' and the 'world dynamics modelling' movement; the European green movement; the alternative economics movement in Europe, North America and lately in Latin America; the eco-feminists movements, the Latin American indigenous movement; the human rights movement (Estes, 1993 p. 4-5). It is interesting to observe how in 1992 various groups with different concerns came together, and finally gave rise to the multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral challenge of sustainable development.

FIGURE 3: THE BUILDING UP OF THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
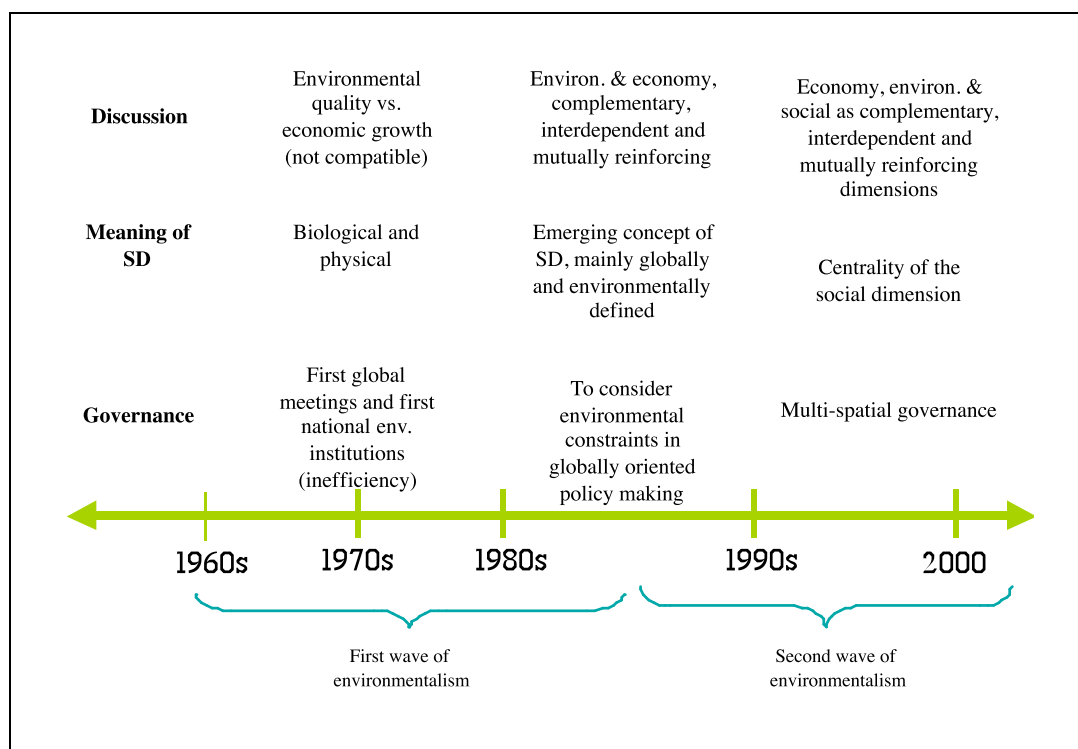
Source: author

2.3. Complementarities and interdependences between socio-economic development and ecological sustainability as a main challenge for the second wave of environmentalism

During the 1980s and 1990s, the interrogation opposing environmental health to economic growth developed during the preceding period was reformulated in the context of the emerging sustainable development paradigm (Pearce, 1993). In contrast to the preceding period, environmental protection and development were no longer seen as conflicting. Instead, the new discourse stressed their complementarities, interdependences and moreover their mutually reinforcing character (Elliot, 1994). The Brundtland Commission Report *Our Common Future* and the utilisation of the notion of sustainable development condensed a normative reflection on the need for an alternative development paradigm. Elaborating on the previous IUCN (1980) *World Conservation Strategy*, sustainable development was coined as a concept building favourable bridges between development and environmental constraints and potentials. Unlike Meadows *et al.* (1972), the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987) did not put the accent on alarming public opinion with environmental issues nor on criticizing the notion of development itself. Instead, Brundtland and later the Rio Conference chose to redefine the notions of development and growth, taking into consideration their environmental and social dimensions. Moreover, while stressing values such as equity, justice and fairness among human beings, governance-related issues were also identified as keys to achieving sustainability. Democracy, participation and rights have then largely been evoked in various official documents as primary elements of sustainability. In short, the articulation among the concepts of development, growth, and environmental and natural resources protection, gradually moved towards the elaboration of a more comprehensive notion, which combines socio-institutional, political, economic and environmental issues under the same normative umbrella, stressing equity and fairness among human beings.

Even if there is no doubt that the introduction of sustainable development marked a landmark for politicians, economists, ecologists and social scientists interested in the relationship between the socio-economic and ecologic dimensions of development (Vivien, 2001), the history of this notion is not only the subject of a succession of numerous meetings, as can be appreciated in table 2, but it also has been a matter of several controversies. During the last twenty years we have witnessed a vast proliferation of literature related to the different dimensions of sustainable development and a widespread utilisation of the concept in different senses and contexts[4]. Although this abundant literature has been essential in making sustainable development a worldwide known term, its popularity and broad acceptance have also been sources of emerging contradictory debates, suspicion and strong criticism (Jollivet, 2001a). On the one hand, sustainable development has become a

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[4] See Jollivet (2001a), Bürgenmeier (2005), Layard *et al.* (2001), Buckingham and Theobald (2003), Berkhout *et al.* (2003a), Bressers and Rosenbaum (2003a), Chautard *et al.* (2003), Vivien (2005), Brodhag (2003), Lélé (1991), Ekins and Max-Neef (1992) Redclift (2005), Zuindeau (2000, 2010), Zaccai (2002); Selman, 1996, *Revue Développement Durable et Territoires,* Clersé (2008).

philosophical base and a practical tool to foster alternative development forms. In contrast, for others, this notion is seen as an easy alibi, omnipresent political rhetoric or a marketable publicity strategy for repackaging under an attractive slogan, traditional unsustainable practices (Latouche, 1994, 1999, 2003; Revue La Décroissance, the Ecologist Magazine under the direction of Edward Goldsmith; Agha Khan, 2005).

In spite of this, I argue in this dissertation that the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development, indistinctly used in this work, are notions with considerable potential, entailing interesting theoretical, methodological and practical challenges, which are still insufficiently addressed and exploited. Even if it is highly possible that the contradictions between the socio-economic and environmental dimensions of development will probably never be completely overcome and therefore the discussion about sustainable development will never result in a "genuine sustainable world", it is possible to affirm that the materialization of this concept has already had several direct and indirect impacts in different areas: i) in the political arena as a source of socio-institutional innovation in the policy agenda; ii) in the academic sector it has brought closer traditionally separated research fields, giving rise to a new common inter-disciplinary and inter-sectoral language; iii) in one way or another, it has set a new theme of discussion and a new topic for rethinking the relationship between socio-economic and ecological systems, at all levels of society; vi) from a governance perspective, the incorporation of sustainable development as a broad societal challenge has inspired the state in its process of modernization, in the integration of traditionally separated public policy fields, and in its territorial scalar reconfiguration.

While recognizing that there is no consensus on one precise meaning of sustainable development as there is instead a coexistence of evolving approaches addressing this problem, the aim of the following section is to introduce several basic features defining this concept as a basis to start building a territorial and social perspective to sustainable development, highlighting governance dynamics and challenges, which are indeed some of the main objectives of this dissertation.

3. CORE DIMENSIONS DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Despite more than 100 definitions inventoried by Pezzey (1989) or perhaps because of the existence of this great amount of definitions, the concept of sustainable development remains a complex term to define. Sustainable development is indeed a polisemic term (Vivien, 2001) and embraces several physical, biological, social and economic elements regulating the interaction between humans systems and ecosystems (Selman, 1996). Consequently, it is a topic omnipresent in a vast number of academic fields and it has thus been defined in various ways, emphasizing economic, political, social or

environmental issues (Batty, 2001; Hanley and Atkinson, 2003). In broad terms, sustainable development is generally presented as a conjunction of three interdependent dimensions: social equity, economic viability and ecological sustainability (Godard, 2001). More recently, governance has been added as a complementary dimension (Brodhag, 1999; Chautard *et al.* 2003). While in the very beginning sustainable development alluded to global scale problems such as North-South gaps and global pollutions, it has recently also been applied to other spatial scales (local, regional, sub-national, national, supra-national, global), raising the question about its forms of articulation (Selman, 1996; Buckingham and Theobald, 2003; Buckingham-Hatfield and Evans, 1996; Vivien and Zuindeau, 2001; Bressers and Rosenbaum, 2003a; Lafferty, 2004a).

Elaborating on the seminal definition and features provided by the Brundtland Report, it is possible however to state that sustainable development is a term circumscribing specific content: i) it seeks to watch over future generations; ii) it includes the environmental and social dimension within the debate about development and growth; iii) it implies continuity, articulation and equity among global-local spheres, north-south relations and past-present-future time scales, and; iv) it alludes to precaution, uncertainty and responsibility. Bearing these characteristics in mind, in the next sections sustainable development is analysed from the following perspectives:

- Sustainable development articulates economic viability, social equity and ecological sustainability;
- Sustainable development has a normative and analytical content;
- Sustainability is about equity, from an inter-generational and intra-generational perspective. While the inter-generational equity exigency alludes to the articulation among temporal scales, intra-generational equity refers to the articulation among different communities and territorial scales;
- Sustainable development is a governance challenge, meaning that it requires, produces and leads to a particular system of governance. I argue here that the normative and multi-level character of sustainable development engenders specific governance challenges to contemporary societies. In turn, the dialectics between these multiple spatio-temporal governance scales, defining and tackling current sustainability challenges, recreate and lead to a new system of governance. Territorial specificities, in this context, will play a major role in defining governance dynamics and challenges, and at the same time they will be shaped according to existing socio-institutional relations. As this fourth point constitutes one of the major interests of this dissertation, chapter number two is completely consecrated to it.

3.1. Sustainable development as a conjunction of economic viability, ecological sustainability, social equity and governance

Already expressed within the concerns of the first wave of environmentalism and materialised in the Brundtland Report, today there exists a certain consensus regarding the three core spheres or pillars

from which the notion of sustainable development is defined: economic viability, social equity and ecological sustainability. Following the classical definition given by the Brundtland report defining sustainable development as *"a kind of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"* (WCED, 1987), it has been argued that the matching of development goals and human needs entails the equilibrated articulation between the economic, social and ecological systems, which despite their own individual logics, shape and are shaped by their continuous mutual interrelation and embeddedness.

The *economic dimension* refers to the viability of the economic system and alludes to its growth, efficiency and stability. For Harris (2000), an economically sustainable system must be able to produce goods and services on a continuing basis to maintain manageable levels of government and avoid extreme imbalances. However, economic sustainability cannot be achieved at the expense of ecological degradation and non-respect of equity and social justice commitments, given the fact that the economy depends upon the social tissue and ecological system in which it is embedded.

The *social sustainability dimension* has traditionally been related to values such as equity, solidarity, fairness and social justice among human beings, which should be guaranteed from inter-generational and intra-generational viewpoints. For reaching sustainability then ideological premises point out the need to enhance society's democratic values promoting social cohesion, social mobility, civil society participation and enhancement of cultural identities, among others. In other words, this social dimension refers to a particular type of governance capable of dealing with two key interrelated aims: i) harmony between human beings and nature through a certain respect of ecological limits; ii) harmony between human beings, referring to cohesion, solidarity and democracy to guarantee equity. Indeed, the centrality attributed to the social dimension was already underlined in the first WCED reports (1987), pointing out that sustainable development needs a social system capable of finding solutions to tensions stemming from a non-equilibrated kind of development. Nevertheless, current dominating theoretical positions regarding sustainable development do not always take into consideration the centrality of the social dimension.

FIGURE 4: MAIN DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
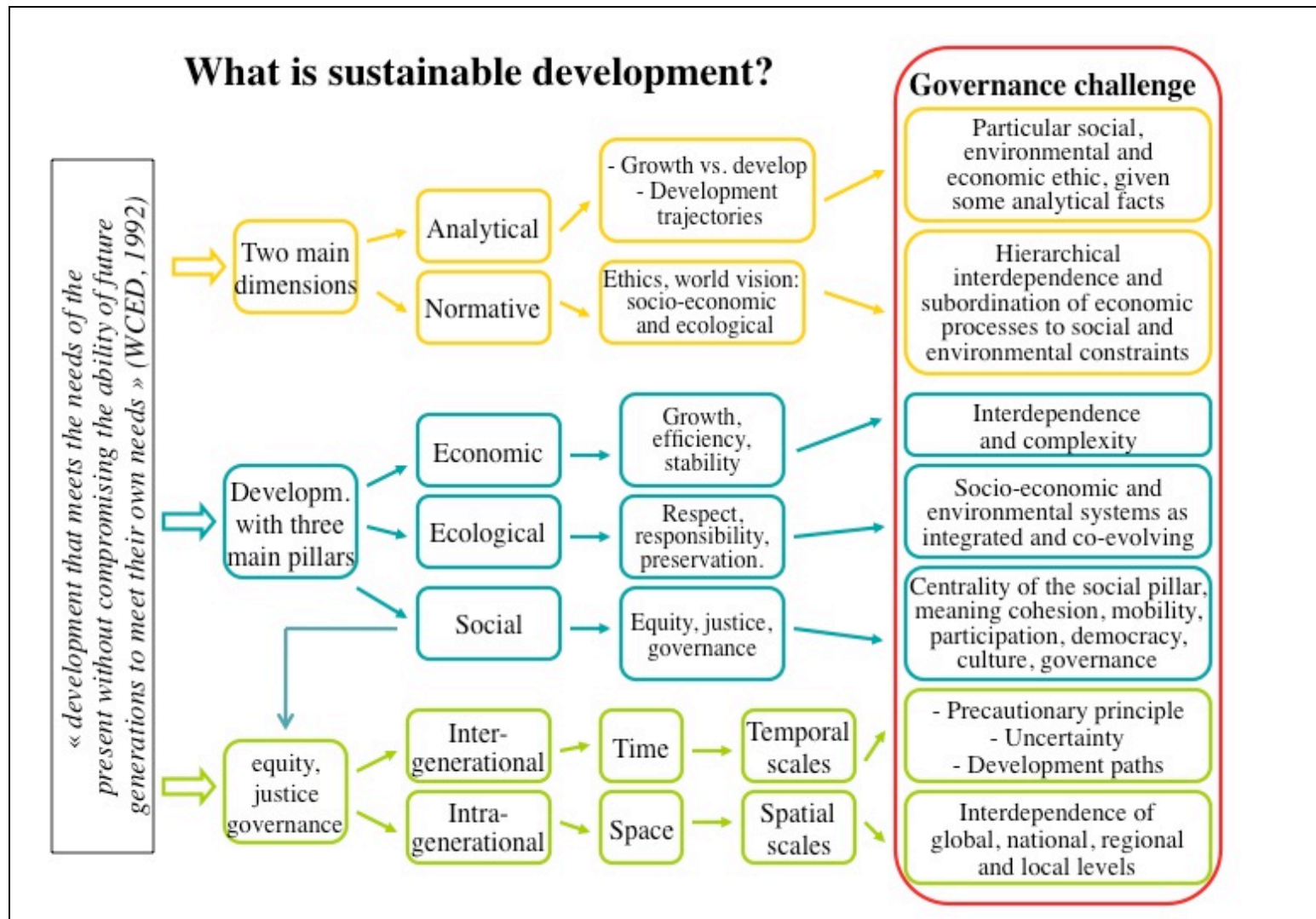
Source: author

The *ecological dimension*, finally, can be related to a view of nature as an ecological system that replaces an atomised perspective for an integrated viewpoint underlying the importance of interactions among species, regulations, retroactions and differed effects resulting from the system's dynamics. Since according to this vision human beings and ecosystems interrelate (Barbault, 2001), the idea of ecological sustainability refers to the ensemble of natural limits to development that human beings should respect (IUCN *et al.*, 1991) in order to guarantee harmony between humans and the natural environment in which human life occurs. Furthermore, this dimension acknowledges that the set of biophysical resources found in Earth, including the natural environment and natural resources, plays an irreplaceable role in supporting life on Earth at all levels, constituting thus the *"life-support system without which economic activity would not be possible"* (Costanza *et al.* 1997 p. 95). This principle alludes then to respect and responsibility for the ecological system, which promotes among others a healthy environment for humans, an equilibrated use of renewal resources, the preservation of non-renewal resources and the maintenance of the natural-cultural identity of territories. The ecological dimension has as well been conceptualised in terms of natural capital, which can be either renewable or active natural capital, or non-renewable or inactive. Renewable natural capital is active and self-maintaining through solar energy, thus it can be harvested to ecosystem goods (*i.e.* wood) and also yield a flow of ecosystem services when left in place (*i.e.* erosion). Non-renewable natural capital, on the other hand, is more passive due to the fact that it does not yield services until extracted (*i.e.* fossil capital and minerals) (Costanza and Daly, 1992 p. 38). As it is further explored in a later section, there exist two main debates building bridges between the concept of capital and ecological sustainability, which are the possible substitutions between natural capital and human-made capital, and the designation of a fair bequeathing of capital to future generations. In this respect, Harris and Leiper (1995) provide answers to these two questionings by means of enouncing three principles considered as fundamental for ecological sustainability: i) do not use non-renewable resources faster than renewable substitutes can be found; ii) do not use renewable resources faster than they can be replenished; iii) do not release pollutants faster than the biosphere can process them to be harmless (Page and Dowling, 2002). Moreover amongst the numerous guidelines that might be defined in view of ecological sustainability, there will be always an uncertainty component that will impede, for instance, the measurement of the capacity of the biosphere to process pollutions. This situation opens a large discussion in which normative and analytical elements cannot be dissociated, and which constitutes a main feature of the reflection about sustainable development and its governance (see section 3.2).

Evidently, the previously examined three sustainability pillars – economic, social and ecological – together with their multidimensional underlying goals lead to much more complexity than the Brundtland Report's first definition. One major discussion in sustainable development literature is the way in which these three dimensions articulate, raising the question about the primacy of one of these

three elements vis-à-vis the other two. This problem of hierarchical articulation among the social, economic and ecological dimensions has resulted in the emergence of different methodological approaches to sustainable development either promoting economic, ecological or social supremacy, as will be analyse in section 5 of this chapter. In the specific case of this dissertation, focusing on the articulation between sustainable development, ecotourism and governance, I essentially develop a social approach to sustainability highlighting the key role of territories as living entities and their socio-institutional dynamics. While assuming a social supremacy, what I intend to argue is that, on the one hand, economic and ecological sustainability depends upon governance and on the other, that the process by which sustainable development challenges are socially defined and tackled engender new forms of governance (see chapter 2).

3.2. The necessary dialogue between analytical and normative dimensions of sustainability

Beyond the variety of meanings assigned to the term sustainable development according to different political, ideological, sectoral and scientific discourses, a set of interrelated analytical and normative features can be identified as primary elements of consensus-building.

From an analytical point of view, since the mid-1960s it has been argued that development can no longer be defined without taking into consideration the biophysical environment, its preservation and the renewable capacity of natural resources. At the global level, natural scientists have shown the dramatic effects of economic growth on air pollution, global warming and general degradation of the ecological system (see WWF, 2008). Publications showing that environmental limits to economic growth exist and that we are approaching these limits (Batty, 2001) are varied and focus on subjects such as the increase of waste and pollution by consumptive behaviour (Bisserbe and Duval, 2005), energy depletion (Chevalier, 2005), water scarcity and seasonal droughts (Urrutia, 2005), as well as population growth (Husson, 2005), climate change and extreme socio-economic differences between the North and the South (UNDP, 2007), among others. The Human Development Report 2007/2008 (UNDP, 2007) shows that climate change is not a future scenario, but a current reality. According to this Report, humanity is not only transiting towards a point in which exposures of populations to droughts, floods, storms and catastrophes are destroying opportunities and reinforcing inequality, but also that irreversible ecological catastrophe has become unavoidable. The acknowledgement of this environmental crisis has important consequences on the way the social-economic-ecological relation is regarded. On one hand, it calls into question the correlation between economic growth and development; on the other, it demands reconsidering the idea of an existing unique development path for all countries, regions and localities. Orthodox definitions of development equated with economic growth and considered as a desirable uniform path for all societies have proven to be inappropriate to address the most urgent and basic human needs (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2008).

Sustainability has to do as well with values, rights and a specific ethic concerning the relationship between socio-economic and environmental issues. The normative facet of sustainability has different implications that are related to the kind of life and world in which human beings desire or wish to live. First, sustainable development is built on a specific ethic, which is associated with a particular world vision, a respectful attitude in relation to our planet, and more specifically with regard to the articulation between socio-economic and environmental spheres. Sustainability has to do with values and rights of existence of other species (ecological dimension), with the heritage each generation should bequeath to the next one, and also with social values and equal rights for all human beings. It denotes the acknowledgement of a normative hierarchy among economy, society and environment: the market economy depends upon societal and environmental factors. While societies are possible without a market economy, none of them can exist without a healthy natural environment. Economic processes are therefore subordinated to social and ecological constraints. In short, sustainable development refers to commitments to make social, economic and environmental goals compatible at all levels, by means of putting forward values such as equity, solidarity and justice between different generations and among present ones, which implies the recognition of cultural diversity and biodiversity as primary resources for the reproduction of life. In this context the enhancement of democracy is fundamental.

FIGURE 5: ANALYTICAL AND NORMATIVE DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
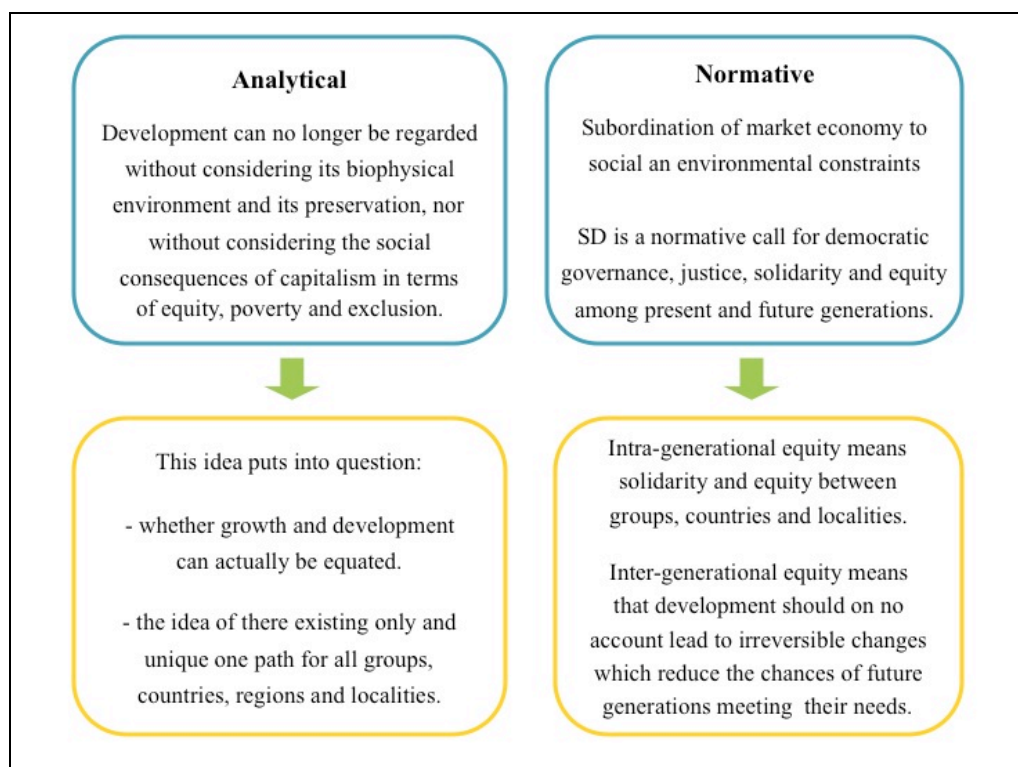
Source: author

While articulating analytical and normative views, the sustainable development debate provides a rich methodological framework to deal with complex challenges societies are facing today, permitting us to foster a dialogue between scientific evidence denouncing unsustainable paths, societal values needed to deal with this reality and the necessity to build empirical frameworks in tune with these evidences and ethics. Within the concept of sustainable development, the dialogue between normative and analytical spheres is materialized in the reflection on equity and its temporal and territorial understanding. Below I present the meaning of temporal and territorial equity in sustainable development through the notions of inter-generational and inter-generational equity.

3.3. Inter-temporal and spatial equity as basic principles of sustainable development

As stated in the preceding section, fairness, equity and responsibility between human beings constitute a fundamental sustainability principle, which when combined with time and territory, result in the notions of equity and justice across generations (inter-generational perspective) and equity and justice within generations (intra-generational perspective) (Hanley and Atkinson, 2003; Zuindeau, 2000b; Jollivet, 2001b). These two interdependent dimensions underlying the concept of sustainable development generate important challenges for the study of governance (Laganier *et al.,* 2002), being the governance of sustainable development shaped by both time-scale and spatial-scale challenges.

In the case of equity across generations, the literature on sustainable development contends that different kinds of risks and environmental threats against our planet concern not only present societies, but also future generations. The inter-generational equity principle states that it is not fair to sacrifice future generations' needs in order to satisfy those of present societies. Jollivet (2001b) relates the notion of inter-territorial equity with the concept of heritage, and argues that present generations have the obligation and responsibility vis-à-vis future generations to bequeath this legacy. Godard (2001 p. 79) defines heritage as the set of goods, natural or not, holding a particular identity or essential value that justifies the desire of present generations to transmit them to future ones. From a governance viewpoint, the inter-generational principle might be associated with three main challenges. First, the definition of present and future needs together with the identification of the heritage to leave to future generations should be collectively defined according to values, behaviours and desires of societies. Second, once heritage and needs are socially defined, their legacy to future generations will depend on people's behaviour and responsibility toward the agreed commitments. Third, the inter-generational equity principle refers to the path-dependency and development trajectories of territories, whose sustainability or non-sustainability will be historically built across interconnected time scales.

In spite of this, the inter-generational equity principle does not mean that present generations should sacrifice their existence for the welfare of future generations. According to the definition of sustainable development, inter-generational equity goes together with an intra-generational equity

perspective. The inter-generational equity principle only makes sense if inter-generational values, such as social equity, social justice, solidarity and reinforcement of social values are also guaranteed from a synchronic perspective (Zuindeau, 2000b). Coenen and Halfacre (2003 p.185-186) identify three approaches to equity relevant from an environmental justice perspective: 1) *social equity* refers to decisions that do not reproduce racial, socio-economic, age, gender or occupational inequalities; 2) *geographic equity* alludes to the location, situation and proximity of localities to polluted environments; 3) *procedural equity* refers to a non-discriminatory application of governmental rules, evaluation criteria and enforcement. On the other hand, Wheeler (2004) examines the concept of equity from the perspective of the gap between economically favoured and disfavoured groups in a context of increasing exclusion, poverty and discrimination at a global scale and also within nations.

To the same extent that inter-generational equity alludes to time and to the interrelation among temporal-scales, intra-generational equity refers to the notion of territory and to the relevance of the articulation between different spatial scales (Bressers and Rosenbaum, 2003a). The notion of territory has been examined in different ways in the literature on sustainable development, ranging from the concept of imported/exported sustainability between territories (Pearce *et al.* 1989) to territorial approaches highlighting a view of places as living entities, sources of creativity and social innovation (Moulaert *et al.,* 2000, 2003, 2005). According to Pearce *et al.* (1989), either by the means of exporting pollution or polluting activities, or through the import of natural resources at low prices, one territory can satisfy its needs and guarantee its sustainability in detriment to others. Nevertheless, this perspective certainly does not take into consideration equity among territories nor sustainability as a global challenge. Another territorial approach to sustainable development is the well-known ecological footprint analysis developed by Wackernagel and Rees (1996). The ecological footprint can been defined as the aggregate land area and water required by people in a region to provide continuously all the resources they presently consume and all the wastes they presently discharge (Selman, 1996 p.36). This is a tool that calculates ecological sustainability based on the resources people consume, the waste they generate and the biologically productive area needed to provide enough space for this (Wackernagel, 1998 cited in Buckingham and Turner, 2008 p. 5). Results from the footprint analysis have shown that current consumption and production patterns require three Earths to sustain contemporary societies (Selman, 1996).

Also adopting a spatial approach, Zuindeau (2000a) identifies various key areas of interaction between the local and global territorial spheres, and especially concerning the role of the local level. One of these areas is the *aggregation effect* that specifically characterizes global sustainability as a result of the summing up of various local sustainable actions. From a multi-level territorial perspective, the challenge of sustainable development at a global scale will necessarily depend of the contribution of lower territories to the achievement of global objectives. Moreover, according to Zuindeau (2000b) the

aggregation effect might go hand in hand with an *exemplifying effect* meaning that sustainable local experiences can operate as positive catalysts for sustainable practices in other territories. Elaborating on the Agenda 21, Zuindeau (2000b) highlights the role of the sub-national level reminding us that it is principally at the local level where sustainable development laws and measures are operationalized. Regions and localities are usually the governance levels in charge of important subjects for sustainable development, including water, forests, land and waste management, among others. Local and regional actors then play a key role in carrying out the spatial planning process and controlling environmental standards. Finally, the local arena is also seen as the ideal scale for raising awareness, informing and promoting sustainable practices.

Furthermore, exploring the concept and role of territories, Moulaert *et al.* (2003) have developed a dynamic vision of places including the notions of path-dependency, embeddedness of spatial scales and social innovation to argue that territories, as places of socio-institutional innovation, play a fundamental role in fostering alternative integrated development (Moulaert, 2000), which is in tune with sustainability imperatives. *This perspective rejoins the argument I develop in this dissertation that assigns a supreme position to the social sustainability dimension and therefore to the whole set of socio-institutional dynamics shaping territories.*

This basic characterization of sustainable development as the integration of the previous dimensions receives different nuances among the diverse theories that have dealt with the sustainable development problematic. The definition, integration and degree of importance assigned to the economic, social or environmental dimensions will vary between contributions coming from different scientific fields. For instance, the importance assigned to normative and analytical elements and to the definition of equity will also be different among these contributions. It is for this reason that it is possible today to find such a diverse and sometimes contradictory literature universe apparently addressing the same problems. Of course, epistemological differences within economic thought existed far before the coining of sustainable development; we can even argue that there has never existed a serious epistemological debate that combines the two concepts.

Bearing in mind the essential characteristics defining sustainable development, and more precisely the conjunction of socio-economic and environmental aims encompassing sustainability, in the next section I expose the main approaches currently dealing with this problematic. After a brief first part confronting the evolution of economic thought to sustainability related topics, aiming to examine how and to what extent early economists dealt with the natural environment and natural resources, I proceed to present several definitions and methodological approaches to sustainable development, which although they have in common the objective to include the environmental variable in their reflection, together they compose quite an eclectic group of theories with little commonality.

4. EVOLUTION OF ECONOMIC THOUGHT AND ITS INTERRELATION WITH BIOLOGY, ECOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

While confronting the evolution of economic thought with the notion of sustainability, it is possible to observe that it was rather tardy when economists became aware about the need to address the economy with considerations for environmental and social issues. In spite of punctual contributions marginally pointing out the economic importance of the availability of natural resources and cultivable land, theories integrating in a dynamic and interdisciplinary manner ecological, economic and social issues emerged with more force only after the 1990s. Earlier, the natural environment was considered as a provider of free and abundant natural resources, thus the only preoccupation was to exploit them. With the institutionalisation of other scientific approaches such as evolutionary theories, thermodynamics, biology, forestry and alternative development theories, progressively a more interdisciplinary view started to be constructed planting the first seeds for a more integrated approach to development. In fact, the current range of theories dealing with sustainable development, including weak and strong approaches, is the result of a sort of amalgam of notions and assumptions coming from different disciplinary and paradigmatic contexts. *Even if today there exists a great disparity of approaches, these assorted foundations are quite interesting because they contribute to keeping in mind the importance and so the need of dealing with sustainability by adopting an interdisciplinary approach. This belief is one of the central ideas defended in this work.*

A call for interdisciplinarity in the context of sustainable development is explained by the necessity of producing a knowledge which is able to satisfy the complexity of sustainability problems (Godeman, 2006). *"Interdisciplinary research applies to a common problem that alludes to several disciplines and thus represents a 'disciplinary interface' (...)* [This means that] *new knowledge structures are established by the integration of different disciplinary perspectives, theories and medium* (…) (Brand, 2000 cited by Godeman, 2006 p. 52). Therefore, for interdisciplinary to come about, a 'common reflection ground' needs to be created to approach a shared concern that simultaneously will be interpreted from individual disciplinary logics and inter-disciplinarity shared perspectives. Sustainable development seems to be an ideal 'ground' to create dialogue among disciplines and innovative research methodologies leading together to the creation of a common knowledge (Godeman, 2006) to advance in the understanding of the complex relationship between nature and society.

4.1. Early contributions

4.1.1. The Physiocrats and the power of nature: Quesnay

The physiocrats, group of French philosophers of the mid-eighteenth century, are usually presented not only as the first modern-time school of economic thought economists but also as the founders of a theory combining agriculture and economy, in which agriculture is seen as the one and only source of

richness, given its capacity to nourish workers and allow production. According to physiocrats, natural law determines social and economic order, by means of defining economic activity in direct relation with the work of the land, excluding from the analysis any kind of role of institutions or collective action.

4.1.2   The classics: Smith, Malthus, Ricardo and Marx

Following a similar viewpoint in which individuals are treated as sovereign entities, but also considering that nature provides abundant natural resources for free, classical economists were not really concerned about the need to manage natural resources, adopting thus an exploitative view. Adam Smith's (1776) invisible hand assumption and the central role assigned to markets completely leaves questions of the governance of environmental systems and the role of any actor or institution beyond markets out of economic analysis. Malthus (1803), for his part, despite his population principle stating that exponential population growth will entail food scarcity and social disturbances – which has indeed exerted an important influence, notably during the 1970s with the emergence of neo-malthusian approaches (*i.e.* Erhlich, 1968) – is not preoccupied by natural resources scarcity in itself but rather by population augmentation. Similarly, Ricardo's (1817) differential rent theory showing how population growth results in the extension of farming on less fertile lands does not manifest any concern for natural resource depletion, although this approach has exerted some influences on current discussions on food prices and agriculture intensification. Finally Marx, who although he was not directly concerned with nature conservation, seems to be the classical economist with a clearer influence on sustainability approaches, pointing out arguments against the concentration of ownership of resources and its consequence on justice among human beings, all notions mobilised by sustainability approaches.

4.1.3.   The notion of steady-state and the importance of energy: the contributions of Mill

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Mill is considered as one of the first economists advocating for biodiversity conservation and positioned against the transformation of natural capital into man-made capital (Costanza *et al.* 1997). This author coined the notion of steady-state to show that continuous growth is not observed in nature and consequently augmentation of richness cannot be unlimited. In contrast, Mills perceives steady-state as natural and desirable for societies. Elaborating on Mill's notion of steady-state, in 1977 Daly (cited in Costanza *et al.* 1997 p. 33), member of the ecological economics approach, started advocating for a 'steady-state economy' in which flows of resources into production and of pollutants back to the environment are kept at a steady level.

4.2. The centrality of markets and prices in the neoclassical economy approach

4.2.1. Jevons and the coal question

In a context of dominance of the neoclassical paradigm fostered by Walras, Edgeworth, Jevons and the Austrian school towards the end of the nineteenth century, the natural environment was not a subject of interest for these economists who were instead centred on an approach to economics relying on markets, competition and price systems. Nevertheless, even if Jevons is considered to be a key contributor to the neoclassical paradigm, notably due to his works on marginal utility of value, some of his writings on the dependence of the British Empire on coal and its fast diminishing rate, are cited in economic ecological literature as being influential for having recognized the importance of energy, which still constitutes a key challenge for contemporary societies (see Jevons, 1865).

4.2.2. Externalities and market failures: Marshall and Pigou

In the beginning of the twentieth century, period in which marginalism was sovereign, the English economist Alfred Marshall (1890) introduced the concept of externality to show that prices do not reflect collective satisfaction, but only the private satisfaction of consumers and sellers. The concept of externality refers to a phenomenon that is external to markets; in pure competition theory externalities do not affect markets functioning. From Marshall's notion of externality, Pigou (1920) started dealing with the natural environment and collective resources use, formally elaborating how costs and benefits that are not included in market prices affect the interrelation of people with the environment. In this context, externalities, which can be positive or negative, can be defined as monetarily uncompensated effects of a certain activity on agents that are not involved in it. Different forms of environmental pollution provoked by production are often cited as examples of negative externality (*i.e.* pesticides). According to this logic, biodiversity is not adequately protected because its value is not included in market signals that guide the economic decisions of producers and consumers provoking a market failure (Costanza *et al.* 1997). In order to reach the optimum, meaning the maximal welfare for the ensemble of consumers and producers, prices should be corrected through taxes to producers of environmental nuisances or subsidies to recompense the producer of positive external effects. Taxes and subventions will permit the internalisation of the social effects of a private decision, engendering incentives for agents to take into consideration these social effects and thus adapt their decisions. Since Pigou's contribution, numerous economists dealing with the environment adhere to the solution of integrating critical environmental resources into the market system by means of assigning economic values to all kinds of environmental resources, expecting that an increase of prices will reduce the demand and consumption of them. Furthermore, since Pigou's contribution, a large literature was published supporting the replacement of inefficient regulations by efficient taxes on pollution. The polluter-pays principle was born from this approach, as a compromise to make converge private and collective interests and maintaining the central role of markets.

TABLE 1: CONFRONTING ECONOMIC THOUGHT WITH CURRENT SUSTAINABILITY CONCERNS

Physiocrats (Quesnay mid-18th)
A natural social order*:* group of French social philosophers stating that natural law (universal laws of physics) determines social order and economic systems. Economic activity consists of working the land and individuals are sovereign entities.   *Limits: role of social institutions and collective action?*
Adam Smith (1723-1790)
The invisible hand*:* the social good results from the sum of individual wants and markets automatically guide individual behaviour to the common good. It is an atomistic view of individuals and a mechanistic view of social systems.   *Limits: role of communities, collective action and all kinds of social institutions in defining the social good, organising the social order and governing environmental systems?*
Malthus (1766-1834)
Population principle*:* human population will grow exponentially as long as food and land are available. While population increases at a geometrical rate, food supply does so at an arithmetic rate, giving rise to food scarcity and derived social conflicts.   *Limits: is it because human population might become stabilised that it will be possible to guarantee a sustained level of human well-being? The relation between population growth and the environment are much more complex.*
David Ricardo (1772-1823)
Differential rent theory*:* model showing how population growth results in the extension of farming to less fertile lands.   *Relationship between population growth, augmentation of food prices, disturbance of natural areas and agriculture intensification to increase production.*
John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)
Steady-state*:* competitive economies have to be based on rules of property use and a sense of social responsibility that favoured the common good; competitive markets are essential for freedom. Continuous growth is not seen in nature and steady-states rather than random change are perceived as natural.   *Notion of steady-state economy where flows of resources into production and of pollutants back to the environment are kept as a steady level* (Daly, 1977 cited in Costanza *et al.,* 1997 p. 33).
Marx (1818-1883)
Concentration of ownership of land and capital among a few people and its effects on economy*:* The ownership of resources and resource use affects sustainability and paths of development.   *Economic and environmental injustices within and between nations; unequal access to resources between nations and the derived consumption impact.*
Jevons (1835-1882)
Marginal utility of value and acknowledgement of the critical importance of coal (energy) for the British economy.
Pigou (1877-1959)
Costs and benefits that are not included in market prices affect the relation between people and the environment.   *Externalities:* they are external to markets thus they do not affect how markets operate.
Hotelling (1895-1973)
The rate of interest will determine the efficient use of resources over time.
Coase (1910-)
Polluter and polluted reach an accord in terms of the desirable level of pollution.

Source: author based on various sources (see Costanza *et al.,* 1991)

The work of Pigou inspired several economists who later developed formal models of collective use of resources. However, for authors' such as Costanza *et al.* (1997) the approach developed by Pigou was

not really understood until the biologist Garret Hardin published in 1968 his popular article "The Tragedy of the Commons". Hardin coined the analogy of the "tragedy of the commons" to allude to the attitude by which individuals and corporations have maximized private benefit at the expense of shared public goods, among them the environment. Open access to resources thus can develop through the destruction of regulating institutions for these resources, leading to 'tragic' consequences. This is a typical situation occurring on uncontrolled borders, open seas, wildlife and water resources located in transfrontier areas, which are usually overexploited (Berkes, 1989 quoted in Costanza *et al.* 1997).

4.2.3. *The contribution of Hotelling on non-renewable resources*

Hotelling (1931) with his article on non-renewable natural resources is credited as one of the founders of natural resources economy (Boidin and Zuindeau, 2006), another important branch of economics in which the environment is taken into consideration. According to Hotelling's model, in any situation of resource scarcity, an efficient resource use over time will be reached through price variation. He shows how the level of interest rates affects the direction of ecosystems extinction of species and argues that it will be efficient to exploit species or degrade an ecosystem if their value over time does not increase at least as fast as money deposited in an interest-bearing bank account (Costanza *et al.* 1997). This analysis constitutes one of the bases of the reflection of capital substitution, being Hotelling's viewpoint in favour of total substitution of natural capital for human-made capital if the former does not earn as high a return as human-produced capital. Complementing Hotelling's work, Hartwick (1977) defines a rule stating that the inter-generational optimum is guaranteed if the scarcity rent is invested in compensatory physical capital that is substituted by natural capital.

4.2.4. *Coase limited critique of the neoclassical economics paradigm*

Critiques of neoclassical contributions are numerous and several of them played an important role in fostering an alternative development paradigm enlarging the notion of value, criticizing the process by which a monetary value is assigned to nature in a context of uncertainty, and questioning the central role of markets and their capacity to guarantee ecological sustainability on their own (see Bressers and Huitema, 1999). Indeed, these two standard approaches, one limiting the governance of the natural environment to market correction through taxes and the other guaranteeing that prices reflect the increasing scarcity of non renewable natural resources, try to reduce as much as possible the role of the state in order to fit with liberal tenants. Among critiques to neoclassical approaches addressing the natural environment, we can mention the works of Coase (1960), the English economist that showed that 'polluter' and 'polluted' could negotiate and thus attain a satisfactory level of pollution for both sides. This level, according to him, corresponds to the price of pollution that results from the maximal amount that the polluted would pay to the polluter to reduce its level of pollution, and the minimal amount that the polluter will demand for doing this. Within this procedure it is the market, and not the state through a tax, that will determine this level or social cost of pollution. Coase's works have been

very influential and have inspired very popular tools for regulating pollution, as is the case with the emissions trading approach used to regulate pollution through the provision of economic incentives to reduce emissions of pollutants, as well as all the politics underlying tradable pollution rights. Carbon emission trading is one controversial mechanism through which the different countries can exchange pollution quotas to meet the Kyoto Protocol objectives.

Certainly, since the first reactions against the neoclassical paradigm until today, the number of approaches dealing with the interaction between human beings and the natural environment has increased significantly. By means of building bridges between various scientific fields, an alternative paradigm stressing the complementarities between the socio-economic and ecological systems started progressively to be forged. As a result, various methodological perspectives defining the sustainable development problem differently, which are commonly known as strong and weak sustainability approaches, coexist today. This panorama is also formed with anti-developmentalist approaches holding radical discourses that reject the sustainability paradigm for being an approach persisting with a developmentalist growth-oriented aim. Below I address various contributions from different scientific fields that to different extents have influenced the forging of the sustainability paradigm.

4.3. Contributions coming from other scientific fields, their aim to go beyond mechanistic orthodox approaches and their role in forging the concept of sustainable development

At different historical periods, mechanistic approaches and orthodox economic theories stressing markets and prices have been questioned from a scientific and ideological point of view, because of their lack of acknowledgement of and incapacity to deal with the complexity of human-natural environment interaction.

4.3.1. The contributions coming from the field of biology and ecology: from Darwin to the first bio-ecological approaches during the mid-20th century.

Darwin's (1859) evolutionary paradigm, stating that the wide variety of species on earth are the result of evolution by the process of natural selection and adaptation, marked a turning point in modern biology, ecology and other science fields, including economics. Among other subjects, according to Canguilhem (1960 quoted in Vivien, 2001) Darwin's theory points out the opposition between development and growth, stating that living beings can at the same time grow and stop their development. Unlike mechanistic approaches, an evolutionary economic perspective highlights the process of path dependency, history and systems dynamics. It contends that evolution can achieve multiple equilibria, and contests the possibility of guaranteeing optimal efficiency and optimal performance due to path dependency and perturbations (Arthur 1988 cited in Costanza *et al.* 1997).

Even if the roots of ecology can be remitted to Greek science and later to the contributions of authors such as Linnaeus, Buffon, Darwin and Wallace, it was only in 1866 when Ernst Heinrich Haeckel used

for the first time the notion of ecology. Since then, the term started to be more widely used, the first specialised books started to be published and during the twentieth century the first formal societies were created (Costanza *et al.* 1997). As a science, ecology finally emerged only during the mid-twentieth century pointing out ideas such as holism[5] and system integration. Elaborating on Newtonian physics, the aim was to build a worldview that it is adapted to complex living systems, which should be evolutionary (Costanza *et al.* 2003 in Costanza *et al.* 1997).

4.3.2. *Thermodynamics: Carnot, Claussius, Georgescu-Roegen, Costanza…*

Thermodynamics is another paradigm that has exerted an important influence in the development of theories showing the interaction between the human activity and the natural environment. Thermodynamics can be defined as the branch of physics focusing on the process of transformation from an energetic viewpoint (Vivien, 2005). The origins of thermodynamics can be remitted to the study of Carnot (1824) of the efficiency of steam engines, in which he pointed out for the first time that the amount of work that can be extracted from an engine depended on the temperature of the gradient between the source and the sink. This study constitutes the basis for the formalisation of the first law of thermodynamics done by Claussius during the mid-1800s (Costanza *et al.*, 1997). The first thermodynamic law states that energy can neither be created nor destroyed. The second law, named entropy law, states that the amount of energy available for work in a closed system only decreases with use. Energy thus is increasingly less disposable for human beings over time. Thermodynamics laws have been mobilised by different academic fields to develop models of ecosystems and models of the interaction between humans and the natural environment (Odum, 1971, Georgescu-Roegen, 1971, 1975; Costanza, 1980). A group of ecological economists have used thermodynamics laws to develop a critical approach to economic growth and production (see section 5.3 of this chapter).

4.3.3. *The sustainable management of European forests and its influence on conservationism*

The utilisation of the notions of sustainability and sustainable development that can be remitted to European forestry practices occurred during the eighteenth and nineteenth century (Davoudi and Layard, 2001; Mittler, 2001; Vivien and Zuindeau, 2001). During this period, German and French foresters became aware of the risk of resource depletion and therefore of the need to put a sort of 'limit' or control by the means of replanting as many trees as needed to replace harvest wood. In order to monitor the growth of wood fibre, foresters coined the notions of scientific or sustainable forestry (Davoudi and Layard, 2001) and sustainable yield (Selman, 1996). Years later, Gifford Pinchot, chief forester in the early 1900 under Roosevelt, imported from Europe the concept of sustained yield

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[5] Holism, dating back to the 1930s, designates a conceptualization of reality as *"an integrated whole; a unity, not as a set of logically separable structures and process (for example, "the price system") as perceived by formalists (…) Holists employ a part-whole mode of apprehending reality (…) **Meaning**, therefore, is linked to the context; entities or activities are assumed to be truly comprehensible in their interrelations with other entities or activities. Additionally, the whole is seen in the main to **determine** the part. Obviously, if one is committed to this interpretation, one should study a whole living system rather than just one part (for example, the "labour market") taken out of context* (Ramstad, 1986 p. 1071).

resource management, adopting a rather utilitarian approach that considerably influenced the conservationist movement (Weaver, 2001b). Contrary to a preservationist viewpoint, ascribing intrinsic values to nature, the sustainable yield approach is rather utilitarian and concerned with preserving natural resources for future human use (Wheeler, 2004).

4.3.4. The eco-development theory and the questioning of development

During the 1972 Stockholm Conference, Maurice Strong, the meeting's general secretary, coined the notion of *eco-development* to address the relationship between ecology and economy. After this event, this new concept started to penetrate the reflection opposing environmental quality, development and industrialisation. Later in 1980, Ignacy Sachs published a book called *Stratégies de l'éco-développement*, and defined the term eco-development as a "development philosophy" or sort of *voie moyenne*. Sachs, inspired by his observations on less developed economies, which are characterized by their economic dependence and thus, aspirations of achieving another kind of development, indicated that the unfair distribution of the Earth's richness is one of the most important world paradoxes. For Sachs, this unequal distribution provokes a double loss, for both rich and poor societies, since wealthy people over-consume and exhaust a significant portion of resources, and disfavoured groups under-consume and over-use scarce resources to which they have access. Sachs, refusing the thesis on the non-reconciliation of ecological and economic logics, described the eco-development as a *voie moyenne* between extreme Malthusian propositions and an unbounded natural resources thesis (Sachs, 1993). Consequently, the challenge is to find growth and development modes able to make social progress and the reproduction of healthy natural resources compatible.

According to Sachs (1980) eco-development is a kind of development that is engendered by local communities through the better utilization of natural resources, and the respectful adaptation of the environment without depletion of resources. It is a kind of development in which each natural region searches for specific solutions to their problems, which are defined in function of local ecological and cultural contexts, as well as according to immediate and long-term necessities (Sachs, 1980). Eco-development has three basic pillars: i) self-reliance in decision-making and the need for personal development ways in tune with the historical, cultural and ecological contexts; ii) an equitably watch over human needs, material and non-material, from a diachronic and synchronic solidarity perspective; iii) ecological prudence or development paths in harmony with nature (Sachs, 1980).

TABLE 2: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MILESTONES

1800	1870	Foundation of the **Yellowstone** national park, the world's first national park.
1950 to 1960	1951	**IUCN**, *The position of nature protection throughout the world in 1950*
	1961	Foundation of the **World Wildlife Fund**
	1968	Paul Ehrlich publishes « Population Bomb »
	1968	Foundation of the **Club of Rome**, group conformed by thirty-six European economists and scientists
	1968	**UNESCO** Intergovernmental Conference for Rational Use and Conservation of Biosphere
	1968	The **UN** General Assembly authorises the Human Environment Conference to be held in 1972
	1969	Foundation of the non-profit environmentalist organization **Friends of the Earth**
1970	1971	Foundation of **Greenpeace** in Canada and launching of the first actions to avoid environmental damage.
	1971	Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
	1972	**Club of Rome** (Dennis L. Meadows *et al.*) publishes *The Limits to Growth* or *Meadows Report*
	1972	**United Nations** *Conference on the Human Environment*, held in Stockholm. It led to the creation of the UNEP and IIED, and to the emergence of the concept of eco-development.
	1973	First European Environmental Action Programme
	1974	Foundation of the **European Environmental Bureau** (Brussels)
	1975	Convention on International Trade in endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) comes into effect.
	1977	**United Nations** *Conference on Desertification*
	Late-70s	Several environmental catastrophes (Amoco Cadiz oil spill, Three Mile Island nuclear reactor leak)
	1979	Adoption of the *Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air pollution*
1980	1980	**IUCN, WWF** and **UNEP,** *World conservation strategy: living resource conservation for sustainable development*
	1982	**United Nations** *World Charter for Nature* (publishing)
	1982	**United Nations** *Convention on the Law of the Sea* (adoption)
	1983	Foundation of the *World Commission on Environment and Development,* chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland
	1984	Bhopal catastrophe
	1984	International Conference on Environment and Economics (OECD)
	1985	Scientists discover the Antarctic ozone hole.
	1985	Publishing of first reports predicting global warming. UNEP and ICSU Reports on the build-up of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.
	1986	**IUCN** Conference on Environment and Development, Ottawa[6]
	1986	Chernobyl radioactive explosion
	1987	Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Sept 16th 1987) adopted.
	1987	Publishing of the **WCED** *Brundtland Report* **"***Our Common Future***".**
	1988	Establishment of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
	1989	Foundation of the Stockholm Environmental Institute
1990	1990	Foundation of the International institute for sustainable development in Canada.
	1990	Foundation of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (independent non profit organisation)
	1992	**United Nations** *Conference on the Environment and Development* or *Earth Summit (UNCED)*, Rio de Janeiro.
		- 173 countries signed the Rio Declaration on the environment and development
		- Agreement and publication of the **Agenda 21** (a global action plan for sustainable development)
		- Convention on Biological Biodiversity
		- Framework Convention on Climate Change
		- Statement on non-binding forest principles and other treaties on desertification, high-seas fishing.
		- The parallel NGO forum advanced other treaties.
		- Creation of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development
	1993	First meeting of the UN Commission on sustainable development
	1993	**United Nations** World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna
	1994	**United Nations** International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo.
	1995	**United Nations** World Summit for *Social Development*, Copenhagen
	1995	**United Nations** World Conference on Women
	1996	**United Nations** *Second Conference on Human Settlements*, *Habitat II*, Istanbul
	1997	**United Nations** *Second Earth Summit,* Rio + 5, New York
	1998	Controversy over GM crops.
	1999	Third World Trade Organisation Ministerial Conference, Seattle. One of the first anti-globalisation protests.
2000	2000	Second World Water Forum
	2000	**United Nations** Millennium Summit (Millennium Development Goals to be achieved by 2015)
	2002	**United Nations** *Sustainable Development World Summit,* Rio + 10, Johannesburg
	2004	Wangari Muta Maathai awarded Nobel Prize (The first environmentalist to be awarded)
	2005	Kyoto Protocol comes into force
	2006	**United Nations** Climate Change Conference, Nairobi
	2009	**United Nations** Climate Change Conference, Copenhagen

Source: author based on various sources

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[6] "*Meeting participants define SD as the emerging paradigm derived from to closely related paradigms of conservation 1) one reacting against the laissez-faire economic theory which considers living resources as externalities and free goods and 2) one based on the concept of resource stewardship*" (timeline IISD).

Development must be impregnated, motivated and supported by the search for a dynamic equilibrium between human life, collective activities and specific spatial and temporal realities. Within this context, planning specialists have for Sachs a key role to play in terms of coordination and coherence of local strategies. Evoking Kalecki, Sachs argues that participatory planning approaches are fundamental to equilibrate power between market structures, the state and civil society (Vivien, 2001). It is worthy to observe precursor reflections on sustainable development and governance in the writings of Sachs. His reflections not only search combing socio-economic and ecological aspects of development with their spatial, temporal and socio-cultural dimensions, but they also introduce very relevant reflections on the role of different governance structures.

FIGURE 6: THE ORIGINS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
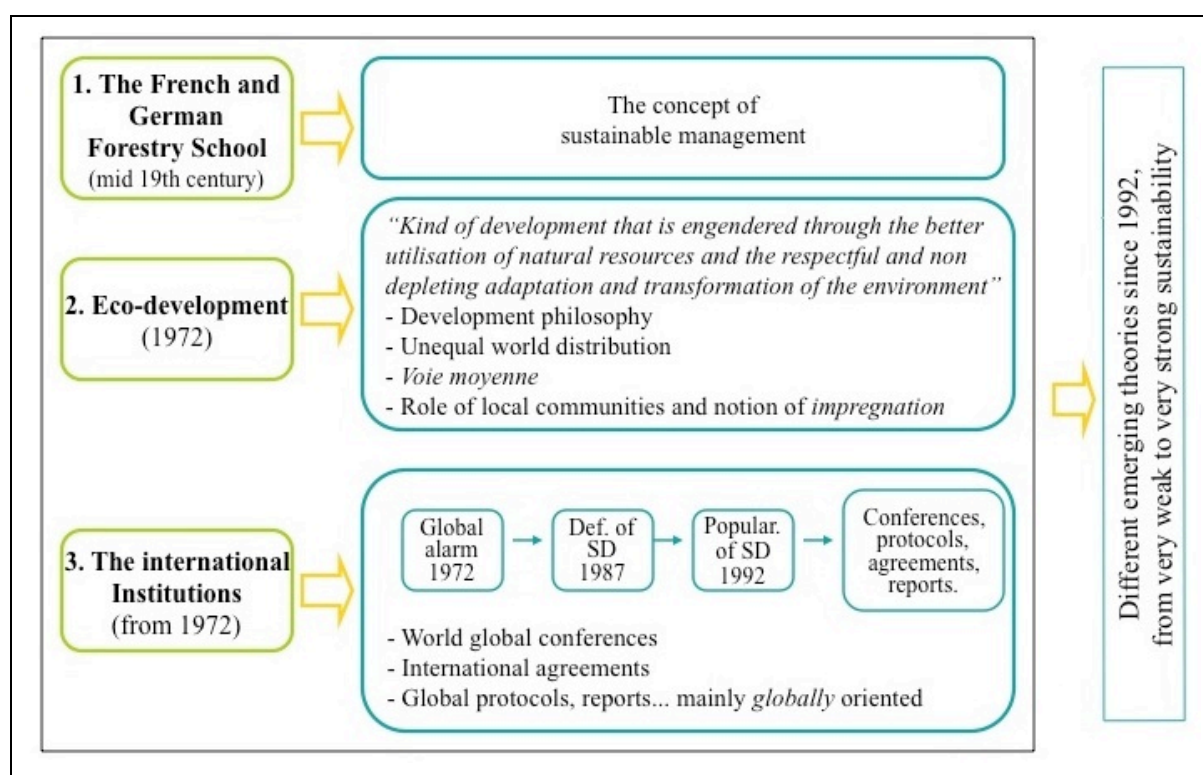
Source: author

4.4. From the Club of Rome to the Johannesburg Summit: the globalist contribution of international institutions

In 1972 the Club of Rome published the controversial and popular *Limits to Growth* report, which intended to show and predict the effects caused by the world economic growth pattern. The report announced the increasing natural resources impoverishment, due to overexploitation and pollution generated by rapid demographic and economic expansion. This report has been extremely controversial because it predicted calamitous consequences if growth was not slowed down. Since its

publication, the sustainable development movement began its take off. An important number of international conferences followed this first report: Stockholm in 1972, Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and Johannesburg in 2002, among many others.

In June 1972, the United Nations called 113 nation-state leaders for a meeting, to debate the interrelations between economic development and environmental protection. The UN Conference on Human environment /UNEP was held in Stockholm under the leadership of Maurice Strong. The conference was rooted in the regional pollution and acid rain problems of northern Europe. Several institutional arrangements sprang from this conference. First, the declaration of Stockholm is a document that stresses the importance of natural resource conservation, guaranteeing access for present and future generations. Next, followed, the adoption of an environmental protection action plan. This plan, precursory of the Agenda 21, sought to establish certain resolutions concerning environmental protection. Finally, the conference led to the establishment of many national environmental agencies and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It was during this period that the concept of eco-development was born. This new development project searched to reconcile economy and environment, and to encourage a more harmonic kind of development.

Some years later, in 1980, the term sustainable development was officially born. It was first employed in the IUCN[7] *World Conservation Strategy*. Its section "Towards Sustainable Development" identifies the main agents of habitat destruction as poverty, population pressure, social inequity and the terms of trade. It calls for a new international development strategy with the aim of redressing inequities, achieving a more dynamic and stable world economy, stimulating economic growth and countering the worst impacts of poverty.

In 1983, Mrs Grö Brundtland, the former Norwegian environment minister, representing a United Nations General Assembly, presided the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). As a conclusion of this meeting, in 1987, the works of Mrs Brundtland were published under the name *Our Common Future*, known as the Brundtland Report. This document while weaving together social, economic, cultural and environmental issues, and stressing global scale solutions, provided the world famous definition of sustainable development: *"a kind of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"* (WCED, 1987). This new concept implies a new view of development, which should be environmentally more respectful and satisfy an equity objective from an intra-generational and inter-generational perspective.

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[7] IUCN is the acronym for the World Conservation Union. Its mission is *"to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable"* (http://www.iucn.org/about/index.htm).

However, perhaps the most important institutional episode in the history of sustainable development is the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), known as the World Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This meeting brought together one hundred seventy-three countries and provoked an effervescent ambiance of social exchanges where ecological issues ended by deeply touching almost all segments of society (Vivien, 1994). Thus, various agreements emerged from this summit: the Agenda 21 or action plan for sustainable development for the 21st century that describes sectors where sustainable development should be applied, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Rio Declaration on Development and Environment, and a set of non-binding Forest Principles. The Rio Environmental and Development Declaration enumerates twenty-seven principles, among which some of them have strongly influenced the evolution of environmental laws, such as the cases of the precautionary principle and the polluter-pays principle. After this meeting, an institution called Earth Council was born in Costa Rica. It would be in charge of the follow up to the Rio Conference and to the world implementation of its agreements. It is important to mention that from the 2500 resolutions agreed to in Rio, most fell into oblivion, revealing the extent of international law's lack of legal strength.

BOX 1: LOCAL AGENDA 21

The Agenda 21 is a comprehensive inter-sectoral plan of action issued from the Rio Earth Summit (1992) oriented to guide global sustainable activity. Its 40 principles aim to direct governments to produce 'national sustainable development strategies' (NSDS) and also 'local sustainable development strategies', better known as Local Agenda 21. Concerning governance, chapter 28 points out the importance of the local level scale, and civil society participation and their inclusion in decision-making and policy formulation (UNCED, 1992). The implementation of LA21 varies considerably among countries. For instance, less developed countries put emphasis on local democracy and the provision of basic infrastructure services (sewage, dereliction, waste disposal); developed countries, for their part, focus on the reduction of resource consumption and on different forms of natural conservation (Selman, 1996). In Europe the adoption of Agenda 21 appeared varied as well. While in England LA21 seems to be the *"principal means for achieving the local environmental agenda and accommodating the environmentalists' pressures towards constitutional reform"* (Batty, 2001 p. 27), in France progress in the implementation of LA21 has been slower and the impact rather mitigated. Unlike the early bottom-up strategies in the cities of Hanover, Modena and Bologna that LA21 developed from early bottom-up strategies, French localities started to put into practice LA21 only after the launching of the Voynet law in 1999 and the SRU law in 2001 (Emelianoff, 2007). However, in any case enthusiasm for LA21 is often shadowed by scepticism concerning the ability of changing consumption and production patterns (Selman and Parker, 1999), the lack of political and financial support, inconsistency between ambitions and real efficacy, etc. (Emelianoff, 2007) On the other hand, the Agenda 21 has been well translated for different sectors. In 1996, the UNWTO in collaboration with the WTTC and the Earth Council developed a report untitled "Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry: Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development" (UNWTO *et al.*, 1996).

Source: author

The *Sustainable Development Timeline* prepared by the IISD[8] gives an idea about the great number of conferences and events consecrated to different aspects of sustainable development after the 1992 Earth Summit *i.e.* First Meeting of the UN Commission of Sustainable Development in 1993, the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, the Signing of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, the UN General Assembly review of Earth Summit/Rio+5 in 1997, the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, the Marrakech Accords for the Kyoto Protocol in 2001, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development Rio+10 held in Johannesburg in 2002, whose public evaluation qualified it as mediocre and unsatisfying, questioning the role of United Nation institutions and effectiveness of the accords issued from these meetings. On the other hand, evidences on the absence of ameliorations in terms of ecological sustainability provoke a discouraging feeling of criticism, especially coming from environmentalist groups. In fact, dramatic data from the Living Planet Index (WWF, 2008) shows that over the past thirty-five years alone the Earth's wildlife populations have declined by a third. For instance, the Marine Index shows an average decline of 14% between 1970 and 2005, due to rising sea temperatures, destructive fishing methods and pollution. This report also reveals persisting deforestation in the tropics at a rate of almost 3.5 millions hectares per year in Brazil[9].

5. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TODAY AND THE COEXISTENCE OF A WIDE VARIETY OF DEFINITIONS AND APPROACHES

The combination of the first attempts of economists to integrate the environment into their analysis and the consequent negative reaction that neoclassical approaches generated due to the centrality assigned to market regulation mechanisms, together with the extended diffusion of sustainable development in the mass medias during more than two decades of conferences recalling the need for integrated approaches to development, resulted in a sort of explosion of approaches, definitions and literature related to this topic. We witness a wide proliferation of these notions in various scientific fields, policy arenas and productive sectors, which all together have given rise to more than one hundred sustainability definitions. Even if it is not completely new that a concept in social sciences undergoes a tendency of broad utilisation and thus coexistence of varied definitions, in the case of sustainable development, since the launching of the seminal Brundtland definition, the amount of interpretations either emphasizing economic, environmental or social aspects is quite remarkable. Inside the wide range of books whose titles include the words sustainability or sustainable, it is possible to find completely differing definitions that not only emphasise one of the three sustainable pillars, but which conform to opposed perspectives with particular underlying worldviews, values and principles.

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[8] For a periodically actualised version see http://www.iisd.org
[9] This report provides ecological information of almost all kinds of ecosystems (see WWF, 2008).

Broadly speaking, among social sciences perspectives dealing with the natural environment there coexist two radically opposed visions of humanity: 1) techno-centric (utilitarian) and 2) eco-centric (biocentric). According to techno-centrism, human beings and all human activities, including economic ones, are separate from nature, thus the pursuit of human goals without much regard for ecological concerns is justified. Conversely, eco-centrism contends that nature is superior to humankind and therefore human activity should be subordinated to ecological principles (Shaefer *et al.* 2003 p. 210). To these two visions of humanity correspond two opposite sustainability approaches: the very weak sustainability perspective assuming a rather technocentric and economicist view and the strong sustainability attached to eco-centrism and supremacy of ecology. Between these two poles, there are several intermediate approaches trying to bring up a compromise from between these two extremes, where some of them are closer to the weak pole and others are nearer to the strong one. In this dissertation I intend to go beyond this duality and highlight the social dimension, reworked in chapter two in terms of governance.

Table 3 provides a few definitions of sustainable development, highlighting either the economic, the environmental or the social pillar, representing the different branches within the sustainability debate. Besides the already quoted definition provided by the Brundtland report, the WCED complemented its original definition stating that sustainable development is *"a process of change in which exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations"* (WCED, 1987 page 46). This definition combines environment, technological development and institutional change in the road towards meeting human needs and aspirations. In line with this procedural approach, William Rees, well-known as the author of the ecological footprint, defined sustainable development as *"any form of positive change which does not erode the ecological, social, or political systems upon which society is dependent"* (Rees, 1988).

One largely quoted definition of sustainable development comes from one major figure of environmental economics, David Pearce. According to this author, *"sustainability requires at least a constant stock of natural capital, construed as the set of all environmental assets"* (Pearce, 1992 p. 69), meaning that sustainability would be attained if an undiminished stock of capital is passed among generations. In tune with this definition, Mäler (1990 quoted in Opschoor and Van Der Straaten, 1993b p. 1) defined sustainable development in reference to the notion of capital, stating that development is sustainable *"if the total stock of resources (human capital, physical reproducible capital, environmental resources, exhaustible resources) does not decrease over time"*. These two last definitions point out the capital substitutability question, which certainly constitutes a key discussion in the different sustainability approaches.

TABLE 3: SELECTED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DEFINITIONS

Brundtland Commission (1987)	*SD is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*
IUCN (1986 cited in Gibson *et al.*, 2005 p. 2007)	*SD seeks to respond to five broad requirements: (1) integration of conservation and development, (2) satisfaction of basic human needs, (3) achievement of equity and social justice, (4) provision of social self-determination and cultural diversity, and (5) maintenance of ecological integrity*
Redclift (1987)	*The term sustainable development suggests that the lessons of ecology can, and should, be applied to economic process. It encompasses the ideas in the World Conservation Strategy, providing an environmental rationale through which the claims of development to improve the quality of (all) life can be challenged and tested*
Pearce (1992)	*Sustainability requires at least a constant stock of natural capital, construed as the set of all environmental assets.*
Norgaard (1992)	*Sustainability does not imply that everything stays the same. It implies that the overall level of diversity and overall productivity of components and relations in systems are maintained and enhanced*
Rees (1988 cited in Wheeler 2004 p. 25	*SD is « any form of positive change which does not erode the ecological, social, or political systems upon which society is dependent »*
IUCN et al. (1991 p.6)	*SD means 'improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems'*
Asheim (1994 cited in Hanley and Atkinson, 2003 p. 77)	*A requirement for our generation to manage the resource base such that the average quality of life we ensure ourselves can potentially be shared by all future generations*
Opschoor (1990, quoted in Opschoor and Van Der Straaten, 1993b p. 1)	Development is sustainable *"if the environmental impacts in consequence of it do not impair the present and future functioning of resource regeneration systems, waste absorption systems and the systems supporting flows of other environmental services and goods, and when use of non-renewable resources is compensated for by at least equivalent increases in supplies of renewable or reproducible substitutes"*
Zuindeau (2000b)	*A new problematic concerning development, more environmentally respectful, but also oriented to satisfying an equity objective – from an intra-generational and inter-generational perspective – without questioning the need for economic efficacy.*
European Environmental Bureau (2006 p. 3)	*SD describes a situation in which citizens feel secure, live in a healthy environment, are prosperous, can play a constructive role in society, and are listened to by business and decision-makers. (...) SD requires respect for nature and the preservation of our society's natural resource base. It also means that the EU must contribute to sustainable development globally, since different societies are nowadays extremely inter-dependent.*

Source: author

Rejecting the assumption of semi-perfect substitutability between human-made capital and natural capital, Opschoor (1990 quoted in Opschoor and Van Der Straaten, 1993b p. 1) argues that development is sustainable *"if the environmental impacts in consequence of it do not impair the present and future functioning of resource regeneration systems, waste absorption systems and the systems supporting flows of other environmental services and goods, and when use of non-renewable*

resources is compensated for by at least equivalent increases in supplies of renewable or reproducible substitutes". Finally, Norgaard (1992), figure of Ecological Economics, defines sustainable development in terms of *co-evolution of social and environmental system dynamics* and contends that sustainability *" implies that the overall level of diversity and overall productivity of components and relations in systems are maintained and enhanced"* (Norgaard, 1992 p. 81).

The different interpretations of sustainability can be classified under the strong or weak sustainability approach. For example, Mäler's and Pearce's definitions, allowing complete capital substitution, can rather be situated as part of the weak pole allowing an important level of capital substitution. On the other hand, Norgaard provides a more encompassing definition opening the reflection to the interaction between societal and environmental issues. However, the social dimensions occupy a more central position in sustainability definitions coming from institutions such as the United Nations or the European Environmental Bureau. For instance, the EEB's definition highlights key social and governance issues such as citizen's security, healthy environments and the need for societies playing a constructive role. Finally, one can mention Zuindeau's (2000b) definitions highlighting environmental respect, equity and economic efficacy. In section 5.1., I analyse with more detail the weak and strong approaches.

5.1. A critical perspective to traditional unilateral sustainability methodological approaches

Solow (1974) interpreted the notion of sustainable development as a development that implies non-declining human welfare through time. According to Solow's constant capital rule, sustainability can be achieved by bequeathing to the next generation a stock of capital assets not smaller than the current stock. Intergenerational equity is achieved then by acknowledging the right of future generations to *"expect an inheritance sufficient to allow them the capacity to generate for themselves a level of welfare no less than the enjoyed by the current generation"* (Barbier, 1993, p. 190). Capital in this context can take several forms, including man-made, human, natural and cultural. A key issue that arises when implementing the constant capital rule is the extent to which different types of capital can or should be substituted for another in order to guarantee sustainability. In other words, it points out the question about what exactly is to be sustained and bequeathed to future generations. In fact, the level of capital substitutability between the natural and human-made capital tolerated by different scholars working on the topic is what differentiates the weak from the strong sustainability approach. While very weak approaches allow an almost perfect capital substitutability, stronger approaches develop less optimistic views vis-à-vis the desirability and real extent to which human-made capital can substitute for natural capital in the long term. Unlike weaker approaches, stronger perspectives advocate for complementarity between different capitals together with a precautionary and proactive environmental attitude aiming at risk-aversion when uncertainty and irreversibility exist.

5.1.1. The limits of the a-spatial and a-temporal weak sustainability approach

Whereas environmentalists are concerned about natural systems, the economic perspectives are primarily interested in natural resources or natural services, described as elements of physical or biological systems that might be used for human benefit. In this utilitarian perspective, the environment is taken into consideration only to the extent that it is useful for humans. Standard economic analysis does not consider the environment to have an intrinsic value, different to monetary valuation. In contrast, the ecological paradigm suggests that natural systems need to be protected for their own sake, independent of their use value to humans. The ecological paradigm places value on the long-term sustainability of natural systems, focusing on the efficiency of the use of natural resources in the production process, as a measure of how well natural resources are used to satisfy human needs.

Adherents to weak sustainability approaches (see Solow, Desgupta, Heal and Beckerman) refuse the idea that growth necessarily leads to environmental degradation. Growth theory is organised around savings and investment, arbitrating consumption fluxes over time. Environmental problems, for their part, are interpreted in terms of inefficacy in static environmental resource allocation, as a consequence of the existence of external effects or collective goods. Furthermore, with the aim of testing the availability of resources over time and finding optimal inter-temporal welfare allocation, a few weak sustainability approaches work on developing models of optimal exploitation of renewable and non-renewable resources.

According to this perspective, the value of nature is merely instrumental and technical progress is conceived as a panacea for repairing all ecological damages before they become critical (techno-centrism). Sustainability requires the total capital stock to remain constant over time, meaning the aggregate of natural, man-made, human and cultural capitals. Any form of capital can be eliminated as long as it is compensated for by the provision of other capital assets deemed to be of equal value to humans. Different types of capital are thus assumed to be perfectly substitutable. Renewable capital can be substituted for non-renewable capital; man-made capital can be substituted for any type of natural capital. Environmental goods take part in the individual utility function like any other consumption good, thus they can always be substituted. The previously evoked "Hartwick's rule" (see section 4.2.3 of this chapter) formally expresses this idea while arguing about the necessity to reinvest in compensatory physical capital to be substituted for natural capital (Hartwick, 1977). It proposes to invest in man-made or human capital the same amount of profit obtained from the exploitation of natural resources.

As is the case of all neoclassical perspectives, the weak sustainability perspective assigns a central role to markets and price mechanisms. Following Pigou, this approach equates environmental problems to market failures or externalities, which take part in a universal regularity that overlooks temporal or

territorial variables. Furthermore, while seeking to maximise market compensations to environmental destruction due to externalities, weak approaches do not deal at all with broader reflections about development models and more precisely, the way they should be inserted in the biosphere.

5.1.2. *Ecologic theory and the lack of the economic sustainability dimension*

At the other sustainability pole, deep ecological approaches have been identified as strong sustainability perspectives. The foundations of the deep ecology movement can be traced to the concept of "land ethic" coined by Aldo Leopold. In the book *A Sand County Almanac* (1949), Leopold contested theories reducing the environment and natural resources to monetary values and argued that humans have an ethical responsibility to keep and protect natural ecosystems, since they have an intrinsic value that goes far beyond human use (Wheeler, 2004).

The ecological paradigm focuses on the health and survival of ecosystems, defined as natural systems composed by a diverse set of interacting plant and animal species, as well as of physical systems including soils, minerals, fresh and sea water environments, and the atmosphere. Most natural systems are characterised by cycles, which permit them to maintain themselves over long periods of time. Scales of ecosystems can vary from local to global, where the biosphere is the major symbol of the Earth's global ecosystem. Partisans of this paradigm are interested in keeping in equilibrium the different cycles of renewal, regeneration and reproduction of ecosystems, which will depend on the capacity of these systems to absorb disturbances. Authors like Allen *et al.* (2009 p. 4) use in this context the concept of resilience to describe *"the property that allows the fundamental functions of an ecosystem to persist in the face of extremes of disturbance. (...) Resilience focuses on the role of positive feedbacks of behaviour far from steady states and with internally generated variability"*.

Consequently, sustainable development must involve limits on population and consumption levels, and human beings must ultimately accept the boundaries of a finite planet (Holling, 1973). This perspective carried to an extreme (very strong sustainability perspective) coincides with a steady-state economic model, characterized by zero economic and population growth, and is motivated in part by a consideration of thermodynamic limits. This position coincides with a more bio-centric viewpoint in which the intrinsic rights of nature are acknowledged and given significant weight in decision-making, thus capital substitution is not allowed.

5.2. The partial capital substitution theory as a selfish and restricted view to address the limits of the neoclassical approach

Between the very strong and very weak sustainability approaches there is an intermediate contribution that has also been influential among the literature on sustainable development. These are the ideas reflected in the works of Pearce *et al.* (1989), which put the accent on assigning a monetary value to the environment. They believe in and intend to show that environmental problems are mainly a result of the gratuitous nature of those natural resources that are supposed to be inexhaustible, as it is the case of air, water and natural areas. This perspective expresses that despite the fact that monetary valuation implies the subordination of the environment to the economic logic, we should recognize that environmental problems come from the lack of value assigned to these resources. An open access to natural resources will lead towards their depletion, because individuals and firms, seeking maximizing private benefit, will act at the expense of shared public goods, even if this implies their destruction. Only a price can limit the overconsumption and depletion of these resources.

In relation to capital substitution, these authors adjusted the perfect capital substitutability promoted by neoclassical approaches and argued that some types of natural capital are assumed to be complements rather than substitutes, and some key species and processes are not considered to be substitutable at all (Common and Perrings, 1992). For that reason, only partial substitutability is permitted given the existence of an ensemble of critical natural capital, which should be sustained. Ecological constraints should be imposed on the use of these resources in order to guarantee a certain level of stock according to the limits imposed by ecosystems stability and resilience (Turner *et al.,* 1994). One major critique addressed to experts adhering to this approach is the identification and selection of the group of assets that will be considered as critical natural capital or not. This is indeed a very delicate question that certainly cannot receive a finished answer given the context of environmental uncertainty and risk.

5.3. The ecological economics perspective

Ecological Economics (see Costanza, 1991; Costanza *et al.,* 1997; Gowdy and Erikson, 2005; Ekins, 2003) is a relatively young discipline, launched at the end of the 1980s and institutionally strengthened through the creation of the Ecological Economics Society and Journal. Unlike orthodox approaches, ecological economics aims to develop a more pluralistic perspective to the study of environmental problems. Although ecological economics is identified as an alternative to neoclassical economic approaches, in present times diverse schools of thought adhering to this approach coexist, ranging from heterodox institutional approaches (Söderbaum, 1999, 2000) to others more closely related with orthodox natural resources and environmental economics[10]. Authors such as Hanley *et al*. (2001 cited

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[10] For a complete panorama see Costanza *et al.* (1997).

in Hanley and Atkinson, 2003 pp. 101-102) call into question the originality of ecological economics, contending that even if this approach stresses the idea of environmental limits of human action and orthodox approaches focus mainly on human adaptation and response, both employ a similar method. In this respect, Costanza *et al.* (1997 pp. 71-72) argue that ecological economics is a methodologically pluralistic approach aiming to reintegrate ecology into economics, therefore it might use the framework of neoclassical economics, although it is not constrained to use only that framework nor to adopt the same worldviews, politics and economist cultures.

However, moreover these differences, the foundation of the ecological economics project is related to deep discontentment from a group of economists regarding the absence of the environment within economic analysis. More precisely, ecological economics has been described as an effort *"to build a more interdisciplinary relationship as a bridge to a truly comprehensive science of humans as a component of nature that will fulfil the early goals of ecology"* (Costanza *et al.*, 1997). According to this aim, ecological economics focuses on the inclusion of the ecological logic at the centre of economic analysis, and for this purpose a group of ecological economists use thermodynamics laws to develop a critical approach to economic growth and production. Scholars adhering to this approach have rescued the work of Georgescu-Roegen (1971) in which he argues for the need to reformulate economic thinking and models for consistency with the fundamental physical laws of thermodynamics and entropy.

TABLE 4: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

	Neoclassical economy	The partial capital substitution	Ecological economics	Deep ecology
Basic principles	- Internalisation of ecological problems into economic logic - Environment: instrumental value - Utility maximization - Material welfare - Technocentric and utilitarian	- Environment: monetary value, except critical natural capital	- Environment: a value itself - Complementarity between socio-economic systems and ecosystems	- Health and survival of ecosystems - Conservation principles - Ecocentric
Meaning of sustainable development: what is to be sustained?	- Sustainable growth - Total capital stock	- Sustainable growth - Critical natural capital - Non-renewable natural capital	- Satisfaction of fundamental human needs according environmental constraints	- Sustainability of the natural environment - Total natural capital
Degree of capital substitutability	- Complete substitution	- Partial capital substitution	- Complementarities between different forms of capital	- No substitutability is allowed.
What degree of sustainability?	- Very weak	- Weak	- Strong	- Very strong
What kind of governance?	- Market coordination mechanisms	- Market coordination mechanisms and regulation for critical capital	- Plurality of mechanisms - Notion of circular interdependence	- Expert and authority regulation

Source: author (inspired by Theys, 2001)

Concerning capital substitution, ecologic economists have adopted a rather critical regard concerning the near-perfect substitutability of man-made capital for natural resources. Authors such as Costanza and Daly (1992, p.41) criticise the perfect substitutability assumption contending that *"if human-made capital were a perfect substitute for natural capital, then natural capital would also be a perfect substitute for human-made capital"*. In this case, there would be no reason for developing and accumulating human-made capital. Second, manufactured capital is made from natural resources, thus its production needs the initial resources. From this analysis, these authors conclude that on the whole natural capital and human-made capital are complements. Further exploring this argument, authors such as Ekins (2003) employ the notion of "critical natural capital" to point out the fact that an important number of biophysical processes and components of ecosystems cannot be replaced. Humans should avoid their irreversibility due to this argument. Within this eclectic group of works, among ecological economists we find the contributions of Söderbaum, (1999, p. 162), advocating an institutional version of ecological economics in which one major characteristic will be a value commitment to work for a sustainable society in an ecological sense. Within this context, this author highlights the role of collective action and regulation mechanism alternatives to markets and prices (see chapter 2).

6. FOR AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTING COMPLEMENTARITIES BETWEEN SOCIOLOGICAL, ECONOMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

Sustainable development is a complex concept due to its dual normative and analytical character. Its origins come from the recognition of a major ecological crisis and grave socio-economic disparities, and the consequent need to do something to reverse this. After several years of discussion and debates, in general, the literature addressing this topic, public opinion and different governments seem to agree that economic development should respect the natural environment. Conversely, there seems to be no agreement on the way societies will deal with this challenge. More precisely, the question about the theories, means and instruments to bring into play in order to deal with this problematic is complex, therefore its answer is much less clear and controversial.

For instance, from a theoretical viewpoint, the rethinking of the societal-environmental relationship in terms of sustainability has contributed to increased complexity. As was illustrated in the previous section, economic thought has moved from a complete neglect of the environment in economic analysis, to a progressive, enlarged conceptualisation in which the environment and natural resources not only are part of the analysis, but this inclusion has sometimes permitted the utilisation of concepts from other scientific disciplines such as natural sciences, ecology and institutional analysis. On the other hand, this theoretical transition towards a more overarching interdisciplinary and organic analysis, highlighting the interactive nature of societal systems and bio-systems, has entailed the

confrontation of traditional market instruments and policy options with the conviction that it is absolutely needed to temper and blend these instruments to cope with the holistic changes in question (see Bressers and Huitema, 1999).

Of course the discontentment of various social sciences and heterodox economic approaches vis-à-vis neoclassical economy and neo-liberal policy is not limited to environmental issues; it indeed long precedes the debate on sustainability. As will follow in more detail in chapter two, the articulation of societal and environmental issues constitutes the founding topic of disciplines such as economic sociology and institutional economics. In a large sense, these two approaches express a deep dissatisfaction regarding the detachment of economic theory from other social sciences (Steiner, 1999; Cusin and Benamouzig, 2004; Smelser and Swedberg, 1995a). Instead, these disciplines define the economy as a multidimensional and multifunctional practice (Bourdieu, 2000), which is embedded in a large social tissue in which markets are only one of a wide set of forms of regulation (Polanyi, 1944; Veblen, 1899). The economy is therefore an integral part of society.

Later debates on the environmental and social costs of industrialisation and economic growth, and therefore, concerning the need to rethink the way societies are governing their countries enlarged the previous socio-institutionalist discussion concerning the embeddedness of the economy in society, towards the inclusion of a third dimension: the environment. Either under the conceptual umbrella of eco-development, sustainable development or alternative forms of development, among many others, literature on the topic discusses basically the place that the environment will take within this discussion that combines intertwined socio-economic and ecologic challenges. As far as the heterodox critique to neoclassical approaches is concerned, the emergence of several fields dealing with environmental issues insists not only on the embeddedness of the economy in society, but it also focuses on the interaction of human systems with ecosystems.

Certainly, social and institutional approaches to sustainable development are numerous. In fact, the request to apprehend the social-economic-environmental interaction has resulted in the awaking of different social science fields currently dealing with sustainability-related issues. As a result, sustainable development and the natural environment constitutes, on the one hand, a topic for sociology (*i.e.* Berger, 1995; Beck, 1986; Latour, 1995), polical science (*i.e.* Lafferty, 1999; Meadowcroft, 1999; Bressers and Rossenbaum, 2003a; Langhelle, 1999), economy (*i.e.* Zuindeau, 2000a; Vivien, 2005; Costanza *et al.,* 1997; Söderbaum, 2000, 2008; Ekins and Max-Neef, 1992), planning, human geography and regional theory (*i.e.* Selman, 1996; Buckingham and Theobald, 2003; Buckingham-Hatfield and Evans, 1996; Layard *et al.,* 2001). On the other hand, an increasing recognition of the need for more interdisciplinary approaches has given rise to various academic, social and political experiences opening spaces for a dialogue not only between different social

sciences, but also with other scientific disciplines and members of other socio-institutional groups (Jollivet, 1998, 2001a; *Revue Développement Durable et Territoires* and the *Réseau développement durable et territoires fragiles*; *Revue Natures Sciences Sociétés*).

6.1. The focus and the theoretical perspective of the dissertation

This dissertation aims to contribute to the deepening of the reflection on sustainable development from an interdisciplinary perspective. While assuming the complexity and the multidimensional character of sustainable development challenges, I argue that the best way to deal with this reality and to influence policy-making, programs and projects is to open the discussion to all of society for defining specific challenges and the best ways to face them. In this context, market-based instruments, incentives, cost-benefit analysis and fiscal conditions seem to be insufficient to face environmental uncertainty, changing societal contexts, injustices and the whole ensemble of sustainability imperatives. Furthermore, the traditional role of the state built as a hierarchical organisation based on centralised decision-making guided almost exclusively by scientific expertise, above all in environmental matters, also reached a limit provoking a redefinition in its role. Bearing this in mind, in this dissertation I develop an approach to sustainable development that highlights the role of the institutional context, the actors that build it and the socio-economic dynamics that sustain it. This reality is seen as holistic and historically constructed from the ensemble of bio-physical, social and economic elements, all of which take part in the interactive process of human systems with ecosystems. This process is conceptualised in this work in terms of governance. Rescuing Buckingham and Theobald's (2003) approach to sustainable development as a political issue, in this dissertation I that argue every economic activity aspiring to sustainability, as is the case of ecotourism, contains a governance challenge.

The originality of this dissertation rests on the form in which it connects sustainable development with the following bodies of literature: i) socio-institutional theories with a special focus on economic sociology and institutionalism; ii) levels of governance, territory and power, with an special focus on socio-institutional regional theories; iii) the distinctiveness of territories classified as protected areas and the role of ecotourism.

Thus far, little dialogue has been established between these fields. My research approach, which is based on economic sociology and institutionalism, intends to create bridges between them. Of course, heterodox contributions to sustainable development are not restricted to the two fields mentioned. Indeed, as Boidin and Zuindeau (2006 p. 18) have stated, the body of literature within this field is vast including evolutionary approaches, that are part of institutional economics, thermodynamics (Khalil and Boulding, 1996), eco-energetic approaches (Odum, 1983) and regulationist institutionalist approaches (Gibbs, 1996; Rousseau and Zuindeau, 2006; Zuindeau, 2007), among others. Nevertheless, according to the objectives of this research, economic sociology and institutionalism

seem to be the most suitable theories to comprehend sustainability from a territorial perspective underlying the role of governance.

6.2. An introduction to the analysis of the governance of sustainable development

In various social sciences the renovation of the role of the state has been analysed in terms of the passage from government, defined as the institutional regulation of environmental questions, to governance, referring to the whole set of interactions between actors, institutions and the natural environment.

In narrow terms, the word governance is related to both, the verb "to govern" and the noun "government", and it can be remitted to concepts such as rules, regulation and control. But more broadly speaking, there are a number of concepts related to governance, with different meanings and scopes *i.e.* global governance, international governance, corporate governance, etc. Each of these terms has a different nuance, emphasizing aspects such as public institutions, democracy, international organizations, private groups and civil society. On the one hand, the noun 'government' usually refers to the authoritative exercise of power by the organs of a sovereign state. On the other hand, the term governance refers to the emergence of new styles of governing in which the boundaries between the public and the private sector, national and international, are more blurred. Governance will be used as a wider and more inclusive concept than the term government, and it will be considered as much more than a purely administrative category or rational administration. Moulaert (2000) defines governance as "*the system of regulation and coordination governing the interaction among a plurality of actors*" (Moulaert., 2000 p.42). Governance includes formal and informal relations and non-governmental mechanisms of articulation, which are based on the reciprocal recognition of interdependence and on the communitarian goals of involved actors. It is a term that alludes to processes of negotiation and bargaining between different groups, and to power and conflicts of interests experienced within communities, both between its members and in the interrelation with other, external actors. The group of mechanisms of governance is viewed in dynamic terms, as rules resulting from social and political practices. This system of social relations between institutions and individuals is supposed to encourage socio-economic development. Part of the governance challenge will therefore be the collective choices about the direction of that development (Moulaert, 2000).

Given this context the following questions arise: which are the main governance challenges associated with sustainable development? What is the specific content of governance when we deal with sustainable development? In this dissertation I argue that the governance of sustainable development has an *original* and *specific content*. This originality lies in the specific meaning of sustainable development, which poses specific challenges in the way we reflect and analyse governance dynamics

and governance structures. These challenges can be defined regarding the four main characteristics of sustainable development, which are explained in table 5:

- Dialogue between analytical and normative dimensions;
- Interdependency between economic, social and ecological axis of sustainable development;
- Inter-generational equity and temporal scales;
- Intra-generational equity dimensions and spatial scales.

Sustainable development is first associated to the interrelation between analytical and normative dimensions. From a governance perspective, we can affirm that the normative character of sustainable development imposes a transformation in decision-making processes, in public decision-making and institutional action. The underlying sustainable development ethical principles imply a particular behavioural ethic (affection with nature, ecological transparency) and prudent attitudes responding to precautionary principles, uncertainty and risk aversion, which favours partnerships guaranteeing the integration of social and environmental dimensions (Godard, 2001). Concretely, sustainable development aspires to a continuous and cooperative decision-making process between actors with different and sometimes conflicting interests. Second, sustainability entails the integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development, stressing the harmony between man and nature. The governance challenge in this respect is to cope with the co-evolving nature of socio-economic systems and environmental ones, which integrate inseparable systems of society. Third, sustainable development implies a system of governance at different levels. From an inter-generational perspective, the challenge is to cope with the different temporal scales that put into perspective present generations in relation to past and future ones. This challenge is associated with principles such as uncertainty and precautionary attitudes regarding an uncertain future. This variable also entails the importance of the analysis of evolution and development paths as revelatory episodes of sustainability or non-sustainability. From an intra-generational perspective, on the other hand, the challenge is to deal with the different spatial or territorial scales. Sustainable development not only interrelates temporal dimensions, but also implies the interrelation of several spatial scales – global, national, regional and local – from a synchronic and diachronic perspective.

These selected characteristics will be guiding variables in our analysis of sustainable development and its underlying governance. Nevertheless, to these variables associated to sustainable development, we should also add two more key characteristics that will contribute to specifying sustainable development governance. These are ecotourism, as a way to foster sustainable development paths, and the consequent kind of territory associated with this activity: territories classified as protected areas. Both, ecotourism – seen as an industry, as a socio-economic and environmental practice, as a means of countryside economy diversification and as a vector of sustainable development paths – and protected areas will pose new challenges to our analysis of governance.

TABLE 5: SD, ECOTOURISM AND PROTECTED AREAS AS VARIABLES REDIFINING AND GIVING A SPECIFIC MEANING AND CONTENT TO GOVERNANCE

SD CHALLENGES / GOVERNANCE	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT					
	Dimensions		**Development**	**Equity, solidarity and social justice**		**Kind of territory**	**Foster sustainable development through**
	Normative	Analytical	Economic Ecological Social	Inter-generational equity	Intra-generational equity	Territories classified as protected areas	Ecotourism
As a *challenge*, *process* and *outcome* - The *existing* governance - Main challenges *of* SD - Main governance challenges *for* SD - Governance as an *outcome* ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ The specificity of territories classified as *protected areas* The role of *ecotourism* and its governance in territorial sustainability.	Particular ethics and values associated with the social dimension of SD: equity, social justice, solidarity and democracy. Particular ethics and values associated with the environmental dimension of SD: nature as the most primary source of human life. Hierarchical interdependence and subordination of economic process to social and environmental constraints.		Integrated definition of development that considers the interrelation between economic, environmental and social dimensions. Socio-economic and environmental systems as co-evolving, integrated and inseparables systems of our society. Centrality of the social dimension as a meaning of governance.	Centrality of TEMPORAL-SCALES Respect of present and future generations' needs, through the application of precautionary principles to face environmental uncertainties. The importance of development paths and trajectories in showing sources of (non) sustainability.	Centrality of SPATIAL-SCALES Interrelation of different territorial or spatial scales - global, national, regional and local – from a synchronic and diachronic perspective.	Transition to a post-productive country-side: from production (for urban markets) to consumption (from urban areas) -Agriculture: main land use in rural areas, but loses its dominant position in relation to the rural economy, local society and politics. - Post-productivism: diversification, pluriactivity, environmental sensibility, divergence within farming dynamism. - More heterogeneous countryside: land use, social composition, econ. activity, modes of regulation, place representation.	To overcome the classical definition of tourism as a consumption behaviour. Ecotourism as: - Social practice or experience - Economic activity - Complement of rural economy - A means of rural economic diversification - A means of environmental conservation and education - Vector of sustainable development paths

Source: author

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7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I analysed the emergence, institutionalisation and delineation of the concept of sustainable development as a multi-scale process guided by several intertwined influences. The aim was to show that the coining of this notion and its later application to different political and scientific fields is a result of a socio-institutional process that has been occurring for decades.

The history of sustainable development can be divided into several phases. The first philosophical seeds can be remitted to early civilisations' worldviews emphasizing harmony between human beings and nature. A second phase was related to the romantic reaction against the industrial revolution, and utopian values pointing to the virtues of nature as a cure to industrialisation. Besides, this period was also characterised by the emergence of forestry practices advocating sustainable management of woodlands, which later resulted in the first tensions between conservationists and preservationists. A third period situated after WWII coincides with the materialization of clear signs of environmental deterioration resulting from long years of sustained economic growth and neglect of environmental limits. This first ecologic alarm converged with the broader social discontent of the late 1960s, giving rise to a period in which a combination of environmentalism, scientific work and flourishing of varied social movements gave rise to the first wave of environmentalism, which highlighted the conflicting relationship between the environment and development. Between the late 1980s and the early 1990s one finds the birth of a second wave of environmentalism: this period inevitably is associated with the Brundtland report and the Rio Conference, and of course with the dissemination of a sustainability approach articulating the economic, social and environmental spheres of development. The launching of this approach was a turning point among social scientists and policy makers dealing with environmental issues, and thus provoked a sort of explosion of literature, meetings and policies on the topic.

Certainly, as is the case with many concepts in the social sciences, sustainable development is far from being a notion with one single and shared definition. It is indeed quite interesting to observe how, after the second wave of environmentalism, sustainable development went through a period of broad diffusion and interpretation by various sciences and productive sectors, giving birth to a variety of methodological approaches. While confronting weak and strong sustainability approaches to the question of how to advance towards paving more sustainable paths, it is possible to realize that current dominating theoretical interpretations rarely give a central position to the social dimension, advocating for either economic or environmental supremacy and therefore to their restricted logics. Even if the social sphere and collective action occupied a fundamental place in the seminal reflections on sustainable development, it seems that the meaning and importance of the social dimension got somehow blurred in the large amount of literature on the topic. In this dissertation I propose to develop

an approach to sustainable development in which the social dimension will recover its central place through its reinterpretation in terms of governance.

FIGURE 7: CONCLUSION CHAPTER ONE
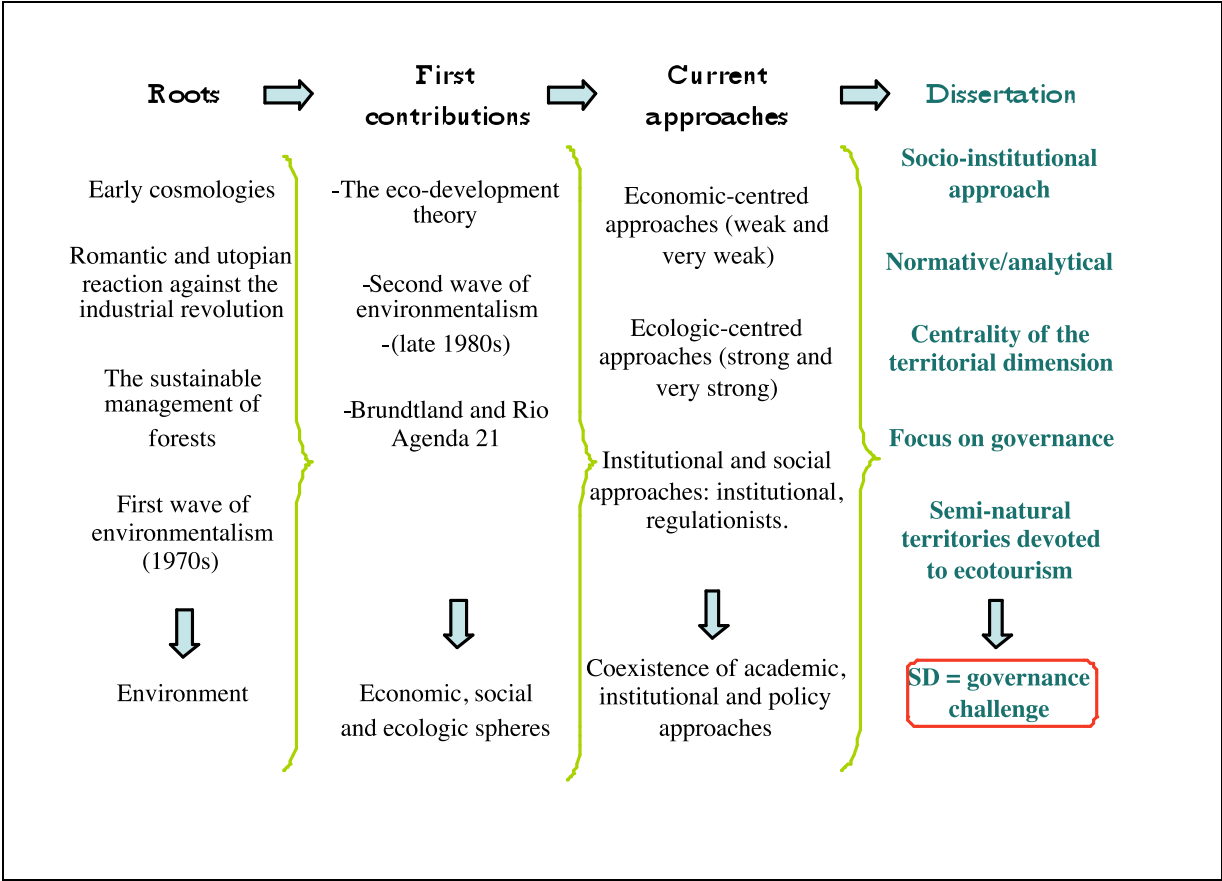
Source: author

This argument does not suggest diminishing the relevance of the other two pillars of sustainable development, but it supports the need to understand their articulation as being indivisible from society in terms of social relationships or governance dynamics. This argument aims to rework the articulation or hierarchy among the three sustainability dimensions in a manner that the social sphere, meaning governance dynamics, will circumscribe the natural environment and economic action, challenging both ecologic and economic centred approaches. Given the fact that neither weak nor strong sustainability approaches seem pertinent for the comprehension of the socio-institutional reality in which sustainable challenges are shaped, in chapter two I elaborate an interdisciplinary approach to sustainable development based on the contributions coming from economic sociology, institutionalism and regional development theory.

If we assume that sustainability is a governance challenge, it is necessary then to define the specific meaning of governance in a context in which sustainability challenges are engaged. I argue in this dissertation that the governance of sustainable development has a distinct content nourished by the specific dimensions defining sustainable development: normative/analytical, economic/social/environmental and intra/inter-generational equity. The specific sustainability challenges require and lead to different governance dynamics and governance challenges. Furthermore, this content is redefined and recreated according the specific characteristics of territories. In the case of this research, I focus on the analysis of natural/rural territories in which ecotourism activities are practiced. *The governance of sustainable development will thus be defined in interrelation to the specific biophysical and social characteristics of these territories.*

In summary, the aim of this dissertation is to develop a framework to analyse sustainable development underlying the role of governance, the embeddedness of institutions and the path-dependency of territories. This choice is validated from an analytical and normative point of view related to the complexity of dealing in real life with an overarching value, such as sustainable development. Moreover, while arguing that sustainable development is about governance and more precisely about the collaboration of a wide variety of actors interacting in order to define inherent sustainable challenges and choices to cope with them, this work considers interdisciplinarity to be a fundamental first step toward attaining this objective. Paraphrasing Beck (1986), facing the challenges of a risk society, requires not only the construction of bridges between policy sectors, public and private logics of action, territorial levels, and temporal scales, among many others, but it also requires a dialogue between academic disciplines.

Chapter II - Sustainable development and governance: a socio-institutional and territorial perspective

1. INTRODUCTION

Even if human needs and societal arrangements occupied a fundamental place in seminal sustainability definitions, during the last decades there has been a predominance of works feeding either the weak or the strong sustainability perspectives, respectively privileging economic or ecological methodological disciplinary logics. The confrontation of these two approaches to important societal sustainability challenges delivers rather inert responses that fail integrating the social sustainability pillar, blurring its meaning and role, and thus voiding sustainable development of its human and social distinctiveness. For that reason, in this chapter I develop an approach to sustainable development where the social dimension will recover its centrality through its reinterpretation in terms of governance. Building on the conclusions of chapter one, I develop a socio-institutional and territorial perspective to sustainable development, which draws the attention to the role of governance, the embeddedness of institutions and the path-dependency of territories, denoting that a sustainable development project entails specific governance challenges aiming at making the socio-economic and ecological sustainability dimensions compatible, from an inter-generational and intra-generational perspective.

This chapter proceeds in six main parts, after this introduction. With the aim of laying a few bases for a socio-institutional analysis of sustainable development, section two builds bridges between the main sustainability dimensions and the literature on the fields of economic sociology and institutional economics. From these analyses, I consider four main dimensions of sustainable development and its governance, which are i) the hierarchical interdependence and subordination of the economic and ecological dimensions to the social dimension; ii) the need for articulating the different forms of capital; iii) the articulation among temporal scales, and; iv) the articulation among embedded territorial scales. Section three focuses on the territorial dimension of sustainable development, for which it examines the concepts of territory, place and spatial scale stressing their social nature. Section four deals with the concept of governance and situates the

debate on governance in relationship to the problem of sustainability. While pointing out the multi-level nature of the governance of sustainable development, in this section I examine the role of the different spatial levels, from the global to the local. Within this context, in section five, I examine in greater detail the role of the local level and argue that localities play a key role in fostering socio-institutional innovation at the service of sustainability. Deepening the argument on the distinctiveness of the meaning of the governance of sustainable development, in section six I develop and apply this argument to the specific context of rural territories and protected areas, highlighting the major contemporary transformations undergone by these territories. The chapter concludes with a definition of sustainable development as governance.

FIGURE 8: OUTLINE CHAPTER TWO
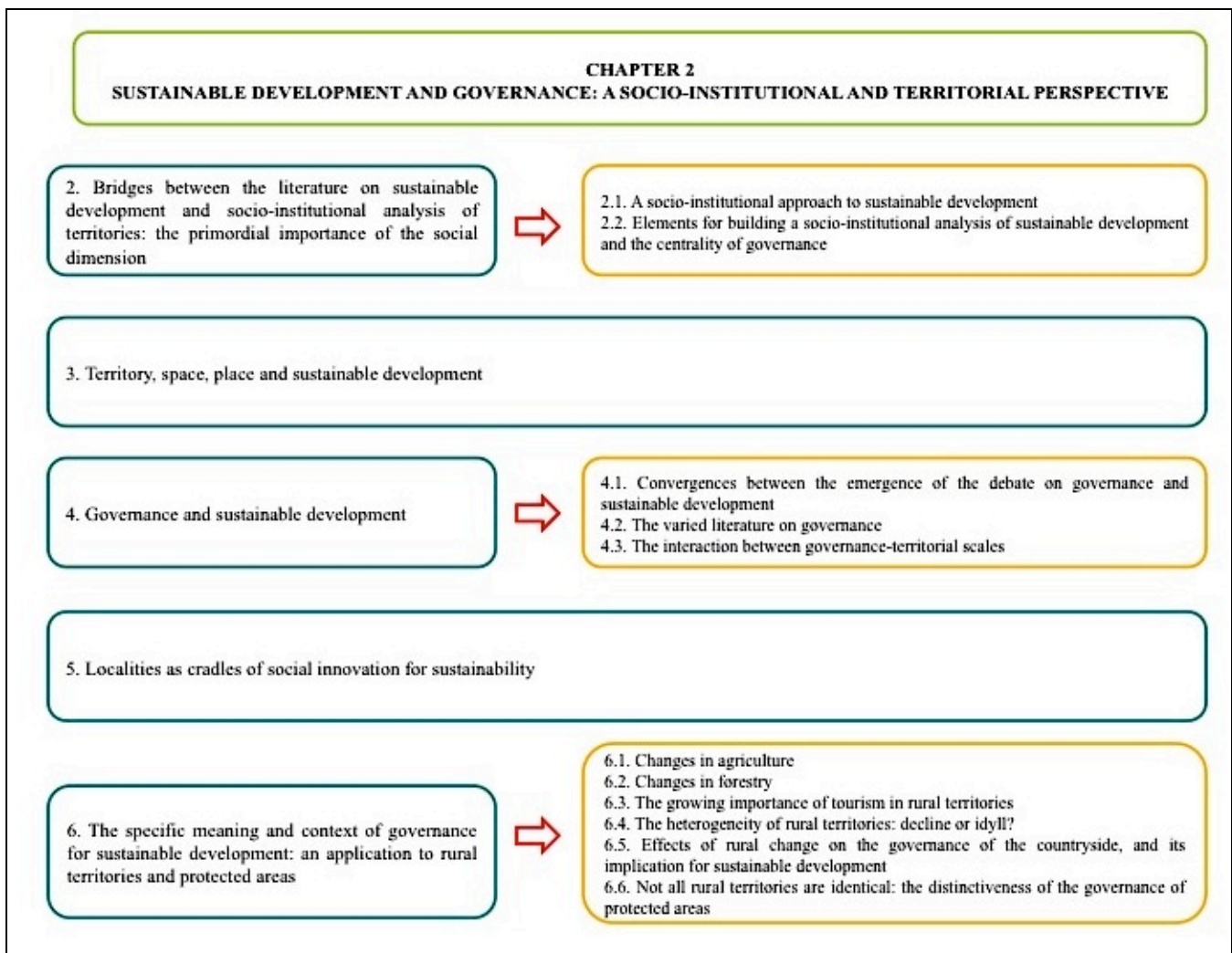
Source: author

2. BRIDGES BETWEEN THE LITERATURE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIO-INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS OF TERRITORIES: THE PRIMORDIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE SOCIAL DIMENSION

Sustainable development challenges the ways in which society governs its natural and socio-cultural heritage. Sustainability challenges, therefore, are situated at the crossroad of socio-institutional interactions, including economic exchanges, and the natural environment, raising questions about the best way to protect natural resources in order to guarantee their sustainability. This delicate interaction between the socio-economic and the ecologic dimensions of development motivates the reflection about alternative development models, capable of addressing urgent environmental conflicts and challenges, which are the outcome of an economic system pursuing economic growth, whatever its cost. As I have presented it in the first chapter, the abundant literature on sustainable development reveals the coexistence of a variety of ways to cope with this problem, ranging from radical antiglobalisation or degrowth alternatives (Latouche, 2003, 2005; Revue La Décroissance, 2008), to less radical perspectives proposing to make efforts to adapt existing values and institutions to the exigencies of sustainability (Lafferty, 2004a; Söderbaum, 2000). From this perspective, authors such as Layard (2001) argue that there is no single way forward to pursue sustainable development, but rather a coexistence of different complementary alternatives, institutional arrangements and implementation forms from which society as a whole can take advantage in order to advance towards the tracing of more sustainable paths. This idea rejoins Zaccaï's (2002) definition of sustainable development as a 'project' that aims to make compatible socio-economic and ecological sustainability dimensions, from an inter-generational and intra-generational equity perspective. However, as every project must be held and carried out by people in order to be achieved, sustainable development becomes a challenge for the whole society.

Assuming a socio-institutional perspective (Hollingsworth and Boyer, 1997; Swedberg and Smelser, 1995), in this dissertation I argue that the way towards sustainable development and therefore towards sustainability of territories depends on the whole set of forms, logics and functions that lie beneath the variety of socio-institutional arrangements governing societies. Alternatively stated, this work analyses the evolution of socio-economic and environmental systems as being inseparable from society in terms of social relationships, denoting normative hierarchical interdependence between dimensions of sustainability, in which the social sphere, meaning governance relations, circumscribes environmental and economic dimensions. For the purpose of this argument, the next sections develop a socio-institutional analysis of sustainable

development, using concepts and theories from the fields of economic sociology, old institutionalism and regional development.

2.1. A socio-institutional approach to sustainable development

Despite several decades of debate and the variety of sustainable development definitions, today there exists a certain consensus concerning the three primary sustainability spheres: economic, social and environmental. The issue then is how these three spheres are going to interrelate over time horizons for achieving sustainability and therefore inter and intra-generational equity. This challenge doubly alludes to the way social and economic dimensions articulate and then to the manner how socio-economic dimensions articulate with the natural environment.

2.1.1. *How do social and economic spheres relate?*

The articulation between 'societal' and 'economic' issues is a central theme for the fields of economic sociology and institutionalism, addressed since the founding of these two sub-disciplines, as shown later in this section.

Economic sociology covers the analysis of economic phenomena from a sociological perspective, arguing that sociology and economy should work together in the explanation of economic behaviours and processes. According to Steiner (1999), the discipline of economic sociology stresses the necessity of building up a dialogue between economic theory and sociology, which will be much more fruitful in explaining economic reality than two isolated and sometimes contradictory disciplines. The naissance of economic sociology should be situated between 1890 and 1920, and its rebirth during the 1970s can be remitted to a dissatisfaction with an economic theory increasingly detached from other social sciences (Steiner, 1999; Cusin and Benamouzig, 2004). Smelser and Swedberg (1995b, p. 3) define economic sociology as *"the application of the frames of reference, variables and explanatory models of sociology to the complex of activities concerned with the production, exchange and consumption of scarce resources and services"*.

While standard economic theory advocates for a dissocialised economic agent motivated by profit maximization, economic sociology is a discipline that examines how and to what extent social relations intervene in the development of economic regularities, stressing the social construction of economic relations. Further exploring this idea, Swedberg (2003) states that economic sociology should not only be concerned by social relations, as it actually is, but it should also consider the analysis of the role of interests from a sociological perspective, evoking Weber's

argument that interests drive people's actions, meaning that the general directions of human actions will be determined by the way actors view the world. The analysis of interests can provide revealing insights into the *strength* driving actions, the motives underlying *choices*, the *dynamics* of opposition, blocking or reinforcing among interests, and the interrelation between humans and their *natural environment*. It is for this reason that, according to Swedberg (2003 p. xii), institutions cannot be understood as rules but as *"distinct configurations of interests and social relations".* In the context of these configurations, according to Swedberg (2003) law and culture are of major importance for their capacity of blocking, slowing down or accelerating economic process.

BOX 2: ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY PRINCIPLES ACCORDING TO SMELSER AND SWEDBERG

- The actor takes part of groups and society, therefore, it is influenced by other actors.
- There exist a variety of economic actions, including rational ones. Therefore rationality is a variable and not an assumption.
- The centrality of interests
- Economic actions are constrained by scarcity, social structures and meaning structures.
- The economy is an integral part of society (interrelation)
- Complementary variables to be analysed: law, regulation, culture,

Source: author based on Smelser and Swedberg (1995b) and Swedberg (2003)

Institutional economics, a heterodox economic school born in the United States towards the end of the nineteenth century, rises up against mainstream economic orthodoxy, bringing back the analysis of the role of institutions in the understanding of economic phenomena (see Rutherford, 1996; Hodgson, 1998; Chavance, 2006), as it was introduced by the German historical school in the nineteenth century. The distinctive characteristic of institutional economics is the idea that institutions and society shape individuals, meaning that individuals' preferences and actions are knitted and modelled by culture and the socio-institutional reality (see Veblen, 1899; Galbraith, 1969; Commons, 1934). According to Hamilton (1919 pp. 314-18 quoted by Hodgson 2000 p.317) *"economic theory is concerned with matters of process… economic theory must be based upon acceptable theory of human behaviour".* For Hamilton (1919) institutional economics should unify economic science by the means of showing how parts of the economic system are related to the whole. According to this perspective, institutions as a form of change or stagnation are the elementary unit from which economic systems can be analysed. Therefore, scholars adhering to this school, despite their diverse approaches (Samuels, 2000), refuse the individualist

method of the orthodox economic sciences together with its atomised vision of human nature. The assumption of individual rational agents searching for utility maximisation is considered to be erroneous (Hodgson, 2000 p. 318).

Inspired by pragmatic American philosophy (William James and Johns Dewey), 'old' institutional economics tries to reconcile economic theory with a theory of institutions and collective action, meaning that individuals are in constant interaction, and thus, affected by institutional and cultural contexts. Nevertheless, as Hodgson (2000 p. 326) points out, the interaction between individuals and institutions is reciprocal, meaning that to the same extent institutions shape and constrain individuals, individuals create and change institutions, originating upward and downward causal processes. This anthropologic viewpoint adopted by institutional economists thus stresses human behaviour which varies according to time and space (culture, locality, country, etc.), and individuals' behaviour changes in relation with social change in a mutually interrelated manner. From this perspective, reality is perceived as integrated and holistic, a special emphasis is put on historical and evolutionary patterns of events, rather than equilibrium analysis and dissembedded market and price mechanisms. Further, it stresses the relationships between biology, ecology and social sciences, rather than economics.

Even if the body of literature on the socio-institutional analysis of economy is quite varied and fluid (Swedberg, 2003), we can find in the contributions of Durkheim, Weber, Polanyi, Veblen, Commons, Hodgson, Bourdieu, Smelser, Swedberg, Hollingsworth and Boyer a key normative element of consensus: a socio-institutional analysis of the economy should go beyond the methodological abstraction of orthodox economics, in such a way that the economic phenomenon is seized according to its social status.

Durkheim (1895) while developing his core concept of *faits sociaux* (social fact) states that the existence and the functioning of markets cannot be explained without evoking institutions and social representations[11]. Weber, for his part, also contends that the economy is a social fact. According to him, every personal action, including actions oriented to satisfying needs in a context of scarcity, always take into consideration other economic agents and the sense they give to their action. Thus, Weber draws attention to the importance of human interaction, highlighting the peaceful character of action concerning economic issues (Steiner, 1999). Further exploring

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[11] *"Il est facile de voir dès le premier coup d'oeil que les traditions et les pratiques collectives de la religion, du droit, de la morale, de l'économie politique ne peuvent être des faits moins sociaux que les formes extérieures de sociabilité (…) Ils sont la société elle même, vivante et agissante"* (Durkheim, 1900).

this idea, Weber (1904) proposes a research agenda on socio-economic relationships that combines the study of current existing processes, the historic conditions of their formation and development, and their cultural meaning. Given these distinctions, Weber's research on *The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (1905) shows how rational economic behaviour, the distinct characteristic of modern societies, is a specific social construction that takes part in a larger process of rationalisation which occurred in Western societies that reached all social spheres including arts, science, law, labour and economy (Lallement, 2007).

Rejecting the legitimacy of the naturalisation of the *homo economicus* and so of markets, Polanyi published a very influential reflection on how the relationships between society and the market system have historically evolved. In his book *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi (1944) developed a substantive definition of economics, opposed to the formal definition used by pro-market theorists, to show how economic action is a complete social phenomenon. Polanyi developed the original idea of *societal embeddedness,* and argued that the economy is anchored in institutions, which are economic and non-economic (Polanyi, 1992). Polanyi's (1944) research on pre-capitalist societies shows the coexistence of different types of exchange and economic systems including householding, reciprocity, redistribution and markets. As to the first three mechanisms, economic activities are socially embedded, constituting a set of institutions allowing for the functioning of the economic elements of social relations. Conversely, in the case of self-regulated markets, economic relationships have historically been dissembedded from a vaster social tissue, provoking a great transformation in which social, political and ecological relationships become subordinated to market regulation mechanisms (Polanyi, 1994). With this argument Polanyi (1944) denounces the fallacy that equates economy and markets, pointing out that the economy is embedded and subordinated to a broader social reality, and therefore that an economy driven by self-regulated markets is contingent or dependent upon historical factors.

However, as Hess (2004) pointed out, Polanyi (1957) in a later work deepened his reflection on the transformations in progress since WWI concerning the market society, and contended that the market as the unique frame of reference was somehow out of date (Polanyi, 1957). In fact, to a certain extent, Polanyi revised his initial arguments on the complete dissembedded market system, and instead emphasized the role of society in shaping the economy, so constructing markets. According to him, *"market societies – even the most 'liberal' ones – are to a varying extent 'embedded' systems, connected with and influenced by non-economic institutions, and showing characteristics of a redistributive exchange system that, for Polanyi, was mainly pre-*

modern, pre-market based" (Hess, 2004 p. 169). In sum, markets for Polanyi are socially constructed and governed (and not natural or given), thus market economies are the result of a specific socio-institutional environment (Gertler, 2001 quoted by Hess, 2004 p. 169).

Further exploring the concept of embeddedness, Granovetter (1985) has also been influential with his thesis of relative social embeddedness. From his research on labour markets and networks, he concluded that even in the most extreme market societies, economic action is highly influenced by relational and institutional frameworks. While adopting a more micro regard, Granovetter (1985) underlined the role of concrete personal relations and structures in generating trust that will lead towards the understanding of acts. As Hess (2004) reminds us, Granovetter's focus on social relations has been criticized for neglecting the embeddedness of social relations in broader institutional structures, as well as in culture (see DiMaggio, 1990).

The French sociologist Bourdieu is also considered a very influential contributor to the analysis of the economy from a social viewpoint (Swedberg, 2003). Evoking Marcel Mauss' approach to the economy as a *fait social total*, Bourdieu (2000) defined the economy as a multidimensional and multifunctional practice, in which the disposition of economic structures and economic agents are social constructions that cannot be separated from the whole set of social constructions constituting the social order. With the aim of developing a normative and historical approach to the economy, which underlines the role of agency, action, people, structure and culture, Bourdieu (1994, 2000) coined the set of notions of 'field', 'habitus', 'capital' and 'interest'. From this perspective, actors' behaviours, symbolic constructions and social institutions shape the 'economic field'. In turn, the 'economic habitus', meaning the particular set of economic predispositions incorporated by individual actors through socialisation, intervenes in the economic field relating past experiences to future actions. Stated differently, the habitus combines individuality and collectivity creating a 'socialised subjectivity' or what Veblen (1899) calls a 'coherent structure of propensity and habits' that will guide, among others, economic actions. Each field consequently produces different forms of interests (or non-interest) that cannot be reduced to the rational and a-historical economic interests of the *homo economicus*. More generally, the notion of interest denotes the variety of drivers that actors carry or bring to participate in a certain field with specific rules of the game, which can be familiar to the actor or not. In fact, the participation of actors in different fields will be affected by their amount of symbolic capital, which for Bourdieu includes every type of capital (physical, economic, cultural,

social), as perceived and recognized by social agents and therefore with a certain attributed value (Bourdieu, 1994 p. 116).

2.1.2.   *How do socio-economic and environmental spheres relate?*

As we saw in the previous section, the question of the dialectics between the social and the economic spheres of development constitutes a major issue for socio-institutional approaches, providing them with essential methodological and theoretical reflections for the sustainability debate. However, the third sustainability pillar, the inclusion of the natural environment, requires examining how and to what extent these socio-institutional approaches have dealt with the natural environment. Once it has been assumed that the economy is socially embedded, where should the environmental dimension be placed?

First, it must be acknowledged that even though economic sociology provides important elements for reflecting on the inclusion of the environmental dimension, institutionalism and regional development theories inspired in socio-institutional premises (Moulaert *et al.* 2000, 2003, 2005; Swyngedouw, 2005; Gonzalez and Healey, 2005) have been much more abounding in this respect, though the inclusion of the environment has been relatively recent, mostly since post-fordist analysis has been introduced. The natural environment as it is spatially embedded has been examined by the fields of human geography and regional development theory, which have provided very important starting points to construct a territorial and socio-institutional approach to sustainable development.

From the previous section I bring on board a set of distinctive elements of a socio-institutional economic analysis, which will directly determine how the environmental dimension will be taken into consideration:

- The economy is a complete social phenomenon and an integral part of society.
- The economy is socially and thus historically and territorially embedded, which implies the importance of the notion of path-dependency.
- Institutions, social representations and interests shape the economy.
- Reality is integrated and holistic, meaning that society is a whole whose interconnected parts cannot exist independently of the whole, which is greater than the addition of its parts. Thus society and institutions affect individuals' choices and the social structure influences individuals' behaviour (Ravenaud, 2004).

The inclusion of the environmental variable in socio-institutional analysis of the economic phenomenon, including economic sociology and institutionalism, is rather new. Indeed even if there exists a certain consensus that this approach to the environmental question will refuse orthodox economics' assumptions (individualism, rationality, monetarisation, the environment as an externality), the form that a detailed research agenda of a socio-institutional economic approach to environmental issues should take is much less explored (Berger, 1995).

One reason given to explain this situation is the quasi-inexistence of the environmental variable in classic and modern economic sociology, and of course in other social sciences (Leroy, 2003). This absence can be explained in two ways. On the one hand, there is the desire of sociologists to affirm self-autonomy and the specific character of sociology vis-à-vis natural sciences; on the other, it is related with the pro-modernisation rhetoric that dominated social sciences since the end of the nineteenth century and which was strengthened with growth and technological progress during the post-war period (Leroy, 2003). It is perhaps for this reason that it is not surprising that the first social scientists addressing environmental issues did it from an anti-modernist view rejecting mass production, mass consumption and the consequences of economic growth (see Illich, 2004; Gorz, 1991). Neoclassical economists, for their part, apart from environmental functions of economic agents and externalities, develop models where the economy and the environment are conceived as independent domains.

However, it was really during the 1970s when conservation issues started being tackled by Marxists social scientists (O'Connor and Schnaiberg, cited in Gendron and Villancourt, 2003 p. 13), echoing major public concerns about the relationship between industrial development, urban expansion and the consequences for the environment. Later, during the 1980s, a new set of works by modernist ecology theorists emerged, stressing the explanation of the dialectics of changes in industrial society and environmental issues. These contributions contended that economic growth can be compatible and create synergies with ecological objectives, thus the State plays a vital role in favouring strategies of environmental prevention, participation and decentralisation. Social movements, for their part, should change their utopian character into realist and constructive participation.

Even if the natural environment has not been a priority in socio-institutional theory, this literature provides key elements of reflection for building what could be a socio-institutional theory capable of providing explanations regarding the broader process of institutional transformation lying

beneath the ecological problem. More exactly, this body of literature provides analytical elements for developing a socio-institutional approach that at the same time recognize the social nature of economic institutions (embeddedness), the sociality of the environmental problematic and therefore their reciprocal interrelation. In order to build a dialogue between socio-institutional economic analysis and the environmental question, I review below the premises defining this approach.

A socio-institutional theory addressing the social nature of the economy and the environment is based on several *normative premises* concerning ecosystems and their preservation. Söderbaum (2000) in his institutional perspective on the analysis of the environment, states that nature is not free of values and development thus cannot be defined nor pursued without taking into consideration the sustainability of the biophysical system. Such a view comprises two connected issues:

- It contests the neoclassical instrumentalisation and monetarisation of the environment that reduce its value to mere economic premises. Within this view we come across Polanyi's critique regarding the subordination of ecological systems to the self-regulated market logic as a result of the dissembeddedment of economy, which has even entailed the commodification of the natural heritage and patrimonial land.

- It demands enlargement of the meaning of the notion of value to include aesthetic, cultural, social and historical significance. This vision converges with the arguments of Swedberg and Bourdieu about the need to consider the coexistence of interests and worldviews, and thus to go beyond the neoclassical assumption of the dissocialised rational agent motivated exclusively by profit research. For Söderbaum (2000), a socio-institutional perspective of sustainable development stresses an ethical worldview in which individuals are seen as human beings existing in an affective relation with nature, and thus enterprises as responsible social actors, an idea that had been recovered by analysis on Corporate Social Responsibility.

Such a view opens the possibility of a wide analysis of the interaction between interests and worldviews influencing choices and dynamics, which can go or not in a sustainability direction. It is argued that according to a sustainability paradigm, individual and collective actions will be driven taking into consideration, to a very large extent, environmental values that are socially anchored and socially constructed. In fact, the emergence of environmental sustainability values has deeply reconfigured what Swedberg calls institutions, meaning that the sustainability worldview has shaped in different senses the configuration of interests and social relations. As

will be examined in the following chapters devoted to the analysis of ecotourism in the Morvan Park, the interests lying beneath the practice of ecotourism and especially of the creation of an ecotourism micro-business in a natural area can go widely beyond profit maximisation, putting environmental, family and communitarian values before any economic aim.

As a result, the emergence of a green or sustainability paradigm and its socially constructed quality intensifies the need for interdisciplinary, historic and holistic analysis, as it is needed for the analysis of economy as a socially embedded institution (Boidin and Zuindeau, 2006; Rist *et al.* 2006; Jollivet, 2001a). In the same way as the economy is socially embedded, and therefore socially constructed, the natural environment is articulated and in constant interrelation with society and thus, with the economy (Söderbaum, 2000).

The institutional economic perspective confronts economy and ecology from an interdisciplinary point of view, stressing the complementary interrelation between socio-economic systems and ecosystems. From a holistic point of view, it is an effort to revert the neoclassical logic of internalising ecological problems as economic ones. In contrast, it proposes to inverse this relationship, apprehending the socio-economic system as a sub-system of the ecological system, what implies the subordination of socio-economic issues to ecological constraints. From this viewpoint, *"nature is considered as the most primary source of social progress",* thus *"it should be preserved according to this status"* (Moulaert, 2000 p. 43). According to this perspective, societal problems, like those related to the natural environment, are a result of multiple factors and a multidimensional reality. Development paths thus reveal values and life-styles, public and private institutions' performance, as well as the role of the State. Individuals, institutions and society as a whole, build the present reality, according to particular worldviews, ideologies, ethical considerations, socio-economic specificities and historical evolutions (Söderbaum, 2000). All these issues are essential when we address the sustainability or non-sustainability of development paths. Within this perspective, democratic values and collective action are seen as drivers for reversing the capitalist economy's negative impacts and thus for promoting sustainable goals (Söderbaum, 2000).

Opschoor and Van der Straaten (1993b) review four important institutionalist economic premises stressing on the interrelation between socio-economic processes and environmental functioning:
-   The concept of *circular interdependence* replaces the neoclassical fixed context premise. The concept of circular interdependence alludes to the idea of chains of triggering factors, causes,

effects and responses that link the economy to environmental processes. It denotes the *"co-evolutionary nature of society-environment interactions"* (Opschoor and Van der Straaten, 1993b, p. 4).

- From a governance perspective, the analysis of decision-making processes goes beyond the neoclassical individualistic and utility maximizing premise, stressing the importance of *non-rational and non-instrumental modes of behaviour* (see Simon, 1976). Referring to this, Moulaert and Mehmood (2009 p. 209) underscore the concepts of path-dependence, the role of culture, institutions embedding human interaction and the norm systems for their enlightening potential in the understanding of the sociology of social relations.

- Institutional economics mobilises an ethical approach expressed in terms of values and rights rather than utilitarian theories. The neoclassical weighing premise is thus replaced by an *ethical or existential hierarchical approach* with some continuity, or by *social reproduction-oriented values,* as is the case of sustainability and environmental compatibility. In this respect, institutionalists underline specific ultimate values in a hierarchy that puts values beyond individual wants, needs and preferences, which are *continuity of human life* and *non-invidious recreation of community through the use of knowledge* (Tool, 2001; Swaney, 1987). From an environmental point of view, these values imply *environmental compatibility* (Swaney, 1987) and *co-evolutionary sustainability* (Norgaard, 1994).

- Institutional economic analysis goes beyond the assumption on the optimality of market regulation and the existence of externalities as particular market failures. The causal link between institutional frameworks, meaning governance structures and dynamics, and current environmental conditions is a very important domain of institutional analysis, which in any case can restrict policy recommendations to market-oriented solutions. On the one hand, there exists an explicit interest in the operation of non-market instruments in addition to market mechanisms; on the other, market instruments are assessed beyond their efficiency aspects, meaning that their emergence and evolution are analysed looking also at their conformity with policy trends, administrative traditions, organizational strategies, societal decision-making processes, etc. that are shaped according to time and spatial horizons.

TABLE 6: ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY, INSTITUTIONALISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Basic principles	- The environment has value in itself - There exist complementarities between socio-economic systems and ecosystems - The socio-economic system is a subsystem of the ecosystem
Meaning of sustainability: what is to be sustained?	- Satisfaction of fundamental human needs according to environmental constraints
Degree of capital substitutability	- Complementarities between different forms of capital and ecological capital.
What kind of governance?	- Centrality of institutions and collective action - Notion of dynamic interdependence - Sustainable governance

Source: author, based on quoted sources.

In sum, *co-evolutionary sustainability* implies *"to avoid development paths, social structures and technologies that pose serious threats to continued compatibility of socio-systems and eco-systems"* (Opschoor and Van der Straaten, 1993a, page 8). The pursuit of this maxim implies the comprehension of reality in all its complexity and pluralism, avoiding mechanicist and universal premises. Reality is thus seen as integrated, complex and holistic, denoting that wholes are different to the sum of parts, and therefore one cannot be understood without the other. Since wholes are complex and organic, their transformations are not necessarily mechanistic, but can also be chaotic, evolutionary and discontinuous, as well as constantly influenced by contextual factors (Norgaard, 1994).

2.2. Elements for building a socio-institutional analysis of sustainable development and the centrality of governance

Elaborating on the premises of a socio-institutional theory, I present below four distinctive dimensions of the concept of sustainable development. I argue that these four dimensions can be interpreted as major sustainability challenges. Thus from a perspective aiming to rescue the centrality of the social sustainability pillar through its reinterpretation in terms of governance, I propose a reading of these four sustainability dimensions as major governance challenges for sustainable development (see figure 9). These dimensions will be considered as cross-cutting variables throughout this chapter. Allowing a special centrality to the territorial dimension, which is defined in function of the definition of place as embodiment of socio-institutional dynamics, I broaden the territorial reflection of sustainable development in section three.

FIGURE 9: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DIMENSIONS REDEFINING GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

Sustainable development	Dimensions	Governance challenges
Normative - analytical	Ethic and social and environmental values	Articulation between different world views, rationales, ethics and values
Development	Economic, social and environmental	Articulation of different dimensions of development. Co-evolution of different forms of capital
Equity	Inter- generational => Time	Articulation between temporal scales (long and short term goals)
	Intra- generational => Space	Articulation between different embedded spatial scales

Centrality of spatial and social dimensions

Space, in addition to its physical and geographical aspects, represents an embodiment of social relations, human agencies and politico-administrative systems in which governance of smaller territories is embedded in the social relations of larger ones.

Hierarchical interdependence and subordination of economic processes and environmental sustainability to governance dynamics

Source: author

2.2.1. The hierarchical interdependence and subordination of the economic process to social and environmental constraints (the centrality of governance)

Following the enounced core dimensions of sustainable development in chapter one, it is possible to conclude that this concept acquires sense if it is regarded from a territorial or spatial perspective and therefore conferring centrality to its social dimension. From a theoretical and methodological point of view, I argue that sustainable development aspires to a certain social cohesion and harmonisation that has been somehow lost in the large amount of literature on this topic. Therefore, I propose to recover its original human meaning with the analysis of the role of institutions, collective action and interdependence among actors. In this respect, the analysis of the socio-economic, cultural, anthropological and socio-political mechanisms of articulation intervening and determining sustainability are expressed in the context of this dissertation in terms of governance, which in a broad sense alludes to all socio-political processes and institutions intervening in the life of a certain territory.

2.2.2.   Towards more sustainable forms of articulation between different types of capital

The notion of capital has been used by different authors on works about human, cultural, social (Bourdieu, 1980, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993; Fukuyama, 1996) and natural capital, among others. An approach to sustainable development stressing the articulation of the different forms of capital is an invitation to go beyond the weak sustainability assumption about the perfect substitutability between different forms of capital, and the deep ecological paradigm advocating for a strong sustainability in which the economic dimension is practically absent from reflection. Conversely, a socio-institutional approach contends that sustainability of territories is built upon, and depends on how different forms capital are articulated and how they co-evolve (Norgaard, 1992; Dietz and Van der Straaten, 1992). More specifically, it alludes to the moulding and reciprocal causation of the different forms of capital from which territories are constructed, evolve and live, including economic capital, socio-cultural capital, politico-institutional capital and ecological capital, belonging to both public and private spheres. Further exploring this idea, Moulaert and Nussbaumer (2005a) state that capital in its varied forms has a history, territorial scales and thus is anchored in power relationships, rejoining Jessop's (2004) argument on institutions explicating that they emerge in specific territories and horizons that operate at different scales. Both arguments evoke the inter-generational and intra-generational principles that traditionally have defined the notion of sustainable development.

2.2.3.   The articulation among temporal scales

The intergenerational equity principle alludes to time and therefore to history. More specifically, it refers to the articulation among different temporal scales and to challenges related with the edification of a long-term development trajectory, which can be sustainable or not. This idea evokes the concept of "path dependency" which encompasses the local system trajectory in all its dimensions and scales (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2005a). From a governance perspective, this principle can be translated into the coordination effort between what has been inherited and the decisions that present generations take affecting future generations' welfare.

2.2.4.   The articulation across spatial scales

The intergenerational equity principle refers to the territorial variable. Sustainable development challenges are not limited to the articulation among temporal scales, but they also allude to the interrelation between different territorial layers, from a synchronic and diachronic perspective (Zuindeau, 2000; Bressers and Rosenbaum, 2003b). In danger of slipping into a circular argument of ever-diminishing proportions, this view requests the following key explanations: what is

territory? What is a territorial scale? How do different territories interrelate? Which is the role of the different territorial scales in view of a sustainable development objective?

3. TERRITORY, SPACE, PLACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Reflecting on sustainable development as a territorial challenge, contests orthodox a-spatial or non-place-oriented approaches to development, and thus begs to define not only the notions of territory, place and space, but also to put them into perspective regarding the notion of scale.

If "*all social life is necessarily 'placed' or 'situated'",* as Swyngedouw *et al.* (2003 p. 11) affirm, a territory is certainly much more than a specific biophysical setting within a a geographic area. According to the Human Geography Dictionary (Johnston *et al.* 2000, p. 582), the notion of place in geographic science alludes to a portion of geographic space, which can be either an officially recognized territory or an informal one. Space thus, is organised into places perceived as bounded settings in and across which social relations are constituted. Alternatively stated, places are embodiments of unique social relations and consequently they represent specific meanings and collective memories (Johnston *et al.*, 2000), which are the result of a particular history, culture and community's singularities (Wheeler, 2004; Moulaert et Nussbaumer, 2005a). Places, in this context, can be defined as *"condensations of different social relationships coming together in the 'same' time-space location, with the density, variety and types of social relations that intersect there helping to define different types of place"* (Hudson, 2000 p. 25).

However, as stated earlier by Massey during the 1970s and 1980s, the dynamic relations between socio-institutional processes and spatial forms are complex and undetermined, meaning that places not only contain social relations and therefore territories are the product of these social relations, but also that territorial forms shape the ways in which these processes are constituted and evolve (Hudson, 2000). This argument rejoins Amin's relational approach to places. Amin (2005 p. 79), elaborating on the contributions of Massey (1999) and Thrift (1999), develops a relational approach to places, which rescues a philosophic view that conceives territories as living entities, affinity, immanence, relationships, multiplicity, governability and efficacy, highlighting both cognitive and institutional assets of places (Amin and Thrift, 1994 cited in Hudson 2000 p. 25), but overlooking power relationships.

A further point that can be made in this approach to places as embodiments of socio-institutional relationships is related to the way in which the social interrelates with the natural environment (Hudson, 2000). This point raises key questions for a territorial sustainability theory that stresses the co-evolution of the different forms of capital, while addressing issues about biodiversity preservation, natural resources utilisation and the construction of socio-natural identities of territories (Harris and Leiper, 1995). If places are carriers of biodiversity and natural resources and at the same time embodiments of social relations, the relationships people knit with their natural environment seem very important for several intertwined reasons. First, the specific physical and natural characteristics of territories will largely define the way communities will organise production and consumption. Second, the combination of local needs, the quality of the natural setting and other cultural characteristics will contribute to define the limits that communities will draw or not on production and consumption in order to guarantee the sustainability of territories. Third, the chosen production, consumption and regulatory framework then will positively or negatively affect the natural settings of the concerned territory and softer production alternatives will probably be less environmentally harmful compared with more depleting economic activities. Finally, the specific characteristics of the natural setting will for their part shape the symbolic meaning assigned to territories. This symbolism is related to the notion of 'sense of place', meaning the consciousness that individuals or communities have of places that are significant to them (Weaver, 2001b p. 351). As is further explored in the next chapter, this idea of 'sense of place' in natural and semi-natural areas is relevant not only for local communities, but also for visitors and outsiders coming to live in these areas. From an environmental sustainability perspective, for instance, a strong 'sense of place' might result in stronger environmental limits to production and thus in the promotion of more sustainable activities, such as those devoted to ecotourism which will be explored it the next chapters.

However, recognizing specificities of places does not imply ignoring processes operating at other territorial levels or scales. Territories or places in fact are embedded in wider geographical areas and in wider power structures occurring at different scales (Massey, 1997; Swyngedouw *et al*., 2003; Moulaert *et al.,* 2000). The particularities of a certain territory resulting from the interaction between the setting in which the social relations are constituted, the geo-biophysical area and the symbolic dimension of place (Agnew, 1987; Johnston *et al*., 2000 p. 583) are anchored and therefore in reciprocal interrelation with what it is occurring at other scales. On the one hand, places are stimulated or affected by the governance of other territories; on the other, particular territories have the capacity to affect the governance dynamics and structures located at

other scales. From this perspective, places are seen as discontinuous entities with permeable boundaries vis-à-vis territories located at other levels (Hudson, 2000). Consequently, both the process of social construction of territories and their level of sustainability will be defined and redefined according the governance dynamics and wider and lower territories. As a result, places, "things in place" and the specific character of territories are the crystallization of the complex inter-level dynamics of socio-spatial processes (Swyngedouw *et al.,* 2003). Places condensate and therefore reveal the complex process of articulation of the different forms of capital (socio-economic, cultural, politico-institutional and natural) present at different geographical scales (Moulaert *et al.,* 2000). For Swyngedouw *et al.* (2003 p. 12) places are moments, photographic stills or crystals of the world's complex socio-spatial processes and political-economic configurations historically constituted.

An important feature of this approach to territories as spatio-temporal condensations of complex social relations is their embeddedness in a reflection of power relations. Institutions then not only emerge in specific territories and horizons, but they are also anchored in complex power relations (Jessop, 2004; Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2005a; Swyngedouw *et al.,* 2003). Consequently, spatial scales are *"the embodiment of, and the arenas through and in which, social relations of empowerment and disempowerment operate"* (Swyngedouw, 1997 cited in Swyngedouw *et al.,* 2003 p. 12).

In sum, the territory is a concept that not only encloses a set of physical and geographic elements, but also constitutes a sort of embodiment of social relationships, human agencies and politico-administrative systems, in which governance of smaller territories is embedded in the socio-institutional relationships of bigger territories. From a sustainable development perspective, the intra-territorial equity principle alludes to the articulation between socio-institutional relationships and it concerns different embedded territorial scales – supranational, national, regional and local – as well as the power relationships underlying this spatiality.

4. GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
The works of Bressers and Rosenbaum, and Lafferty (Bressers and Rosserbaum, 2003a; Lafferty, 2004a) have suggested that the key issue underlying the sustainability paradigm is a challenge of articulation between different social 'scales' or 'levels'. Specifically, in this dissertation I am interested in a vision of sustainable development that highlights the articulation between different

forms of capital, which in turn have a history, are territorially embedded, are anchored in power relations and subordinated to socio-institutional coordination mechanisms (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2005a).

In the previous sections I argued for supremacy of the social dimension, meaning that the sustainable co-evolution of socio-economic and environmental systems are inseparable in terms of social relationships. This argument suggests to rethink the hierarchical interdependence between the dimensions of sustainability, in which the social sphere, particularly meaning governance relations here, includes environmental and economic dimensions. Such analysis rescues the centrality of the social pillar in the sustainability concept and its territorial dimension. However, it does not imply diminishing the relevance of the other two sustainability pillars, economy and ecology, but rather to understand their articulation as being a function of the underlying socio-institutional mechanisms governing societies.

The concept of sustainable development and its concrete underlying territorial challenges bring together a variety of actors, institutions and human agencies. Either differently or similarly concerned by a certain socio-spatial process, conflict or any other kind of situation, these actors and institutions hold varied interests, viewpoints and values, which might be convergent or divergent. Furthermore, from a sustainability perspective, the complexity of the interrelations between interests and values is open to a broader temporal and territorial horizon.

Sustainable development is a challenge regarding how society governs its natural and socio-cultural heritage. Sustainability challenges, therefore, are situated at the crossroad between socio-institutional interactions, including economic exchanges, and the natural environment, raising questions about the best way to protect natural resources in order to guarantee their sustainability.

As a result, sustainable development challenges suggest the need for a set of socio-institutional coordination mechanisms adequate not only to face these challenges, but also in line with its main values and components (temporal-spatial articulation, as well as among socio-economic and environmental dimensions). In the context of this dissertation, the set of coordination mechanisms underlying sustainable development is defined in terms of governance, and I argue that sustainable development is a multi-level challenge that does not only require a particular system of governance, but also leads to new forms of socio-institutional articulation. More specifically and elaborating on the concept of socio-institutional innovation developed by Moulaert and

Nussbaumer (2008), in this section I argue that sustainable development is a governance issue, in the sense that it is dependent on a certain system of coordination and also engenders socio-institutional innovation in governance relations that might lead to more sustainable territorial paths. Below, after a brief general presentation of the notion of governance, I will present its implications in the context to sustainable development.

4.1. Convergences between the emergence of the debate on governance and sustainable development

As is the case of sustainable development, literature on governance is vast, academic approaches are varied and sources come from various disciplines. Jollivet (2001) warns us that together with the concept of sustainable development, governance must nowadays be one of the most used terms in social sciences. Furthermore, the term governance has also been qualified, resulting in a panoply of new concepts such as global governance, corporate governance, multilevel governance, environmental governance, among many others terms.

For its part, the debate about sustainability and the progressive transition towards more sustainable forms of development takes part and consequently shapes and is shaped by this new way of governing societies (Svedin *et al.* 2001). Perhaps the most powerful factor that explains the intrinsic relation between sustainability and the shift towards governance is the recognition of the impossibility for States to advance by themselves in paving the way for more sustainable paths. In fact, the complexity derived from the interconnection of sustainability-related problems, uncertainty and the recognition that the knowledge needed to address these challenges is shared among a plurality of actors (Froger, 2001b), reveals the impossibility for States to build up satisfactory regulatory frameworks by themselves (Dooner *et al.* 2001; Simioni *et al.* 2004). This results in the need to call on all of society, at different territorial levels, to address major environmental and sustainability challenges. In addition, this transition has been nourished by major governing challenges derived from the specific character of sustainable development issues. The debate on governance is far from been restricted to sustainable or environmental issues, addressing complexity while dealing with principles such as uncertainty, precaution, equity and justice. The 1990s marked a turning point in this analysis not only in the way societies govern sustainability-related issues, but also with regard to how they provided major insights for a broader debate on governance. Another reason explaining the proximity between sustainability and governance is related to the fact that at least in the normative definition both share similar values favouring democracy, decentralisation, transparency and civil society participation (Theys,

2003). In sum, the values and complexity of sustainable development put into question the exclusivity of market and state regulation as coordination mechanisms recognizing the need to develop new modes of decision-making grounded in the participation of a plurality of actors (Chautard *et al.,* 2003). As a result, since the mid-1990s, sustainable development initiatives have become a kind of laboratory where new ways of collective action are invented (Theys, 2003).

4.2. The varied literature on governance

The broad literature addressing governance is composed by several founding contributions coming from different social science fields, including economics, political science and sociology, a prescriptive ensemble emanating from international institutions such as the World Bank, OCDE and UN, and a growing academic and empirical literature focusing on governance issues applied to topics such as urban development, local development, sustainable development, etc. Even if these approaches are quite varied, they at least share the recognition that contemporary societies are governed by a multiplicity of actors and institutions whose arenas go far beyond markets and States (Kooiman, 2003; John, 2001; Swyngedouw, 2005; Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Goodwin and Painter, 1996; Moulaert, 2000).

Table 7 summarizes the most cited contributions to the formulation of the concept of governance. It starts with the works of Coase and Williamson about firms and modes of coordination that are alternative to markets and hierarchies, from which later emerged the concept of corporate governance referring to the participation of stakeholders in the management of the firm. Even if these early contributions have the merit of opening the black-box of markets as sovereign coordination mechanisms by the means of stressing the role of firms, they remain limited in the sense that they essentially keep a focus on economic issues and consequently disregard socio-political dimensions and non-economic actions. During the 1980s, the reflection on governance was a topic of interest for international relations theorists, which either characterized the supranational system of governance as anarchic, or conversely, they developed arguments stressing the existence of a relatively stable international system guaranteed by different sorts of regimes. The merit of these approaches is to have pointed out the need to theorise international modes of regulation. From an international perspective as well, the notion of 'good governance' was during the 1980s mobilised by international institutions, like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to define a set of neo-liberal political and economic criteria considered to be necessary for the good management of international aid in developing countries undergoing structural adjustment reforms. This highly criticised approach has been mainly

responsible for the discrediting of the notion of governance because of the unquestioned negative consequences of World Bank and IMF actions.

One influential contribution comes from political science works on local urban development, which pointed out that governance includes the participation of different interests, groups and networks, with power and empowerment of communities recognized as key components in the elaboration and negotiation of public policies (Le Galès, 1995). Another important ensemble of contributions focussing on the role of the socio-institutional tissue governing territories and localities come from the field of sociology, and more specifically from works on local forms of regulation and embeddedness (Bagnasco and Triglia, 1988), social capital (Putnam, 1993), symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994) and institutional thickness (Amin and Thrift, 1995). They all highlight the role of institutions and social relations in economic development (Moulaert *et al.,* 2000).

The common idea of these approaches is the recognition that contemporary societies are governed by a multiplicity of interdependent actors and institutions, belonging to the public and private sphere and placed at different territorial levels (Kooiman, 2003; Shmitter, 2002; John, 2001; Swyngedouw, 2005). For Kooiman (2003) *"the governance of and in modern societies is a mix of all kinds of governing efforts by all manner of social-political actors, public as well as private; occurring between them at different levels, in different governance modes and orders".* Schmitter (2002 quoted in Swyngedouw 2005 p 1994) defines governance as *"a method/mechanism for dealing with a broad range of problems/ conflicts in which actors regularly arrive at mutually satisfactory and binding decisions by negotiating with each other and co-operating in the implementation of these decisions".* Finally*,* for Swyngedouw (2005 p. 1994) *"governance-beyond-the-state systems are presumably horizontal, networked and based on interactive relations between independent and interdependent actors who share a high degree of trust, despite internal conflict and oppositional agendas, within inclusive participatory institutional or organizational associations".*

TABLE 7: SELECTED DEFINITIONS OF GOVERNACE

Institutional economics (Coase, 1937; Williamson, 1979, 1996; Corporate governance 1980s)

Focus on mechanisms coordinating economic activities that are alternative to markets and hierarchies.

Coase 'transaction cost theory': internal coordination mechanisms of the firm permit to reduce transaction costs produced by markets. Firms are more efficient than markets.

Williamson: governance as the set of mechanisms employed by firms to foster efficient coordination (contracts, internal protocols, partnerships). Governance alludes to institutions, structures and processes that internalise transaction costs.

Corporate governance: refers to the will of shareholders and stakeholders to participate in the management of the firm.

Limits: essentially economic, lack of the socio-political dimensions and forgetting non-economic agents.

International Relations

International realism theory: the international system is anarchic and lacks supranational authority. The most important agents are national states, focused on maximising their power and security. Pessimist and hobbesian vision regarding cooperation among States (Waltz, Krasner, Aron).

Theory of international regimes: the stability of the international system is guaranteed by different international regimes in which individual expectations converge (norms, rules and decision-making process). Even if a 'world government' with hegemonic power does not exist, interaction between States is not totally anarchic (Keohane, Nye). "Global governance" is seen as a continuous cooperation process and arrangements between different interests, which include official institutions and regimes with executorial powers, together with informal arrangements (Froger, 2001b p. 34).

International institutions (World Bank and IMF, 1980s)

'Global governance' is associated to international cooperation and development policies to face the 'crisis in governance' undergoing by non-developed economies. The World Bank and the IMF condition economic and social international aid to the adoption of a rigorous neo-liberal agenda considered as prerequisites for 'good governance'. Good governance delineates several criteria considered as necessary for a good management of public affaires in countries subject to structural adjustment programmes (Smouts, 1998).

Political science

Local governance: stresses the participation of different interests, especially private, in public decision systems of cities and regions. Power is a key variable in the analysis of local public policy elaboration and negotiation.

For Le Galès (1995; 1998 cited in Moulaert, 2000 p. 13): governance includes alternative mechanisms of negotiation between various groups, networks, subsystems, potentially empowering local government.

Sociology and socio-institutional analysis (Bagnasco, Triglia, Bourdieu, Granovetter)

Local forms of regulation: how the market is embedded in the local society or dependent on community institutions, family structures and local subcultures. Local regulation is a process that involves different types of regulation, reciprocally adjusting to each other. Importance of trust, social capital (Putnam) or institutional thickness (Amin and Thrift, 1995).

Bourdieu: symbolic capital.

Granovetter: concept of embeddedness.

Focus: specific forms of social relations among institutions.

Regional development theory inspired in socio-institutional analysis (Moulaert, Swyngedouw, Nussbaumer, Martinelli)

Local governance refers to the system of regulation and co-ordination governing the interaction among a plurality of actors. It includes formal but also informal non-governmental mechanisms, based on the reciprocal recognition of interdependence and on the shared goals of the actors involved (Moulaert, 2000 p 43). Centrality of social innovation.

Governance-beyond-the-state systems are presumably horizontal, networked and based on interactive relations between independent and interdependent actors who share a high degree of trust, despite internal conflict and oppositional agendas, within inclusive participatory institutional or organizational associations (Swyngedouw, 2005 p. 1994).

Focus: on embeddedness, path dependency and power.

Source: author (with various sources Froger 2001b; Kooiman, 2003, Smoots, 1998; Moulaert, 2000)

A focus on sustainability as a governance challenge results from a renewed recognition of the importance of institutions (Hudson, 2000) to deal with major sustainability challenges. In order to successfully deal with them, their governance should involve the participation of a range of formal and informal institutions including state regulation at different territorial scales and various civil society institutions (Hudson, 2000). It is in the reflection about the concept of space where the paradigm of sustainable development meets questioning about governance. More specifically, it rejoins the works of Perkmann and Sum (2002), Storper (2005), Keating (2005), Morgan (2005) and Moulaert and Nussbaumer (2005a) on governance and multi-level governance. According to this literature, the analysis of the relationship between different levels of governance constitutes a key issue in social sciences, given the socio-political transformations related with the reconfiguration of the Nation-State and the loss of its hegemonic role. These works highlight the role of different power scales, the varied institutional mechanisms, the role of different actors, their discursive forms, conflicts and forms of cooperation among and within territories, in a context of increasing participation of the regional and local scales in development policies. In the same way, the creation of supranational levels such as the European Union is seen also as an important variable of governance rescaling.

Both sustainable development and the redistribution of power among institutions and actors, derived from the 'hollowing out of the State', highlight the importance of multi-level processes, as well as the need for research methodologies addressing these different temporal and territorial horizons. Bressers and Rossenbaum (2003b p. 3) contend, in this respect, that sustainable development is an issue of multiple scales, thus main governance challenges are related with collaboration and integration across them. One major issue will be thus to explore the relationship

between the current distribution of power and roles among spatial scales with the capacity of societies to pave more sustainable paths. All these bearing in mind that the challenge of sustainability is to integrate in the long-term the intertwined socio-economic and environmental dimensions of development stressing equity, justice, democracy, uncertainty and precaution as base values. As a result, it might be argued that sustainability requires ad hoc human behaviour and adequate policy responses to these values and exigencies, which should be conceived and defined collectively through an integrated and dynamic learning process in which all segments of society should take part (Buckingham-Hatfield and Evans, 1996).

The next section presents the issue of scale from a territorial viewpoint because it is considered to be a central element of sustainability, not always systematically addressed by the literature on sustainable development and its governance. Indeed, many of the works on the governance of the environment, sustainable development, natural resources and rural territories focus primordially on the local scale, stressing local action and participation, this way forgetting that local governance structures and dynamics are embedded in wider power scales. The local level is certainly very important in the sustainability of territories and especially in ecotourism as we will see through the Morvan case. Nevertheless, we cannot overlook that localities are only one piece of the whole multi-scalar context and that collaboration among territories is fundamental.

The interest of building bridges between the sustainability paradigm and the scalar dynamics reconfiguration lies in the relative synchrony between these two. Following the propelling of scalar reconfiguration begun in Europe after WWII, characterised by the double process of decentralisation and creation of supranational regulation bodies, the progressive incorporation of environmental and sustainability principles in the political agendas resulted in the creation of new innovative policies and new territorial sub-national institutions in tune with the new democratic and sustainability requirements enounced in the Rio Conference in 1992. As a result, in countries such as France the post-Rio conference had an effect of reinforcement of the process of territorial reconfiguration. I will come back to this subject in chapter five. Below, I present some theoretical reflections concerning the different governance scales, accompanied with several illustrations referring to the role of each governance level in sustainability. This presentation intends to build the basis of the framework that is mobilised for the multi-scalar analysis that is developed in the empirical section of this dissertation.

4.3. The interactions between governance-territorial scales

4.3.1. *The global level*

The global level alludes to the widest scale of governance, also called the international, transnational or supranational scale, and it is of great relevance in sustainability issues. There are at least three interrelated explanations about why the global level occupies a central position in the sustainability reflection. First, there is the acknowledgment that contemporary environmental and broader sustainability problems are interconnected (WCED, 1987), and therefore cannot be circumscribed to national or sub-national boundaries (Batty, 2001). Unlike the first environmental conflicts focusing mainly on more localised forms of pollution (*i.e.* polluted beaches, pressures of tourism buildings on coastal areas), the current debate on sustainability has moved towards a global and cross-border reflection, highlighting greenhouse effects and climate change, global pollution and loss of biodiversity, among others (Batty, 2001) and thus challenging governance across different scales in a context of globalization (Berkhout *et al.*, 2003a; Bressers and Rosenbaum, 2003a; Lafferty, 2004a).

Second, the sustainability reflection is immersed inside the broader discussion about contemporary globalisation and more specifically it is related to the importance of shifts in the economic and political organisation of the world economy (Swyngedouw *et al.*, 2003). From a sustainable development viewpoint, the demand of and for global competitiveness, resulting from the accelerated process of economic deregulation and global trade liberalisation that became prominent since the 1980s, raises questions about the sustainability of several local measures oriented to increase productivity: such as low wages and the promotion of State absenteeism as a means for attracting foreign investment (Grant, 1997; Moulaert *et al.*, 2000; Swyngedouw *et al.*, 2003). The reshaping of social power choreographies resulting from the global process of liberalisation (Swyngedouw et al., 2003) interrogates key socio-economic sustainability issues, such as fairness and equity among territories, and also the ecological impact of trade agreements removing obstacles to exchange goods and services between countries (Berkhout *et al.,* 2003b). Even if it has been stated that it is complex to establish a direct causality relationship between the expansion of world trade and ecological sustainability (Ekins, 2003), since policy makers fear the impact of stringent environmental policy on economic competitiveness, considered as technical barriers to trade, the maintenance of supple legal frameworks has allowed for ecological and social dumping practices with disastrous consequences (Berkhout *et al.,* 2003b; Moulaert *et al.,* 2000). All this can be related to the debate on socio-environmental equity and justice between the northern and southern hemisphere, and more precisely to the existence of a kind of environmental

racism that permitted, for instance, the Bhopal catastrophe and the French decision to resume nuclear testing in the Pacific islands justifying it as a 'scientific' matter (Agyeman and Evans, 1996).

Finally, increasing environmental and sustainability pressures led to the reflection about the role, the capacity and the power of the existing global regulatory and governance structures. On the one hand, the reflection concerning the role of the global level in the context of sustainable development interrogates how and to what extent several international UN conferences, international treaties, conventions and protocols on sustainability related issues have been able to provide responses to key challenges, in a current context characterised by a weak international government and economic liberalisation. As was shown in chapter one, the introduction and popularisation of the notion of sustainable development were done during these international meetings, which while attempting to build global consensus on alternative development dimensions, permitted to gradually introduce new governance forms conceived to be applied at other spatial levels, as is the case of the Agenda 21 and several sectoral directives concerning forestry, biodiversity, oceans, and tourism, among many others. In fact, once the individual limits of States to independently deal with sustainability challenges were acknowledged, a demand for supranational action emerged, in spite of the non-existence of a global government capable to resolve these global problems. As Layard (2001a; 2001b) maintains, the problem is that there is no global legal authority capable of implementing sustainability by legal fiat. Actually, the international treaties issued from United Nations international meetings are non-binding instruments, which although they have a certain impact at different territorial levels, have little legal standing (Buckingham and Theobald, 2003). Conversely, Wheeler (2004) contends that although the implementation of statements issued from these declarations have been rather slow, they contributed to inculcate new values and behaviour on people, and also transferred new policy ideas and working practices, as similarly happened in the late 1940s with the Universal Declaration of Human rights. The most emblematic sustainability matters that have been globally addressed are climate change and the Kyoto agreements since December 1997, and the depletion of the Earth's ozone layer since the 1987 Montreal Protocol. Concerning the Kyoto agreements, even if so far progress in the reduction of CO_2 emissions is not encouraging and that the effort done by different countries varies a lot (Jeanneau, 2008), it is an interesting example in which nations are trying to collectively govern a global problem (Wheeler, 2004). For its part, the negotiations oriented to control the ozone layer depletion resulted in the stabilisation of the size of the hole in the layer, by means of eliminating the production and utilisation of several harmful

chemicals. Unlike the Kyoto accords that failed to set targets for developing countries, in the case of the ozone layer, a Multilateral Fund administered by UNDP and the UNEP was created to help developing countries to meet their targets. Perhaps a more detailed analysis of the governance process that led to effective collaboration in the ozone layer case could be instructive for another similar process, yet as has been pointed out, potential policy lessons from this experience have still been underexplored (see DeCanio, date not available).

Besides UN agencies, at the supranational level other institutions intervene addressing different sustainable development issues. On the one hand, we have the controversial actions of the World Bank and the IMF in developing countries and the powerful business-oriented agencies such as the World Trade Organisation. Even if the World Bank has a sustainable development division, since the late 1990s, its policies and projects remain highly controversial and subject to severe criticisms vis-à-vis their socio-economic and environmentally negative impacts (Aknin, 2008). Convinced that World Bank projects undermine sustainability in developing countries, activists from all around the world call for the dissolution of the agency (Wheeler, 2004). For its part, the WTO is also focus of strong criticism because of the negative consequences of neo-liberal free trade and globalization in terms of exploitation of resources and people (Munton, 2003).

The counterbalance to these powerful institutions carrying out unsustainable practices is exerted by the so-called 'global civil society', which is formed by a wide variety of NGOs, civil society networks, members of the academic community and different sorts of medias. Since the foundation of the first environmentalist institutions between the late 1960s and early 1970s, their initial 'environmental advocacy' role (Duncan and Walker, 1996) has evolved towards a mixture of actions including lobby, notably in climate change conferences, compensation for the lack of capabilities of nation state governments, provision of 'politically legitimated' scientific expertise, technical advice, international aid and humanitarian projects, and management of sustainable development projects (Vogler and Jordan, 2003). Pressure groups, such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, inherited the alarmist approach reported in the Meadows Report (1972), developing thus an advocacy role that emphasizes the perceived need for action to protect the environment (Duncan and Walker, 1996). For instance, Greenpeace, the largest and most mediatic green international NGO, develops a direct intervention action aiming to pacifically eliminate environmental menaces through exerting pressure on decision-makers in concerned territories. One paradigmatic action of Greenpeace was the anti-nuclear protest carried out in 1985 in front of Muroroa island, which finally ended with the Rainbow Warrior's sinking by the

French secret services (Agence Page 30, 2007). As for other leading NGOs, Wheeler (2004) mentions the work done by the International Council on Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) in the implementation of Agenda 21 and in training related to environmental impact assessment, Oxfam in the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices, and the international network of NGOs that developed the Earth Charter in the 1990s on shared sustainable development principles and values.

The increase of global supranational power also has a strong mobilising dimension in the rise of citizen awareness crystallised in diverse forms of environmental activism, among which the emergence of globally organised protest groups seems quite innovative. While in past years environmental direct action occurred principally at the local level and was related to specific environmental problems, one major change is the recent emergence of worldwide protests against WTO and global capitalism (Munton, 2003; Toscano, 2003). During the 1990s, activists connected with the International Forum on Globalisation, based in San Francisco, and "The Ecologist" journal, based in London, helped organizing protest mobilisation in Seattle (1998), Genova (2000) and Cancun (2003) (Wheeler, 2004; Ekins, 2003). Certainly, media coverage, internet and new information technologies reinforced the echo of these manifestations at different territorial levels (Batty, 2001), and later led the way to the development of periodic alternative summits gathering NGOs, academics, politicians and citizens. Two well-known examples are The Other Economic Summit, concurrently held with the G-8 summit, and the annual World Social Forum, concurrently held with the World Economic Forum since the Porto Alegre meeting in early 2000.

In addition to the above-mentioned global agreements and programmes, different territorial scales can formally interrelate through bilateral or multilateral political-economic agreements, as is the case of the European Union, NAFTA, MERCOSUR, APEC, etc. Concerning natural resource management and environmental protection, bilateral agreements are usually instituted as well in the case of transfrontier ecosystems, as is the case of shared water resources (Maganda, 2008) and protected areas divided by national borders (Zbicz 1999, 2001; Sandwith *et al.,* 2001). The following section focuses on the European level and its key role in the governance of European territories especially in the domain of sustainability. Later, in section six, I will come back to the discussion concerning the articulation of spatially embedded protected territories. It is argued that the sustainability of ecosystems depends on the collaboration between policy levels.

4.3.2. *The continental European level*

In the case of Europe, supranational regulation level is led by the European Union, accompanied by several other European institutions such as the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the European Courts. The European Union, pre-conceived in 1951 as the European Coal and Steel Community aimed at fostering economic cooperation as a means of creating interdependence between countries (Koff, 2009), is a recognized actor playing a leading role in global sustainability policy (Vogler and Jordan, 2003), by means of influencing the legislative and budgetary frameworks of its Member States. Concerning sustainability and environmental-related issues, the academic literature often recognizes the leading role of the EU in boosting environmental best practices among member states (Buckingham and Theobald, 2003; Selman, 1996). Through periodic Environmental Action Plans (EAP) developed since 1973 and a transversal European Sustainable Development Strategy, issues such as industrial pollution, productive land management, nature conservation, environmental assessment and urban change are tackled from a continental perspective. Besides, the European Union also deals with sustainability indirectly through other policy domains including regional development, economic and agricultural policies. It is important to mention that the European environmental policy has considerably evolved since the launching of the 1EAP in 1972, from measures primordially oriented to avoid possible trade distortions due to differences among the environmental frameworks of the different countries, to the elaboration of documents and measures focusing on prevention and sustainability, stressing proactive and preventive policy debates (Berkhout and Gouldson, 2003). In 1997, the EU introduced sustainable development as one of its fundamental objectives, meaning that it should permeate all European policies (Article 2 of the EC Treaty). Currently, the 2001 6EAP focusing on climate change, biodiversity, health and the environment, and sustainable resource use and waste management, defines long-term goals and also the specific objectives to be achieved by the member states for 2010. Unlike UN treaties, EU legislation binds member states and thus drives policy making at the national level (Buckingham and Theobald, 2003)[12].

There are several specific hot negotiations in which the EU has assumed an international negotiator stature (Buckingham and Theobald, 2003). One key subject is climate change and the application of the Kyoto Protocol in which the EU is positioned as a leader in the negotiation process, definition of norms and standards, supervising the respect of objectives of pollution reduction, among other roles. Another hot topic is the role of the EU in food, health and safety

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[12] For an analysis of the environmental and sustainable development policy of the EU see chapter five.

related issues, resulting from the need to re-regulate certain delicate markets by the means of what Runge (1990, cited in Grant, 1997 p. 330) calls 'ecoprotectionism'. In this respect we can cite several disputes between the EU and the USA in the context of WTO (Millstone and Zwanenberg 2000, cited in Stirling, 2003 p. 52) focused on genetically modified crops and food, and animal medications and growth hormones (Stirling, 2003; Ekins, 2003). These conflicts are related to contradictions between free trade agreements, protectionist measures and the need for environmental and health protection. These conflicts between free-trade and the recall for 'ecoprotectionism' anticipate future tensions in the areas of eco-labelling and precautionary principle, which could be branded as discriminatory by free-trade advocates (Ekins, 2003).

Another European institution is the Council of Europe, which was founded in 1949 and originally conceived to intervene in the fields of culture, protection of rights, and eradication of social and political conflicts. Concerning environmental and sustainable development issues, the Council developed in 2001 a document with *Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development of the European Country* focusing on various areas like transport, and preservation of ecological and cultural landscapes. Additionally, the Council adopted the EU sustainable development strategy in 2001 (Hontelez, 2006). As will be further explored in chapter five, the European Council is also at the origin of specific contributions on tourism and conservation.

Similar to the global level, along with these big regulatory bodies, much initiative at the European scale is taken by environmentalist organisations. It is argued that the active role acquired by the EU in environmental issues is to a great extent the result of the dynamic character of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB)[13], especially in lobbying with the EU and the European Parliament (Mousel, 2007). The EEB, created in 1974 with the aim to monitor the nascent European environmental law, is a federation of around 145 environmental organisations, most of them European, working in collaboration with various institutions such as trade unions, social groups, consumers, religious organisations, etc. (Hontelez and Buintenkamp, 2006). Its aim is to protect and improve the environment of Europe and to enable the citizens of Europe to play their part in achieving that goal. The EEB plays various roles related to the provision of critical information and opinions concerning EU policies (see Hontelez and Buintenkamp, 2006), institutional coordination and leadership, and it also acts as a consultative organism for several institutions[14]. Even so, one of the most emblematic actions carried out by this network is the

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[13] The following website provides full information on the activities of the EEB http://www.eeb.org
[14] Council of Europe, EC, European Parliament, OCDE and UNCSD.

elaboration of documents on several topics that are still absent from the EU agenda, but according to the EEB should be urgently included. In sum, assuming a proactive attitude, the EEB exerts pressure especially to set encompassing sustainability targets and setting concrete deadlines for diverse topics. Furthermore, while adopting a very critical position regarding the privilege of the EU for market regulation mechanisms, the EEB stresses the need to face sustainability challenges with a creative and interlinked thinking, together with a wider stakeholder involvement in policy design (Hontelez, 2006).

Besides actions carried by the EEB, there are other initiatives led by other international bodies, among which it can be highlighted the Aalborg Charter, issued from the European Conference on Sustainable Cities and towns in Aalborg in 1994 and considered an influential document federating around 3000 European communes working on urban SD (Wheeler, 2004). For the rural context, there are two important European organisations actively working on protected areas and ecotourism. One is EUROPARC, an institution responsible for the European charter of sustainable tourism in protected areas, and the other is Pan Parks, an institution responsible for a network of certified European protected areas.

4.3.3. *The national level*

With the growing importance of the supranational level, the question about the role of the national scale seems complex and somehow contradictory. As I discussed in the previous section, the role of the European level in environmental and sustainability issues has evolved a lot, going from a slow and timid adoption of environmental measures, to an increasing commitment to more global sustainability issues. Certainly, this shift coincides with a more generalised legitimacy acquired by the EU since the 1980s, but it is also related with the occurrence of extremely grave environmental catastrophes (Chernobyl, Bhopal, Seveso) and the succession of international meetings on sustainable development. As far as the power of the EU level has changed, the power of the State did as well, influenced by at least four major factors: i) the internationalisation of environmental governance; ii) the growing importance of the EU level and its progressive incorporation of the sustainability variable within its directives, in a context of rising liberalisation and market deregulation; iii) the moral exigency concerning sustainability issues resulting from numerous international meetings and instruments; iv) the focus on the local and regional territorial scales as adequate levels to implement sustainability plans and projects.

It is evident that the level of the national state functions have been deeply redefined and therefore its unrestricted powers have been eroded, due to a denationalisation of policy-making associated to a double process of Europeanization of policies and the devolution of power to decentralized institutions (Moulaert *et al.,* 1988; Swyngedouw *et al.,* 2003; MacLeod, 1999 cited in Swyngedouw et al., 2003 p. 22). However, in territorial sustainability issues the level of the national state still plays a key role and should still go on doing so (Meadowcroft, 2004). In fact, beyond transnational policies, States can assume different attitudes regarding sustainability. As I already discussed above, for reasons of competition States can assume different attitudes regarding sustainability, while one position might still forsake sustainability imperatives for economic reasons, others States are acknowledging that environmental degradation is a security risk, thus they are progressively reconsidering this subject (Toscano, 2003). On the other hand, in the case of pioneering initiatives, the choice of giving priority (or not) to programmes fostering alternative forms of production, such as organic food, fair trade products, development of alternative energies, ecotourism, among others, the central State plays a key role. Indeed, there are still many environmental domains with opportunities for progress, either absent from the European agenda or lacking precise implementation objectives (see EEB, 2009), in which visionary and proactive central states could deeply change the route of a country. For example, Costa Rica and Australia are leading ecotourism destinations not only because of their natural environments, but also because of their well-developed national ecotourism strategies by the central state. Furthermore, within the current discussion about GM crops in France the petition of regional parks to forbid these cultivations inside their territories is nationally discussed. Concerning global sustainability engagements of countries, Toscano (2003) insists that *"states, not banks, corporations, or local institutions, are the signatories of multilateral environmental agreements"* (Toscano, 2003 p. 38). Rodrigues and Direitinho (2001) show the complexity of the role of the central state in the context of the application of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) through the case of the Portuguese town of Peniche. Regulations of the CFP restrain the catching of fish in offshore international water. However, there are also Moroccan fishermen active in these waters non-constrained by this policy, a situation that produces conflict and demands informal negotiations to regulate the sharing of this maritime territory.

From a top-down policy perspective, the central state is responsible for the development of legislation and programs and for the creation of adequate government structures for the implementation of sustainability at the sub-national levels (Selman, 1996; Meadowcroft, 2004). We should not forget that according to Agenda 21 Action Plan (UNCED, 1992), each country has

the mission to formulate a national sustainability strategy that would be the starting point for the local implementation of Agenda 21. Besides, each signatory country was expected to formulate specific policy statements in the domains of biodiversity, climate change and sustainable forestry. As a result, many nations either began Local Agenda 21 planning processes or included new sustainability challenges in already existing institutions. In France, it is often argued that its relatively slow incorporation of sustainability and implementation of Agenda 21 is explained by the tardiness with which the central State promulgated the founding laws Voynet in 1999 and SRU in 2001. As Emelianoff (2007, p. 132) explains, unlike in the rest of Europe, French localities did not feel they had the right to act until the central state gave a green light.

From a governance perspective, it is also argued that a juxtaposition of regional and local territories and projects is not enough for building a coherent national policy for paving more sustainable development paths (Lorach and Quatrebarbes, 2002). States have a commitment inside their sovereign territory in terms of solidarity, territorial cohesion and responsibility for national decisions. As Meadowcroft (2004 p.188) contends, *"governance for sustainable development depends first and foremost on active governments that place this goal at the centre of environmental policy; and establish legal and organisational frameworks to facilitate participation"*. How these still affect different socio-economic activities, territorial arrangements, and varied key issues like transport action, protected areas, energy, health, natural resources, tourism, land use, etc. will significantly depend on national policies, programmes and budgets, as I will examine in chapter five for the French case.

In the same way as the European and global levels of governance are not only restricted to state regulation institutions, the national and subnational levels are also composed by several network groups and agents active in sustainable development issues, either supporting or criticizing them. In the case of France the panorama of associations engaged in sustainability issues is composed of groups tackling general environmental issues such as *France Nature Environnement* (FNE), Greenpeace France, *Les amis de la terre*, WWF France, *Comité 21*, *Dossiers et débats pour le développement durable (4D)* and *Orée*; and others focused on specific subjects, as is the case with *Réseau action climat France*, *Sortir du Nucléaire*, *NégaWatt*, the French committee of the IUCN and Forum. There are also two quite visible groups combining academics, experts and civil society members in France: *'la décroissance'* and ATTAC. Another active association is *4D*, which is a network of citizens working on sustainable development subjects that specifically supervise respect for engaged objectives.

4.3.4. *The sub-national levels: regions, departments and localities*

Regions, cities of different sizes, villages, protected areas, among other kinds of special agencies, compose countries and establish politico-administrative borders inside national territories, giving rise to a great variety of administrative localities, but usually sharing some socio-economic or natural characteristics. The sub-national territorial organisation varies among different countries, and it is the result of particular nation building histories and the historical evolution of spatial policies. In chapter five of this thesis I examine the French territorial context composed by a large amount of sub-national institutions. In fact, to the oldest regional, departmental and communal levels, since the promulgation of the first decentralisation laws in the mid-1980s and the Voynet and SRU laws, several new territorial institutions erupted in the French territory, resulting in a highly complex politico-institutional skeleton, composed of among other bodies, by the *pays*, the *EPCI*, urban agglomerations, Agenda 21 and several types of protected areas. As will be illustrated through the Morvan case, the complexity of the French institutional context (Bleton-Ruget *et al.* 2002), characterised by an unclear definition of competences among territories (Pécqueur, 2000) and therefore competition between local actors (Garraud, 2000 cited in Maillefert 2002 p. 90), shows the importance of the articulation between various governance levels (Maillefert, 2002).

In spite of the diverse sub-national realities and bearing in mind that sustainable development entails challenges and constitutes policy objectives for all spatial scales, each level having a crucial role to play (Buckingham and Theobald, 2003), the sub-national levels, and especially the local one, have often been identified as a pivotal scale (Selman, 1996). As several scholars state (Moulaert, 2000; Wheeler, 2004), the local constitutes a tangible level for sustainable development. Indeed, *"claims for alternative development emerge more easily at the local level: it is the locus and the privileged level of community identity, perception, and mobilisation about local issues, and of resistance against alienating 'development' process"* (Moulaert, 2000 p. 65). Selman (1996) contends that the local arena has traditionally been the place where residents express their concerns about quality of life, which in turn are related to the existence of environmental amenities and reflect societal production and consumption patterns. Elaborating on the definition of place, it is in localities where the socio-temporal trends are crystallized. Furthermore, Buckingham and Theobald (2003) consider that even if supranational action and regulation play a very important role, the socio-institutional energy for sustainable development mainly emanates locally, from a range of local organisations, including local governments and civil society.

Chapter 28 of Local Agenda 21 (UNCED, 1992) exposes the central importance of the local governance level for sustainable development, stressing the central role that local authorities should assume in sustainability, and the importance of bridging partnerships between the local state and local civil society[15]. Equity, democracy and governance constitute the essence of the notion of social sustainability (Buckingham-Hatfield and Evans, 1996), thus the role of local authorities cannot be equated to 'environmental management'. Certainly, local governments play a leading role in actions related with procurement, environmental management, audit and environmental negotiations, as well as in the fostering of environmentally friendly approaches to transport and mobility, energy efficiency and the development of alternative energy sources, waste minimisation, land use, sustainable utilisation and preservation of natural resources, among other sustainability responsabilities (Buckingham and Theobald, 2003). Nevertheless, even if this list is quite long, the role of local authorities is wider. As Selman (1996 p. 107) underlines, because local authorities are local, they have authority and therefore can promote civic pride, leadership and trust assuming the role of the guarantors of local democracy. Furthermore, Buckingham and Theobald (2003 pp. 3-4) identify several roles for local governments in sustainable development: a) to implement national and international policy; b) to act as initiators of new ideas and approaches; c) to offer capacity to facilitate and support local community action and initiatives for sustainability; d) to incorporate in the policy process a wide variety of visions and to include the interaction of all concerned actors. From a sustainability perspective, this debate requires the participation of all actors including not only local state institutions, but also local consultants, non-profit organisations, neighbourhood associations, unions, and business groups, NGOs, communities of interest, local communities, etc. Local governments should then be active in favouring the conditions to foster governance, placing this goal in the centre of the political agenda and setting the adequate legal and organisational frameworks for appropriate participation (Meadowcroft. 2004) and empowering local communities.

For Buckingham-Hatfield and Evans (1996, p. 4) sustainability is fundamentally a political concept that should be understood as an 'overarching value', since it holds long-term and all embracing objectives highly dependent on the legitimacy of the belief in the urgent necessity for present generations to act as guardians of the earth for future generations. In a context in which

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[15] *"Because so many of the problems and solutions being addressed by Agenda 21 have their roots in local activities, the participation and co-operation of local authorities will be a determining factor in fulfilling its objectives. Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and sub-national environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilising and responding to the public to promote sustainable development"* (UNCED, 1992 principle on 'Basis for action' 28.1)

the neutrality of technical and scientific knowledge has been put into question, since the recognition of the major role value judgements play in science, and more specifically their influence of scientific approaches, results and propositions (Berkhout *et al*. 2003b), the authoritative top-down governance paradigm lost its credibility (Froger, 2001a). When environmental risks and uncertainty prevail, rational scientific methods and solutions are no longer sufficient for guiding governmental decision-making and policy formulation, and therefore bridging public confidence and legitimacy (Froger, 2001a; Berkhaout *et al*. 2003a). As a result, in many respects the role of government as the primary actor in sustainability became questioned and led to the idea that there is a need to open the definition and the governance of the public good to a plural decision-making process. This is related to what Froger (2001a) defines as 'mutual confidence paradigm', alluding to the need to transit towards the emphasis on the existence and importance of many forms of expertise and knowledge, which in turn are rooted in cultural assumptions and political values that might be opposite to experts viewpoints.

Civil society participation at the local level can be focused on environmental justice and rights. In fact, the State is far from being the only actor that underwent a transformation in its form of organization and role during the last thirty years. Negative environmental consequences of heavy economic growth and negative social consequences derived from free trade and neo-liberalism, fostered different forms of civil society mobilisation, including formally organised socio-political and environmental movements and particular groups of affected citizens, as well as many organizations holding neoliberal ideologies and practices (Moulaert, 2000).

Concerning groups of citizens advocating for the need to advance in deepening shared democratic values and struggle for deepening socio-environmental rights and justice, some scholars (Ringquist 1997 quoted in Coenen and Halfacre, 2003 p. 191) link the origin of the environmental justice movement in contemporary society with the Warren County case, that occurred in the United States in the early 1980s. In a deprived locality of North Carolina arose a strong political struggle against the creation of a large dangerous waste landfill in the poorest county of this state inhabited by 65% African Americans (Coenen and Halfacre, 2003). Among activists, this decision was seen as extremely discriminatory, since at the same time it threatened people's health and violated basic civil rights. It is interesting to observe in this case how a debate that emerged at a local level with the mobilisation of Warren County's actors, including grassroots, religious and civil rights groups, among others, progressively transformed a local environmental justice issue into a national political discussion. In fact, Warren County became a national

example imitated throughout the US and a source of numerous regional and national movements for environmental justice. According to Coenen and Halfacre (2003) there seems to exist consensus among scholars about the fact that the Warren County led to substantial policy changes at different territorial levels. For instance, it led to a more permanent presence of civil society groups in local politics.

5. LOCALITIES AS CRADLES OF SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The need for broad public participation in decision making as a prerequisite for sustainable development (UN, 1993) is usually presented as a necessity resulting from the high complexity of sustainable development issues, which are related with the articulation of the magnitude of socio-economic and environmental sustainability challenges and the normative arguments related to democracy, equity and justice. Meadowcroft (2004) shows how important different types of participation at various spatial scales constitute a very important dimension of governance for sustainable development. Elaborating on Healey (1998) and Taylor (2000), Buckingham and Theobald (2003) conclude that the need to build on local knowledge within civil society is a key element to develop socio-institutional capital for sustainability. Consensus seems to exist regarding the need for local governments to learn about different social worlds, and thus to incorporate the tacit knowledge of each actor in the governance of territories. As Maturana and Varela (1984) contends each person observes the world conditioned by his/her own distinctive mental map or lenses and therefore he/she acts and follows his/her interests (in the sense of Swedberg) according to them. In turn, actors that do not belong to the public sphere need also to learn about the public sector in order to build the necessary socio-institutional capacity for coping with sustainable development challenges that by definition are complex and immersed in a context of uncertainty. This links the reflection about governance with the role of local policy makers in fostering social learning in the view of enhancement of the local capabilities throughout the integration of different types of knowledge and cultures.

The important role of social learning and local communitarian knowledge in paving sustainable paths is indeed related with our conception of territories as places, multiplicities and living entities. In a previous section, territories were defined as embodiments of social relations embedded in larger geographical scales and very immersed in complex power structures. Further exploring the reflection on territories, Moulaert *et al.* (2003) conclude from their research on large-scale urban development projects that territories are also places of imagination, creativity

and innovation. Territories as living entities have a particular cultural identity that is dynamic, path-dependent and unbounded from a social innovation perspective. Adopting a wide vision of the concept of innovation, Moulaert *et al.* (2005 p. 1976) define the concept of social innovation according to the following three dimensions:

- *Satisfaction of human needs* that are currently not satisfied, either because 'not yet' or because 'no longer' perceived as important by either the market or the state (content/product dimension). The stress will be on the satisfaction of alienated basic needs, although it is admitted that this may vary among societies and communities.

- *Changes in social relations*, especially with regard to *governance*, that enable the above satisfaction, but also increase the level of participation of all but especially deprived groups in society (process dimension).

- *Increasing the socio-political capability and access to resources* needed to enhance rights to satisfaction of human needs and participation (empowerment dimension).

This definition of social innovation can be quite instructive for the understanding of sustainable development and the role of its underlying governance. This definition of social innovation can be interpreted as the necessary innovation required to transit towards more sustainable socio-economic and environmental paths. On the one hand, basic human needs will be defined according to the sustainability requirements of co-evolution between socio-economic and environmental dimensions, as well as in reference to the sustainability value system aspiring ecological sustainability, equity, justice and democracy. On the other hand, this definition rejoins our dynamic vision of sustainable development as a governance *challenge*, *process* and *outcome* occurring at various spatial scales. My own vision goes beyond the existing approaches on the governance of sustainable development, which although they refer to social dynamics involving actions undertaken by a multiplicity of actors, persist in a local scale focus and do not necessarily deal with governance as a socio-institutional outcome or product. Thus they focus instead on the concrete outputs of these processes (Froger, 2001b; Froger and Oberti, 2002).

Rejoining the works of Moulaert and Nussbaumer (2008) on the social region, it can be argued that necessary governance for more sustainable territories is not synonym of bottom-up governance approaches. Indeed, while acknowledging the key role that the local scale plays, and thus highlighting the role of participatory governance approaches that include others than the State and markets, I argue that the understanding of social dynamics governing territories is possible only from a multi-level governance perspective. This means that governance for

sustainable development needs more dense forms and articulations among the different institutional levels (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2008), as well as among the different temporal horizons. At the same time, local initiatives, and thus their outcomes, depend upon the strategic choices done at other spatial scales (regional, national, supranational), referring to the financial, institutional and environmental resources that have been allowed to social, human or ecological investments (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2008 p. 93). This focus on articulation among scales has a special pertinence for the discussion on sustainable development, whose governance is dependent upon the interplays across spatial scales, temporal horizons and therefore challenges the public policy arena demanding interactive processes among different policy fields.

In this respect, these analyses are connected with the policy frameworks and the legal traditions that envelop and normalize societies. This framework, at the same time, operates as the backdrop of the scene in which different governance forms come to be, and it is also the result of these social dynamics. As addressed in the previous sections and in chapter one, during the last decades we have witnessed important transformations in the focus of the policies addressing sustainability-related issues. In fact, the naissance of the sustainability paradigm, combined with the multifaceted nature of environmental problems, while questioning the ways societies are governed, have introduced important transformations in the policy field and in the legal framework. As will be analysed in more detail through the French case, during the last decades we witnessed a shift from a focus on centralised State decisions guided by technical and scientific information, towards governance approaches favouring the flourishing of a very complex institutional diversity, situated at various spatial scales, in which technical and scientific knowledge are seen as insufficient to address the current environmental complexity and uncertainty. Thus technical approaches to natural resources management have progressively transformed into integrated policy frameworks advocating for a more comprehensive view that contemplates specific mechanisms of consultation and participation. This policy transformation seems to be especially interesting in the fields of spatial planning and nature conservation, where a conservationist policy view has coexisted and conflicted with a policy approach aiming at integrating spatial issues with ecological sustainability. These tensions reveal how still in certain fields, technical views conflict with more integrated approaches, despite the existence of a general tendency in favour of open technical regulation of more global alternatives.

Another major point in this reflection is the viewpoint adopted for examining the outcomes of multi-scalar socio-institutional dynamics. Outcomes might be addressed in terms of 'territorial

products' (*i.e.* territories with better rates of ecological conservation), but also from a process perspective. What I mean here is that different forms of governance will lead towards more or less sustainable territories expecting, according to the literature, that more participatory approaches, engaging a plurality of actors in policy-making, would allow higher levels of sustainability. Nonetheless, the effects or outcomes of the different forms of governance are not limited to concrete biophysical outputs, but also refer to transformations of the socio-institutional dynamics and arrangements governing societies. Certainly, evaluating these outcomes is a very complex and perhaps impossible task, given the unbounded connections that exist among the possible forms of articulation in the various temporal horizons. However, these socio-institutional outcomes in the context of sustainable development seem to be essential. Actually, the specific content of sustainable development produces particular governance challenges to societies. Societies, for their part, while engaging a multiplicity of actors and visions in order to face these challenges, redefine pre-existing governance relations and foster new social dynamics. Alternatively stated, the contextual and path dependent process by which the socio-institutional thickness of a certain territory faces sustainability challenges and then enables progress in regard to them, contributes to recreate and thus feed governance dynamics resulting from this process of innovation. Related with the third dimension of the concept of social innovation reviewed above, I argue that the socio-political capability enhanced by this process might allow progress in terms of environmental rights and needs.

From this perspective, localities might be seen as places of negotiation and arenas of struggle for sustainable rights and justice. Rights are socially constructed, as they are bargained as compromises still achieving progress in sustainability. On the one hand, it is expected that others than the State will be able to assume a proactive responsibility in dealing with major sustainability challenges. On the other, the potential in terms of innovation that might result from empowerment, community learning and negotiation, and processes building according to particular contexts and histories, will be essential in fostering sustainability and thus in shaping territories. According to Buckingham and Theobald (2003), the most innovative local projects are rarely conceived exclusively by local governments. In contrast, these authors consider that innovation for sustainable development rather seems to appear in spaces of direct practical action and participation. Moulaert *et al.* (2000) and Moulaert and Nussbaumer (2005) stress the role of culture in community based development strategies, underlying also the importance of traditional activities, socio-cultural life, informal relationships and all elements of social life. I will come back later to this point, because of its meaningful importance in the context of ecotourism

destinations, in which history, nature, culture and people constitute the soul of the these places and thus a most important tourism asset.

Table 8 summarizes key criteria associated to the governance of sustainable development that will be employed to elucidate the central thesis of this dissertation, i.e. ***the extent to which territorial sustainability depends upon their multi-scalar system of governance, and what forms of governance dynamics and forms of articulation among embedded scales will better lead towards more sustainable paths. For this purpose, the governance of sustainable development is addressed according to its dynamic nature, denoting that its impact evolves through time and according to different territorial contexts, holding thus an unbounded potential for renewing challenges, processes and outcomes connected with the governance of sustainable development.*** In the next chapter, this argument is applied to the specific case of ecotourism.

In summary, in this dissertation I argue that the governance of and for sustainable development has an original and specific content, which lies in the specific meaning of sustainable development. Sustainable development is a multi-scale challenge that requires and leads to a particular system of governance. Multiple nested governance scales, both temporal and spatial, therefore need to be articulated. From an inter-generational perspective, the challenge is to cope with different temporal scales that connect present generations to past and future ones. This is associated with precaution vis-à-vis an uncertain future and stresses the importance of the analysis of development paths that reveal episodes of territorial (un)sustainability. The intra-generational dimension, for its part, corresponds to the articulation of various embedded spatial scales – global, supranational, national, regional and local ones. Space, in this context, was defined as an embodiment of social relations, human agencies and politico-administrative systems in which the governance of smaller territories is embedded in the social relations of larger ones. Thus the challenge might be understood as *"one of reforming the collective governance of social/environmental interactions so that further economic advance will not be predicated upon (or incidentally provoke) continued degradation of natural systems. It is a question of developing institutional capacity to steer societal development within the parameters of ecological sustainability"* (Meadowcroft, 2004 p. 163-164).

TABLE 8: THE MEANING AND CONTENT OF GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Governance and SD as a normative position	Governance and SD as analytical frameworks
- Dialogue between disciplines as a prerequisite for addressing sustainability. - Nature and the natural environment: the most primary source for human existence. - Environmental preservation, and socio-economic and environmental equity and justice. - The social constructed character of socio-spatial processes, spatio-temporal embeddedness and path-dependency of territories - Governance: democracy, collaboration, sharing of knowledge, learning, empowerment, respect.	- Governance: interdisciplinary lenses for examining major changes in the way societies are governed. - Concepts and theories for analysing the indeterminate relation between socio-cultural specificity of territories and the broader power dynamics in which they are embedded. - Spatio-temporal articulation between different forms of capital, seen to be in co-evolution. - Governance structures, dynamics and the results from the governing of sustainability. - Articulation between different temporal and territorial scales: history, path-dependency and spatial articulation.

Governance structures: who interacts? - Actors (state, private, civil society): roles, interests, mobiles, knowledge, agendas, logics, culture and values. - Socio-environmental movements: roles, history and forms of collaboration with other sectors. - Framework in which social practices are embedded: laws, norms, programmes, institutions (their articulation, consistency, contradictions) - Culture and values in which these actors are embedded. **Governance process: how do actors interact and collaborate?** - Forms of collaboration among groups: formal or informal, partnerships, networks, social and environmental groups. - The nature of the social interaction: proactive/reactive, constructive/destructive, negotiation, respectful, regular interactive practices, reasons for interacting, social dynamics and leaderships - Interaction: communication, learning, values, discourses, perception of other actors, power, convergences, divergences, emergence of countercultures. - Conflicts and obstacles to collaboration and sustainability. - Sharing: values, aims and desires. - Culture and political culture. - Production, consumption and regulation	**AT DIFFERENT TEMPORAL AND TERRITORIAL SCALES** **Embeddedness Path-dependency**

Real outcome: what is the result of these interactions?
- Does this process lead towards more sustainable territorial paths? (regression/stagnation/progress/ enhancement in socio-economic and environmental sustainability)
- Does this process lead towards more sustainable forms of governance?
- Conflicts/ convergences/ collaboration between social, spatial and temporal scales.
- Governance: weaknesses, strengths, opportunities, niches, positive and negatives examples.
- Satisfaction/dissatisfaction of actors and institutions engaged in governance with interaction and its outcome.

Result: sustainability of territories and its governance (Ideal)
There is not only one way: territorial specificity
- Efficacy, justice, equity: socio-economic and environmental
- Building up a sustainable long term and path-dependent process: coordination and cooperation among different social groups, economic activities.
- Sustainable governance structures: plurality of actors situated at different territorial scales.
- Sustainable governance dynamics: historically embedded, democracy, respectful.
- Outcomes from the sustainable governance of territories: enhancement
- Democracy and participation
- Learning process and empowerment
- Territorial scales and embeddedness
- Visions and interests
- Social innovation: needs, governance and empowerment
- Extrapolation to other sectors
- Conservation
- Historically, socio-culturally and naturally constructed.

Methodology implications
- Dialogue between normative and analytic dimensions
- Holist approach
- Historical
- Interdisciplinary

Source: author

6. THE SPECIFIC MEANING AND CONTEXT OF GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: AN APPLICATION TO RURAL TERRITORIES AND PROTECTED AREAS

This section focuses on the particular nuance that acquires the notion of place in the context of rural areas. A distinction between rural and urban places seems fundamental in the context of this research, given its focus on ecotourism, an activity that occurs in non-urban territories, environmentally sensitive and sometimes regulated by an environmental protection status. The objective thus is to clarify what is meant by rural, focusing on three main elements: i) the distinctiveness of rural territories in terms of their physical, geographical and environmental characteristics; ii) major change trends which rural territories undergo in terms of production and consumption modes; iii) socio-institutional transformations and main governance issues derived from and intervening in rural territories and their articulation with other scales. Indeed, given the fact that environmental territorial dynamics cannot be dissociated from the socio-institutional embedding, the modes by these territories are managed, owned, exploited, preserved and conserved. Once the rural specific quality is defined, I will proceed to analyse it in terms of governance, highlighting sustainable governance challenges of rural territories.

Even if there is no consensus about the meaning of rural areas, rural are distinguished from urban areas by their much lower population density and natural environmental processes (Selman, 1996). The definitions of rural areas in fact vary in terms of philosophy and scales (Roberts and Hall, 2001). The OCDE, for example, defines rural areas in terms of population density and composition, distinguishing the local territorial level with a population density criterion of 150 persons per kilometer. However there are important differences between European countries concerning the criteria to classify rural areas. In France, for example, rural communes are defined as places of fewer than 2000 people and rural agglomerations are defined as a group of houses distant less than 200 metres (Bontron *et al.*, 2002 p.16)[16].

The rural quality of course cannot be reduced to a population criterion. There are several socio-economic, cultural and environmental characteristics distinguishing the complexity (Garrod *et al.* 2006) of rural territories. Butler (2001), for example, defines rural territories as *"settled areas which are used primarily for agriculture, in which the pattern of settlement is permanent but may be either village based or dispersed"* (Butler, 2001 p. 434). However, the supremacy of

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[16] These definitions vary a lot. While in Austria the rural is defined as *"places of fewer than 1000 people, with a population density of fewer than 400 per km"*, in Denmark these areas are defined as *"agglomerations of fewer than 200 inhabitants"*. In contrast, in Italy and Spain they are defined as *"settlements of fewer than 10.000 people"* (Roberts and Hall, 2001 p. 11)

agriculture in Butler's definition can be contested by the general agreement on the exceptional period of transformation currently faced by rural areas (Garrod *et al.* 2006; Ilbery, 1998). In several English rural regions tourism appears as more economically significant than agriculture (English Tourism Council/Countryside, 2001 cited in Garrod *et al.* 2006 p. 118). On the other hand, other works (Markey *et al.* 2008) evoke the precariousness of rural territories alluding to the progressive cutback of services, facilities, transport means and jobs.

In sum, from several research projects we can conclude the following main characteristics of rural territories (after Johnston *et al.* 2000 p. 718; Selman, 1996; Butler, 2001; Garrod *et al.* 2006; EC, 2003):

- Transition towards diversity and heterogeneity in terms of land use, social composition, economic activities, modes of regulation and symbolic place representation;
- Low density population;
- A biophysical environment mainly characterised by biological productivity (farming, forestry, wildlife and fisheries), recharge of water supplies, availability of non-renewable mineral and energy stocks, and 'positional' amenity goods (Selman, 1996 p. 51);
- Predominance of extensive land uses (agriculture or forestry) and presence of large open spaces of undeveloped land;
- Pluri-activity and economic diversification characterised by the coexistence of traditional activities (traditional agriculture, forestry) and new activities (tourism, organic crops, etc.). This is related to the progressive adoption of practices not only oriented to benefit rural economies, but also to maintain the environmental quality and vitality of local communities.
- Small settlement patterns with buildings anchored in the surrounding extensive landscape, which are perceived as rural by most residents.
- Rural identity and life-style: rurality is related to a particular way of life and cohesive identity based on particular environmental sensitivity. Rural territory possesses significant natural and cultural heritages, material and non-material, which are essential to the reproduction of a sense of local distinctiveness and belonging (EC, 2003).

Further exploring the reflection concerning the sustainability of the countryside, authors like Roberts and Hall (2001) contend that rural areas should be observed taking into consideration major change trends observed in these territories. For this purpose, the post-productivism thesis is frequently mobilised (Markey *et al*., 2008; Roberts and Hall, 2001; Reed and Gill, 1997; Mather *et al.* 2006), which alludes to the transformation in values, productive activities and biophysical

environment, due to a shift from primary resource production to a diversification of rural economies. Although it is not possible to generalise a uniform transition to the whole variety of rural territories, a focus on post-productivism permits to transcend a sectoral analysis (Lafferty, 2004b), in order to develop a more dynamic and comprehensive territorial view that integrates socio-economic, institutional, cultural and environmental variables. This fits particularly needs of the analysis of the governance of rural territories positioned today as ecotourism or green tourism destinations. In fact, post-productivism encloses a set of interrelated socio-spatial transformations which include according to Mather *et al.* (2006) changes in the nature and type of production, the multidimensionality of objectives and values regarding the biophysical environment and the socio-institutional dynamics governing these territories.

6.1. Changes in agriculture

Certainly, one of the major changes in rural territories refer to agriculture, which even though it still often remains the principal activity in rural territories, it has gradually lost its dominant position in overall rural economy, the local society and politics. From a sustainability perspective, since the beginning of land use intensification during 1960s, agriculture and farmers have regularly been blamed for different sorts of air, soil, watercourse and aquifer pollutions. Intensive agriculture, related to the utilisation of chemical products and progressive destruction of soils, degrades natural habitats and pollutes food chains, which in turn engenders negative effects on humans, birds, vegetables and insects populations living in farmlands. Studies in this topic show a reduction of 28% in the number of birds living in farmlands between 1989 and 2006 (Verhaeghe and Canfin, 2008). On the other hand, as De Ravignan (2008) and other specialists have pointed out, fighting pollution derived from agriculture is very complex due to societal consumption patterns, costs associated to a reduced utilisation of pesticides and other chemicals, and the demand for biofuels, among others.

Given this complex panorama, continental and national authorities have gradually started launching new policies oriented to counterbalance environmental negative effects of agriculture, which although possibly increasing farmers' production costs (Selman, 1996), have also stimulated a slow but sure more sustainable restructuring of agriculture. In the case of Europe, policy transformations go in two main senses. First, a controversial policy shift from a productivist focus, dependent upon protectionist and subsidised measures, to a policy that also aims at productivism but through a limited assistance and stronger market liberalisation. Second, the inclusion of environmental measures oriented to encourage best quality food production and

environmental protection i.e. zoning of environmentally sensitive areas, aids and subsidies for the development of organic agriculture, nitrate sensitive areas, GM crops control, among others. It must be said that agriculture is an extremely sensible issue for European countries, since the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) costs 55 billion euros per year, which represents 40% the European budget (EC, 2007). Agriculture aids are distributed between two big areas: aid to farmer's income (80%) and rural development (20%). It is important to point out that rural development projects are co-funded by the CAP (50%) and European States (50%); therefore, their relevance among European countries is quite variable *i.e.* they concern 100% of farmlands in Finland and only 40% in France (De Ravignan, 2008). Since the CAP reform in 2003, aids to farmers' income started been conditioned by the introduction of environmental exigencies, despite the fact that they are still non-constraining, and sanctions and controls are limited.

Among rural development projects, European agro-environmental measures represent 2 billion euro per year, from which only 5% are allocated to organic agriculture farms. France, for its part, allocates 5 to 6% of agriculture expenditure to agro-environmental practices (Dupraz, 2008). There exists a certain consensus regarding the need to increase European and French public support inciting good practices in agriculture. Actually, France is quite behind compared with the development of organic farmlands in the rest of Europe, appearing in the nineteenth position with only 11.640 farms that represents 1,9% of its surface. Among the leading European countries we find Austria (11,2%), Lithuania (10,1%), Estonia (9,5%) and Greece (9,3%), among others. It remains to be seen what form European and French agriculture will take after the renegotiation of the CAP in 2013 and after the announcement by the Minister of the Environment in the *Grenelle de l'environnement* of tripling the organic cultivation surface by 2010. As stated by Burreau (2008), this will certainly be quite a complex challenge for France, given its reluctance vis-à-vis CAP pro-environmental measures and its preference for unconditional farmer's incomes subsidies.

In sum, we can conclude that sustainable agriculture challenges vary and concern financial public support, financial stability of farm business, environmental issues including wildlife, soil, landscapes and water resources, and governance issues concerning the socio-institutional context in which farmers live and work. Current agriculture policy is situated in a transition phase characterized by measures oriented to stop intensification and incite environmental protection and food quality. As a response, a group of farmers have decided not only to embark on agro-environmental cultivations, but also to diversify their economic activities either by enlarging their

cultivation to medicinal plants, more into specific organic cultivation or/and by offering complementary tourism services, among others.

6.2. Changes in forestry

The second rural land use is forestry. The links between the concept of sustainability and forestry go back many years, more specifically to the notion of 'sustainable yield' of fisheries and forests, and to the idea of non-destructive resource management of indigenous cultures that inspired the sustainable development reflection (Selman, 1996). Today the relation between forestry and sustainability is of great importance not only because of global environmental change and the role of woodlands as CO_2 sinks, but also given the context of rural economic diversification, biodiversity challenges, increasing aesthetic and recreation values assigned to forests, and the development of renewable energies. Following Guyon (2004), the dynamics of forestry cannot be dissociated from governance issues; therefore in order to understand current challenges underlying their appropriation, management and exploitation, the social dimension is essential. In fact, sustainability challenges concerning woodlands are complex and combine, on the one hand, environmental issues related to deforestation-reforestation, woodland structure and species composition, and renewable energies; on the other, socio-institutional challenges related with the socio-economic viability of a more sustainable forestry[17].

Mather *et al.*'s (1999) research about France provide interesting information about the historical factors intervening in the development of forests and forestry. France, until the beginning of the nineteenth century, underwent a severe and long process of deforestation that started during the Roman times (Reed 1954; Thirgood, 1989 both cited in Mather *et al.*, 1999 p. 67). For these authors, French deforestation that occurred between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century has similar characteristics to the contemporary evolution of forests in developing countries. One example of how deforestation proceeded in France is the loss of 71% of the forest area in Basses-Alpes between 1791 and 1840, whose severity can be compared to current deforestation rates. The forest's lowest point was reached in the early part of the nineteenth century, and recovery of the French woodland surface began around 1830, and considerably accelerated during the second half of the nineteenth century. According to Mather *et al.* (1999), even if the character, composition and scale of expansion vary within the French territory, globally the forest has recovered to its fourteenth century scale. Further, he explains that the

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[17] On time horizons these challenges have been differently faced according to the variety of existing forests that range from virgin old-growth forest in the Amazons to modified woodlands, as is the case of Europe.

causes of deforestation and reforestation are quite complex and have been different in distinct periods. Variables intervening in these processes are many, including demographic trends, industrial development, agricultural traditions, levels of environmental awareness, public regulations, urban development patterns, aesthetic and recreational values, as well as the varied public and private uses of forest resources (*i.e.* industrial fuelwood, shipbuilding, renewable energy and recreation)[18].

Today, forests cover one third of the French metropolitan area and are composed of 136 species, being a unique example of biodiversity in Europe. However, the variety of four species within parcels remains quite reduced compared to the natural standard of 10 to 20 species within a territory of 25 meters in diameter round. Moreover, forest sustainability must also be regarded from the point of view of fauna living in this milieu, of which around 20% are under threat according to specialists. Another critical aspect is timber exploitation that has increased, since 1950, from 13 to 37 million M3 (Verhaeghe and Canfin, 2008). For counterbalancing environmental negative effects, specialists highlight that one third of French timberland adhere to a code of sustainable management of this resource[19].

6.3. The growing importance of tourism in rural territories

Together with agriculture and forestry, rural tourism is a very important activity that has deeply affected natural and semi-natural environments, the rural economy and communities. As will be analysed in detail in chapter three of this paper, tourism occurring in rural areas has considerably evolved during the last forty years in its importance, role and scope. Originally, tourism in rural areas was more marginal and mainly seen as a business proposition (Selman, 1996) and as a complementary means for rural territorial revitalisation. Today, in contrast, tourism in natural and semi-natural areas has acquired an unprecedented importance given its fastest-growing rates within the tourism industry and the above-mentioned changes in rural territories, becoming in some occasions the 'lynch pin' of many rural communities (Garrod *et al*., 2006; Bontron *et al*. 2001) Tourism plays thus a key role in the process of rural economic diversification and territorial sustainability. Certainly, tourism occurring in rural areas may vary a lot; nonetheless is widely seen as beneficial to rural areas in terms of income, infrastructure development and maintenance, and, if it is well managed, ecological sustainability (Roberts and Hall, 2001; Butler,

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[18] For a detailed historical analysis of the French forestry see Mather *et al*. (1999)
[19] See certification PEFC www.pefc-france.org and FSC www.fsc-france.org

2001; Vourc'h and Natali, 2000; European Commission, 2003). Of course, because of variations in how rural tourism occurs, it is hard to give a definitive judgement about benefits and prejudices of tourism for rural territories.

6.4. The heterogeneity of rural territories today: decline or idyll?

The transitional character rural territories carry since long ago due to their heterogeneity in terms of productive activities, preservation of natural resources and forms of regulation have created a double image, in which a decline coexists with a romantic or idyllic representation of the countryside. Rural territories enclose both visions and what is more, the declining or the rural isolated character feeds the idyllic representation. This double image can be observed from the post-productivist condition affecting rural territories, stressing specifically the shift from an emphasis on production for urban markets to consumption by those coming from urban areas to enjoy the idyll (Roberts and Hall, 2001 p. 7). According to Roberts and Hall (2001), rural areas are no any longer exclusively productive territories, but also adequate places to host urban populations desiring to be re-immersed in the natural environment for its multiple aesthetic, healthy and socio-cultural values (Béteille, 1996). Within their variety, rural areas are then characterised by the presence of particular cultural heritage and natural heritage landscapes, watercourses and lakes, biodiversity, forests and low population density, all features that match the green values that societies currently embrace.

Since the beginning of the rural exodus after WWII, public authorities have launched numerous policies in order to retain and invigorate rural populations, among which rural economic diversification with tourism has a key focus (Pérol-Dumont, 2004). As will be examined in the following chapters of this dissertation, in the case of France, one key policy oriented to reinvigorate rural territories has been the creation of regional parks. This institution, as it was conceived in the late 1960s, combines socio-economic development and environmental protection objectives; among them economic diversification was considered as very important, especially through tourism activities.

After almost fifty years since the launch of a number of policies oriented to reinvigorate rural areas, scholars interrogate the effectiveness and coherence of these measures given various contradictions observed in these territories (Owen, 1996; Pérol-Dumont, 2004; Rist *et al.* 2007). From a policy perspective, to the same extent that governments have promulgated measures oriented to counterbalance negative environmental effects of agriculture intensification and

forestry monocultures, as well as economic decline accompanied by depopulation, despite the effort to foster economic diversification, the improvement of transport and basic services provision has been neglected. Indeed, population decline and production/consumption restructuring have come along together with a withdrawal of public and private services (Rist *et al.* 2007), reinforcing isolation in these territories. In addition, according to Williams (2001), after a long process of migration from rural to urban areas, many rural territories have suffered serious problems of socio-economic decline, which in turn have contributed to reproduce an unsustainable development logic characterised by the reduction of services, facilities, transport means and job opportunities. This situation of abandonment, of course, has also had an impact on housing quality.

Even if the great variety of rural territories impedes the definition one uniform reinvigoration strategy, there are some common elements that a rural invigoration plan should take into consideration. Owen (1996), for instance, mentions the importance of considering specific local needs when addressing employment regeneration, housing and natural environment protection. More specifically focused on the environmental quality of rural areas, Bulter (2001) contends that in Europe even if very few areas are free of human modification, there is a wide variety of natural and semi-natural settings with rural territories presenting different degrees of pureness, which are suitable for ecotourism. More generally, Moulaert *et al.* (2000), stresses the strong potential of culture, social relations, tourism and artisan activities for reinvigorating socio-economically disintegrated localities, even though they might be insufficient to solve deeper unemployment problems.

A deep economic restructuring of territories forcedly comes together with profound transformations in its governance. In this respect, rural territories are not only of particular 'nature', but also embody deep social transformations that play a key role in terms of sustainability, as it will be presented below and detailed later in the document.

6.5. Effects of rural change on the governance of the countryside, and its implication for sustainable development

It is clear that stopping rural population decline was not possible. Nevertheless, since a few years ago a progressive repopulation of rural territories by non-farm populations has is taken place (Stabler, 1993 cited in Roberts and Hall, 2001 p. 39). Even if it is not possible to generalise the reasons explaining this transformation, one clearing up can be remitted to the naissance of the so-

called green or environmental paradigm (Weaver, 2001b). The growing public awareness of threatening environmental trends and the series of high environmental disasters have progressively forged an effective pro-environmental mobilisation, which even if it is still somehow fragmented, in the context of non-urban territories it is materialised in the arrival of non-farms population to the countryside. Although it is still not a key subject in the literature on ecotourism, mostly focused on local population, indigenous cultures and traditional communities, the arrival of 'outsiders', 'imported people' or '*néo-ruraux*' to rural territories seems to be a very important transformation factor affecting the governance of rural territories and their sustainability in European (Roberts and Hall, 2001; Buller and Hoggart, 1994) and southern countries (Montero and Parra, 2002). It is important to observe that this arrival is not only limited to the expansion of second homes for holiday purposes, but it also includes people that decided to permanently settle in the countryside, either to rest after their retirement or a younger population for developing ecotourism or other form of green business. As presented later in this document, Swedberg's definition of interests is quite instructive in this respect, because of the heterogeneous interests underlying the decision of 'outsiders' to go living in the countryside, which in any case can be restricted to rational economic mobility.

One major subject deriving from this depopulation/repopulation phenomenon is its effect in terms of rural identity and life-styles in the countryside, which certainly nourishes the imaginary of visitors to these areas. Rurality is related to a cohesive identity and way of life based on particular environmental sensitivity (Roberts and Hall, 2001), derived from the proximity rural populations have with nature and the multiple ecological cycles. Rural territories hold material and non-material cultural heritages, which are embedded in a specific natural setting, together they concur to construct the local specificity. Natural heritage includes wildlife and habitats, either protected or not, as well as geological features, landscapes and sceneries (EC, 2003). Cultural heritage, for its part, comprises any material or non-material cultural expression transmitted from the past and inherited by the present societies (EC, 2003 p. 15). In its material form it can take the shape of a built physical structure or building; in its immaterial form it can be a tradition, language, festival, know-how, life-style, customs, etc. (EC, 2003 p. 81). Rural identities and their sense of place are built up from these plural forms of heritage, which can either be recreated by traditional populations or rescued and reinterpreted by 'outsiders'. In turn, outsiders arrive to the countryside with their knowledge and customs that will feed the existing local knowledge and governance dynamics. Integration of these two different worlds and the outcomes of this combination is in my opinion a very interesting element of the governance of these territories, so far underexplored in

the literature about tourism and rural sustainability. It has been stated that the influx of outsiders might indeed provoke conflicts and local resentment (Roberts and Hall, 2001), even if it is not always the case, as research on British home-owners in France has shown (Buller and Hoggart, 1994). However, a deeper and vast analysis of the more complex socio-institutional dynamics is still missing. Furthermore, studies that somehow develop a reflection on the topic, limit their scope to the local scale, without putting into perspective the extra-local variables intervening with and therefore influencing the governance of these territories. The Morvan case-study intends, in this sense, to provide insights about the role of 'outsiders' in the governance of rural territories and specifically in fostering sustainability and ecotourism.

6.6. Not all rural territories are identical: the distinctiveness of the governance of protected areas

Even if it can easily be inferred, before finishing this chapter it seems necessary to stress that rural territories are far from been homogeneous places. Of course, not all of them underwent agriculture intensification nor are experiencing post-productivity in the same way. Moreover, a few rural areas are also consecrated to other economic activities such as mining, industry and services, which are rather incompatible with sustainability and ecotourism practices. For the French context, Pérol-Dumont (2005) identifies three main types of rural areas:

- <u>rural areas located near urban centres</u>: since the early 1990s they are characterised by constant demographic growth and a dissociation between labour and living areas;

- <u>fragile rural areas</u>: in general terms, they are defined as declining regions due to their low population density, their productive mono-activity, either agriculture or industrial, and regressive demographic pattern;

- <u>the new rural areas</u>: they present a more diverse productive profile, including tourism, and thus play a double role of residence and hosting. Territories classified under this category may also vary according to attractiveness, importance of tourism in regards with the local economy, as well as their population, presence of foreign people and environmental sensitivity, among others[20].

Beside these three areas identified by Pérol-Dumont (2005), rural territories might also be protected territories for nature conservation, as it is the case of national parks, regional parks and nature reserves. As a means for counterbalancing negative environmental degradation resulting

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[20] In total, the first group gathers 754 cantons, the second one 799 cantons and the third one 1169 cantons (Pérol-Dumont, 2005)

from the establishment of heavy industry since the end of the eighteenth century and later the proliferation of fordist industries and fordist mode of consumption, governments decided to protect natural areas under a system of protected areas. After the precursory action of the United States with the foundation of Yosemite and Yellowstone, European countries created different forms of protected areas. In this case, nature and the quality of the environment play a primordial role in configuring the symbolic dimension of place. In fact, the symbolic sense of these protected areas is built upon their biophysical exceptional characteristics, which are reinforced by the allowance of nature protection labels.

Because this dissertation focuses on ecotourism and the governance of protected areas, giving some preliminary reflections about the specificity of these territories seems fundamental. According to the World Conservation Union (IUCN, 1994 cited in Lawton, 2001 p. 287), a protected area is an area of land and/ or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or effective means. The IUCN classifies natural areas in six categories according their level of protection as is shown in the table 9, ranging from strict nature conservation reserves to areas aiming at a more sustainable use of its natural ecosystems.

TABLE 9: IUCN PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES

CATEGORY	OBJECTIVE
Category I: *Strict nature reserve (Ia) or Wilderness area (Ib)*	science (Ia) or wilderness protection (Ib)
Category II: *National park*	ecosystem protection and recreation
Category III: *Natural monument*	conservation of specific natural features
Category VI: *Habitat/species management Area*	conservation through management intervention
Category V: *Protected landscape/ seascape*	landscape/seascape conservation and recreation
Category VI: *Managed resource protected area*	sustainable use of natural ecosystems

Source: author with information of IUCN (1994)

To this variety of protected areas underlies different forms of governance, defined in function of the ownership and management responsibility of the area in question, thus to the system of regulation of the area. Protected areas might be government managed or co-managed, privately owned or managed by the community. Table 10 presents four broad types of governance of

protected areas that have been identified by the IUCN, ranging from protected areas whose public status entails governance by the government to private territories whose landowner is the only one responsible for its management. Between these two extremes, there exist protected areas governed by a variety of parties viewed as legitimate, as is the case of co-managed protected areas, as well as communitarian forms of governance where those responsible for these territories are the local communities, which in many cases are indigenous communities.

TABLE 10: TYPES OF GOVERNANCE OF NATURAL AREAS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Governance by the government	*Authority, responsibility and accountability rest with a government ministry or an agency at national, regional or municipal level. The land and resources are subject to use rules and regulations under the law, and often included as part of a system protected areas. Management may be directly exercised or delegated but the government retains full ownership or control. At time, the government is committed to inform or consult other concerned parties prior to making management decisions.*
Joint governance by several concerned parties	*Authority, responsibility and accountability are shared among a variety of parties, likely to include one or more government agencies, local communities, private landowners and other stakeholders. The parties recognize the legitimacy of their respective entitlements and chose or are required to collaborate. Examples include co-managed protected areas and conservation easements. Ecosystems designated for transboundary conservation and high-seas protected area are other promising candidates.*
Private governance	*Authority and responsibility rest with the landowners, which may exercise it for profit (e.g. tourism businesses) or not for profit (e.g. foundations, universities, conservation, NGOs). Usually, the landowners are fully responsible for decision-making and their accountability to the society at large scale is quite limited.*
Community governance	*Authority and responsibility for managing the natural resources rest with the indigenous peoples and/or local communities with customary and/or legal claims over the land and natural resources. The communities have in place some forms of traditional governance, or otherwise locally agreed organisations and rules. Land and resources are usually collectively owned and managed, but partial private or clan-based 'ownership' can also be accommodated. Accountability to society at large remains usually limited, although is at times achieved as a counterpart of recognized rights or economic incentives.*

Source: author with definitions of CMWG and TILCEPA (2004 p. and 2)

Another important topic in the literature on Protected Areas concerns dilemmas derived from the coexistence of natural borders (natural places) and politico-administrative frontiers that rarely correspond (Parra, 2008). In broad terms, protected areas are characterised by the presence of an exceptional flora and fauna, so that they constitute unique ecosystems whose fragility requires specific regulations for their protection. Protected areas have been created since 1870 in order to restrict by law access to or development of these areas, so as to preserve their natural state. Alternatively stated, protected areas seek to match up natural fragile spaces with a politico-administrative border, so that the latter watches over the ecosystem contained in the former. However, reality shows several cases in which both frontiers do not correspond. The human construction of politico-administrative frontiers usually is the result of decisions that have not

necessarily taken into account the ecologic context of the territory. This is the case of protected areas divided by national frontiers (*i.e.* Canada/USA; Costa Rica/Panamá; Bolivia/Chile, etc.), thematic already examined by the IUCN and scholars such as Zbicz (1999, 2001), and Protected Areas fragmented by sub-national frontiers, notably the case of the Morvan Park in France.

As I already discussed in a previous section, sustainability and its governance involve a significant spatial articulation aspect. In the specific case of protected areas, dependent on a global and coherent management of their ecosystems, the articulation and the collaboration between different territorial levels is of vital importance. In this context, conflicts derived from the incongruence between a biophysical system and a politico-administrative border and also the lack of articulation among politico-administrative borders inside a same biophysical system, will seriously threaten the protected area's sustainability. Therefore protected areas, either strict reserves or more mixed territories, face different sustainability and governance challenges, related on the one hand with their local governance and on the other with the embeddedness of their territories in a wider socio-territorial context. Both are key issues that will be re-elaborated in the next section in the specific case of ecotourism.

7. CONCLUSION

In this second chapter I developed a socio-institutional and territorial approach to sustainable development. Following a first chapter presenting the historical roots of the concept of sustainable development, together with a few leading methodological approaches addressing this topic, I concluded about the need to resort to a theoretical approach able to comprehend the complex interactions between human beings and the environmental system in which human activity occurs and, consequently, is shaped.

Bearing these intermediary conclusions, chapter two tackled the relationship between the socio-economic and the environmental spheres of development, starting from the contributions of economic sociology and institutionalism. Although these two theoretical families mainly focus on the role of actors, collective action and the whole set of socio-institutional interactions expressing the embeddedness of the economy in a broader societal system, their contribution concerning the interaction between socio-economic practices and the natural environment remains implicit, and therefore their reference to the territorial dimension and to the role of territories was less clear. For that reason, the analysis was complemented with various contributions coming from regional

development theory inspired by socio-institutional and political analysis, which while adopting the same methodological approach, expand their analytic framework to territory and scale.

While criticizing orthodox approaches, a socio-institutional approach to sustainable development focuses on the role of institutions and collective action, and therefore defines the economy and all sort of economic action as a multifunctional and multidimensional social agency, for which the interrelation of several contextual factors such as culture, history, biophysical conditions, among others, play a primordial role. Economic agency is embedded in a rich social tissue that is path-dependently knitted by human beings in interaction and holding varied interests. Reality, in this context, is seen as relational, holistic, integrated and evolutionary. As to the interaction between the socio-economic and environmental sustainability dimensions, this approach starts from the normative premise that continuity of human life depends on nature; so every person has a responsibility in defining the way in which life will be guaranteed. Such an argument contests the orthodox notion of monetary value, and attributes to nature vital, aesthetic, cultural and historical significances. Environmental sustainability from this perspective is therefore dependent upon human worldviews, human behaviour and the plurality of interests, engendering a process of nature-society co-evolution articulated in a dynamic interdependence. This articulation and collective reciprocity is defined in this dissertation in terms of governance, alluding to the whole set of actors, institutions and processes governing territories, which can either foster sustainability or not. Sustainable development is consequently dependent upon governance, it is a governance challenge.

Assuming a socio-institutional perspective, sustainable development is defined according to four main interactive dimensions, with each of them responsible for specific governance challenges: a) the articulation of worldviews, rationales and values; b) the co-evolution among different forms of capital; c) the articulation of temporal scales and; d) the articulation among embedded territorial scales. Such analysis highlights the centrality of the social pillar in the sustainability concept and its territorial dimension, alluding to the co-evolution of socio-economic and environmental systems through their understanding as being inseparable from society in terms of governance dynamics.

FIGURE 10: CONCLUSION CHAPTER TWO

Social-economy relation → Socio-economic - environment relation

A socio-institutional approach to SD

Social-economy relation	Socio-economic - environment relation
-Economy: a social phenomena; multidimensional and multifunctional practice	-Normative premises: human life continuity; human and institutional responsibility.
- Embeddedness	-Enlarged meaning of value: aesthetical, cultural, social, historical.
-Path-dependency	
-Role of interests and worldviews	-Environment: dependent upon interests, social relations, worldviews.
-Relational and institutional frameworks: human interaction, history, culture, role of institutions and collective action	-Circular interdependence of processes and co-evolutionary nature of society-environment interactions.
- Reality: holistic, integrated, historical, evolutionary.	- Role of governance and collective action.

SD dimensions	Governance challenges
Normative/analytical: ethic, social and environmental values	Articulation between world views, rationales, ethics and values
Development: economic, social and environmental	Co-evolution of socio-economic and environmental spheres
Time and inter-generational equity	Articulation between temporal scales
Space and intra- generational equity	Articulation among embedded spatial scales

• Hierarchical interdependence and subordination of economic processes and environmental sustainability to **governance**.
• Centrality of the **territorial** dimension.

Territories (places) ⟺	The governance of/for SD ⟺	Rural/ natural
- Embodiments of social relations, human agencies and politico-administrative system embedded on wider power scales. -Reciprocal indeterminate of socio-temporal relations; - Crystals of socio-spatial reciprocal. - Geophysical characteristics determine consumption, production and regulation. -Creativity, living entities, multiplicity, cradles of social innovation.	- Articulation and complementarities among temporal and territorial scales. -Interaction of a plurality of actors and collective action, empowerment, participation, negotiation, collaboration, knowledge, learning, culture. -Socio-institutional innovation for SD: definition of need and progress in environmental rights and needs.	With a distinctive: - natural setting - forms of production, consumption and regulation. - G structures and dynamics, culture. - post-productivism, econ. diversification - Role of ecotourism.
SD: relation people knit with their natural environment	**SD: a governance challenge, a process and outcome; historically defined, path dependent, territorially built**	**Rural/natural: crystallize a particular social experience or relation between human beings and nature**

Source: author

For its part, the centrality of the territorial dimension underlies the argument that governance structures and dynamics necessarily take place within territories. Territories in turn not only embody, condensate or crystallize specific socio-temporal relations, but also shape social relations, constituting together complex indeterminate processes. This reciprocity and interactive relation between territories and social relations constitutes the core of the sustainability reflection, alluding precisely to the relation people interweave with their natural environment, organise production, consumption, regulation and all kind of social life. Certainly, this reciprocal interrelation bypasses by far one single governance scale. Socio-spatiality is indeed anchored or embedded in wider geographical areas and power structures. In sum, a territory not only encloses a set of biophysical elements, but also condensates social relations, human agencies and politico-

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administrative systems, where the governance of smaller territories is embedded in wider power structures.

One major characteristic in this shift to governance, and therefore to the inclusion of a plurality of actors coming from different social sectors in decision making, is the double process of scalar reconfiguration characterised by the emergence of supranational institutions and State devolution. It is interesting to observe how major governance shifts came together with the launching of the concept of sustainable development. Indeed, changes in the governance of societies are in direct relation with changes introduced since the emergence of the green paradigm, and more precisely since the second wave of environmentalism starting end of the 1980s.

As a result, contemporary societies are governed at various nested governance scales, which interrelate and are mutually reinforced. In the case of Europe, its governance is highly determined by the process of regional integration that resulted in the construction of the European Union. However, the increasing importance of the European level does not mean that other spatial scales do not play a key role in sustainability issues. For sure, the complexity of sustainable challenges requires a governance in which every territorial level is involved. This of course means as well that the inclusion of actors in the process of negotiation is not limited to State agents, but include actors from the private sector, NGOs and all kind of civil society groups.

A definition of territories as living and dynamic entities leads to the notion of social innovation, meaning that territories and specially the local level of governance, recognized as pivotal in sustainability-related issues, are considered as cradles of social innovation. The particular identity of territories, their culture and history hold an important potential in terms of social innovation and therefore in their capacity to introduce changes allowing a transition towards more sustainable forms of development. The three dimensions of this concept (satisfaction of human needs, changes in social relations and increasing socio-political capability) lead to the ideas of collective definition of sustainable paths of development, innovation in the necessary governance for sustainable development and enhancement of environmental rights. This definition meets the dynamic vision about the governance of sustainable development alluding to challenges, processes and outcome. This definition permits to go beyond approaches to sustainable development that, although highlighting the importance of participation of civil society at local levels of governance in order to foster sustainability, do not always adopt a large framework opening the analysis to other spatial scales nor dealing with innovation in governance relations

resulting from sustainability challenges. This is indeed a very important element in a context of environmental uncertainty and the need for precaution, which requires community tacit knowledge, collective decisions, bargaining, empowerment and debate.

However, if territories are understood as crystallisations of social relations and in turn social relations are defined according to specific territorial characteristics, the governance of territories will indeed be shaped by the distinctiveness of territories. Even if the governance of rural territories might share a few characteristics with the one of urban areas, necessarily the specificity of the countryside and of natural areas will be determinant in their governance. The natural setting, their forms of production, consumption and regulation will result in particular governance structures and dynamics. Moreover, in the specific case of territories classified as Protected Areas, environmental protection regulatory traditions are essential factors of governance. As I examined it in this chapter, the changes that rural areas are undergoing and their passage towards a post-productivist condition have introduced important changes in terms of governance. In fact, the limits shown by the productivist model and by a vision focusing on productivity require apprehending rural territories according to their multidimensionality and multifunctionality, highlighting their history, identity, and socio-cultural and natural meanings. Within this context, in this dissertation I argue that ecotourism plays an important role in the governance of rural/natural territories, thanks to its potential as a catalyst of sustainable development paths.

Chapter III - Ecotourism as a vector for paving the way for more sustainable development paths

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the concept of ecotourism, its interrelation with territorial sustainability and therefore with governance. The aim is to go beyond the standard approach to tourism as an industry, in order to highlight the role of socio-institutional mechanisms, arguing that they form the basis for the practice and development of different forms of tourism and notably of ecotourism. Ecotourism is a type of tourist activity, essentially nature-based and sensitive in its ethical orientation to environmental and social conditions. More precisely, the concept of ecotourism alludes to a system of governance allowing the transformation of a set of inherited natural advantages into more sustainable ones, either through restoration, protection, conservation or enhancement of a certain natural environment. While most literature on the topic stresses the virtues of ecotourism as a source of monetary resources, which should be reinvested in conservation and fairly distributed among local communities, in this dissertation I am specifically interested in the role of governance, and the enhancement of learning and community knowledge through the practice of ecotourism, and its effects on the sustainability of destinations. I argue that ecotourism, as a vector for sustainable development, is a governance challenge, where visitors, hosts, varied public institutions and regulations, and the whole of local civil society have an important role to play. Furthermore, the ethical green challenges associated to the practice of ecotourism, to the development of ecotourism services and to the specific regulation framework in which ecotourism occurs, lead to new forms of territorial governance. Applying the concept of place developed in chapter two, ecotourism destinations thus are defined as dynamic territories of innovation, embedded in wider territorial scales and incarnating path-dependent governance dynamics which might be sustainable or not.

The chapter is structured in five sections, after this introduction. The first section examines the place of sustainable development and ecotourism within the contemporary world tourism industry. This section presents the main landmarks in the history of tourism, including the first

travels, the advent of mass tourism and the emergence of alternative or more sustainable forms of tourism. The second section, focusing on tourism during contemporary times, examines major economic tourism supply and demand trends at the global scale. It also analyses the organisation of the world tourism industry and its underlying governance. The section ends with a critical analysis of mass tourism from a sustainability viewpoint. Section three focuses on the concept of ecotourism. More specifically it presents the governance context in which the concept was coined, the various definitions of the concept, and its main principles and dimensions. Section four analyses ecotourism from a governance perspective, highlighting the tensions between the embeddedness of ecotourism in a wider liberal tourism system and the role of ecotourism destinations as places of resistance playing a role in counteracting global unsustainable practices, through for instance the creation of awareness, vigilance or civil society mobilisation.

FIGURE 11: OUTLINE CHAPTER THREE
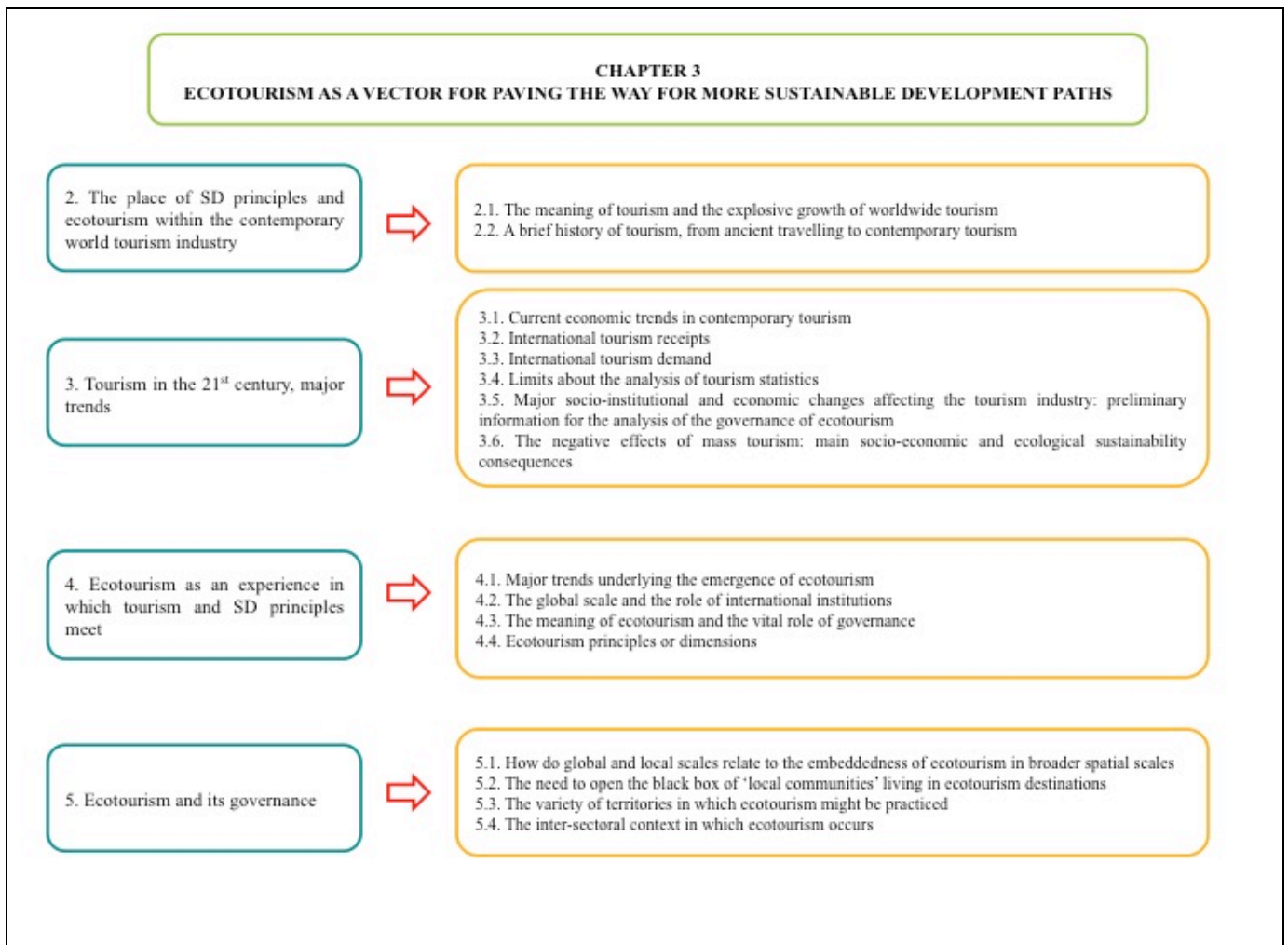
Source: author

2. **THE PLACE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES AND ECOTOURISM WITHIN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD TOURISM INDUSTRY**

2.1. The meaning of tourism and the explosive growth of worldwide tourism

The increasing importance of tourism at a worldwide level is a well-known story recognized by scholars and international institutions. From an economic point of view, tourism has been seen as a powerful industry in terms of export earnings, foreign exchange and employment. Indeed, tourism is credited as being one of the world's fastest growing industries (WTTC, 2005). Since the end of WWII, international tourism has experienced immense growth, becoming the world's largest industry and job source across national and regional economies. Statistics of the World Tourism Organization show that annual tourist arrivals increased from 25 million in 1950 to 924 million in 2009. Data for 2006 reveal the highest growth rate of the last twenty years, leaving behind a difficult three-year period mainly caused by economic deceleration and risks related to terrorism, armed conflicts, epidemics and natural disasters. The UNWTO forecasts that international tourism will continue growing at the average annual rate of around 4%, Europe being the most popular destination[20].

FIGURE 12: INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS
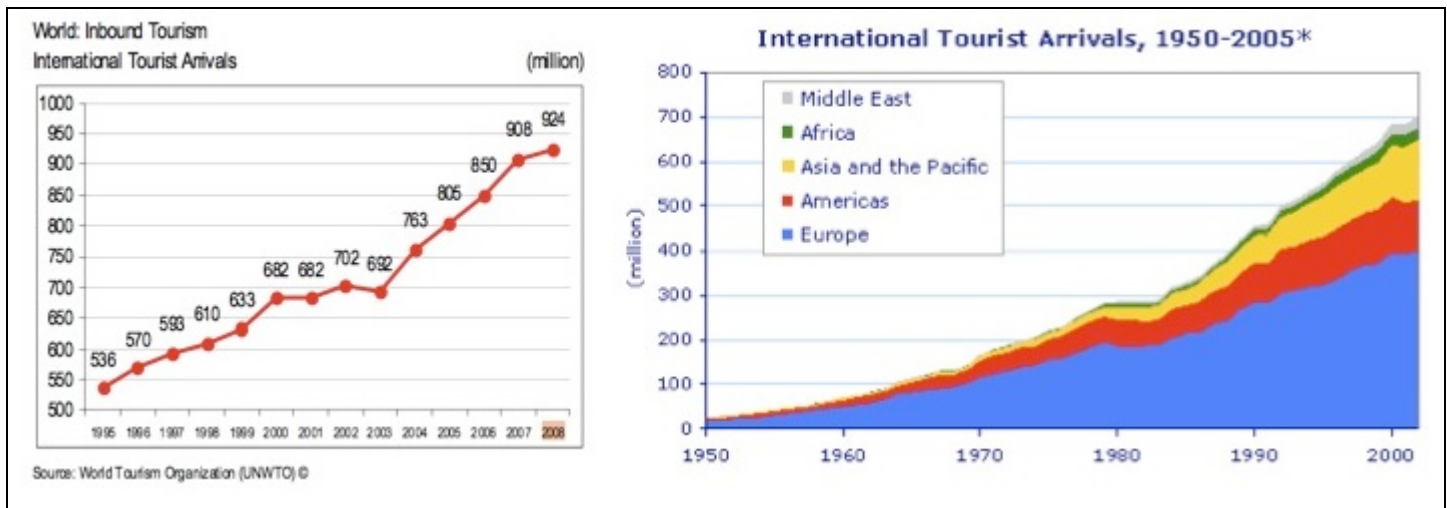
Source: author with information from UNWTO (2009a) and http://www.unwto.org/facts/eng/historical.htm

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[20] By 2020 Europe will still be the most visited destination with a 46% of the whole marked (UNWTO, 2005), in contrast with the 60% that it concentrated in 1995.

According to the UNWTO (1995b p. 10) tourism comprises the activities of persons *"travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than twenty-four hours and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes"*. Complementing this, the UNWTO defines a tourist as *the one who travels at least eighty kilometres from home for the purpose of recreation and whose length of stay reaches or exceeds 24 hours*. Tourism, thus, is possible when several parameters come together to make it happen: available income and money to spend in non-essentials, available time for leisure, existence of infrastructure in the forms of accommodation facilities and means of transport. In addition, the UNWTO distinguishes three basic forms of tourism: domestic tourism, inbound tourism and outbound tourism.

BOX 3: OFFICIAL UNWTO TOURISM DEFINITIONS

a) According to the UNWTO (1994) three basic forms of tourism exist:
    -   Domestic tourism: involves residents of the given country travelling only within the country
    -   Inbound tourism: involves non-residents travelling in the given country
    -   Outbound tourism: involves residents travelling in another country

b) Tourism expenditure: *"the total consumption expenditure made by a visitor or on behalf of a visitor for and during his/her trip and stay at destination"*.

c) International tourism receipts: *"expenditure of international inbound visitors including their payments to national carriers for international transport"*.

d) Domestic visitor: *"any person residing in a country, who travels to a place within the country, outside his/her usual environment for a period not exceeding 12 months and whose main purpose of visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited"*.

e) International visitor: *"any person visiting a country other than that in which s/he has his/her usual place of residence but outside his/her usual environment for a period not exceeding 12 months and whose main purpose of visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the country visited"*.

f) Tourist: *"a visitor whose length of stay in a country reaches or exceeds 24 hours, thus spending at least one night in the visited country"*.

g) International tourist: *"temporary visitors staying at least 24 hours in a country whose motive for travel can be described as being either for: leisure (pleasure, holidays, health, study, religion or sport); business, family or work assignments"*

h) Excursionist or same-day visitor: *"foreign visitor whose stay does not exceed 24 hours"*.

Source: author with various sources (UNWTO, 1994; 1995b)

2.2. A brief history of tourism, from ancient travelling to contemporary tourism

This section presents the history of tourism[21], pointing out main landmarks related to the context in which travelling and tourism were born, the context in which mass fordist tourism practices

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[21] For a complete history of tourism see Boyer (1999, 2002, 2005).

emerged, and finally the process of diversification of the tourism sector that progressively triggered the development of alternative forms of tourism, among them, ecotourism.

2.2.1. *From elites tourism to the advent of fordist tourism*

Different written records show that in the same way that ancient Greeks, Romans and Chinese people travelled for trade and conquest, their wealthy upper classes did it also for pleasure and diplomacy (Graburn and Jafari, 1991). In fact, since early periods, wealthy people have travelled to distant places of the world to visit archaeological sites, to see art works, to learn foreign languages, to come into contact with other cultures or just for leisure. During the Roman period (I BC-IV AC), for example, leisure tourism was mainly for patricians, who comfortably sojourned in villas or in the countryside in order to relax and take some time off. Written records of Horatius, Plaut and Plinis bring to light particular details of travelling during this epoch. Perhaps one of the most popular writings about pre-modern travelling is *The Histories* of Herodotus (484-420 BC), which is a fascinating collection of inquiries and stories about places and people encountered by the author during his journeys around the Mediterranean coast, Egypt, Italy, Sicily, among other places.

Later on, during the Middle Ages, tourism practically disappeared and travelling was primarily related to conquest, trade and war. Only a few displacements were for leisure, pursuing some of them for scientific research purposes as well. Besides, medieval religious pilgrimage can also be considered a tourism experience since it involves travelling and meeting other people.

In the course of the fifteenth century, the Renaissance entailed the opening out of Europe and so it facilitated tourism with the development of cartographic and sailing technologies; on the other hand, international interactions and exchanges increased due to the rise of merchant classes (Graburn and Jafari, 1991). Among the tourism traces from this epoch, Merlin (2001) cites *"La guide des chemins de France",* published by Charles Estienne in 1522 and considered to be one of the first tourism guides. Montaigne's travel diary (*"Journal de voyage", 1774[22])* is also quoted as a landmark of the history of tourism. Actually, Montaigne, called *le premier touriste* by the romantics, inspired by Herodotus' writings, registered his memories of a trip he took to Germany, Switzerland and Italy, in which he visited health-giving mineral springs, religious places and archaeological roman sites, from September 1580 to November 1581 (Braybrook, 2000).

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[22] His writings were published in 1774 by Anne-Gabriel Meunier de Querlon.

Also from the mid sixteenth century onwards, tourism concerned only a small number of wealthy Northern Europeans, who regularly travelled to national spas, as well as to Southern European cultural centres and archaeological sites (Graburn and Jafari, 1991). To these travelling experiences can be remitted the birth of the so-called *Grand Tour*, a fashionable tourism practice that became during the seventeen century an important aesthetic component of the education of British aristocrats. The Grand Tour lasted between two and three years, involved young itinerant nobles casually hosted in basic accommodation, and was a combination of initiation voyage and cultural pilgrimage following a circuit around Europe that included Rome, the Greek temples in Sicily, Delphos, Athens, Ephesus and sometimes Syria (Leiper, 1983; Lozato, 2006). Complementing this, Graburn and Jafari (1991) mention that under the influence of the Romantic Movement, inspired by William Blake and Lord Byron, this tour was extended to the countryside and natural areas. In fact, the romantic intellectual hostility towards industrialisation and enlightenment meant that natural areas and forests became a place of aesthetic appreciation and recreation for elites (Mather *et al.,* 1999). Additionally, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are also associated with the practice of health tourism, even if this form of tourism had existed for a long time. In the case of England, for example, health tourism consisted in visits to spas and health-giving mineral waters to relieve a variety of diseases and disorders, and also to permanent or temporary sojourns in warm southern lands[23]. Normally, spa cures were combined with other recreation activities such as polo, horse riding, casino games and parties oriented to commit rich visitors. The development of health tourism allowed the discovery of the mountains, with Saint Moritz in Switzerland one of the first winter villages equipped for the practice of winter sports in 1864. During the same period, groups such as the Club Alpin de France and Touring Club de France (Mather *et al.*, 1999) were inaugurated.

2.2.2. *The advent of fordist tourism*

Between the end of the nineteenth century until WWII, the institutionalisation of leisure occurred. With the improvement of railroads, health sojourns undertaken by aristocrats became longer and became of interest to bourgeois groups as well, resulting in a tourism period called *villegiatura*[24] in which English travellers, after visiting warmer places in southern Europe, decided to prolong their vacations either to skip cold seasons or to stay the rest of their lives in warm coastal areas. With the transformation of cultural and health tourism into leisure tourism, we witnessed, according to Boyer (2002), the invention of tourism. Lozato (2006) describes this period as the

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[23] For example, Brighton and Bath in England, Baden-Baden and Marienbad in Germany, Montreux in Switzerland, Montecatini and Chinciano Terme in Italy and, Biarritz and Aix-les-Bains in France (Lozato, 2006).
[24] Italian word issued from villegiare that means "going to the countryside" (Deprest, 1997).

"Belle Époque" of the villegiatura pre-tourism and he evokes how, since then, several places became mythic destinations *i.e.* Nice, Cannes, Biarritz, Lido, Rapallo… Lozato (2006) points out that this form of tourism did not engender negative environmental effects; villegiatura, indeed, depended on landscapes and climate quality and on the socio-cultural attractions of destinations.

The industrial revolution is another major event contributing to the expansion of tourism. On the one hand, the industrial revolution led to the emergence of new technologies facilitating the mobility of people; on the other, it induced important social changes that contributed to the expansion of tourism (Graburn and Jafari, 1991). With the industrial revolution, for the first time, labour and leisure time were separated, provoking two main complementary consequences for tourism. First, struggles oriented to increment leisure time resulted in the augmentation of free time for the working class and, consequently, in the gradual institutionalisation of leisure time as a right. Second, an emerging bourgeois class exerted pressure on an impoverished aristocracy and started travelling as a means of social differentiation, even if tourism and leisure initially were condemned by the protestant church. Later on, Protestants ended up accepting tourism, recognizing its cultural, health and well-being benefits and tourism penetrated different social classes (Py, 1996).

As the current literature illustrates (Graburn and Jafari, 1991), the basis of contemporary tourism goes back to this period and is explained by two intertwined socio-economic phenomena: higher incomes and institutionalisation of leisure time, which allowed the payment for free time and so the payment for leisure activities. At the same time, travelling was possible because of important technological improvements allowing a relatively fast transportation of a large number of persons to attractive places *i.e.* the invention and expansion of railways. Thomas Cook, named the father of modern tourism, was in fact the first one to see the potential for business in the tourism sector. He organised in 1841 the first package tour in history, becoming the first tour operator of the world (Graburn and Jafari, 1991). The increasing speed of trains permitted the development of international tourism; so, by 1901, 0.5 million people a year crossed the Channel to go from England to France or Belgium.

In the case of France, the 1936 law on paid holidays marked a turning point in the history of tourism, first, because of the symbolic importance of a norm oriented to democratise holidays and later, after WWII, as a veritable revolution in tourism (Lozato, 2006). Certainly tourism development wouldn't have been possible without the unprecedented economic growth rates

reached during the *Trente Glorieuses*, which allowed, on the one hand, mass production and consumption of all kinds of goods and services, tourism among them; on the other, it permitted public investment in tourism-related infrastructures. In 1950, international tourism displacements involved approximately 50 million persons; 150 million in 1975, 457 million in 1990, 698 million in 2000 and 898 million in 2007. Graburn and Jafari (1991) stated that tourism developed mainly after 1963, with the popularisation of package tours and the launch of jet travel in 1952.

TABLE 11: TOURISM – A TIMELINE

Before V AC	Ancient civilizations travelled for trade, conquest and wealthy classes for leisure.
XV	Renaissance came together with an increase of travelling.
XVI	Elite tourism for wealthy northern Europeans
XVIII - XIX	The Grand Tour
XIX	*Villegiatura* tourism Stendhal publishes *Mémoire d'un touriste* (1838)
1841	Thomas Cook organizes the first package tour in history.
1901	0.5 millions tourists crossing the English channel.
1936	French law on paid holidays
1950	25.3 million tourist arrivals[25] (US$ 2.1 billions)
1967	International year of tourism, declared by the United Nations
1970s	First World Bank policies oriented to foster tourism strategies in developing countries.
1970	165.8 million arrivals (US$ 17.9 billions)
1975	222.3 million tourist arrivals (US$ 40.7 billions)
1990	439.5 million arrivals (US$ 270.2 billions)
1995	540.6 million arrivals (US$ 410.7 billions)
2000	687.0 million arrivals (US$ 481.6 billions)
2002	International year of ecotourism
2005	806.8 million arrivals (US$682 billions)
2007	898 million tourist arrivals (U$856 billions) (30% of the world's exports of services)
2008	924 million arrivals

Source: author, based on various sources (data on arrivals and receipts from UNWTO, 2006)

It was during the 1960s when scholars and international institutions started showing interest in tourism. Accordingly, the United Nations qualified tourism as *"a basic and most desirable human activity, deserving the praise and encouragement of all peoples and all governments"* and

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[25] It refers to the number of foreign tourists arriving to a country.

so nominated 1967 as the International Year of Tourism[26]. In view of that, the current phenomenal growth of tourism can as well be ascribed to tourism policies promulgated during this period, being the UNWTO and the WTTC leading institutions highlighting the potential of tourism as a development engine for those regions experimenting industrial decline. Adopting a similar perspective, on the one hand, the World Bank policies during the 1970s explicitly encouraged developing countries to invest in tourism for attracting foreign exchange (Ghimire, 1997, cited in Christ et *al*., 2003; Jafari, 1974); on the other hand, governments of developing countries started conceiving tourism as a means of economic development and as an economic redistribution strategy from Northern to Southern countries (Jafari, 1973; Lanquar, 1985). Since the end of WWII, tourism has also received special interest in the political agenda of the different European countries. France, since the 1936 law, in order to promote tourism, has launched actions for developing tourism infrastructures, for financial support to public and private tourism enterprises and policies promoting social tourism (Baron-Yelles, 1999).

3.   TOURISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY, MAJOR TRENDS[27]

3.1. Current economic trends in contemporary tourism

Nowadays, tourism is often described as the biggest world industry on the basis of number of clients, job creation and contribution to the world's gross national product (GNP). According to UNWTO, tourism transported 898 million travellers in 2007, including business and leisure travel, which represented annual receipts of about US$ 856 billion equivalent to € 625 billion (see http://www.unwto.org/index.php). Before the crisis, statistics of the UNWTO predicted 1,1 billion travellers for 2010 and 1,6 billion for 2020. According to a recent version of the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (2009b) the decline of international tourism caused by the crisis may have started to bottom out, after a sharp decline of 7% between January and august 2009. Nevertheless, UNWTO predicts for the year 2010 a much more moderate growth of tourism than expected (UNWTO, 2009b). Concerning employment, the travel and tourism industry is considered in many countries as the principal source of job creation. According to the WTTC (2008) tourism represents a total of 233 million jobs, which corresponds to 8,4% of the total world employment. However, the amount of labour force employed in tourism-related activities varies a lot according to the different regions of world. In the Caribbean, for example, this

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[26] See http://responsible-travel.org
[27] For a deep analysis of contemporary tourism see Durand (2003).

situation is extreme, with the tourism sector hosting 15,4% of total employment. In the EU direct and indirect tourism jobs counted for 23,8 million in 2006 (13,39% of the total), 87,5 million in South Asia, 22,5 million in North America and 21,7 in South-East Asia. In Northern Africa, tourism employs 5,5 million persons, in the Middle East 4,6 million, and in Latin America 12,1 million from which 2,6 million are concentrated in the Caribbean Region. In the specific case of France, calculating tourism jobs is quite controversial given the large amount of family business structures that do not have salaried employees and that several structures remain closed during winter. In spite of this, the INSEE estimations of direct jobs in hotels, bars and restaurants are around 786.000 for 2004, plus 150.000 non-salaried jobs. In total, direct and indirect jobs employ near 1,5 million people (Vellas, 2007).

Tourism is a major player in economic development given its consequences for consumption, production and employment. According to the WTTC (2008), the contribution of the Travel and Tourism industry to gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to rise from 9,9% in 2008 to 10,5% by 2018. This contribution is bigger than the one of the automobile industry, agriculture and electronics (Ceballos-Lascuráin, 1993). Once more we can observe several regional differences regarding the significance of tourism in the GDP: in the Caribbean tourism contributes with 16,4% to the GDP, in Northern Africa with 13%, in North America with 10,9%, in Europe with 10,8% and in North-East Asia with 10,3%. Conversely, in Middle East (9,6%), Latin America (7,2%), South-East Asia (7%) and South Asia (5,5%) the importance of tourism is inferior the world average (Vellas, 2007)

3.2. International tourism receipts

Since the beginning of the 1980s, tourism receipts have increased considerably, going from US$104 billion in 1980 to US$682 billion in 2005 (UNWTO, 2006), growing at a faster rate than tourist arrivals. According to UNWTO statistics for 2006, Europe is the world's main destination receiving 54,9% of the world's visitors (444 millions visitors in 2005) and contributing with 51% of total world receipts. East Asia and the Pacific receive 19,3% of the world's visitors (20,4% receipts), the American Region 16,5% (21,3% receipts), Africa 4,5% (3,1% receipts) and the Middle East 4,8% (4,2% receipts). Proportionally, East Asia and the Pacific and the America Region have higher revenues due to the fact that they are destinations attracting a greater proportion of high-spending tourists and business travellers (Vellas and Bécherel, 1995). Among the world leading destinations, France is the top host country with 75,1 million arrivals (9,8%), followed by Spain with 53,6 million (7%), USA 46,1 million (6%), China 41,8% million (5,5%)

and Italy 37,1 (4,9%) (UNWTO, 2006) However, concerning tourism receipts USA, Spain, France, Italy and Germany are the countries earning more money. During 2006, USA earned US$74,5 billion (11,8%), Spain 45,2 billion (7,3%), France 40,8 billion (6,6%), Italy 35,7% (5,7%). China appears only in the seventh position with receipts of US$25,7 billion (4,1% of worlds receipts)[28].

TABLE 12: INTERNATIONAL TOURISM RECEIPTS

International Tourism Receipts, 1950-2005*

	World	Africa	Americas	Asia and the Pacific	Europe	Middle East	World	Africa	Americas	Asia and the Pacific	Europe	Middle East
	International Tourism Receipts (US$, billion)						International Tourism Receipts (euro/ECU, billion)					
1950	2.1	0.1	1.1	0.04	0.9	0.03						
1960	6.9	0.2	2.5	0.2	3.9	0.1						
1965	11.6	0.3	3.4	0.5	7.2	0.3						
1970	17.9	0.5	4.8	1.2	11.0	0.4						
1975	40.7	1.3	10.2	2.5	25.9	0.9	32.8	1.0	8.2	2.0	20.8	0.7
1980	104.4	3.4	24.7	11.2	61.6	3.5	75.0	2.4	17.7	8.1	44.2	2.5
1981	106.1	3.7	27.8	13.2	57.1	4.4	95.0	3.3	24.9	11.8	51.2	3.9
1982	100.2	3.4	25.7	13.3	55.5	2.2	102.2	3.5	26.2	13.6	56.7	2.2
1983	103.4	3.5	26.3	14.0	55.2	4.4	116.2	3.9	29.6	15.7	62.0	5.0
1984	112.2	3.2	32.0	15.1	57.2	4.7	142.2	4.1	40.5	19.2	72.5	5.9
1985	119.1	3.1	33.3	16.2	62.2	4.2	156.1	4.0	43.7	21.3	81.6	5.5
1986	145.0	3.6	38.4	21.0	78.5	3.5	147.4	3.6	39.0	21.3	79.8	3.6
1987	179.1	4.6	43.1	28.0	99.0	4.5	155.2	4.0	37.3	24.2	85.7	3.9
1988	207.9	5.5	51.3	36.7	109.9	4.3	175.8	4.7	43.4	31.1	93.0	3.7
1989	265.6	5.7	60.2	40.9	153.8	5.1	241.1	5.2	54.7	37.1	139.6	4.6
1990	270.2	6.4	69.3	46.5	142.9	5.1	212.2	5.0	54.4	36.5	112.2	4.0
1991	283.4	6.0	76.3	48.0	147.8	5.3	228.7	4.8	61.6	38.7	119.3	4.2
1992	326.6	6.8	83.6	56.2	172.4	7.5	251.6	5.3	64.4	43.3	132.8	5.8
1993	332.6	6.9	89.2	61.5	167.1	8.0	284.0	5.9	76.1	52.5	142.7	6.8
1994	362.1	7.6	92.4	72.0	180.9	9.3	304.4	6.4	77.7	60.5	152.1	7.8
1995	410.7	8.5	98.4	80.7	212.2	10.9	314.0	6.5	75.3	61.7	162.2	8.3
1996	446.0	9.7	108.2	91.0	224.6	12.5	351.2	7.6	85.2	71.7	176.9	9.8
1997	450.4	9.5	114.4	88.9	223.7	13.8	397.1	8.4	100.9	78.4	197.3	12.1
1998	451.4	10.2	115.2	77.7	234.6	13.7	402.7	9.1	102.7	69.3	209.2	12.2
1999	464.5	11.0	119.9	84.1	233.6	16.0	435.9	10.3	112.5	78.9	219.2	15.0
2000	481.6	10.5	130.8	90.2	232.5	17.6	521.4	11.4	141.6	97.7	251.7	19.0
2001	469.9	11.5	119.8	92.9	227.5	18.1	524.7	12.9	133.8	103.7	254.0	20.2
2002	488.2	12.0	113.5	101.4	241.9	19.4	516.3	12.7	120.1	107.2	255.8	20.5
2003	534.6	16.1	114.2	98.4	283.4	22.5	472.6	14.3	101.0	87.0	250.6	19.9
2004	634.7	19.2	132.0	129.5	328.5	25.5	510.3	15.4	106.1	104.1	264.1	20.5
2005*	682.7	21.5	144.6	140.8	348.3	27.6	548.7	17.3	116.2	113.1	279.9	22.1

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) ©   (Data as collected in UNWTO database November 2006)
* Receipts data are in current US$ and euro (based on the average annual exchange rate for euro or ECU to US$) and can be strongly influenced by exchange rate fluctuations.

Source: UNWTO (2006)

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[28] For detailed data see UNWTO (2006) and Vellas (2007).

3.3. International tourism demand

The international tourism market is considerably segmented according to types of product, clientele and destinations. In the case of Europe, it is possible to observe that the current rate of arrivals is lower than the world average. While in 1980 Europe received 59% of the world receipts, in 2005 this share had dropped to 51% (UNWTO, 2006). This tendency can be explained by the growing popularity of new countries, especially those in Southeast Asia, the competitiveness loss of some Western European Countries, particularly of Southern Europe, and the higher prices in Northern European Countries. The main tourism flows to Europe are to Western and Southern destinations, representing around 68% of arrivals and 75% of European receipts in 2005. Central and eastern countries receive 21% of arrivals and only 9% of the total European receipts (UNWTO, 2006).

In the American region, receiving 133,5 million arrivals in 2005 (21,3% of the world receipts), the mains destinations are USA, Mexico and Canada, receiving together around 70% of the arrival and 74% of receipts of the continent (UNWTO, 2005b). Among these three countries, the United States is by far the largest tourism country in terms of arrivals and receipts, hosting the greatest proportion of high-spending tourists. As to the rest of the continent, tourism has considerably developed in the Caribbean islands (14% arrivals and 14% receipts), Cuba, Costa Rica in Central America, as well as in Brazil, Argentina and Chile in South America (Vellas, 2007).

Tourism in the East Asia and Pacific region is characterised by the emergence of new destinations since the 1980s. This region, which includes China, Japan and the 'new tourism countries'[29], have experienced an incredible progression in arrivals and receipts, going from 20 million visitors in 1980 to 149 million in 2005, a progression in receipts that goes from 8.3% to 18,9%. Tourism explosion in this region is associated with the convergence between the export of goods and the export of services, both of which have been based upon major developments in transportation, telecommunication and banking, resulting in a positive feedback by which business travel has been stimulating leisure tourism (Vellas, 2005), which in turn has been successful because of the excellent quality-price ratio. The most visited areas are countries from East and South Asia *i.e.* China, Malaysia and Thailand as the main destinations. Africa, for its part, has also a more marginal participation in the world tourism industry. In 2005 it hosted only 4,6% of the arrivals and received 3,14% of the international tourism receipts. The most visited regions are North

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[29] Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea, Taiwan and Indonesia,

Africa (36,8%) and Southern Africa, with Tunisia, Morocco and South Africa the most demanded destinations (UNWTO, 2006). The Pacific area remains marginal with Australia and New Zealand the most visited countries.

Although political and military conflicts have negatively affected tourism in the Middle East, arrivals have progressed faster than the world average, increasing from 2,3% in 1985 to 4,9% in 2005. The most visited areas are Saudi Arabia and Egypt, respectively religious and cultural destinations. Abu-Dhabi, Dubai and Qatar are cited as emerging destinations with important ongoing tourism development. Finally, South Asia[30] receives only 1% of world tourism (8 millions tourists), from which half is concentrated in India. For Vellas (2007), this is the result of the lack of infrastructure and policy decisions oriented to put barriers to non-sustainable forms of tourism in order to protect traditional societies. Bhutan, for example, cannot be visited in packaged tours; the only tourism alternative is through local authorized agencies.

3.4. Analytical limits of tourism statistics

There is no doubt about the explosive growth experienced by the tourism industry in terms of arrivals and receipts. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that tourism statistics have always been the subject of controversies due to the difficulties in defining and therefore measuring tourism demand and supply (Longhi, 2003). Furthermore, conclusions extracted from tourism statistics have also been criticized because of their focus on international tourism and their failure in providing significant information about domestic tourism and tourists travelling by car and train, especially in the European continent characterised by considerable mobility across frontiers free of border controls. Deprest (1997) warns as well that it is quite delicate to base tourism analysis in only two statistical sources.

3.5. Major socio-institutional and economic changes affecting the tourism industry: preliminary information for the analysis of the governance of ecotourism

3.5.1. Evolution in the organisation of the tourism industry

The tourism supply, defined as the set of goods and services oriented to the satisfaction of the tourism demand, has considerably evolved since the birth of tourism. Actually, after the first tourism package offered by Thomas Cook during the nineteenth century, several competitors

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[30] According the WTO classification it includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, the Maldives, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

started offering similar products. Since the first developments of railways, transport underwent a revolution with the expansion of air, road and water means of transportation. On the other hand, the increasing number of persons having access to paid-holidays provoked significant socio-cultural changes, among which the awakening of the leisure society demanding varied tourism experiences seem very relevant for this research. All these phenomena related to changes in the demand and supply side of tourism, were confirmed with major regulation changes, associated to the liberalisation of tourism related service markets, industrial reorganisation and major technological innovations that profoundly changed tourism trade. Below I review major transformations in tourism, with a special focus on changes in the modes of production, consumption and regulation.

From a production perspective, tourism can be seen as a service industry comprising tangible and intangible components. Among tangibles, we find transport (air, rail, road and water), hospitality services (accommodation, food and drinks) and related support services such as banking, insurance, safety and security. Intangible elements comprise rest and relaxation, culture, evasion, adventure and nature, among many other experiences. According to Vellas (2007), three main characteristics identify the tourism supply: it is seasonal, very labour intensive (which creates tensions with seasonality) and the tourism product cannot be stocked. Since a few years the tourism industry has been following several intertwined trends, changing radically its governance and organization: the incorporation of new sophisticated information and communication technologies; a process of organisational innovation characterised at the same time by globalisation and concentration; the emergence of new actors; and a power reconfiguration between new and old tourism actors. Still, the most powerful actors remain the tourism triad composed by transportation, accommodation and tour operators.

3.5.1.1. Transport and tourism

Transport is an essential component of the tourism value chain. Transport costs normally dominate the total cost of the tourism product, exerting a high influence in the selection of tourism destinations. In turn, the costs of the mode of transportation depend on technology, entrepreneurial organization, fuel prices and regulations. Among different means of transport, including railways, car, buses and water, air transport occupies a central position in the tourism industry.

Since the creation of the first jet aircraft for civil aviation by the 1920s, air transport has evolved a lot, going from elitist expensive products, mainly for business travellers until the 1960s, to the massification of air travel by means of market deregulation and organisational transformations allowing the eruption of low cost airlines. The first charter flights date from the 1970s, representing 30% of air transport market in the beginning of the 1970s. Later, regular airlines started offering differentiated fares for tourism and business, with tourist fares much less expensive. As a result, during the 1970s, tourists became the main clients in air transport, representing today around 75% of the whole clientele (Merlin, 2001). Another major transformation within this industry is the progressive disconnection that exists between fares and travel distances.

Even if air transport has experienced an exceptional growth since the 1970s in industrialised regions (Vellas and Bécherel, 1995), it is an industry immersed in a very competitive market and very susceptible to economic and political crises. Airline deregulation started in the USA in the 1970s, notably with the launching of the Open Skies policies provoking a severe price reduction and emergence of new charter companies (1980s) and low cost airlines (1990s)[31]. In the case of Europe, deregulation started in the beginning of the 1990s with the agreement to drop restrictions on airfare tariffs within the EU, eliminating the obligation to approve fares by a supervisory authority[32] (Vellas and Bécherel, 1995). Deregulation was accompanied by a deep organisational restructuring of the sector oriented to compete with the whole transport industry. As a result, air transport underwent strong market concentration, vertical and horizontal integration, privatisation and diversification, among which the emergence of airline alliances and of low-cost airlines constitutes a major revolution (Longhi, 2003). The low-cost airline model is a result of the incapacity of new airlines to compete with traditional companies. In fact, after deregulation of airline markets, new air companies, taking advantage of reduced entrance barriers, tried without success to compete with consolidated airlines by means of offering high quality products at lower prices than those offered by traditional companies. As a consequence, realising that clients were

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[31] The 'open skies' policy adopted by the USA has eleven main clauses: 1) free access to all routes; 2) no restriction on capacity and frequency of any route; 3) no restriction on operation in all internal markets; 4) flexibility of tariffs; 5) liberalisation of charter rules and elimination on charters; 6) liberalisation of air cargo rules; 7) no restrictions on the conversion of revenue to hard currency and its repatriation; 8) agreement on code-sharing; 9) airline companies to be able to ensure their own ground services abroad; 10) no regulation on commercial agreements concerning air transport operation; 11) non-discriminatory access and use of Computer Reservation Systems (Vellas and Bécherell, 1995).
[32] Air transport deregulation in Europe covers three main domains: 1) freedom to set tariffs since 1993; 2) standardization of operating conditions for all airlines in Europe, since 1993; 3) cabotage rights, meaning rights to operate domestic flights in other EU countries and to operate flights originating from other EU countries, since 1997. Besides, European authorities implemented a system of European airspace and national air controls (Vellas and Bécherell, 1995).

much more sensitive to prices than quality, new airlines changed their strategy and proceeded to implement several innovations oriented to reduce costs such as point to point flights, use of hubs and secondary airports, labour-force flexibilisation policies and internet reservations allowed by the development of specific technologies. The first low-cost companies were Southwest and JetBlue in the USA. Later, since 1995, companies such as EasyJet, Ryanair and Virgin Express have completely redefined the intra-European transport market penetrating the tourism and the business segment. Even more, while internal European flights undergo stagnation, low-cost companies' benefits increased 15% between 2006 and 2007. In France they represented 12% of the market in 2006 against the 5% of 2003, and 36% in the United Kingdom (Canfin, 2008b). As a result, traditional airlines reacted by developing low-cost subsidiary companies; however their success cannot be compared to EasyJet and Ryanair, which are now almost the number one in intra-European flights. One of the most delicate issues concerning airlines costs' reduction are their strategies oriented to reduce wage costs that have been implemented since the 1980s in the USA and since the 1990s in Europe. In fact, trade unions have been denouncing social dumping low-cost practices, such as self-paid training, uniforms and meals. In the case of France, trade unions have denounced the existence of employees living in France, but working under foreign contracts that are more liberal (Canfin, 2008b). However, these conflictive situations have not impeded the expansion of the low-cost market, even with the creation of low-cost branches by traditional air companies such as Air France or Iberia, leading to a new process of reorganization of the sector.

3.5.1.2. The production and commercialisation of tourism

The second major agent operating in tourism is the tour operator sector. Today, tourism is commercialised either by tour operators, travel agencies or directly by the customer through the Internet. Tour operators are big commercial tourism enterprises *"responsible for the design, organisation, marketing and operation of vacation and other tours at the outbound, inbound or local level"* (Weaver, 2001a p. 661). The difference between tour operators and travel agencies is that the latter are smaller and mainly devoted to commercial operations.

Tourism business has considerably changed since the first time Thomas Cook sold a package tour in 1841. One of the most important transformations of the industry was due to the invention of the Global Distribution Systems (GDS), which provoked a process of deep restructuring within the tourism industry characterised by a power shift from traditional airlines towards new tourism traders. A GDS is an intelligent informatics-based network tool, containing integrated and real

time information about availability, scheduling and prices of airplane tickets, hotels and package tours (Saglietto, 2003). In the very beginning, a precursor system called Computerized Reservation System was designed to provide real time information on air travel seats and ticket availabilities; later, the system was expanded to information on hotels, car rentals, cruises, and all tourism services. Between the 1940s and 1980s, innovative systems allowed economising about forty phone calls for just one electronic connexion in the purchasing of an airline ticket (Volle, 2000 cited in Saglietto, 2003 p. 384). Following air transport deregulation, airlines invested a lot in optimising their reservation systems, whose degree of efficiency permitted effective competing in air ticket markets. Actually, since not all companies had the financial means to invest in these technologies, airlines owning these systems lodged smaller companies in their networks. In return, airlines took advantage and controlled the access conditions to travel agencies and biased information to clients via travel agencies in order to favour the diffusion of their own products in detriment of smaller companies. In order to avoid these practices, since then, US and European authorities have adopted several controlling measures.

Today there are four GDS dominating the world market, which are Sabre, Travelport, Amadeus and Abacus. While Sabre (40%) and Travelport (30%) dominate the North American market, in Europe the leader is Amadeus (50%), followed by Travelport and Sabre, and in Asia the most important is Abacus. The function of GDS is to pilot and to optimise the whole set of tourism suppliers means, together with mediating and managing interfaces between infrastructures and users. The objective is to produce scale economies, which are potentially infinite. In addition, Volle (1999) states that electronic transactions allowed by GDS have produced a new market organisation through mediation. GDS, as mediators, have the task to find in the magma of varied tourism products the one that fulfils the needs of a consumer at the lowest transaction costs. While the leading world GDS function with traditional technologies developed in the past decades, important changes are expected for the sector, which normally should be introduced by ITA Software, an innovative company developing new technologies combining web and neuronal networks.

As happened with airlines, new communication technologies have been generating important transformations in tourism commercialisation. The e-commerce, Internet tour operators and the irruption of new tourism sellers, like hypermarkets and big department stores, challenged traditional tour operators and travel agencies. Today, these technologies not only play a very important role in tourism, but the tourism sector is one of the most represented activities in the

internet. It was in the USA where the virtual agencies were born, notably with the creation of Travelocity by the Sabre GDS and Expedia by Microsoft, both websites with emergent technology allowing secure online commercial transactions (Longui, 2003). Later appeared new companies like Last Minute.com, Opodo and E-Broker, as well as Google, Yahoo and MSN also integrated in the tourism sector (Vellas, 2007).

Concerning tourism operators, traditional French companies (*i.e.* Nouvelles Frontières, Club Med, Fram, Pierre & Vacances, Jet tours and Look) have been challenged during the last years by the entrance of hypermarkets and big department stores to the tourism business. These new local competitors took advantage of their selling power, low commercial costs, sale prices and promotions, and opened a previously unexploited tourism niche. Similar to the logic applied to all kinds of products, hypermarkets operate with a strategy that consists in purchasing big volumes at a low price, assuming risks and adopting fares according to their costs. In France, for example, Carrefour and Leclerc commercialise products of Fram and Jet Tours. Enterprises such as Casino, Fnac and Decathlon have set up a similar strategy but specifically adapted to their public, with Fnac being a cultural tourism specialist and Decathlon a sport and nature-based tourism provider. As they own a consolidated world-brand and they also count with a loyal clientele that trusts their products and services, the travel products commercialisation is easier for them.

3.5.1.3. <u>The heterogeneity of the accommodation sector</u>

Accommodation plays a major role in tourism and constitutes a key segment of the tourism industry. It is a labour-intensive sector, highly affected by seasonality and perishability, suffering overcrowding during peak periods and being underused the rest of the year, which indeed generates economic, labour-force and carrying capacity tensions (Vellas, 2007). At the same time, accommodation has considerably evolved in its quality, customer service, efficiency and organizational characteristics. Since the advent of fordist tourism and business travel after WWII, many different forms of accommodation have been developed. Basically, this sector evolved from a predominance of family business structures towards industrial forms of management and organisation, characterised by the presence of powerful hotels chains, vertically and horizontally integrated, providing uniform services, generally integrated with other services such as transport (Dreyfus-Signoles, 2002). As a result, today we have a quite varied accommodation supply

composed of hotels[33], lodgings, cottages, second homes, holiday centres or holiday villages, as well as camps, caravans, cruise liners, among others. These structures might be profit or non-profit oriented, individual or collective, built or alternative. According to Vellas (2007) the world capacity of hotels and similar establishments was 36,9 million rooms in 2004, almost doubling the capacity of 1980[34].

One major trend in the hotel sector is the dramatic reduction of the number of small independent and family-run structures and the increasing number of hotel chains, which can be either hotel consortiums or integrated chains. A hotel consortium associates independent hotels to compete with integrated chains, aiming to provide comparable service standards and to benefit from economies of scale in purchasing, marketing, computer reservation systems, among others. It is a kind of organization that, at the same time, allows small hotels to remain independent and to have a place in the international tourism market. There exists a great variety of consortia in terms of quality, target public and hotel characteristics (*i.e.* rural, sustainable, etc.). The Best Western chain is the biggest with 4100 hotels and more than 300.000 rooms in 2004. In France, hotel consortia are very important, representing 25% of hotels (Vellas, 2007)[35].

On the other hand, multinational integrated chains, which represented in 2005 20% of the world hotels (Lozato, 2006), have commercialised homogeneous services under a common name and insignia, either directly by the owner or through a franchise system; this last mode of organisation being the most important factor in the expansion of the integrated chain sector (Vellas and Bécherel, 1995). One leading chain example is the French group Accor with 463.427 rooms[36], classified in the fourth world position after Intercontinental, Cendant and Marriot International. Attention should be paid to the fast development experienced by Asian chains over the last years (Vellas, 2007). Another successful tourism chain is the Club Méditerrannée, an autonomous combination of tour operators, hotel and holiday villages present in the most important world tourism destinations.

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[33] *"Commercial establishment offering rooms or furnished apartments to a market which is either passing through the area or staying for several nights. It may offer catering service, bar and complementary services. It can operate all year round or seasonally"* (Vellas and Bécherel, 1995 p. 102).
[34] For a detailed analysis of the sector in the different continents see Vellas (2007).
[35] Chapter 5 of this document offers a complete panorama of the French tourism supply, with a special focus on ecotourism and nature based structures.
[36] Accor manages Sofitel (4-star), Novotel, Mercure (3-star), Ibis (2-star) and Formula 1 (1-star).

Besides hotels, tourism lodgings can take the form of secondary homes, rented furnished apartments or houses, timeshares, campsites, holiday villages, holiday centres and holiday camps. The number of secondary homes has considerably increased during the last years. In France, for example, there are 12 million beds representing 69% of the total accommodation capacity[37]. It is important to highlight the tendency showing an important presence of foreign owners, especially since the development of low cost airlines arrivals regional airports. Individual secondary home accommodation is complemented with an increasing number of second homes with shared collective services and timeshares.

Another important component of this segment is the furnished rented accommodation, which includes furnished apartments, guesthouses and different sorts of rural cottages (gîtes, chambres d'hôte and B&B), which can be rented for short or long periods. This type of accommodation is not dependent upon high fixed costs and generates an important source of income for local populations and also provides resources for restoring rural-built heritage (Vellas and Bécherel, 1995; Vellas, 2007). Given the growing demand for nature-based, ecotourism and rural tourism, during the last years, rural cottages have seen rapid growth. According to Pérol-Dumont (2005), in France there are 42.000 gîtes. The rural tourism accommodation is complemented with campsites that in France count for 250.000 sites representing 750.000 beds (Pérol-Dumont, 2005), which is almost 15% of all accommodation. One last important segment is social tourism accommodation, which includes holiday villages (2700 rooms in France in 2004), holiday centres, family holiday camps, and youth hotels, among other non-profit accommodation.

From the previous sections we can conclude that there are four major intertwined trends largely determining the way tourism is governed today: i) the incorporation of new sophisticated communication and information technology; ii) a deep process of organisational restructuring characterised by globalisation, horizontal and vertical integration and concentration; iii) emergence of new powerful actors; iv) power reconfiguration between old and new actors, where traditional actors loose power. Below I examine the main – sustainability – effects of these transformations, as well as the consequences of the increasing number of world tourism arrivals.

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[37] French regions with a higher proportion of secondary homes are Hautes-Alpes, Savoie, Corse-du-Sud, Alpes-de-Haute-Provence and Lozère (Vellas, 2007).

3.6. The negative effects of mass tourism: main socio-economic and ecological sustainability consequences

Already in the beginning of the 1970s, certainly echoing major environmental concerns and reports (Meadows, 1972), we find the first academic articles denouncing the negative costs of tourism, from a socio-economic and environmental perspective (Jafari, 1974; Gunn, 1970; Pigram, 1980; Cazes *et al.*, 1981; EC, 2003), even if tourism was just starting. The first studies denounced the heavy pressure of tourism infrastructures on coastal areas and the negative impact of tourism in pacific islands. Among others, critics denounced the naivety and indolence with which developing countries embraced tourism as relatively easy export offering development and prosperity; on the other hand, criticism condemned the existence of a somehow 'promotional' pro-tourism research agenda, carried out by international institutions, which painted a quite unrealistic and biased picture of tourism pointing out only potential benefits (Gray, 1970 cited in Jafari, 1974). This seminal literature has been complemented until today with the analysis of tourism from a sustainability viewpoint, putting into question the economic, social and environmental limits of tourism.

3.6.1. Economic limits

Since the late 1960s, tourism started to be considered as an alternative development model to heavy industrialisation, especially for declining economies and marginalized territories (Jafari, 1970). There are certainly several advantages in fostering economic development by means of tourism. As it can be appreciated in the forehand quoted statistics, in several cases tourism creates employment, attracts foreign exchange and increases governments' revenues. However, there are critics contending that tourism related negative economic impacts have largely overweighed benefits, point out the following elements.

3.6.1.1. Seasonality and demand variability

Tourism destinations are exposed to demand variability and therefore to seasonality. Tourism demand is concentrated on a few months per year corresponding to holidays and sunny periods (Cazes, 1983). As a result, tourism destinations undergo short but intensive periods of arrivals accompanied by long periods of abandonment. As tourism requires high investments, in extreme seasonal destinations, tourism receipts are not always sufficient to recoup them, provoking pressures and contradictions in the local economy and leading to precarious forms of employment. In addition, demand variability is also strongly related with tour operators'

commercial and advertising strategies through which these enterprises, in order to maximise profits, control arrivals to different destinations and shape tourists' preferences.

3.6.1.2. Profit repatriation

One major consequence of the dominance of tourism by multinational companies, at the same time owners of hotels chains, NTIC technology and transports, is the repatriation of tourism profits (Honey, 1999). In fact, even if these companies take advantage of the locality for selling their products (resources, public investment, attractions), tourism surpluses are neither reinvested in the destination localities nor equitably redistributed among the local population, but instead repatriated to headquarter countries.

3.6.1.3. Multiplier effect

Even though the multiplier effect is one of the most quoted benefits defended by pro-tourism advocates, some studies have called attention to the fact that in less articulated localities the most important linkages remain outside the host region. For example, luxury hotels and restaurant chains often import food and liquors in order to satisfy their clientele. Furthermore, for senior management jobs, they employ foreign staff. As a result, these regions increase their dependence in terms of goods and services imports, which has a negative impact on the multiplier effect.

3.6.1.4. Employment

Contrary to expectations conducing local people to abandon traditional occupations to integrate into a promising, new labour-intensive industry, an important portion of tourism jobs is seasonal, unskilled and low-paid, and only a limited number of tasks require qualified workers. Usually, qualified tasks are done by an imported labour-force and locals, in turn, fulfil precarious occupations. This situation causes deep social discontent and tensions, especially in those cases in which the replacement of local traditional activities by tourism jobs leads to an irreversible transformation and impoverishment of the local economy (Lanquar, 1985).

3.6.1.5. Distortion of local markets

In many ways tourism negatively alters host economies. Tourist arrivals and tourism investment generate inflation, spur real state market prices, provoke speculation, and trigger off a generalised increase in the prices of goods and services (Lanquar, 1985). Furthermore, tourism generates distortions in the use of basic services such as water and electricity due to over consumption and price rises (Lozato, 2006). As was described early by Butler (1980), tourism destinations follow a

cycle characterised by an early phase in which the discovery and the firsts developments of a new host region attract tourists and investments and therefore creates inflation. Later, once the destination reaches a certain stagnation and/or saturation phase, tourists and tour operators abandon it, thus initiating a phase of decline which is highly impairing for the locality[38].

3.6.2. Socio-cultural limits

Both, the tourist-host encounter (see Proulx, 2006) and the previously mentioned economic changes introduced by tourism, inevitably provoke deep socio-cultural changes in host communities (Lanquar, 1985; EC, 2003). Expectations associated with the arrival of a new economic activity that promises new jobs, incite locals to abandon their traditional occupations in order to participate in what is presented as the new development opportunity. Nonetheless, in the same way as economic benefits do not meet expectations, tourism is also in one way or another responsible for altering existing traditional values and socio-lifestyles (Lanquar, 1985). On the one hand, tourism pushes locals to move away from their home-lands and to change traditional forms of social organisation for working on tourism; on the other, the practice of tourism entails the influx of foreign values, money and capitalist goods that are usually not fairly distributed among the community members. As a result, tourism will heavily impact the pre-existing value system, traditional family relationships and the behaviour of individuals and communities' (Lanquar, 1985), resulting sometimes in the destruction of solidarity communitarian networks and fostering a social context that in some cases favours prostitution, vandalism and drug trafficking and, therefore, divesting the locality of its genuine folklore and traditions. Deepening this idea, it is important to mention the delicate situation of some Asian and Latin American countries like Thailand, Cambodia and Brazil due to their recognition as destinations of sexual tourism and child exploitation (Canfin, 2008c). Complementing this, other studies go even further, qualifying certain tourism practices in southern countries as neo-colonialism, alluding to host communities' bitterness vis-à-vis tourism (Nash, 1977 cited in Lanquar 1985).

3.6.3. Environmental limits

Since the development of the first high-density tourism operations in coastal areas during the 1970s, scholars have begun denouncing the negative environmental effects that these infrastructures could provoke (Jafari, 1974). Perhaps because of their heavy visual impact, massive arrivals and enormous cement constructions became a powerful symbol of environmental

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[38] Patagonia and the Atacama Desert are considered as regions undergoing a discovery and exploration phase. The Spanish Costa Brava as stagnant areas and Miami Beach as a declining one (Deprest, 1997).

pressure and degradation, with the Spanish Costa del Sol and Palma de Majorca as major examples (Lozato, 2006). Concerning tourism fluxes, critical studies point to the environmental costs resulting from the increasing number of tourism arrivals. Air transport, for example, is responsible for 13% of CO_2 emissions, with tourism being responsible for 4 to 5% (Lozato, 2006). Other environmental conflicts concern diverse situations such as excessive water consumption in hotels located in relatively dry areas, pressures on islands, aesthetic pollution, traffic jams, noise, waste treatment of maritime cruises, construction of marinas and ports in fragile costal areas, unsustainable management of flora and fauna, waste in trekking trails, among many others (Cazes and Lanquar, 2000). There are two main unresolved tensions underlying environmental effects of tourism: first, that tourism pollution diminishes the interest of local populations to preserve their territory; second, carrying capacity studies are sometimes overlooked in order to privilege economic gains. Both situations engendered vicious circles causing irreversible impairment of ecosystems.

With the aim of introducing a few nuances to the previous discussion, but without the intention of diminishing the delicate unsustainable situation in which mass tourism operates, before closing this section, I would like to complete the reflection about tourism effects with some possible socio-cultural benefits of tourism, observed even when practiced in a fordist style. Either as a tourist, traveller or doctorate student living abroad, I am convinced of the infinite positive effects that tourism-related interactions can entail in terms of socio-cultural enhancement, horizon broadening and emancipation of women, among others. As these effects might concern visitors and host communities, the practice of tourism will probably introduce new ideas in two different systems of governance. Specifically concerning the socio-cultural effects of tourism on host communities, Bowles (1957) expressed that the idea of a host community status quo was rather theoretical, especially in a context in which audiovisual communication technologies reach most of the world's corners. The next section and the whole second part of the dissertation are consecrated to the analysis of ecotourism and its sustainability potential. Since I share the position of those who warn about the unsustainable effects of tourism, but at the same time believe that every human being has the right to travel, I am interested in the reflection about alternative or more sustainable forms of practicing tourism and developing tourism destinations; more specifically, in those forms of travelling, meeting and offering tourism founded on the respect of all human cultures and natural environments.

4. ECOTOURISM AS AN EXPERIENCE IN WHICH TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES MEET

4.1. Major trends underlying the emergence of ecotourism

Several trends have concurred to the relatively fast rise of the notion of ecotourism during the last decades. A notion that in the 1980s did almost not exist, today is defined in different ways and characterised by several principles, which either describe ecotourism as an economic activity, as a kind of tourism, as an industry or as social practice. The increasing interest in ecotourism and other forms of sustainable tourism reflects the growing concern about the quality of the natural environment and the effects of tourism (Eagles *et al.*, 2002). It responds to a certain culmination of dissatisfaction with the development approach adopted by governments and society (Fennell, 1987 cited in Page and Dowling, 2002). Actually, the emergence of alternative forms of tourism coincides with the post-fordist crisis period, which was accompanied by important social transformations such as the emergence and consolidation of ecological movements during the 1960s and 1970s, strong criticism of the aesthetic and ecological negative effects of mass tourism and of a certain nostalgia for the countryside, somehow forgotten as a tourism destination during coastal tourism boom. All these contributed to develop a new demand for alternative forms of tourism, among them, ecotourism. From a supply side perspective, even though fordist tourism forms still dominate, over the last fifteen years we have observed a gradual process of adapting forms and function in tourism in tune with above-mentioned demand changes. Within the whole set of changing trends, we cannot dismiss the importance of the role that international institutions have played in diffusing new concepts and defining various sets of good practices addressed either to tourists, host communities, enterprises or governments.

4.2. The global scale and the role of international institutions

This section explores how and to what extent environmental international meetings and declarations examined in chapter one have influenced the tourism sector, and more specifically ecotourism (Fennell, 2002a).

Table 13 summarizes major international events related to tourism and therefore to the emergence of alternative, sustainable and ecotourism forms. It is not the objective of this section to go through every international document or meeting, but rather to draw the attention of the reader on a few points I believe are quite important for the reflection about the governance of ecotourism. First, the relation between main international environmental events, and the later application of

their conclusions to the field of tourism. In fact, the tourism sector echoed major global events either launching new meetings or statements, or incorporating tourism as a sub-topic in broader environmental meetings.

Perhaps one of the most emblematic international initiatives was the creation in 1972 of the international network of World Heritage together with the UNESCO Convention for the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. This list today includes nearly 850 sites worldwide of remarkable natural or cultural value, which have been nominated by national governments and then approved by international institutions. This Convention was the first international document highlighting and addressing the indissolubility between nature and culture together with the necessity to develop protection measures to conserve sites considered to have a world heritage value. With the increasing number of sites inscribed in the World Heritage List, the question about the positive relation between the classification of a site as world heritage and the resulting increasing number of tourists arriving to the site has been addressed by scholars as major ecotourism challenges.

TABLE 13: INTERNATIONAL STATEMENTS, DECLARATIONS AND CODES RELATED TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND ECOTOURISM

1960	1963	International Bureau of Social Tourism, Belgium.
	1972	UNESCO Convention on the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.
	1976	United Nations International Covenant on economic, social and cultural rights.
1980	1980	UNWTO's Manila Declaration on World Tourism
	1982	UNWTO's Acapulco Documents on the Rights to Holidays, Acapulco.
	1985	UNWTO's Tourism Bill of Rights and Tourism Code, Sofia.
	1989	UNWTO's The Hague Declaration on Tourism.
1990	1990	Foundation of the International Ecotourism Society
	1992	Rio Declaration on the environment and development
	1995	UNWTO's Lanzarote Charter for Sustainable Tourism (jointly with UNEP, UNESCO, EU)
	1995	UNWTO's Statement on the Prevention of Organized Sex Tourism, Cairo.
	1996	UNWTO's Agenda 21 for Tourism and Travel Industry
	1997	Berlin Declaration on Sustainable Tourism
	1998	International conference on sustainable tourism in small island developing states (SIDS) and other islands[39]
	1999	UNWTO's Global Codes of Ethics for Tourism
	1999	Commission on Sustainable Development Seventh Session (April 1999)
2000	2002	UNWTO's Hainan Declaration - Sustainable Tourism in the Islands of the Asia-Pacific Regions
	2002	The UN declared the International Year of Ecotourism, WTO's Québec Declaration on Ecotourism issued.
	2002	The Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism in Destinations
	2003	UNWTO's Djerba Declaration on Tourism and Climate Change
	2007	Davos Declaration on Climate Change and Tourism Responding to Global Challenges
	2007	UNEP, TIES and Ecotourism Norway Global Ecotourism Conference and elaboration of issued Oslo Statement on Ecotourism.

Source: author

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[39] A report produced following the Lanzarote conference that includes recommendations of the CSD for the specific requirements of small islands, particularly those located in developing states.

During the 1980s, conventions and declarations on tourism mainly focused on the discussion about the rights to holidays, with social tourism as the big focus of public policies. It was really during the 1990s that the environmental and the sustainability variables were addressed by international organisations in the field of tourism. Echoing the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987) and the Rio Conference, the tourism sector, first of all, incorporated in a more general way a global sustainability ethic in the discourse about tourism, as it can bee seen in the *Lanzarote Charter for sustainable tourism* (1995), the *Agenda 21 for Tourism and Travel Industry* (1996), the *Berlin Declaration on sustainable tourism* (1997) and in the *Global Code of ethics for tourism* (1999). Later, in 2000, the general sustainable tourism discussion was refined according to specific types of territories (*i.e.* Hainan Declaration on Sustainable Tourism in the Islands of the Asia-Pacific Regions, 2002), different forms of tourism (*i.e.* Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism, 2002), and specific environmental problems such as climate change (*i.e.* Davos Declaration on Climate Change and Tourism, 2007).

Specifically considering ecotourism, it is important to mention the central role of The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) and the United Nations in launching worldwide the discussion about ecotourism. In this context, the nomination by the United Nations of 2002 as the *International Year of Ecotourism* is considered a main landmark in the history of ecotourism, in the sense that it opened and fostered both the institutional and academic discussion on the topic. Following this event, several types of associations and enterprises, devoted among others to the promotion, consulting and certification of ecotourism[40] flourished all around the world. Simultaneously, the governments of those countries with a higher ecotourism potential started developing ecotourism plans and strategies promoting sustainability guidelines for ecotourism. Countries like Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Kenya, Indonesia and the USA are usually cited in this respect (see Ceballos-Lascuráin, 1996; Page and Dowling, 2002). One of the most quoted positive examples of ecotourism planning and development is the case of Australia, often cited for its Ecotourism Association, Ecotourism Accreditation Program and Ecotourism National Planning System (see Dowling, 2001; Page and Dowling, 2002). Furthermore, a considerable amount of academic literature on the topic is driven by Australian researchers and printed by

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[40] Two examples of institutions are the *Center for responsible travel* directed by Martha Honey that is non-profit research institution (see http://www.responsibletravel.org/home/index.html) and *EplerWood International*, launched in 2003, by Megan Epler Wood, founder and past president of The International Ecotourism Society (see http://www.eplerwood.com/).

Australian publishers. Other countries fairly active in this respect are the United States of America, Canada and an a few Latin American countries[41].

TABLE 14: SELECTED LEADING ASSOCIATIONS IN THE FIELD OF ECOTOURISM

The international ecotourism society (TIES)	The oldest and the most notable global membership-based NGO specialised in ecotourism. It was founded in 1990 and today has nearly 1.100 members from more than 75 countries, including universities, governments, travel and tourism industry representatives, ecotourists, etc. Assuming a world leadership position, it carries out actions in domains such as research, publishing, lobbying, education and awareness (see www.ecotourism.org).
The Ecotourism Association of Australia (EAA)	According to Weaver (2001b), it is one of the most advanced examples of a national membership-based ecotourism organisation. It works as the Australian peak body for the ecotourism industry and is well-known for the Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP).
Green Globe 21	Membership-based organisation dedicated to the objective of environmental and social sustainability within the global tourism and hospitality industry. Actually it is promoting the implementation of a certification system supported by independent monitoring (Weaver, 2001b).
Planeta	Online global journal of practical ecotourism founded in 1994. It provides broad information on ecotourism related issues addressed to travellers, politicians, researchers and all kinds of experts and people interest on ecotourism (see www.planeta.com).

Source: author with different sources.

Publications in the field of ecotourism contain both academic and policy tourism action oriented contributions with Anglo-Saxon documents by far the most represented ones. Policy documents are mainly devoted to the diffusion of guidelines and good practices for ecotourism planners and managers (see for example Lindberg and Hawkins, 1993; Epler Wood, 2002; WTO, 2002). Academic literature, on the other hand, focuses on case study analysis, as well as on the economic and ecological impact of ecotourism, with researchers from UK, Australia, USA and Canada being the most active in this domain (Backman and Morais, 2001). A flourishing of specialised literature can be perceived around the year 2002, crowned indeed by the edition of the first volume the *Journal of Ecotourism* during this year (see Weaver, 1998, 2001a, 2001b; Page and Dowling, 2002; Fennell, 1999, 2002a). Concerning French literature, Canadians have been the most dynamic, despite a relative tardiness regarding Anglo-Saxon literature (Lequin, 2001; Gagnon and Gagnon, 2006; Deslisle and Jolin, 2008). In the specific case of France, the concept of ecotourism was not employed at all, neither by academics nor institutions, until the preparatory

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[41] For specific information about ecotourism in different countries of the world see "Section 2: A Regional Survey by Continent", coordinated by E. Cater in Weaver (2001a).

conferences for the international year of ecotourism (2002). Actually, the first French publications on this topic date from this period (UNWTO, 2002; Blangy *et al.*, 2002a, 2002b), despite the relatively long tradition of French territories in developing rural based tourism under the name of *tourisme vert* (see Béteille, 1996). Among later contributions, we can mention Lozato's (2006) book on ecotourism.

The above mentioned meetings and declarations form quite a heterogeneous set of statements, which vary according to their impact, content, objectives, type of target destination, target public and supporting institutions. However, besides launching best practices, voluntary initiatives and raising awareness, these documents have in common their weak enforcement power. Even if there are formal written statements expressing aims, principles and procedures concerning tourism, they remain non-constraining documents. They are soft-law, lacking a judicial framework to constrain bad practices even though, for example, States officially sign their adherence to a certain convention. Perhaps one of the most illustrative examples of this situation is the suppression of the Onyx Reserve in Oman from the World Heritage List in 2007 due to the decision of the government of this country to exploit petroleum in the ex-protected area. The explosion of the Bamyian Buddhas in Afghanistan in 2001 is also an example of the lack of power of international institutions like UNESCO in case of conflict.

4.3. The meaning of ecotourism and the vital role of governance

The term ecotourism is not just another word for sustainable tourism. It is in fact quite a more specific concept. Rather than describing an approach to tourism, the term ecotourism, since the mid 1980s, has been coined to describe a type of economic activity, essentially nature-based, sensitive to environmental and social conditions, and managed according to sustainability principles (Weaver, 2001; Budowski, 2002; Blamey, 2001). The term ecotourism itself refers to a segment within the tourism industry, while sustainability principles are expected to be applied to all types of tourism activities, operations and projects, including conventional and alternative forms (UNWTO, 2002).

Alternative tourism is defined in opposition to mass tourism forms. According to Orams (2001), the development of mass tourism follows short-term, free-market principles and is dominated by profit maximization. Conversely, alternative tourism has been defined a more *"generic term that encompasses a whole range of tourism strategies (e.g. 'appropriate', 'eco', 'soft', 'responsible', 'people to people', 'controlled', 'small scale', 'cottage', and 'green tourism') all of which*

purport to offer a more benign alternative to conventional mass tourism in certain types of destinations" (Fennell, 1999, p. 9). Unlike mass tourism, in alternative forms of tourism, even if profit is necessary for guaranteeing the economic viability of the activity, socio-economic and ecological sustainability are emphasized over profit.

TABLE 15: SELECTED TOURISM CONCEPTS RELATED TO ECOTOURISM

3S tourism	*Tourism with reliance on sea, sand and sun, often associated with large-scale and mass resort tourism* (Weaver, 2001b p. 19).
ACE tourism	*A hybrid form of tourism that combines Adventure, Cultural and Ecotourism: recognizes that many tourism products, such as trekking, combines a variety of experiences, attractions and motivations, and therefore cannot neatly be placed within a single category* (Weaver, 2001a p. 657).
Adventure tourism	*Usually a form of nature-based tourism that incorporates an element of risk, higher levels of physical exertion, and the need for specialized skill; often hybridizes with ecotourism and other forms of tourism, as in ACE tourism* (Weaver, 2001a p. 657).
Agro/agritourism	Concerns specifically farmers offering chambres d'hôtes, gîtes or searching for a main or complementary income from activities such as equestrian farms, fishing, local animal parks, etc. (Béteille, 1996 p. 5).
Alternative tourism	*Tourism that is deliberately fostered as a more appropriate small-scale, community controlled option to mass tourism in environmentally or socio-culturally sensitive destinations; ecotourism was originally conceived as an environmentally based form of alternative tourism during the era of the adaptancy platform* (Weaver, 2001a p. 657).
Tourisme vert	*Concept mainly employed in France to describe a kind of tourism that refers to the values of nature and landscapes; therefore it alludes to the visit of rural territories located far away from cities (Béteille, 1996 p.5)*
Mass tourism	*Related to two main characteristics: (a) participation of large numbers of people in tourism; (b) the holiday is standardized, rigidly packaged and inflexible"* (Vanhove, 1997 p. 51). *The more traditional form of tourism development where short-term, free-market principles dominate and the maximization of income is paramount* (Orams, 2001 p. 25).
Nature-based tourism	*Any type of tourism that relies on attractions directly related to the natural environment. Thus, ecotourism is a subset of nature-based tourism* (Fennell, 1999 cited in Weaver 2001b, p. 16).
Non-consumptive tourism	*Commonly used to describe tourism activity such as ecotourism and adventure tourism that provides experiences rather than tangible products. However, the consumptive/non-consumptive dichotomy is criticised by those who believe that all forms of tourism entail elements of 'consumption' and 'non-consumption'* (Weaver, 2001b p. 350).
Rural tourism	*Tourism essentially located in rural areas, functionally rural (i.e. built on the special features of the countryside), rural in scale (small scale), traditional in character, organic growth, local ownership and high importance of the countryside for consumer satisfaction* (Lane, 1994 in Roberts and Hall, 2001).
Sustainable tourism	*Development that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems* (UNWTO cited in EC, 2002 p. 7).

Source: author, with cited references

The Mexican Hector Ceballos-Lascuráin is generally credited as the first expert coining the Spanish word "ecoturismo" in the early 1980s. Nonetheless, literature on the topic also refers to early publications of Hertzer (1965) and Budowski (1976) highlighting the complex relationship between tourism and the environment. Budowski (1976) in his article "Tourism and conservation: conflict, coexistence and symbiosis" drew attention to the contradicting fact that tourism holds the possibility to support environmental conservation as well as undermine it. For Budowski (1976), the tourism-environment relationship can be 'conflictive' or incompatible due to the fact that tourism damages the environment, or 'symbiotic', alluding to a more complex relationship in which tourism can be used to enhance the environment in terms of protection, management and sustainability or 'coexistent', meaning that although tourism and environment might be incompatible, sometimes they can fairly coexist for mutual benefit (Page and Dowling, 2002). The environmentalist Ceballos-Lascuráin, in the context of his work within the Mexican non-governmental conservation organisation PRONATURA, on the one hand perceived the increasing number of tourists interested in bird watching and, on the other realized the potential role that these visitors could play in boosting the local rural economy and preserving the ecology of the area (Page and Dowling, 2002).

Also the first formal definition of ecotourism is generally attributed to Ceballos-Lascuráin and dates from 1987. He defined ecotourism as *"travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (past and present) found in these areas"* (cited by Blamey, 2001 p. 5; Budowski, 2002; Honey, 1999). A few years later, the International Ecotourism Society, TIES (1991), defined ecotourism as *"responsible travel to natural areas for understanding its cultural history and natural environment that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people"* (The Ecotourism Society, 1991 quoted by Western, 1992). In line with this definition, the Australian government emphasizes that both *education and interpretation of the natural environment* are also key elements in the ecological management of ecotourism localities. In addition, it stresses that implementing ecotourism is primarily based on *networking between different actors and players*, such as local population, national, regional and local authorities, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, tourism industry, tourists, etc.

Source: author based on Weaver (2001b, p. 16)

As can be seen in table 16, today there exists a wide number of definitions of ecotourism, which emphasize different aspects of this practice. At the same time as definitions such as those by Ceballos-Lascurián (1996) and Boo (1992) mainly emphasize the nature-based experience of the tourist, more recent definitions given by institutions such as the TIES (1991) and Australian government focus on various dimensions of sustainability and sustainable development, resulting in the elaboration of the term 'sustainable ecotourism' which introduces an ethical overlay on nature based-tourism practices (Wight, 1993). Indeed, as Wight (1993), Honey (1999) and many others have pointed out, at the same time as the term ecotourism was widely disseminated in the academic and institutional literature, the practice of ecotourism has been developed in different tourism destinations at a very fast rate. As a result, we have today a wide-ranging supply of ecotourism, with varied tourism operators and agencies that have adopted the label ecotourism, interpreting it at their own convenience (Orams, 2001). Among these various practices, several have been qualified as green washing experiences. The existence of pseudo ecotourism destinations and products, broadly addressed by the tourism literature through case study analysis, has pushed the tendency on making explicit the sustainable ethical overlay. However, it is also important to make explicit that already the emergence of ecotourism, as an alternative form of tourism, circumscribes this ethical sustainability aim.

TABLE 16: SELECTED ECOTOURISM DEFINITIONS

Boo, E. (1992)	*Nature travel that contributes to conservation through the generation of funds for protected areas, the creation of employment opportunities for communities surrounding protected areas, and by providing environmental education for visitors.*
Valentine (1992 cited in Weaver 2001b)	*Nature-based tourism that is ecologically sustainable and is based on relatively undisturbed natural areas, is non-damaging and non-degrading, contributes directly to the continued protection and management of protected areas, and is subject to an adequate and appropriate management regime.*
Tickell (1994, p. 9, cited in Blamey, 2001 p. 6)	*Travel to enjoy the world's amazing diversity of natural life and human culture without causing damage to either.*
Buckley (1994)	*Ecotourism is nature based, environmentally educated, sustainably managed and conservation supporting.*
Ceballos-Lascurián (1996 cited in Blamey, 2001)	*Travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (past and present) found in these areas.*
The International Ecotourism Society (1991 cited in Western, 1992).	*Responsible travel to natural areas for understanding its cultural history and natural environment that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people.*
Weaver (ed) (2001a, p. 658)	*A form of tourism that is increasingly understood to be: (i) based primarily on nature-based attractions; (ii) learning-centred; and (iii) conducted in a way that makes every reasonable attempt to be environmentally, socio-culturally and economically sustainable.*
Honey (1999 p. 25)	*Travel to fragile, pristine, and usually protected areas that strive to be low impact and (usually) small scale. It helps to educate the traveller, provides funds for conservation; directly benefits the economic development and political empowerment of local communities; and fosters respect for different cultures and for human rights.*
Weaver (2001b p. 15)	*Form of tourism that fosters learning experiences and appreciation of the natural environment, or some component thereof, within its associated cultural context. It has the appearance (in concert with best practice) of being environmentally and socio-culturally sustainable, preferably in a way that enhances the natural and cultural resource base of the destination and promotes the viability of the operation.*
Epler Wood and Halpenny (2001 p. 122)	*Ecotourism is rooted in its role and history as a SD strategy. Its components can be identified as travel to a natural area, that: (i) benefits local communities; (ii) supports conservationist efforts both locally and nationally; (iii) includes interpretation of natural and cultural environments.*
Lozato (2006 p. 160)	*Concept coined during the 1980s and defined according to the following objectives: conservation of natural milieus, education of all concerned actors (tourists, local communities, government, NGOs, industries), promotion of moral and ethical behaviour concerning the protection of the natural and cultural environment.*
Ziffer (1989, cited by Page and Dowling p. 26)	*A form of tourism inspired primarily by the natural history of an area, including its indigenous cultures. It also implies a managed approach by the host country or region which commits itself to establishing and maintaining the sites with the participation of local residents, marketing them appropriately, enforcing regulations, and using the proceeds of the enterprise to fund the area's land management as well as community development.*

Source: author with various sources

4.4. Ecotourism principles or dimensions

Bearing in mind the wide variety of the above-mentioned definitions for the concept of ecotourism, and following Blamey (2001), Buckley (1994) and Weaver and Lawton (2007) we can distinguish at least three core principles defining ecotourism: i) it is nature-based; ii) it is environmentally and culturally educated and; iii) it is managed according to sustainable development principles.

4.4.1. *The nature based principle*

The nature-based principle is the most cited ecotourism feature in specialised literature, being present in almost all ecotourism definitions, as we can see in table 16. In spite of the fact that there seems to be a consensus that the natural environment or any of its features constitutes the main attraction for the ecotourist (Orams, 2001), more specific variables related to this principle remain less clear due to the difficulty associated with defining nature and the environment. The variables composing this principle, which refer among others to the location in which ecotourism occurs, to the tourism experience, to the motivations and style of ecotourists, as well as to the kind and impact of the activities practiced in the destination are still less explored topics.

The discussion about the location alludes to the characteristics of the ecotourism destination in terms of its level of pureness, being undisturbed, unpolluted (Ceballos-Lascuráin, 1996; Valentine, 1992), fragile, pristine and protected (Honey, 1999) the most common adjectives used to describe these areas. Of course, various questions arise from these characteristics, especially from the term 'relatively undisturbed'. Even if there still exist territories in the planet that have been less touched by civilisation, it seems important to discuss the pertinence of those arguments affirming the existence of natural territories completely free of human intervention or completely pristine (Gómez-Pompa and Kaus, 1992) suitable for ecotourism. As Blamey (2001) remarks, there is no consensus concerning this point. While some scholars ask whether farm stays can qualify as ecotourism, others suggest that modified areas such as human-made watercourses perfectly can meet the criteria for ecotourism if other principles are respected. Lawton and Weaver (2001) while analysing the potential of modified spaces to provide opportunities for ecotourism, argue that already modified territories can accommodate a significant wildlife presence which creates the possibility of pursuing ecotourism. Further, Butler (2001) discusses the pertinence of rural territories as ecotourism destinations and argues that the development of ecotourism in rural areas offers excellent potential for environmental conservation. He also highlights that we should not underestimate the potential of ecotourism in rural territories in terms

of local economic benefits in areas undergoing restructuring or crisis, particularly in western European countries. As the empirical part of this dissertation examines ecotourism in the Morvan Park, indeed a modified territory with particular rural characteristics, chapter five deepens the discussion about the context in which ecotourism occurs in western European countries, highlighting the challenges associated with the coexistence of rural territories and protected natural areas.

The second point tackled in the nature-based principle discussion alludes to the tourism experience and to the motivations behind travelling to natural areas. Even though ecotourists are not a homogeneous group, as has been pointed out by the analyses of Wight (2001), in general, among the main motivations of ecotourists that have been highlighted one finds the desire to get back to nature, the need to escape from daily life pressures and routines, the wish to see, learn and embrace wildlife before it is too late, and the desire to practice several specific nature-based activities (Whelan, 1991 cited by Blamey 2001 p. 7). As we can see, these motivations are closely related to the enounced characteristics of the new green or environmental paradigm that puts into question mass tourism. As ecotourists differ in their motivation, attitude and behaviour, scholars use ideal types to classify them. For example, Kusler (1991) uses the categories 'do-it-yourself', 'tours', 'school' and 'scientific groups' to differentiate forms of travelling; Weaver (2001b) distinguishes 'hard' from 'soft' ecotourism (Weaver, 2001b) and Orams (1995) 'passive' and 'active' ecotourism. Finally Mowforth (1993, cited in Page and Dowling, 2002) differentiates 'rough, 'smooth' and 'specialist' ecotourists. Hard ecotourists, a small proportion of travellers, are strongly biocentric and moved by the desire for deep and meaningful interaction with nature. They search to practice physically and mentally challenging activities, they aspire to contribute to sustainability enhancement and they need minimal services (Weaver, 2001b). Conversely, soft ecotourists practice short-term and diversionary contact with the natural environment, and they usually prefer well-serviced and mediating settings (Weaver, 2001b) (see table 17). In a similar perspective, Lindberg (1991, cited in Page and Dowling, 2002) develops a typology that distinguishes 'hardcore', 'dedicated', 'mainstream' and 'casual' ecotourism forms. While those who practice hardcore ecotourism are mainly researchers, conservationists and natural science specialists, the casual group visits natural areas by chance as part of a broader trip. The dedicated group are visitors to protected areas deeply interested in the local natural history, and the mainstream category are persons that visit natural areas as an exceptional trip.

TABLE 17: HARD AND SOFT ECOTOURISTS AS IDEAL TYPES

HARD (active, deep)	SOFT (passive, shallow)
the ecotourism spectrum	
Strong environmental commitment	Moderate or superficial environmental commitment
Enhancive sustainability	Steady state sustainability
Specialised trips	Multi-purpose trips
Long trips	Short trips
Small groups	Larger groups
Physically active	Physically passive
Physical challenge	Physical comfort
No services expected	Services expected
Deep interaction with nature	Shallow interaction with nature
Emphasis on personal experience	Emphasis on mediation
Make own travel arrangements	Rely on travel agents and tour operators

Source: Weaver (2001b, p. 44)

Mowforth (1993) makes another classification in which he identifies three basic sorts of ecotourists that are 'rough', 'smooth' and 'specialist'. They differ in terms of age groups, travelling preferences and main activities practiced during their sojourns (see table 18). This typology underlies various discussions on the type of tourism activities that might classify as ecotourism or not, which point out that the impact of the activity and the proximity of the tourist with nature-based attractiveness are two topics that analyses might take into consideration. Broadly, literature on ecotourism mentions nature observation, trekking and birdwatching as main activities, as well as nature sport-based activities such as canoeing, white-water rafting, kayaking and canopying (see Weaver and Lawton, 2007)

TABLE 18: A THREEFOLD CLASSIFICATION OF ECOTOURISTS

Feature	The rough ecotourist	The smooth ecotourist	The specialist ecotourist
Age	Young–middle-aged	Middle-aged–old	Young–old
Travelling	Individually or in small groups	In groups	Individually
Organisation	Independent	Tour-operated	Independent + specialist tours
Budget	Low: cheap hotel/ B&B; local/fast food; uses buses	High: 3*/5* hotels; luxury cafes; uses taxis	Mid–high: cheap-3* hotels; mid-lux. Cafes; as necessary
Type of tourism	Sport and adventure	Nature and safari	Scientific investigation/ hobby pursuit

Source: Mowforth (1993, cited in Page and Dowling, 2002)

From a sustainability perspective, Orams' (2001) continuum of ecotourism types offers another possibility to examine ecotourism (see figure 13). For Orams (2001), according to the attitude of ecotourists and thus ecotourism desirability in terms of environmental sustainability, ecotourism can be exploitive, passive or active. While exploitive ecotourism damages the environment, active ecotourism contributes to enhance the health of the host environment. In the midway, there exist passive forms of ecotourism that minimally damage host environments. I will come back to Orams' (1995, 2001) continuum in section 4.4.3 when addressing the sustainability management challenges of ecotourism.

FIGURE 13: THE CONTINUUM OF ECOTOURISM TYPES
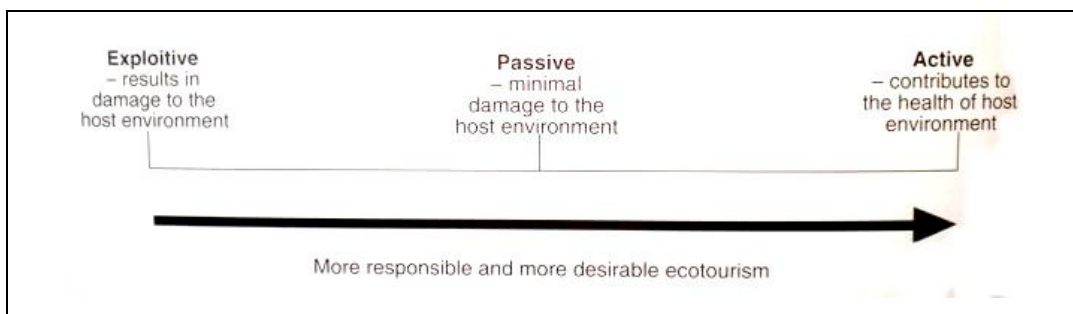
Source: Orams (2001 p. 30)

4.4.2. *Focus on environmental and cultural education*

Education and interpretation of the natural and cultural environment of the destination is an essential dimension that differentiates ecotourism from other nature-based forms of tourism (Blamey, 2001; Page and Dowling, 2002). Actually, interpretation and the key role of tourism guides in making the tourism experience enjoyable and meaningful has been a concern in all kinds of tourism. While offering to tourists evocative explanations about their trip, chances related with their satisfaction and potential return to the destination increase considerably. In the specific case of ecotourism, interpretation goes beyond tourism enjoyment and reaches into the domain of learning and transfer of knowledge of the visited area. This explains the importance given to training and guides in tourism development plans (Page and Rowling, 2002)

Given the fact that ecotourism attracts people willing to interact and learn about a particular natural and cultural setting, ecotourism hosts have the mission of providing the most complete information on the destination. This mission not only aims at satisfying tourists' desires, but also seeks to take advantage of this demand to foster positive sustainability governance effects

through the creation of awareness, responsible behaviours and conservationist actions (Page and Dowling, 2002). Alternatively stated, this principle means that the high levels of information expectations of ecotourists should be fulfilled with a meaningful transfer of knowledge guided by sustainability values. The impact of this educational process should then transcend the particular ecotourism sojourn, persisting in the tourists' imagination for a long period of time. In the case of some protected areas, visitors' engagement with their destination reaches the point that they continue to pay a membership fee for the environmental conservation of the visited area[42]. The methods that can be employed for this purpose vary and include the development of advising materials, pedagogical museums, websites, local scientific publications, talks and instructive trail circuits. They can either focus on the discovery of the natural specificities of the region or on fostering pro environment attitudes.

Much less examined in the literature, but at least as important as the rest of the ecotourism principles, is the learning process in which the local community participates. On the one hand, locals can be subject of a specific training or guidance oriented to foster sustainable governance dynamics and sustainable ecotourism, for which documentations originally prepared for visitors might also be useful for locals. On the other hand, ecotourism, as any form of tourism meeting visitors and hosts, is a social practice that implies interactions, discussions and reflections, which might constitute an essential learning medium to foster territorial sustainability. If we take into consideration the results of studies showing that ecotourists have higher educational qualifications than other consumers (Hvenegaard, 1994; Eagles and Cascagnette, 1995), it is possible to expect that interactions between ecotourists and host communities might allow for interesting exchanges of knowledge, thus fruitful learning processes with considerable sustainability repercussions. In sum, ecotourism destinations meet tourists, who have an important environmental knowledge and ascribe to specific green values, thus in high demand for extensive information about the destination, with an eclectic host population belonging to the private and the public sector, which might either be directly or indirectly implicated in ecotourism activities.

4.4.3.   *From sustainable management to the sustainable governance of ecotourism*
Almost all ecotourism definitions highlight sustainability as a guiding principle for the practice and management of ecotourism (Valentine, 1992; Buckley, 1994; TIES, 1991; Weaver, 2001b), referring to the concept of sustainable development already reviewed in chapter one and two of

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[42] See for instance https://www.applyweb.com/public/contribute?s=YOSEMITE

this dissertation. As Weaver (2001b) suggests, the sustainability dimension of ecotourism alludes to the desire to foster a form of tourism that avoids the negative effects of mass tourism. However, the philosophy lying beneath sustainability encompasses a specific content in the context of ecotourism, which has been translated in several specific sustainability guidelines. As I have already discussed in previous sections, sustainable development is related to economic, environmental and social dimensions, which are constrained from both a diachronic and synchronic perspective. Furthermore, it is related to the sustainable articulation of the different forms of capital that are present in a certain territory. In the specific case of ecotourism, frequently related to tourism occurring inside protected areas, sustainability challenges and so governance ones are specific.

4.4.3.1. Ecological sustainability

The ecological sustainability principle raises questions about the compatibility between different forms of tourism and the environmental quality of a destination. Since ecotourism occurs in relatively pristine territories and by definition depends on their environmental quality, ecological sustainability is a major challenge for the destination, its community and also for visitors. Acott and La Trobe (1998) state that there is a continuum between different forms of ecotourism and ecological sustainability, where environmentally sensitive small-scale practices are opposed to mass forms of green tourism. For his part, Ceballos-Lascuráin (1996) states that conservation through ecotourism must also be obtained by means of the traveller's attitudes and responsibility, rejoining Orams' (2001) distinction between active and passive ecotourists. However, the important point here is that ecotourism is not only thought to be non harmful to the natural environment, but it also contributes to the improvement of the destinations' sustainability, through restoration, protection and conservation of its local environments. It is not exclusively a matter of maintaining the natural environment stock, but enhancing it through the participation of all the involved actors. This challenge might be coupled with alternatives related to other ecotourism dimensions. For instance, the reinvestment of ecotourism revenues in environmentally related actions, education, fostering of good practices, planning, control of tourist arrivals and access to protected areas, as well as monitoring of degraded areas, the control of their carrying capacities and environmental indicators, among others.

4.4.3.2. Economic sustainability

This dimension alludes to the economic viability of ecotourism and to the fair/equitable distribution of benefits among the local community. Ecotourism related activities are expected to

generate a level of economic resources sufficient to satisfy the needs of the local community and also to cover the expenses for satisfying ecotourists' demands. These demands include the whole set of tourism related facilities, as well as a satisfying level of environmental quality related to the previous dimension. Actually, the capacity of ecotourism to generate resources to be reinvested in environmental conservation is a key distinctive characteristic. The precondition of economic sustainability is indeed the attractiveness of the destination depending on the environmental quality.

As economic sustainability also depends on the ecotourism demand for a certain destination, tourism seasonality and number of persons visiting the destination seem very important. While the arrival of too many visitors to a certain destination could enter into conflict with its carrying capacity, a lack of tourists will certainly provoke economic difficulties. It is expected that ecotourism will create jobs for the local population and a higher multiplier effect in the destination (Weaver, 2001b); however this virtuous system largely depends on the articulation between hosts, public regulation and ecotourists, which together with members of the private sector, are key actors of what might be called governance for sustainable activities. This means a system of governance coordinating a plurality of actors in actions related to the search for an equilibrium between the socio-economic viability of the activity and its ecologic sustainability, leading thus to a socially sustainable tourism practice.

4.4.3.3. Socio-cultural sustainability

There are several perspectives from which we can observe this dimension. Generally this dimension is mobilised to refer to the ability of the community to absorb or to live ecotourism without creating any kind of social disharmony, or to moreover make out of this activity an instance of cultural interchange and social integration. But cultural sustainability also implies the capacity of the local community to maintain its own distinctive cultural traits, resisting against the pressure of the so-called tourist culture. In this sense, one of the main challenges of ecotourism is to provide an answer to the host communities' needs without altering their local culture. Gagnon and Lapointe (2006) argue about the importance of taking into consideration host communities' needs in a broad sense, this is to say not only limited economic ones, alluding to needs related with education, culture, aesthetics, dignity and respect to human rights. Several authors emphasize in this context the role and the importance of 'locals' and especially of native or indigenous communities living at different destinations, as well as the imperative need to integrate them in the whole tourism planning and development process (Hinch, 2001).

However, in the same way that in chapter two I developed a socio-institutional approach to sustainability, highlighting the role of governance and arguing that the social dimension gives sense to the economic and environmental dimensions, in the analysis of ecotourism and its socio-cultural sustainability aspiration, features of governance are considered as central. Although there is no one single accepted definition of ecotourism, we can conclude that ecotourism alludes to a transformation of inherited natural advantages into more sustainable ones, either through restoration, protection or conservation of a certain natural environment by means of the articulation of different forms of capital reproduced in a certain territory. However, this transformation seeking territorial sustainability requires a specific kind of governance, which implies the coordination between ecotourism and the complete socio-institutional system governing a destination. The section below thus deepens the analyses on the governance of ecotourism. More specifically, I am interested in several key aspects highlighted in the tourism, sustainable development and ecotourism literature that contribute to define governance in this context and therefore that are essential to identify ecotourism governance challenges. Furthermore, I believe that examining ecotourism from a combined sustainability-governance perspective might reveal essential elements for understanding and learning how territorial sustainability can be approached.

5. ECOTOURISM AND ITS GOVERNANCE

Even if there exists a certain consensus about the complexity of ecotourism in terms of the socio-institutional coordination mechanisms on which it relies, meaning the articulation and participation of several institutions and actors including tourists, residents, suppliers and managers (Ceballos-Lascurián, 1993), governance is still considered an underexplored topic or a rather emerging perspective for addressing ecotourism (Fennell, 2007). Among the first works that have developed bridges between these two domains, I should cite the book of Lequin (2001) on ecotourism and participative governance, an article by Lequin and Cloquet (2006) on socio-politic factors influencing the governance of the ecotourism supply, the paper of Caffyn and Jobbins (2003) on governance capacity and stakeholder interaction in coastal tourism, as well as sections in a few books of Fennell (2007). Broadly, these analyses have in common the normative conviction about the need to integrate local communities in both the planning and development of ecotourism, arguing that only participative forms of governance will allow sustainable ecotourism.

Beside these works, in most studies ecotourism governance issues are addressed under the form of sustainable management, pointing out the key role of the public sector in regulation and policies, and the need to include local communities in the planning and development of ecotourism. Having outlined the key elements of sustainable development and governance in chapter two, the following reflections on ecotourism focus on the governance for/of ecotourism and how it is central to related debates. From both normative and positive perspectives, the practice of ecotourism implies and needs the participation of all of the socio-institutional system governing a locality, for a normative reason that echoes the democratic and equity values underlying ecotourism and sustainable development, as well as from a positive viewpoint, since ecotourism cannot be practiced otherwise, because as is the case of every tourism activity it depends and takes place inside a territory and thus depends on its socio-institutional context. As is the case of every locality, the governance of an ecotourism destination is not synonymous with bottom-up approaches, since local initiatives and thus their outcomes, depend on the social dynamics and choices undertaken at other spatial scales. This alludes to the financial, institutional and environmental resources that the regional, national and supranational levels have assigned to social, human and ecological investments (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2008 p. 93). As was the case for the governance of sustainable development, the governance of ecotourism is therefore approached from a multi-level perspective. This multi-level governance viewpoint means that sustainable governance for ecotourism is dependent upon the interaction between spatial scales and temporal horizons, as well as demand interplays among different policy fields. The composite nature of ecotourism, regarding its sustainability aims and industrial organisation, accentuates even more the multi-level governance challenges faced by ecotourism territories and the institutional embeddedness of ecotourism destinations.

As stated by Fennell (2007), ecotourism attempts to safeguard human and ecological conditions and, at the same time, to activate economic opportunities for individuals and communities. Following Fennell's (2007) works, in this dissertation I propose to examine the governance of ecotourism as a dynamic process aiming to ensure that tourism development is consistent with the needs of local people and the environment. Thus, there appears to be various tensions underlying the governance of ecotourism, notably related to the aim of striking a fair and equitable balance between preservation, use (Fennell, 2007) and enhancement of these environmentally sensitive territories through resources generated from tourism. As is the case of every activity aiming at sustainability, these challenges concern different spatio-temporal levels and various types of actors including government, industry and citizens.

Based on the above definitions, it is possible to conclude that the governance of ecotourism necessarily originates from the spirit of the sustainability paradigm (Fennell, 2002b). Following then the analyses developed in chapter two, in concert with the sustainability challenges imposed by ecotourism, the governance of ecotourism is addressed in terms of the governance structures that compose the ecotourism system, and the dynamics of interaction between them. The governance of ecotourism is thus examined according to its dynamic social and territorial nature involving reciprocal challenges, processes and outcomes.

Fennell and Dowling (2003b) identified the following main governance structures involved in the ecotourism system: tourists, governments at various levels, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, multi-lateral and bilateral donors, and local communities. Epler Wood and Halpenny (2001), for their part, differentiated direct ecotourism stakeholders from other institutions that they called ancillary groups, which are presented in table 19. Nonetheless, in the classification and organisation of this group of actors, each of these structures has an irreplaceable role to play, which while being performed creates particular dynamics of interaction and coordination that should lead towards the sustainable practice of ecotourism. Below I analyze in more detail these governance structures according to their roles and their social dynamics.

TABLE 19: ECOTOURISM ACTORS

Ecotourism firms (direct actors)	Ancillary groups (other actors)
Information services, travel agents, retail	Non-government organizations (including conservation and community groups)
Airlines and transport	
Outbound tour operators	Local communities
Inbound/ground operators	Regional and natural governments (including marketing boards, tourism ministries, etc.
Ecolodging/ accommodations and meals	
Local entrepreneurs/vendors/outfitters	Development agencies
	Universities and researchers

Source: adapted from Epler Wood and Halpenny (2001 p. 123)

Ecotourists

They are tourists arriving to the locality willing to practice ecotourism activities, as well as sharing the system of values underlying the practice of any activity aspiring to sustainability. Despite recognition that tourists are far from being a homogeneous group in terms of motivations and behaviours (Page and Dowling, 2002), according to Eagles and Higgins (1998 cited in Page

and Dowling, 2002 p. 91) there are three main factors motivating ecotourists: changes in environmental attitudes, the development of environmental education or birth of environmentally literate citizens, and the development of an environmental mass media. What these factors reveal is that there exist core values, attitudes and behaviours underlying the leisure activity undertaken by ecotourists. As for the ecotourism experience, Page (1995) suggested that a complex amalgam of factors shaping tourists' attitudes and feelings regarding their trip exists. In this respect overcrowding of destinations and unsustainable practices will disfigure the ecotourism experience and in the long term diminish arrivals. As Page and Dowling (2002 p. 97) suggested *"in an ecotourism context, recognising that the tourist interaction with nature, the environment and other sources of stimulation is an element of the very product or service",* [thus] the governance for ecotourism should watch over the natural assets through which the tourism experienced is enjoyed.

Puppim de Oliveira (2005) deepens the potential of the role of proactive ecotourists and leaderships in ecotourism. From research undertaken on protected areas in Brazil, he examined the process through which pressures from tourists and local governance structures ended in the creation of new protected areas. In this case, effective bottom-up mobilisations, innovatively involving tourists willing to continue enjoying a natural area in the future, allowed the inclusion of varied actors in a decision-making process concerning the environment, and ended with the creation of a new protected area. The leading role of tourists might be interpreted in terms of socio-institutional innovation and bottom-up action allowing the enhancement of environmental rights and justice (Parra, 2008a). This case is interesting not only due to the creation of a new protected territory, but also for the effects that bottom-up action had in transforming a system of regulation usually defined at a broader spatial scale. In the context of this research, the interplay between spatial scales is considered a very important topic, already explained in the previous chapter and further explored in chapter six through the French case.

Finally, as to social learning and enhancement of sustainability knowledge, the birth of environmentally literate citizens practicing ecotourism might be a very important vector of sustainable knowledge transmission, both inside the destination and in their home territories. The creation of this awareness and ecological affection is one of the bases for donors, which might come from individuals or institutions, and constitute a vital resource for protected territories. According to Christ *et al.* (2003, cited in Epler Wood, 2008 p. 207), between 1998 and 2002, donors reached in total over US$ 7 billion, becoming thus the largest investors in sustainable

tourism and ecotourism projects. Certainly most of these donors come from NGOs and international institutions, yet there still remains an amount of funding provided by individuals.

The public sector and the different levels of government

Within the literature on ecotourism, another set of works touching governance issues have focused on public regulation and political dimensions (see Hall and Jenkins, 1995; Dredge and Jenkins, 2007; Coles and Church, 2007; Pforr, 2005). Governments, at different levels, play several complementary roles referring to ecotourism, which is an assumption grounded in the belief that the public sector is the central driving force that underlies both tourism development and biodiversity conservation, as a consequence of its mandate in the interrelated fields of use and preservation of nature (Holtz and Edwards, 2003). Within this same perspective, Fennell and Dowling (2003) define the role of governments in ecotourism pointing out their coordination function among the different involved actors, and their responsibility in fairly balancing the demands coming from all of them. Broadly, governments are responsible for building a sustainable equilibrium between control and facilitation of ecotourism, for which central governments develop particular organisational and institutional frameworks that operate at the various scales, and lead decision and policy-making processes. Certainly, this chief coordination action hosted by the central government is also needed in view of the politico-administrative fragmentation in which ecotourism operates (as is the case of all forms of tourism), as well as the holistic character of environmental policies (Fennell, 2007). Literature on the topic highlights the importance of building up policies and ecotourism plans not only regarding the national scale level, but also the specific social needs and biophysical characteristics of the different destinations. Thus, national ecotourism plans including managing principles addressing visitors and businesses, ecotourism training issues including accreditation, interpretation and guiding, as well as participation of communities, are identified by Page and Dowling (2002) as important management issues associated with ecotourism from the perspective of planning bodies. From this perspective, regulation, planning, zoning, training, strategic views, marketing and financial acumen are identified as key assets to which planners should draw the attention. Certainly, in the matching of national plans with local realities, meaning specific territorial contexts, and local demands and needs, lower governance structures should be actively incorporated in order to advance towards larger policy coherence and effectiveness.

With regard to this discussion, one key domain seems to be the role of the public sector in policies related with protected areas and the practice of ecotourism inside them. This domain is

quite instructive from a governance viewpoint, since various challenges arise in protected territories related to the delicate alliance between conservation, creation of protected areas and tourism. As was examined in chapter two, the governance of protected areas has evolved from parks managed by public institutions seeking nature conservation through top-down policies, towards a new philosophy of protected areas stressing integrated management methods and communitarian participatory governance. Based upon the belief that the best way to conserve biodiversity is to ensure that people who share these territories are included (Fennell, 2007), institutions and literature on the topic suggest the need to move towards the implementation of participatory or bottom-up approaches (*i.e.* community-based conservation, community based natural resource management, collaborative management). The suggestion is thus to link conservation with local development needs, denoting both community and ecological needs (Siurua, 2006).

The private sector

According to Fennell (2007), one strategy would be to turn conservation into a profitable enterprise strong enough to compete with traditional economic sectors like forestry, fishing, mining and intensive agriculture. Bearing this context in mind, Fennell and Weaver (2005) argued that if ecotourism is managed appropriately, it might generate higher revenues than extractive and managing industries. Nevertheless, the examination of community-based models for nature conservation and park management cannot be understood without taking into consideration differences of power between concerned actors. Nature conservation and sustainable activities, as is the case of ecotourism, might be indeed more sustainable than traditional extractive sectors, but the power of extractive companies, fed by their traditional character, longer history and assured level of profit, might impede the necessary territorial transformations needed for a sustainable transition. Given this context, the State has a central role in guiding the social and political process that would lead towards conservation and sustainability (see chapter two), and of course in defining the role that ecotourism and other sustainable activities will have in this transformation.

Suppliers of the basic ecotourism services located at the level of the destination are mainly accommodation, food and beverage services and provision of ecotourism activities, as well as local travel agencies, transport and local producers of crafts, food and souvenirs. As for accommodation, there exists a wide spectrum, yet usually ecotourism accommodation is small-scaled, locally owned and in many cases ecologically sustainable. The most used ecotourism

accommodation facilities are ecolodges, which opposed to large chains hotels, are small structures usually located in natural areas. They vary from low-impact tents to state-of-the-art ecolodges with similar comforts found in traditional hotels but with fewer environmental impacts (Epler Wood and Halpenny, 2001 p. 126). Following the definition of ecotourism, ecolodges should provide environmental education, be sustainably managed, afford environmental protection of the host territory, provide employment and foster productive linkages among the local territory (Hawkins *et al.*, 1995 cited in Epler Wood and Halpenny, 2001 p. 126).

As to the other services provided in ecotourism destinations, despite their variety, similar sustainability objectives are addressed through a large spectrum of innovations. Roberts and Hall (2001) cite the case of paintfrance.com, a small micro-business providing accommodation, fresh local food, as well as painting courses as a means of enhancing the quality of the holiday experience. The list of small enterprises providing different sorts of ecotourism services and products is very long. It includes, among others, services related with activities of nature observation, trekking and birdwatching, as well as infrastructure and guiding in the realisation of nature or sport-based activities like canoeing, white-water rafting, kayaking and canopying. For all these examples, the sustainability aim should underlie the practice of ecotourism.

Interactions between the government and the private micro-businesses involved in ecotourism development constitutes a key component of the governance of ecotourism, since the permission to undertake or develop any kind of tourism project in a certain destination is usually the result of a political decision (Fennell and Dowling, 2003). On the other hand, development and tourist models desired for a certain territory are negotiated, and in many cases the visions of the public sector, the private sector and non-profit-sector groups often conflict. For instance, in protected areas tensions between NGOs supporting nature conservation and firms willing to develop tourism in the area conflict. For Fennnell and Dowling (2003) these conflicts are one of the most important constraints on the building of an effective policy for ecotourism development.

Local communities
While acknowledging that governments and members of the industry do not have all the necessary facts and information to decide, manage and exploit resources, research on ecotourism and management of protected areas insist on the vital need for integrated and collective management of ecotourism and fragile ecosystems. As was discussed for sustainable development, the interactions between concerned actors have evolved towards the inclusion of a

plurality of actors. Within the literature on the topic, the need for the development of integrated governance systems including the participation of traditionally excluded actors seems fundamental. From this perspective, different sorts of donors, NGOs, associations and every member of the local civil society are considered to be equal partners of the development process (Fennell and Dowling 2003).

As was pointed out in chapter two, the reflection on power structures and embedded scales seems fundamental. Ecotourism takes place at the local scale level in direct touch with local communities. However, despite the fact that local communities and ecotourism related institutions are embedded in larger socio-institutional systems, they are unable to lead and control socio-political and economic action related with tourism occurring at broader spatial scales. In most cases, national tourism policies and public action related with tourism seek to accelerate tourism production, and thus focus on tourism marketing to increase arrivals. From this perspective, the local scale is usually disconnected from these external forces. According to Moreno (2005 quoted in Fennell, 2007), local communities and local enterprises play a rather insignificant role regarding the power of the world tourism industry and the policy decisions taken at the central state level. Therefore the view of a more integrated and sustainable governance seeking coordination, articulation and inclusion of all actors is of major importance. The State has an important role in fostering the necessary socio-political mechanisms allowing participation and enabling more democratic social dynamics. Given the importance of local communities in the governance of ecotourism, section 5.2. goes further in the reflection.

NGOs, ecotourism associations and certification
Both environmentalist and tourism-related NGOs are seen as influential in ecotourism in various senses. In fact, in the early stages of the history of ecotourism, non-governmental organisations and international ecotourism associations, such as the Ecotourism Society, ensured that ecotourism was discussed by different countries of the world (see section 4.2). NGOs have played the role of mediators between the private sector and local interests at the local level by means of providing sustainability and ecotourism standards. While NGOs exist that might focus their work on watching over the various aspects related with the territory's ecological sustainability, pursuing in many cases an environmental rights and justice aim, other NGOs grounded at the local level are directly involved in the funding and development of ecotourism projects, notably as a means to foster local sustainability (Drumm, 1998). Honey (1999) examines the cases of environmental, educational and scientific organisations offering ecotourism in the United States,

as is the case of World Wildlife Fund and the Earthwatch Institute, seeking an educative environmental role in order to publicize their conservationist practices among foreigners. At a broader spatial level, other international NGOs provide funds to local corporations for the development of ecotourism (Epler Wood, 2008).

Seeking similar objectives related to the development of ecotourism, national and international ecotourism associations have also played an important role, notably as intermediaries between the various segments of the ecotourism industry and the national and regional public sector (Page and Dowling 2002 p. 144). In this respect, one of the more popular actions undertaken by these institutions is eco-labelling and the development of certification programs addressed to various institutions, ranging from accommodation and specific ecotourism services to the labelling of entire destinations and parks. This form of regulation has increased considerably during the last years within this sector, notably as a consequence of the weaknesses of the policies and measures intended to regulate ecotourism and control its sustainability. Given the difficulty of guaranteeing that an enterprise truly meets the sustainability standards of ecotourism (Honey, 2002), a system of certification addressed to lodges, resorts, tour operators and other sectors of the tourism industry, as well as to eco-destinations, has been implemented by independent auditors in charge of verifying and controlling the social and environmental impacts of this activity (see Font and Buckley, 2001 for a review). For authors like Honey (2002), the emergence of certification reflects major governance transformations related to the rolling back of the state and the development of new powerful supranational institutions. During the 1990s, certification and labelling reached various industries, including tourism, stimulated by increasing consumer's awareness and preferences for more socially and environmentally responsible products. In the context of an era characterised by free trade, authors like Sasser, Gereffi and Garcia-Johnson argued that *"as voluntary governance mechanisms, certification programs are transforming traditional power relationships in the global arena"* (Honey, 2002 p. 51). Certainly certification does not replace State regulation, however authors like Honey insist that this system might be a very effective tool meeting and balancing interests of varied actors and institutions (Honey 2002 p. 51), including environmentalists, tourism industry, host countries, host communities, consumers and international planning agencies. However, certification programs are far from being free of controversy for the elevated costs of certification are not always adapted to the budgets of smaller structures, as well as for the vagueness and imprecision of evaluation criteria and methodologies. Font and Harris (2004) denounced ecotourism certification programs in developing countries for their ambiguous social standards, and inconsistent assessment

methodologies assigning very different meanings to sustainability. Other studies (see Epler Wood and Halpenny, 2001) denounced the existence of false labelling that confuses tourists and discredit ecotourism, and the existing difficulties in building a valid certification system with a legitimate global governance structure.

FIGURE 14: ECOTOURISM AND ITS GOVERNANCE
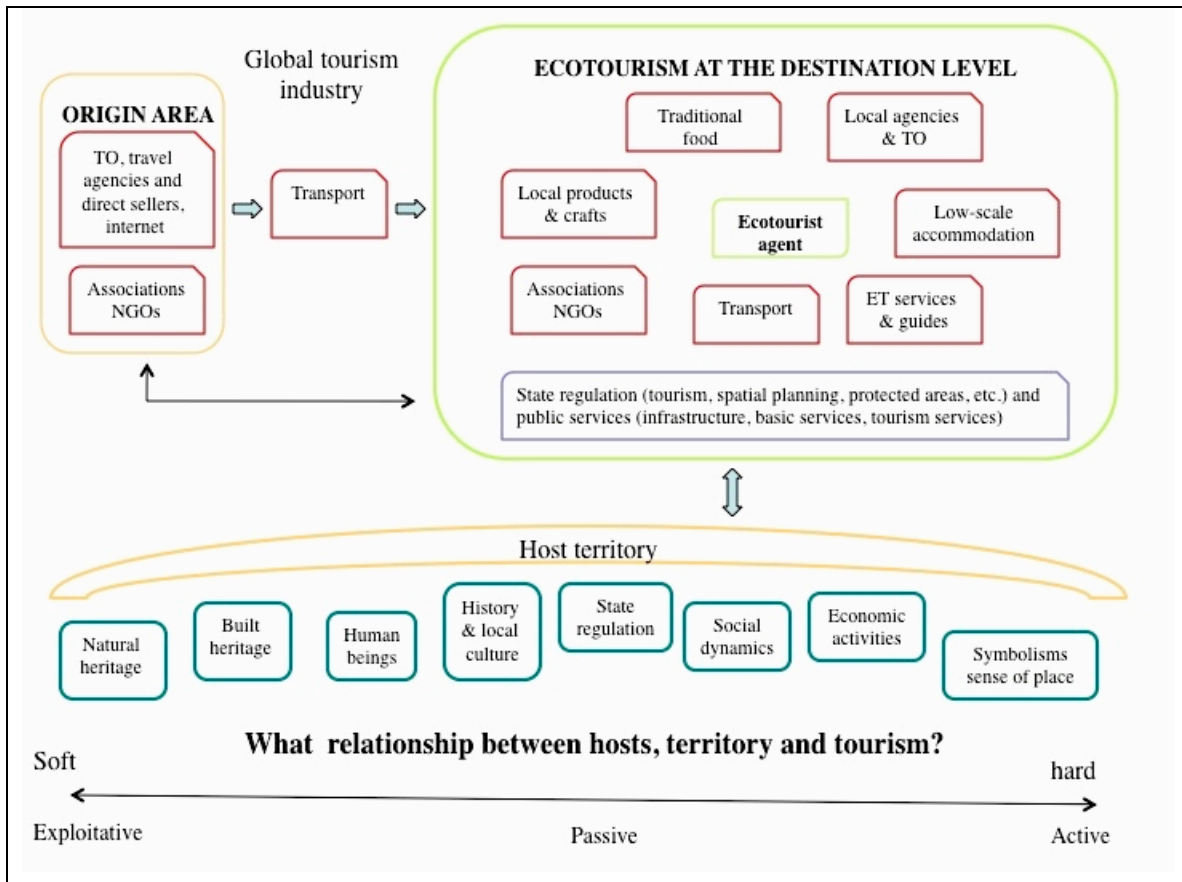
Source: author

As can be observed throughout the previous paragraphs, several contradictions and tensions surround the practice of ecotourism, its search for sustainability and therefore its governance. These tensions refer to: (i) the difficulties in the articulation among sustainable ecotourism aims; (ii) the numerous policy sectors involved in nature-based forms of tourism seeking sustainability; (iii) the challenge of sustainable socio-spatial articulation; (iv) the relation between ecotourism and global tourism forces; (v) tensions in the host territory between tourists, host community, public institutions and the private sector and; (vi) conflicts associated with different territorial governance traditions in the specific context of protected areas. Certainly, the local level plays a

major governance role but this local system of governance takes part in, feeds and is affected by broader power scales that cannot be dismissed. On one hand, the system of governance of an ecotourism destination is formed by various sub-systems and structures that may or may not be directly involved in ecotourism. Therefore, as suggested by Roberts and Hall (2001), these sub-systems must be integrated in the broader development policies, dynamics and initiatives addressed to the locality (Roberts and Hall, 2001). On the other hand, this local system is embedded in wider spatio-temporal governance levels. Until recently ecotourism-specific research focusing on the relationship between collective action and ecotourism hardly ever dealt with ecotourism and ecotourism destinations as path-dependent social territories. In the section below I deepen this reflection on four main issues shaping the interactions between ecotourism's governance structures, and therefore determining the characteristics and role of ecotourism in a certain territory.

5.1. How do global and local scales relate to the embeddedness of ecotourism in broader spatial scales?

Completely opposed to the governance dynamics of globally integrated and powerful tourism enterprises, tourism at the local level can occur differently and be led by micro and small locally owned enterprises not connected at all to global tourism dynamics. Certainly, the governance dynamics of the world tourism industry affect these enterprises and the destinations in which they are located. However, the way and extent to which global tourism trends affect smaller structures and their role as major actors in the destination's governance is less clear. From a competition point of view, the implantation of a hotel that belongs to a consortium with a lower cost structure, thus often practicing more advantageous fares for tourists, will perhaps negatively affect family hotels of the area diminishing their clientele. However, depending on the destination's tourism profile, there are strong chances that the new hotel will attract new tourists to the area that would have never been clients of the existing family structures. As a result, the consequences of the implantation of this new hotel might be rather related with its architectural aesthetics that usually do not fit with the local style. Thus, the hotel might introduce changes in the profile and character of the destination, as well as the local ecological sustainability due for instance to pressures that the new establishment might engender to the carrying capacity of the locality.

While observing in greater detail the role played by locally owned ecotourism enterprises, there are no doubts that they constitute a fundamental piece of the governance of the locality, and in this way of the governance of ecotourism. Locally owned tourism structures are usually much

more than a common enterprise in terms of their implication within the territorial system which they take part. Usually they are family businesses, operated by their owners, who are either natives or people with a special affection for the destination, and thus they have been involved since a long time with the locality in a broader capacity than tourism. Since they cultivate an affective relationship with the territory, their participation within the local system of governance seems fundamental, in the sense that they do not only take part in this system, but also some representatives are leaders in feeding, controlling and transforming major governance processes. In this sense, they might act as key forces in counterbalancing unsustainable trends derived from the current system of governance in which global tourism operates.

Another major point in this respect is the importance of pluri-activity in rural areas, given the fact that, in many cases, owners of ecotourism structures are also integrated into other professional groups and networks and thus they have a larger knowledge of the concerned territory, higher levels of integration and more opportunities to participate in the governance of the territory. In the specific case of the strategy deployed by tourism structures, smaller enterprises might either act individually or collectively through their participation in varied tourism consortiums addressing independent tourism structures. The gathering of these structures might be done under generic tourism categories, or through networks whose label denotes a specific attribute of the adherent structure that can be, for instance, related with its commitment to ecological sustainability issues and social tourism aims. Despite the fact that these formal networks have developed significantly within the ecotourism sector during recent years, in many cases the most important networks and governance relations in ecotourism localities, especially those concerning local businesses are rather informal, and mainly based on friendship and family relationships.

Even though, individually, the power of small-scale and micro tourism enterprises is perhaps insignificant compared with big tourism players, the role played by these local structures seems fundamental and irreplaceable not only for tourism, but also for the broader governance dynamics of the locality. Middleton (2001) proposed the following long list of tourism-related types of micro businesses that include i) several types of accommodation (guesthouses, gîtes, B&B, farmhouses); ii) local attractions like museums and galleries; iii) cafés, inns and restaurants; iv) operators of sports equipments; v) artists and other people involved in cultural action; vi) local crafts producers and souvenirs shops, local natural product producers and; vii) taxi drivers and coach operators. In rural destinations these services usually are controlled by local people, they are operated at a small scale, and thus none of them take part in the governance dynamics of

global tourism. Nevertheless, this system of actors constitutes the heart of the destination on which the local ambiance and quality of the tourism experience depends. According to Middleton (2001), the heterogeneous local system of micro-enterprises and territorial associations moulds the hallmark of a destination, which in turn will define the visitor's perception of it. The collective small locally-owned tourism institutions define ultimately the perception of the sense of place and consequently the wish to visit again and recommend the destination (Middleton, 2001; Montero and Parra, 2002).

While analysing in greater detail the profile of the micro-business ecotourism sector, the works of Weber and Swedberg on the role of interests seem very meaningful. According to these authors, interests drive people's actions, and actions are largely determined by the way actors view the world. Interests, according to this perspective, are of varied natures, they refer to different worldviews, and they necessarily coexist and affect the relations between human beings and with the natural environment. One important element determining the governance of ecotourism is the constellation of interests hosted by owners of ecotourism structures that consequently guide their actions. Since ecotourism aspires to a certain territorial sustainability, actors involved in the supply of ecotourism in most of the cases are guided by a composition of interests that go far beyond a profit logic, which are related to family, cultural and sustainability values. In fact, these structures operate in a local context motivated by a mix of personal enhancement desires, life quality and communitarian aspirations, as well as by the desire to reach the necessary economic viability for the sustainability of ecotourism (Montero and Parra, 2001). Even that economic sustainability is an important objective serves to fulfil a more encompassing objective related with life quality. This nourishes a system of governance pursuing the sustainability of the destination. What is interesting in this respect is the feedback that might exist between global tourism forces and the local system of governance of a destination. The global tourism industry certainly takes advantage of the positive and charming image of certain destinations to develop their tourism operations, thus to a certain extent they are dependent on the local system of governance that is responsible for feeding and improving this image.

5.2.   The need to open the black box of 'local communities' living in ecotourism destinations

One major issue in the ecotourism literature is local community participation, perhaps cited in every ecotourism book or article. According to the literature, local communities should play a central role in every stage of ecotourism, from its conception and planning to its development (Lequin and Cloquet, 2006; Lequin, 2001; Aguirre, 2006; Dowling, 2006; Delisle and Jolin,

2008). It is highly recommended to include local communities for ecotourism to succeed, stressing several participatory methods and highlighting participative democracy values (Lequin, 2001). Although I completely agree with this approach and moreover I sustain that governance is the key issue for the success of ecotourism, literature on ecotourism is in need of a more comprehensive vision about the meaning of governance and about the importance of taking into consideration the ensemble of actors governing a territory. Since the ecotourism literature usually focuses on Southern countries, the issue about how to integrate native, aboriginal or Indian communities has been highlighted (Weaver, 1998). Nevertheless, this issue is quite complex and local host communities are far from being only native people, especially in the European context but also in Southern countries. In Europe for instance, rural territories and natural areas are characterised by the presence of quite a heterogeneous population, composed of locals and varied 'imported' people working in different rural activities. In general, major transformations observed in the countryside (see chapter two) and major governance transformations are still not fully explored in the literature on tourism.

5.3. The variety of territories in which ecotourism is practiced

Governance structures and dynamics underlying ecotourism will vary depending on the kind of territory in which ecotourism will be practiced. Main governance challenges are certainly different if ecotourism takes place in a protected area, a semi-protected area or in rural places non-constrained by a legal protection status. This issue is very relevant given the fact that when we deal with the governance of ecotourism in protected areas, the characteristics of the system of regulation addressed to these territories will directly impact the practice of ecotourism and its governance. In territories with higher levels of protection and conservation objectives, as is the case of national parks in France, any kind of tourism activity might be seen as disturbing, thus even the practice of ecotourism will be controlled and restrained in function of the system's protection rules. Conversely, in the case of territories that are somehow free from environmental regulations or subject to loosen regulations, the system of governance underlying the practice of ecotourism will play a different role. Since ecotourism is highly dependent on the natural characteristics of territories, in these cases it might act as a tacit regulation system seeking sustainability, thus trying to counteract or modify practices challenging the local sustainability. Both cases seem to be very interesting and instructive for research that focuses on the governance of sustainable development. The first case reveals the need to go beyond a focus on bottom-up participatory approaches and extends the analyses of governance to the dynamics of broader spatial scales, as well as to the socio-political regulation sphere. The second situation seems to be

very interesting as well since it exposes the potential of ecotourism in its capacity to induce territories towards more sustainable practices and regulations, thus to transformations in their systems of governance.

As early examined in a previous section, linking ecotourism to rural territories may appear paradoxical due to the higher impact of human activity observed in these territories. Because ecotourism's attractiveness fundamentally relies on natural environments, it is not surprising that relatively natural or untouched landscapes have been seen as the most appropriate venues for this kind of tourism-related activities. This is perhaps most apparent in the way that this form of tourism is associated with protected areas. Nonetheless, in no way this leads to neglect the ecotourism potential of nature spaces containing modified ecosystems by human activity. (Butler, 2001; Roberts and Hall, 2001). In fact, even in rural territories where human intervention has been relatively important there exists a potential to develop small-scale nature-based tourism attempting to promote sustainability. Even more so, rural areas are especially attractive due to the combination of natural and traditional cultural heritage. Other essential elements of ecotourism activities are also present in these rural areas, such as beautiful landscapes, remoteness, quietness, woodlands and clean air, among others (Butler, 2001). In addition, many important sustainable development goals such as the maintenance of local income, the generation of employment and the promotion of environmental conservation, fit in very well with the ideology of ecotourism, no matter if the setting is an exotic tropical rainforest or a rural area in France (Butler, 2001).

5.4. The inter-sectoral context in which ecotourism occurs

Ecotourism, by definition, occurs and therefore depends upon relative natural environments, which can be either a protected area or more heterogeneous rural sites from an economic viewpoint. Ecotourists thus choose their eco-destination in function of its natural characteristics, the attractiveness of its flora and fauna, and its relative environmental quality. However, given the fact that no economic activity operates in complete isolation, the reflection about the broader territorial context in which ecotourism is embedded seems fundamental. Sustainability of territories devoted to ecotourism is indeed highly sensitive to conflicts and forms of cooperation between and among economic activities using differently the same local natural resources such as forest, water plans, land, etc. (Cohen, 2001). On the one hand, the presence of incompatible and compatible productive activities will affect ecotourism and its potential as a sustainability catalyst: resource extraction industries, such as mining, are inherently unsustainable whereas fishing, timber and tourism can potentially be more sustainable (Cohen, 2001). On the other hand,

conflicts linked to the presence of incompatible industries will drive ecotourism leaders to generate opportunities for dialogue and negotiation with the actors concerned by economic activities competing for local natural resources. Concerning forms of cooperation and coalitions, the huge amount of literature on sustainable development and ecotourism, in particular, stresses the importance of the role played by public institutions, civil society and ecotourism enterprises. Generally, when we are talking about ecotourism, we are dealing with small-sized enterprises, considerably less economically and politically powerful compared to, for example, timber companies or the mass tourism industry. For that reason, linkages and cooperation between compatible ecotourism institutions, both private and public, is essential, meaning the whole socio-institutional system promotes pro-ecotourism and sustainability values (Cohen, 2001).

6. CONCLUSION

Elaborating on the approach and concepts explored in chapter one and two of this dissertation, in chapter three I dealt with ecotourism as a multidimensional and multifunctional social practice. With the aim of going beyond the standard approach to tourism as an industry that essentially adopts a market perspective, I pointed out the key role of socio-institutional mechanisms, arguing that they constitute the basis for the development of different forms of tourism.

In broad terms, ecotourism is a type of tourism essentially nature-based, sensitive to environmental and social conditions, and managed according to sustainable development principles. On one hand, ecotourism is identified as a privileged activity to foster territorial sustainability; on the other, the whole set of socio-institutional mechanisms lying beneath ecotourism, meaning governance, constitutes the basis of this activity and therefore determines its sustainability potential. In other words, if ecotourism is acknowledged as a potential vector for sustainable development of territories, as is the case of every activity with sustainability aspirations, its dependence on good governance is very high. In line with this approach, the nexus between ecotourism and nature conservation was examined in terms of the potential of ecotourism to broaden necessary awareness and community knowledge, permitting societies to advance in tracing more sustainable paths. I do not intend to dismiss the potential of ecotourism to generate revenues to be reinvested in conservation and local development, but in this dissertation I am mainly interested in the potential of ecotourism in terms of socio-political enhancement and socio-institutional innovation to foster sustainability. In fact, in the European context the recollection of economic resources through ecotourism is a less pertinent perspective,

given the fact that unlike North and Central American Protected Areas, in France for instance the entrance to protected areas is free of charge.

FIGURE 15: CONCLUSION CHAPTER THREE
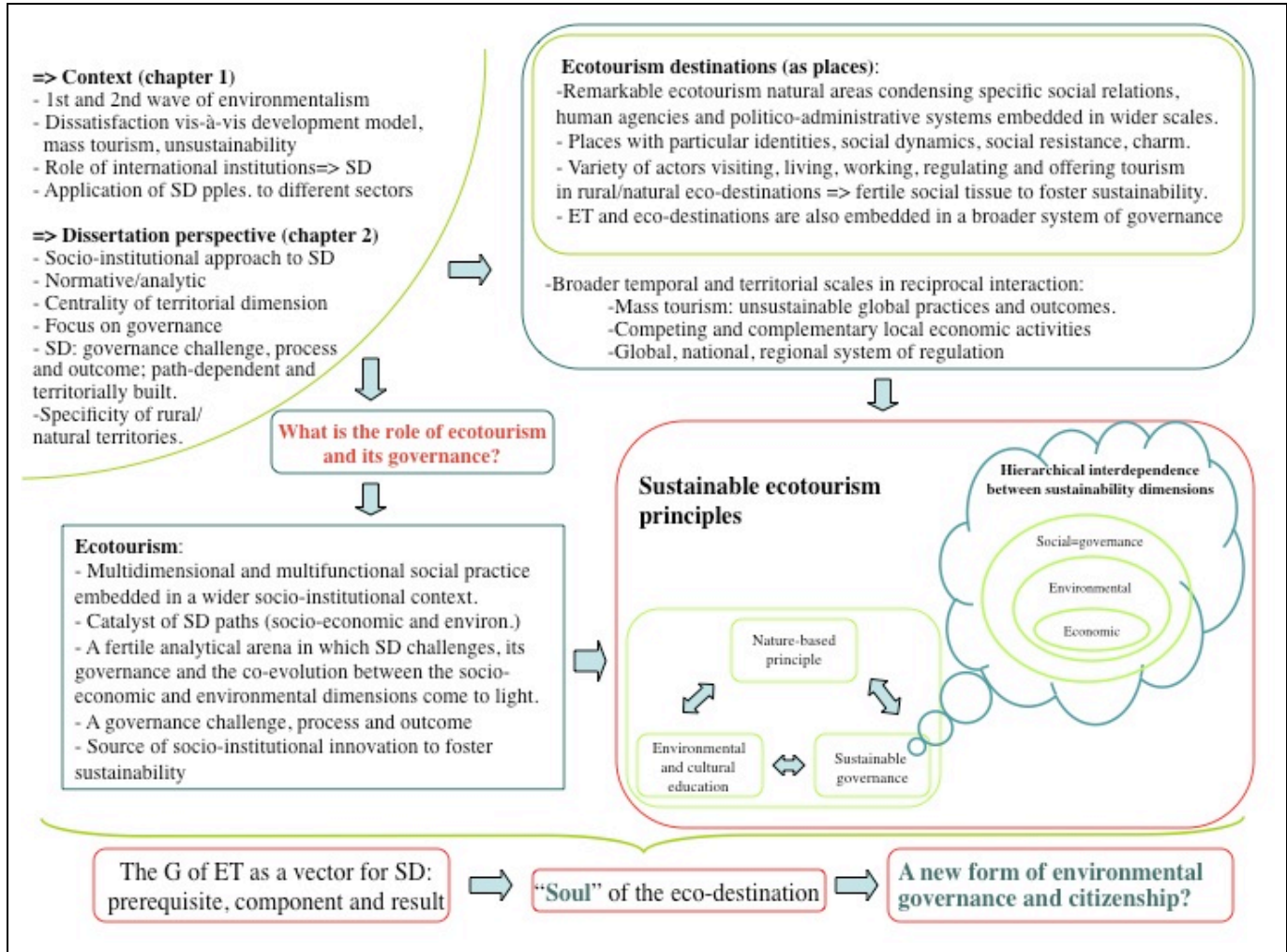
Legend: SD = sustainable development; ET = ecotourism: G = governance

Source: author

Arguing that ecotourism, as is the case of every activity occurring at a local level, is embedded in wider spatio-temporal scales. Contemporary tourism is characterised by increasing growth of arrivals and expansion of the industry, economic deregulation and dependence on new information technologies for its organisation and commercialisation. The organisation of tourism presents high levels of economic concentration and vertical integration, resulting in an economic sector controlled by the powerful triad tour operators, transport and accommodation. In spite of

this, there is place for ecotourism activities. Although they generally do not take direct part in this context, they are influenced by these dynamics and therefore shape them as well. Since the first wave of environmentalism, the limits of Fordist tourism from a sustainability perspective have been signalled, as this type of tourism underlies several economically, socially and environmentally negative effects. In this context, the birth and later institutionalisation of ecotourism can be seen as a result of an explicit demand for more sustainable forms of tourism, which can be conjointly referred to as the promulgation of several environmental declarations, their translation into the field of tourism and also the explicit environmental claims coming from the civil society since the Fordist period. Similarly as has occurred with the concept of sustainable development, ecotourism is also associated with the awakening of a specialised academic literature on the topic, which has been influential from a theoretical and practical orientation.

Further exploring the three main principles defining ecotourism (nature based, environmentally and culturally educated and sustainably governed), ecotourism destinations in this dissertation are defined as remarkable natural areas condensing specific social relations, human agencies and politico-administrative systems, which are embedded in wider governance scales. Starting from the concept of place defined in chapter two, ecotourism destinations are seen as complex living entities, spaces of creativity, culture, and knowledge, and therefore cradles of social innovation that carry the potential to pave more sustainable development paths. In addition, ecotourism destinations might also be seen as territories of resistance against mass tourism, unsustainable local governance of natural resources and broader unsustainable practices.

I believe that the analysis of ecotourism destinations provides a fertile arena to reflect on sustainable development and its governance. In places in which ecotourism is practiced, the governance of the co-evolution of socio-economic and environmental dimensions of development become tangible, offering quite an instructive field to reflect on the necessary social engineering required to advance towards more sustainable development paths. The social complexity of ecotourism destinations, involving ecotourists, host communities and outsiders that might either work on ecotourism related activities or not, and actors related to the specific system of regulation of rural/natural areas, compose a rich and fertile social tissue from which sustainability governance might be fostered. As ecotourism depends on pristine environments and therefore congregates people with a special affection to nature, ecotourism destinations meet a sort of combination of interests, values and objectives that go far beyond economic ones. Nevertheless, as no human activity operates in complete isolation, the governance of ecotourism destinations

also implies the coordination between ecotourism and the complete system governing these territories. Moreover, the ethical green challenges associated with the practice of ecotourism, the development of ecotourism services and the specific regulation framework in which ecotourism occurs, while challenging existing unsustainable practices, will lead to new forms of territorial negotiation, bargaining, debate and knowledge. Ecotourism is then not only embedded in a particular socio-institutional system, but it also feeds and transforms the socio-institutional tissue in which it is embedded, creating new mechanisms of social innovation that might contribute to the promotion and demand for environmental rights. In my opinion, what is interesting about this process is that this distinctive system of 'ecotourism governance' constitutes the 'soul' of ecotourism destinations and determines to a large extent their global tourism charm. Besides the remarkable natural setting of ecotourism destinations, the local ambiance resulting from the eclectic culture of the system of actors intervening in these territories shapes their tourism distinctiveness.

One last point I would like to raise in this conclusion is the relation between the system of governance of ecotourism destinations and the emergence of new forms of environmental citizenship. Unlike or perhaps rather complementing traditional institutionalised environmentalist movements, environmentally sensitive areas create particular spaces of social articulation of actors with particular affection for nature. Even if this social system is rather geographically dispersed in low-density areas, it forms a sort of immanent and omnipresent system of knowledge, vigilance and awareness which might introduce important changes in the way these areas are governed. However, despite this diffusive character, I have the intuition that they might constitute a powerful environmentalist force.

Summarising, from this reflection I extract three issues that I identify as being of particularly great interest: (i) how and to what extent the novel practice of ecotourism in European territories creates new spaces of dialogue and negotiation between the State, the private sector and civil society; (ii) which attitudes, behaviour and roles each agent adopts during and after this negotiation; (iii) what is the outcome of this dialogue and its implication in terms of the sustainability of territories. These three topics together with the whole set of reflections enounced in these three theoretical chapters will be developed in the Morvan Park case study which follows.

Chapter IV – Framework and research tools for the empirical analysis on sustainable development, ecotourism and governance

1. INTRODUCTION

This fourth chapter is a bridge between the three theoretical chapters on sustainable development, governance and ecotourism, and the privileged case study analysis developed in chapters five and six. Elaborating on the conclusions of the theoretical survey, the main objective of this chapter is to present the framework that I developed for the empirical analysis. This framework has been conceived as a flow nourished by the epistemological premises of this work, which in turn are shaped by the theoretical discussion, for finally ending in the Morvan case study and the conclusions of this dissertation. However, unlike the unidirectional river courses coming from high mountains and ending in the sea, in the case of this research, involving fieldwork during different periods, the final construction of the theoretical framework, the framework for the empirical analysis, and the case study in itself, is the outcome of multiple-way interactions and flows. In other words, the progressive deepening of the understanding of the case study illuminated the meaning of several readings; theory, in turn, provided essential insights that were necessary for putting into perspective my empirical findings. Within this context, I am positioned as an observer taking active part in the world under study, assuming an ideological position concerning the nature of the interaction between human beings and the natural environment.

This chapter is organized in four sections after this introduction. Section two is an update of the main research questions and objectives of the dissertation, which are put into perspective with a few theoretical reflections. Section three presents the research design and methods employed for the case study analysis, as well as an explanation/justification concerning the selected case study. It provides information on the territory where the methods were applied and also explains how the information was gathered and which were the main sources. Finally, section four presents the framework from which the analysis of the case study is structured and organised, notably four main research steps: i) main features of the various concerned territorial levels; ii) ecotourism and critical sustainability issues in the Morvan

Regional Park; iii) governance as an articulated process, who interacts and how do they articulate, collaborate or compete? iv) governance as a territorial outcome, resulting from the interactions of the ensemble of actors and institutions involved at different scales. The chapter ends with a conclusion that draws links between the main theoretical concepts and the framework for the empirical analysis.

FIGURE 16: OUTLINE CHAPTER FOUR
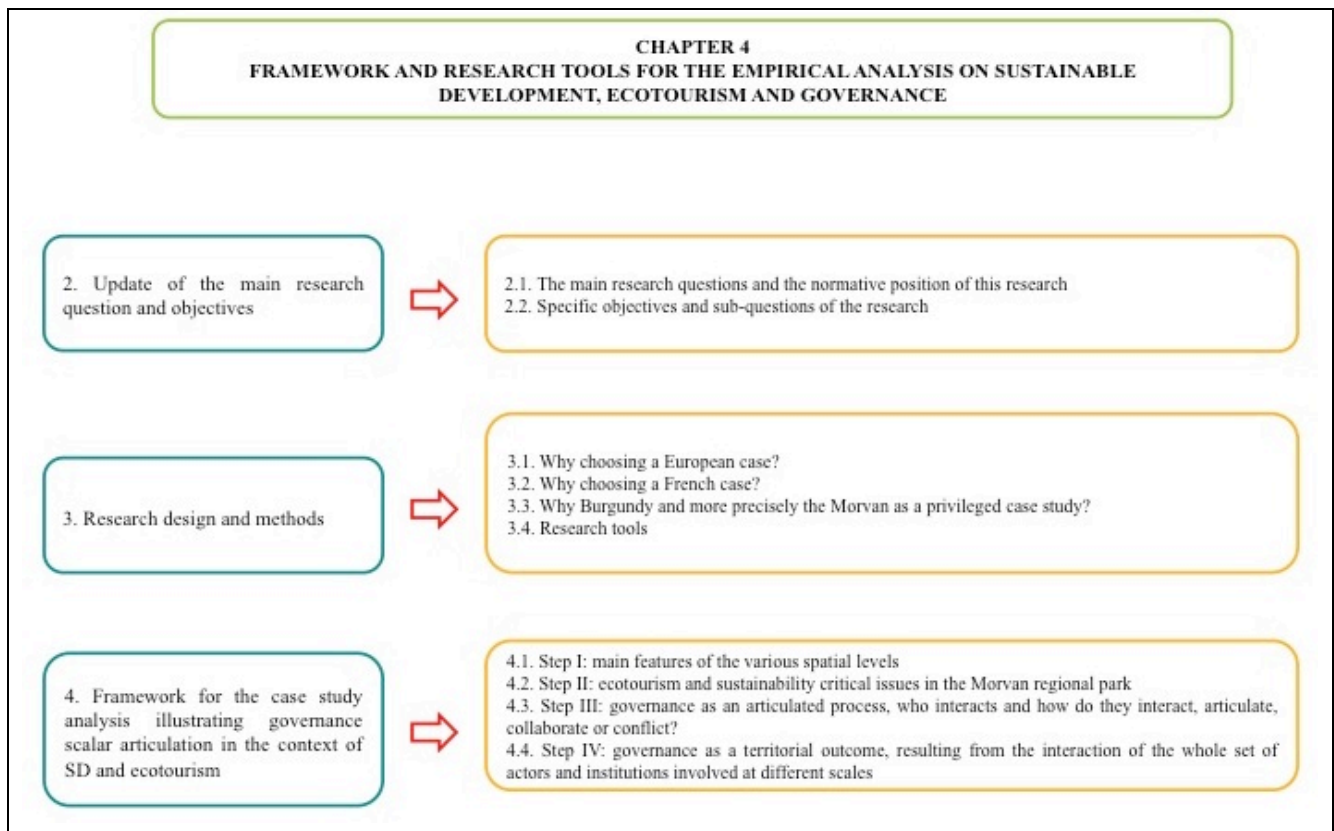
Source: author

2. UPDATE OF THE MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES

2.1. The main research question and the normative position of this research

This dissertation examines the *specific meaning and role of governance in sustainable development, indicating the forms of governance that might better foster sustainability goals*. I argue that *the different forms of socio-institutional arrangements and political organisation of societies, at different territorial levels, play a key role in enabling and/or constraining the sustainable governance of the environment and its natural resources*. In this dissertation the discussion about the governance of sustainable development is specifically applied to the analyses of territories classified as *protected areas* and *ecotourism*. However, because this

research focuses on the interaction between governance and sustainability, it also addresses questions that are pertinent to other environmental arenas. I believe that the analysis of ecotourism destinations and their place-ness, by definition founded in sustainability imperatives, provides a fertile arena to reflect on sustainable development and its governance in general. In places where ecotourism is practiced, *the governance of the co-evolution of socio-economic and environmental dimensions of development come into fore*, offering an instructive field for reflecting and learning about the necessary social engineering required to advance towards more sustainable development paths.

Starting from the assumption that the governance of ecotourism occurring in protected areas is embedded in a larger socio-territorial and socio-temporal system, the mains questions of this dissertation state as follows:

> ***which is the role of governance and its distinctiveness in the process of building an ecotourism destination and, consequently, fostering more sustainable development paths in a certain territory? How does governance shape the building up of an ecotourism destination and encourages sustainable or not sustainable development paths? How do these different forms of governance are crystallized in specific sustainable (or non-sustainable) protected areas, and in particular in the Morvan regional park?***

These main research questions are based on the following assumptions:
- Development can neither be analysed nor pursued without taking into consideration the dynamic interaction between its socio-economic and environmental dimensions. Within the interrelation of the economic, social and environmental sustainability pillars, governance is considered to be a key encompassing concept that fills the notion of sustainability with a more meaningful socio-institutional and socio-political content.
- The interaction of a variety of scales and socio-institutional, political and environmental processes (that might foster sustainability or not) occurs at different temporal and territorial levels.
- The interconnection of processes at different spatial levels (global, European, regional, national, local) denotes and entails the embeddedness of various power relationships.
- Dynamic of continuity, transformations and radical turning points observed along different temporalities reveal the importance of historical and evolutionary analysis.
- The whole set of governance dynamics, at the various territorial levels, are condensed into specific territories, thus determine and shape their sustainability.

- Besides public regulation, the notion of governance touches on the ensemble of socio-institutional arrangements underlying the various modes of consumption and production, and individual life-styles that might be in tune with sustainability or not.

2.2. Specific objectives and sub-questions of the research

This dissertation focuses significantly on the interaction between governance and territory in the field of sustainable development. The construction of the answers to the research questions has been done theoretically and empirically by the means of a case study analysis in the Morvan. This case has been approached from a multi-scalar perspective taking social embeddedness into account. In order to make methodological articulations more manageable, a series of sub-questions have been elaborated and divided into three sub-sections including governance, ecotourism and sustainability of territories designated as protected areas. These reflect three main objectives of the dissertation: the realisation of *theoretical surveys*, *a methodological research framework* and an *empirical analysis*.

From a *theoretical perspective* the originality of this research rests on the form in which it connects three main bodies of literature: sustainable development, governance and ecotourism. Thus far, little dialogue has been established between these three fields and there is a clear dearth of studies focusing on the social dimension of sustainability. My research approach, which is based on economic sociology, institutional economics and regional development theory, creates bridges between these fields and provides an alternative framework offering explanations for the understanding of the complex and interactive dynamics underlying territorial sustainable development and its governance.

This thesis is based on a starting position that focuses on the need to employ an inter-disciplinary approach able to comprehend the complex interactions between human beings and the environmental systems in which human activity occurs and, consequently, is shaped. It adopts critical position vis-à-vis orthodox economic assumptions focusing on the role of competitive markets, prices systems and rationality. Conversely, I am interested in a socio-institutional approach to sustainable development and management of natural resources that highlights the role of governance, the embeddedness of institutions and the path-dependency of territories. For this purpose, this work elaborated on contributions coming from economic sociology (Smelser and Swedberg, 1995a; Bourdieu, 2000), institutionalism (Commons, 1931; Veblen 1899; Polanyi, 1944; Hollingsworth and Boyer, 1997; Hodgson, 1998) and regional development theories inspired by socio-institutional premises (Hudson, 2000; Swyngedouw, 2005; Moulaert, 2000; Gonzalez and Healey, 2005).

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The worldwide weight of tourism is well known among scholars and international institutions. Tourism is seen as a powerful industry in terms of export earnings, foreign exchange and employment. Despite over the last thirty years tourism has been addressed by alternative paradigms, based upon environmental and social values questioning the above mentioned benefits of tourism, a market hegemonic regard still persists (see Higgins-Desbiolles, 2005). Either to support tourism economic benefits, or to condemn them from a sustainability viewpoint, a market perspective has overshadowed essential socio-institutional facets linked to the development, reproduction and effects of this activity. In this dissertation I go beyond this standard approach to tourism, in order to highlight the role of socio-institutional mechanisms that lie beneath tourism, arguing that they constitute the core or basis of this social practice. A focus on governance implies a socio-institutional reading of the interaction between tourism supply and demand, and involves the roles of tourists and tourism suppliers, as well as the ensemble of public and private institutions intervening in the making of tourism and its geography. Additionally, an analysis of tourism focusing on governance highlights the territorial dimension of tourism. Given the focus on ecotourism the territorial dimension of tourism is addressed in terms of the sustainability of the destination locus, following the assumption that ecotourism is embedded in a larger territorial system. In sum, the articulations between tourism, governance and territory are essential. In this work they are addressed through ecotourism, defined in the previous chapters as a socio-economic activity carrying the potential to foster territorial sustainability. Governance, thus, plays a major role in both ecotourism and territorial sustainability. The governance of sustainable development and of ecotourism implies temporal and territorial scales, as well as their forms of articulation and power.

Elaborating on the theoretical surveys, the second aim of this dissertation is to develop an empirical framework that examines how and to what extent contemporary societies deal with sustainability challenges through ecotourism. In order to investigate the role of ecotourism in the governance of protected areas, I propose an analysis of multi-level governance combining a historical perspective (processes, path-dependency) with an inter-territorial regard of various embedded scales (from global to local), together with a more detailed analysis of the level of governance where ecotourism occurs (the Morvan). The governance of ecotourism is thus analysed as a sustainability *challenge*, a path-dependent *process* and a territorial *outcome* (which is the result of these interactions in terms territorial sustainability and socio-institutional innovation and governance for sustainability?). Sub-questions guiding this research are presented in box 5:

BOX 5: THE SUB-QUESTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Governance structures and dynamics at various territorial levels

- What is the specificity of the governance needed to foster sustainable development?
- How and to what extent has the notion of governance been redefined by major environmental and sustainable development challenges?
- What is the role of governance in environmental decision-making and sustainability of territories classified as protected areas?
- Which is the role of the various public actors, the private sector and civil society involved in the governance of protected areas?
- What is the specificity of the governance of protected areas aiming sustainability?
- Which is the role of the different spatial levels (global, continental, national, regional and local arenas) and how have they interacted in different historical periods? What are the forms of collaboration and conflict between these power scales and actors?

The role of ecotourism and its potential to foster sustainability of territories

- How and to what extent does ecotourism foster environmental protection and, at the same time, enhance the quality of the local heritage, and by doing so reinforce sustainability of territories that are classified as protected areas?
- How and to what extent does ecotourism feed a pre-existing system of governance, either contesting non-sustainable practices or reinforcing sustainable ones? What role does ecotourism play in fragile territories protected under specific environmental regulations?
- To foster sustainability through ecotourism, what are the most appropriate levels of governance to become involved and how should they be articulated among them?
- What insights do the analyses of the governance of ecotourism provide for a broader reflection on the modes of governance necessary to foster sustainability and more sustainable utilization of natural resources?

Sustainability and governance outcomes derived from the practice and institutionalisation of ecotourism

- What are the outcomes of the ensemble of socio-institutional interactions governing ecotourism destinations and their sustainability?
- How and to what extent does the governance of ecotourism foster more sustainable development paths, and thus produce more sustainable protected areas?
- Which are the outcomes of these interactions in terms of socio-institutional innovation and governance for sustainable development?
- How is new knowledge, creativity and socio-institutional innovation for sustainable development territorially produced from the practice of ecotourism and how does this process feed and re-create the existing system of governance, by means of engendering and renewing governance challenges for the various involved spatial levels?

The specificity and richness of the Morvan Park case for the reflection on territorial sustainability, ecotourism and governance:

- How and to what extent does the governance of ecotourism in the Morvan Park favours (or not) territorial sustainability?
- How is the Morvan socio-economic system is embedded in a vast "morvandelle" culture and history, and which is the role played by the local socio-cultural system in the development of ecotourism in this territory?
- What elements (economic, environmental and socio-institutional) at the various spatial scales (EU, France, Burgundy, *Département*) have significantly shaped the Morvan development trajectory for it to become a protected area where ecotourism is practiced?
- Which biophysical, institutional, cultural, economic and social characteristics do distinguish the Morvan experience from other ecotourism cases and protected territories?
- To what extent the multi-level governance of the Morvan can be qualified as legitimate and, socio-economic and environmentally in tune with territorial sustainability?
- How the Morvan case contributes to shed light on the concepts of sustainable development, ecotourism and governance, and more precisely on the role of governance, different spatial levels and ecotourism as a territorial sustainability vector?

Source: author

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

In order to investigate how and to what extent different forms of governance foster territorial sustainability, and more precisely sustainability of territories classified as protected areas, the empirical research was done through case study analysis in French Regional Parks, and more precisely in the Morvan Park. A privileged case study as the core research method is justified by the wish to carry out in-depth analysis comprising not only the realisation of a 'picture' of the Morvan in the present day, but also an examination of its socio-economic, environmental, cultural and institutional trajectory drawing attention to the notion of path-dependency. Furthermore, as it has already been argued in the theoretical chapter, a research method in tune with an holistic approach cannot limit its empirical scope to the Morvan scale, according to the argument on the embeddedness of institutions and territories in wider governance scales. These assumptions entail three remarks regarding empirical research that seem important to underline: i) ecotourism is an activity that takes part and interacts with a larger socio-institutional system; ii) the Morvan, as a protected area where ecotourism is practiced, is anchored in wider territorial scales and; iii) sustainable development is seen as an overarching political value and challenge permeating at different degrees all territorial scales, policy sectors and socio-institutional interactions. As a result, even if this research focuses on ecotourism in the Morvan for the analysis of sustainable development and its governance, it is far from being restricted to ecotourism. Firstly, the inter-sectoral character of tourism demands a wider perspective; secondly, the study of an activity aiming socio-economic and environmental sustainability, as it is the case of ecotourism, necessarily comprises a kind of examination that puts into relation ecotourism with the whole territorial system, including the inter-sectoral economic context and the management of the different natural resources. The methodological consequence of this analysis is thus related with the need to formulate an empirical framework that gives an articulated explanation in terms of time, territory, economic sectors, institutions and policy levels.

The reasons justifying the specific selection of the Morvan Park as the privileged case for this study on ecotourism, sustainable development and governance are various and can be remitted to multiple evolving challenges observed at the different territorial levels. Even though I explained in the previous chapter that ecotourism is mainly associated to territories with a more pristine environment located according to the literature in African and Latin American countries, in this dissertation I argue that ecotourism principles and sustainability objectives are as pertinent in Europe and France as elsewhere. In the subsections below, I briefly review the reasons lying beneath the selection of the Morvan case.

3.1. Why choosing a European case?

The selection of a European case study is firstly explained by the existence of various initiatives, strategies and policies promoting sustainable development and ecotourism for European countries. The European Union, to which France belongs, is a well-established and structurally developed model of regional integration offering an ideal context for analyzing governance from a multi-level perspective. Also, the Council of Europe (to which France also belongs) and other European institutions (*i.e.* EUROPARC) have established sustainable development priorities and ecotourism strategies, which are promoted through structural funding, voluntary certification programmes and pan-institutional networks. Sustainable development and governance is about spatial scales, thus the analysis of governance from the perspective of a European country – in this case France – opens interesting investigation areas concerning challenges related with the inter-scalar articulation necessity.

Secondly, it is important to mention the sheer wealth of the European natural and cultural heritage, which constitutes an important tourism attractiveness for both European and foreign tourists. The mixture of geological features and landscapes with varied inherited cultural expressions, essentially located in non-urban areas, constitute key assets for sustainable tourism activities, among them ecotourism, which take place beyond habitual mass tourism circuits. The existence of this distinctive heritage combining nature and culture has fostered the formation of a special institutional skeleton working on actions related with the inventory, protection, conservation and enhancement of these sites. A number of policies, institutional networks and instruments, which have been conceived to ensure sustainability of remarkable territories, constitute very interesting institutions for reflecting on governance.

The EU is indeed a central actor in the governance of its member states, especially in sustainability and environmental domains. I certainly believe that the broader discussion on the governance of protected areas, sustainability and ecotourism may well be enriched by this research on a European case, where the European level is characterised by the effort of building bridges between spatial scales, economic sectors and policy domains under a sustainability umbrella.

3.2. Why choosing a French case?

The examination of France from a tourism perspective is of great interest firstly because of the popularity of this country as a tourism destination not only among European travellers but also all through the world. According UNWTO (2002a) statistics, since 1985, France belongs to the select group of the biggest tourism world players. Each year the number of tourists disembarking in France reaches a new record, attaining in 2008 more than 80 millions visitors

(Direction du Tourisme, 2008a). According to UNWTO statistics, in the next years tourism will become the first French industry.

Several factors explain the attractiveness of France as a tourism destination, among which its lower population density compared to European neighbours, its larger natural areas, refined gastronomy, more temperate climate, and its cultural and built heritage are usually pointed out as main assets. The process by which this touristy reputation of France has been constructed is of big interest as well. Although it could be easy to relate the tourism popularity of France to Paris, which is indeed a very strong world tourism icon, French tourism goes far beyond its capital. In the specific case of this dissertation, I am interested in the French expertise in developing rural tourism products that combine nature, culture and agriculture, as is the case of the world-known Alsatian *route de vin*. The emblematical *route de vin* is indeed a recognized French innovative tourism model that has been a subject of research among tourism experts, as well as a know-how export for other wine producers countries like Chile.

Finally, I believe that the reflection on the governance of sustainable development and ecotourism starting from a French experience is of great interest given the particular institutional trajectory under which sustainability and ecotourism goals have evolved in France. Echoing the first and second wave of environmentalism, France has transited from a top-down policy approach (1945-1975) towards devolution to sub-national territories (since the mid-1980s) and also delegate some power to the European level. From the mid-1990s onwards, decentralisation was accompanied and reinforced with the inclusion of sustainability objectives in the policy agenda, provoking the proliferation of a large amount of new sub-national institutions that highly increased the complexity of the French institutional skeleton. On the other hand, France presents a well-developed system of protected areas and complementary initiatives coming from different societal sectors (public, private, civil society) related with biodiversity protection, natural resources management, agriculture, forestry, spatial planning, tourism and sustainable tourism, among others. This ensemble of initiatives operates at different territorial levels and therefore permeates the whole French governance system.

3.3. Why Burgundy and more precisely the Morvan as a privileged case study?

Beyond reasons associated to other spatial scales, there are several "local" reasons lying beneath the selection of the Morvan as the privileged case for this research. Firstly, I wish to point out the international popularity of the Burgundy region as a tourism destination. Burgundy is in fact one of the most visited regions in France, in particular due to its

international reputation as a wine culture destination and its strategic location in close proximity with Paris and midway from Mediterranean destinations.

FIGURE 17: THE GOVERNANCE TO FOSTER SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH ECOTOURISM: A REGARD ACROSS SCALES
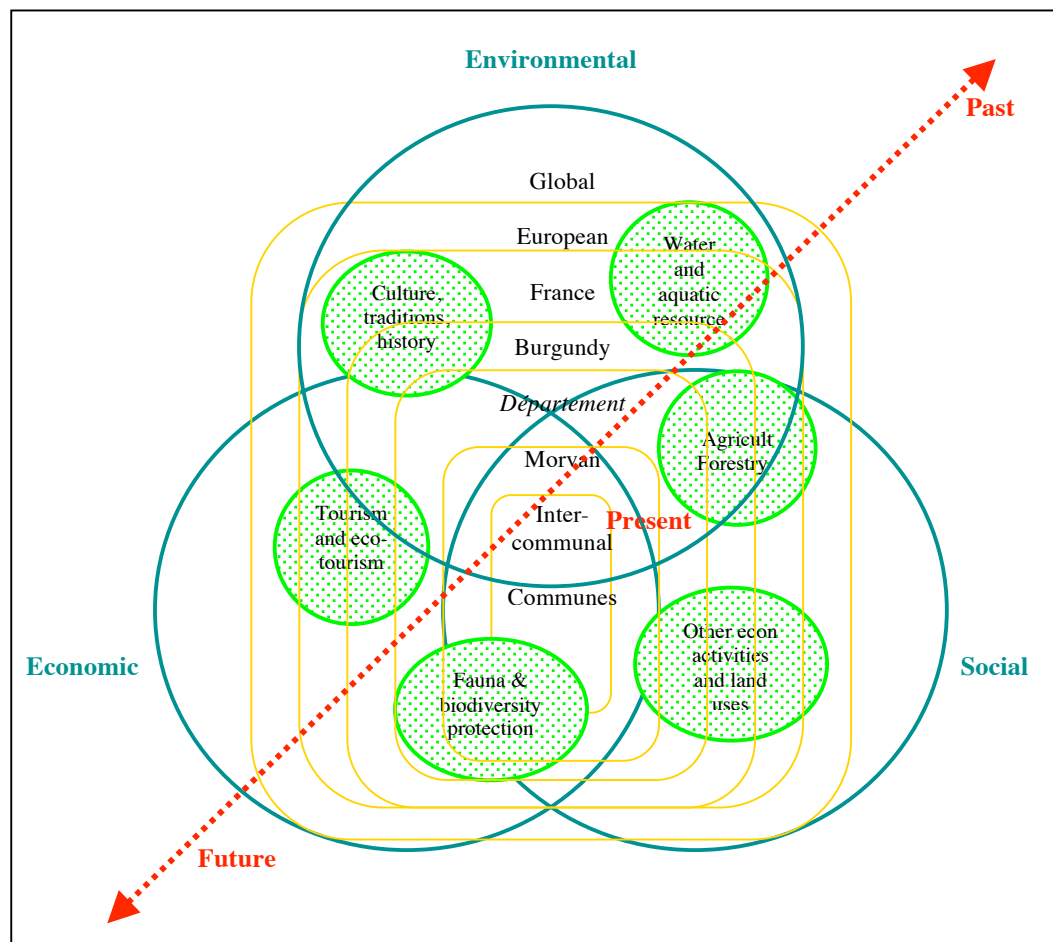
Source: author

Even if the Morvan is a territory whose ecological system has been modified by the passage of various civilisations, it is important to mention that it remains being a region congregating numerous relevant European natural species. Throughout centuries the inherited Morvan natural characteristics, including its flora, fauna, natural resources, geology, etc., have witnessed and hosted important episodes of the European history. This passage has consequently resulted in a unique scenario that combines history, culture and nature, which is indeed very attractive for developing and practicing ecotourism today. During the early-1970s, in the middle of the first environmentalist wave, the Morvan was invested with the creation of a new public institution that would be the responsible for this territory: the Morvan Regional Park. Taking advantage of the launching of a new French institutional tool

to favour rural development and nature protection, the Morvan inhabitants founded one of the firsts regional parks of France. Since then, with ups and downs, this institution has not only been in charge of protecting and enhancing the Morvan, according to sustainable development imperatives, but also the Park has become an important actor among the whole set of institutions governing the Morvan. In this sense, regional parks are considered as pioneers in promoting territorial sustainability, engaging a collaborative system of governance aiming at sustainability, and fostering sustainable tourism and ecotourism.

For many reasons I believe that the Morvan case is quite an appropriated experience for studying the governance of sustainable development and ecotourism. Summarizing, I highlight: i) the presence of a wide variety of actors and institutions adhering to different sustainability visions and incarnating and promoting different governance modes; ii) there is a growing group of actors and institutions working for deepening sustainability in this territory; iii) as part of a broader sustainability strategy, since the very early beginnings of the Park, ecotourism has been identified as a major activity, and; vi) the Park is an institution that has played an important role, assuming an original positioning and action oriented to protect the natural environment and encourage socio-economic development. With more than thirty years of life, the Morvan Park (and the complete network of French regional parks) has become a symbol among the large list of institutions working nowadays in fostering territorial sustainability. In spite of this, it is also important to mention that regional parks are also subject of controversies. In fact, as will be analysed in the next chapters, French regional parks have been confronted with the birth of new decentralised institutions with sustainability purposes that put into question the existence and role of parks.

In my opinion, the Morvan case provides interesting and original information for the understanding of the role of governance within a context of sustainability and ecotourism. The figure below sketches the various relevant aspects and scales that will be taken into consideration in the case study analysis, revealing so the underlying challenges in terms of governance and scalar articulation from a synchronic and diachronic perspective.

3.4. Research tools

The case study analysis combines *primary* and *secondary* research methods for data collection. Primary information was gathered from a combination of in-depth interviews with privileged witnesses, participatory observations, ethnographies, informal conversations and photos, in agreement with the belief that researchers also participate in the world that they examine and interpret. Primary information has constantly been complemented with comprehensive analysis of secondary sources, which included various kinds of press articles,

official and unofficial documents and reports, quantitative studies, historical documentation, novels, local newspapers and magazines, and diverse on-line materials.

I conducted in total twenty-six in-depth interviews with political leaders, public officials, and representatives of political agencies involved in the management of the protected area under study, as well as owners of tourism structures, tourists, host communities involved in ecotourism, residents, environmental associations and other institutions involved in the governance of the Morvan. The fieldwork was conducted during four different periods. The first two rounds of interviews were done in 2002, from June to mid August. A third round of interviews and observations was done during the summer of 2004. Finally, this process of observations, interviews and collection of information was finished with a last visit to the Morvan during fall 2006. It is important to point out that even though the last round of interviews was done at the end of 2006, essential data initially obtained through interviews has periodically been updated until the last days of the writing of this dissertation, as it will appear from chapters five and six. Information exchanges and discussions with key informers bypasses the above mentioned periods through email exchanges and phone conversations. It is important to point out the benefits of conducting interviews during different periods. This permits to observe certain evolutions in the area under study. It also allows evaluating to what extent challenges defined in a certain period were faced in the following years and which were the main outcomes. I had for instance the opportunity to meet twice the Morvan's park director, once when he was initiating his mandate with a lot of optimism, and a few years later before he was leaving his job.

Additionally, to the interviews carried out in the Morvan we can add discussions with professionals and government officials from the North of France facing dilemmas and challenges with various similarities with those observed in the Morvan. During the period 2003-2004, I participated in a monthly seminar led by the association *Espaces naturels régionaux Nord-Pas de Calais*, which at that time started discussing about the relationship between tourism and sustainability. It is interesting to observe that today this association is explicitly engaged with ecotourism. Finally, I would like to mention my participation in various specialised seminars on the topic where I had the opportunity to meet academics working of several issues affecting the area under study. Further, I had also the opportunity to conduct a seminar and a teach a course on ecotourism and sustainable tourism for a Master degree on tourism management at the University of Boulogne-sur-Mer during the winters of 2004 and 2005. Exchanges with students with rich knowledge on French tourism provided key insights on the topic.

Interviews with public officials and elected representatives were the most useful way for understanding the relationship among the different governance levels, and especially the role held by the EU. In respect to the local governance scale, *i.e.* the territories and the social relationships contained inside the park, relevant information came from almost all interviewees. However, it is important to highlight the outstanding knowledge of the local mayors, which in most cases shared with me very interesting stories about the Morvan 'life history', impossible to get from other sources. To a lesser extent this was also the case of people belonging to the traditional *morvandelle* society, whether they were involved in tourism or not, but always well informed about the development history of their home territory. On the other hand, interviews with representatives of a new wave of micro-business owners, usually belonging to a younger generation of Morvan newcomers, were helpful to understand the challenges of the ecotourism sector in general and for the Morvan. They also proved to be an essential means to critically examine the governance dynamics and the sociology of the public institutions leading action in this territory. The fresher outlook held by these actors allows a less complacent evaluation of the politico-institutional dynamics of this territory. With regard to interviews with the different representatives of the associative sector, they were particularly important to get to know better the more specific micro-stakes challenging the Morvan such as forestry, culture and biodiversity.

Nonetheless, the most crucial methodological challenge was to interrelate the discourses of the different interviewees on order to draw an accurate picture of the Morvan as a socially embedded territory. It was also important to fabricate a more comprehensive meaning of its governance. In the end this process could only be accomplished by putting together the interviews, all sorts of publications, maps and photos, and other resources, and to develop a 'dialogue' among them. In this respect, one of the most memorable experiences in conducting research in the Morvan was buying a tent and spending holidays doing observations and fieldwork in the park. The purpose of these trips was to witness and understand the interests, preferences and worldviews of the people that choose this park as their holiday destination or place of residence.

4. FRAMEWORK FOR THE CASE STUDY ANALYSIS ILUSTRATING GOVERNANCE SCALAR ARTICULATION IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ECOTOURISM

The central idea guiding the construction of this empirical framework is the notion of scale, in tune with the argument defining sustainable development and ecotourism as a governance challenge in which the articulation among scales is central. The notion of scale remits us to concepts such as levels, multiple, layers, coordination, conflicts, networks, embeddedness. Among other possible definitions of scale in geographical analysis, this work adopts a view of scale as *"socially constructed, relational, contingent and contested"* (Newman, 2009), as well as socio-institutionally embedded and dialectically fabricated in the intertwined relationship between societies and nature. In the specific case of the analysis of the governance of sustainable development, this notion of scale remits us to its temporality, territoriality, and to their interrelationship with socio-economic hierarchies and the ecological sustainability imperatives. Scale thus hint at challenges 'inside' different scales (time, space and components of sustainability) and 'among' them, which might be associated to situations of competition, complementarities, superposition and cooperation from a synchronic and diachronic perspective. This double angle under which the notions of scale might be observed (inside and among) opens interrogations on the issues of effectiveness, legitimacy and sustainability of the multi-layered processes governing a park as the Morvan.

Bearing the concept of scale in mind, I propose an analysis of governance combining a historical perspective (processes, evolution, path-dependency) with an inter-territorial perspective (from global to local), together with a more detailed analysis of the levels of governance in which ecotourism takes place (the Morvan Park). As it has already been stated, the governance of sustainable development and ecotourism will be analysed as a sustainability *challenge*, a path-dependent *process* and an *outcome*. As a result, the framework for the case study analysis was organized according this four steps:

- Step I: Main features of the various spatial levels
- Step II: Ecotourism and sustainability critical issues in the Morvan Regional Park
- Step III: Governance as an articulated process, who interacts and how do they interact, articulate, collaborate or compete?
- Step IV: Governance as an outcome, resulting from the interactions of the ensemble of actors and institutions involved at different scales.

TABLE 20: FRAMEWORK FOR THE EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS	
STEP	**OBJECTIVE**
I. Main characteristics of the various spatial levels.	This step presents a picture of the different spatial scales (actors, policies, strategies) in this research (local, regional, national, European and global) with a special focus on ecotourism and sustainable development. This step includes as well a comprehensive characterization of the Morvan.
II. Ecotourism and sustainability critical issues in the Morvan Park	This step has three main objectives: 1) to analyse the particularities of ecotourism in the Morvan; 2) to examine the Morvan's historical evolution and landmarks through the lenses of sustainable ecotourism principles; 3) to present main governance structures, dynamics and challenges involved in ecotourism.
III. An articulated analysis of governance dynamics and structures (process)	Highlighting historical processes, path-dependency and embeddedness of territorial scales and institutions, who are the main actors and institutions involved in the governance of the Morvan? Which is the role of the different spatial levels and how (and why) do they articulate or not? Is the current articulation among scales with the dynamics of cooperation required by sustainability aims and ecotourism?
IV. Governance as an outcome, resulting from the interactions of the ensemble of actors and institutions involved at different scales.	Analysis of outcomes in terms of social innovation, learning and sustainability of territories. Key issues are: 1) the role of ecotourism in governance, social innovation and sustainable development; 2) the Morvan territory as place embodying complex socio-spatial relations related with specific values, interests, governance dynamics, history, power, identities; 3) role of governance in the building up of an ecotourism destination, effectiveness and legitimacy of processes and institutions.

Source: author

4.1. Step I: main features of the various spatial levels

This step presents a comprehensive picture of the different spatial scales relevant for this work, from global to local, with a special focus on ecotourism and sustainable development. It includes the realization of a deep portrait of the Morvan, together with an analysis of the spatial scales in which the Morvan is embedded. This picture therefore goes beyond the geographical and politico-administrative boundaries of the Morvan, aiming at transcending a static mono-scale analysis. The challenge is then to develop a comprehensive portrait adopting a temporal and spatial multi-scale analysis. The temporal challenge entails an historical observation showing how different processes have been built and evolved throughout different periods; the spatial-scale dimension implies both, examining the Morvan territory and its relations with other spatial levels: global, Europe, France and Burgundy. Consequently, this step firstly presents a picture of actors, institutions, policies, instruments

and all sorts of initiatives coming from the public, private and civil society sector; secondly, it presents a comprehensive picture of the Morvan and its main governance structures. The aim is to analyse the necessary details for the understanding of sustainable development, ecotourism and their governance in the Morvan. Below I present the main addressed issues.

4.1.1. *The global, European, national and regional levels: what's going on at 'upper scales'?*

The Morvan Park's main governance characteristics are not only the result of what is going on inside the Morvan, but also the product of interrelated governance dynamics involving various spatial scales, which are presented below.

4.1.1.1. The global context

The first theoretical chapters already provided important insights about the global level. They introduced the nature and role that different international institutions have been playing in the process of institutionalisation of sustainable development and ecotourism. Further, they presented some basic information for understanding the main governance challenges and dynamics related with sustainability and ecotourism. One conclusion of these chapters is the crucial role played by the international level in these topics, together with their capacity of influencing other spatial levels. In fact, global discussions on sustainability and ecotourism were introduced in France, and reached the Morvan as an echo of main international events *i.e.* the Rio Conference (1992) and the international year of ecotourism (2002), together with the EU interpretation and institutionalisation of these international projects. Given the importance of the global scale, chapter five begins with a brief update on its role.

4.1.1.2. The European level

Chapter two also provided information on the evolution of the role of the European level in sustainability and ecotourism, from a rather timid implication towards the leadership of international negotiator. Chapter five expands this reflection and elaborates on the following topics:

- *A general background of Europe:* its territorial characteristics, natural milieus and cultural heritage, tourism assets, together with its main socio-institutional structures.
- *Sustainable development, ecotourism and protected areas:* evolution and articulation of major policies and institutions addressing these topics (EU, Council of Europe, EUROPARC, etc.); an evaluation of the importance of sustainable development and ecotourism within different policy fields and institutions (*i.e.* rural, tourism, biodiversity, CAP, etc.); role and perceptions of non-governmental agents.

- *Sustainable tourism and ecotourism in Europe:* main European tourism and ecotourism characteristics from a supply and demand perspective.

- *A preliminary synthesis of the main European governance structures and dynamics concerning sustainable development and ecotourism:* leading institutions and actors, legitimacy, partnerships, policy priorities, challenges and opportunities.

4.1.1.3. France: national and regional levels

The national level corresponds in this research to the government of France and the regional level refers to the Burgundy. The main objective is to identify main governance changing trends concerning ecotourism and sustainable development in France and its application into the Burgundy region. This analysis consists of four parts:

- *A background of France and Burgundy*: the aim is to elaborate a brief panorama that includes socio-economic, environmental, political and socio- institutional aspects.

- *Sustainable development and ecotourism in France:* evolution of the local and regional development policy, instruments and institutions dealing with the environment, sustainability and ecotourism; introduction of sustainability into different policy fields and economic activities (*i.e.* rural territories, environment and biodiversity, agriculture, forestry); role of private, non-governmental and civil society institutions and actors;

- *Tourism and ecotourism in France:* importance of tourism in the French economy; national tourism strategy, priorities and policies; the introduction of the sustainability variable into tourism; role and relative importance of ecotourism and other nature based tourism forms in the broader tourism policy context; general analysis of the ecotourism supply (*i.e.* natural and cultural heritage, facilities, infrastructures and services, destinations) and demand in France and in Burgundy (*i.e.* motivations, preferences, tourists and holiday profiles); main public, private and mixed structures, agents and institutions involved in the building up of French ecotourism; ecotourism and the specificity of regional parks; the translation of this framework at the Burgundy level.

- *A preliminary synthesis of the main French and Burgundy governance structures and dynamics involved in sustainable development and ecotourism:* role of the national and regional levels; role of the main governance structures; priorities and visions concerning ecotourism and sustainability; main governance dynamics and challenges associated to these levels; national and regional structures influencing sustainable development and ecotourism and the relevance of sustainability within the French public policies.

4.1.1.4. What's going on inside the Morvan?

The analysis proceeds with a comprehensive presentation of the territory under study, comprising: i) an analysis of the Morvan in the flow of history, since first human settlements until today; ii) an examination of the biophysical, socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics of the Morvan; iii) an analysis of the main governance structures, institutions and policy instruments concerning this territory (see box 6). A second step is the realisation of a particular examination of ecotourism in the Morvan, highlighting evolutions in the role of tourism and ecotourism; the main supply and demand ecotourism features, including main tourist attractions and main demand and supply trends. Ecotourism is as well addressed from a governance perspective by means of the identification of the main actors and institutions involved in ecotourism in the Morvan (see box 7).

BOX 6: A COMPREHENSIVE PICTURE OF THE MORVAN TERRITORY

Historical landmarks and socio-cultural characteristics

- The Morvan in the flow of history: main historical landmarks and their effects on the Morvan.
- Socio-cultural system: density, demographic fluxes, social composition, cultural heritage.

Territory and the biophysical system

- Geography, natural environment, biodiversity, natural heritage, attractiveness, status of the territory.
- The Morvan vis-à-vis surrounding and broader territories: environmental, administrative and socio-politic frontiers.

The socio-economic system

- The Morvan's socio-economic life and its connection with its natural environment: from an historical point of view, the challenge is to describe main economic activities, employment, land uses, role of agriculture, rural diversification and multi-activity.

Main governance structures

- Policies, instruments and public institutions
- Private, non-governmental and community institutions (networks, associations, conservation associations, etc.)

Source: author

BOX 7: TOURISM AND ECOTOURISM IN THE MORVAN

- **Ecotourism history:** Evolution in the relative importance assigned to ecotourism vis-à-vis economic activities.
- **Attractions and assets:** Attractions, significance and distinctiveness of the Morvan: natural (flora, fauna, habitats, landscapes, geological features, water plans, weather, scenic values) and cultural (immaterial, traditions, gastronomy, built heritage)
- **Demand:** nationality, age, holiday profile, seasonality, needs, motivations, expectations, preferences and interests.
- **Supply:** amenities and facilities (access, proximity, transportation); business tourism structures (accommodation, restaurants, hallmark, services); the organisation and segments of the ecotourism supply; main ecotourism activities and products; seasonality.
- **Key actors:** public, private and non-governmental key actors, institutions and enterprises involved in ecotourism in the Morvan.

Source: author

4.2. Step II: ecotourism and sustainability critical issues in the Morvan Regional Park

Building up on previous sections, step two examines the Morvan from an ecotourism and governance perspective. Though this section will not drop the inter-scalar regard, the primary focus is the Morvan scale, and more precisely the reciprocal dynamics constructed between the characteristics of the Morvan territory and the socio-institutional arrangements from which ecotourism in the Morvan emerged, recalling one of the conclusions of previous chapters stating that sustainable development and thus ecotourism are the result of specific relationships people knit with their territories and natural environment. Ecotourism was defined as a multidimensional and multifunctional practice embedded in a wider socio-institutional context; it might operate as complement of traditional activities, as a means of conservation and education, and as a sustainability vector. Ecotourism might be understood as a governance challenge and source of social innovation to foster territorial sustainability. In tune with the definitions examined in chapter three, table 21 presents the main objectives and variables addressed i) main features and particularities of ecotourism in the Morvan; ii) the Morvan history and main landmarks through the lenses sustainable ecotourism principles, meaning nature based, environmental and cultural educative aims and sustainably managed; iii) governance structures, dynamics and challenges related with ecotourism, assuming that environmental and economic sustainability dimensions are subordinated to the social pillar, defined as governance. Table 23 summarizes the set of aspects observed in the Morvan case.

TABLE 21: SUSTAINABLE ECOTOURISM IN THE MORVAN PARK: A CRITICAL REGARD		
Nature based principle	Natural conditions for ecotourism: kind of territory (pristine -> rural); kind of nature protection system. Kind of ecotourism: supply and demand characteristics (hard/soft activities)	
Environmental and cultural educative aims	Education and interpretation of the <u>natural</u> and <u>cultural</u> environment for: - the satisfaction of educative tourism demands; - to change knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of <u>tourists</u>, <u>residents</u>, host communities, broader public; - strategies for building environmental awareness: communication and information strategies, publications; - production of scientific research, local know how, exchanges and production of post-normal knowledge.	
Sustainably governed	**Economic sustainability**	Ecotourism, diversity and stability in the local economy: - financial benefits and employment opportunities for local people; - <u>viability</u>, <u>stability</u> (seasonality) and <u>centrality</u> (dependence) of ecotourism for the Morvan economy; - multi-activity and coherence between different economic activities; - specialization/ diversification/ clustering of ecotourism activities; - indirect benefits for other sectors *i.e.* demand for local products; - supply characteristics: small and locally owned; - production of resources for the <u>destination</u> locality and its <u>inhabitants</u>; - financial benefits and resources for reinvesting in conservation, scientific research and education; - other tangible benefits (water, roads, services) and improvement of local living standards; - financial sources: taxes, fees, voluntary contributions, public expenses, subsidies.
	Environmental sustainability	1/ Instruments, tools and strategies to <u>protect</u> natural environments, to <u>rehabilitate</u> modified environments, to <u>prevent</u> natural disasters, to <u>foster</u> environmentalism and <u>valorise</u> natural areas: - compatibility and coherence between ecotourism and ecological sustainability; - environmental sensibility, visions, conflicts and role of actors (tourists, locals, associations and public institutions); - strategies for minimizing adverse effects and extending sustainability to other local activities. 2/ Avoiding possible <u>negative</u> environmental effects: - impacts of tourism (waste, noise, transport) and exposure to other forms of tourism; - impacts of other less sustainable activities; problems associated with economic valuation of nature.
	Socio-cultural sustainability	1/ Sustainability of the <u>cultural heritage</u>: stimulus to conserve, rehabilitate and valorise the cultural heritage. 2/ <u>Sustainable governance</u>: - key governance structures (public, private and civil society) and their sustainability visions and values; - interactions/ articulation/ dynamics: organizations, branding, networking (national and international labels); - motivation, partnerships and key innovative initiatives; - policies, instruments, strategies, power: coherence and gap within tourism, and with other sectors (territorial, environmental); - conflicts, cooperation, alliances; intra-Morvan channels of articulation and articulation with other scales. 3/ Normative challenges related with sustainable ecotourism: - respect for the local culture and social harmony; - recognition, inclusion and well-being for the concerned actors; - social integration and creation of new social opportunities; accessibility and support to local initiatives; - motivations, partnerships, participation and social community building, empowerment; - respect and enhancement of environmental rights and democratic values; - shared sustainable values and behaviours of involved actors, economic activities and governance scales.

Source: author

TABLE 22: A SYNTHESIS OF THE MAIN ASPECTS ADRESSED IN THE ANALYSIS OF THE GOVERNANCE OF ECOTOURISM IN THE MORVAN				
The Morvan general context	**Ecotourism in the Morvan**	**Ecotourism principles in the Morvan**		**Governance structures, dynamics and challenges**
The Morvan in the flow of history	Ecotourism in the Morvan history	Nature based principle		Key elements introducing governance challenges
Biophysical system	Relevance of ecotourism for the Morvan (broad SD perspective)	Environmental and cultural educative aims		
Socio-cultural system	Tourism and ecotourism attractions	Sustainably governed	Socio-economic sustainability	Particular sustainable ecotourism governance challenges
Socio-economic system	Tourism and ecotourism demand			
Particular trends affecting rural areas	Tourism and ecotourism supply		Environmental sustainability	Rural sustainability governance challenges
Key governance structures	Key ecotourism governance structures (ecotourism actors)			

Source: author

4.3. Step III: governance as an articulated process, who interacts and how do they interact, articulate, collaborate or conflict?

Step three focuses on governance in the context of ecotourism and sustainable development in the Morvan Park. Elaborating on information of the previous sections, this step develops an articulated and critical analysis of governance, highlighting main historical processes, path-dependency and embeddedness of spatial scales and institutions. The main aim is to answer the following questions: who are the main actors and institutions involved in the governance of the Morvan? How do these actors and institutions interact? Which is the role of the different territorial levels and how do they articulate? Is the current articulation of territories, actors, institutions and instruments compatible with the scalar dynamics of cooperation and conflict required to feed and reproduce a system of sustainable ecotourism? Which are the strengths, weaknesses and potential of the governance dynamics? Table 23 details the aspects that will be addressed in this section

TABLE 23: THE GOVERNANCE OF SUSTAINABLE ECOTOURISM: A REGARD ACROSS SCALES	
Aspects for the analysis of the governance sustainable ecotourism	1/ Particular ethic and values associated to the socio-economic (equity, social justice and democracy) and environmental dimensions of sustainability. 2/ The central role of the social dimension (governance), considered as source, constituent and result of SD and ecotourism. 3/ Sustainable governance as a matter of interrelation and interdependence between: - economic, social and environmental dimensions: this means considering socio-economic and environmental spheres as co-evolving, integrated and inseparable systems of our society. It refers to a hierarchical subordination of economic process to social and environmental constraints; - spatial scales (intra-gen. equity), from a synchronic and diachronic perspective; - temporal scales (inter-gen. equity), relevance of development paths, trajectories, shifts and turning points. 4/ The governance of sustainable ecotourism: nature based principle, environmental and cultural educational aims, and managed according to sustainability guidelines. The role of ecotourism and its governance in fostering territorial sustainability. Articulation/conflicts between ecotourism and the local production system, local institutions, the global world tourism, etc. 5/ Major changing trends in territories classified as protected territories: - transition to a post-productivist countryside: from production (for urban markets) to consumption (from urban areas); - rural economy: agriculture loses its dominant position vis-à-vis rural land uses, the rural social system and policies; therefore, natural areas acquire a different role and status; - multi-activity: economic diversification, environmental sensibility, divergences within rural activities objectives; - heterogonous countryside: land use, social composition, economic activities, modes of regulation, imaginaries, etc.
Main governance structures: *who interacts?*	- Actors (state, private, civil society, local population): role, leaders, interests, mobiles, knowledge, agendas, discourses, culture, sustainability views. It includes actors directly and indirectly involved in tourism. - Socio-environmental movements: role, history and forms of collaboration with other sectors. - Culture and value systems in which these actors are embedded. - Framework in which social practices are embedded: laws, norms, programmes, institutions (their articulation, consistency, contradictions)
Framework in which social practices are embedded	- It deals with the coexistence of binding and non-binding regulations (laws, norms, programmes, institutions, soft-laws, codes of good behaviour) and their articulation, consistency, contradictions and complementarities. - Articulation between specific tourism policies, institutions and instruments, and the broader regulatory framework that, although it is not addressed in priority to tourism, exerts a direct influence on ecotourism and territorial sustainability (regulation on rural areas, local development, biodiversity, protected areas, SMEs, environment, etc.
Governance dynamics: *how do actors interact and collaborate?*	1/ Interactions and articulation among the variety of actors: - role, responsibilities, discourses and main initiatives - forms of collaboration among groups: formal or informal, partnerships, networks, social and environmental groups; - the nature of the social interaction: proactive/reactive, constructive/destructive, negotiation, respect, competitive/collaborative/conflictive, regular interactive practices, reasons for interacting, social dynamics, leaderships, legitimacy; - interaction and sharing: communication, learning, values, discourses, perception of other actors, power, convergences, divergences, emergence of countercultures; - conflicts and obstacles to collaboration and sustainability, overlapping actions, superposition of institutions. - culture: political culture, culture; - production, consumption and regulation. 2/ Relevant sustainability scales and articulation among them: spatial, temporal and social: - relevant governance scales – intra-scale and inter-scales articulation; - intra-territorial analysis: coherence, gaps and bridges between environmental, social and administrative boundaries; - inter-territorial analysis: gaps, bridges, echoes and conflicts. 3/ Key actors, key sustainability initiatives and sustainable cooperative episodes that foster sustainable ecotourism governance through the creation of new social opportunities.
Governance potentials and challenges	For sustainable ecotourism in rural areas in terms of: - sustainability visions and priorities of governance structures; - existing legislations, coherences and gaps; - governance dynamics; - relevant spatial scales.

Source: author

4.4. Step IV: governance as a territorial outcome, resulting from the interaction of actors and institutions involved at different scales

Finally, step four addresses the governance of sustainable ecotourism as a territorial outcome. I propose an analysis that distinguishes three main types of outcomes that could result from the mechanisms of socio-institutional articulation governing a protected area where ecotourism is practiced: i) social innovation for sustainable development; ii) collective learning and post-normal knowledge for sustainable development; iii) progress in terms of territorial sustainability. One major issue is the analysis of the specific role of ecotourism in fostering sustainability of protected areas; however, the role of ecotourism cannot be limited to territorial and tangible outcomes. In fact, ecotourism also holds a potential in terms of inducing social innovation and the opening of a new dialogue from which new knowledge might emerge. From this perspective, ecotourism is observed in its multidimensional and multifunctional role, underlining its role as sustainability catalyst and source of social innovation and post-normal knowledge stimulating sustainability.

BOX 8: OUTCOMES AND EFFECTS: WHICH IS THE RESULT OF THE GOVERNANCE OF ECOTOURISM IN THE MORVAN?

Territorial outcomes:
- does this process lead towards more sustainable territorial paths? (regression/stagnation/progress/enhancement in socio-economic and environmental sustainability);
- extrapolation of sustainable ecotourism practices to other economic activities;
- biodiversity conservation, restoration of natural environments and cultural heritage enhancement;
- physical echoes in upper territorial scales;
- negative effects.

Governance and socio-institutional innovation for sustainability
- does this process lead towards more sustainable forms of governance, to a better articulation? In what sense?
- legitimacy in sustainability;
- social innovation: needs, governance and empowerment;
- socio-economic and environmental efficacy, justice and equity;
- democracy, participation and empowerment;
- community learning, post-normal knowledge and socio-cultural transformations;
- enhancement of environmental rights and environmental citizenship;
- effects on the ecotourism image and charm of the destination;
- echoes in upper spatial scales and marks of historical turning points;
- satisfaction/dissatisfaction of actors and institutions engaged in the governance with the existing system of governance and its outcomes. Possible negative outcomes.

Source: author

Concerning more tangible sustainability outcomes, meaning that ecotourism could stimulate environmental protection, biodiversity recovery and heritage conservation, one important aspect to observe is the kind of protected territory that emerges from the particular values, culture, history, varied interests, power relationships, collective action and policy instruments governing the area under study. In the same way that, for instance, Ibiza represents quite an accurate image of the 3S tourism model, what does the Morvan incarnates? What does the Morvan territory (alluding as well to its (non) sustainable trends) reproduces from its history, culture, economy and socio-political systems? Which has been the role of ecotourism in this process? (see box 8).

5. CONCLUSION

Chapter four was conceived as a connection between theory and empirical analysis. It aimed to present the framework and the research tools constructed to examine sustainable development and ecotourism from a governance viewpoint, together with giving a brief presentation of the reasons explaining the selection of the Morvan as the privileged case study.

From an empirical perspective, the concepts of sustainable development, ecotourism and governance are employed as interdisciplinary lenses for examining major transformations in the way societies are governing the relation between environmental protection and socio-economic development, thus coping with sustainability challenges. Governance is mobilized as a concept able to realize in a dynamic way the various interdependencies and articulations treated in the sustainable development and ecotourism theoretical field. Governance is a concept that can operate as a tool to recognize, on the one hand, links between changes within the state, the economy and the civil society; on the other, changing trends within the relationship between economy, society and environment. From a socio-institutional viewpoint, the concept of governance can answer the question about the role of different institutions and collective action, at different territorial scales, in fostering and guaranteeing sustainability in a certain territory. Starting from the normative position that the dialogue among disciplines is a prerequisite to apprehend sustainability and that nature and the natural environment are the most primary sources for human existence, an analysis highlighting the role governance and adopting an inter-territorial regard provide fruitful insights in the co-evolution of the socio-economic and environmental spheres of development. While being a normative approach, this perspective stresses on the need for participation, collaboration, sharing of knowledge, learning and empowerment as a means for advancing towards more sustainable life-styles.
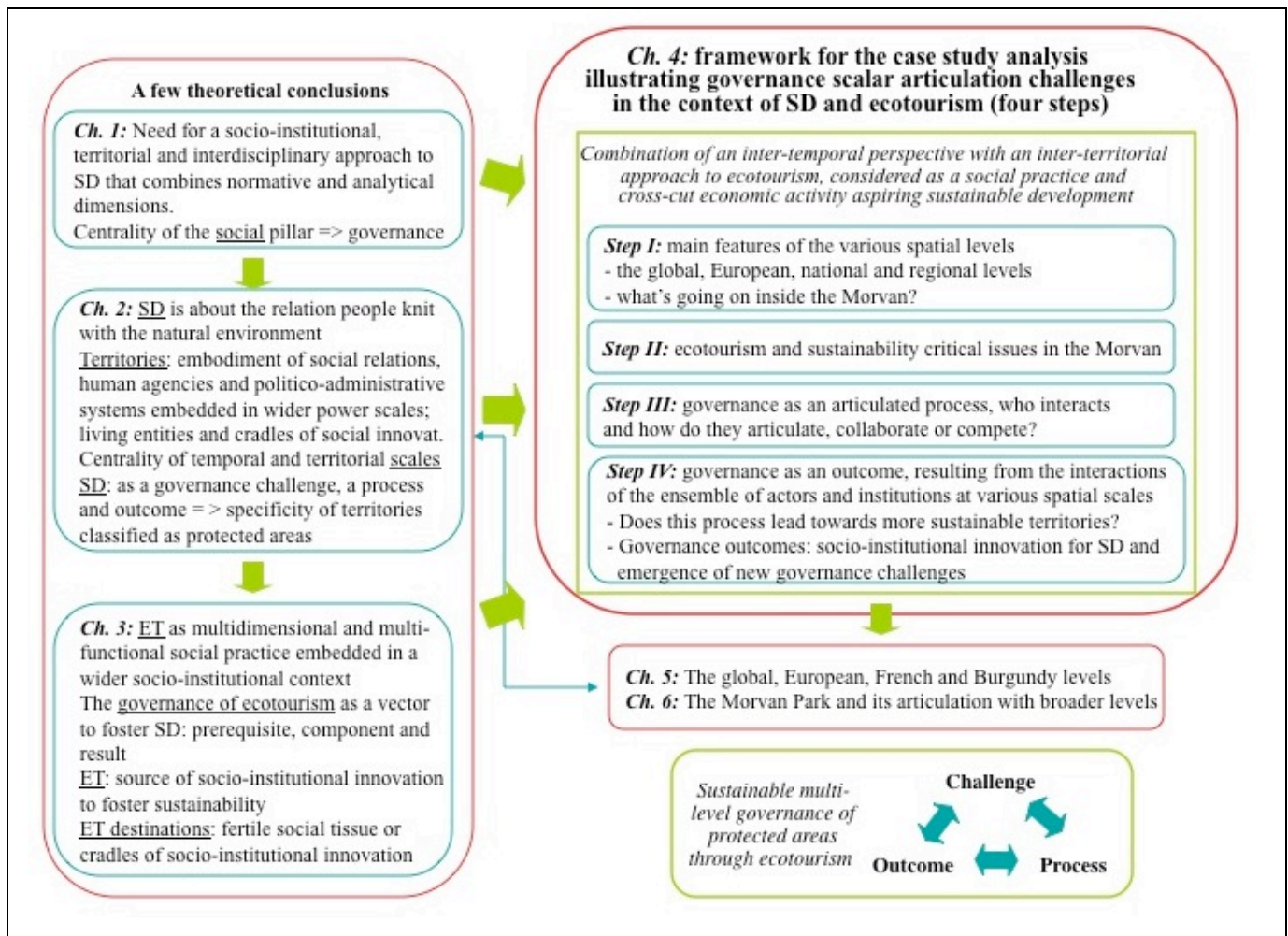
Legend: G = governance; SD = sustainable development; ET = ecotourism

Source: author

Theoretical reflections will be enriched during the research and discussion process that follows, as we look at them through the lenses of the Morvan Regional Park. As the domain of explanation and implication of the connections between sustainable development, ecotourism and governance that will be presented in the following chapters are restricted to the park examined here, I propose in this dissertation some theoretical perspectives, dimensions, research framework and tools, and empirical analyses, which I suspect are useful in other sustainable development, ecotourism and governance contexts. The aim is to see the Morvan case study as both a 'stand-alone' contribution within the field of and a common contribution for the academic debate on governance and sustainable development. The framework for the empirical analysis, for its part, might be as well to analyse the governance of sustainable development and ecotourism in other parts of the world, as well as it might be adapted to analyse the governance of other territories aiming at sustainable development, but not necessarily through ecotourism.

Chapter 5 – On the multi-level governance of sustainable development and ecotourism: flows, dynamics and interplays among the global, European, French and Burgundy scales

1. INTRODUCTION

The hybrid and multi-sectoral nature of tourism is the source of important research challenges, especially when addressing this topic from a governance perspective. This is due to the complex institutional framework and numerous actors involved, either directly or indirectly, in the various tourism-related activities. Additionally, the focus on ecotourism amplifies this complexity, given the fact that ecotourism not only inherits the crosscutting features of tourism, but also is confronted to the sustainability imperatives linked to its practice and the consequences for the territories where ecotourism occurs. Thus ecotourism and ecotourism destinations, which in many cases might be protected areas, are embedded in a complex socio-institutional framework including environmental, sustainability and tourism regulations, as well as a wide range of local and regional development regulations addressing rurality, protected areas, natural and built heritage, management of natural resources, among others. The above complexity is also crosscut by the challenge of addressing the governance of ecotourism from a multi-scalar perspective, ranging from the global to the local level. Furthermore, since the different levels of governance, together with their role and power, have been shaped during distinct historical periods, it seems important to examine this problematic from an historical perspective as well. In fact, at the time when the Morvan Park was founded in the 1970s, the institutional constellation governing French territories was completely different from the one observed today. As a result, the sustainability and governance challenges currently faced by the Morvan not only differ from those of the 1970s and 1980s, but are also delineated by the coexistence of various territorial institutions founded in different historical periods, which today overlap, contradict and sometimes conflict. This institutional complexity is related with a major question raised in this dissertation, *i.e.* the articulation and role of the different spatial scales in sustainable development. Assuming that at any point the environment is the result of the dialectics between human beings and nature, this chapter introduces main institutional and policy features framing the context in which this relationship occurs, and therefore the socio-ecological pact is discussed, negotiated and defined among human beings. Within this context, I argue that sustainable practices, like ecotourism, can play a very important role in this dialogue.

FIGURE 19: OUTLINE CHAPTER FIVE

CHAPTER 5
ON THE MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE OF SD AND ECOTOURISM: FLOWS, DYNAMICS AND INTERPLAYS
AMONG THE GLOBAL, EUROPEAN, FRENCH AND BURGUNDY SCALES

2. The role of the global scale in sustainable development and ecotourism

3. Sustainable development and ecotourism at the European scale
⇒ 3.1. Sustainable development and ecotourism governance contexts: the European natural and cultural distinctiveness
3.2. The complexity of the policy and planning context for sustainable development and ecotourism in Europe
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4. Sustainable development and ecotourism in France
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5. Regional parks in France and their contribution to sustainable development
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6. Burgundy
⇒ 6.1. Burgundy, land of biophysical and socio-cultural contexts
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6.3. The regional economy
6.4. The regional development strategy and the role of ecotourism in Burgundy

Source: author

The aim of chapter five is thus to examine the role of the different spatial levels in the governance of the Morvan, meaning the global, the European, the national and the regional scales. Chapter six, for its part, focuses on the Morvan scale, together with the numerous sub-national levels that are contained inside this territory. Chapter five is structured in seven sections after this introduction. Section two updates the examination of the role of the global level of governance, prolonging discussions on sustainable development and ecotourism already addressed in the theoretical chapters. Section three tackles this discussion for the European scale, including analyses for the EU, Council of Europe and a few leading European NGOs working on nature conservation and sustainable tourism. Section four deals with the role of the national scale through the French experience and shows how the traditional overwhelming top-down policy approach led by the central state has slowly given space to more decentralised governance forms, devolved state institutions and Europeanization. Simultaneously, I analyze how along this process the French state has introduced the environmental variable into its policy agenda, to the extent of promoting sustainable tourism and ecotourism as major factors of territorial sustainability. Within this reflection, there is a special sub-section consecrated to the governance of protected areas and regional parks, as well as the role and importance of tourism. This

chapter ends with a general introduction of Burgundy, notably of its territorial, socio-institutional and tourism features, with the aim of providing the first references introducing the Morvan case.

2.   THE ROLE OF THE GLOBAL SCALE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ECOTOURISM

The first three chapters of this dissertation were generous in providing insights for understanding the role of the global level in the governance of sustainable development and ecotourism. From tables 12 and 13 we learnt about the large amount of events dealing with these topics, among which actions led by the United Nations can be highlighted, notably the precursory Stockholm conference, the Brundtland report and the Rio meeting. While the focus in the 1970s opposed growth and industrialisation to environmental quality, in the 1980s emerged a view of sustainability aiming at conciliating the social, environmental and economic dimensions of development. A few years later, notably from the 1990s onwards, echoing global sustainability actions, the tourism sector adopted and translated global sustainability ethical directives into specific tourism documents, mainly under the form of charters and best practices codes, addressed to tourism suppliers, tourists and policy officials working on tourism. Therefore while in the 1980s the focus was social tourism and the expansion of the rights to holidays, since the 1990s actions have mainly dealt with different forms of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism. In the particular case of Europe, the following three international documents might be considered as influential: *i)* the *UNWTO Lanzarote charter for sustainable tourism (1995)*[191] that benefited from the political will and the media impact of the Rio meeting, and operates today as an ethical base-line for various European tourism initiatives; *ii)* the *UNWTO Global code of ethics for tourism (1999)* that brings together principles on environmental protection, local participation, and role of public institutions, tour-operators and visitors. Tourism is considered here a vector for sustainability, societal understanding, and individual and collective fulfilment[192]. Even if it is a non-binding code, a World Committee on Tourism Ethics, responsible for all litigation concerning the Code, assists its voluntary implementation; *iii)* the *UNWTO Québec declaration on ecotourism (2002)* highlighting the potential of ecotourism in poverty alleviation and environmental protection, and is the responsible for introducing the term ecotourism in Europe. It provides recommendations for its sustainable practice addressed to governments, the private sector, NGOs and local communities.

As examined in chapter one and three, the set of global arrangements dealing with sustainability and ecotourism emerged from the collaboration of various international institutions addressing complementary issues related with biodiversity, climate change, water, protected areas and tourism, among others. From their joint action emanated a long list of statements and declarations expressing a

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[191] Launched jointly with the UNEP, the UNESCO and the EU.
[192] Article n°4 states that *"nature tourism and ecotourism are recognized as being particularly conducive to enriching and enhancing the standing of tourism, provided they respect the natural heritage and local populations and are in keeping with the carrying capacity of the sites"* (see http://www.world-tourism.org/code_ethics/eng/3.htm).

will regarding sustainable development and ecotourism, which later took the form of best practices' codes, action principles and certification programmes. The question about the impact of these documents, and indeed of the ensemble of events and charters presented in tables 2 and 13 is difficult to estimate and consequently source of disagreement. Together they form a heterogeneous set of instruments regarding their objectives, contents, levels of influence and popularity. However, despite a considerable visibility of a few of these documents, their legitimacy and effectiveness are often put into question for several reasons. In the field of tourism, perhaps one of the most powerful motives is related with the rather ineffective action of these codes and charters in introducing more radical sustainable changes into the tourism industry. As far as statistics show, unsustainable tourism forms and their negative effects are still far from being counterbalanced, despite the flourishing of best practices and good conduct codes. The main issue underlying this reflection is the weak enforcement power of these documents, which are usually identified as soft-law or non-binding instruments lacking the necessary authority to constrain unsustainable practices, even if states might have officially adhered to their rules. To a certain extent this flaw could reflect a rather feeble leadership of these institutions, and consequently a restrained legitimacy and efficacy of their actions and instruments. On the other hand, it can also be argued that despite the non-obligatory status of the actions deployed by these institutions, their particular influence cannot be dismissed. We cannot forget that the first discussions and actions addressing sustainable development and ecotourism were officially born at the global scale, and more precisely they emanated from meetings held United Nations institutions. These meetings while capturing media attention started developing awareness and introducing changes among governments, the private sector and civil society, and therefore they contributed in giving a more definite form to this discussion, despite the gap observed between the long list of international events and their concrete impact in fostering sustainability and more sustainable forms of tourism.

As to the outcomes of international organisations' action, we can identify effects in at least three intertwined directions. First, at a discursive level and in the content of the actions carried out by the various concerned actors and institutions. Second, a 'radiance effect' towards the European and national levels. Third, the progressive birth of various interrelated initiatives at different spatial levels ethically oriented by a sustainability aim. After long years examining diverse environmental and sustainability issues, the political discourse underlying the events exposed in the above mentioned tables, stressing on the need to include a sustainability ethical overlay at all public policy levels, denoting the need to deepen participatory democratic processes allowing a transition towards more participatory forms of governance, progressively reached different state spheres and the dialogue of the concerned actors. Thus inspired in this encompassing ethical aim, the European level and each member state gradually started adopting policies incorporating the sustainability dimensions, either through binding or non-binding measures. Furthermore, international action has also had repercussions at a more territorialized scale, meaning that at the local level have flourished different sustainability

initiatives either conducted by public agents, NGOs or civil society, that echo initiatives originally conceived at a the global scale.

For instance, in the specific case of ecotourism, the 2002 Québec conference and declaration played an important role for European countries. Even though Europe already counted with certain measures addressing sustainable rural tourism and a well-developed system of protected areas, a more concrete discussion on ecotourism and a more coherent policy programme emerged only after 2000. The diffusion of ecotourism was facilitated by the existing discourse on sustainable development, as well as by the involvement of specific NGOs and associations working on ecotourism and biodiversity protection *i.e.* IUCN, the WWF and the International Ecotourism Society. Further explored in the next sections, these institutions have provided technical assistance and knowledge that has been a very important support for regional and national governments. Perhaps the easiest way to examine the impact of global action is to examine its repercussion at lower spatial levels in stimulating governance changes for more sustainable territorial experiences.

In broad terms, we can conclude that global initiatives addressing sustainable development and ecotourism, issued from the collaboration of various international institutions, have engendered the following outcomes or effects: *i)* they are responsible for introducing and popularizing these new topics; *ii)* this level has led the production of precursor knowledge and information, which today is materialised in a large long list of non-binding statements, codes and charters that have inspired documents produced and implemented at lower spatial levels; *iii)* consequently, this flow disseminated at the local scale has inspired and sown numerous territorial experiences involving different degrees of civil society participation and empowerment, as well as territorial sustainability. Thus while global actions have stimulated the birth of specific sustainability experiences at different spatial levels, and notably at the local level, identified as the tangible level for sustainable development, this process has introduced new discourses, spread new values and points of reference for understanding and redefining the relationship between human beings and ecosystems. This preliminary conclusion raises a number of issues that this chapter will discuss, including the relationship between the production of new sustainability and ecotourism policies, instruments and varied experiences, the transformation of the system of values and interests, and the consequent innovation on governance relations. While the analysis of the ensemble of rules, policies and instruments at different spatial levels will be analysed in this chapter through the case of Europe, France and Burgundy, the reflection on the main governance dynamics and system of values and interests determining this governance is examined in chapter six from the Morvan case.

3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ECOTOURISM AT THE EUROPEAN SCALE

Even if the concept of ecotourism had no resonance in Europe until the publication of the Quebec Declaration (2002), European small-scale tourism combining natural and cultural heritage date long back from this moment. Prolonging the reflection introduced in chapter three on the applicability of the notion of ecotourism to European territories, notably due to their modified natural heritage, in this dissertation I argue that ecotourism is a pertinent tool, both normative and analytical, to examine European territories. Ecotourism is a practice that increasingly congregates new adherents, and therefore while progressively transforming the European tourism demand and supply, has stimulated changes in the system of governance and sustainability of the concerned territories.

Elaborating on Weaver (2001b), I argue that the distinctiveness of European ecotourism lies exactly in the combination of inhabited nature, history, agriculture and cultural heritage from which charming ecotourism destinations have been shaped. Throughout this process, governance, and more precisely the governance at each spatial scale, has played a central role. For instance, at the destination level the network of micro-businesses offering ecotourism services in European destinations has contributed to enhance and sustain the natural and cultural heritages. On the other hand, the examination of European ecotourism territories from a sustainable governance perspective provides a fertile arena to observe the evolution of the continental system of regulation governing these territories and its articulation with broader and lower spatial scales. Since ecotourism is touched by the inter-sectoral nature of tourism and its interconnection/dependency on sustainability, denoting the close relationship between ecotourism, fragile ecosystems and protected areas, the socio-institutional structure in which it occurs is vast and complex. Ecotourism in Europe is therefore regulated by a combination of initiatives addressing sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, rural territories, protected areas and tourism. These issues have been translated into specific directives and instruments, as well as into more encompassing territorial development strategies. Broadly, European governance structures and dynamics, while mirroring and taking part in a more global shift in the way the environment is/should be governed, have transited from an incipient inclusion of the environmental variable, towards the development of a broader sustainable development strategy, in which more sustainable forms of tourism, including ecotourism, occupy an important place. This shift has been accompanied by more bottom-up and participatory policy approaches, which certainly is not restricted to sustainability or ecotourism issues.

Bearing this context in mind, below I examine ecotourism and sustainable development from a territorial, governance and policy perspective. I focus on the European system of regulation governing the practice of ecotourism and thus the sustainability of ecotourism destinations that in many cases might be protected areas.

3.1. Sustainable development and ecotourism governance contexts: the European natural and cultural distinctiveness

Europe presents a complex geography combining large plains with mountain ranges that is encircled by a vast and fragmented coastline. This geographic diversity is associated to a varied climatic panorama and to the existence of a rich flora and fauna that together shape six main bio-geographic regions with distinctive habitats and ecosystems (European Commission, 2002). However, only a very few territories are free from human intervention. A long and indeterminate interaction between natural and human forces has shaped European landscapes through time. From these interactions emerged a continent rich in semi-natural landscapes and environments, which are intimately connected with the distinctive cultural heritage that has been built and reproduced through centuries by various civilisations. Most of Europe has been influenced by successive human migrations, settlements and land utilizations, context in which agriculture is often singled out as the strongest force shaping European territories. For thousands of years of history, different civilisations have built all over Europe a remarkable heritage that combines material and immaterial legacies. Material heritage is represented by different kind of buildings, historical towns, churches, chapels, fountains, etc. Cultural heritage, for its part, consists of gastronomy, music, dances, languages and handicrafts, among others. As a result, almost each small European village hides a distinctive heritage, which has usually been preserved and enhanced to attract visitors. Although there is no unique centralised inventory of remarkable European sites (European Commission, 2002), the three hundred European buildings classified under the UNESCO World Heritage List illustrate the quality of the European heritage, together with its equilibrated combination of nature and culture. Two examples are the Portuguese town of Sintra and the Colline de Vézeley located inside the Morvan Park. This heritage might also appear in national lists, as is the case of more than fourteen thousand French buildings classified as historical monuments. All this cultural and natural richness plays a major role in tourism, explaining the popularity of European tourism destinations. The European continent is the world's first tourism destination. It receives 54,9% of the world's visitors and contributes with 51% of the world receipts (UNWTO, 2006). Tourism represents almost 11% of the European GDP (Vellas, 2007) and created, in 2006, 23,8 millions direct and indirect jobs, mainly in small and medium enterprises. The UNWTO anticipates a sustained expansion during the forthcoming years, predicting more than 700 million cross-border tourists arrivals for 2020, 3% of growth annual rate and 100.000 new jobs per year. This expansion can be explained by the euro, transport liberalization, notably airlines, further European integration and development of new communication technologies (European Commission, 2002).

According to Middleton (2001) there is a broad consensus on the importance of micro-business in European Tourism, despite the difficulties faced by the different countries in measuring, recognizing and regulating the sector. As stated by Middleton (1997 cited in Middleton 2001), this sector not only can play a major role in generating employment and boosting local communities, but also the sector's

vibrancy and originality can play a vital role in delivering a product of excellence that big companies will never be able to replicate. Statistics of the Wales Tourist Board (1998 cited in Middleton, 2001) estimated that in Europe there exists around 2.6 million tourism SMEs that generate about 10.5 million jobs (Middleton, 2001). Within the broad tourism sector of SMEs[193], the group of enterprises representing the smallest employers[194] are by far the largest group, estimated at more than 90%. Further, the best part of them employs less than five people and many comprise only the owner and its close family (Middleton, 2001). In the end of the 1990s the number of such tourism enterprises was estimated to be as a minimum 2.4 million. Nevertheless, once more, we should be careful with tourism statistics. The definition of tourism enterprises is ambiguous; the different statistics do not clearly identify which activities have been taken into consideration, as well as the definition of small or micro-enterprises varies a lot.

Concerning the level of engagement of the business sector on more sustainable actions, there exist differences between bigger and smaller units. While larger companies have started pursuing sustainability by introducing corporate social responsibility, the engagement of smaller units depends on personal interests and the owners' commitment. In any case, studies show that in both cases interest in this respect is growing (see TSG, 2007), and might certainly be related with important market transformations undergone by this sector. On the one hand, European sea mass tourism destinations face tough competition and decline since the emergence of cheaper 3S destinations in different parts of the world; on the other, alternative forms of European tourism seem to grow at a three times faster rate, meaning 8%, than classic tourism (European Commission, 2002). This rate reveals a shift in tourists' preferences, which today start demanding new places, alternative and environmentally responsible tourism, higher quality products and more often but shorter trips. European studies reveal an important increase in consumer awareness on the impact of tourism, in the demand for clean destinations and preference for enterprises that care for the environment and local communities (see TSG, 2007). This transformation matches with the emergence and increasing demand for ecotourism in Europe and elsewhere, and reaches further resonance due the distinctive characteristics of European ecotourism destinations, which are usually natural but populated and modified places. As a result, European ecotourism mainly occurs in small relatively natural areas or in larger populated zones that combine farmlands with woodlands[195]. The European ecotourism supply is complemented with a rich cultural heritage and with an amount of other activities not necessarily related with tourism. Secondly, given the presence of mainly modified landscapes, ecotourism usually is labelled as "rural tourism" or "sustainable tourism", leaving aside the term ecotourism. The emphasis in Europe is put in combining nature-based activities with culture heritage and other forms of tourism (Weaver, 2001b).

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[193] Enterprises with less than 250 employees.
[194] With less than 10 employees.
[195] Northern Scandinavia and Iceland boreal forests are exceptions (Weaver, 2001b).

3.2. The complexity of the policy and planning context for sustainable development and ecotourism in Europe

The policy framework addressing sustainable development and ecotourism at the European level consists of an ensemble of regulations for rural territories, protected areas, biodiversity, natural resource management, etc. The leadership at the European level resides with the European Union, however other European institutions such as the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and NGOs, like the European Federation of Protected Areas, play a very important role, addressing either directly or indirectly these topics. Below I examine main landmarks in the European regulation since the birth of the first EU environmental regulations until today.

3.2.1. Shifts and continuities in the EU environmental policy

There is a consensus among scholars about the central role of the EU in the environmental field. The EU, by influencing the legislative frameworks and budgets of its member states, has progressively introduced the environment and sustainability into different policy domains, either directly through the EU environmental policy and the European Sustainable Development Strategy, or in a more transversal manner in areas such as regional development, economy and agriculture. Furthermore, the EU has assumed during the last years a role of leader in environmental international negotiations, as is the case of the Kyoto Protocol.

The birth of the EU environmental policy goes back to 1972. It not only echoed and responded to the emblematic meetings and publications of the 1970s, but it is also related with environmentalist actions by European citizens and the promulgation of individual national measures oriented to control chemical and industrial pollutions. Within this context, the EU launched the 1EAP with the particular aim to regulate possible gaps between nascent national environmental policies and European trade. The 1EAP, simultaneously, harmonized national environmental policies to avoid trade distortions and defined the fundamental principles that have guided the EU environmental policies until present days: control of noise and pollution, ecological equilibrium and biosphere protection, compatibility between exploitation of natural resources and sustainability of natural milieus, health and life quality, and integration of the environment into territorial programmes (Dubouis, 2004).

As a result, in tune with the second wave of environmentalism and echoing the international declarations of the 1990s, the 5EAP (1992-2000), entitled *Towards Sustainability,* focused on climate change, ozone layer, biodiversity and deforestation. The aim was to transform the European growth model into a more sustainable one stressing the central role of governance relationships. The 5EAP identified several priorities (the sustainable management of natural resources, pollution control, reduction of non-renewable energy consumption, transport, urban quality, health and risk control) and targeted a few key industrial sectors like energy, transports, agriculture and tourism for both the

adoption of community norms and voluntary accords. However, as occurred at all governance levels, sustainable development in Europe reached a larger spectrum of domains that are not limited to the 5EAP. In fact, the period going from 1992 to 2000 was very prosperous in introducing sustainability at the European level, as will be examined below.

The originality of the current 6EAP (2002-2012) is its focus on governance. It is conceived as a strategic governance approach that stresses collaboration among market strategies, involvement of citizens, enterprises and other stakeholders (art.14), as well as cooperation between the European level and the national and local governments. Even if this programme identifies five key actions (climate change control, nature protection and biodiversity, environment and health, and utilisation of natural resources and waste management), its ultimate aim is to promote the full integration of environmental requirements into all community policies and actions; thus it also provides the priorities for the environmental pillar of the EU SDS. Among the priority areas for action on nature and biodiversity of the 6EAP, tourism is identified as a key sector through which conservation and restoration might be fostered. Additionally, this programme emphasises the need to encourage sustainable rural development, sustainable agriculture and pluriactivity (see Official Journal of the European Communities, 2002).

The European Council in Gothenburg adopted in 2001 the first EU SDS. This strategy was then complemented during the European Council in Barcelona (2002) in view of the Johannesburg Summit, and later renewed by the European Council in 2006. In its renewed version, the EU SDS seeks to modify unsustainable consumption and production patterns, to advance towards an integrated approach to policy-making and to improve quality of life. For this purpose, it addresses various thematic areas[196] through numerous crosscutting policy domains like education, training, research, communication, collaboration among actors, monitoring, etc. Nevertheless, despite the large number of areas covered by this strategy, the perspective remains global with climate change as the main topic, thus the spatial dimension and land uses issues seem less important.

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[196] Climate change and clean energy, sustainable transport, sustainable consumption and production, conservation and management of natural resources, public health, social inclusion, demography and migration, global poverty and sustainable strategies (see http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/sds2005-2010/index_en.htm).

TABLE 24: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, ECOTOURISM AND PROTECTED AREAS IN EUROPE

1950s	1951	EU Treaty of Paris, signed by France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg to form the European Coal and Steel Community
	1957	EU Treaty of Rome
1960s	1965	Council of Europe, **European diploma of protected areas**
1970s	1970	The Council of Europe launches the first European year of nature conservation
	1972	EU **1EAP** aiming to control trade distortion and respond to global environmental awareness
	1973	Foundation of the **EUROPARC** Federation
	1975	Bathing water Directive
	1977	EU **2EAP**
	1979	EU **Bird** Directive
1980s	1983	EU **3EAP**
	1984	First EU agro-environmental measures and first discussions on agricultural diversification
	1985	EU Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (amended in 1997 and 2003)
	1987	EU **4EAP** (1987-1992); Single European Act (**SEA**); First European year of the environment (echoing Brundtland)
1990s	1990	European year of tourism
	1992	EU Treaty of Maastricht; EU proposition for the **5EAP;** EU **Habitat** Directive; EU **5EAP** *Towards sustainability* (1992-2000)
	1993	EUROPARC publication ***"Loving them to death?":*** it provides guidelines for managers of protected areas. There is a special section dedicated to tourism in fragile areas including mountains, coastal, Mediterranean and wetlands
	1993	Between 1993 and 1999 the Council of Europe publishes a set of recommendations on environmentally friendly tourism. Recommendations are addressed to protected areas (1995) and coastal areas (1997)
	1994	Charter of European cities and towns towards sustainability (Aalborg Charter)
	1994	IUCN publication ***"Parks for life: action for protected areas in Europe"***: it is an action plan for protected areas in Europe
	1995	First award of the European Prize for Tourism and the Environment
	1997	Treaty of Amsterdam
	1997	Launching of **PAN Parks**, which started as a WWF project in Europe
	1998	European Council of Cardiff
	1998	UNECE Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters. The Aarhus Convention entered into force on October 2001
	1999	EC Enterprise Directorate publication *"Towards quality rural tourism – Integrated quality management (IQM) of rural destinations"* on the application of the concept of IQM to sustainable tourism in European rural destinations
	1999	"Tour operators initiative" led by the Secretariat tour operators Initiative for sustainable tourism (UNEP). Voluntary and non profit-making initiative open to all tour operators willing to commit themselves to sustainable development
	1999	**Plan Bleu** publication on tourism and sustainable development: set of recommendations for tourism and sustainable development in the Mediterranean that was adopted by the contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (UNEP *et al.*, 1999)
	1999	**Responsible Tourism in the Mediterranean** (WWF Programme): set of general principles and a code of conduct developed to address specific issues related to tourism in the Mediterranean. It is oriented to tourists, tourist industry and government authorities
2000	2000	Launching of the **European charter for sustainable tourism in protected areas** (ECFST / EUROPARC).
	2001	The European Council at Gothenburg adopts the European sustainable development strategy
	2001	6EAP (2001-2010)
	2002	Verification and certification of the first three PAN Parks
	2002	6EAP (2002-2012)
	2003	EU directive 2003/35/EC on public participation in the drawing up of certain environmentally related plans and programmes
	2004	Treaty of Nice
	2005	Review of the EU SDS (2005-2010)

Source: author based on Blangy and SECA (2001), Barnes and Barnes (1999), Dubouis, 2004 and other complementary sources

TABLE 25: MAIN ACTION DOMAINS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL EUROPEAN DIRECTIVES

The right to have access to information concerning the environment
Directives on *access to information* (Directive 901313/CER, 7 June 1990), *environmental assessment* of different projects (Directive 85/337/CEE, 27 June 1985, modified by the Directive 97/11/CE 3 march 1997) and *evaluation* of environmental plans and projects (Directive nº2001/42) *i.e.* Natura 2000. The last directive introduces changes in governance by means of reinforcing the right of public consultation, which is conceived as a means and objective of the evaluation process.
Air and water pollution
Directives on *air quality* (Directive 80/779/CEE, 15 July 1980; Geneva Convention, 1981) and *emissions reductions* (Directive 84/360/CEE, 28 June 1984)
Directives on *water pollution* address various complementary domains: quality of bathing, fresh, briny and coastal waters (Directives of 1975, 1978 and 1979); potable water quality (Directive 76/464/CEE completed with the directive 80/68/CEE); prevention and elaboration of codes of good behaviour in agriculture (Directive nitrates 91/676/CEE). The Directive Cadre 2000/60 (23 October 2000) imposes a global strategy for basin zones (hydrographical territories). Water directives also address marine pollution through the application of various international conventions (North Sea Convention, Bonn 1984; Mediterranean Conventions on 1977 and 1971).
Risks, waste and chemicals
Directives in this domain deal with *prevention of major risks* (Seveso Directive, 1982; Seveso 11, 1997), management of *toxic* and *dangerous waste* (Directive 75/442/CEE, 1975, 1978, which was replaced by the 91/156/CEE), control of *transfrontier transportation* of dangerous waste (Directive 91/156/CEE), recycling and reduction of the volume of *packing material* (Directive 94/62 CE), pesticides control (Directive 76/895/CEE modified in 191 and 1982), control in the utilisation of GMO crops according to their pathogenesis (Directive 2001/18 CG, 2 March 2001). All these issues are also concerned by the more global eco-audit mechanism seeking to favour organic agriculture and eco-labelling.
Nature protection
It combines the ratification of several global conventions dealing with *wildlife* (Bern Convention, 1979), *migratory species* (Bonn Convention, 1979), *international commerce* of threaten flora and fauna (Washington Convention, 1973) and the participation in the Cartagena Convention on the Caribbean (1982), with specific EU policies and instruments such as the Birds Directive (Directive 79/409/CEE, 2 April 1979 modified by the Directive 94/24/CE) and the Habitats Directive (92/43/CEE, 21 May 1992) aiming to build a European network of protected sites Natura 2000. Nature protection in Europe is financed by the LIFE + instrument.
Regional policy and the environment
The combination of environmental and regional policies is a key component of the socio-structural policies of the EU. This is the case of the RSDF, EAGF and EAFRD funds, which hold strong environmental objectives.
The environment, agriculture and rural development
Directives favouring *extensive agriculture* (regulation nº 1115/88 21 September 1988), fostering a reduced utilisation of *fertilizers* and *phyto-pharmaceutical products* and encouraging organic agriculture (regulation nº 2078/92 June 30 1992; regulation nº 2092/91/CEE 24 June 1991).
The other policies: energy, transport and industrial policy
The EU finances projects on *clean energy technologies* (regulation nº 2008/90, 29 June 1990 programme JOULE-THERMIE), fosters the development of *renewable energies*, *Aeolians*, *biogas*, etc. (Directive 2001/77/CE), transports (75/32/CEE 17 February 1975), reduction of negative environmental impacts of industrial activities and creation of ecological labels.

Source: author based on Dubouis (2004)

In sum, from the 1970s onwards environmental and sustainability issues have been present in the EU regulation framework, either through periodical programmes and ample SDS, or through specific regulations addressing biodiversity, local and regional development, rural territories, protected areas, natural resources, etc. (see table 25). In the next section I refer to a few of them, selected in function of their pertinence for the topics (ecotourism and sustainable development) and kind of territories under study (protected areas). In fact, European regulation and funding for ecotourism come from various

complementary policy domains, including not only tourism related activities but also nature protection, agriculture and rural pluri-activity and, of course, regional development. Thus a framework situated at the crossroads between various environmental, biodiversity, rural development and environmental/sustainability measures regulates ecotourism in Europe.

3.2.2.   European regulation for ecotourism: at the crossroad between biodiversity protection, rural development and sustainability

For a large period, the European Commission has not only been sensitive to environmental protection and nature conservation, but also to tourism because of its potential in terms of local development, growth and job creation. Already in the 1980s, the EC, the Council of Europe and the European Parliament were involved in tourism policy. Together, in 1986, these institutions set up an Advisory Committee on Tourism to facilitate information exchanges and cooperation. In the case of ecotourism, activity combining tourism and sustainability, regulations bypass by far the DG Enterprise's Tourism Unit that has the primary responsibility in the coordination of the EU tourism policy. This DG has indeed no specific budget to fund individual tourism projects, thus EU regulation and funding for ecotourism comes from other areas *i.e.* regional development, agriculture, environment, biodiversity and rural development. I now examine the main lines of the EU tourism policy and its interrelation with sustainability, as well as those complementary regulations that have a direct impact on ecotourism.

3.2.2.1. The European Union, tourism, sustainable tourism and ecotourism

Various EU regulations play a fundamental role in tourism, even if the Community has no direct competence in this sector involving a diversity of activities. One of the main roles of the Tourism Unit[197] is thus to coordinate the various programmes, actions and funds that influence tourism, which relate to a wide range of areas *i.e.* education, culture, environment, transport, regional development, employment, etc. Nonetheless, there exists a certain consensus on the restricted implication of the EU with tourism, reflecting a certain lack of enthusiasm among member states to became involved with the sector, despite a consensus on its economic benefits and relationship with environmental cleanness (Barnes and Barnes, 1999). In fact, various policy proposals of the Commission have failed due to a lack of unanimous support of the Council of Ministers; and publications on the topic continue to insist on the need to advance in stakeholders' cooperation to overcome the inherent articulation difficulties of this sector (CEC, 2006).

The Treaty of Rome (1957) is the first EU official statement recognizing tourism due to its potential in approaching different peoples and cultures. Later, the 1EAP mentioned tourism to evoke its negative

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[197] See http://ec.europa.eu/enterpriuse/tourism/index_en.htm

effects on coastal areas, from which emanated in the mid-1970s the *Bathing Water Directive*[198] and the *Mediterranean Plan Bleu*[199], which are two early examples dealing with the complementarities between tourism and the environment. Later, a more general document entitled *Initial guidelines for a Community policy on tourism* (CEC, 1982) stressed on the need to develop tourism considering the environment. However, it was in the 1990s when the tourism-environment nexus was more explicitly addressed, notably with the designation of the European Year of Tourism (1990) by the Council of Ministers, and the publishing of the *Community action plan to assist tourism* (CEC, 1991) where the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee expressed the need for harmony between tourism and the environment. By 1992, the Treaty of Maastricht included for the first time in EU regulations measures on tourism, although it gave no particular guidance for a EU tourism policy or specific legal base for Community measures on tourism. In tune, the 5EAP identified tourism as primal industrial sector, emphasised its paradoxical sustainability/unsustainability potential and made a call for a more sustainable management of tourism (CEC 1992a vol. II: 7 cited in Barnes and Barnes, 1999 p. 273).

The subsequent Community plans for tourism followed a similar line regarding the environment through information and awareness campaigns, support to innovative projects merging tourism and nature protection at lower spatial scales, and fostering of transnational networks and exchanges for the development of environmentally-friendly tourism. For instance, from the 1992-1995 Action Plan for tourism[200] issued innovative actions like the *European Prize for Tourism and the Environment* (1995). According to this plan, the tourism policy primarily relies on the activities of the industry and on the articulation among the different spatial scales, which face and hold specific challenges and responsibilities. While the global level is approached in terms of traffic and global warming, the local and regional levels regard land, bodies of water, biodiversity and habitats management.

The PHILOXENIA Programme (1997-2000)[201], that replaced the previous Tourism Action Plan, had of a budget of €25 millions and gave instead prominence to the industry's needs in terms of quality and competitiveness of European tourism, growth and employment. The environment played thus a minor role and initiatives promoting sustainability were limited to give support to local initiatives, eco-friendly accommodation and destinations through the European Prize. Simultaneously, the 1996 *European Conference on Rural Development* and the innovative *Cork Declaration* (see European Commission, 1997), which resulted from this meeting, stressed the need for bottom-up and integrated development approaches to rural territories. It highlights the role of tourism, while arguing that rural

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[198] Council Directive 76/160/EEC of 8 December 1975 concerning the quality of bathing water, OJL 31, 5 February 1976.
[199] For more information on the Mediterranean http://www.planbleu.org
[200] Community Action Plan for Tourism, Council Decision of 13 July 1992, OJL 231, 13 August 1992 that counted with a budget of €18 million.
[201] Also called multi-annual programme to assist European tourism.

sustainable development should address all socio-economic sectors of the countryside. For Roberts and Hall (2001) this declaration constitutes a sort of precursor of the LEADER programmes.

Echoing international initiatives, the EU has been promoting sustainability tourism since the 1990s. This aim is expressed in the documents *Towards quality rural tourism: integrated quality management of rural destinations* (1999), *Plan bleu on the Mediterranean* (1999) and *Basic orientations for the sustainability of European tourism* (CEC, 2003), which underscored policy coordination and more efficient utilisation of EU financial instruments. The creation of the *European ecolabel for tourist accommodation and campsite services* (2003)[202] is not only another important moment of the history of European tourism, but also within the broad EU ecolabel programme started in 1992 with the aim to promote products and services with low environmental impact. Today there exist about one hundred labelled hotels and twenty-two campsites, of which sixty-eight hotels are located in Italy and twelve in France. This difference is explained by the early and important financial support given by the Italian government to the enterprises willing to attain the requirements for obtaining the label. As with a lot of certifications, this label entails high costs and exigent standards (*i.e.* 22% of electricity should come from renewable sources) difficult to attain by small enterprises.

This set of initiatives prefigured the convocation in 2004 of the *Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG)* for the elaboration of a sustainable tourism framework, seeking to define the role of the different involved actors and spatial scales, and improve coordination of the EU regulations touching tourism. The TSG is a heterogeneous team, gathering individuals from international bodies, member states, regional and local authorities, as well as the tourism industry, environmental organisations, and representatives from tourist destinations. It aims at encouraging stakeholders' synergies in the view of the elaboration of an Agenda 21 for European tourism. In 2007, the TSG delivered the document *Action for More Sustainable European Tourism* that was conceived as a basis for communicating an Agenda for the Sustainability of European Tourism after a period of consultation (TSG, 2007). Corroborating the current EU SDS (2005-10), which recognizes the role of tourism in territorial sustainability in terms of preservation and enhancement of cultural and natural heritages, the TSG (2007) report defines the sustainable tourism strategy according to the same three key objectives of the EU SDS, which are economic prosperity, social equity and cohesion, and environmental and cultural protection. It also identifies the following eight key tourism challenges for destinations, firms and tourists: 1) reducing the seasonality of the demand; 2) addressing the impact of tourism; 3) improving the quality of tourism jobs; 4) maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and quality of life, in the face of change; 5) minimizing resource use and production of waste; 6) conserving and giving value to natural and cultural heritage; 7) making holidays available to all; 8) using tourism as a tool in

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[202] See http://www.ecolabel-tourism.eu

global sustainable development (TSG, 2007). According to this plan, each spatial scale has a role to play. The EC is responsible for coordination, and the member state governments for providing political commitment and active support to sustainable tourism. As to local authorities and destination managers, they are in charge of establishing multi-stakeholder mechanisms and structures, and providing leadership, coordination, support and effective control. The business sector should participate in the local system of governance, and is responsible for applying and promoting sustainable practices. Finally, other actors such as educational and research institutions, trade unions, NGOs, international organisations, and tourists should be involved in communication actions and in the creation of environmental consciousness. In short, this report makes a call for a more clear recognition by the EC and the member states of the special position of tourism in delivering sustainable development. It expresses that since the challenge of tourism is to remain competitive and sustainable, necessarily competitiveness will depend on sustainability.

Despite its embryonic stage, the project EDEN *European Destinations of Excellence,* launched in 2006 might be considered a step forward in the EU tourism strategy. The novelty of EDEN resides in its combined promotional strategy of undiscovered European places not only as sustainable tourism destinations, but also as places to invest and live. Furthermore, the aim is to pursue economic growth and also sustainable tourism, by means of addressing congestion, seasonality, rebalancing of tourist flows and partnerships among destinations for the diffusion of good practice[203].

As observed in the previous paragraphs, the EU tourism policy has basically tried to combine three different objectives that are growth, employment and environmental issues, besides actions related with the collection of tourism statistical information in collaboration with member states statistical institutes (Council Directive 95/57/EC), marketing of Europe (*i.e.* European Tourist Destinations Portal[204]) and support to regions hosting cultural and sporting activities (*i.e.* European Capital of Culture). Nevertheless, as observed in the document *A renewed EU Tourism policy* (CEC, 2006), presenting the latest version of a policy highlighting competitiveness, sustainability, environment, rural tourism and ecotourism is mostly concerned by actions and programmes that do not belong to the DG Tourism Unit. This situation explains the strong emphasis on developing a strategy based on partnership and stakeholders' collaboration. Either due to the complexity of the tourism sector or because of a lack a political will, the EU tourism policy and strategy remains weak and unclear. Furthermore, it could be argued that there is no EU tourism policy, but rather a coexistence of isolated initiatives and programmes that converge when applied at the different tourism destinations. The section below examines the most relevant initiatives.

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[203] The first awarded destinations in 2007 are rural regions located in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia and Malta (see http://www.europeandestinationsofexcellence.com).
[204] See http://www.visiteurope.com

3.2.2.2. <u>Relevant European regulations for ecotourism-related activities</u>

Structural Funds, that is the most important European funding for regional, economic and social development, are also the main source of EU funding for tourism and ecotourism[205], especially for less developed regions. Structural Funds are targeted at regional and national programmes, are managed by the member states and co-financed by the EC. They include the *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)*, the *European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF)*, the *European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)*[206], the *European Fisheries Fund (EFF)* and the *European Social Fund (ESF)*. Ecotourism is also supported by EU initiatives *LEADER+* and *INTERREG III*:

- The *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)* gives socio-economic support to less developed rural localities, as is the case of those dealing with economic problems such as industrial restructuring and demographic decline. The ERDF supports sustainable tourism by funding actions oriented to enhance cultural and natural heritages, to develop accessibility and infrastructure, to support innovative SMEs and business networks, and to foster transfrontier and inter-regional exchanges (CEC, 2006).

- The *European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF)* and the *European Agricultural Fund for rural development (EAFRD)* deal with agriculture and rural territories. While the EAGF finances direct payments to farmers and measures to regulate agricultural markets, the EAFRD finances more encompassing rural development programmes of the member states, including tourism. The EAFRD provides funding for improving agriculture production, environmental quality, to encourage tourism as a part of economic diversification and investment for cultural heritage restoration. In total, the EU rural development policy (2007-2013) will count with a budget of €91 billion to address competitiveness of farming and forestry, environmental protection, quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy (European Communities, 2008b).

- The *LEADER+* is the Community initiative for rural development aiming to encourage and help rural interests improve the economic development of their area. LEADER+ focuses on quality of rural life, development of natural and cultural resources, enhancement of local products, improvement in the access to markets, introduction of new know-how and technologies. This programme has been identified as one of the most proactive and successful bottom-up EU initiatives (Roberts and Hall, 2001). It concerns rural territories and aims to promote innovative rural development policies as well as cooperation among rural European territories. The LEADER+ focuses on economic territorial vitality, encourages rural actors to reflect on the long-term potential of their area and the implementation of integrated, high-quality and original strategies for sustainable development. The LEADER+ is a bottom-up approach operating under the umbrella of the CAP in which each member state is responsible for defining their selection criteria according their own rural policy. Unlike LEADER I and II focused on disadvantaged and

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[205] In the period 1994-1999, the EU Structural Funds contributed €7,3 billions to tourism projects.
[206] Since January 1, 2007 the EAFG and the EAFRD have replaced the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund.

remote areas, LEADER+ recognizes all EU rural areas as eligible. According to Blangy and Vautier (2001) from a total of 217 projects active in the mid 2000, 71 focused on tourism.

- The community initiative *INTERREG III,* financed under the ERDF, promotes development and cooperation across borders throughout the promotion of cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation. It recognizes the potential of sustainable tourism development in border areas and helps valorising this potential by supporting projects in tune with environmentally friendly tourism, development of SMEs, renovation of historical urban centres, renovation and preservation of rural heritage, restoration of run-down areas, good management of cultural heritage and natural resources, etc.

- The main objective of the *European Fisheries Fund (EFF)* is to introduce sustainability in fishing waters to alleviate the socio-economic effects of the restructuring of this sector and to regenerate fishing-dependent areas through their diversification. Ecotourism is identified as one of the sectors towards which fishermen might convert their activities.

- Finally the *European Social Fund (ESF)* while focusing on education and training, might target the tourism sector and the quality of its employment. Furthermore, tourism might also be concerned by the Integrated Lifelong Learning programme, the competitiveness and innovation programme that gives support to the SMEs and the Framework Programme for Research.

In sum, to different extents, these instruments seem interesting for this research given their efforts in combining environmental and territorial issues with tourism. It is important to mention as well that various regional development, heritage, land use and tourism activities also receive funding from other European programmes related with research and technology (*Research and technological development RTD*), training for SMEs (*Competitiveness and innovation program CIP),* environmental and transport infrastructures *(Cohesion Fund)* and nature conservation (*LIFE+*, see below*).* These projects are carried out by cooperative efforts between organisations in two or more member states. Below I address the specific regulation concerning biodiversity and protected areas in Europe due to their close relationship with ecotourism.

3.2.3. *Biodiversity, fragile ecosystems and protected areas in Europe*

EU regulations addressing biodiversity conservation and protected areas echo the broader environmental and regional development policy presented in the previous section. However, given the close relationship between protected areas, biodiversity and ecotourism, a more detailed analysis seems necessary. As will be seen later, the governance of ecotourism and protected areas comprises not only EU regulations, but also includes leading actions from other European institutions such as the Council Europe and the EUROPARC Federation.

3.2.3.1. <u>The EU biodiversity policy</u>

The EU biodiversity policy dates from the 1970s, and more precisely goes back to the first wave of environmentalism and the first EAP. Subsequently, legislation with different emphasis has been adopted to protect and conserve wildlife, biodiversity and habitats of Europe. One emblematic landmark is the creation of the Natura 2000 system seeking to create an ecological network of protected sites across Europe. Natura 2000 is based on the Bird Directive (1979), the European Map of Spatial Planning identifying coastal and mountain areas (1983) and the Habitat Directive (1992). Both, the Bird and Habitat directives emanate from a socio-institutional process where a varied range of actors and institutions converged, including civil society demands, expert knowledge and top-down policies. The Bird Directive, for instance, resulted from the junction of the 1970s mobilisation against the killing of migratory birds (Gammel, 1987 cited in Rauschmayer *et al*., 2009), petitions from energetic interest groups and expert-driven studies. For its part, the Habitat Directive cannot be dissociated from the sustainability discourse of the 1990s, and the mobilisation of conservation groups inspired in this global discourse. Whereas Birds put the focus on conservation and expert-driven knowledge, the Habitats enlarged the initial conservation view towards a broader sustainability and territorial perspective[207] combining economic, social and cultural aims, together with more bottom-up strategies (European Community, 1992). Alike every EU directive, Birds and Habitat are binding instruments to member states, which are free to choose the form and methods for their implementation. Member states are responsible for the designation of sites, their management and local regulation. This legislation aims to protect most rare species and habitats throughout the designation of representative sites in order to ensure their long-term conservation[208]. Collectively, these areas form the Natura 2000 network, which so far comprises about 21.612 Sites of Community importance (655.968 km^2) designated under the Habitats Directive, and 5.004 Special Protection Areas (517.896 km^2) under the Birds Directive (EC, 2008).

LIFE+ is the EU financial instrument for environmental and nature conservation[209]. It provides support for the development and implementation of the EU environmental regulation, and in particular for the 6EAP. It finances projects involving land use and spatial planning, impact assessment, water and waste management, agriculture, tourism, among others. The LIFE Unit (DG Environment) coordinates this fund that comprises a budget of €2.143 billion for the period 2007-2013. Since 1992, the LIFE fund has co-financed about 2.750 projects, representing nearby €1.35 billions of the environmental protection budget[210]. Among the best LIFE projects for the period 2007-2008, member states awarded

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[207] *"The main aim of the Directive being to promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking into account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements, this Directive makes a contribution to the general objective of sustainable development"* (European Community, 1992).

[208] In total there are 181 birds species, 200 other animal species, 500 plant species, and around 200 natural and semi-natural habitats targeted for protection.

[209] The LIFE+ (2007-2013) follows on the LIFE III programme (2000-2006).

[210] See http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/index.htm

an initiative in Halkidiki (Greece) aiming to implement sustainable tourism methods, by means of integrating the objectives of environmental standards improvement, long-term socio-economic benefits for farmers, tourism operators and rural communities (see European Communities, 2008a).

3.2.3.2. Other European institutions dealing with protected areas in Europe

There are around 40.000 protected areas in Europe (EC, 2002), varying from strict nature reserves to more flexible natural areas governed according sustainability principles. In general, European protected areas are small, covering on average a surface of 1000ha or less, and they mainly belong to the categories II, IV and V of the IUCN classification (see table 9) (Blangy and Vautier, 2001). In Europe protected areas receive varied "appellations" *i.e.* nature reserves, nature parks, regional parks, marine reserves, etc., shaping together a complex plexus of protected sites. Below, I examine actions carried out by four European institutions in the field of ecotourism in protected areas.

a) The Council of Europe: the European diploma and the Landscapes Convention

Action carried out by the Council of Europe pursuing sustainability comprises four initiatives on nature and cultural heritage. One pioneer example is the creation in 1965 of first European award for protected areas, by initiative of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The *European Diploma of Protected Areas* is a five year-period award for natural and semi-natural protected areas granted as recognition for their exceptional scientific, cultural or aesthetic qualities, as well as their sustainable development oriented labour. It seeks to stimulate more efficient protection and management of European sites. So far, this diploma has been conferred to 69 areas distributed in 25 countries.[211]. A second initiative is the 1979 *Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Resources*[212] that is a legally binding instrument combining flora and fauna protection together with cooperation among signatory states. It has been signed by the 46 member states of the Council of Europe, the EU, Monaco and also by a few African and Asian countries. This convention led in 1999 to the creation of the *Emerald network of areas of special conservation interest* (ASCIs), following similar objectives to the ones of Natura 2000, thus operating in parallel to it. Since the EU is a contracting Party, Habitats and Birds serve to fulfil obligations to this convention.

A third initiative is the 2004 *Convention on European landscapes* (Florence Convention) defining measures to protect, manage and plan European landscapes; it also aims at fostering cooperation among signatory states[213]. It is part of the Council of Europe's work on natural and cultural heritage[214],

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[211] One of the first awarded areas was the French Camargue National Reserve, the Peak District National Park in the United Kingdom and the Hautes Fagnes Nature Reserve in Belgium (see http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage /aware/Diploma/default en asp).
[212] Into force on the 1 June 1982.
[213] Adopted in Florence on 20 October 2003 and into force since the 1 March 2004 (Council Treaty Series No. 176).

and does not only concern remarkable but also ordinary landscapes. It refers to tourism and recreation for their potential to modify landscapes. This is a rather new initiative, ratified by France only in 2006. One last initiative of the Council is the *Conference of Ministers responsible for regional/spatial planning (CEMAT)* created in 1970 and working today on European sustainable development. The most significant outcome is the publishing of the *Guiding principles for sustainable spatial development of the European continent* (2002) that covers a number of territorial topics, including tourism. This document stresses the need for more high quality and more sustainable forms of tourism, adapted to the specific characteristics of rural, coastal and mountain areas. Ecotourism is identified as an opportunity to foster sustainability in natural areas and as a means of nature protection.

b) The EUROPARC Federation and the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas
The Federation of National and Nature Parks of Europe EUROPARC[215], founded in 1973, is a politically independent pan-European organisation working on giving support and enhancing all kinds of European protected areas. In view of the increasing popularity of European Protected Areas as tourism destinations, EUROPARC started addressing issues related with the compatibility between nature protection and tourism. EUROPARC thus launched in the early 1990s a preliminary research in fifteen European parks with the aim to define best practices for sustainable tourism in protected areas. From this initiative issued the publication *Loving them to death* (1993) that provides practical guidelines and recommendations for managers of protected areas, international and national governments and for actors of the tourism sector. One of the conclusions underscores the need to regulate the coordination among parks, providers of tourism services and tour operators under the form of a *European Charter for Sustainable Tourism* (EC, 2001). In tune with this conclusion, by 1995, the DG Environment funded a LIFE project to support the process that led to the Charter. This action was conducted by the *Fédération des Parcs Naturels Régionaux (FFPNR)* that worked in collaboration with EUROPARC, and engaged in a participatory process involving representatives of protected areas, tourism industry and international organisations. Once the first draft of the charter was ready, fifteen European parks tested it during a three-year period. A more definitive version of the charter was presented in a seminar in France in 1999 and the official document was published in 2000 (Kangas, 2007).

Participation in the Charter is voluntary and contractual, and is awarded to parks whose objectives and actions in the field of tourism follow a sustainability approach. The charter commits signatories to implement a local strategy for sustainable tourism, by defining specific responsibilities for protected areas' authorities, local tourism providers and companies organising tours in the area. The Charter is

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[214] The Council of Europe's Heritage Conventions are: Convention for the Protection of the architectural heritage (Granada, 1985); Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valleta, 1992); European Convention for the Protection of the Audiovisual Heritage (Strasbourg, 2001); Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro, 2005).
[215] See http://europarc.org

composed by both a set of principles and a detailed methodology for the preparation and implementation of a sustainable tourism strategy, and also involves an evaluation of the strategy and action plans. Its implementation includes a territorial diagnosis, done by authorities of protected areas in collaboration with the local community and tourism representatives, the adaptation of general principles to the local context, the definition of a five-year strategy, and its translation into an action plan. The area is then evaluated by a technical committee that might allow the label of excellence in the development of sustainable tourism (EC, 2001). If so, the protected area will be engaged to watch over the respect of the charter for a five-year period, until a new evaluation. By 2001, seven parks had the award, among them two French regional parks[216]. At the end of 2007, forty-eight parks had the label, from which nine were regional parks and three national parks of France. For the period 2008-2009 there are twenty-five new applications, including the one of the Morvan Park[217]. Given the increasing popularity of this eco-label, since January 2008 the Federation charges € 5000 to candidates to cover the elevated operational costs of EUROPARC, resulting from a progressive augmentation of the number of parks submitting a charter proposal.

BOX 9: EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS

BASIC AIMS AND REQUIREMENTS:
Underlying aims
1. To recognise Europe's protected areas as a fundamental part of our heritage, which should be preserved for (and enjoy by) current and future generations.
2. To develop and manage tourism in protected areas in a sustainable way, taking account of the needs of the environment, local residents, local business and visitors.

Working in partnership
3. To involve all those directly implicated by tourism in its development and management, in and around the protected area.

Preparing and implementing a strategy
4. To prepare and implement a sustainable tourism strategy and action plan for the protected area.

Addressing key issues
5. To provide all visitors with a high quality experience with respect to all aspects of their visit.
6. To encourage specific tourism products which enable discovery and understanding of the area.
7. To communicate effectively to visitors about the area's special qualities.
8. To increase knowledge of the protected area and of sustainability issues among all those involved in tourism.
9. To ensure that tourism supports and does not reduce the quality of life of local residents.
10. To protect and enhance the area's natural and cultural heritage, for and through tourism.
11. To increase benefits from tourism to the local economy.
12. To monitor and influence visitor flows to reduce negative impact.
* The above principles constitute the framework for the Charter. Principles 3 to 12 serve as a list of requirements conditioning the charter's allowance.

Source: author, with information from www.parcs-naturels-regionaux.tm.fr and http://www.europarc.org/european-charter.org/map_neu.htm

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The successful application of the Charter depends to a great extent on the governance of the protected area, and more specifically on the translation of the Charter into practice and its adaptation to local specificities (EC, 2001). While examining the functioning of the Charter in different parks, authorities

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[216] Parc naturel régional du Luberon and Parc naturel régional du Vexin Français.
[217] See http://www.european-charter.org/ for an actualized list of granted parks.

usually mention difficulties related with a gap between the elevated human and economic costs of its implementation and the mitigated benefits that the label engenders in terms of tourism. In fact, there is no necessary correlation between the label and the number of tourism arrivals, situation that someway disappoints the park's managers[218]. On the other hand, this situation reveals an important tension, given the fact that in any case the charter should provoke a considerable growing of the number of tourists.

c) The Protected Areas Network PAN Parks

The *PAN Parks* programme is a parallel European initiative, created in 1997 by the WWF in partnership with the Dutch Molecaten Leisure Group. In tune with ecotourism philosophy, PAN parks aim at investing the economic value generated through tourism in the protection and conservation of nature. As the European Charter, the PAN Parks agreement pursues networking strategy, high quality nature tourism standards and environmental sustainability principles. Furthermore, this strategy focuses on a wilderness tourism experience, occurring in larger parks with a minimum size of 25.000 ha from which 10.000 ha should be core zones free of intervention and visitors[219]. The main aim is to build a recognisable pan-European network of unique and well-managed protected areas that welcome visitors while giving priority to nature conservation. Under this strategy, building partnerships with nature conservation groups, travel agencies, the business community and all local actors seems fundamental (EC, 2001). PAN Parks operates through a document listing principles and criteria for the award of the Pan Parks logo, which has been operative since 2000. Guiding principles were conceived as strict quality standards applicable to different types of nature and administration of protected areas in Europe, and specifically refer to protected areas' features and criteria for sustainable tourism and commercial partners. Nine parks had been recognized by 2008, located mainly in eastern and northern Europe[220].

d) Voluntary initiatives for sustainability in tourism (VISIT)

The VISIT association was created from a EU LIFE project in tourism eco-labelling and was born at the 2004 Reisepavillon fair[221] with the collaboration of seven leading European labels working together since 2001, among which the French Clef Verte[222]. The aim is to create cooperation and synergies among institutions hosting certification plans and all kinds of voluntary initiatives for sustainable tourism at the international level. More precisely, the objective is to advance towards the construction of a reliable system of certification for European sustainable tourism for which VISIT has

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[218] Interview with a French park authority.
[219] For a detailed comparison between the European Charter and the Pan Parks see European Commission, 2001.
[220] Bieszczady National Park (Poland), Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park (Georgia), Central Balkan National Park (Bulgaria), Fulufjället National Park (Sweden), Majella National Park (Italy), Oulanka National Park (Finland), Paanajärvi National Park (Russia), Retezat National Park (Romania), Rila National Park (Bulgaria) (see http://www.panparks.org).
[221] It is one of the most important fairs on green tourism and ecotourism in Europe.
[222] The countries are Italy, Denmark, Latvia, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Luxembourg, as well as the Netherlands where VISIT is based (see http://visit21.net).

developed a framework with 21 key criteria that should regularly be tested and adapted to local contexts. Unlike EUROPARC, VISIT still does not carry intensive action (Alet-Ringenbach and Verhaeghe, 2008).

3.3. A preliminary synthesis of the European level: governance challenges and dilemmas

The complexity of the previously analyzed framework reveals the importance of governance in the context of sustainable development and ecotourism. The large heterogeneity of institutions, instruments and actors intervening in these two interrelated domains has led to a call for a governance where collaboration, partnership, articulation and broad participation are considered essential to guarantee sustainability.

This section started examining the pertinence of the concepts of ecotourism and sustainable development for European countries, for then addressing the main European policies and regulations dealing with these two topics. The biophysical setting of European landscapes hosting ecotourism has been shaped by a long and reciprocal interaction between natural and human forces, creating ecotourism destinations essentially distinguished by their mixture of culture and nature. Beyond the specific EU tourism regulation established by the DG enterprise, is clear that ecotourism and sustainable development are regulated in Europe by a combination of initiatives addressing biodiversity, spatial planning, rural territories, natural resources and protected areas, among others, that are hosted by other EU DG in partnership with other European institutions. As to the introduction of sustainability into the practice of tourism, European regulations mirror broader global shifts in the way the environment has being governed over the last four decades. Of the many issues considered here, I underscore the transition from the EU environmental approach from a focus on trade (1970s) to the current emphasis on governance by shared parties including market, citizens, enterprises and other actors. A major landmark in this transition was the still persisting focus on sustainability adopted in the late 1980s, together with the current aim of fully integrating sustainability in every policy domain. In the field of tourism, it is possible to observe a similar transition. The tourism-environment link was first addressed in the 1970s underscoring the negative effects of tourism, basically opposing the development of this activity to environmental quality, as was typically done during this decade for all policy fields. Later, notably since the late 1990s, tourism discovered its conservation and cultural enhancement potential, echoing the complementarities between the socio-economic and ecological dimensions included in the term sustainable development. Of course, these transformations are far from being linear and free of contradictions, as specially observed in the tourism sector, frequently exposed to the tensions between a tourism policy aiming at increasing tourism competitiveness, and therefore increasing arrivals, and on the other hand the whole set of sustainability measures related with tourism but rather seeking to control and even reduce the number of arrivals to certain

destinations because of carrying capacity limitations. This is indeed a very relevant issue, not only observed at the European scale, but also at the national and sub-national levels.

Summarizing, ecotourism governance in Europe is situated at the crossroads between various environmental, biodiversity, rural development, tourism and environmental regulatory systems, giving rise to a very complex and sometimes contradictory framework. The EU leadership is considered here as a valuable catalyst for national and sub-national action, sharing experiences and good practices, dissemination of information and communication, as well as a key leader in stimulating multi-stakeholder governance approach throughout its different policy instruments. In fact, there is no doubt about the role played by the European level in environmental questions, and moreover there exists a general recognition that the EU constitutes a powerful actor in the environmental regulation in Europe (see Barnes and Barnes, 1999). One of the principal aims of this section has been to enable the reader to understand that this role is particularly perceivable (legitimate) in policies concerning protected areas, biodiversity and ecotourism, fields in which the EU has certainly played a major role, yet collaboration with the other concerned European institutions has been fundamental.

However, while observing the amount of published documents, policies, programmes and instruments the question about their efficiency seems very important. After more than 30 years of European environmental policy, several questions have emerged concerning the degree of environmental 'clean-up' resulting from these measures, the European levels of pollution, and the difficulties associated with the confection of a uniform environmental policy to be implemented in such a wide range of diverse ecosystems represented in Europe. From a governance perspective many doubts persist, on the one hand, given the mismatch between biophysical territories and political frontiers and, on the other, regarding the legitimacy, effectiveness and level of participation expected from these policies. In terms of how effective the implementation of the European environmental policy has been, Barnes and Barnes (1999) cite a report done in 1998 that concludes that even though environmental pressures have been reduced, it is not possible to affirm that there has been a general amelioration in the European environmental quality, remaining transport, energy and agriculture as the most damaging sectors. Barnes and Barnes (1999) also raise questions concerning the degree of implementation of the different EAP arguing that there has been a lack of political commitment. With a ten-year delay a similar reflection might be made for the tourism sector, since despite the various initiatives carried out to improve its sustainability, major negative environmental effects persist.

Despite the current environmental condition of Europe, this section makes clear that issues concerning ecotourism have penetrated other environmental dilemmas that cannot be addressed in isolation. In this respect, European action has made considerable progress and set the standard in introducing the environmental variable in the broad policy framework, as well as in the effort for combining tourism

with conservation. On the other hand, the effects of a certain policy or instrument cannot be quantified exclusively in terms of the level of pollution of the European continent. Transition towards sustainability will certainly be a slow process, depending upon transformations that are difficult to quantify, as is the case of innovations, diffusion of new knowledge, promotion of new values, etc., inducing changes in governance relationships that might sow more sustainable paths. Bearing this in mind, the impact of European initiatives is analysed in the section below, which examines France within its interrelations with the global and European levels.

4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ECOTOURISM IN FRANCE

In this section I develop a historical and inter-policy perspective to deal with the birth and institutionalisation of sustainable development and ecotourism in France. The aim is to analyse the processes though which sustainability arouse in the French policy scene, together with its translation into different policy arenas through the example of tourism. One central field is the French spatial policy where new environmental and sustainability challenges were progressively addressed since the first wave of environmentalism, as observed for the global and European levels. As to tourism, it was affected by the same environmentalist élan, which progressively greened the tourism demand and supply, and its regulation, converging in the emergence of the concepts of sustainable tourism and ecotourism. Tourism also is an emblematic sector in which the sustainability limits of the fordist growth model were crystallised in coastal tourism infrastructures whose high degree of visual, aesthetical and environmental pollution imposed the need to incorporate regulation aiming at sustainability. This major shift observed in tourism was accompanied by policy innovation in the fields of biodiversity, rural territories and protected areas, at different spatial levels, combined with a deep restructuring/renovation of the role of the state, characterised by decentralisation and the introduction of more participatory forms of local governance.

4.1. The local and regional policy in France

4.1.1. *A top-down strategy for regional development and environmental protection after WWII*

France has a long tradition in preferring top-down policy approaches to bottom-up steered local and regional development, believing in central state intervention and state planning. This centralised role was more than ever true during the three decades following WWII, which corresponded to a very prosperous epoch known in France as the *Trente Glorieuses*. During these years, it was the central state who decided, conducted and implemented the global reconstruction post-war plan in France, which was based upon intensive local and regional development policies combining heavy industrialisation and urbanisation. The aim was to boost growth by the means of transforming France

into an industrial country, to spatially regulate employment and to foster equity among territories[223]. From 1954 onwards, the state began to unlock new regional development alternatives that incorporated the participation of local elected politicians and created the *Commissariat Général du Plan* to elaborate the development agenda for the 22 French administrative regions. The conduction of this top-down strategy was delegated to new institutions such as the *Délégation à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Action Régionale DATAR[224]* (1963) and the *Ministère de l'Équipement* (1967). The DATAR, since its birth, played a fundamental role, as the central state agency in charge of leading the implementation of the economic development policy at the subnational level. Additionally, the DATAR was responsible for the creation of a diversified regional development apparatus combining spatial planning with environmental protection aims, as is the case of the *Agences de l'eau* (1964), the *Parcs Naturels Régionaux* (1967), the *Conservatoire du littoral* (1975) and to a large extent of the Ministry of the Environment.

In 1964, the local and regional development policy was subtly transformed with the creation of the *Préfet de la Région* and other regional administrations[225] that in the 1980s became sovereign regions. In fact, since the abolition of the Ancient Regime's provinces during the Revolution, the French territory remained divided into departments until the promulgation of this law assembling in a broader spatial level various departments to create a region. Summarizing, the period until the early 1970s was characterised by a strong state intervention focusing on development and territorial equity fostered through industrialisation. In this context, Prefects were in charge of administrating the policy dictated at the national level. Elected representatives, for their part, negotiated and competed for subsidies coming from the central state. The role of the other territorial levels rests marginal due to their lack of legal and technical competences.

Echoing this top-down scheme, biodiversity conservation was also conducted by central state agencies. The 1960s came together with new laws founding emblematic nature protection institutions such as the *réserves naturelles* (1961), the *parcs nationaux* (1960) and the *parcs naturels régionaux* (1967). While natural reserves and national parks were created with a scientific and biodiversity conservation purpose, regional parks were envisaged to foster simultaneously socio-economic development and environmental protection. The urban focus of the local and regional development policy of that time intensified migration from rural areas to urban industrial poles, and therefore exacerbated the economic and demographic decline of the countryside. The DATAR thus created regional parks for environmental protection, but also as a sort of socio-economic palliative to alleviate

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[223] This was done by the *Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme* through the planning tool known as *"Le Plan"*.
[224] The Délégation interministérielle à l'aménagement compétitif des territoires (DIACT) since 2005.
[225] The decrees of march 14th 1964 gave birth to the *Préfet de la région*, the *Conférence Administrative Régionale* and the *Commission de Développement Economique Régional* (Vital-Durand, 2006).

the effects of the rural exodus. Regional parks thus embody the alliance and concomitance between the spatial and the environmental policies from the late-1960s to the early 1970s, evoked by Theys (2004).

One recurring remark about the French environmental and biodiversity policy is its relative tardiness vis-à-vis other countries, perceived for instance in the long interval between the foundation of the first national park in the USA (1870) and the first national park in France (1960). In fact, the introduction of the environment into French laws occurred only from the 1960s onwards, as an outcome of the pressures exerted by northern European countries and the stirring of environmentalist groups contesting industrialisation in certain French territories (Lorach and Quatrebarbes, 2002). It was in the 1960s when French environmentalist groups gained more visibility and coherence, as happened with the *Société impériale zoologique d'acclimatation* born in 1854 and converted into the *Société Nationale de Protection de la Nature (SNPN)* in 1960 to reorient its activities towards flora and fauna protection. Since its foundation, this society played a major role in inspiring the constitution of protectionists groups[226] and protected areas. In 1926 it gave birth to the *Réserve Nationale de Camargue*[227] constituted from rented private lands, followed by two other reserves in the Pyrénées and in the Alpes, which years later became national parks[228], denoting how important the SNPN was in orienting the state about the fragile ecosystems needing protection. Today the SNPN manages the *Grand Lieu* lake (Loire-Atlantique region), after the perfumer Jean-Pierre Guerlain donated the lake to the state imposing that it should be managed by the SNPN. Another environmentalist group born during those years was *France Nature Environnement* (FNE)[229] (1968), playing until today an active coordination role of more than 3.000 environmentalist associations located in the French territory and represented at the European Environmental Bureau.

4.1.2. *The governance of the post-fordist years: environmental awareness, environmental regulation and decentralisation*

The crisis of Fordism provoked in Europe and in France a more generalised awareness of the consequences of industrialisation and uncontrolled economic growth. The environmental effects of productivism, combined with the energy collapse, raised environmental consciousness, and consequently legitimised public intervention in this field. The state, as a means to alleviate the crisis, conducted an economic policy built upon plans adapted to the specific handicaps of territories (*i.e.* subsidies for the *massif central* and the Grand Sud-Ouest) and gradually introduced novel environmental regulations. Simultaneously, the emerging energy policy, based upon the construction of nuclear power plants, encouraged civil society mobilisation and empowered a nascent green

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[226] *i.e.* Société des amis de l'élephant (1906), Ligue française pour la protection des oiseaux, and the Réserve ornithologique des Sept-Iles (Bretagne) (1912) (see http://www.snpn.com).
[227] First natural reserve recognized as such in 1967 and in 1975 designed UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.
[228] Respectively the Parc national des Pyrénées and the Parc national du Mercantour.
[229] See http://www.fne.asso.fr/

political party. The candidacy of René Dumont to the French presidency in 1974 embodied this shift, which together with the 1976 *Loi sur la protection de la nature*[230] instituting impact assessments, seem to be valuable germs of the French *Droit de l'environnement* (Lorach and Quatrebarbes, 2002). Within this context, central authorities started renewing the role of the local level, assigning to communes new environmental and waste recollection tasks. To a certain extent, the crisis coupled discontentment of citizens, elected representatives and sub-national government institutions, opening a first reflection on the capacity of the central state to cope by itself with the challenges derived from the crisis, inaugurating thus a debate on environmental governance that persists until today. The succession of catastrophes in the 1980s certainly reinforced this process (*i.e.* Bhopal, Chernobyl, ozone layer gap).

The decade after the crisis is characterised by deep changes in the geopolitical world organisation. In the context of European countries, from the 1980s onwards, the European level of governance gained a more central role in the development of regions through the implementation of structural funds and new environmental regulation. Concurrently, the autonomy of French sub-national territories started increasing with decentralisation. Unlike the top-down approach of the previous decade, the 1982-83 Decentralisation Laws[231] restrained the central state function, instituting a first step towards the territorialisation of spatial policies. These laws conferred broader powers to regions, called from now on *collectivités territoriales,* to intervene for instance in giving assistance to local enterprises and incite their implantation with tax reliefs. By 1986, the power of the regional level increased, after the foundation of regions directed by regional elected representatives, and the second breath gained by the *Contrats de Plan Etat-Régions (CPER)* established in 1984. The CPER is a five-year planning contract[232] negotiated between the central state and the *collectivités territoriales*, where the state decides a general set of economic objectives for all the country, and each region elaborates specific Plans in agreement with the national framework. The CPER is a sort of intermediate planning tool that although it allows regions (*Conseil Régional*) to freely design and implement their own development strategy, the latter must be in tune with the national plan set by the central state, revealing its persisting leading role in France (see Ancien, 2005). With this first decentralisation laws the state recognized the limits of top-down intervention, thus solicited the collaboration of regions, even though it maintains high levels of power and control. This transformation happened concomitantly with the reinforcement of the regulatory and subsidising role of the EU level, for since managing European funds for regional and local development by the central state proved to be complex, decentralisation was also needed to implement EU policy.

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[230] "*la protection des espaces naturels et des paysages, la préservation des espèces animales et végétales, le maintien des équilibres biologiques auxquels ils participent et la protection des ressources naturelles contre toutes les causes de dégradation qui les menacent sont d'intérêt général*" *(...)* "*la réalisation de ces objectifs doit également assurer l'équilibre harmonieux de la population résidant dans les milieux urbains et ruraux*" *(...)* (JO Loi n° 76-629 du 10 juillet 1976).
[231] Loi n 82-213du 2 mars 1982.
[232] They started during the IX Plan with the *CPER Première Génération* that covered the period 1984 to 1988. Since then there have been four more CPER generations: 1989-1993, 1994-1999, 2000-2006 and the ongoing generation 2007-2013.

Theys (2004) points out that the fordist crisis and the first decentralisation laws broke up the connection between spatial and environmental policies, to move towards a more sectoral and a-spatial strategy. On the one hand, environmental regulation underwent a process of verticalisation and targeting of specific topics (*i.e.* water, air and risks); on the other, tools promoting integrated territorial development did not receive enough financial support. Thus, until the 1990s, the environmental policy was rather detached from its territorial dimension, apart from a few measures addressing rural territories. The Morvan park case provides interesting insights concerning the efforts made to maintain the dialectics between environmental protection and socio-economic revitalisation of territories. This case also expresses the tensions of an institution (a regional park) that was conceived as a territorial tool pursuing combined planning and environmental aims in the 1970s, and that later, in the 1980s underwent a disconnection between these two policy domains. Moreover, regional parks personify the contradictions engendered by the creation of institutions issued from the intention to reconsider spatial and environmental policies in view of the sustainability objectives fixed for the post-Rio period.

4.1.3. *The rebuilding of the environment-territory nexus through sustainable development*

Following the course of scalar reconfiguration initiated after WWII, characterised in Europe by the double process of Europeanization of policies and devolution of power to decentralized institutions, the incorporation in the 1990s of the sustainability paradigm into various public policies resulted in the birth of new territorial institutions aspiring to satisfy the democratic needs of a sustainability project. A similar movement is observed in France, but with a relative tardiness compared to other European countries, explained by the hesitant way of the French environmental regulation.

Until the 1990s, the concept of sustainable development had very little resonance in French policies. During this decade, various laws combining sustainability and territorial action came to light, as is the case of the *Loi sur l'eau*[233]*,* the *Loi relative à l'administration territoriale (LOATR)*[234]*,* the first sustainability actions enounced by the *Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Energie (ADEME)*[235]*,* and the earliest attempts to create a *French sustainable development commission*[236] that was finally operational in 1996. Among these actions, the LOATR is considered a main text drawing attention to collaboration among local institutions and civil society participation, from which novel inter-communal institutions or *Établissement public de coopération intercommunale (EPCI)* were born, as is the case of the *Communautés de Communes (CC)* and *Communautés des Villes (CV)*, both *collectivités territoriales* authorised to collect taxes and responsible for a number of tasks linking

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[233] Loi n° 92-3 du 3 janvier 1992 that complements the 1964 law allowing the inclusion of water issues into a broader law addressing the environment and protection of aquatic ecosystems.

[234] Loi d'orientation n° 92-125 sur l'administration territoriale de la République du 6 février 1992 (LOATR).

[235] That later defined its mission according sustainability principles and whose financial means considerably increased since 1997.

[236] The creation of National Sustainable Development Commissions, defined in the articles 38-40 of the Agenda 21, was one of the important tasks delivered to States for the after Rio Conference.

sustainability with territorial action (*i.e.* environmental protection and valorisation, air and water pollutions, noise, waste, etc.). The application of the LOATR resulted in the creation of a new spatial level in France, consisting of EPCI of different sizes. Still, according to Lorach and Quatrebarbes (2002), this new structure was not capable of meeting the necessary conditions of a project aspiring sustainability. From a multi-level governance perspective, these new structures joined the ensemble of institutions composed by a fortified Region, the *département,* and the national and the EU levels.

Nonetheless, it was not until 1995 when the concept of sustainable development was mentioned for the first time in French law, notably in the 1995 *loi relative au renforcement de la protection de l'environnement (Loi Barnier)*[237]. Inspired by Brundtland, the *loi Barnier* contends that the general public interest coincides with the aims of a sustainable development project insisting on environmental protection, valorisation and rehabilitation of ecosystems, and centrality of its territorial character. This law introduces the principles of precaution, polluter pays and participation, later included into the *Code de l'environnement*[238] (Lorach and Quatrebarbes, 2002).

Since the promulgation of the LOATR, sustainable development flourished in the French legislative scene. One key field is the local and regional development policy, which concurrently incarnates the introduction of sustainability into the French legal framework and the deepening of the process of power devolution from the central state towards decentralised institutions. This double process therefore rebuilds the interrupted alliance between environmental and spatial policies. In this context, the 1995 law *d'orientation pour l'aménagement et le développement du territoire (Loi Pasqua or LOADDT),* attempting ameliorating the LOATR, employed the concept of sustainable development to define the meaning and scope of the French spatial policy[239]. Thus with the aim to combine sustainability and territorial development, this law instituted an additional inter-communal level, called *pays,* and incorporates public participation in local consultations.

The second half of the 1990s seems fairly dynamic in reconciling the environment with its territorial dimension. The Environment Ministry[240] reinforced the utilisation of this concept, the French Sustainable Development Commission became operational and joined the Ministry, various instances of public participation at the regional level (the *Assises Nationales et Régionales du développement durable)* were organised to prepare the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) pointing towards the 2002 Johannesburg Conference. A second boost occurred in 1997 with the unification of

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[237] It defines sustainable development *"l'objectif de développement durable qui visent à satisfaire les besoins de développement et la santé des générations présents sans compromettre la capacité des générations futures à répondre aux leurs"* (Lorach and Quatrebarbes, 2002 p. 57).
[238] Article L. 110-1 du Code de l'environnement.
[239] Article 2: *"le schéma national d'aménagement et de développement du territoire fixe les orientations fondamentales en matière d'aménagement du territoire, d'environnement et de développement durable".*
[240] Under the direction of Corinne Lepage.

the *Ministère de l'Environnement* and the *Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire*, giving birth to the *Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire et de l'Environnement (MATE),* directed by Dominique Voynet, the first green party minister integrating the government. For Theys (2004, p. 43), this institutional merger is a concrete sign of reconciliation of environment with territory, and stimulating the inclusion of sustainability into sectoral regulations[241]. In fact, international events periodically recalling the need for sustainability, combined with an omnipresent feeling of environmental laziness and crisis in spatial policy, concurred towards the promulgation of various sustainability-related laws stressing on its territorial dimension. The first one is the 1999 *Loi d'Orientation pour l'aménagement et le développement durable du territoire* (*LOADDT* or *Loi Voynet*)[242] that pointed out the need to advance towards the formulation of a comprehensive policy that combines economic performance, social justice and environmental quality, together with encouraging participation and employment[243]. This law identifies local development, support to fragile and excluded territories, and integration of local populations as key strategic actions. Another important law is the 1999 *Loi relative au renforcement et à la simplification de la coopération intercommunale (Loi Chevènement or LOADT)* addressing the functioning of inter-communal institutions with tax autonomy and providing a legal body for these three governance levels: *CC*, *Communauté d'agglomeration* and *Communautés urbaines*.

The 2000 *loi relative à la solidarité et au renouvellement urbain (Loi SRU)* at the same time as pointing out targets related to equilibrated urban renewal and controlled urban development, as well as rural development, preservation of agriculture and forests and protection of natural spaces, among others, identified sustainable development as a global objective for urban plans. In tune with this purpose, it was expected that the new *Plans Locaux d'Urbanisme (PLU)* for communes and the *Schémas de Cohérence Territoriale (SCOT),* issued from this law, were integrated into the *Projets d'Aménagement et de Développement Durable*. A SCOT aims at favouring cooperation among communes sharing the same basin of life and fixes specific planning objectives equilibrating rural, urban, natural, forestry and agricultural territories[244]. In certain cases, one SCOT might regulate the construction of tourism equipments. Non urban territories as well were affected by the introduction of

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[241] For instance, the *Loi du 13 février 1997* on the national railroad mentions the need to develop a rail transport according sustainable development (Art 1: *"Cet établissement à pour object, conformément aux principes du service public et dans le but de promouvoir le transport ferroviare en France dans une logique de développement durable, l'aménagement, le développement, la cohérence et la mise en valeur de l'infrastructure du réseau ferré national")*; the Environment Ministry *Circulaire du 11 mai 1999* demanded *Préfets de régions* to elaborate CPER in tune with sustainable development.

[242] This law modifies the *Loi Pasqua*. Its first article states that *"la politique nationale d'aménagement et de développement durable du territoire concourt à l'unité de la nation, aux solidarités entre citoyens et à l'intégration des populations"*.

[243] *"Il s'agit d'impulser une politique qui contribue à un DD associant performance économique, justice sociale et qualité de l'environnement, qui favorise la participation de l'ensemble des acteurs et qui mobilise des territoires au profit de l'emploi"*.

[244] *"l'équilibre entre le renouvellement urbain, un développement maîtrisé, le développement de l'espace rural, d'une part, et la preservation des espaces affectés aux activités agricoles et forestières et la protection des espaces naturels et des paysages, d'une autre part, en respectant les objectifs du développement durable"* (loi SRU, article L.121-1).

sustainability principles, as is observed in the promulgation of the 1999 *Loi d'orientation agricole*[245] and the 2001 *Loi d'Orientation sur la forêt*[246], both stressing the large economic, social and environmental role of rural activities, and therefore their direct input to territorial sustainability. These laws, through new territorial tools, the *Contrats Territoriaux d'Exploitation (CTE),* incited transversal action, long term planning, partnership and integrated territorial projects.

TABLE 26: ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN FRANCE

1970	1960	Birth of the *Société nationale de protection de la nature*
	1960	*Parcs Nationaux*
	1967	*Parcs Naturels Régionaux*
	1968	Foundation of *France Nature Environnement*
	1971	Birth of the Ministry of the Environment
	1975	*Conservatoire du littoral et des espaces lacustres*
	1976	*Loi relative à la protection de la nature*
	1979	*Directives nationales d'aménagement de la montagne et du littoral*
1980	1982	Decentralisation laws: the executive is transferred from the *Préfets* to the *Présidents des Assemblées régionales*. The economic competences of the *collectivités locales* were expanded.
	1985	*Loi montagne*
	1986	*Loi littoral*
1990	1992	*Agence de l'environnement et de la maîtrise de l'Energie* (ADEME) defines its overall goals according sustainable development Creation of the French sustainable development commission
	1993	*Loi paysage* (Relative au renforcement de la protection de l'environnement)
	1995	*Loi relative au renforcement de la protection de l'environnement* (Loi Barnier) seeking to integrate sustainable development and environmental protection in rural territories (art. 38)
	1995	*Loi d'orientation pour l'aménagement et le développement du territoire LOADT* (Loi Pasqua): introduces the concept of *pays* and encourages its implementation in France. *Schéma National* and the *Shémas régionaux. d'aménagement et de développement du territoire,* which can be considered as the first formal sustainable development strategy in France, despite its weak operative function (Canfin, 2007)
	1996	*Loi sur l'air et l'utilisation rationelle de l'énergie* (LAURE)
	1999	*Loi d'orientation pour l'aménagement et le développement durable des territoires* (Loi Voynet): reinforces inter-communal institutions such as the *pays, the EPCI* and the *agglomérations*
	1999	*Loi relative au renforcement et à la simplification de la coopération intercommunale* (Loi Chevènement): agglomérations
2000	2000	*Loi relative à la solidarité et au renouvellement urbains* (SRU - Loi Gayssot)
	2002	*Loi relative à la démocratie de proximité* (Loi Vaillant)The Aarhus Convention comes into force in France
	2002	The *Comité interministériel pour l'aménagement et le développement du territoire (CIADT)*[247] states that the French spatial policy should incarnate the ambitions embodied in the concept of sustainable development
	2003	*Loi d'orientation et de programmation pour la ville et la rénovation urbaine*
	2003	Stratégie Nationale de *développement* durable
	2004	*Plan Climat*; *Plan Santé environnement*; *Stratégie nationale pour la biodiversité*
	2004	*Charte de l'environnement* (attached to the French Constitution by the Loi Constitutionnelle de 2005)
	2006	The CIACT states that the 2007-2013 CPER should give priority to sustainable development
	2007	*Grenelle de l'environnement*

Source: author with various sources

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[245] Article 1: *"La politique agricole prend en compte les fonctions économiques, environnementale et sociale de l'agriculture et participe à l'aménagement du territoire, en vue d'un développement durable".*
[246] Loi n° 2001-602 du 9 juillet 2001that follows the loi du 4 décembre 1985.
[247] Substituted in 2005 by the *Comité interministériel pour l'aménagement et de compétitivité des territoires (CIACT).*

The advent of the 2002 Johannesburg conference alerted French public powers and reinforced the role of sustainability in political discourses, as well as stimulated multiple actions anticipating this event. For instance, the 1998 inter-ministerial conference on spatial planning[248] identified sustainable development, employment and solidarity as the major axes of the forthcoming 2000-2006 CPER. A special decree creating a sustainable development commission[249] was promulgated in 2000 to pursue in practice the objectives issued from the Rio Conference and the implementation of Agenda 21. Yet, a first draft of the French SDS, to be presented in Johannesburg, was overdue and the germinal progresses lost continuity and impetus with various changes of governments and ministers.

In the 2000s, sustainable development continued gaining visibility among social movements, associations, local institutions, enterprises and academia. By 2002, the new government[250] renamed the MATE as *Ministère de l'Ecologie et du Développement Durable (MEDD),* taking away its spatial competences, and created a *Sécretariat d'État de Développement Durable.* Simultaneously, after the Johannesburg Summit, numerous initiatives converged in the elaboration of the French SDS[251], finally adopted in 2003, turning sustainable development into an inter-ministry objective conducted by the MEDD and giving rise to a profusion of initiatives at different territorial levels (*i.e.* the *Semaine du développement durable* promoting exemplary practices and proposals for the elaboration of Agenda 21). In 2006, the French SDS was adapted according to the renewed EU SDS revised in 2005, echoing the exact themes addressed by the EU strategy: climate change and renewable energies; sustainable transport; sustainable production and consumption; conservation and management of natural resources; public health, prevention and risk management; social inclusion, demography and immigration; world poverty and international sustainability challenges.

The succession of laws and initiatives addressing sustainability during the last years is considerable. In the urban field, the *Loi urbanisme et habitat du 2 juillet 2003[252] and loi d'orientation et de programation pour la ville et la rénovation urbaine du 1 août 2003[253]* gave a central role to sustainable development. One high-publicized event in 2004 was the publishing of the *Charte de l'environnement,* together with its integration in 2005 into the French Constitution with the same legal value as the 1789

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[248] *Conférence Interministérielle sur l'Aménagement du Territoire (CIADT).*
[249] *Décret du 25 mai 2000 portant création de la commission du développement durable.*
[250] Under the direction of Pierre Raffarin.
[251] *I.e.* a governmental seminar on SD (2002); the creation of a *Conseil national du développement durable (CNDD)* gathering representatives of local institutions, economic actors, trade unions, associations, etc. responsible for elaborating a proposal for the SDS; the creation of a *Comité Interministériel pour le Développement Durable (CIDD)* that substituted various environmental institutions (*Comité Interministériel de l'Environnement (CIEN), Comité Intérministériel de Prévention des Risques Naturels Majeurs (CIPRNM) and the Commission Interministérielle de lutte contre l'Effet de Serre (CIES).*
[252] Article 16: *"Lorqu'un plan local d'urbanisme a été approuvé avant l'entrée en vigueur de la présente loi: a) Les orientations générales du projet d'aménagement et de développement durable tiennent lieu et ont les effets du projet d'aménagement et de développement durable".*
[253] Article 6: *"Le programme national de rénovation urbaine vise à restructurer, dans un objectif de mixité sociale et de développement durable, les quartiers classés en zone urbaine sensible...".*

Human Rights Declaration[254]. This document insists on the need to integrate the environment into the entire policy framework and to develop precautionary approaches, as well as to promote participation and access to information. Among regulations addressing rural territories, the *Loi d'orientation agricole du 22 décembre 2005* and the *Loi relative au développement des territories ruraux du 23 février 2005*[255] not only highlight the need for more sustainable forms of agriculture, but also provide a wider frame for understanding rural territories insisting on their contrasts, diversity, attractiveness and character that bypasses agriculture by far (see section 4.3). Regulations concern then all sort of territorial forces from national to local, as is reflected in the decision of the *Comité interministériel d'aménagement et de compétitivité des territoires (CIACT)* to give a special place to sustainable development in the 2007-2013 CPER.

BOX 10: FRENCH INSTITUTIONS GOVERNING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The central state (MEEDDAT) is the main responsible for the production of French regulations dealing with territorial sustainability, biodiversity, natural resource management and all issues related with the governance of the environment. To fulfil this goal the Ministry is organised in several institutions at various spatial levels: a) the central level: with specific expertise areas (*i.e.* water, risk, nature, etc.[256]), inter-ministerial delegates addressing greenhouse effect issus, a sustainable development delegation, etc. At lower spatial levels, the MEEDDAT devolves its task forces on services located at the inter-regional, inter-department, regional and department levels. Regional institutions were restructured as *Directions régionales de l'environnement, de l'aménagement et du logement* (DREAL) on January 2009. The *département* level has directorates on equipment, agriculture, forestry, sea etc., as well as environmental directorates[257], industrial and research directorates. This framework is completed with the various tasks accomplished by national councils, committees and commissions working closely to the Ministry in the areas of agriculture, water, coral reefs, fauna, hunting, nature protection, risk, sustainable development…

Source: author

In 2007 the MEDD was replaced by the *Ministère de l'écologie, de l'énergie, du développement durable et de l'aménagement du territoire* (MEEDDAT)[258] re-establishing thus the alliance between the environmental policy and the territorial dimension. The year 2007 finished with the *Grennelle de l'environnement*, which corresponds to an ensemble of political meetings to discuss long term environmental and sustainability decisions. The debate was organised according to six thematic working groups[259] and convoked actors from the central state, *collectivés territoriales*, NGOs, employers and employees. The result of these discussions ended up in a highly-publicized round table on October 25 2007, led by Nicolas Sarkozy, where he presented a few conclusions from the past months' discussions. Although this initiative has been positively perceived due to the unprecedented

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[254] The Charte was joint to the *Constitution de la Cinquième République (loi constitutionnelle n° 2005-205 du 1er mars)*
[255] Loi No 2005-157 du 23 février 2005 relative au développement des territories ruraux.
[256] *Direction générale de l'administration, Direction des études économiques et de l'évaluation environnementale, Direction de l'eau, Direction de la prévention des pollutions et des risques, Direction de la nature et des paysages (DNP).*
[257] *Directions régionales de l'environnement (DIREN).*
[258] Under the direction of Jean-Louis Borloo.
[259] 1) climate change and energy; 2) biodiversity and natural resources; 3) environment and health; 4) sustainable production and consumption; 5) democracy and; 6) ecological modes of development favoring employment and competitiveness.

participatory nature of this meeting, various suspicious points were mentioned along the process. For instance, the partial selection carried out by the government of the participating environmentalist NGOs that excluded those dealing with the anti-nuclear question, as well as the stand-by status given to polemical topics such as genetically modified crops, nuclear power, pesticides and agro-fuels.

In sum, the previous paragraphs showed two major shifts observed in the regional and local development policy in France. On the one hand, the movement from a top-down development strategy towards a complex process of denationalisation of policy making composed by the concomitant flourishing of sub-national and EU regulation institutions. On the other hand, we observe the gradual introduction of the natural environment and sustainable development into the French policy framework, notably after the first and second wave of environmentalism, alternating phases in which the environmental and sustainability policy have been more or less territorially conceived. As a result, the French territory has been undergoing during the last decades important transformations that are characterised by a process of spatial fragmentation and multiplication of sub-national politico-administrative institutions and borders. France compiles today several territorial institutions that were founded in different historical periods and at various spatial scales. Together they form an institutional framework of high complexity. It is interesting to observe how, since their foundation, these newly devolved institutions since their foundation have assumed a more protagonist role in environmental and sustainability matters. They have then accompanied and nourished the design and the transformation of the role of the state, from a completely centralised and technocentric strategy towards the proliferation of decentralised institutions advocating for more participatory forms of governance based on a more post-normal scientific approach. I now elaborate on this historical analysis and the previously examined arguments through their application to the field of tourism and more precisely ecotourism in protected areas.

4.2. Tourism and planning shifts for tourism development in France

As we saw in chapter three, since the mid-1980s, France is the first world tourism destination. In 2007, France hosted 9,4% of global travellers, followed by Spain and the United States. More than 80 million foreign tourists and 114 million foreign excursionists visited France in 2007 (DDT, 2008a). They mainly come from the UK (18,1%), Germany (15,9%), Belgium and Luxembourg (11.9%), and near 45 millions arrivals correspond to stays of four nights or longer.

TABLE 27: FOREING VISITORS IN FRANCE

%	Share of visitor arrivals	Share of visitor nights	Share of same-day visitors	Share of receipts
United Kingdom	18.1	17.3	4.0	15.7
Germany	15.9	15.8	21.9	15.8
Belgium, Luxembourg	11.9	10.5	27.8	11.8
Italy	10.3	8.7	9.8	8.4
Netherlands	8.9	10.8	3.6	8.2
Spain	6.7	5.3	9.6	5.9
Switzerland	6.6	5.5	18.1	7.3
United States	4.2	4.9	1.0	5.1
Canada	1.1	1,8	0.3	1.6
Japan	0.9	0.7	0.2	0.9

source: EVE Foreign Visitors Survey (Tourism Directorate/TNS Sofres, Banque de France)

Source: DDT (2008a p.3)

Moreover, despite the socio-economic and political upheavals affecting tourism and the increasing importance of emerging destinations (see chapter three), reducing the share of tourism within the French economy, tourism still plays a very significant role. The tourism industry represents in France annual gross revenues of about €117.6 billion[260] and 6,2% of GDP (DDT, 2008a). As to the tourism trade balance, while it is estimated that expenditure by foreign visitors in France reached € 39.6 billion, expenditure by French residents abroad was estimated at € 26.8 billion, generating a balance of € 12.8 billion in 2007, 6% higher than the previous period. Employment in the sector was estimated at two million direct and indirect jobs in 2007[261], distributed over 200.000 SMEs (DDT, 2008a). The whole tourist sector represents about 8% of total French employment[262] (INSEE, 2007). Some regions with very high shares of tourism employment in region's total jobs (29.3% in Île-De-France, 12,2 in Rhône-Alpes and 11% in PACA), while others where tourism is marginal (Corse, 0.6%) (DDT, 2008a). This rate reflects the touristy popularity of PACA, Rhône-Alpes and Île-De-France, respectively accounting for 12,3%, 11% and 5.1% of domestic tourists.

With regard to the tourism supply, further explored in section 4.3.2., France has an accommodation capacity of more than eight thousands beds, among which almost 70% correspond to second homes. As to the total commercial accommodation, supply is quite varied, ranging from highly luxury hotels to more rudimentary lodgings. The great variability of the supply quality and the oldness of some establishments explain the considerable public effort done for its improvement.

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[260] The tourism consumption is shared 55.4% Domestic tourists, 34.9% foreign tourists and 9,7% consumption in France by French residents before trip abroad (DDT, 2008a).

[261] Tourism direct employment generated 894.000 wage/salary jobs in 2008 (between 686.000 in January and 1.184.000 in August). As to the category hotels, cafés and restaurants, in 2007 there were 880.400 employees and 170.000 self-employed workers, this represents 28.600 more employees than in 2006 (DDT, 2008a).

[262] Compared with 1,4% of the automobile sector, and 3,4% of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, from the total of 28 millions of actives (INSEE, 2007).

TABLE 28: BUSINESSES IN THE TOURISM SECTOR   **TABLE 29: ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY**

	Number of businesses	Turnover (€ million)	Added value (€ million)
Hotels	25,707	15,908	8,619
Other tourist accomodation	13,172	4,935	1,879
Restaurants	112,221	30,799	14,582
Cafés	41,487	5,359	2,624
Travel agencies	4,263	12,635	1,966
Total	**196,850**	**69,636**	**29,670**

source: Insee, Annual Enterprise Survey for sevices (2006)

	Beds (thousand)	%
Tourist hotels	1,229.1	6.7
Tourist residences and equivalent	559.8	3.0
Campsites	2,767.1	15.0
Holiday villages	245.2	1.3
Self-catering	752.2	4.1
Guest houses	76.0	0.4
Youth hostels	13.4	0.1
Total commercial accommodation	5,642.8	30.6
Second homes	12,815.0	69.4
Total	18,457.8	100.0

source: Insee, Tourism Directorate, trade associations

Source: DDT (2008a p.3)   Source: DDT (2008a p.4)

Returning to the reflection on governance for sustainability, the progressive introduction of sustainable development in French public policies is also observed in the field of tourism, and more precisely in the rise of rural tourism and ecotourism. Tourism has always been considered a very important means to both promote France's international image and foster socio-economic development at the regional and local levels. With the advent of sustainable tourism and ecotourism, tourism started to be considered a means of protecting natural and cultural heritages.

Since the end of WWII, a number of institutions have dealt with the three main action domains of the tourism policy in France, which are: the promotion of the French touristy image; the building of infrastructures and funding for public and private tourism enterprises; and social policies seeking equity in the access to holidays. However, the relative priority given to these axes, together with the means assigned for their implementation, vary and echo major socio-economic and political trends that transcend tourism. As with sustainable development, the French tourism policy, and so the institutional framework in which professionals and governments of tourism destinations operate, is a result of directives coming from a comprehensive spatial policy that affect all sort of territories (Monod and Castelbajac, 2001). The governance of tourism thus has transited from a top-down strategy towards more territorial approaches carried out by decentralised institutions in partnership with other spatial levels. Bearing this argument in mind, we can distinguish three main periods in the history of policies, institutions and thus in the global practice of tourism in France: i) the foundation of the *first institutions* responsible for tourism and the main challenges for the initial public efforts in developing tourism; ii) the *post-fordist years*, characterised by the emergence of environmental concerns among citizens, as well as the beginning of decentralisation in France; iii) a period in which both decentralisation and environmental aims were strengthened, converging in the notions of *sustainable tourism and ecotourism*. Along these three moments it is possible to observe how new governance challenges emerged and how these challenges entailed deep transformations in the governance of territories and therefore of tourism destinations.

4.2.1. *The early years of the French tourism policy: top-down strategies for large scale projects*

In 1910 the French state founded the first two institutions with competences on tourism, the *Office National de Tourisme (ONT)* and the *Conseil Supérieur du Tourisme*. In the very beginning these institutions were in charge of introducing the first tourism regulations and grading accommodation; later, they assumed as well the responsibility for the promotion of destinations. Between the two wars, the French state increased its interest in tourism, thus introduced supplementary regulations for its development, which gave birth to institutions like the *Crédit hôtelier* to stimulate the development of accommodation. In 1935 the *Commissariat Géneral du Tourisme* and the *Comité national d'expansion du tourisme et du thermalisme* substituted the ONT, and the first measures regulating tourism as a professional activity were founded, confirming the aim of the state to concentrate its efforts in improving the quality of the tourism supply. However, the most important landmark in this period, and indeed in the complete history of tourism, is the 1936 law instituting paid holidays in France, which led to a growing access to holidays, and consequently stimulated the expansion of tourism. However, it was not until the end of WWII that the state assumed a more active and coherent role in tourism policy. Until these early years the strategy was rather erratic, characterised among others by the transformation of the *Commissariat Général* into the *Direction Générale du Tourisme* in 1952, and its reinstatement for the period 1959-1974.

During the *Trente Glorieuses,* tourism echoed the wider post-war reconstruction plan designed and implemented by the central state, and also with the birth of mass tourism. Particularly during the decade 1962-1973, the state conducted a policy essentially based on the development of huge concrete tourism infrastructures, seeking to attract tourist flows to the Mediterranean coast and to mountainous winter sport areas. This policy was reinforced by ameliorations in the road network and the railways service since the first Plan. One symbolic example is the Plan Racine or *Mission Interministérielle d'aménagement touristique du littoral* (1963) in Languedoc-Rousillon, from which emerged the Grande-Motte, Cap-d'Agde and Port-Barcarès[263]. The economic impact of these first resorts inspired task forces in coastal areas (*Aquitaine*)[264] and mountain areas for winter sports activities *i.e.* the Alpes du Nord and the Pyrénées as part of the *Plan Neige* (1960) planned the construction of about twenty resorts before 1974[265]. For Cazes and Lanquar (2000), although these projects pursued clear macro-economic objectives, in tune with the top-down regional policy of those years, they also sought reinvigorating these territories.

Even if rural tourism was not the prime focus of those years, a first key transformation came by the mid-1940s with a Popular Front's decision to launch social initiatives providing financial aid to

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[263] This Mission constructed seven coastal resorts and fourteen marinas (Hautesserre, 2001).
[264] *Mission Interministérielle d'aménagement de la Côte Aquitaine* (1967).
[265] In 1964 it was created in France the *Commission interministérielle pour l'aménagement de la Montagne.*

modest tourism enterprises located in rural areas facing the earliest signs of decline. For the first time, authorities envisaged tourism as a tool for revitalising rural areas, and so promoted the renovation programmes addressed to small rural accommodation structures. The birth of the consortia *Logis de France* (1949), the first *gîte rural* (1951) and the *Fédération Nationale de Gîtes de France* (1955) are important landmarks dating back from those years. Until today the "*gîte rural*" model is an example emulated all around the world. Social tourism policies in the 1950s also concerned the promotion and development of hosting infrastructure for social tourism, which were led by the Tourism Association Union and the Family Holiday Towns Association that received complementary budgets for enlarging the social accommodation park (Baron-Yelles, 1999). From this period also dates back the birth of the label *Station verte* (1964) issued by the *Fédération française des stations vertes de vacances et des villages de neige*. This label is given to rural and mountain communes with no more than one thousand inhabitants, offering a certain level of hosting capacity and nature based tourism activities. Until today, the focus of this label is the hosting quality and the proximity to nature, and not necessarily the local environmental governance.

In the beginning of the 1970s, large-scale tourism projects started showing environmental and socio-economic limits. The unsustainable nature of large-scale resorts, together with the first signs of the economic crisis reduced public investment and purchasing power, and thus hindered the ongoing tourism projects. Furthermore, rotation of the institutions in charge of tourism, successively attached to the Ministries of Transport, Equipment and Spatial Planning, reinforced confusion and inefficiencies in the application of the different tourism regulations.

4.2.2. *The post-fordist years: the impact of environmental awareness, new environmental regulation and decentralisation in the field of tourism*

Since the earliest regulations on nature conservation (1960s), environmental exigencies have gradually been introduced in almost every policy field. In the case of tourism, the causes and effects of the Fordist crisis, combined with the first wave of environmentalism, reinforced this tendency in terms of regulations and modification of tourists' preferences. The world crisis coupled two important events that have been affecting tourism until present days. Firstly, the environmental costs of heavy industrialization engendered awareness among the population, sowing the first seeds of an early ecologist movement; secondly, a suddenly sense of rejection to the propagation of technology and urban society's icons provoked a renewed desire to rediscover the benefits of a somehow forgotten rural world (Béteille, 1996). Since then, new social groups (*i.e.* environmentalist, anti-urban, neo-rurals, etc.) started blaming the state and the private sector for the negative costs of tourism, leading towards a subtle but progressive "greening" of the tourism practice and regulation.

As a result, in the 1960s and 1970s large-scale tourism projects were confronted with the birth of

institutions in search of alternatives to limit this expansion in coastal and mountain areas undergoing the risk of overexploitation (Baron-Yelles, 1999). The divulgation of scientific studies confirming tourism costs had a strong impact, and contributed to the promulgation of the first environmental laws and the closures of the first overexploited French sites, as was the case of the Lascaux grotto in 1963, one of the oldest decorated caves discovered in 1940 and intensively visited from 1948 to 1963 (Lozato, 2006). The *Piquard report* (1973) – an evaluation ordered by the DATAR to a group of spatial planning experts – confirmed apprehensions about the environmental pressures of tourism resorts, and recommended to limit economic activities in coastal areas by means of encouraging tourism in interior lands. It suggested to implement integrated coastal plans, especially in those tourist areas that were not concerned by inter-ministerial task forces, thus inaugurating a new phase of tourism planning in France with the birth of regional Plans. Simultaneously, the *Alpes du Nord* task force was interrupted in 1977 for environmental reasons and an assessment commission was constituted to evaluate forthcoming projects (Baron-Yelles, 1999).

Another remarkable regulation of this period seeking more sustainability in tourism management, is the law creating the *Conservatoire du Littoral et des Rivages Lacustres* promulgated in 1975 in response to pressures of environmentalist groups (Lozato, 2006). The Conservatoire, which is a world reference in terms of coastal and marine protection, has the faculty of acquiring fragile or threatened territories for restoring them, and later delegating their management to local public institutions. By the end of 2008, the Conservatoire covered a surface of 120.000 ha, 1000 km of shores and 600 natural sites[266]. A second tourism innovation of those years was the creation of the French *écomusées* by the early 1970s, which are a sort of witness of the material and immaterial heritage of the rural world, urban cultures and industrial activities. Today there exist more than 200 *écomusées* in France organised under the *Fédération des écomusées et des musées de société (FEMS)*.

Summarizing, environmental preoccupations combined with budgetary restrictions explained the need for new institutions to deal with tourism and its negative effects at the local level. During this period, tourism was successively attached to different Ministries, thus deficient institutional articulations persisted and accentuated by overlapped domains of intervention (*i.e.* social tourism, spatial planning, legislation, grading and classification, etc.). Within this context, the first tourism deconcentrated services were created in 1979, mainly to watch over the application of the national policy orientation willing more environmental prudence. However, the instauration of these new regional institutions was rather paradoxical given the fact that, after all, regional services proved to be more supportive of large-scale investments than the central government. Concerning the links between environmental and tourism regulations, despite there is no single policy advocating for a more environmentally respectful

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[266] See http://www.conservatoire-du-littoral.fr

tourism, ecological issues were introduced into tourism regulations, through impact assessments and the creation of protected areas. The later birth of the Environment Ministry and 1976 law for nature protection implicitly added renewed challenges to tourism.

The combination of environmental regulation and the advent of decentralisation from the 1980s onwards transformed the global policy context, leading to a redistribution of power and competences among different spatial levels governing tourism. Criticisms from the previous periods alluding to environmental and regulatory issues redirected public efforts towards a progressive disengagement of the central state from Mediterranean tourism projects, relying the responsibility on local institutions that received since then enlarged environmental and tourism responsibilities. Simultaneously, tourism continued growing, tourism recipes increased, so tourism became a veritable industry. Besides decentralisation, the early-1980s came together with the creation of specific tourism institutions like the *Agence Nationale pour les chèques de vacances (ANVC)* (1982), the *Agence Nationale pour l'Information Touristique (ANIT)* (1982), the economic group *Bienvenue France* (1984). By the second half of the 1980s, the ANIT and *Bienvenue France* were replaced by the *Maison de la France* (1987) responsible until today for the international promotion of France.

Two major laws promulgated during this period are the 1985 *Loi de la Montagne*[267] and the 1986 *Loi du Littoral*[268], both addressing the environmental costs of tourism and large-scale infrastructure. By the means of controlling and regulating urbanisation, these laws seek regulating the natural and cultural heritage of these sensible ecosystems overexploited in the precedent decades[269]. Both laws combine national directives and geographical specific characteristics, either for mountains or coasts, revealing a transfer of responsibility from the central state to decentralised or deconcentrated institutions.

In spite of a few improvements, rotation of the institution in charge of tourism around different ministries not only persisted, but fuzziness in its role was intensified with the transfer of responsibilities towards lower spatial scales. In fact, the devolution of competences towards lower scales was complex due to the inter-sectoral nature of tourism whose particularities were not nominally addressed in the 1982 decentralisation law. Therefore it was necessary to wait until the 1992 law on tourism to start put some order to the different territorial levels and institutions concerned by tourism. Finally, this period ended with various national initiatives for the provision of technical assistance, social tourism and statistic monitoring, for which the state created an *Observatoire national*

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[267] *Loi nº85-30 du 9 Janvier relative au développement et à la protection de la montage.* It concerns the eight massifs which are Alpes du Nord, Alpes du Sud, Pyrénées, Corse, Jura, Vosges, Massif Central and Réunion.
[268] *Loi no 86-2 du 3 janvier 1986 pour l'aménagement et la protection et la mise en valeur du littoral.*
[269] For instance, the law dealing with mountain areas interdicts any construction in a radius of 300 meters around a water surface and the law regulating coastal areas forbids new constructions in a distance of less than 100 meters.

du tourisme (1993), the *Agence Française de l'Ingénierie Touristique* (AFIT) and the *Bourse Solidarité Vacances* (1998).

TABLE 30: TOURISM, RURAL TOURISM AND ECOTOURISM IN FRANCE

Pre-XX	1522	*"La guide des chemins de France" (*Charles Estienne) that is considered as one of the first tourism guides.
	1774	Montaigne's travel diary *Journal de voyage*
	XVIII - XIX	France is an important destination of the Grand Tour
	XIX	Villegiatura tourism (Nice)
	XIX	Birth of the *Club Alpin de France* (1874) and *Touring Club de France*
1910-30	1910	Creation of the ONT
	1930	*Grands Sites Classés*
	1935	*Commissariat Géneral du Tourisme* and *Comité national d'expansion du tourisme et du thermalisme*
	1936	Law on paid holidays
1940-50	mid-40s	First funds addressed to modest tourism firms located in rural areas facing the earliest signs of decline.
	1949	*Logis de France*
	1951	Birth of the first *gîte rural*
	1955	*Birth of the Fédération Nationale de Gîtes de France*
	mid-50s	First social tourism policies
1960	1960	*Parcs Nationaux; Plan Neige*
	1963	*Plan Racine* or *Mission Interministérielle d'aménagement touristique du littoral;* closing of the Lascaux grotto
	1964	Birth of the label *Station verte*
	1967	*Parcs Naturels Régionaux*
1970	1970s	Large-scale tourism projects started showing environmental and socio-economic limits
	1970s	French *écomussées*
	1973	*Piquard report*
	1975	*Conservatoire du Littoral et des Rivages Lacustres*
	1977	Interruption of the *Mission Alpes du Nord* for environmental reasons
	1979	Creation of deconcentrated services
1980	Early-80s	Progressive disengagement of the central state from Mediterranean tourism projects (early 1980s)
	1982	*Agence Nationale pour les chèques de vacances (ANVC)*; *Agence Nationale pour l'Information Touristique (ANIT)*
	1984	*Bienvenue France*
	1985	*Loi de la Montagne*
	1986	*Loi du Littoral*
	1987	*Maison de la France*
1990	1992	Law defining the role of the different spatial levels in tourism. It created the *Schéma regional de développement du tourisme*
	1993	*Observatoire national du tourisme* ; *Agence Française de l'Ingénierie Touristique* (AFIT)
	1998	*Bourse Solidarité Vacances* (1998).
	1990s	The laws Pasqua (1995) and Voynet (1999) identified tourism as a possible way out for declining areas
2000	2000	Birth of a network of thirty-eight *Grands Sites Classés*
	2000	Adoption of the *Charte Nationale d'éthique du tourisme*
	2000	The SRU law strengths the coordination role of the *Conseil Régional* in tourism, promotion and information
	2001	Publishing of *Piloter le tourisme durable dans les territoires et les enterprises*; *Conférence Permanente du Tourisme Rural*
	2003	*Mission nationale véloroutes et voies vertes (MN3V)*
	2004	*Comité Permanent du Développement Durable du Tourisme*; *État exemplaire*
	2004	Ecotourism Plan in partnership with Québec (period 2004-2006)
	2005	ODIT-France
	2006	Elaboration of the French Code of Tourism between 2000-2006

Source: author

4.2.3.   From sustainable development to sustainable tourism and ecotourism in France

Despite quite a long tradition of France in developing softer forms of tourism combining agriculture, culture and nature, dating back to the birth of the first gîtes in the 1950s, sustainable tourism appeared in France only various years after the Rio conference, as part of a more global process integrating sustainability into various policies, as well as allowing a more central role to the regional and local scales. The two main laws addressing sustainability at these levels encourage new environmental aspirations to the sector, as well as promote the constitution of inter-communal institutions collaborating on environmental, territorial and tourism issues. The 1992 law addressing the division of competences at different spatial levels in the field of tourism[270] and the above mentioned 2000 SRU law are regulations giving a more central role to regions, thus stressing on the need for spatial articulation. According to the 1992 tourism law, regions are responsible for defining the middle term objective for regional tourism, through the elaboration of a *Schéma regional de développement du tourisme* (SRDT) fixing the strategy, conditions and financing to achieve these objectives. The 2002 SRU law on proximity democracy strengthened the coordinating role of the *Conseil Régional* in tourism promotion and information. As can be seen, these regulations mirror the broader spatial policy seeking combining inter-communal cooperation and sustainability; for their part, the laws Pasqua and Voynet identified tourism as a possible way out for abandoned areas and holding the potential to re-equilibrate differences between urban and rural places.

However, despite the undeniable fact that the terms sustainable and ecotourism are much more integrated in the current French tourism strategy, progresses are still limited and contradictories, still remaining a long way to go. For instance, in the debates engaged in the 2008 *Assises Nationales du Tourisme,* sustainability and ecotourism are almost absent notions compared with the focus on growth of arrivals and receipts, in a context where the Dubai's tourism model is cited as exemplary regarding the leadership exerted by the central authorities of that country[271]. As a result, while analysing official documentation addressing tourism and describing the French tourism policy, it is easily noticed that, besides actions undertaken by the research department, sustainable tourism and ecotourism are mainly addressed by other polity organs than specific tourism institutions, as already discussed for the EU level. This situation explains why reports, laws and official documents addressing sustainable tourism in France almost in every case develop analysis addressed to rural territories and protected areas, disregarding for instance the potentials of sustainable tourism in urban contexts. One of the most emblematic contributions of France to sustainable tourism has been the involvement of the federation of regional parks in the conception and implementation of the European charter for sustainable tourism. Literature on the topic always points out the leadership of the French regional parks' federation, as well as the innovative role of parks in sustainability and governance.

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[270] Loi nº 92-1341 du 23 décembre 1992.
[271] See http://assises-tourisme.fr/actes.html

The policy on *Grands Sites Classés*[272] is one interesting initiative aiming at matching sustainability and tourism. It is conducted by the MEEDDAT in partnership with other ministries and local institutions, and since 2000 it functions as a network of thirty-eight sites (*i.e.* Dune du Pilat, Gorges du Verdon, Marais salants de Guérande, Pont du Gard, Alésia, etc.) whose label denotes environmental and sustainable tourism actions. However, this strategy is subject of controversies regarding the carrying capacity of these sites and sustainability of tourism practiced there. This situation is related with the policy context that while rebuilding the alliance between the environment and spatial development, favours tourism as a means of territorial development in detriment to stronger conservation regulations.

Another domain where central state action has played an important role is the publication of technical documents on sustainable tourism. Since 1999, the ODIT[273] has been the public institution responsible not only for the publishing of very influential territorial methodologies for the implementation of sustainable tourism (*i.e. Piloter le tourisme durable dans les territoires et les enterprises*, ODIT, 2001)[274], but it has also tested them in various destinations, elaborating new documents with the evaluations of these pilot projects[275]. These documents broadly concluded on the importance of governance and the key role of the local level in sustainable tourism. These initiatives rejoin the EU indications on the need to develop an Agenda 21 for European tourism (see UNEP, 2003) and were taken into consideration in the updating of the French SDS. The French SDS' committee convoked the Tourism Ministry to participate in the elaboration of the strategy, which proposed methods and provided advice for the elected representatives responsible for tourism destinations and enterprises, as well as participated in drafting a preliminary Agenda 21. Additionally, the Foreign Affairs Ministry engaged in cooperation and know-how transfer for the development of sustainable tourism in southern countries (DDT, 2007a). From these initiatives emerged the *Comité Permanent du Développement Durable du Tourisme* (2004), aiming at including sustainability into the tourism policy, and the initiative *État exemplaire* to promote sustainability among the potential partners for a sustainable tourism policy. All along this period we observe a flourishing of initiatives on sustainable tourism[276], among which we can highlight an agreement on ecotourism with Québec for the period 2004-2006.

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[272] Which dates back to the 1930 law protecting natural and historical heritage (see and Vourc'h and Natali, 2000 and http://www.grandsitedefrance.com).

[273] This Agency results from the grouping of the *Agence Française de l'Ingénierie Touristique (AFIT)*, the *Observatoire National du Tourisme (ONT)* and the *Service d'Etudes et d'Aménagement Touristique de la Montagne* in 2005 (see http://www.odit-france.fr).

[274] My interviews in Burgundy confirm the utilization of this document as a guideline for inspiring tourism projects at the local level, at the pays, Agenda 21 and Park. Interviewees spontaneously mentioned it as good document.

[275] *Le tourisme durable par l'expérience* (ODIT, 2006a); *Evaluation de la durabilité des pratiques touristiques* (ODIT, 2006b)

[276] *I.e.* annual evaluation of the NSDS, working group on *Tourisme et modes de consommation et de production durables*, pilot group *Tourisme durable et solidaire*, expert group on *EU Tourism sustainability group*, organization of the salon Ecorismo on ecologic products and solutions for hotels, campsites, restaurants and tourism held in 2007 (see DDT, 2007a)

The national green cycling network (*3V Véloroutes et voies vertes*) is an original policy seeking sustainable transport and tourism. Its objective is to build a 9000 km circuit to increase tourism attractiveness and so revitalize rural territories, create jobs, connect cities with smaller towns, as well as to promote sustainable transports and environmental consciousness. While at the national level this plan is conducted by the *Mission nationale de véloroutes et voies vertes (MN3V)* born in 2003, regions, represented by a regional 3V committee, are in charge of tracing the regional trails that will integrate the national plan. The MN3V essentially has a coordination role of the various concerned ministries[277], it supports the inclusion of regional circuits into the CPER and watches over the interregional coherence of the network. Today, there exist near twenty operative regional committees and seven regions with an approved plan, including Burgundy[278]. As to the impact of this project, evaluations are rather mitigated, simultaneously mentioning the creation of awareness and a lack of leadership and efficiency in the coherence and functioning of the project. This is especially true while observing the gap between the start of the project in the different regions and its progressive vanishing from the CPER and other public budgets. Additionally, the articulation between the *Mission 3V* and older tourism strategies in France (*i.e.* randonnée, *commissions de sites*, *Voies navigables de France*) and in Europe remains poor (*i.e.* Paris-Prague, Eurovelo 1,3,4,8).

One last important issue concerning tourism is certification. In this respect, France reaffirmed global ethical discussions by means of developing its own tools and charters. For instance, following the UNWTO global code of ethics for tourism (1999), France elaborated its own *Charte Nationale d'étique du tourisme* (adopted in 2000). This document has already been signed by the first twenty tourism firms, who were awarded with the label for their commitment to sustainable practices. Other ethical actions touching tourism are related with the commitment of France to various global initiatives concerning climate change, international cooperation, sexual tourism, and special provisions for handicapped tourists, among others. Nonetheless, leading actions in the fields of tourism are not restricted to those carried out by state institutions. There exist various French associations dealing with sustainable tourism and ecotourism in France and foreign countries (see section 4.3).

In sum, public actions referring to tourism have been focused on publishing, networking for committing tourism professionals to sustainable practices, implementation of the European ecolabel addressed to tourist accommodation and camping site services, and participation in the evaluation of Agenda 21 projects that are concerned with tourism. As to ecotourism and rural tourism, the Ministries of Agriculture and the MEEDDAT have established different forms of collaboration with public-private associations, as is the case of the *Conférence Permanente du Tourisme Rural.* Among others,

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[277] MEEDDAT, Ministry of economy, Ministry of agriculture and fishing, and Ministry of health, youth and sports.
[278] Regions with an approved plan are Aquitaine, Bretagne, Basse-Normandie, Limousin, Poitou-Charentes, Haute-Normandie, Nord Pas de Calais and Burgundy (see *Ministère de la santé, de la jeuneusse et des sports* (2007), MN3V (2007) and http://mn3v.tourisme. gouv.fr).

together they conduct initiatives oriented to protect and valorise the rural heritage, improve the quality of the accommodation supply, develop rural tourism activities and the necessary infrastructure, as well develop a system to regulate and improve quality standards.

4.2.4. Competencies and role of the different spatial levels in French tourism

The previous paragraphs revealed the long history of French tourism, and moreover how the public sector along these years provided the regulatory and policy basis for transforming France into one of the most demanded tourism destinations. As early examined, this process led to a diversification of tourism forms, currently governed by measures conducted at various spatial levels, which are examined in more detail below.

4.2.4.1. The central state level

According to the 1992 tourism law, the central state level has four principal roles: i) to collect and diffuse tourism data and information, in collaboration with regions; ii) to develop and lead tourism labelling and quality grading of infrastructures, institutions and activities; iii) to promote the touristy image of France; iv) to take part in the various tourism initiatives that had been agreed with lower spatial levels through the CPER that has a specific tourism section addressing destinations, enhancement of cultural and natural heritage, economic assessments, education and training. The central state level is also responsible for providing the legal basis for regulating protected areas, and for establishinglocal institutions like the *pays d'accueil* and the *pays*, among others.

Through different periods, tourism has been attached to either a Ministry[279] or to a state Secretary, denoting the legitimacy and role assigned to this activity by the different governments. Despite tourism is recognised as a major economic activity in France, the state Tourism Secretary has always represented a modest portion of the whole national budget. All along the 1980s and the early 1990s the tourism budget decreased. The 1992 tourism law reverted this tendency with the creation of new credits for this sector, and consequently in 1998 the tourism budget reached the total of € 57 million. Today tourism is attached to the inter-ministerial institution responsible for spatial policy and assigned a budget of €86,25 millions for 2007[280] that is spent in three main domains: i) the reinforcement of the touristy image of France to increase the number of arrivals, carried out at the national level by the *Maison de la France*; ii) the upgrading of the quality standards through the *Plan Qualité Tourisme* and the label *Qualité Tourisme*[TM] addressed to accommodation, restaurants, travel agencies, tourist offices, transport and business tourism; iii) social tourism through the actions carried out by the *Agence nationale pour les chèques-vacances (ANVC)* to guarantee a more universal access to holidays. All

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[279] *i.e.* youth, planning, sports, transport, equipment, etc.
[280] Since tourism is a transversal activity, it benefits of budgets from other ministries whose amount is difficult to calculate due to absence of specific budgetary 'tourism' credits. These resources might come from the Ministries of employment, youth and sports, spatial planning, agriculture, ecology and sustainable development, culture, among others (DDT, 2007e).

these actions are nationally coordinated by the *Direction du Tourisme (DDT)* in charge of elaborating and implementing the tourism policy in collaboration with the *Conseil national du tourisme*, which is a consultation organ engaged in a prospective reflection on national and European tourism. Regulations are contained in the four books of the tourism code addressing the general organization of tourism, tourism activities and occupations, accommodation and facilities, holiday funding and tourist taxes[281].

However, the transversal nature of ecotourism, merging tourism and sustainability, involves a wide variety of national institutions that crosscut ecotourism, as is the case of the MEEDDAT and its cycling trail program, actions carried out by national federations (*i.e.* trekking and parks) and funding of the Ministry of Agriculture for rural development. Ecotourism is thus regulated by specific tourism policies and also by an ensemble of inter-sectoral measures and institutions. As to credits from the national level, it is important to mention that central services not only take part in financial negotiations between the state and regions, but they are also present through decentralized or outsourced services, as well as through credits allowed to inter-regional conglomerates sharing similar geographic characteristics like (*i.e.* coastal fronts, mountain massifs, fluvial axes) and inter-communal cooperation through institutions such as the *pays* and regional parks (Baron-Yelles, 1999).

4.2.4.2. The regional level

At the regional level, the state is represented under the authority of the *Préfet de Région* by the *Délégations régionales du tourisme (DRT)*, which are responsible for the application of the national policy, the implementation of the regulations and the management of the tourism budget at lower spatial scales. For its part, the *Conseil régional* through a *Comité Régional du Tourisme (CRT)*[282] leads tourism at the regional scale. The CRT is responsible for the implementation of the tourism policy, and also negotiates and controls the utilisation of national (CPER) and EU funding. From this perspective, the CPER is the master plan for negotiating political support and public funding for the development of tourism. Each region has the obligation to design a *Schéma regional de développement du tourisme* (SRDT) defining the general orientations of the regional tourism plan. Regions play also a role in tourism data collection and analysis, national and international promotional initiatives, planning and equipment, and providing technical and marketing support for the varied existing tourism structures. With regard to the CRT's budget there exist important disparities among regions, ranging from two million euro to more than fourteen million. This budget is spent in communication, promotional activities and tourism development activities like the realisation of the SRT and tourism observation (DDT, 2007e).

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[281] Code du Tourisme (2007) (see http://www.droit.org/codes/CTOURISL.html).
[282] They exist since 1942 and are regulated by the *Loi du 3 janvier 1987.*

Concerning funding coming from CPER, unlike the one for the period 2000-2006 including a specific tourism section (€203.824.334), the 2007-2013 CPER does not incorporate tourism as an individual target. Instead, it defines more precise objectives and designs the inter-regional cooperation (*e.g.* mountain massif) as the scale of action. Within this context, the new CPER privileges urban renovation, provisions for handicapped people issues and the development of mountain massifs by the means of fostering the wood sector and improving the quality of tourist accommodation structures. After various negotiation between the central state and regions, finally a tourism budget of € 43 million was reinstated in 2007, mainly for social tourism, handicap and accessibility to Grand Sites (DDT, 2007g).

4.2.4.3. The *département*

At this spatial level we find deconcentrated and decentralised state services, respectively called *Commissions départementales d'action touristique* and *Comités départamentaux du tourisme (CDT)*[283]. The CDT, composed by delegates and elected representatives of the economic and tourism committees, are in charge of promotional and statistical tasks, as well as implementing the national tourism policy and elaborating a departmental tourism plan. The national federation of CDT gathering 96 members had in 2005 a budget of 180 million euro, mainly from the *Conseils Généraux*. In certain cases, departments are allowed to commercialise tourism products by setting up a commercial antenna managed in collaboration with other institutions, such as the *gîtes ruraux*, *Logis de France*, the *Fédération Française de Randonée Pédestre (FFRP)*, among others. One important domain conducted at the level of the département is the development of trekking circuits or elaboration of the *Plan départemental des itinéraires de promenade et de randonnée* (PDIPR). Since 1983[284] and ratified later by various other laws the departments are responsible for managing trekking trails and coordinating the various public and private actors concerned by this activity (Florent, 2007). However, as will be further explored in this chapter, there exist other actors occupying a central place in this activity, as is the case for instance of rural and the French trekking association.

For the central state and the EU, sub-national levels play a vital role in tourism. They are in charge of requesting, gathering and assigning funds for public and private projects, and they are the main responsible for providing tourist information and training to professionals. These services are provided either by communes, inter-communal groups, departments or regions.

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[283] Recognized by the *Loi du 23 décembre 1992*.
[284] This remits to the *Loi n°83-663 du 22 juillet 1983 relative à la répartition des compétences entre les communes, les départements, les régions et l'État.*

TABLE 31: TOURISM IN FRANCE AT THE DIFFERENT SPATIAL LEVELS

Level	Institutions, instruments and role of the different levels
National	<u>Central services</u> - To regulate, authorize and classify tourism equipments, institutions and activities. - To promote the French tourist image among foreign countries and international institutions. - To collect and diffuse tourism data in collaboration with Regional Tourism Observatories.
Region	<u>CPER – CRT – SRDT</u> Regions define middle term objectives through the elaboration of the SRDT plans that translate and adapt public policies to regional features. With the 2002 law on participatory democracy, the *Conseil Régional* assumed a coordination role aiming at guaranteeing coherence among the whole set of public and private initiatives on tourism development, promotion and information. Regions are also responsible for training, providing support to enterprises, promotion and tourism observation with the CRT, as well as for the spatial coordination of tourist policies..
Département	<u>CDT</u> They are allowed to create a CDT and a departmental plan in tune with the region. They develop promotional and data gathering activities. They are also in charge of implementing national regulations through the development of a regional plan and the commercialisation of products. They collaborate with other tourist-related institutions and associations like *Gîtes de France* and the *Fédération Française de Randonée Pédestre*.
Inter-communal	<u>Pays – EPCI – CC</u> It is a territory whose inhabitants share common geographical, cultural, economic and social cohesion aims. These are pursued starting from a locally defined and coordinated project and is led by an EPCI and contracted through the CPER. A *pays* gathers local elected representatives, all sort of local actors, associations and members of the local community. As to inter-territorial institutions, it is important to mention the role of parks for their governance and role in ecotourism, notably during the last years through the implementation of the European Charter (see below for a detailed analysis of these institutions).
Communes	<u>SI – OT</u> Initially their role focused on providing tourist information, however they are also allowed to assume tasks related to tourism marketing, animation, management of infrastructures and commercialisation.

Source: author based on DDT (2007e; 2007f)

4.2.4.4. <u>The local level: communes and inter-communal structures</u>

There exist two main public institutions dealing with tourism at the local level: the *offices de tourisme (OT)* and the *syndicats d'initiatives (SI)*, which together form a network of 3600 structures. Both are responsible for hosting tourism services, promotion and providing tourist information. In some cases, OTSIs might be also in charge of developing and implementing the tourism policy at the communal level, carrying out research, tourist animation, management of infrastructure, and since 1992 they are allowed to offer tourism products. These institutions are funded by local private resources from tourism firms and shopkeepers, as well as with subsidies from the *Conseil Municipal*. A study done in 2004 reveals a global budget of 410 million euro for the ensemble of OTSI mainly spent in operational activities (DDT, 2007e). One major tendency observed at the local level is the merger of OTSIs into inter-communal institutions, as is already the case of forty percent of the structures. In coastal areas and *stations classées,* for instance, tourist animation and promotion are carried out by inter-communal *Offices municipaux du tourisme*. The classification *stations classeés* presumes a destination with a

certain hosting capacity, accommodation quality and touristy attributes[285]. They thus benefit of the right of creating a tourist office, collect tourist taxes, manage a casino and develop a land use plan, as well as monthly supplementary endowments. Since the mid-1980s decentralisation laws, either through technical or financial tools the state has encouraged cooperation among territories sharing similar geographical or tourism characteristics, as is the case of the *pays d'accueil* label permitting rural areas to coordinate and structure a coherent tourism supply.

4.2.5. *Changing trends in the role of the state: a few preliminary observations*

There is no doubt that the state has played a major role in the development of tourism in France. Immediately after the end of WWII we observe the first regulations addressing tourism and the foundation of the first institutions. In the period 1960-1975, the central state enlarged its regulative and legislative functions, assuming a role in the production of large-scale tourism infrastructure. Echoing the major voluntarist lines of the regional policy of those years, the DATAR planned and carried out a number of tourism projects in coastal and mountain areas. As far as the first signs of environmental degradation and rural decline came to light, the state assumed a role in biodiversity protection operationalized in the birth of nature parks and coastal reserves exerting a direct effect on tourism. One major point in this respect is the uniform top-down character of the complete spatial strategy developed by the state during those years, including tourism and conservation, where the only out of the ordinary policy seems to be regional parks for their governance and sustainability aims.

From the 1980s onwards, with the emergence of European institutions and decentralisation the role of the state started evolving. The state progressively became a co-responsible, sharing the governance of tourism with the regional and local levels, notably through the CPERs allowing to involvelocal institutions and firms. The CPER has progressively encouraged major territorial polity coherence, a better coordination among local actors and favoured inter-communal collaboration. Certainly, this territorial governance is supported and required by EU regulation.

A third landmark in the history of tourism is the advent of sustainable development together with the re-strengthening of the environmental question since the late 1980s. During this period, we observe a concomitance between a deepening of decentralisation, notably with the birth of new local institutions, together with the introduction of sustainability affecting to a large extent the role of the state and the development of tourism. Through the Morvan case we I will examine how local actors negotiated the inclusion of ecotourism in the CPER and in the regional tourism plan.

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[285] There exist five types: *stations balnéaires, stations de tourisme communes, stations de sport d'hiver, stations thermales and stations climatiques.*

4.3. The governance of ecotourism in France: the specificity of a multi-functional activity at the crossroads between rural tourism and sustainable tourism in protected areas

4.3.1. From tourism as a tool for rural revitalisation towards ecotourism as a way towards territorial sustainability

Rural territories since a long time have been targets of particular policies oriented to encourage revitalisation in a demographic, socio-economic and developmental sense (see Cazes and Lanquar, 2001; Pérol-Dumont, 2005)[286]. One emblematic example is the creation of the first gîtes in France immediately after WWII, conceived to fight rural exodus through the fostering of low-density tourism. This model aimed at helping farmers to restore their houses and at the same time stimulating rural socio-economic development. In the 1970s, the French state launched another set of initiatives to reinvigorate rural territories under a regulation called *rural renovation policy*. Although EU and national regulations dealing with rural decline seem to be having a certain positive effect, notably engendering a gradual devolution of rural depopulation, for some authors this renewed effort arrived late. Already evoked in chapter two, the suppression of public services, local stores and transport, combined with the departure of an important number of artisans and workers, have engendered dynamics of decline that will not be easily restored.

Bearing this context in mind, the state efforts to revert this situation have constantly been renewed since the 1960s, and have focused on four main areas: i) the continuation of rural services and stores, both public and private, either through programmes supporting the creation of rural schools and public multi-service offices, or measures restricting the implantation of big commercial centres threatening local production and traditional convivial spaces; ii) stopping decline of agriculture, through for instance new subsidies for young farmers; iii) the encouragement and facilitation of rural multi-activity strategies, where tourism plays a central role. In the early 2000, already more than two thousand farmers were developing a second economic activity, practice that became pretty common in the Alsace and Lorraine regions. One stimulus in this sense is the regulation allowing to include tourism complementary revenues – up to €30.000 and/or 30% of the total agriculture revenues – into the revenues from agriculture, permitting the combination of several activities without loosing any social benefits (Monod and Castelbajac, 2001).

In Europe and particularly in France the concern about rural decline evolved in parallel with concepts like rural, green and ecotourism, going from the creation of the first gîtes to more encompassing territorial programs promoted by the national and European levels. Moreover, the preoccupation regarding rural decline cannot be isolated from the environmental debate and the omnipresent

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[286] Given the fact that while in 1846 rural population represented 75% and in 1945 50%, in 2000 only 25% of the population lived in the countryside (Monod and Castelbajac, 2001).

sustainability challenge. In the case of French territories, characterised by a lower population density, the integration of social, economic and environmental concerns of the rural world became very important and were addressed by the state through establishing regional parks. This institution unlike sectoral or uni-dimensional development agencies, seek integrated plans aiming at harmonising the socio-economic and environmental pillars of development.

Initiatives oriented to foster rural tourism are the result of an inter-ministerial policy framework led by the Ministers of agriculture, ecology, spatial planning and tourism. From public-private partnerships have emerged various collaborative institutions, as is the case of the *Conférence Permanente du Tourisme Rural (CPTR)* in 2001[287]. The CPTR is a consultative institution on rural tourism working, among others, on the elaboration of a national rural tourism proposal aiming at turning rural tourism into a complete and independent activity. The enhancement and improvement of rural tourism as a state objective is also expressed in the recent laws on rural territories. Both regulations (*Loi d'orientation agricole du 22 décembre 2005* and *Loi relative au développement des territoires ruraux du 23 février 2005[288]*) underscore the need for more sustainable forms of agriculture, and apprehend rural areas in their diversity, multi-functionality, attractiveness and economic potential beyond agriculture. Besides regulations addressing to traditional agriculture, these laws provide concrete stimuli for environmental protection, organic agriculture, biofuels, the utilisation of recyclable packing material, among others. One of these laws allows funding and tax cuts for the rehabilitation of tourism infrastructure and refurbishing of tourist buildings. In tune with these regulations, at the end of 2005 the DIACT launched the *Pôle d'excellence rurale* project. This was an open call for giving support to 300 innovative initiatives for rural development with an emphasis was on employment quality, governance and partnership, and a rural focus, among which tourism and heritage were identified as a major axis. Table 32 summarises the main policy axis addressing rural tourism, including measures oriented to valorise the rural heritage and ameliorate the quality of the tourism supply, as well as to provide professional training, incentives to invest in declining areas and measures to improve commercialisation.

The development of rural tourism is financed with funding coming from various national state ministries, regional and local institutions and European funds[289]. As to the Ministry of Tourism, there exists both funding allocated through the CPER and independent budgets for equipment. Since the creation of the territorial section in the 2000-2006 CPER, with the aim of improving the quality of the

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[287] The CPTR gathers 46 members including local elected representatives, leaders federations and professional associations (i.e. FEMS, FFRP, FNGF, FNCRT, etc.), representatives of ministries, among others (see http://www.cp-tourisme-rural.fr).
[288] *Loi No 2005-157 du 23 février 2005 relative au développement des territories ruraux.*
[289] For instance, in 2005, the Ministry of Youth and Sports provided support to the ODIT, the association *France Nature Environnement*, to regional parks, among others, as well to the green cycling project. The MEEDDAT, for its part, provided funding for various pilot initiatives on local experimentation for developing ecotourism, governance of tourism in national parks, revitalization and tourism enhancement of regional parks, etc.

employment, rural tourism benefits of about € 53 millions for the rehabilitation of tourism infrastructure and credits for small business. As to funding from regional and local institutions, its total sum is difficult to evaluate given the variety of institutions involved and the variability of their contribution (DDT, 2007b), which also depends on EU credits negotiated with the sub-national levels.

TABLE 32: MEASURES ORIENTED TO FOSTER TOURISM IN RURAL AND NATURAL AREAS

Valorisation and protection of the natural heritage	Oriented to grand sites, historical villages, monuments, arts, savoir-faire, etc. The tourism direction together with the MEDDAT gives the label *Grand Site de France*.
Improvement of the quality of rural accommodation	The law *relative au développement des territories ruraux* proposes measures to protect built heritage and fiscal incentives to rebuild, extend, fix or ameliorate it. Fiscal reduction ranges from €10.000 to €40.000.
Incentives for investing in new tourism residences	Mainly in areas identified as *Zones de Revitalisation Rurale*, proprietors investing benefit of TVA and tax reimbursements, until 31 December 2010. Tax reduction in the case of new structures can go up to 25%, with a limit of €12.500 for a single person and €25.000 for a couple.
Development of high quality tourism products	This objective is pursued by means of reinforcing networks of tourism firms, support to institutions working in coordinating isolated actors (*i.e. assiette de pays, relais de pays, sites remarquables de goût*), implementation of the *Plan qualité de France* and the promotion of a tourism quality brand.
Training	Oriented to tourism professionals through regional training programs.
The *schéma national pour le développement de véloroutes et voies vertes*	In 1998 an inter-ministry commission launched a green cycling trail project coordinated by a national commission and funded through CPER. With the aim of favouring sustainable tourism, it seeks to create long distance circuits (8.000 km) the softer or shorter ones.
Rural tourism commercialisation	Through the website of the *Maison de la France* since 2006
Governance	Creation of several federative and associative structures to coordinate tourism (*i.e.* CPTR, Mission 3V), as well as the strengthening of already existing groups (*i.e.* federations of trekking, eco-museums, gîtes). This is accompanied with the launch of a new ethic code, eco-labels, trainings and new sub-national institutions.

Source: author with information of DDT (2007a, 2007b)

4.3.2. *Ecotourism and protected areas in France, main supply and demand features*

For a long time all kind of protected areas have been highly frequented tourism destinations[290]. In France, one fourth of the metropolitan communes have a protected area, revealing the ecotourism potential of this country. Compared to other European countries, France possesses unique comparative tourism advantages shaped by its biophysical characteristics, history and culture, institutions and tourism know-how. It is one of the less urbanised European countries, it has a long coastline and a rich

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[290] In 2006, 25 millions people visited Canadian national parks and 350 million for USA parks (Lozato, 2008), showing the positive relationship that exists between protected territories and labels and the number of tourists arriving to the site.

natural heritage and varied geography, congregating a large sample of vertebrates and 40% of the flora species of Europe. These natural characteristics have been transformed through the centuries by various civilisations, which have left behind rich imprints of their agriculture practices, political and religious history, architectural traditions and culture. As a result, France offers a set of destinations that despite do not meet the pureness requirements of ecotourism, their attractiveness reside precisely in the variety and concentration of remarkable human invested landscapes and natural territories. Alternatively stated, the French ecotourism supply is founded upon an ensemble of semi-natural landscapes that has been invested and modified by various civilisations forming a sort of territorial mosaic that concentrates numerous remarkable sites, destinations and territories.

4.3.2.1. Tourists and visitors in natural areas

In 2006, 283 million overnight stays of French tourists occurred in a municipality with a protected area, counting for 30% of the total sojourns in France. Moreover, 216 millions overnight stays (26% of the total) were the occasion for practicing a nature based tourism activity (MEEDDAT, 2007). Certainly, the most visited territories are coastal areas, where communes belonging to territories classified *Conservatoire de l'espace littoral et des rivages lacustres* or situated near to a *Grand Site* host the largest tourist share. Conversely, in communes situated in regional parks, tourist overnights stays are less represented, even if regional parks host 48% of the total overnights of communes with a protected area (MEEDDAT, 2007). These regions also welcome an important number of excursionists *i.e.* 27 millions to Grand Sites, 6 millions to national parks and 28 millions to territories belonging to the *Conservatoire*. Regarding the profile of visitors and tourists, the MEEDDAT (2007)[291] estimates that there are five million people interested in nature-based activities and searching for tourism combining the discovery of flora, fauna and culture. The majority of tourists are aged between 35 and 50 years old, and are employed as professionals or managers earning salaries ranging from average to high. More than one half of these tourists are women. They prefer low-budget accommodation *i.e.* campsites or guesthouses (UNWTO, 2002a), only 40% are foreigners and the most attractive regions are Rhône-Alpes, Aquitaine, Midi-Pyrénées, PACA and Centre. The most practiced nature activity in France is trekking, estimated at 15 million trekkers and 35 million walkers (Pérol-Dumont, 2005).

TABLE 33: RURAL TOURISM DATA

	Rural territory	Other
French territory	80%	20%
Tourism arrivals	28%	72%
Tourism expenses	19,3%	80,7%

Source: DDT (2007b p. 1)

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[291] Based on the results of OMT (2002) and *Le marché fraçais du tourisme "nature-faune"* (1999).

While observing into more detail data providing information on the impact of ecotourism in the local economy, results appeared to be mitigated. Even if statistics show that rural tourism represented 19,3% (€ 20 million) of the total tourism consumption in France (€ 108,11 billion) and 28% of the arrivals in 2005 (402 million nights), tourism in rural destinations shows signs of being less beneficial for the local economy since almost 78% of arrivals take place in second homes (DDT, 2007b). One major issue concerning tourism is the rapid expansion of second homes owned by both French people and foreigners. They reached 2.851.678 structures (12.815.000 beds) in 2007, representing near 70% of the total number of beds (18.457.000 beds) (DDT, 2008b)[292]. While for Vellas and Bécherel (1995) second homes might reinvigorate the local economy and contribute to restore the local heritage, Dreyfus-Signoles (2002) consider that their impact cannot be such, since second homes are in average open only a few weeks per year (between two and eleven). For its part, Pérol-Dumond (2005) advances that owners of these residences do not necessarily take part of the local life to contribute to its enhancement, thus efforts should be made to promote their integration. One major point touching the second homes is the fast augmentation of foreigner investors representing almost 14% of this market (Pérol-Dumont, 2005). While a few years ago investments in second homes were concentrated in the Alpes-Maritime and the Var, since 2002 we can observe a tendency towards a diffusion all over the territory. As to customers' nationalities, the leader is the UK with almost a monopsony in Dordogne, followed by Italy, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium.

TABLE 34: ACCOMMODATION IN COMMUNES WITH PROTECTED AREAS

	Capacité des campings		Capacité des hôtels		mobile-home, bungalow	
	2007	Evolution 2000-2007	2007	Evolution 2000-2007	2007	Evolution 2000-2007
Cons. du Littoral	33 441	3%	7 525	7%	7 259	90%
Grands sites	35 492	3%	9 820	-4%	10 090	35%
Natura 2000	142 829	0%	21 024	-4%	31 606	84%
Parcs nationaux	37 476	1%	20 315	-10%	3 858	72%
Parcs naturels régionaux	167 039	0%	70 840	-1%	32 231	16%
Ramsar	8 715	1%	2 318	4%	3 381	3%
Réserves de biosphères	2 908	0%	962	6%	109	-49%
Réserves naturelles	1 314	-1%	1 088	3%	201	-16%
Total espaces protégés	429 214	1%	133 892	2%	88 735	42%
France métrop.	926 396	1%	520 812	2%	198 358	43%

Source : Enquête de fréquentation hôtelière, 2000-2007, INSEE.

Source: MEEDDAT (2007 p.2)

4.3.2.2. Tourist equipments and infrastructures

Besides a few exceptions, tourist infrastructures in natural areas were not developed until the late 1960s, as a section of a broader tourism and rural renovation policy from which emerged regional parks, *stations vertes*, campsites and aquatic recreational bases[293]. Since then, the rural tourism supply has not stopped evolving in quantity and variety, engendering a complex package formed by gîtes,

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[292] This is quite an elevated number compared with the 1,6 million second homes existing in 1975.
[293] Aquatic recreational stations were created in 1970 to valorize and develop artificial lakes and other water plans.

hotels, and camping sites, several of them belonging to federations and thematic associations. Table 32 provides some information on the accommodation capacity of the different natural territories.

Tourism supply is the result of many years of experience in the elaboration of tourism products combining agriculture, natural destinations and culture, as well as of a local and regional development policy that in the last years has made progress in environmental protection, territorial sustainability and sustainable tourism. In broad terms, together with the regulative framework, the French ecotourism supply is formed today by five main segments present in all natural areas:

- Ecotourism hosting and basic infrastructure: local tourist offices (OTSI) are in charge of the reception of tourists; they provide tourists with all the necessary tourism information and connect them with accommodation structures. Ecotourists also receive environmental information from local public institutions and associations i.e. parks, pays, ecomuseums, cultural groups, environmental associations, etc. The role of the great variety actors is explored in the following chapter through the Morvan case.

- Accommodation structures in natural areas are usually family run business that might be associated to a federation providing a label guaranteeing authenticity, charm and facilitating commercialisation. The variety of accommodation structures is vast, ranging from establishments directly concerned with conservation actions or immersed in a specific natural setting (*i.e. gîtes panda, rando accueil, hôtels au naturel, camping clefs vertes, gîtes retrouvance*) to more classical rural accommodation forms not necessarily eco-labelled, but satisfying an ecotourism demand (*i.e. classical rural hotels, gîtes, gîtes d'étape, auberges-fermes*, campsites, equestrian gîtes, etc.). Besides individual lodgings, there also exist collective tourist structures, which might belong to the social tourism branch or to the private sector i.e. campsites, youth hostels, holiday villages, timeshares and tourism residences. Table 33 provides information on the evolution of the number of accommodation structures, where we observe a reduction in the number of campsites and a progression of *chambre d'hôtes*, although France has always been a world leader in camping sites[294]. As to agrotourism, studies show that only 4% of French farmers offer tourist services; however these statistics do not take into consideration the farmers' production of traditional products consumed by visitors. Finally, I would like to highlight a growth of tourism residences constructed by real state professionals, like Pierre & Vacances, in partnership with local institutions providing fiscal advantages (Pérol-Dumont, 2005).

- Food and beverage services are also diverse, ranging from classical restaurants of different quality levels to *fermes-auberges* and *tables d'hôte* offering local food and traditional dishes. Gastronomy is indeed one of the most important icons of the French touristy image, notably in rural areas with the well-known *produits du terroir*. To traditional rural restaurants since a few years, new quality

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[294] After the USA, France is the second world leader in campsites with 9000 structures offering one million sites, representing more than 50% of the market accommodation (see DDT, 2004 for a complete analysis on the subject).

brands have emerged *i.e. cafés de campagne,* the *bistrots de pays* and the *assiettes de pays*.

TABLE 35: ACCOMMODATION IN RURAL AREAS

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Evolution 2001/2005
Meublés de tourisme	56.063	53.355	49.189	50.188	50.560[295]	-5%
Chambres d'hôtes	26.000	26.320	27.926	30.283	32.005[296]	+ 23%
Gîtes d'étape gîtes/ de groupes	1.604	1.578	1.622	1.632	1.650[297]	+ 3%

Source: DDT (2007b)

- Ecotourism activities and animation: the supply of ecotourism activities is based on the natural and cultural heritage of territories, with trekking being the most practiced ecotourism activity in France. A growing demand for nature observation, cultural discovery and soft-adventure is mainly satisfied through the more than 180.000 km of recognized and maintained trekking trails. In total there exist 65.000 km of *Grande Randonnée* (GR) trails and 115.000 walking and trekking itineraries[298], all of them preserved and developed by the very active French trekking association (see Florent, 2007). Other activities practiced in the territory are cycling, horse-riding, aquatic activities like canoeing, kayak and rafting, as well as cultural heritage trips, gastronomy, nature observation and discovery of past civilisations. The support needed for the practice of these activities is provided by small local business working in partnership with local institutions and associations. Nature-based activities are combined local cultural animation, including museums, historical monuments, architecture, cultural events, agricultural festivities, etc., as well as theatres, art galleries and courses given by local artisans.

- Marketing and selling: tourists have three main options to access to ecotourism services: self-organisation of the trip and reservations, accessing through a federative or associative structure, or specialized TO. With the massification of Internet and guided by the advice of tourists and guidebooks, ecotourism in France is in most cases self-organised (Blangy *et al.* 2002b), thus clients purchase the different services separately. A second choice is to reserve in federations and professional associations, which might charge up to 15% of the location sale, as is the case of the Gîtes de France (Dutron, 2001 cited in Dreyfus-Signoles, 2002 p. 220). Concerning TO, the number of French enterprises offering ecotourism, sustainable tourism and nature-based activities in the French territory remains limited (see UNWTO, 2002a)**[299]**. While in France there exist only ten TO specialized in nature based activities, Germany has 120 and Great Britain 80, including

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[295] It includes 43.518 meublés labeled Gîtes de France and 7.042 meublés labeled Cléavacances .

[296] It includes 30.042 chambre d'hôtes classified Gîtes de France and 1.963 Cléavacances.

[297] It includes the Gîtes d'étape gîtes and Gîtes de groupes classified Gîtes de France.

[298] In total there are 800.000 km trails and paths, but only 180.000 are way-marked.

[299] UNWTO (2002) is the first ecotourism research done France, published during the International Year of Ecotourism.

enterprises offering ecotourism in French protected areas *i.e.* the German firm NatureTrek (MEEDDAT, 2007). As to French TO, they focus on trekking, cultural trips and gastronomy, and the trips they offer are normally short and during the summer period.

BOX 11: A SYNTHESIS OF THE ECOTOURISM SUPPLY ORGANISATION

Accommodation and restaurants

- <u>Small independent and family-run hotels</u>: about 25% of French independent hotels are located in rural areas. Frequently, these small hotels are organised independent hotel consortia or federations (*i.e.* Logis de France).
- *Chambre d'hôtes* (guest lodgings): they were born in France in 1968, inspired in the British B&B model. They usually are quality rooms located in charming houses hosting travellers for one or more nights and serving breakfast. Accommodation is complemented with traditional homemade food services (*table d'hôtes*).
- *Gîtes* (rural cottages, farmhouse accommodation): they are houses or rooms in guesthouses for seasonal or daily rent. Since their creation, they have experienced a very fast growth and diversification *i.e. gîtes ruraux*, *gîtes d'étapes* (simple structures located in trekking trails), *gîtes panda* (WWF gîtes located in remarkable nature settings), *Retrouvance* (located in Retrouvance trekking trails) *hotels au naturel* (sponsored by regional parks, located in remarkable natural settings), *rando accueil* (environmental and quality label). Differentiation has also originated thematic gîtes *i.e.* equestrian, snow.
- <u>Campsites</u>: were born in 1974 with the aim of providing complementary revenues and a job opportunity to women. There are three main groups gathering campsites: *Bienvenue à la ferme*, *Accueil Paysan* and *Clefs vertes*. The demand for <u>campsites-cars</u>, created in 1967, has increased a lot. It is form by people closer to retirement and with higher education levels than the average.
- <u>Collective accommodation</u>: might belong to the social tourism branch (i.e. holiday centres and holiday family camps, youth hostels, Villages Vacances Famille) or to the private sector (i.e. private timeshares and holiday villages).
- <u>Second homes</u>: currently experiencing a very fast growth. They represent today almost 70% of the hosting capacity.
- <u>Food and beverage services</u>: labels *cuisine du terroir, bistrot de pays, cafés de campagne, etc.* Their focus is local traditional food.

Ecotourism activities and animation

- <u>Natural heritage</u>: trekking, cycling, flora and fauna observation, horse riding and various nature-based sports *i.e.* canoeing, kayak, rafting, canopying, climbing and speleology[300].
- <u>Cultural heritage</u>: nature based activities are combined with cultural animation, local history, architecture and monuments, festivities, museums, pedagogical and cultural events, artistic manifestations and gastronomy[301].

Commercialisation

- Directly, through federations or tour operators. There also exist regional catalogues for marketing and selling.

Territorial collaborative institutions and associations

- Officially <u>OTSI</u> are the public institutions in charge of welcoming tourists. They can be public (i.e. parks, pays, OTSI), associative (environmentalist, cultural, social, rural, etc.) or private institutions (accommodation, food, services, etc.)
- <u>Nature parks and protected areas</u>: (see section 5.1)
- *Stations vertes*: tourism label created in 1964 by the *Fédération française des Stations vertes de vacances et des Villages de neige.* It is addressed to rural or mountain communes that do not exceed one thousand inhabitants, that have a certain level and quality in hospitality services and nature tourism alternatives. There exist today more than 550 *stations vertes* in France.
- *Nautical bases*: created in the 1970s to valorise coastlines and to artificial bodies of water for recreation.
- *Pays d'accueil and pays*: tourism inter-communal institutions (EPCI) created in the mid-1980s and strongly encouraged since the mid-1990s with the re-launch of inter-territorial cooperation. They conduct collective tourism projects based on the valorisation of the natural and cultural heritages. They also work as the OTSI in the welcoming of tourists and information delivery. They are allowed to apply to LEADER and structural funds. In some cases the 1995 *pays* might also be involved in tourism and lead local tourism initiatives.
- <u>Cultural heritage groups and labels</u>: *Villes d'art et d'histoire*, *Plus beaux villages de France* (1982) and the *routes touristiques* (i.e. *route de champagne,*

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[300] See Brunet *et al.* (2004) for an analysis of the nature-based tourism activities in France.
[301] See Bontron *et al.* (2001) for a study on different examples of cultural heritage valorization in rural areas *i.e.* network of churches in Bessin, memories tourism in the mining sector, the windmill circuit, etc.

Source: author based on Cazes and Lanquar (2001), Alet-Rigenbach and Verhaeghe (2008), Blangy *et al.* (2002a, 2002b), Pérol-Dumond (2005) and Vellas and Bécherel (1995).

4.3.3. *A deeper examination of the governance of ecotourism, through the role of associations, federations and working groups operating at different spatial levels*

In the fields of sustainable tourism and ecotourism, the associative sector plays an important role in developing, guiding and regulating this practice, as was examined in chapter three for the world level and previously in this chapter for Europe. Compared to other countries hosting similar natural and cultural characteristics, one of the distinctive elements of the French supply is the effort made in terms of enhancement of the nature-based tourism activity. This effort has conjointly been made by public institutions at different territorial levels, and also by a large network of associations and groups leading innovative action in ecotourism. The varied forms of interaction among public agencies, firms, networks and mixed institutions have not only produced original tourism experiences, but also fostered innovative partnerships and governance dynamics. This originality can be perceived in the transfer of tourism know-how from France to other countries. For example, several countries have expressed their interest in learning about how to implement the French gîtes and regional parks. Below I provide a deeper analysis of a few collective actions and institutions governing French ecotourism.

4.3.3.1. Tourism territorial labels

Since long date, at the destination level, it is possible to observe the deployment of various plans and tools aiming to engage a global comprehension and apprehension of the destination. To the process of natural heritage valorisation and integrated terroir enhancement, underlies an explicit pedagogical and discovery aim, as included in the label *Villes d'art et d'histoire* hosted by the Ministry of Culture, the *Plus beaux villages de France* network, association born in 1982, the various French *routes*

touristiques (i.e. *route de champagne, route du goût, route de la lavande, route du vin*, etc.), which are quite challenging in terms of the governance required to guarantee the necessary territorial cohesion and coherence underlying a tourism product combining landscapes, architecture, local enterprises, local know-how, culture, history, among others. Two other associative initiatives combining tourism and sustainable development are the *Centres permanents d'initiatives pour l'environnement (CPIE)* and the *Atelier technique des espaces naturels (ATEN)*[302]. While CPIE are mainly involved in actions dealing with environmental awareness, sustainable local development, sustainable tourism, the ATEN is a professional network for environmental conservation that provides information to professionals, as a well as to the general public about protected areas, Natura 2000 and various nature protection topics.

4.3.3.2. Federative labels and traditional rural tourism networks

The federation *Accueil paysan,* born in 1987, is another example of an organisation working on sustainable tourism in France. It assembles a group of farmers developing tourism activities simultaneously with soft or extensive agricultural practices with the aim to provide a new socio-economic dynamism to rural territories. Adherents must respect a charter and criteria defined according the services proposed by each farm, which might be accommodation, food and beverage, campsites and tourist hosting. There exist 700 farms in France classified under this label, from which 150 develop organic agriculture practices. The popularity of this label has reached the international sphere with already near 150 members in countries like Brazil, Chile, Spain, Morocco, etc. It is important to point out that the objectives of this charter go beyond the economic revitalisation of rural territories. In fact under this label there also exist environmental and preservation aims, as well as social, educational and cultural objectives conceived to revalorise the rural culture and its population. Following a similar spirit the French network *Bienvenu à la ferme*, created in 1998 by the permanent assembly of the Agriculture chamber, unites farmers offering different kinds of tourism products[303].

The Fédération Nationale de Gîtes de France is the biggest network of rural accommodation in France. It gathers 42500 business owners organised in departmental organisations in charge of guiding and accompanying people willing to open a gîte and obtain the label *Gîtes de France*. This label stands for a particular rural environment that is calm and clean, guarantees a certain level of quality and implies an exclusive marketing and selling through the federation. *Gîtes de France* is not free of controversies, especially due to the 15% of the rent fee and the commercialisation exclusiveness requested from its members. One particular conflict occurred with the local label *Pays cathare*[304] for which accommodation, controls, evaluations and labelling activities were outsourced to *Gîtes de France*. Thus to obtain the local label *Pays Cathare*, gîtes were forced to adhere to Gîtes de France

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[302] See http://www.vpah.culture.fr, http://www.les-plus-beaux-villages-de-france.org, http://cpie.fr, http://espaces-naturels.fr
[303] See http://www.accueil-paysan.com and http://www.bienvenue-a-la-ferme.com
[304] Brand owned by the *Conseil Général de l'Aude.*

and respect its commercial criteria. This obligation has provoked several conflicts, since conditions imposed on gîtes' owners are perceived as abusive (Dutron, 2001 in Pérol-Dumont, 2005 p. 220)[305].

If trekking is the most practiced ecotourism activity in France, this is certainly related to the key role of the *Fédération française de randonnée pedestre* (FFRP) since its foundation in 1947. The FFRP congregates individual trekkers, trekking coordinators, association's leaders, trainers and way markers, composing a group of 192.221 adherents and 3.040 associations. The FFRP performs actions related with the identification of interesting sites, marking and maintenance of trails, as well as the publishing of guides and training. The maintenance of trails is carried out by a group of 6.000 voluntary workers[306].

4.3.3.3. French ecotourism labels and certifications

As to tourism certifications addressed to the French territory, the labels *Clef verte* and *Pavillon Bleu* seem important[307]. *Clef verte* was born in Denmark (1994) and adapted to the context of French campsites in 1998 by the OF-FEE. Since a few years this label also certifies hotels, gîtes and *chambre d'hôtes* that satisfy certain standards related with environmental education and sustainable environmental management. In 2008 there existed 550 labelled establishments in Europe, from which 234 are located in France[308]. The *Pavillon Bleu*, created in 1985 by the OF-FEE, is one of the first labels of the world and also an originally French label that throughout the years became international. It is addressed to communes located in coastal areas or having a pond, as well as to leisure ports carrying out an environmental policy. This label uses 37 key criteria not only dealing with water quality, but also with waste management, global environmental quality, education, circulation of motorized vehicles and energy. The high prestige of this label is based upon annual rigorous controls of the labelled sites, which are 87 communes (252 beaches) and 72 ports in France. As to foreign sites, in 2007 there existed 3300 labelled beaches within thirty-six countries including France.

Another certification initiative is the one conducted by the association *Agir pour un tourisme responsable*, which gathers almost twenty enterprises offering adventure tourism in France and in the rest of the world (*i.e.* Allibert, Atalante and Voyageurs du Monde). These enterprises work in partnership with the Afnor to produce an official certification program that should guarantee fair distribution of tourism revenues between the north and the south, respect of local populations and the local environment, and transparent information for customers. This certification is exclusively addressed to French enterprises and is the first French certification initiative controlled by an

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[305] Besides environmental and rural labels there exist in France social tourism networks (i.e. *Charte de l'Unat* and *Loisir de France*) and solidarity tourism labels. While social initiatives deal with social tourism supply in France, solidarity tourism associations focus on foreign countries.
[306] See http://www.ffrandonnee.fr/
[307] See http://clefverte.org, http://pavillonbleu.org and http://blueflag.org
[308] There are 199 campsites, 21 hotels and 14 gîtes and chambre d'hôtes.

independent agent (Alet-Ringenbach and Verhaeghe, 2008).

Always in the field of eco-accommodation, there exist two well-known labels in France, the WWF *Gîtes Panda* (1993) and the *Hôtels au Naturel* (1999)[309], respectively born in 1993 and 1999 with the support of the FFPNR. Both are assigned to cottages engaged in environmental actions and also respecting a set of environmental and ecotourism criteria. Candidates to these charters are evaluated by a group of experts and the assignation of the charter is signed between the WWF, the owner and the regional park in the case of the gîtes pandas, and between the owner and the FFPNR for the Hôtels au Naturel. Unlike the relative success of the Gîtes Panda with 320 labelled given in 31 parks, the other formula seems less successful with only 17 hotels in 7 parks (Alet-Ringenbach and Verhaeghe, 2008).

4.3.3.4. Professional associations and working groups on ecotourism in France and beyond

With the International Year of Ecotourism (2002), enterprises that had offered ecotourism services in France and in other countries became more visible. The sector thus reinforced its organisation through the creation of associations and publishing of documents. One example is the *Association Française d'Ecotourisme* (AFE) born in 2005 with the aim to promote ecotourism in France among professionals and the general public, as well as to give support for the development of ecotourism projects. Later, ecotourism organisations slowly emerged at the local level, as is the case of the *Association Cévennes Ecotourisme*, network of about 55 ecotourism professionals willing to implement the principles defined in the European Charter for sustainable tourism. The awakening of ecotourism in France is reflected also in the birth of new publications like *Ecotourisme magazine* and the revue *TER Durable,* respectively addressed to customers and tourism professionals[310].

Within this context it seems important to distinguish firms offering ecotourism services and associations coordinating ecotourism voluntary actions, even though they develop collaborative projects. On the one hand, there exist enterprises offering sustainable ecotourism, which can eventually be certified by a charter. Among certified firms we can mention Alibert, Atalante, Tirawa, etc. certified ATR, and among those non certified we have SAIGA offering experiences where the tourist participates actively in nature conservation actions and ecotours offering responsible and fair tourism in Latin America[311]. The price of the proposed trips remains expensive.

There exist also groups of associations working on and offering social and ecotourism experiences in foreign countries, as is the case of the association *"A pas de loup, des volontaires pour la nature"* and *Ecovolontaires*, respectively born in 1994 and 2005. In partnership with biodiversity specialists, these

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[309] See http://www.gites-de-france.fr and http://parcs-naturels-regionaux.tm.fr/hotels_au_naturel
[310] See http://www.ecotourisme-magazine.com, http://www.ecotourisme.info and http://www.cevennes-ecotourisme.com
[311] See http://www.saiga-voyage-nature.fr and http://www.ecotours.fr/

associations organize trips all around the world in which the traveller plays an active role in nature conservation. The aim of the trip is to carry out a particular mission in the destination area, which for instance might be the observation of certain animal species, the impact of human activity on the local flora and fauna or the organisation of ecotourism in a locality[312]. As to fair and equitable tourism, there exists a group of associations carrying out sustainable tourism action in southern countries aiming at fostering fair trade and equitable development through tourism. For example, the *Association pour le tourisme équitable et solidaire (ATES)* unites twenty tourism agencies offering trips that respect a set of ten tourism criteria, among which the organisation of trips in partnership with local communities is essential. Another two initiatives in this domain are the *Charte du tourisme en village d'accueil* and the *Réseau méditerranéen des acteurs du tourisme responsable et solidaire*. Finally, we have the association EchoWay whose role is to inform travellers about ecological and fair tourism destinations, and develop consciousness campaigns on responsible travelling[313].

4.3.4. *Preliminary reflections about the organization and governance of French ecotourism*

The examination of France from a tourism perspective is of great interest due to the popularity of this country as a tourism destination. Each year the number of tourists disembarking in France attains a new record, already reaching more than 75 millions visitors. Several factors explain the attractiveness of this country, among which its lower population density compared to its neighbours, its larger natural areas, refined gastronomy, more temperate climate, and its cultural and built heritage are identified as main assets. The governance dynamics from which this touristy status has been constructed is indeed of great interest.

The previous sections brought to light the large amount of actors and institutions involved in ecotourism in France, revealing that ecotourism and sustainable tourism disembarked in the early-2000s and stayed. On the one hand, statistics show that people willing to practice nature-based activities have progressively increased, together with the number of stays in protected areas. This shift in the tourism demand has concomitantly evolved with broader trends, related to the first and second waves of environmentalism, which have gradually transformed tourism fashions and touristy preferences conducting them towards a growing demand for practices situated in natural environments. On the other hand, the French tourism supply has also evolved and adapted according to this demand, thus increased in complexity up to the point to form today a very original tourism package. In short, the French ecotourism supply is formed by structures, institutions and regulations born in different historical periods and therefore originally pursuing different objectives. While tourist equipments and regulations of the 1960s-70s were conceived and implemented by the central state to

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[312] See http://www.apasdeloup.org and http://www.ecovolontaires.org
[313] See http://www.tourismeslidaire.org, http://tourisme-dev-solidaires.org, http://tourisme-solidaire.over-blog.com, http://www.echoway.org and Delisle and Jolin (2008).

reinvigorate declining rural areas, structures born from the 1990s onwards have mainly being conceived to connect tourism with nature protection. Between these two moments, France developed also innovative tourism experiences through the combined valorisation of gastronomy, agriculture and cultural heritage. Even if the 1970s and 1990s are associated to similar environmental claims, the conception of tourism equipments and institutions aspiring ecological sustainability is relatively new in France. As a result, today these structures and related system of governance coexist and relate, giving rise to a rather dismembered ecotourism supply that still do not form one coherent package. In fact, the French ecotourism supply's components combine to form a very complex tissue, but thus far the variety of actors disseminated over the territory still do not constitute a clear and identified ecotourism supply, as happens in other countries. Although an important number of tourism structures is organised in broader federative or associative networks, the French ecotourism supply still lacks the necessary articulated assemblage to form a visible supply structure. Unlike the very potent French touristy image, with Paris at the centre, the ecotouristy French image is less visible.

One of the reasons explaining this undefined image is related with the absence of an integrated approach to ecotourism planning and policy in France. In contrast with world leaders tourism destinations like Australia regulated by a national tourism strategy[314], in France the responsibility for the development of ecotourism-related activities is far from being consolidated under one single agency or policy instrument. As discussed in the previous sections, public policies and regulations touching ecotourism emanate from a large gamut of governmental agencies, which have built a very complex institutional apparatus. This situation has been reinforced by the evolution of the governance of tourism in France during the last decades, which has echoed major governance transformations permeating almost every socio-economic sphere. The system moved from an approach relying in direct public investment and management during the post-war period, towards a more decentralised and indirect governance led by regional and local institutions in partnership with private actors. In this new scenario, structures such as the *societés d'économie mixte* have permitted to associate private and public agents and resources. As a result, the system of regulation governing ecotourism is composed by a variety of institutions located at different spatial levels, from the global to the local. As to the broader scales, in the previous sections we concluded about the importance of the global and European levels in promoting new tourism philosophies and instruments in a view of more sustainability. Concerning France, we have a system governing tourism with basically three key levels: the national level providing the general lines of the tourism policy; regions simultaneously integrating these broader policies; and development plans adapted to territorial specificities. Finally, we have the sub-regional level formed by departments, various forms of inter-communal structures and communes. As to communal and inter-communal institutions, they are the ones in charge of hosting tourists in the

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[314] See Dowling (2001) and Fennell *et al*. (2001).

different territories and thus dealing with the daily difficulties and conflicts inherent to an activity aspiring sustainability. These institutions are the ones in direct contact with tourists and of course with the whole set of non-governmental organisations and private actors, as well as local interest groups and residents.

The distinctiveness of the governance of ecotourism is that these actors or stakeholders are centred on a view of tourism at the service of socio-economic and ecological sustainability. In this context, it is worth questioning how and to what extent ecotourism contributes to sustainability in France, and therefore redefines the relationship between society and nature. This is certainly a very complex question, but constitutes the marrow of the reflection on the governance for sustainable development. The relationship that societies collectively knit with the natural environment is addressed in this dissertation by means of exploring how ecotourism is connected with territorial sustainability. For this purpose, the examination of the governance of protected areas appears to be of great importance. Below I examine the governance of regional parks in France, the type of protected area chosen as case study for this dissertation.

5. REGIONAL PARKS IN FRANCE AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Even if there exists a certain consensus that the first conservationist experiences were forged in North America, the processes leading towards the foundation of national parks seem to be more complex. As already examined in chapter one, the idea of protecting natural territories emerged in the 1830s as a reaction against industrialisation. Nevertheless, according to Richez (1992), environmental awareness in the United States, country where national parks were born, coincided with the desire of American citizens to forge a national identity. In contrast to the long years of Europe's history and cultural heritage, United States appeared devoid of culture to protect and exhibit. Therefore in the search for original national icons, from which building up identity, wilderness appeared as a strong image to exhibit, leading towards the foundation of Yellowstone (1870). The birth of the first USA parks was certainly not free of controversies, notably related with disagreements about the legitimacy of the new conservationist role of the state and the behaviour toward native populations living in these areas.

The creation of the first national parks did not generate immediate echo in Europe. It was necessarily to wait until 1903 for the foundation of the first European park in Lunenbourg, Germany (Lozato, 2008)[315]. Richez (1992) analyses this apparent tardiness, pointing up that unified conservation systems were not needed in Europe before, since the continent was inhabited by a deep-rooted farmer society controlling rural landscapes and that there already existed a watchful attitude towards and regulations

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[315] Followed by Sweden (1909), Switzerland (1914), Spain (1918) and Italy (1922) (Richez, 1992).

for historical and natural sites. Deepening the differences among the two continents, Richez (1992) argues that even if in the very beginning European and American parks shared similar characteristics, European countries added a research function to protected areas, conceived also as laboratories for studying nature in its pure state. Soon after, the variety of the European landscapes led towards a process of differentiation of protection models, ranging from strict protection reserves to semi-protected territories conceived to reinvigorate rural declining zones. Below I examine this process for the French case with a special focus on regional parks.

5.1. Protected areas in France

The earliest set of measures in France addressing nature protection, fragile ecosystems and remarkable sites can be remitted to the creation of first *réserve artistique* in the *forêt de Fontainebleau* (1861), the *loi sur la restauration des terrains de montagne* (1882), the *loi sur la protection des sites de caractère pittoresque et artistique* (1906) and the *loi sur les monuments historiques* (1913). In addition, the year 1913 is also emblematic due to the attempt to found the first French park, known as the Bévarde Park in the Peolvoux Massif, and the year 1930 for the promulgation of the law regulating the protection of natural monuments and emblematic cultural sites[316]. Nevertheless, while examining the birth of protected territories in France, the role of the SNPN seems to be very important. The creation of the *Réserve zoologique et botanique de Camargue* (1927) and the two *Réserves de Néouvieille et du Lauzanier* (1935) by the SNPN constitute two pioneer landmarks in the history of nature protection in France. Firstly, the identification of these sites permitted to start mapping the ecosystems needing protection. Today *Néouvieille et du Lauzanier* are respectively located inside the Pyrénées and the Mercantour parks. Secondly, the nomination of these nature protection reserves acted as a concrete new force to put pressure on the French state to create national parks.

The first French conservation group dates back to the nineteenth century and emerged in response to the environmental tensions issued from industrialisation. However, this movement did not reach broader popular support until various years after WWII, notably with the environmental consequences of rapid industrial expansion, urbanisation, and cars' proliferation, etc. engendering several kinds of pollution and biodiversity threatening. As a result, the French state founded the Port-Cross and Vanoise national parks in 1963, almost one hundred years later than Yellowstone. Since then, France has implemented a variety of initiatives to conserve and protect biodiversity, giving rise to a system including nine national parks, forty-five regional parks, one marine park and more than one hundred smaller nature reserves. This system also includes protected territories classified under EU directives (Natura 2000 and Birds), as well as areas originated at a local level by either public or private institutions, as is the case of the Grand Lieu lake in hands of the SNPN. Table 36 summarizes the

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[316] *Loi du 2 mai 1930 relative à la protection des monuments naturels et des sites de caractère artistique, historique, scientifique, légendaire ou pitoresque.*

different institutions and instruments addressing nature protection in France.

TABLE 36: PROTECTED AREAS IN FRANCE

Parcs nationaux (1960): they are ten, seven in the Metropolitan area and three in Outre-Mer. They represent 2% of the French territory and host seven million visitors per year. They are created and entirely funded by the central state, and they are managed by a local institution in charge of implementing the charter and the national regulations addressed to all national parks.
Parcs naturels marins (2006): there only exists one park, the Parc de la mer d'Iroise (Bretagne). They are created and financed by the central state, managed by the *Agence des Aires Marines Protégées* and daily run by a local council.
Parcs naturels régionaux (1967): 46 parks covering 7 millions ha. Their creation results from a regional demand to the central state; they are managed by a *syndicat mixte* and financed conjointly by the state, the regions, departments, communes and EU projects.
Sites Natura 2000 (1979/ 1992): there are more than 1700 French Nature 2000 sites, covering about 12% of the territory (6.8 Mha). In France, the Natura sites are managed by local public institutions and protected areas. They are financed by the EU, the state and sub-national institutions.
Réserves Naturelles nationales (1976) and **Réserves naturelles régionales (2007): t**here exist 157 RNN and 160 RNR. While RNN are created by the state, RNR are created by the *Conseil Régional*. They are rather small areas that might be managed and financed by public institutions, nature protection associations, owners of the classified lands, etc.
Conservation de l'Espace Littoral et de Rivages Lacustres (1975): 400 sites designed and financed by the central state, and managed by local institutions and foundations.
Protected woodlands and biological reserves: **Forêt de protection:** 115.000 ha, created and financed by the central state. **Réserves biologiques domaniales** (1953): woodlands for biodiversity conservation. They can be *dirigée* or receiving human intervention (161 sites, created by the state) or *intégrale* or free of intervention (42 sites created by the ONF).
Other protected areas: **Opérations Grands Sites:** 32 from which six have the label Grand Site. They are managed by EPCIs and financed by various institutions. **Consevatoire des Espaces naturels** (CEN): there exist 30 CEN and 2050 sites (120.000 ha) **Espaces naturels sensibles** (1985): created by the Conseil Général and financed by a departmental tax **UNESCO Résérves de biosphère** (1971): they are ten in France. **Zone humide d'importance internationale** (ZHII) (Ramsar Convention) (1971): they are 22 sites designed by the state. **Zone Naturelle d'intérêt faunistque et floristique** (ZNIEFF) (1971): They are 14836 zones (13,8Mha). **Zone importante pour la conservation des oiseaux** (Birds Directive) (ZICO): 285 (4,7Mha). **Arrêté préfectoral de protection de biotope** (1976) they are more than 600 (surface: 300.000 ha). They are created by the state (Prefect). **Les reserves de chasse et de faune sauvage:** 12000 sites (2.5Mha) created by the state, and managed and financed by hunting associations and groups. **European diploma of protected areas (Council of Europe):** six French parks have the diploma

Source: author with various sources.

As observed in table 36, the institutional framework regulating nature protection in France is very complex. It congregates a large family of instruments, institutions and policies, which together construct a system of nature protection based upon institutions hosting different governance forms. While national parks, nature reserves and woodland reserves belong to the set of regulatory measures dictated by a national decree and a top-down decision, regional parks are contractual territories created and managed by regional institutions, and financed through contracts with the national and the EU levels. Another major distinctiveness of European and French territories is related with land ownership and land uses. Unlike North American national parks, wholly owned by the federal government, in French parks coexist different lands ownerships (*i.e.* private sector, national or the local government,

nature protection associations, cooperatives, etc.) and land uses (i.e. forestry, agriculture, tourism, etc.). Therefore major governance challenges of French protected territories are in direct relationship with the heterogeneity of interests hosted by the different concerned actors and institutions. For instance, the final implementation of the EU charter for sustainable tourism in French parks relies on a very long process of local debate and agreements trying to conciliate the variety of interests of farmers, foresters and local associations, as well as the large variety of actors involved in tourism who do not always agree on the kind of tourism to be fostered.

On the other hand, governance challenges faced by French parks are also related with the existence of other territorial institutions not primarily concerned by nature protection, but to different extents related with sustainable local development. In fact, this system of protected areas is anchored in a broader spatial system of regulation that has gained increasing complexity during the last years, notably with the flourishing of newer contractual institutions at the local level such as the *pays* and other forms of EPCI. The coexistence of traditional nature protection institutions (*i.e.* national and regional parks) with novel territorial institutions and instruments pursuing sustainability objectives, both sub-national and European, has not always being trouble-free in their articulation effort. Through the Morvan case, I will further explore how decentralisation and the arrival of sustainable development, together with an increasing presence of the EU level, both associated with the emergence of new institutions, have augmented the complexities of the system of governance of protected territories to the point of putting into question older institutions in favour of new ones. This has certainly to do with the planning concept adopted in France that in different periods has either integrated the territorial dimension with environmental regulation or not. Comparable to the governance dynamics of the whole French territory, protected areas have been affected by transformations resulting from decentralisation and consolidation of the European level. On the one hand, new sub-national institutions have fragmented pre-existing natural areas that were relatively coherent from a biophysical and institutional perspective. On the other, the EU level has taken more responsibilities within the environmental policy and protected areas management. In the sections below I continue examining the governance of protected areas from the experience of regional parks.

5.2. A brief presentation of national parks

France has today ten national parks, six in the Metropolitan area and three in Outre-Mer[317], covering together almost 3% of the territory. National parks are generally located in isolated and uninhabited mountain areas, enclosing territories with exceptional ecological and cultural heritages whose fragility demands protection. The territory enclosed by a national park is divided into two zones. A central area

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[317] France has ten national parks covering around 0,8% of the territory: Vanoise, 1963; Parc de haute montagne in Alpes du Nord, Port-Cros, 1963; Parc insulaire et marin, les Pyrénées, 1967; Parc de haute montagne, les Cévennes, 1970; Parc de moyenne montagne et habité, les Écrins, 1973; Parc de haute montagne à cheval, le Mercantour, 1979; Parc de haute montagne, Alpes du Sud and Parc de montagne en milieu tropical, 1989; Guadeloupe, 2007; Guyane, 2007; Réunion, 2007.

regulated by strict conservation norms, and a peripheral zone with a softer regulation allowing the practice of certain economic activities. While commercial, hunting, circulation and industrial activities are either very controlled or completely forbidden in national parks, eco-responsible agro-pastoral activities and a few ecotourism activities are allowed.

MAP 2: NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PARKS IN FRANCE[318]
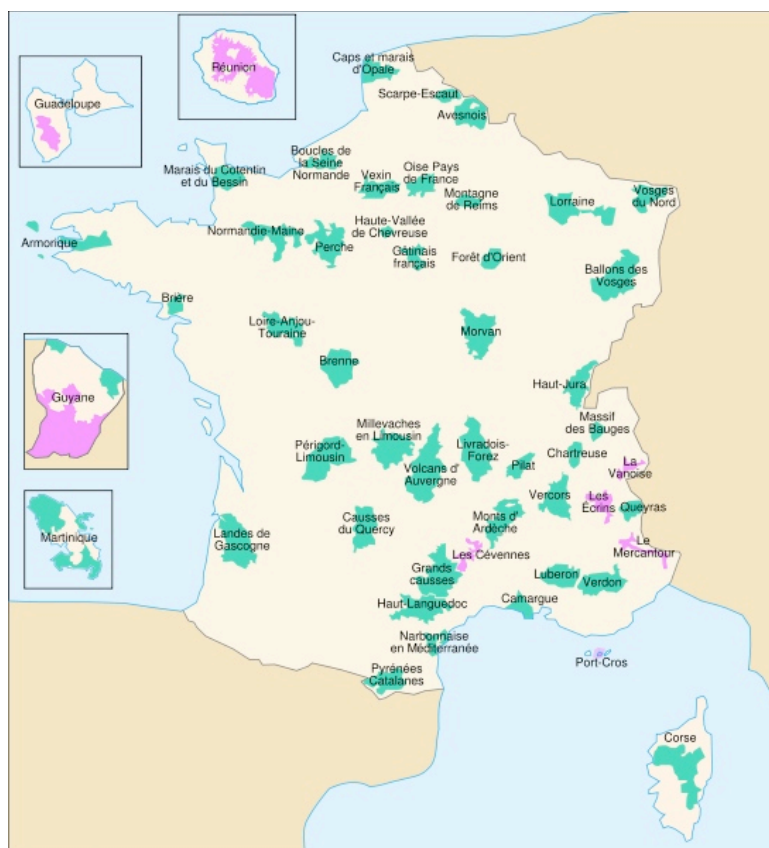
Source: Parcs Naturels Régionaux de France (2008a).

The creation of national parks follows from a central state decision based upon consultations and assessments seeking to determine the public interest of protecting a certain territory. This task is conducted by a public interest group in charge, among others, of preparing the park's founding documents, and leading the involved partners in the negotiation of the park's perimeter and charter. Unlike regional parks, national parks are constrained by rigorous protection standards approaching them to Nature Reserves. They are doubly regulated by a national common law to all national parks and by their individual constitutive charter. Since 2006, national parks are committed to develop a charter that should allow more dynamism and specificity to the governance of these areas, approaching them to the governance of regional parks. This law also states that the administration board of national parks should integrate members of the concerned local institutions. Within this

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[318] Regional parks in green and national parks in violet.

context it is important to recognize de *loi du 16 avril 2006* as a major turning point in the history of national parks and French protected areas in general, for its aim at fostering a more active engagement and participation of civil society and local institutions in nature protection. This transformation is especially significant for national parks, until then exclusively regulated at the national scale.

TABLE 37: A COMPARISON BETWEEN REGIONAL AND NATIONAL PARKS

	REGIONAL PARKS	NATIONAL PARKS
Number	46 (12% of the French territory)	10 (3% of the French territory)
Surface	6 million ha	1,7 million ha (35% classified as central zone)
Creation decision	Regions in agreement with other local institutions present to the central level a charter proposal to be approved by the MEEDDT	Central state
Territories	Inhabited rural areas with a rich natural and cultural heritage and undergoing socio-economic fragility and demographic decline	Rather uninhabited ecosystems (mountain, islands, forests and coastal areas with a rich natural heritage)
Territorial regulations	Without specific regulations, besides the parks' charter that might oppose to land uses and urban documents considered incompatible.	Common regulation for all parks: interdiction of publicity, and industrial and mining activities; interdiction and/or strict regulation of hunting, forestry, fishing, etc. A national park's charter might oppose other territorial plans.
Governance	They function according to a 12-year charter, engaging the central state with regional and local institutions.	They are created by a central state law decree and they are managed according locally agreed charter.
Aims of the institutions	To conciliate environmental protection with sustainable socio-economic development through the sustainable utilization and valorisation of the local heritage. They focus on nature and landscape, and innovation and experimentation.	Biodiversity protection and conservation
Financing	State, region, communes, EPCI and Europe through programs	State
Society-environ nexus	Soft-regulated sensibility	Restricted
Tourism	Completely integrated to the park's life dynamics; regulated through good practices charters	Only soft trekking circuits and nature discovery activities are allowed. Stays are allowed only in the peripheral area.

Source: author based on Lozato (2008) and www.parcs-naturels-regionaux.tm.fr

As a result, three main bodies lead the governance of national parks: i) a financial autonomous public institution in charge of the daily operation of the park; ii) a board of directors gathering national and local agents including local elected representatives, public administrations, scientists and civil society members. This board is in charge of defining and guaranteeing the park's priorities and intervention alternatives and; iii) a scientific committee responsible for the sustainability of the territorial biodiversity. The director of the park leads the implementation of the decisions undertaken by the board of directors concerning flora and fauna protection, fishing, agriculture, forestry, public and private action. Additionally, architectural designs, waste, hunting, traffic regulation, fire control and tourism activities are also a major concern of national parks (see Cazes and Lanquar, 2000). All these actions and national park's specific objectives are financed by the central state. National parks are indeed a very important part of the national French identity hosting strong symbolic values attracting

more than seven million visitors per year. Nonetheless, only soft trekking circuits and nature discovery and pedagogical activities are allowed. Tourist stays are permitted only in the peripheral area.

Even if the national park formula since the beginning seemed to have functioned well, soon after the inauguration of the first French parks, state experts rapidly realised that this institutional model was unfit for most of French natural territories, characterised, among others, by a higher population density, proximity to urban agglomerations and presence of an important number of tourists. In order to face this particular reality, French institutions developed a more suitable nature protection model named *Parc Naturel Régional*.

5.3. The history and governance of French regional parks

The DATAR's engineers took a few years to conceive a more suitable institution to both protect and revitalize those territories that needed protection, but could not attain the environmental standards set for national parks. Regional parks (RP) then were born in the middle of a controversial ambiance opposing voices against the creation of new protected areas in France, and instead arguing about the need to invest in other fields, with a nascent ecological movement since long date demanding the creation of new protected areas. Finally, at a conference organised by the DATAR in Lurs, in 1967, the concept of regional park was launched. Since the very beginning, these parks were conceived to foster a territorial socio-economic development and revitalization experience based upon the protection, conservation and enhancement of nature, evoking thus the sustainability philosophy with more than twenty years of anticipation. In contrast with national parks, primarily focused on nature conservation, regional parks were conceived as institutions responsible for watching over the entire local heritage, natural and cultural, so as to convert the concept in the engine that would lead towards a kind of development that will respect the natural and human local systems.

More than forty years of history have passed since the foundation of the first regional parks. Along these years, the system of regulation governing French territories has changed a lot, as early explored in this chapter. The question here is how an institution for nature protection of the late 1960s evolves, adapts and fits with the new context of decentralisation, Europeanization and therefore contemporary system of environmental multi-level governance. This reflection is certainly not only pertinent for regional parks, since various others institutions for nature protection have evolved in parallel with the described scenery. However, analyses seem especially interesting in the context of protected areas due to the renamed 'pioneer' role of regional parks in terms of bottom-up approaches and sustainability territorial objectives. The point here is how an avant-garde institution should fit with a new system of governance established with the same goals as the original institution was meant to achieve. Before addressing all these topics in more detail through the Morvan case, the section below explores the basic characteristics and challenges of regional parks.

TABLE 38: *PARCS NATURELS RÉGIONAUX* MILESTONES

1964	**The Ministry of Agriculture demanded the DATAR to invent a different kind of Protected Area** for territories with remarkable ecosystems but inhabited.
1966	Multidisciplinary meeting led by the DATAR at Lurs-en-Provence: **birth of the *Parcs naturels régionaux.***
1967	De Gaulle signed the law instituting Regional Parks (march 1st, 1967) Creation of the first Ecomusées (Ecomusée d'Ouessant and Ecomusée de Marquèze)
1968	**Birth of the first regional park**: the Saint-Amand-Raisme park (12.000 ha.)
1969	Birth of the Armorique regional park (65.000 ha) and launch of the *Conférence permanente des parcs*
1971	The new Ministry of the Environment took on the responsibility of regional parks, which until then belonged to the DATAR. On the other hand, Robert Poujade, the Minister of the Environment at that time, created the *Fédération des Parcs naturels régionaux de France*. **Birth of the Morvan Park**
1973	10 parks: St. Amand-Raismes, Armorique, Brière, Camargue, Landes de Gascogne, Morvan, Vercours, Forêt d'Orient, Corse, Haut-Languedoc. After long months of negotiations with the Ministry of Finance, the financial contribution of the central state was maintained. Yet, this support was conceived to be regressive, expecting regions to assume it completely three years later. Birth of the **EUROPARC Federation**, led by Federal Germany, Belgium and the French federation of regional parks
1975	**Birth of regions**. From now on, **they are in charge of leading the submission of park's candidacies and the elaboration of charters**. Regions should assume a more central role in the financing and functioning of parks. Regional parks fight (and won) for the state to keep its responsibility in the validation of the charter and the classification of parks, despite one first attempt to decentralise this task.
1976	The *Secrétariat d'Etat à l'Environnement* created a new special budget for regional parks. This financial support ranged from 15 to 45% of the whole budget, depending on the socio-economic, demographic and environmental situation of each case.
1977	20 parks: Brottonne, Pilat, Lorraine, Normandie-Maine, Maritinique, Montagne de Reims, Vosges du Nord, Luberon, Queyras, Volcans d'Auvergne. Giscard makes peremptory the financial aid of the Sate to regional parks, which was supposed to be eliminated at the end of the VII Plan. On the other hand, the Article 2 of the 1976 Nature Protection law (on environmental assessment) stipulated that regional park's directors should obligatory get involved in the environmental assessments concerning the parks' territory.
1979	Circular from the first Minister instructing every state secretary to respect the regional park's charters, and not to disinvest in these territory. Creation of a law to regulate the aesthetics of the publicity inside regional parks.
1981	Evaluation of the financial contribution of the state to regional parks, which diminished from 43% (1972) to 18% (1976). From now on, parks' budget doubled, going from 4,7 MF to almost 10 MF for functioning and from 11 MF to almost 20 MF for equipment.
1982	**Decentralisation laws**; First *Journées nationales des PNR* to celebrate their fifteenth anniversary.
1984	Regional parks become concerned by the first generation of CPER.
1988	**New policy decree addressing the functioning of regional parks and decentralisation. This law maintains the role of regions in the creation of parks and the role of the state in the validation and renewal of charters.**
1989	25 regional parks; publishing of two key documents: *Les cahiers de l'intercommunalité* to guide communes in decision making and *Guide de la valorisation économique des ressources locales* examining the experience of regional parks.
1990	First two pilot regional parks experimenting in France EU agro-environmental measures (art. 19th of the CEE measure)
1991	Meeting *Parcs naturels régionaux – Horizon 2001* at the Morvan Park. During this event President Mitterrand, affirmed that regional parks were the best tool to integrate nature protection in our daily lives. He encouraged implementing environmental regulation more strictly for parks to give a national example. **Law regulating the traffic of motorised vehicles** in natural areas and specifically stating that regional parks charters must include a section defining specific rules to control motorized circulation. From an agreement between the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Tourism for the development of nature tourism derived a set of new tourism products labelled *"Parcs Naturels de France: les voyages au naturel"*. This initiative was awarded with the innovation tourism prize delivered by the Ministry of tourism.
1992	From a total of 35 candidatures to the European **LEADER** program, four applications coming from regional parks were accepted.

1993	Article 2 of the *"Loi Paysages"* gave for the first time a legislative basis to regional parks. This law stipulated the three criteria determining the park's classification: heritage quality and territorial coherence, the quality of the project and management capacity. Protocol between the FFPNR, the WWF and the *Fédération nationale des Gîtes de France* to create the **Gîtes Panda.** Regional parks assumed the responsibility for leading the elaboration of the **European Charter for Sustainable Tourism**.
1995	The **loi Barnier** introduced a few specifications concerning the functioning of parks: they have to be managed by open *syndicats mixtes*, they might hire specialised *gardes champêtres*, to perceive the local tourism tax from communes oriented to be used in environmental protection and management of natural areas for tourism. This year the FPNR becomes member of the IUCN.
1996	**First downgraded regional park** (PNR du Marais Poitevin)
1997	Thirtieth anniversary of parks. There exist 32 parks covering 10% of the French territory. Regional parks starts to being exported in three continents.
1999	**The LOADDT recognizes regional as tools for spatial planning and development.** Similar to the *pays* and *EPCIs*, regional might sign a particular contract within the **CPER territorial section**. Territorial **superposition between parks and *pays* is allowed**, yet this must be regulated through a convention articulating actions of both institutions in the common territory. The pays' charter must be compatible with the one of the park. The LOA allows regional parks to assume a plaintiff role and to be represented in the *Commissions départementales d'orientation de l'agriculture*.
2000	The FFPNR represented French RP in the Johannesburg conference. The *Code de l'Environnement* includes the regional park's policy and the SRU law redefines urbanism tools and engages parks in their elaboration and revision. The Park's charter is then submitted to a public evaluation by regions.
2001	40 parks (11% of the territory)
2002	The *loi relative à la démocratie de proximité* allows the park's *syndicat mixtes* to freely fix the **participation** of its statutory members.
2003	Following the LOADDT, **17 parks have already signed a particular contract in the context of the CPER.** The *loi relative à l'urbanisme, l'habitat et la construction* **modifies the *pays'* policy and their articulation with parks: the convention between these two institutions is not anymore obligatory, and the park, inside its territory, is the responsible for the animation and the coordination of the *pays* policies that are relevant for the park's objectives. There is an obligation to make compatible the charters of parks and pays.**
2005	*Loi sur le développement des territoires ruraux*, allowing the extension of a park's classification in two years in case of difficulties in the charter's renewal. During the same year, the government starts **reforming the French park's policy** and proposes the creation of marine's parks.
2006	**Loi relative aux Parcs nationaux, Parcs naturels marins et Parcs naturels régionaux is adopted.** Major changes after this law were: parks classification is extended to 12 years, parks can lead SCOTs, their advice concerning planning document becomes obligatory and the *syndicat mixte* becomes obligatory. As to national parks, this law introduced the obligation of individual charters, approaching them to regional parks.
2007	Birth of the *Conseil d'Orientation, Recherche et Prospective (CORP)* of the regional parks federation, composed by academics, experts, local elected representatives, etc, with the aim to develop reflection on the future of Parks. There are **46 regional parks (13% of the territory**). They concern 21 regions, 66 metropolitan *départements* and 2 *départements d'Outre-Mer*, 3706 communes and about 3.100.000 inhabitants.

Source: author based on PNRF (2007), http://www.parcs-naturels-regionaux.tm.fr/fr/accueil/ and other complementary sources

5.3.1. *Regional parks main features*

Regional parks[319] are places embodying a special identity, culture and history, as well as a rich natural heritage whose fragile balance might be threatened. They are inhabited protected areas carrying out initiatives conciliating environmental protection and sustainable socio-economic development. Participative governance, innovation and experimentation are the action plans deployed by regional parks to achieve these aims. The role of parks is built on five core principles that are common to the

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[319] Created by the law n° 67-158 of march 1st 1967.

46 French parks: a) to protect the national heritage through an appropriated management of nature and landscapes; b) to contribute to rational land use; c) to promote economic, social and cultural development, and so improve quality of life; d) to attract, educate and inform the population; d) to conduct experimental or precursory actions in the above mentioned fields and contribute to research programmes[320]. In addition to these common principles, each park maintains its originality through the elaboration of a document called charter stipulating main specific goals and actions. This charter, valid for twelve years, seals the park's project and also engages and coordinates the responsibilities of its signatories that gather local elected representatives, departmental and regional officials and members of the national government. Once the 12-year period is over, the park must begin an examination procedure oriented to evaluate accomplishments and redefine new objectives for the following period, so as to obtain the approval of the central state for renewing the charter. Following a law enacted in January 8, 1993, the procedure became more complicated since land use documents must henceforth be compatible with parks' charters. The renewal of the charter is indeed a very important event for parks. During the last years the charter's renewal has turned to be an occasion to convoke civil society participation to define the objectives and actions for the following years. This procedure exposes one of the main specificities of regional parks: their governance combining formal elective democracy with civil society participation, which has been reinforced by a policy context encouraging bottom-up participatory processes. On the other hand, the charter renewal is also an opportunity to make an evaluation of the functioning of parks; in some case this evaluation carried out by the Ministry of the Environment has led to the lose out of the label. This was the case of the Marais Poitevin Park that lost its label in 1996 due to its compliance with intensive agriculture.

Since the Barnier (1995) law, regional parks are directed by open *syndicat mixtes,* which are a kind of management consisting ofofficials and elected representatives from the regional and local levels. In addition, a scientific committee, including representatives of local associations, universities and other actors give support and advice to this political team. The *syndicat mixte* is in charge of recruiting a Director and a permanent technical team for the daily operation of the park. Technical teams are composed by twenty to thirty experts in the fields of ecology, spatial planning, agriculture, tourism, energy, education and culture, among others, revealing the broad perspective through which these territories are addressed. As to funding, each regional park operates with an approximate budget of €2.300.000, from which 48% comes from the regions, 32% from member institutions, 12% from the central state[321], 5% from European funds and 3% correspond to own resources (PNRF, 2008b)[322]. As table 38 shows, funding for regional parks has been a complicated subject all along the parks' life. Central state funding was supposed to be regressive, expecting the regions to assume the entire

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[320] Art. R. 244-1 of decree No. 94-765 promulgated September 1, 1994 for application of article L. 244-1 of the rural code.
[321] Mainly from the Ministry of the Environment.
[322] Data for 2006 (PNRF, 2008b).

financial responsibility from the parks' third anniversary onwards. However, since regional parks are located in deprived territories, funding these institutions exclusively with regional and local resources is almost impossible. Thus recurring negotiations among the different territorial levels led to periods with either more or less representation of the central state; however the net tendency is a decreasing participation of the central state. One important turning point came with the decentralisation, notably with the CPER and the LOADDT law recognizing parks as spatial planning tools. This law allowed parks to sign particular contracts within the CPER under the territorial axe, as is the case of the 2007-2013 CPER. Simultaneously, regional parks started benefiting from EU funds for culture, nature conservation, agriculture and territorial development. Nonetheless, despite the various changes introduced in the composition of the park's budget during different periods, the insufficient financial and human means of parks has always been stressed. Budgetary difficulties reflect deeper tensions of these institutions situated at the crossroads between a top-down policy (identical parks are built all over the French territory) and a pioneer decentralisation effort dating back to the early 1970s.

5.3.2. The governance of regional parks: between a top-down and bottom-up regulation

Regional parks belong to the group of contractual instruments for environmental protection, thus they are considered as a sort of exceptional French administration. They were born from the shared will of the French state, represented by the DATAR, in agreement with regional and local institutions. Literature on spatial planning and sustainable development frequently describes regional parks as one of the most innovative measures undertaken by the DATAR during the post-war period. Unlike national parks, whose creation has always emanated from a centralised decision, regional parks originate from a coordinated demand coming from the regional level supported by other local organs. More precisely, since the creation of regions in 1975, the law stipulated that they would be in charge of leading the process by which parks will be created. The regional level thus leads the elaboration and renewal of the park's charter, as well as should assume increasing responsibilities in their budgets. For this purpose, regions head the elaboration of the charter. They are assisted, on the one hand, by the entire sub-national institutional apparatus, including the *Conseil Régional*, the *Départements*, pays, EPCI and the communes, and on the other, by diverse territorial associations, professional organisations and devolved state services. It is important to mention that local institutions freely decide whether or not to become a member of a park. Each partner participates in the negotiation of the park's perimeter, which is finally defined as a function of the communes ratifying the charter. In this respect, political views of local leaders play an important role, determining the implication and functioning of contractual institutions. Once the charter is submitted to evaluation, it is the role of the Ministry of the Environment to decide its final approval, and finally provide to each park a seal

symbolising environmental quality and local heritage protection. This framework has produced parks with extremely diverse characteristics in terms of their territories, surface and population[323].

5.3.3. *Regional parks as avant-garde institutions: in which sense and to what extent?*

Academic literature and official documents dealing with French protected areas often highlight the innovative role of regional parks, in the sense that they opened a door towards decentralisation, governance by shared parties, sustainable development, and sustainable tourism and ecotourism. In 2007, regional parks commemorate their fortieth anniversary with celebrations in France and in other countries where the regional park model has been 'exported'[324]. Certainly, regional parks have carried out an innovative role, yet the evoked works frequently lack a deeper critical regard concerning the tensions lying beneath these ambitious objectives. They thus close the eyes to the whole set of contradictions and conflicts that regional parks have undergone since their very beginning, which might question their legitimacy and sustainability role, two key elements shaping their governance. Because of their pre-emptory and experimental role, during their early years, regional parks remained somehow marginal rural institutions in relation to the urban focus of the spatial policy of the post-war period. Later, with the advent of decentralisation and sustainable development, thus with the proliferation of new territorial institutions in France at different spatial levels, regional parks were rediscovered, either to accentuate their advantages or to put in check their pertinence to the new governance context made up of a large amount of compiled new institutions.

As to avant-garde actions of regional parks, we can mention their early involvement in experimenting the first EU agro-environmental measures (1990), their relative success in the first LEADER submissions (1992) and the park's role in the implementation of the Habitat and Birds directives. Additionally, regional parks were leaders in the creation of EUROPARC (1973) and also in the development of the sustainable tourism charter (1993), explaining the popularity of this tourism instrument among French parks. Regional parks have been involved in tourism activities since their foundation. Firstly, giving support to nascent rural gîtes and various tourism institutions, and later with the fostering of sustainable tourism and ecotourism. While in the 1960s and 1970s tourism was mainly conceived as a tool to fight against rural desertification and stagnation, since the early 1990s the increasing demand for ecotourism activities, combined with the development of a more consolidated international ecotourism network, resulted in the identification of regional parks as ideal ecotourism destinations due to their governance and sustainability aim. To a certain extent this image is embodied in the birth of Gîtes Pandas, Hôtels au naturel and the nine parks awarded with the EUROPARC label. This strategy is also related to the disposition of regional parks to international cooperation, counting

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[323] From 2000 to 170.000 inhabitants according to Maupéou, 2005.
[324] For example, Mme. Agnès Boulard, vice-director of the regional parks federation did a conference about the regional park model in the *IV Cuartas Jornadas de Derecho Ambiental*, Universidad de Chile, Santiago 25-27 June 2008.

for very diverse exchanges with more than twenty-five countries, and therefore being identified as a key niche from which to foster sustainable development (Madon *et al.*, 2008). There exist both individual decentralised collaborations, including technical exchanges, communal twinning, transfrontier cooperation and European programs (LEADER, INTERREG, EQUAL, etc.), and since 1998 collective actions led by the federation of regional parks. One major federative strategy has been the realisation of international missions aiming at the creation of regional parks in foreign countries. To a first project in the Brazilian Pantanal (1998), followed the implication of the federation in the creation of a park in the Chilean Patagonia whose charter was finalised after five years of collaboration (see FPNRF, 2003; Bechaux and Paquier, 2004; Madon *et al.* 2008).

As to the internal governance of regional parks, technical teams have skills to intervene in almost every socio-economic and ecological domain, due to their large understanding in agriculture, forestry, water, tourism, biodiversity, and every topic concerning their territories. Depending on the area, regional parks might assume either the leadership of a certain project, or a federative or coordination role basically supported by the diffusion of sustainable and governance best practices. While they are leaders in ecotourism and experimentation for the development of alternative energies (*i.e.* biofuels), in more traditional sectors like agriculture and forestry they assume a role aiming at building collaboration and consensus among the concerned actors in view of establishing more sustainable practices. One major issue in this respect is the lack of power held by regional parks in the different negotiations, notably due to the absence of specific regulations to introduce sustainability measures. They thus adopt in many cases a persuasive role, involving the diffusion of best practices and the fostering of participative modes of governance to build consensus. This coordinating role is certainly essential for a territory aspiring sustainability and equity from a territorial and temporal perspective. In this context, the reduced budget and insufficient human resources of regional parks are a problem. This situation is related with the current inter-territorial difficulties faced by regional parks, after the birth of new institutions like the *pays* benefiting of more generous budgets, a fresher institutional image and a renewed bottom-up legitimacy. Within this context, it seems important to remember that the DATAR got its inspiration from the regional parks experience for the thinking up of the *pays* concept (Maupéau *et al.*, 2005), leading to the creation of institutions with similar governance and sustainability aims. Therefore after the territorial operationalisation of the *pays* and other EPCI from the early 2000 onwards, their articulation with pre-existing institutions like regional parks became a major delicate issue. Publications of those years[325] and conversations with various interviewees denoted the unease of park representatives and the federation of regional parks vis-à-vis these new institutions established on already ancient and somehow coherent territories, and therefore challenging their system of governance. The law instituting the *pays* partially addressed the parks-pays relation

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[325] See PNRF (1998), Gauchet (2006) and PNRF (2008b).

indicating that the perimeter of both institutions could not coincide, impeding the superposition of these two institutions. However, this restriction did not prevent a park from containing one or more pays or other type of EPCI. As a result, various pays and EPCI have occupied the French territory since the early 2000, fragmenting regional parks and thus challenging their governance. Within a theoretical framework arguing about the need for articulation among territorial scales to foster forms of governance that might better lead towards sustainability, the parks-pays relationship is very important, and will be further explored through the Morvan case in the next chapter.

MAP 3: 46 PARKS AND 343 PAYS   MAP 4: 46 PARKS AND 164 COMMUNAUTÉS D'AGGLOMÉRATION
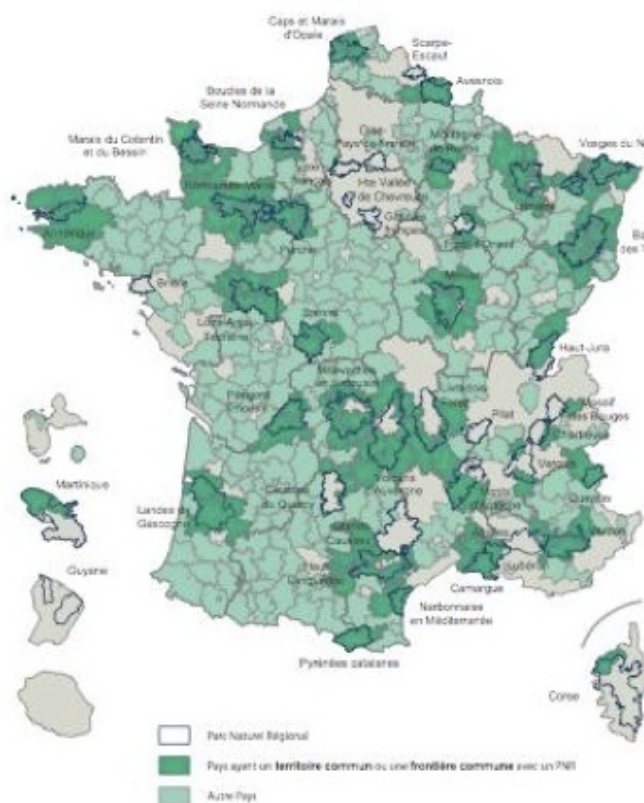
Source: PNRF (2008b)

Another important issue concerns land property and land uses. Regional parks are inhabited territories and totally open to the public as long as private property is respected. These are parks regulated by the common law, without specific planning rules. Therefore parks focuses on watching over the strict and exemplifying application of all available environmental policies and instruments. In addition, these parks might be concerned by the application of specific biodiversity regulations addressed to fragile ecosystems (*i.e.* Natura 2000, Nature Reserves and other conventions), as well as by the strict control of pollution sources, waste management systems and motorized circulation through municipal

ordinances. As might be imagined, several tensions and conflicts emerge from the confrontation of the sustainability goals of parks and the nonexistence of specific regulative frameworks keeping a close watch to these territories. In fact, the semi-open character of regional parks demands constant coordination efforts among the whole set of actors and economic activities operating in these areas. The governance of regional parks involves a diversity of actors that do not necessarily host a similar relationship with the natural environment, and that consequently do not aspire to the same ecological sustainability standards. In this respect, the close examination of the specific governance of regional parks might be very instructive and provide meaningful insights about the relationship between society and nature. One interesting example of the challenging nature of regional parks' governance was the attempt to build a high voltage power line in the Gorges du Verdon (PNR du Verdon in Alpes-de Haute-Provence) in the mid-2000. In fact, despite the fragility and the heritage value of this area, since several years the French electricity company EDF has been trying to build a power line that would cross several fragile ecosystems. Finally, after long battles led by environmentalist groups and local actors, in July 2006, the *Conseil d'Etat* cancelled the public utility declaration allowing the building of the line. This decision has not only being qualified as a major victory for environmentalist groups, but also as a *coup d'arrêt aux massacres auxquels nous assistons"*[326]. This decision has largely been discussed since it is very unusual that the *Conseil d'Etat* overturns an administrative decision. On the other hand, electricity companies are still lobbying for cancelling this decision, supported by the mayor of Nice and by recurrent power cuts in the area.

The Verdon and Marais Poitevin parks exemplify very well the multifaceted governance of regional parks and the variety of interests cross-cutting these territories. While the Marais Poitevin park was sanctioned for its compliance with intensive agriculture, the Verdon's natural heritage was menaced by the construction of a high voltage line, revealing the complexities underlying the laxity of the legal framework governing these territories, and for that reason the power and the key role of local governance structures as self-appointed guardians of local ecosystems. This topic is certainly much more complicated than these two examples, notably due to the hybrid character of semi-protected territories like regional parks. As early examined (see chapter two and three), the heterogeneous character of these territories, in terms of land use, local identity and changing production and consumption modes, generates per se conflicts among its different users. The combination of this heterogeneous territorial character, the sustainability goal as a major task force and a juridical regulation supported by common law is source of many governance challenges. Ecotourism seems to be a significant activity in this context, since its dynamic role aiming at connecting main sustainability aims have the potential to mobilize, renew and feed the local system of governance in the view of more sustainable paths. In this respect one essential question underlying the governance of regional

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[326] Interview to Corinne Lepage, counsel for the defense (AFP, 2006).

parks in France, together with the role of ecotourism, is the role and extent to which parks and ecotourism contribute to a more sustainable governance of the complete French territory. What I mean here is the capacity of these areas hosting ecotourism practices to underpin "from the bottom" more sustainable territories and processes able to have a 'radiation effect' on upper territorial levels, and thus feed their systems of governance. Bearing in mind the complexities lying beneath the governance of regional parks, before entering the discussion about the specific case study of this dissertation, the following sections introduce a few general features of Burgundy, region where the Morvan is located and therefore the region that led the process from which the Morvan regional park emerged.

MAP 5: FRANCE AND BURGUNDY   **MAP 6: BURGUNDY AND ITS FOUR *DÉPARTMENTS***
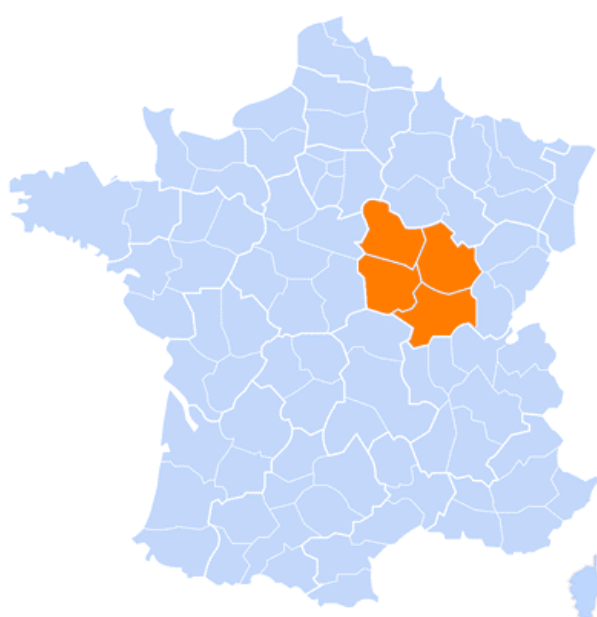
Source: http://www.bourgogne.leguidedesfestivals.com/images/cartes/france-bourgogne.gif and http://www.a-gites.com/Images/cartes/bourgogne.gif

6. BURGUNDY

French Burgundy, vast territory located at 200 kilometres southeast from Paris, has many natural, historical and cultural attributes to be proud of. Covering 31.600 km^2 and hosting a population of 1.623.000 inhabitants (INSEE, 2006), Burgundy is at the same time one of the biggest and one of the lowest density regions in France (51,4 inhabitants/km2), representing nearly 6% of the whole metropolitan territory and 2,8% of the total French population (Boyer *et al.*, 2005). From an administrative point of view, Burgundy is divided into four departments: Côte d'Or, Nièvre, Saône-et-

Loire and Yonne, and its regional capital is Dijon. Burgundy has a specific identity and culture, completely different from other French regions, even from its neighbours, due to a glorious historical past and its world leadership as a high quality wine producer. In spite of this, Burgundy, and its economy and population are very heterogeneous; it is indeed a region that still remains highly rural and agriculture continues to be very important, while industry is strongly dependent from external regional decisions. In fact, since the creation of the regional level, Burgundy somehow lost its internal cohesion, due to its novel location just in the middle of two strong leading economic areas, Île de France and Lyon. On the other hand, its semi-central location together with the small dimension of Dijon has given to Burgundy a transit character both from a national and European perspective. This passage reputation goes back to the Roman routes constructed in Ancient times and today is associated to the famous Paris-Lyon-Méditérranée communication axis.

6.1. Burgundy, land of biophysical and socio-cultural contrasts

Since it is composed by a juxtaposition of varied small territories, Burgundy presents significant natural, economic and demographic contrasts. The east zone presents alluvial plains drained by the Saône river towards the south and touches the *massif central*'s oriental edge. It is a dynamic sub-region due to a rich agriculture, and thus concentrates most of the population and economic activities. It is mainly consecrated to wineries, hosting the Beaujolais and the Mâconnais mountains and the well-known Côte d'Or extending from Beaune to Dijon. In contrast, the central zone, area hosting the Morvan, is less populated and less dynamic (23 inhabitants/km2). The Morvan covers 228.000 hectares, its highest mountain is the Haut Folin (901 m) and its base structure connects the region to the *massif central*. Finally the north, connected to the Parisian depression, has two major inhabited axes, one going from Auxerre to Sens and Val-de-Loire, and the other from Nevers to Cosne-sur-Loire.

Internal regional contrasts are also observed in the cultural and socio-political fields. Burgundy is a historical region whose political construction is of high complexity, further explored through the prism of the Morvan history (see chapter six). In broad terms, the regional history confronts a glorious and rich past, crystallised in buildings like the Cîteux and Cluny Abbeys of the XI and XII century, with the coexistence of a variety of local identities, socio-economic realities and politico-cultural traditions. One of the consequences of this heterogeneity is the geopolitical structure of Burgundy, characterised by a very weak political unity. While the departments of Yonne and Côte D'Or have traditionally been right wing bastions, except for a few industrial cities like Sens, Nièvre is a left wing department symbolically led until today by the image of François Mitterrand, who presided over the *Conseil Général* from 1964 to 1981. Conversely, the Saône-et-Loire tends to fluctuate politically. These departmental rivalries are reinforced by competition between the main cities, continuing their roots in the Ancient Regime. For instance, in Yonne a rivalry between Sens and Auxerre lasted until the

middle of the twentieth century; in the case of the Saône-et-Loire, Autun finally retained the bishopric, Chalon justice and Mâcon the departmental Prefecture. The lack of political coherence is also seen in divisions in the regional press (Yonne Républicane) and in Dijon's difficulty in settling its urban leadership hegemony (Boyer *et al.*, 2005).

Internal regional contrasts derived from the cultural and socio-political differences are quite well reflected in the politico-administrative territorial organization of Burgundy. This region is today organized in six *agglomérations*[327], fifteen *pays*[328], one regional park, 124 CC, four *Conseils généraux*, and the *Conseil régional* plus several devolved state services. Additionally, tourism is organized in several territorial institutions, among which we can mention 31 *stations vertes de vacances*[329] and five communes classified *Plus Beaux Villages de France*[330]. As to ecotourism and sustainable tourism, Burgundy hosts eight farms labelled World-Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)[331] and eighteen projects labelled *Pôle d'excellence rurale* under the tourism and heritage axe[332].

6.2. Population flows and demographic fluctuations

Since 1979, period when Burgundy population counted 1.569.000 inhabitants, demographic growth slowed down to reach a certain stability in the early 1990s. This stability, however, hides internal cross-migratory movements and differences among the four departments. On the one hand, a young population (under 27 years) leaving the region for studying or working in Paris or Lyon; on the other, Burgundy hosts both active persons coming from the Parisian region and retired persons leaving the capital for the countryside, specially to Yonne and Nièvre (Boyer *et al.*, 2005). Thus while since 1975 population has increased around 12% in the Côte d'Or and Yonne, benefiting respectively from immigration from Paris and because it has the youngest population of the region, the Saône-et-Loire and Nièvre experience a declining tendency since the 1980s. As a result, the most demographically dynamic areas are the Dijon-Chalon-sur-Saône axis together with the Yonne valley, which deeply contrast with rural zones like the Morvan, Puisaye and Bresse (Boyer *et al.*, 2005).

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[327] Dijon, Nevers, Chalon, Macon and Le Creusot-Montceau les Mines.

[328] Pays de l'Autunois-Morvan, Pays de l'Autunois et du Morvan Côte d'Orien, Pays de l'Avalonnais, Pays Beaunois, Pays de la Bourgogne Nivernaise, Pays de la Bresse Bourguignonne, Pays du Charolais-Brionnais, Pays du Chatillonnais, Pays Nevers sud Nivernais, Pays plaine de Saône-Vingeanne, Pays de la Puuisaye-Forterre, Pays Seine et Tille, Pays du Tonnerrois.

[329] Anost, Bléneau, Charolles, Issy-l'Evêque, Lormes, Montbard, Montsauche-les-Settons, Pays de Pouilly-en-Auxois, Santenay, Arnay-le-Duc, Auxonne, Bourbon-Lancy, Chagny, Chatel-Censoir, Chauffailles, Clamecy, Donzy, Epinac, Etang-sur-Arroux, Matour, Moulins-Engilbert, Moux-en-Morvan, Nolay, Ouroux-en-Morvan, Pontailler-sur-Saône, Saulieu/Précy-sous- Thil, Semur-en-Auxois/Pont-et-Massène, Seurre, Varzy, Venarey-les-Laumes et Verdun-sur-le-Doubs.

[330] Châteauneuf-en-Auxois, Flavigny- sur-Ozerain, Semur-en-Brionnais, Noyers-sur-Serein et Vézelay.

[331] International network of organic farms hosting visitors for free in exchange of voluntary work.

[332] Les grands lacs du Morvan, La ferme du Hameau, Tourisme fluvial, pédestre et cycliste autour de la Saône in En Côte d'Or; La filière bois au service du Tourisme, Le Comptoir des Sauvignons, La Résidence de tourisme Handiclub : hameau de Paraize à Livry, in the Nièvre; and L'architecture bressane : support d'une nouvelle politique touristique et économique, Mise en valeur d'un site d'exception : les roches de Solutré et de Vergisson in Saône-et-Loire.

Burgundy is one of the most rural regions of France. In 1999, 66% of its surface was rural and concentrated one third of the whole population (Boyer *et al.*, 2005)[333]. Even if the last census still shows a negative demographic tendency (2,6% in average), reflecting the situation of most rural areas in France, it seems that the rural exodus from Burgundy came to an end. For the period 1990-1999, the population fell by only 0,1%; this was a natural diminishing counterbalanced by the arrival of new inhabitants to the region. However, rural territories only hold 30% of the jobs, representing a decline of 8% since 1982. This decline reveals a progressive reduction of agriculture and industrial jobs, respectively representing 13% and 28%; it is also related with a positive employment trend observed in the service sector that absorbs today about 25% of rural jobs (Boyer *et al.*, 2005). On the other hand, it is important to observe that rural territories are quite diverse. There exists a specific fragile zone with only 20 inhabitants/km2 and covering 60% of the regional territory, embracing the area from the Chatillonnais to the Puisaye and also including the Morvan. In contrast, 60% of the population lives in only 10% of the territory (Boyer *et al.*, 2005). For this reason, for the period 2000-2006, 62% of the regional territory (28% of the population) received public support for fragile rural zones[334]. Two sources of dynamism for inhabited areas is the presence of secondary homes, which represents around 10% of the regional housing, and tourism with 5,6 nights/year (Boyer *et al.*, 2005).

BOX 12: BURGUNDY, A GENERAL PROFILE

- Surface: 31.600 km2
- Regional capital: Dijon
- Departmental prefectures: Dijon (Côte d'Or), Nevers (Nièvre), Mâcon (Saône-et-Loire) and Auxerre (Yonne)
- Population: 1.610.000 (INSEE, 2006)
- Foreign population: 4% (INSEE, 2006)
- Density: 51,4 inhab/km2 (INSEE, 2006)

- Main industries: mechatronics (mechanics, electronics, plastics), agro-food and metallurgy.
- Regional industrial specificity: wine.
- PIB 2002 (€ billions): 36,41(15th position)
- PIB/inhabitant (2002)(€ thousands): 21,51 (7th position)
- PIB distribution (2002): agriculture (6,0%,), industry (26,8%) and tertiary (67,2%)
- Unemployment rate (3rd trimester 2004): 8,4%

Source: author, with information from Boyer (2005) and INSEE (2006)

6.3. The regional economy

Burgundy economy contributes 2,4% of the French metropolitan PIB, which in 2002 represented €36,41 billions (INSEE, 2006). Agriculture counts for 5,5% of regional employments[335] and 5% of the regional value added, with wine, cereals and oleaginous as the three main products, as well as the Charolaise bovine cattle breeding in Nièvre. Nevertheless, wineries are the outright regional pride and the most important source of income. Wineries cover 1,5% of the regional agriculture surface and 6% of the national winery surface[336], with the Saône-et-Loire (44% of the regional surface, including

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[333] In contrast with the 18% for the whole metropolitan territory (INSEE, 2006).
[334] Des aides communataires au developpement des zones rurales les plus fragiles.
[335] In average agriculture represents only 3,5% in France (INSEE, 2006).
[336] 60% of the production is white wine (aligoté and chardonnay) and the rest is red (pinot noir) (Boyer *et al.* 2005).

Mâconnais and Côte chalonnaise) and the Côte d'Or (33%) as the most important regions. The "regional wine aristocracy" is located at Côtes-de-Beaune and Côtes-de-Nuits, with the Hospice de Beaune as the leader fixing international prices (Boyer *et al.*, 2005).

As to the other industrial activity, characterised by its diversification and innovation, the main productive sectors are metallurgy, chemistry, rubber and plastic (Michelin), as well as agro-industries (Senoble, Amora) and mechanics. Industry and construction together represent 25% of the regional employment. Other important sectors are commerce and services, representing 69% of both jobs and value added, denoting the less tertiary character of Burgundy compared with the rest of France (INSEE, 2006). As to the spatial division of labour, from the 650.000 regional jobs the Saône-et-Loire (33%) and the Côte d'Or, (33%) are the most dynamic departments, contrasting with Yonne (20%) and Nièvre (13%).

6.4. The regional development strategy and the role of ecotourism in Burgundy

Tourism is one of the most important economic activities in Burgundy. Its turnover equals €1,9 billion and it directly employs 13.000 thousands people, notably in accommodation and food services, besides the indirect benefits of tourism for local business, artisans and winegrowers, among others. Tourism in Burgundy additionally involves a large number of public and private actors carrying out different tourism-related activities like transport, communication and promotion, local and regional development, among other, together with a wide variety of members of the civil society either directly or indirectly involved in tourism. As to employment, the CRB (2005) qualifies tourism jobs as precarious. There exists a predominance of young workers (35%) employed in half time or seasonal jobs (43%), and mostly concentrated in food and beverage services (55%) and accommodation (37%).

6.4.1. Burgundy's tourism strategy, which place for ecotourism?

As observed for every French region, Burgundy defined its tourism strategy throughout the elaboration of a SRDT (see CRB, 2005). The current 2005-2015 SRDT started being elaborated in 2003 through a collective process integrating a wide range of actors involved in tourism[337] leading to a strategy simultaneously addressed to tourists, enterprises, territories and institutions, and structured according the following main objectives: a) to valorise the *Bourgogne* brand through improvements in the tourism supply quality, heritage valorisation and promotion; b) to open Burgundy to the hosting of different population groups, including social tourism and facilities for handicapped people; c) to improve the accessibility and readability of the tourism supply; d) to diversify the tourism supply, including the development of organised packaged trips and pilot initiatives; e) to reinforce the coordination role of the regional level in terms of synergies among different public policies, economic

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[337] It was adopted by the *Conseil Régional* the 28 october 2005, after its approval by the CRT, CDT, les *Conseils Généraux* et le *Conseil économique et social regional* (See CRB, 2005).

sectors and concerned actors (CRB, 2005). In fact, the heterogeneity and complexity of the tourism supply convoking a large range of local actors creates vital governance challenges upon which the quality of the tourism experience depends. Bearing this context in mind, the SRT summarizes its objectives for the forthcoming years on two key points: supply quality and coordination among the interventions of the different *collectivités*.

6.4.2. Tourism and ecotourism in Burgundy: main supply and demand features

The tourism supply of Burgundy is large and heterogeneous in its composition and quality. For that reason, this section provides only a first general overview of these services. A more detailed analysis for the Morvan area will be made in chapter six.

With reference to accommodation, echoing the national trend, one of the most important features of Burgundy is the high proportion of second homes (81%), especially in the northern area. In total, Burgundy has more than 81.500 second homes, from which an important share belongs to a Northern European population from the Netherlands, Germany and Great Britain. In the remaining accommodation[338] (19%) we observe an increased of this share during the last years. In broad terms, accommodation in Burgundy is rather traditional, characterized by a significant presence of campsites, hotels and rural structures (90% of hosting capacity). While hotels are small and independent (70%), campsites have a good level of comfort and in many cases are managed by municipal institutions (56%). Conversely, clubs, residencies and time-shares are underrepresented in the region. Hotels are mainly located in the Côte d'Or, rural accommodation is concentrated in the Saône-et-Loire (42%) and campsites are homogeneously distributed in the region. The main challenges faced by the accommodation sector are short stays and seasonality. Occupation rates and prolonged sojourns in hotels and campsites are lower than the national average, giving Burgundy a stopover character. In this respect, the CRB (2005) identifies as major challenges for the accommodation sector, the modernisation of hotels and the need for adaptation and specialisation of campsites. This is needed to attract a foreign clientele, extending stays and softening seasonality. In this context, the rural accommodation segment seems to be quite dynamic, showing more positive rates of growth, higher levels of quality and integration to national networks. As further examined for the Morvan case, the accommodation supply in Burgundy, and specially in rural areas, has started a process of diversification with the creation of a new ecotourism supply, including WWF Gîtes Panda and Cléavances campsites. This transformation follows a broader national tendency and is in tune with the progressive implementation of national and European ecotourism and sustainability labels.

Local cuisine is a key component of Burgundy tourism supply. This region is world-known for its

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[338] Hotels, campsites, gîtes, chambre d'hôtes, etc.

wine, refined gastronomy and high food and wine quality, as well as for the high reputation of its chefs and restaurants. In addition to their high quality, restaurants in Burgundy are characterised by combining accommodation and food services (36%), as well as for being individually run structures (44%). During the last years, restaurants have progressively start adhering to new labels and associations promoting local products *i.e. Les toques Nivernaises* and *Terroires de l'Yonne*. In average, 20% of the clientele are foreigner visitors.

Burgundy's tourism reputation cannot be dissociated from the ensemble of natural and cultural characteristics of the region. Burgundy is a territory hosting a very rich and varied natural heritage, especially in the Morvan, together with emblematic cultural vestiges testifying to the prosperous past of the region. In fact, the rich natural flora, fauna and varied biophysical resources contained in the Morvan and in other regional ecosystems, Burgundy has being invested with a strong density and variety of cultural sites, ranging from religious, spiritual, medieval and archaeological monuments dating back to different historical periods. Thus castles, museums and historical towns are spread all over the territory. According to Bourgogne Tourisme (2006), Burgundy has more than 2000 classified monuments (*i.e.* 730 churches, 90 convents, 400 castles, 21 archaeological sites, etc.), 100 museums, UNESCO World Heritage sites (Abbaye de Fontenay, Basilique and colline de Vézelay and the site de la Charité-sur-Lire), and three Villes d'Art (Beaune, Dijon and Paray-le-Monial), among many others. These sites host cultural animations and events related to the local gastronomy, wineries, music and local traditions. On the one hand, we have the renowned wine sales at Hospices of Beaune and Barroco music festival at Dijon; on the other, there are more modest cultural manifestations, mainly addressed to the local population and organised by local associations and communes *i.e.* Musiques en Morvan and Rencontres Musicales de Vézelay. Finally, the most visited sites in Burgundy are the Saint-Marie Madeleine de Vézelay Basilica (800.000 visitors), the Saint-Lazare Cathedral at Autun (195.000), the Hospices of Beaune (383.232 visitors), the Art and Archeology museum and the Clunnu Abbey (107.012) and the Bibracte museum at Saint-Léger-sous-Beuvray (45.732).

As to the tourism valorisation of the natural regional places, Burgundy has developed through the years the necessary infrastructure and equipments for the practice of large variety of nature-based activities like trekking, cycling, nature discovery and horse riding, as well for the practice of nature-based sport activities including canoeing, kayak, climbing and canopying, among others. For their practice, the region has numerous trails and infrastructures, notably in the Morvan area (see chapter six). For example, Burgundy has 6.000 km of trekking trails, including GR and smaller trails, very well distributed over the territory and governed by a very dense tissue of associations and voluntary workers[339]. This region also has the necessary infrastructure for the practice of equestrian activities,

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[339] See http://bourgogne.ffrandonnee.fr/

supported by 48 equestrian centres, as well as the lakes and rivers needed for the large amount of water-based sport activities and fishing. In this context, there is no doubt that the Morvan is the area of Burgundy hosting the most of the regional ecotourism activities. The Morvan forests, rivers, lakes and natural sites appear to be ideal places to host a kind of tourism combining nature and culture. Among all these tourism alternatives, cycling has been identified as a key activity in Burgundy. In fact, cycling became important in this region with the launch in 2000 of the French policy on green cycling circuits. Since then cycling benefits from marketing campaigns, new investments and a renewed tourism demand (see chapter 6).

BOX 13: THE ECOTOURISM SUPPLY IN BURGUNDY

Accommodation

Hotels (14.812 rooms, 14th French region)
- Composition: 2* (54%), 3* (26%) and 4* (4,7%).
- Regional distribution: Côte-d'Or (37,9%), Saône-et-Loire (32%), Nièvre (10%) and Yonne (20%).
- Features: independently run (70%), small (25 rooms in average), with low occupation rates (40%). 0*, 3* and 4* hotels are newer, managed by integrated chains, mainly located in urban or peri-urban areas and with higher occupation rates.
- Challenges: modernisation, charm, ambiance, etc. To extend sojourns, which in average last 1,3 days (compared to the 1,9 days for France).

Campsites (15.151 sites, 7th French region)
- Regional distribution: equilibrated in the four departments.
- Composition: predominance of 3* structures (41,6%), followed by 2* (32%).
- Features: important role of communes and public structures; 56% are municipally run campsites (compared to a 30% for France). Strong seasonality and short stays (2,5 days); progression of foreign tourists.
- Challenges: need for adaptation and specialisation.

Rural accommodation (1207 gîtes and 1439 *chambre d'hôtes*; 12% of the total number of beds of the region)
- Regional distribution: Saône-et-Loire with 42% of the total hosting capacity.
- Features: very fast growth in the last years (gîtes grow at a rate of 6% and *chambre d'hôtes* at rate of 37%) Shifts are also related with quality improvements (42,6% of gîtes and 63,1% of *chambre d'hôtes* with 3 épis).
- The departmental office of Gîtes de France play a major role in coordinating the sector. Other labels are less represented: 10 Cléavacances, 14 gîtes panda.

Other (only five holiday resorts, 17th French region)
- Big tourism operators building tourism villages and resorts are almost absent in the region.

Food and beverage services (3624 establishments, from which 22 are awarded with Michelin stars)
- Refined gastronomy and high quality of the local food and reputation of chefs
- 20% are of foreign clients.
- Trends of the sector: reduction of traditional restaurants in favour of fast food and foreign cuisine.
- 36% represent hotel-restaurants *"celui qui dort, mange"* (versus 21% for France).
- 44% work independently and 36% do not do any type of marketing.
- New animation operations are starting, with the creation of local labels (*i.e.* Les Toques Nivernaises, Les Terroires de l'Yonne); 58% of the restaurants have the label *"Restaurateurs de France"* of the Ministry of Tourism.

Source: author with information of CRB (2005)

The described tourism supply is certainly supported by a great number of public institutions and associations engaged in tourism in the region. Burgundy has 126 OTSI hosting about half of the

tourists arriving to Burgundy (CRB, 2005). They are financed by communal resources, and volunteers and people on seasonal jobs run them. There exists a general perception of their deficient professionalism and articulation, context in which the excessive publishing of tourism flyers is perceived as wasteful. This issue is related to the fact that with the proliferation of sub-regional institutions, the number of institutions producing tourism material beside OTSI has considerably increased. For instance, at the moment of this research in the small town of Saulieu two big tourist offices facing each other on the same street, one attached to the commune and the other to the *pays*, offered very similar products.

Of course this situation hides more complex governance stakes affecting tourism and ecotourism in this region, notably the often cited quality disparities observed in the large amount of tourism services. Quality disparities and weak articulation are usually mentioned as main impediments for the development of tourism, despite the high tourism potential of Burgundy. Burgundy benefits from tourists coming from Île-de-France and Rhône-Alpes regions, and also an important number of visitors coming from northern European countries. As to French tourists, they prefer short sojourns, mainly during the weekends, and they are mainly attracted by wineries and gourmand circuits. Among French tourists, Burgundy is mainly identified as a destination of refined gastronomy and wine, and beautiful canals and cultural heritage. Northern Europeans, for their part, also have a high opinion of the Morvan natural characteristics.

6.4.3. An introduction to ecotourism in Burgundy and its underlying governance
As is expressed in Burgundy's SRDT and CPER, sustainability and environmental protection are major strategic orientations guiding development choices of this region (see CRB, 2005 and CRB, 2007). In the field of tourism, this sustainability aim is expressed in the first axe of the SRDT, devoted to the quality and profile of the regional tourism supply. According to this axe, one main tourism objective of Burgundy for the period 2005-15 is the implementation of an ecotourism strategy in the Morvan, process that will be led by the Morvan Park. In fact, since 2003 the park's director for the period of those years started elaborating this idea, perhaps inspired by the first conversation we shared on the topic. More precisely, since 2004 the Morvan Park displays the wish to adhere to the European charter for sustainable tourism in protected areas in the course of 2009. For that reason, in 2004 the park produced a document detailing the contribution of the Morvan to the SRDT, explicitly referring to the concept of ecotourism and the wish to adhere to the charter (see PNRM, 2004c). This intention was ratified by the SRDT in 2005, and later validated and supported by the latest CPER, which not only recognizes the potentialities of ecotourism, but also identifies the Morvan park as the main regional leader for its development (CRB, 2007 p. 78).

Nevertheless, this proclamation is far from being coherent with the broader tourism strategy of the

region and with the tourism objectives displayed by each of the four departments. One widespread initiative within sustainable tourism in Burgundy, identified as the most important tourism axe of the region (see Perrusson, 2008b), has being the implementation of the green cycling trail strategy, which is also one of the most important ecotourism priorities of France. Burgundy has been one of the leading regions in organizing and implementing this plan, and thus is today one of the few regions with a definite trail. In spite of the fact that the Morvan was the only protected area of the region till July 2009, and thus has been recognized as the leading institution for ecotourism development by the *Conseil Régional*, the Morvan park is neither represented in the board nor the trail passes through this territory. At the same time, inconsistencies in the framework regulating ecotourism in Burgundy, together with the unclear role held by the Morvan park, are also observed in the *Schémas départementaux de tourisme* (see CGCD, 2006; CGN, 2005; CGY, 2003). With Nièvre as exception, neither of the departmental tourism plans mentions ecotourism nor the charter on sustainable tourism. Moreover, even if for the four departmental documents institutional partnerships seems very important, the Morvan park is rarely invoked in these plans.

It is crucial to be aware of how the complexity resulting from the large amount of territorial institutions either directly or indirectly involved in ecotourism can lead to more serious governance problems. As will be seen in the Morvan case, in Burgundy there exists an important lack of articulation among territorial institutions, derived from the almost inexistent bridges between the different forms of tourism, the relevant actors working on tourism, and a large range of regional and local public institutions. More precisely, studies on the topic warn about the almost inexistent links between tourism and ecological conservation strategies carried out by the park. This situation has certainly been reinforced by the flourishing of new sub-national institutions from the 2000 onwards, resulting in a Burgundy hosting today more than 25 territorial public institutions working on tourism, besides private and associative stakeholders.

7.   CONCLUSION

The first three chapters of this work drew on recent debates on sustainable development, ecotourism and multi-level governance to approach territories classified as protected areas. While building bridges between these topics, I concluded that protected areas offered an ideal arena to reflect on the governance challenges for a sustainable society-ecology co-evolution. Within this context, in chapter five I made an historical and multi-scalar analysis of the governance system in Europe and specially in France. So, following a brief introduction on the role of the global level, already introduced in the theoretical discussion of this dissertation, this chapter proceeded with a reflection on the European and national French scales, followed by the regional and local levels through the case of Burgundy. As documented several times in this work, governance is far from being limited to the public side of the

system of regulation governing territories; yet public policy seems to be a very important piece of the governance system in which the new environmental pact between human beings is discussed, negotiated and constructed. The evolution of policy systems brings to light the underlying discourses, worldviews and values impacting and shaping the setting up of the policy agenda along different historical moments and also at the various spatial scales. Later, in the following chapter, I explore how the Morvan actors, including public, private and civil society, have taken action within this scenario and observe the sustainability and governance processes and effects of these socio-institutional dynamics, as well as the interplays and cumulative causations between the various nested scales.

The analysis of the worldwide proliferation of sustainability and ecotourism projects shows how the diffusion of new ideas, the promotion of new values, and the spreading of knowledge about new development alternatives were essential pieces of the process renewing the system of governance that ended up by incorporating sustainability as a widespread socio-political aim and value. Certainly, the reviewed global strategies, notably led by the UN and various institutions working on ecotourism and nature conservation at the global level, in most cases are non-compulsory instruments whose use is dependent on the voluntary engagement of states and society in general. Nevertheless, their slow but persistent dissemination today plays a decisive role in the process of policy-agenda setting of the different nations, and also among the beliefs and interests of contemporary societies. This argument, of course, does not intend dismissing the large influence of ideas and requests coming from other stakeholders in calling for more sustainability and environmental respect, which indeed have been very important, thus further explored at a more territorialised level in the next chapter.

Trends that are apparent in tourism show the effects of the above-mentioned process of diffusion of new ideas and values. In fact, the imposition of constraining rules in the field of tourism were not necessary to make states and smaller groups pioneering in this sense. For instance, implementing national ecotourism plans and carrying out local strategies seeking sustainability, as is the case of the ecotourism plans of Costa Rica and Australia or less organised ecotourism experiences in other countries, including France. These situations call for a reflection on the reason lying beneath these choices, as well as on the effectiveness, leadership and legitimacy of the international institutions that spoke for the first time about sustainability and ecotourism, and which conducted early actions and engaged individuals and social groups. Following the first critics of the environmental consequences of mass tourism in the 1960s, the principles promoted in the Brundtland report and the Rio Conference were adapted and translated into the field of tourism, producing a discussion on sustainable tourism and fostering tourism practices with a sustainability potential like ecotourism. This transformation was not even the outcome of an international negotiation, but rather the consequence of a novel knowledge diffused under the form of good practice codes. In sum, the diffusion towards the tourism sector of a new development philosophy forged an innovative sustainability governance flow that gave birth to

new tourism forms. In turn, this current was strengthened by the production of new research on the topic, the spreading of an applied knowledge for action and the penetration of new values and/or their reinforcement where they already existed.

Equally important are the governance dynamics observed at the global scale, meaning the processes through which uncertainty and so the urgency of the environmental question stimulated cooperation and a novel dialogue between international institutions, thus far disconnected. This global action also impacted on lower spatial scales, for instance by stirring an interchange among nations on the relationship between men and nature, as well as at lower spatial scales directly and indirectly stimulating the birth of innovative territorial sustainability experiences. In short, I argue that the global level played an irreplaceable role in insufflating the first institutionalized and articulated élan aiming at introducing the first necessary societal transformations required for a transition towards more sustainable development paths. Perhaps the high media impact of this first élan, combined with the ambitious and long-term sustainability objectives, helps to explain the rapid criticism and deception of those expecting a much faster and radical transformation. Yet, this does not mean that international action has been ineffective in impacting lower spatial scales, as previously showed for Europe and France that since the 1970s have taken action in this respect.

The European governance framework for sustainability and tourism has considerably evolved over the last forty years. Whereas in the 1970s, a top-down and an expert-driven 'knowledge' dominated in Europe, aiming at introducing common and modest environmental standards to for fear of interfering with competition mechanisms, from the late 1980s onwards we observe a stronger focus on sustainability and governance. The current European framework is thus not anymore based on a hierarchical and expert-driven administration, but instead on the implementation of a variety of directives and instruments requesting the involvement of different scales, temporal, spatial and functional, and thus demanding a strong coordination effort capable of dealing with the high complexity and multifaceted nature of the European engagement in sustainability. As to the specific case of ecotourism and sustainability, this chapter showed that the combination of the EU policies for rural territories, protected areas, biodiversity, tourism and regional development has been fundamental. Nonetheless, this does not necessarily mean that other institutions have also played a very important role, as is the case of the EUROPARC and its sustainable tourism charter. On the other hand, the analyses of the tourism sector reflects very well the major challenges associated to a transition from sector-oriented regulation to transversal integration of sustainability and governance, since by definition ecotourism is a transversal sector aspiring sustainability. Early in this chapter, I concluded about a few ambivalences of ecotourism in Europe resulting from the multiplicity of sectors regulating and funding ecotourism strategies, and the restricted coordination role carried out by the EU Tourism Unit. This situation is certainly related with the evolution on the manner tourism has been

apprehended at the European level, which went from a view of tourism as means for self-attracting unknown cultures (Treaty of Rome) towards a view of tourism, and more precisely of ecotourism, as an integral part of the governance of territories, and thus in direct relationship with their sustainability, alluding to the embeddedness of ecotourism in the complete socio-ecological governance dynamics of territories. These views of territories, ecotourism and their relationship with a transition towards a policy approach aiming at dealing with complexity and environmental uncertainty throughout governance, collaboration, partnerships, articulation and participation is reflected in the numerous EU directives and instruments pointing at this sense (see table 39), as well as in actions carried out by other European institutions like the Pan Parks network and the European Charter for sustainable tourism.

A focus on governance, participation and multi-scalar articulation of a territorial policy is expected to produce more sustainable territories, throughout rising legitimacy and effectiveness of the different concerned policies, which by extension will transform and recreate the existing governance dynamics. The question here is how and to what extent the examined European skeleton interplays with the varied member states, either to foster or to obstruct sustainable governance. This issue is especially relevant in a context of an enlarging Europe composed by such different countries in their biophysical, institutional, socio-political and thus governance traditions; it also shows the importance of a multi-level governance approach examining temporal, spatial and functional specificities and interchanges. Within this reflection is anchored the analysis of France, of Burgundy and notably of the Morvan, which is the place where the sustainability and governance effects of the scalar interplays materialised.

TABLE 39: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ECOTOURISM, A REGARD ACROSS TEMPORAL AND TERRITORIAL SCALES

	TRENTE GLORIEUSES (1945 - EARLY-1970S)	POST-FORDIST CRISIS FIRST WAVE OF ENVIRONMENTALISM (1973 – 1986)	SECOND WAVE OF ENVIRONMENTALISM (1987 - 2008)
GLOBAL LEVEL	**Reconstruction** plan after WWII and large-scale projects with a focus on **growth**. Birth of mass tourism in Europe; nature tourism remains marginal.	**Context:** fordist **crisis** (1973) and **catastrophes** (1980s) **Approach: conflict** between growth, industrialisation and environment **International action:** Meadows and Stockholm conference (1972); publishing of the IUCN conservation strategy (1985) **Tourism**: in **conflict with the natural environment** (1970s) Rediscovery of the **rural** world. Birth of ecotourism in Latin America.	**Context: uncertainty, precaution** and **environmental crisis** **International action: Brundtland** Report (1987), **Rio** Summit (1992), Johannesburg (2007)…. **Approach: complementarities** between socio-economic and ecological pillars **Sustainable development** => **sustainable tourism** => **ecotourism** (1987) (mid-1990s) (2002) **Ecotourism**: Lanzarote Charter (1995), Global code of ethics (1999), International year of ecotourism (2002) => **contribution of tourism to SD**.
EUROPEAN LEVEL	Treaty of Paris (1951) **Seeds for ecotourism:** Treaty of Rome (1957): the potential of **tourism to approach cultures**; European Diploma of protected areas (1965); marginal role in tourism.	**Conservation and the environment:** first environmental mobilisations; EU 1EAP (1972) associated to a **top-down** approach and focus on **trade**; EU Bird Directive (1979) with a focus on conservation and **expert-driven** knowledge; Bern Convention on conservation of European wildlife (1979); **Seeds for ecotourism:** EU Bathing water directive (1975); Birth of EUROPARC (1979) **Local and regional development: decentralisation is needed** for implementing EU directives and distributing structural funds; increasing role of the EU level.	**Conservation, environment and SD action:** EU 4EAP and SEA (1987); First European year of the environment (1987); Habitat Directive (1992) with a focus on **SD** and **governance**; 5EAP (1992) calling for more **sustainable forms of tourism**; Emerald network on conservation (1999); 1 EU SDS (2001); 6EAP (2002-12) with a focus on **governance by shared parties** and **participation** of individuals and groups. **Ecotourism:** European Year of tourism (1990) European Prize (1995), Conference on Rural Development (1996); EU **publications** on SD and ST (late 1990s and 2000s); Pan Parks (1997) **European Charter** (2001). **Ecotourism and SD trends:** - **EU role** in regulation and funding => ERDF, EAGF and EAFRD, LEADER+ and INTERREG III; Natura 2000 and Life. - Local and regional development with a SD and governance aim. - Effort to combine environmental and territorial issues with tourism. - ET at the **crossroads** of a variety of regulations, instruments and programmes. Coexistence of multiple competing institutions holding with sometimes conflicting objectives.
FRENCH SPATIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY	**Territorial policy approach: top-down** strategy based upon strong state intervention, industrial and urban focus (Design of regions, 1956; DATAR, 1963) **Environment:** first **connection between environmental and territorial policies** (National parks, 1960; **regional parks, 1967**; France Nature environment, 1968; Conservatoire du littoral, 1975; Ministry of the Environment (1971).	**Territorial policy approach:** first **decentralisation** laws and birth of new territorial tools called CPER (mid-1980s) **Environment**: civil society **mobilisation** against nuclear plants and empowerment of the green party (early 1970s); Loi sur la protection de la nature (1976) **End** of the **environmental-territorial nexus** in French policies **(1980s) => a-spatial** and **sector-oriented** policy focus.	**Territorial policy approach:** second wave of **decentralisation** with a focus on **sustainable development** => flourishing of new sub-national institutions aiming at fostering sustainability and participative democracy (EPCI, *pays*) => **coexistence of old and new institutions** (Barnier, Pasqua, Voynet and Vaillant laws) **Environment**: **rebuilding of the environment-territory nexus through sustainable development**. Plus specific sustainability laws for the countryside (LOA and LRDTR, 2005). Period with highly mediatic environmental events in France: Charte de l'environnement (2005) and Grenelle de l'environnement (2007).

IMPACT ON TOURISM AND IN TOURISM REGULATION		
Tourism context: a **taking off** phase **Top-down tourism policy approach:** the state assumes a key role in **regulation**, **legislation** and **execution** of large tourism projects => birth of the first public tourism institution (1910), **paid holidays** (1936), French trekking federation (1947), first tourism interventions and tourism task forces on coastal and mountain areas (1959) **Sustainable tourism and ecotourism seeds:** first gîtes (1950); social tourism measures (mid-1950s); Plan Racine (1963) and **large scale coastal projects**; **close down** of the Lascaux grotto (1963) **Regional parks:** as **exceptional** for their SD objectives, rural focus and governance. **Challenges:** - **institutional**: lack of maturity, clarity in the role of the each institution and weak coordination. - **environmental**: large scale projects start showing socio-economic and environmental limits. Tourism is seen in conflict with conservation and environmental sustainability.	**Tourism context:** France is the **first world destination** since the mid-1980s. **Tourism policy approach:** **environmental regulations** addressed to the tourism sector (1970s), **disengagement of the state in large-scale tourism** projects and growing role of **regions** and localities (1980s). **Environmental issues:** strong criticism to mass tourism projects; interruption of mass tourism task forces (1973); first greening of tourism. **Sustainable tourism and ecotourism seeds**: rural tourism as means for **fighting against rural decline** (Rural renovation policy, 1970s; Ecomuseums (1970s), Conservatoire du Littoral (1975), Piquard Report (1973); Loi montagne (1985) and Loi littoral (1986) **Challenges**: - **coordination** between the environmental variable and decentralisation, as well as with the European level. In the 1980s the central state becomes co-responsible of tourism development.	**Tourism context:** France is the leading world tourism destination. **Tourism policy approach:** strengthening of **decentralisation** and environmental aims, converging in the birth of **ST** and **ecotourism** **From sustainable tourism to ecotourism:** - Laws Pasqua, Voynet and SRU insufflate **sustainability** and **participative democracy** aims into tourism, thus fostered the flourishing of **new local** institutions with competences on tourism *i.e.* pays. - 1992 Tourism law organizes the role of the **different spatial scales** on tourism and creates **SRDT** (1992). Importance of the **regional** level. - **Proliferation** of territorial institutions and actions on ST and ecotourism, which are seen as practices taking **integral part in a broader sustainability strategy** for natural territories. Role of tourism in rural pluri-activity (Conference permanente du Tourisme rural, 2001) - **Relevant actions:** involvement of regional parks in the European Charter; Charte Nationale d'éthique du tourisme (2000), sustainable tourism publications (since 2001); MN3V (2003); Ecotourism Plan with Québec (2004); Comité permanent du DD du tourisme (2004); CPER with a specific tourism section (2007-13). - Focus on **networking**, **consortia** of different actors and projects to achieve sustainability; emergence of new associations and certifications. **Challenges**: - **Co-existence of old** and **new public institutions** with similar objectives, but with a different legitimacy. - Territorial **fragmentation** and **need for coordination** among **new** and **old territorial** institutions - **Governance**: coordination among the large amount of actors involved in ecotourism and territorial sustainability, as well as articulation among different policies, instruments and institutions at different spatial scales. - **Dismembered ecotourism supply** and need for articulation.
REGIONAL PARKS		
Regional Parks: innovative institutions for their sustainability aim, rural focus and governance, which largely differs from the top-down approach of that period based on urban, industrialization growth. They are also exceptional for their link between the environmental and territory. **Regional Parks and tourism:** rural tourism as a means for fighting against rural socio-economic and demographic decline and revitalizing the countryside.	**Regional Parks:** during the 1970s they faced difficulties related with their pilot period, notably due to their governance and budgetary restrictions. In the 1980s, they persisted as innovative territorial institutions in a context in which the environmental policy lost its territorial dimension and became essentially sector oriented. Parks also hold a role in research, and experimental conservation and environmental actions. **Regional parks and tourism:** key actors in the shift from coastal to rural tourism supported by the French state. This transformation went together with a renewed affection for natural areas observed among certain social groups.	**Regional Parks:** following Brundtland and Rio, they were explicitly re-baptized as sustainability territorial institutions, and more precisely as laboratories and founders of sustainability in France, allowing them a second renewed wind. However, with the proliferation of new local institutions also seeking sustainability, and indeed inspired in the regional park model, their innovative character was somehow trivialized. Strong competence the *pays*. **Regional parks and tourism:** as pillars for sustainable tourism and ecotourism but 'inside' their borders; weak institutional linkages with the other sub-national levels; stronger connections with the EU and twining with European and non-European countries.

Source: author

As is the case of almost all French politico-institutional frameworks, policies addressing nature protection, tourism and regional development underwent a similar trajectory throughout which sustainability and ecotourism goals emerged and evolved. Echoing the first and second wave of environmentalism, France transited from a top-down policy approach (1945-1975) towards power devolution to European and sub-national territories (since the mid-1980s). From the mid-1990s onwards, decentralisation was accompanied and reinforced with the inclusion of sustainability objectives in the policy agenda, throughout the creation of a large amount of novel sub-national institutions aiming at fostering sustainability and bottom-up governance dynamics. In this context, sustainability policies of the late 1990s restored the broken alliance between the environmental and the spatial policy interrupted during the post-fordist crisis period. So, with the advent of sustainability and deepening of decentralisation, the socio-institutional French framework became populated by a large number of local institutions that highly increased the complexity of the governance of territories. Additionally, sustainable development has periodically been relaunched by the central state level through the elaboration and actualisation of a national sustainable development strategy, in tune with the one of the EU, addressing different economic sectors, institutions and kind of territories, as well as with actions like the *Charte de l'Environnement* and the celebration of the *Grenelle de l'environnement.* The quantity of initiatives undertaken in this domain could conduct the reader to think about the existence in France of a coherent and transversal sustainability policy, yet it is still far from being the case. Besides weaknesses in the coordination and articulation among the numerous territorial institutions, further addressed in the next chapter, it seems important to take into consideration de lack of dynamism and political commitment in discussing key issues like climate change, renewable energies, the nuclear energy park and roads infrastructure. The *Grenelle de l'environnement* was indeed applauded by a large part of the population that saluted it as a veritable openness in environmental governance; the current economic crisis pushed the initiative to the background to the benefit of relaunching growth and consumption.

The features of the previously examined processes are very well reflected in the field of tourism, protected areas and in the current governance of ecotourism in France. When tourism took off, the French state deployed a top-down policy approach in which it assumed regulative, legislative and executive functions from which emerged the large-scale tourism projects in coastal and mountain areas, within a context of an embryonic tourism policy and institutions, thus still lacking the necessary institutional maturity and coordination. The revealing of the first environmental consequences of the mass tourism model confirmed by public studies (Plan Racine, 1963) and combated with the first pro-environmental public decisions (closing down of Lacaux grottos, 1963), sew the first green seeds characterizing the following period. Thus during the first wave of environmentalism, the state started disengaging from the execution of large-scale projects transferring responsibilities to the regional level, measure confirmed in the 1992 tourism law creating regional tourism plans. As to rural tourism

and sustainability, the focus of the 1960s was a view of tourism as a means for fighting against rural decline, supported by a renewed tourism demand rediscovering natural areas. The first environmental concerns of that period combined with an incipient green tourism demand were expressed in the 1990s in terms of sustainable tourism and from the year 2000 as ecotourism. This transition was largely affected by major territorial reconfiguration leading to new interplays among spatial scales, resulting from the advancement of a pluri-dimensional European spatial policy stimulating participation at the local level and governance by shared parties, as well as from the promulgation of certain key laws (Pasqua, Voynet, SRU) fostering decentralisation, participative democracy and sustainability aims into the field of tourism.

As a result, the inherent institutional complexity of the tourism sector increased with the birth of new territorial institutions also concerned with tourism, notably in rural and natural areas. One important point in this respect is the new perspective from which tourism is approached: from now on it is seen as an integral part of a broader territorial sustainability strategy. Confronting the complexity of this public territorial plexus governing ecotourism destinations with the composite structure of the French ecotourism actor field, leads us to conclude on the necessity to articulate policies, institutions and instruments. In this respect, one main limit of the French ecotourism supply is its dismembered governance, despite the existing voluntary consortia and networks organizing the sector. For the case of ecotourism, I believe that this situation is to a large extent related with the co-existence of 'old' and 'new' public and private institutions hosting similar objectives but with different levels of legitimacy, situation pretty well observed in the governance of regional parks. What I argue here is that the different evoked historical periods engendered different tourist places, tourism services networks and tourism institutions sometimes in contradiction, competition or complementary, thus highly dependent on sustainable governance interactions.

Protected areas, and more precisely regional parks, are very interesting starting grounds for a reflection on multi-level governance for sustainability, based upon the normative standpoint arguing on the indissolubility of the nexus between human beings, societies and natural environments. After more than forty years of existence, the role and challenges of regional parks have considerably evolved. Alike other territorial institutions, regional parks are nowadays facing multiple contradictions mainly related with the emergence of new sub-national institutional forms that redefine the governance of territories and thus challenge their sustainability. Whereas regional parks were seen with a great pride as pioneer effort in terms of decentralisation and sustainability within the framework of the French policy system, current reality reveals a complicated governance moment for these protected areas. Further explored in the next chapter, regional parks are today fractioned by sub-national frontiers that a few years ago did not exist, and that were created during the second wave of environmentalism as a means for achieving sustainability. I am interested in the role and pertinence of

regional parks in this new governance context, characterised by the compilation of new territorial institutions pursuing similar sustainability objectives and employing similar governance features. More precisely, the question here is how the governance of regional parks responds and adapts to this new reality, and which are the sustainability and governance effects of the new interplays created by the novel spatial scales, as well as with the already existing global, European, national and regional. Bearing these complexities and challenges in mind, in the next chapter I draw attention to the relationship between ecotourism and territorial sustainability: how and to what extent does ecotourism in regional parks contribute to a more sustainable governance of French territories? Which is the capacity of these areas hosting ecotourism practices to underpin sustainability towards higher scales? Which are their distinctiveness, limits and main challenges? Which is the role of the different involved actors?

Summarizing, one main objective of this dissertation is to examine the process through which a protected area is governed and, more precisely, to reflect on the societal-ecological dialectics in the context of territories hosting fragile ecosystems needing protection, and thus depending on a particular sustainable governance. Assuming that in these territories the society-nature relationship is special or different, I largely base my analyses on ecotourism for its contribution to sustainability of territories, and for its capacity to congregate individuals and social groups in special affection with nature. So, after examining the main features of the multi-level system in which the Morvan is embedded, it is worth considering which is the outcome of the interplays among the different scales: which is the territorial effect of this multi-scalar apparatus and to what extent this system of regulation does or does not crystallise more sustainable protected areas? Simultaneously, it will be interesting to observe how local actors take action in this context and how they interplay with different spatial scales in different historical moments. These analyses should also provide important insights for nourishing the broader debate on the governance of protected areas, notably in the role, difficulties and embeddedness of regional parks in a broader system of governance. One major issue in this respect will be the reflection on the role the institution 'regional parks' in the broad conservation network.

Chapter VI – Territorial sustainability and ecotourism in the Morvan in a multi-level governance context

1. INTRODUCTION

The *parc naturel régional du Morvan* is much more than a protected area. The Morvan is a massif or a compact granitic mountain covered by dark green forests and completely surrounded by a flat and regular plane. The Morvan is a biophysical entity containing rich nature and a large variety of ecosystems, flora and fauna. It is also a territory that has witnessed important moments of the French history and, for that reason, stores many vestiges of the civilizations that have passed through it. The Morvan is today the home of a heterogeneous population, ranging from traditional local farmers and forestry workers, to foreigner newcomers arrived a few years ago for working on tourism or after retirement. From a socio-economic perspective, the Morvan is considered a deprived area, notably because of the low revenues of its inhabitants, demographic decline trends and the quality of the land. The Morvan's relief, hedged farmlands and soils are incompatible with intensive agriculture techniques, so this territory has being able to preserve its ecosystems relatively free of pollutions. Even so, this does not mean that the Morvan is free of human intervention. The presence of a rich cultural heritage shows the opposite. As is discussed in this chapter, the Morvan has been physically modelled by the needs and lifestyles of its many inhabitants. For its part, the character and personality of the Morvan people is marked by the rudeness of the local climate, isolation and physical conditions. One interesting element of the dialectics between men and nature observed in this territory is its connection with ecotourism.

From a politico-administrative perspective, the Morvan is a territory located in the middle of Burgundy and thus sub-divided by its four departments. In 1970, the ecological and socio-economic fragility of this territory led to its nomination as a protected area. Since then, the Morvan is a regional park, whose technical team and political board act as guardians of its socio-ecological sustainability. Throughout the years, the evolution of the multi-level system of governance examined in chapter five has produced a deep effect on this territory. The implementation of international actions, European directives and programmes, as well as French

laws and policies, have impacted the Morvan and the park, and thus transformed its governance. The creation of the Morvan park resulted from the green philosophy of the first wave of environmentalism pushing the creation of protected areas in France. From the 1990s onwards, sustainability regulation derived from the second wave of environmentalism produced a progressive fragmentation of the Morvan into numerous politico-administrative territories that were basically created to foster governance by shared parties in the view of more sustainability. In parallel, the growing environmental consciousness that led in the world towards a growing demand for ecotourism and nature based activities transformed the Morvan into a charming place and ecotourism destination. Over the last few years, the Morvan has attracted visitors and new permanent residents opting to live in an unpolluted natural area and at a much lower speed compared to the rhythm of big cities.

In this chapter, I argue that the ensemble of politico-administrative territories gives rise to a very complex mosaic whose pieces still lack the necessary articulation and collaboration needed to guarantee sustainability. However, despite this institutional fragmentation, and in some cases seeking counterbalancing inconsistencies produced by this division, the rich social tissue and growing collective action carried out by individuals and civil society groups living in this territory might act as a decisive force signalling and stopping unsustainable territorial paths, as well as opening the door to the practice of more sustainable socio-economic activities, as it can be the case of ecotourism.

After this introduction this chapter is organized in eleven main sections. Section two introduces the Morvan. Section three examines the Morvan from a historical perspective, going from its first human settlements to current times, period in which the creation of the park is an important landmark. Section four, focused on the contemporary Morvan, provides a comprehensive picture of this massif, including ecological, social and economic elements. Section five shifts the focus to tourism and ecotourism. Section six deepens the analysis of the Morvan from an ecotourism perspective, and discusses the nature of the type of ecotourism practiced and offered in the massif. Always from an ecotourism perspective, section seven moves to governance, and examines the main features and role of the actors carrying out action in the territory under study. Section eight prolongs the analysis of governance, but this time the focus is the dynamics of articulation, the interplays and the contradictions among the different spatial scales. Section nine prolongs the ecotourism focus and integrates the content of the previous sections with the discussion about fostering socio-institutional change in the Morvan, through the examination of

nine micro-cases inside the Morvan. The chapter ends with a conclusion on the main factors defining the distinctiveness of the Morvan as a system of governance, paying special attention to the role of ecotourism for sustainability.

FIGURE 20: OUTLINE CHAPTER SIX
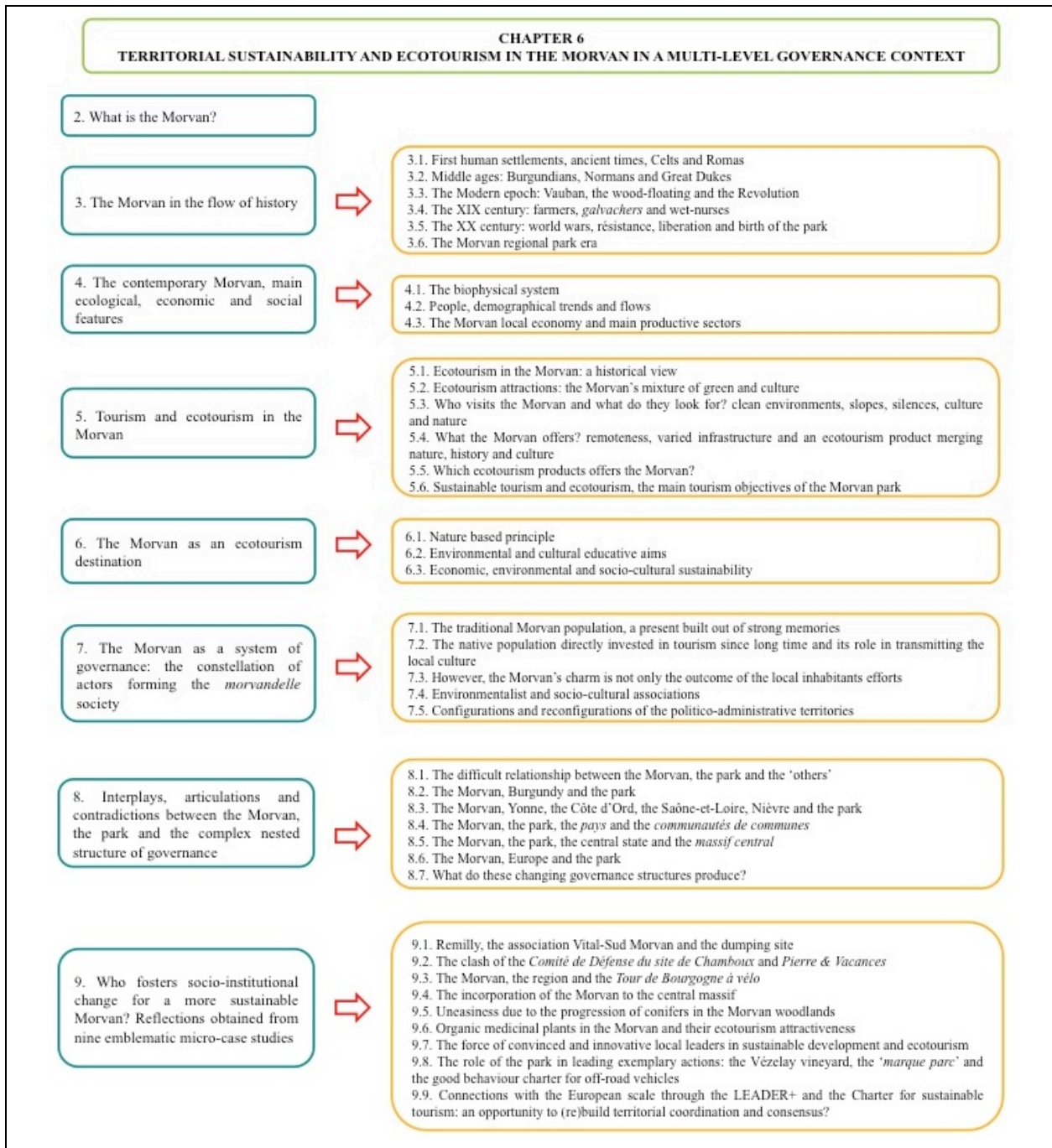
2. WHAT IS THE MORVAN?

The Morvan massif, located in the middle of Burgundy at 250 km south from Paris, is a small rural mountain encompassing an area of 513.400 ha that borders the polygon that links the cities Château-Chinon, Autun, Saulieu, Avallon and Lormes (see map 6). Historically, Burgundy and the Morvan have been identified as a crossroads that interconnects various civilisations. The richness of Greek, Celt and Roman vestiges are the main witnesses to the importance of commercial and cultural exchanges that have occurred in this area since 1800 BC. Given its altitude and granite soil composition, the Morvan has traditionally been regarded as a kind of geologic intromission, contrasting greatly with the surrounding flat areas and sedimentary lands. The Morvan is characterized by the presence of ravines, lakes and rivers inhabited by a diverse flora and fauna, as well as by the presence of woodlands in high zones and wetlands in valleys. Additionally, rainy weather, low temperatures and rather infertile soils for agriculture have contributed to define the regional economy, the idiosyncrasy of its inhabitants and the socio-institutional profile of the territory. In short, the Morvan is a very particular territory and quite different from the rest of Burgundy in its biophysical characteristics, socio-cultural features and its system of governance, explaining why the Morvan is the unique protected area of the region.

PHOTOS 1 AND 2: TWO VIEWS OF THE MORVAN

Source: author (2006)

This reflection brings us up to recent landscape evolutions engendering and redefining major sustainability challenges faced by this territory, and that simultaneously mirror broader socio-economic transformations undergone by European countries. Among these changes, we can mention the decline of agriculture, increasing density of woodlands and attack of conifers, the

building of barrages and other heavy infrastructures over fragile ecosystems and unsustainable tourism. On the other hand, this reflection is also an invitation to rethink the relationship between societies and the natural environment in terms of opportunities for sustainability that a more respectful, harmonic and innovative relationship might offer. And in this respect the Morvan territory, characterised by a rich biodiversity and abundant good quality of its natural resources, is an interesting territory for examining the context in which more sustainable practices might appear in a certain territory, as is the case of ecotourism, organic agriculture, experimental ecological projects, alternative sources of energy, among others. This is certainly a major subject providing insights on the effect that new sustainable forms of production might have on the sustainability of territories and their governance.

From a politico-administrative viewpoint, the Morvan's surface extends over the four Burgundy departments, with Nièvre the largest within the total surface. The Morvan brings together around 125 communes who share similar geo-climatic conditions and farming practices, with extensive agriculture, forestry and ecotourism the main economic activities. Despite the fact that the Morvan is located in the centre of Burgundy, the distances that separate it from the main regional and departmental administrative centres is undeniable. The Morvan is located 70 km east from Dijon and relatively far away from the other urban epicentres. The precarious network of roads and public transport system make this distance greater.

Geographical, socio-cultural and politico-institutional variables cannot be separated while analysing the Morvan life story. Its history has been shaped by an ambivalent image, where a negative vision coexists with a mythical image of this territory. While the negative vision is related to its tough climate, the soils' aridity and the remoteness imposed by altitude, the positive one is associated with the richness of its ecosystems, the history and pride of its inhabitants in the fact that the Morvan constitutes an important bastion of the French Resistance, the native land of connoted personalities such as Vauban and the political ground of François Mitterrand. The feedback between both visions, observed in public actors and civil society members in different historical periods, has alternately produced moments in which optimistic discourse predominate, together with more negative phases. Today, for instance, an environmental wave that is repopulating green territories and attracting more environmentally responsible tourists has created a more positive perception of this place. Acknowledging the importance of history and historical landmarks in shaping the distinctiveness of territories and so of their system of governance, below I examine major historical considerations connected to the Morvan and Burgundy.

3.   THE MORVAN IN THE FLOW OF HISTORY

3.1. First human settlements, ancient times, Celts and Romans

Even if there exist evidences of human presence in the Azé (Saône-et-Loire) and in the Arcy-sur-Cure (Yonne) caves, dating back to the Palaeolithic era, it looks to be that the Morvan has only been inhabited since the end of the Neolithic (roughly 2.000 BC). Climate during this epoch turned continental and temperate, thus shaped the morphology of the regional landscapes, allowed the development of agriculture and domestic animal breeding, and called for the building of the first wooden settlements in the Settons and Corancy areas. However, due to the poverty of bronze vestiges found in the region, experts presume that the Morvan might had later been abandoned from 2.000 BC and 200 BC (Sirugue *et al.* 2006[340]), only conserving a *carrefour* function. In fact, all along the Bronze Age, Burgundy benefited from an image of crossroads and meeting point for varied commercial and cultural exchanges, which persists until today.

One of the most important events in the Morvan's history has been the discovery in 1954 AC of an exceptionally rich funeral grave at Chatillonais. The grave contained the body of a young woman who seemed to be a priestess or a warrior, together with a wonderful collection of sumptuous objects, among which the Vix Vase, the largest decorative Greek vessel ever found. According to the literature on the topic, the presence of the Vix Vase reveals the power and wealth of this region connecting the exchanges between oriental Europe, the Mediterranean and the British Islands. Additionally, researches on ancient settlements have shown several common characteristics and links between the antique communities that inhabited central Europe. One major feature of all of them is the construction of *oppida* or fortified cities on the top of high hills with defensive objectives, as it is the case of Bibracte and Alésia, respectively founded by Aedui and Mandubiens. Undoubtedly, Bicracte, built in the southern Morvan on the top of the *mont* Beuvray, is the most famous *oppidum* and incarnates the debut of urbanisation in Burgundy.

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[340] The reference Sirugue *et al.* (2006) stands for a collective research project developed since 2000 by a team of experts under the direction of M. Sirugue and engaged by the political board of the PNRM. The project, in constant amelioration, was uploaded in 2006 to http://www.patrimoinedumorvan.org/ and diffused under a CD support.

MAP 7: GAULISH TRIBES IN EUROPE

Sources: http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Peuples_gaulois.jpg and Bazin (1998 p. 12)

PHOTO 3: AEDUI COINS

PHOTO 4: THE VIX VASE
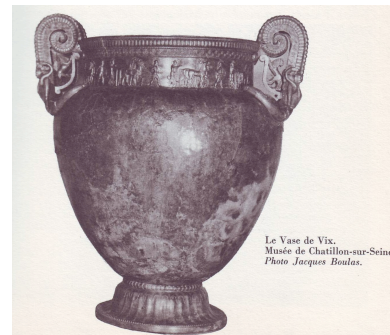
Sources: Sirugue *et al.* (2006) and Bullier et al. (1963 p. 81)

MAP 8: GAULISH TRIBES IN BURGUNDY

Sources: Bazin (1998 p. 12)

Bibracte was the capital of Aedui, one of the Celtic tribes inhabiting the region, notably the zone of the actual Nièvre and the Saône-et-Loire, as well as the south of Yonne and the south of the Côte d'Or until Alésia. In the 60 BC the Celts spread themselves into sixty tribes, all of them organised under an *oppidum* and connected by Druidism. As to Aedui, they maintained a long peaceful alliance with the Romans, explaining the roman support given to this Celtic tribe in the year 58 BC in a confrontation with Helvetia. Nonetheless, despite an alliance of almost one century, in 52 BC, all Celtic tribes, including Aedui, unified under the leadership of Vercingétorix and created a coalition against Roman domination. Even if the Celts vanquished in Georgovia, the same year Cesar besieged and defeated Vercingétorix and his soldiers in Alésia, giving way to a prosperous period of Roman hegemony that lasted until the V century AC. After his victory in Alésia, during the winter of the 52 and 51, Cesar occupied Bibracte and finished his *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*.

PHOTO 5: BIBRACTE   **PHOTO 6: MOSAIC CHAGNIAT**

Source: author (2006) and Sirugue *et al.* (2006)

MAP 9: BURGONDIE IN THE V CENTURY

Source: Bazin (1998 p. 14)

However, for strategic and commercial motives, Romans abandoned most ancient *oppida* and moved their capital 20 km. east, founding in the 15 BC the new city of Augustodunum (Autun), which became the greatest and most prestigious Gallo-Roman city and symbol of the nascent Gallo-Roman culture. Simultaneously, a prosperous economic period began, based upon the exploitation of mineral and forestry resources, together with the construction of a large network of roads required for guaranteeing communication between large and distant farmlands. Among others, luxurious villas decorated with mosaics (*i.e.* Chagniat at Sain-Germain-des Champs), the construction of the first spa at Saint-Honoré-les-Bains and the Salty Fountains at a locality near Vézelay demonstrate this prosperity (Sirugue *et al.* 2006).

3.2. Middle Ages: Burgundians, Normans and Great Dukes

Around the year 259 Burgundy suffered the first Barbarian invasions and pillages, provoking a substantial population decline in the Morvan. As far as barbarian devastations multiplied during the V century, the senate of Lyon, province to which the Morvan was annexed, asked the Burgundians to occupy the region for combating the invaders. The Burgundians were a nomad tribe coming from the Baltic Sea coast and later settled from the Jura to the North Alps. The Burgundians adapted fairly well to the Roman culture and made important efforts to create a new social order in the region, beginning by baptizing it with a new name. As to the word Morvan, even if there still exist many doubts about its origins and meaning, it seems that it was during this period when it was mentioned for the first time. While for a few historians, Morvan might be related with the monk Saint Eptade, who built a hermitage in the middle of a forest called *deserta morvini* (Séverin, 1995), others believe in its Celtic origins and meaning "black mountain".

Contrasting with the previous peaceful period, Burgundy from the VI century onwards suffered from wars, invasions and successions that deeply transformed the aspect of this region. On the one hand, aristocrats owned the largest farmlands and engaged workers for clearing woodlands in favour of larger cultivation areas. On the other hand, the Christian clergy became a key actor in organising society and providing assistance to refugees in a context of social disorder and incertitude. This explains the prominence of the Cluny Monastery, which later became the centre of Christianity for long years, and the fact that by the end of the VIII century all Gaulish inhabitants were Christians. As to offensives and wars, following various Arab invasions during the VIII century, causing the destruction of Autun, Saulieu, Ouroux-en-Morvan, Normans arrived to Burgundy and colonized the existing royal *pagi*. Nevertheless, in 911 AC, Count and Duke Richard the Justiciar of Autun defeated the Normans and succeeded in unifying most of the

Norman *pagi* of Burgundy, and consequently founded a Duchy that lasted until 1477. From the XII onwards, cities multiplied and evolved due to the development of the craft industries and commerce. The first town in the Morvan that obtained a communal charter was Vézelay, and later in 1199 Saulieu, Château-Chinon and Lormes, among others (Sirugue *et al.* 2006).

MAP 10: THE *PAGI* OF BURGUNDY IN THE IX CENTURY

The following centuries yet were certainly not an easy epoch for the Morvan, hit by the plagues and deserted by its inhabitants engaged in the Crusades and in the Hundred Years' war. The death of Duke Philippe de Rouvers of Burgundy in 1361 without leaving a successor reseeded the chaos in the region, therefore King John the Good of France took possession of the Duchy and gave it to his son Philip the Bold. With the marriage between Philip the Bold and Margaret III Countess of Flanders, the richest European heir, Philip the Bold became Duke of Burgundy, Count of Artois, Charolaise and Flanders, and Count Palatine of Burgundy, founding thus the Burgundian branch of the House of Valois and inaugurating their golden era, reflected in the territorial extension of

the Duchy, and its cultural and economic influence. The Duchy of Burgundy, roughly matching with the territory of the Modern Burgundy, after being governed by a succession of dukes, it lost control with the death of John the Fearless, great-grandson and successor of Philip the Bold as Duke of Burgundy from 1404 to 1419. With John the Fearless, Burgundy expanded its power, therefore started being regarded with hostility by the French crown. Therefore, despite these efforts, Philip the Good and Charles the Bold, the last two Dukes, failed in maintaining the independence of Burgundy and King Louis XI of France declared the extinction of the Duchy and annexed Burgundy to the kingdom of France in 1477.

MAP 11: THE HOUSE OF VALOIS-BURGUNDY DURING THE PERIOD 1465-1477

Sources: http://warandgame.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/karte_haus_burgund_4_en.png

Sources: Bazin (1998 pp. 25)

3.3. The modern epoch: Vauban, the wood-floating industry and the Revolution

Religious disputes between Catholics and Protestants, famines, difficult weather conditions and the reappearance of the plague reveal the toughness of the period going from Burgundy's annexation to the Kingdom of France until the eighteenth century. During these years, a succession of events transformed the local economy of the region, as well as the shape of the Morvan's landscapes. The main economic activities were the production of wine, the breeding of a new bovine race called charolais, and the very intensive exploitation of forests, until then only used for domestic purposes. From the mid-fifteenth century onwards, the exploitation of the Morvan's forestlands increased in a dramatic way. It thus transformed the appearance of the Morvan, the life of its inhabitants and so the relationship between the Morvan people and their forest. The growth of Paris led to new needs, notably to an increasing demand for heating

combustible, which was to a great extent satisfied with a new Wood-Floating Industry based upon the transportation of trunks by the flows of the Yonne, Cure and the numerous Morvan's streams. As far as this industry gained more importance, it revealed necessary to control the course of rivers and wood stock storages. For this purpose, wood-floating industrials constructed several artificial lakes (*i.e.* the Settons lake in 1858 is the first one) in order to control with more accuracy the wood production, stock and delivery, introducing an important transformation in the biophysical system of the region. On the other hand, the development of this industry, which reached its peak during the eighteenth century, also influenced the socio-cultural profile of the Morvan population. The omnipresence and economic weight of the wood floating reached every person living in the Morvan. Local farmers, the most implicated ones, became the labour force in charge of cutting, transporting and piling up the wood; they were also responsible for cleaning and maintaining the watercourses (Sirugue *et al.* 2006).

PHOTO 7: BAZOCHES CASTLE **PHOTO 8: WOOD FLOATING**

Sources: http://www.nievre.pref.gouv.fr/images/Bazoches_voeux2006.jpg and Sirugue *et al.* (2006)

Another event from this period is the birth in 1633 of Sébastian le Prestre, Seigneur de Vauban, at Saint-Léger-de Foucheret (Yonne). His origins, noble marriage and many royal gratifications allowed him to acquire important land extensions and properties in the Morvan, such as the Bazoches Castle and more than four hundred hectares of woodlands (Sirugue *et al.* 2006). Vauban, Marshal of France, was the most important military engineer of that time, renowned for his fortifications, military strategy and writings on forestry, religion and monetary policy. In 1686 he worked on turning navigable certain stretches of the Yonne, the Cure and the Cousin rivers

and in his *Traité sur la culture des forêts* he discussed the vicissitudes of the wood floating industry, denouncing the forest's transformations due to the replacement of tall trees for coppice.

TABLE 40: MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF THE MORVAN

- *First human settlements, ancient times Celts and Romans*
- First human evidences in the caves of the Loire and Yonne valley (8.000 BC)
- Development of agriculture and breeding. First colonies in the Morvan (4.000 B.C.)
- Burgundy consolidates its position as a crossroads of civilizations (1.800 B.C.-750 B.C.)
- Foundation of Bibracte (120 BC)
- Celtic rebellion led by Vercingétorix; Alésia battle (52 A.C)
- Foundation of Augustodunum (Autun; 15B.C.)
- Roman domination (until the V A.C)
- Barbarian invasions (259 A.C.– V century)

- *Middle Ages: Burgundians, Normans and Great Dukes*
- Burgunds settle in the region to combat barbarians (V century)
- Beginning of a turbulent period: wars, invasions and successions (VI century)
- Normans invasions, foundation of *pagus* (VI century)
- Defeat of the Normans by Richard the Justiciar (911 A.C)
- Death of the Burgundy Duke Philippe de Rouvers; political chaos, plagues and military confrontations (1361 A.C.)
- John de Good gave the Burgundy Duchy to Philip the Bold, who married Margaret of Flanders: birth to the Valois Dukes Period (1363 A.C.)
- Louis XI annexed Burgundy to the kingdom of France (1477 A.C.)

- *The modern epoch: Vauban, the wood-floating industry and the Revolution*
- Beginning of the wood-floating industry; construction of several artificial lakes (since the mid-1400 and with a peak during the eighteenth century)
- Revolution: abolition of *provinces* and creation of *départments*. The Morvan was divided by four departments (1789)

- *The XIX century: agriculture, galvachers and wet-nurses*
- Restoration (1814-1830)
- Demographic decline
- Boom of the charcoal industry and end of the wood-floating industry.
- Wet-nurses and *galvachers*

- *The twentieth century: World Wars, Resistance, Liberation and birth of the Morvan Park*
- WWI and WWII (German occupation from 1940 to1944)
- Discovery of the Vix Vase (1954)
- François Miterrand: Château Chinon mayor (1959-1981), Nièvre senator (1959-1962), Nièvre deputy (1962-1981), President of the *Conseil Général* of Nièvre (1964-1981)
- Birth of the Morvan Park (1970)
- The Burgundy region becomes a sub-national state level with democratically elected councillors (1986)
- Birth of the *pays* (from 2000 onwards).
- Ecotourism becomes a lighthouse economic activity in the Morvan (2002)
- The Morvan joins up the *massif central* (2005)
- Candidacy of the Morvan for the European Sustainable Tourism Charter (approval expected for 2009…)

Source: author

According to the Morvan priest and historian Baudiau (cited in Sirugue *et al.* 2006), the 1788-9 winter was very difficult for the Morvan, as expressed in the increasing social discontentment announcing the revolution. The *Cahiers de doléances, plaintes et remontrances* of this territory

collect the main demands of the rural society regarding fiscal and job equity, suppression of noble rights, and poverty and abuses hitting this region. After the abolition of the Ancient Regime, the consequently social reorganization did not favour all social groups, thus peasants and disfavoured social groups quickly realised that the ultimate consequences were not totally favourable for them, and so felt disenchanted. A similar reaction was registered after peasants gave an unconditional support to Napoleon's project and then realised that did not bring deep socio-economic improvements. Nonetheless, from a political viewpoint, the 1789 Revolution entailed a very crucial transformation for the Morvan. The new post-revolution political order, abolishing the *Ancien Régime's* Provinces and creating a new territorial organization built upon *départements*, "rubbed out" the Burgundy Province and divided its surface into four new *départements* that exist until today. Since the Morvan is located in the middle of Burgundy, this decision entailed the fragmentation of the Massif by four new dividing lines.

3.4. The XIX century: farmers, *galvachers* and wet-nurses

The century following the revolution was rather an unstable period characterized by several socio-political and economic disturbances. The Morvan in the early 1800s experienced an important population growth, due to improvements in life conditions, a positive balance between births and deaths, and also the arrival of Parisian children from the public social assistance hosted by local families. In 1840 the Morvan had 120.000 inhabitants, of which 87% lived in small rural towns (Sirugue *et al.,* 2006). This demographic context forced farmers to increase productivity, either through extending their cultivation surfaces, renting their land, or by means of developing complementary economic activities related with the wood-floating and craft industries, vegetable and nature recollection, *galvache* and wet-nursing. At this time, almost 90% of the Morvan population were farmers, owning a small piece of rural land, called *ouches,* oriented to satisfy household needs. In fact, in the Morvan society coexisted smallholders with big landowners and nobles enjoying the benefits of the wood-floating and employing a group of precarious dependent workers. These social differences provoked the revolts and forestry fires that occurred from 1840 on, and also explain the unconditional support which the Morvan population gave to Napoleon III, elected president in 1848 with an 80% of the Morvan's suffrages.

The second half of the nineteenth century was also characterized by the development of the iron and steel industry, and the charcoal industry. While iron and steal had a major national importance due to its key role in the implementation of the system of railroads, charcoal had a special relevance for the Morvan. The exploitation of this mineral in France resulted in the

complete replacement of wood for charcoal as a heating supply, and so ended with more than three centuries of wood-floating. To this transformation followed the development of two new seasonal activities, the *galvache* and the wet-nursing, which became fundamental revenue complements. *Galvachers* were experts on ox-drawn cart transportation, seasonally bringing wood, salt, Burgundy wine, iron and seeds, among others, to various neighbouring regions during the period that goes from May to December (see Vieillard-Pasquelin, 1997). For their part, wet-nurses chose between leaving the Morvan for going feeding babies in Paris, or to welcome Parisian babies in their houses. This activity developed from the mid-1800s to WWI, with a peak during the Second Empire when 52% of the wet-nurses working in Paris came from the Morvan. Sirugue *et al.* (2006) mention that in 1876 a children agency located in Château-Chinon arranged the hosting of near 3.000 children per year and that during the nineteenth century the Morvan welcomed about 47.0000 children from the social assistance program. This activity undoubtedly had deep consequences for the Morvan inhabitants. On the one hand, wet-nursing provided complementary sources of income for disfavoured families allowing, *e.g.* women to invest in land. On the other, the contact with Paris and the possibility of earning a salary similar to that of the *galvachers* contributed to the process of women emancipation (see Morlay, 1998).

Echoing a broader national tendency, rural exodus from the Morvan during the second half of the nineteenth century seemed fairly dramatic. Between 1851 and 1911, the higher zone of the Morvan lost ten thousands of its inhabitants, passing from 45.854 to 34.923 (Sirugue *et al.,* 2006). Among the reasons of this decline, we can mention the general crisis in agriculture due to its modernisation, the end of the wood-floating industry, the poverty of the Morvan soils and their incapacity to provide the necessary food for its inhabitants, the end of seasonal migrations related with agriculture as a consequence of the mechanisation of agriculture, and the development of other means of transport. The rural exodus initiated in the mid-1800 is accentuated with WWI and WWII and persisted all along the twentieth century.

3.5. The twentieth century: world wars, resistance, liberation and birth of the park

Already started in previous decades, the twentieth century is characterised by the development of new communication axes, roads and railroads, connecting the Morvan with the Burgundy region. We assist to the renaissance of the ancient system of roads, dating back to the Gallo-Roman period but abandoned and spoiled during Middle Ages. The Morvan's growing isolation motivated Deputy André-Marie Dupin of Nièvre to launch a road reconstruction plan from the

1880s onwards[341] (Sirugue *et al.,* 2006). Simultaneously, two new regional railroads were born, the lines Dijon-Nevers (1867) and Avallon-Autun (1870). However, as map 13 shows, these lines circumscribed the massif and only connected peripheral towns. It was necessarily to wait until the twentieth century for the implementation of two new lines crossing the massif, popularly known by the local people as *'les tacots' ("qui frappe, qui cogne")* to signal their slowness and noise. The first line connected Corbigny with Saulieu (1901) and the second one Autun with Château-Chinon. For Sirugue *et al*. (2006) despite their noise, slowness and smoke, *tacots* were the best means for traversing the Morvan until 1930, date in which trucks and buses replaced them.

MAP 13: RAILDROADS IN THE EARLY 1900s
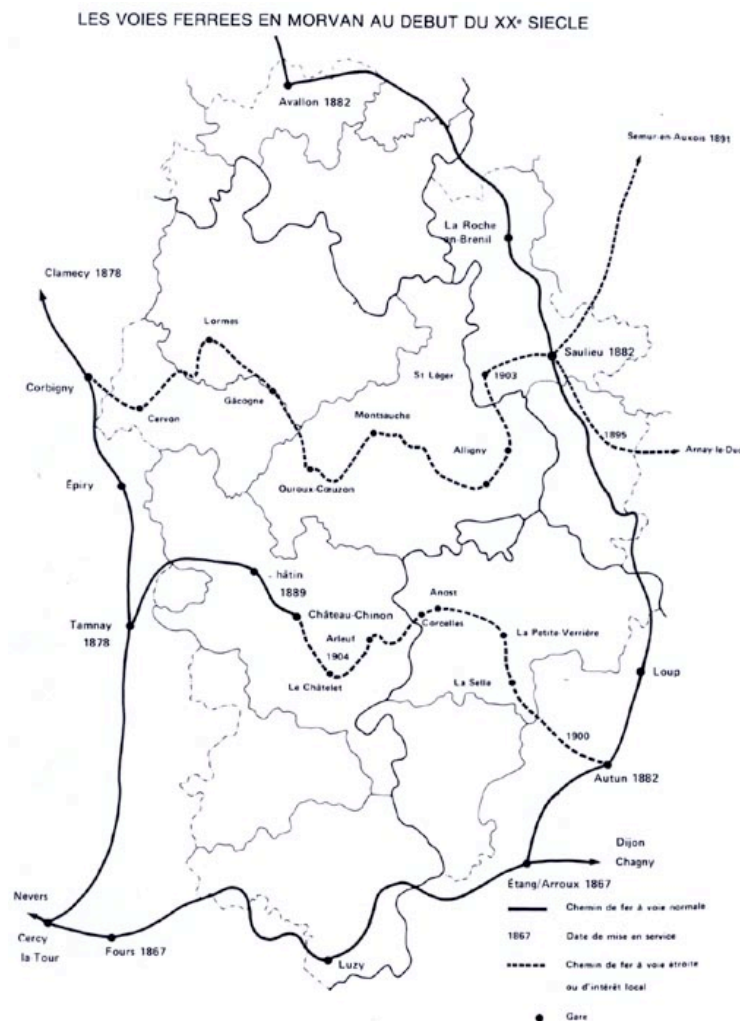
Source: Sirugue *et al.* (2006)

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[341] The following routes were constructed: the national axis Dijon-Nevers crossing the Morvan through Saulieu, Montsauche, Gâcogne, Cervon and Corbigny (1838); the departmental roads connecting Château-Chinon with Montsauche (1846) and Château Chinon with Lormes (Sirugue *et al.,* 2006).

The development of infrastructures also concerned the dense hydrological network of the massif, responsible for feeding the rivers Loire and Seine. A dramatic rise in water level inundated Paris in the early 1910 and because of the need to guarantee a constant supply of potable water to Paris, the state ordered the construction of big dams in Burgundy and Champagne-Ardennes, leading towards the construction of the Chaumeçon, Saint-Agnan, Crescent, Pannecière and Chamboux lakes.
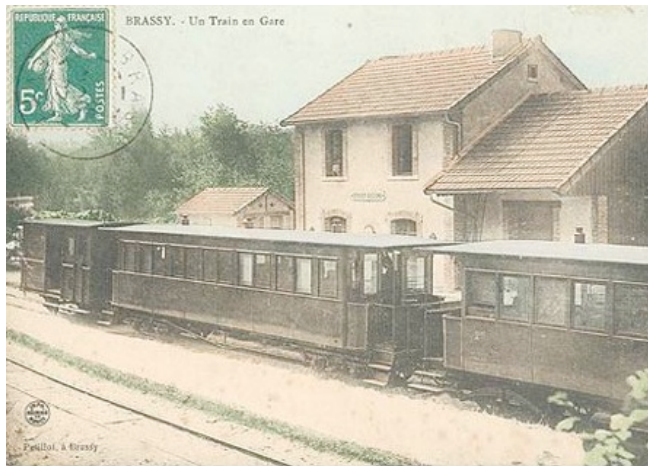
MAP 13: RAILDROADS IN THE EARLY 1900s **PHOTO 9: "LES TACOTS" AND THE SETTONS LAKE DAM**

Source: Sirugue *et al.* (2006) in http://www.patrimoinedumorvan.org

At the same rhythm that infrastructure was transforming the Morvan, agriculture and the main local economic activities underwent deep changes. The end of WWII brought an almost complete decline of traditional agriculture, and led to breeding farm practices and a consequent doubling of grazing lands between 1892 and 1929. Yet, with the 1930s crisis, prices fell animals stocks accumulated and rural migration accentuated. A few years later, with the Popular Front leading the country new reforms favouring unionization and improvement of labour conditions were promulgated. Among many others, the 1936 law on paid holidays symbolically marked the birth of mass tourism in France. The photos below show how tourism development also involved places like the Settons, Vézelay, Avallon, Saulieu and Autun. The detonation of WWII interrupted this first tourism élan, and transformed the Morvan into a battlefield and refuge for the French resistance. In 1940 the German army overran the entire region, and instituted for the following years a system of control and repression. Nonetheless, this could not prevent the *maquis* from benefiting from social and biophysical conditions in the region facilitating a silent

resistance organisation. The bio-geographical characteristics of the massif, combining altitude, forests and steep valleys, proved to how complicated the territory was to cross; consequently its dispersed habitat, isolated farms and availability of food offered an ideal refuge for the *maquis*. Moreover, the Morvan's administrative situation, straddling four departments, hindered military coordination, mainly concentrated in peripheral towns. Finally, the Morvan's simultaneous proximity/distance relationship with Paris converted this territory in an ideal safe haven to host refugees (Sirugue *et al.,* 2006). However, this was not enough to impede the massacres of thousands people and the violent destructions of Planchez, Montsauche and Dun-les-Places during the Liberation, which left a distressful long-lasting mark in the memory of a complete generation.

PHOTO 10: THE EARLY YEARS OF TOURISM IN THE MORVAN: TOURIST INFORMATION, THE *SAINT HONORÉ LES BAINS SPA* AND THE *HOTEL MÉNÈDÉ À MÉNESSAIRE*
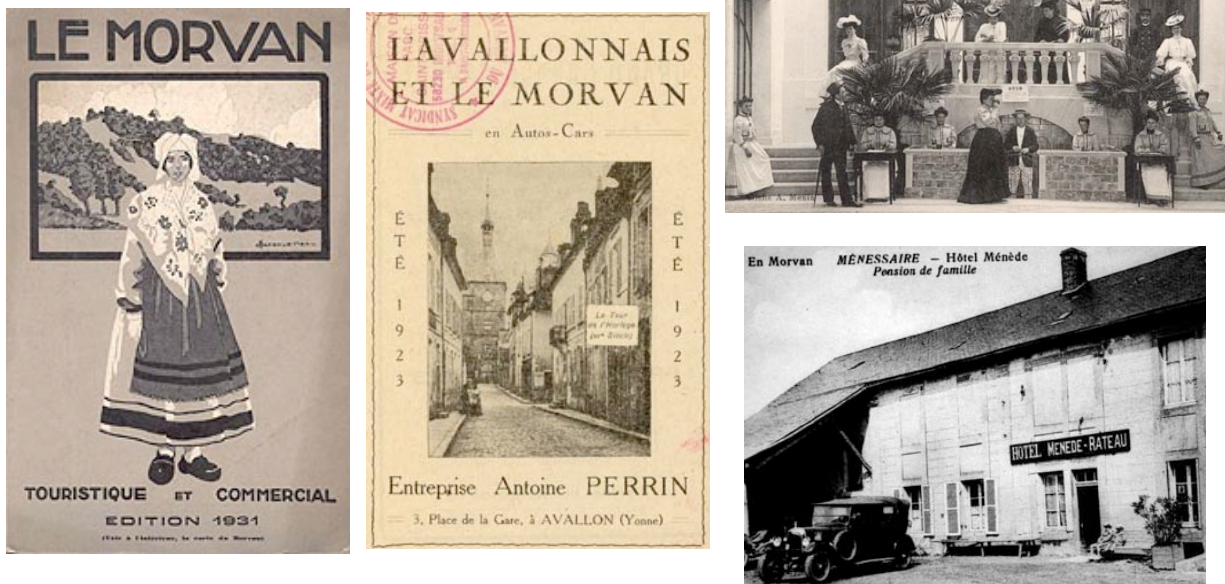
Source: Sirugue *et al.* (2006)

The period after WWII confirmed the main socio-economic and demographic trends of the previous years. From the 1950s onwards, charolais breeding generalises and pasturages replace cultivated areas. As to demographic movements, rural decline in Morvan exacerbates, population ages and traditional rural towns are deserted (Sirugue *et al*., 2006). This transformation echoes French demographic trends, for in the 1960s for the first time urban surpassed rural population, a

tendency that persists until today. This transformation is indeed related with the top-down reconstruction plan implemented by the state after WWII, whose focus on growth through industrialisation and development of urban centres encouraged population movements, especially of young inhabitants, from the countryside to bigger cities. These difficulties lived by the Morvan during the post WWII period, combining geographical isolation, socio-economic crisis, demographic decline and administrative fragmentation, urged for a deep reorganization. The law on regional parks was taken as a very important opportunity.

3.6. The Morvan regional park era

The Morvan park, born in 1970, is one of the first regional parks created in France. As it is the case of all regional parks founded at that time, the creation of the Morvan park aimed at fighting against rural devitalisation and protecting natural ecosystems judged as fragile.

3.6.1. *Birth and history of the Morvan Park*

At the end of the 1960s, the Morvan faced a complicated socio-economic and demographic scenario, aggravated by the urban and industrial focus of the territorial policy of those years. This crisis was amplified due to the Morvan's arid soils and valleys that proved to be incompatible with agricultural intensification. It is surprising that circumstances perceived as a handicap thirty years ago, and, very much associated to the Morvan's unpolluted ecosystems, became the strengths of this place in the context of the increasing demand of natural areas for the practice of ecotourism, organic agriculture and naturalist investigation. *"Before settling in the Morvan, we said: if it is not the Morvan, it is nowhere. For this kind of farming we need unpolluted lands and a low-density territory"* (Newcomer organic farmer).

The creation of the regional level in 1964 introduced a few changes in the Morvan's governance. The birth of the Burgundy region reunified the territories corresponding to the Province of Burgundy, and thus brought together the four departments that had fragmented the Morvan since the Revolution. Certainly, the creation of Burgundy and the birth of the park have contributed to 'softening' this 'disregard', yet a tradition of non-collaboration among these territories persists, and the Morvan is still called with a certain regret the *"Département de l'impossible"* (Mayor of a Morvan commune).

When regional parks were created, the Morvan appeared to be an ideal territory to test this new DATAR institution. The Morvan sheltered about 33.000 persons, its economy had stagnated after

WWII. Simultaneously, biodiversity regulation was needed to protect the quality and variety of its ecosystems. The feasibility of founding a park engendered a hopeful mood among local actors, notably due to the chance of creating an institution whose perimeter would correspond to the natural area encircling the massif. For some inhabitants and politicians, this park might probably allow the division of the Morvan by the four departments to be "rubbed out", and thus facilitate the implementation of a unique development strategy adapted to the specific needs of this territory. As soon as the law authorizing the creation of regional parks was promulgated (1969), the region delegated to the local *Association Régionale du Morvan*[342] the power to set up a park by means of a constitutive charter. Finally, in October 1970, the Ministry of the Environment approved the Morvan park's constitutive charter, and with this decision, the park brought together 64 communes and 8 *villes portes*[343] distributed over an area of 172.000 ha (PNRM, 2001). The *Association Régionale du Morvan,* under the direction of André Emery, was responsible for running the park during its early years, until the constitution of a *syndicat mixte.*

The birth of the Morvan park came in a contradictory atmosphere opposing optimistic opinions, contending that this new institution would allow the massif's take off and, moreover, it would do so in respect of the ecosystem's natural equilibrium, to sceptic views questioning the real aims and reasons of the French state for investing in nature protection and creating new parks. Under a shade of disbelief, this last group wondered about the main beneficiaries of this new policy conceived by 'fancy' Parisian offices: the Morvan people or rather Parisians coming spending holidays in a new protected area? To a certain extent, this suspicion was reinforced by the strategy carried out by the Morvan park during its early years, which focused on the creation and restoration of tourism infrastructure, leaving aside a more profound discussion on the necessarily socio-economic approach needed to meet the local population's needs. The main objective of the park was tourism development, and so the adaptation of the Morvan for welcoming tourists in the best quality conditions, for which the emphasis was put on visitors instead of on the local population's welfare. This situation occurred in a context in which the rural exodus continued, and the budgetary restrictions and organizational problems hindered the functioning of regional parks during their first years. Nonetheless, despite this ambiguous institutional environment the number of regional parks continued augmenting in France. The Morvan Park survived, constituted a *syndicat mixte* in 1976 and published a renewed charter in 1979. The promulgation

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[342] Association created in 1966 and gathering local elected representatives and members of various local organizations, including sports, cultural and professional groups.
[343] *Villes-portes* are towns located in the Park's periphery but adhering to the Park *i.e.* Avallon, Lormes, Arnay-Le Duc, Autun, Luzy, Saint-Honoré-les-Bains, Moulins-Engilbert and Chatillon-en-Bazois.

of this second charter followed the birth of the *Conseils Régionaux*, which requested redefining the parks' missions and activities. This is also related with a law promulgated in 1976 by the *Secrétariat d'État à l'Environnement* that provided a specific budget for parks, which could range from 15 to 54% of the park's budget depending on their socio-economic and ecological characteristics. This law also stated that parks should foster agriculture for its economic potential.

PHOTO 11: SAINT BRISSON, *LA MAISON DU PARC*   **PHOTO 12: PARK LOGO[344]**

Source: author (2006) and www.parcdumorvan.org

In the last three decades, after several charter renewals, the Morvan park has expanded and changed a lot. It is surprising that the Morvan park's second charter run for an 18-years period (1979-1997), since major institutional shifts linked to decentralisation and the introduction of sustainable development into the French policy agenda ended by transforming the inter-territorial organization of the Morvan. With this second charter the Morvan started benefiting of a stronger financial support from the central state, and redefined main objectives according to more socio-economic local needs and quality of life. It also saw its perimeter increase, congregating 76 communes and nine *villes portes*[345] in the year 1992. Unlike the previous period focusing on improving the Morvan's touristic image, from 1979 onwards the park adopted a broader strategy

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[344] Inspired in an aedui coin (photo 12)
[345] The new *ville porte* is Etang-sur-Arroux.

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aiming at a more encompassing rural development, context in which tourism was seen as a means for benefiting the locality. One major event was the hosting of the *Journées Nationales des Parcs*, which were chaired by President François Mitterrand who reaffirmed its political support to regional parks and more specifically to the Morvan.

TABLE 41: THE MORVAN REGIONAL PARK - A TIMELINE

1967	Creation of regional nature parks in France.
1970	**Foundation of the Morvan regional park** with 33.780 inhabitants, 64 communes and 8 *villes portes*. The running of the park was delegated to a local association led by André Emery. The constitutive charter of the Morvan park operated from 1970 to 1979.
1975	Setting up of the park's head offices at Saint-Brisson.
1976	Creation of a **syndicat mixte** and starts a period of revision of the first charter.
1979	**Second charter** covering the period 1979-1997. In 1992 the park expanded to 76 communes and 9 *villes portes*.
1991	The Morvan park hosted the *Journées Nationales des Parcs* at Saint-Brisson, chaired by President François Mitterrand.
1997	**Third charter** covering from 1997 to 2007 gathered 95 communes, 10 *villes portes*, Later, in 2001 two new communes integrated the park as permanent members and a third one did it under an associative mode.
2005	Meeting on Regional parks and inter-communality hosted by the Morvan park.
2008	**Fourth charter** congregating 71.372 inhabitants, 117 communes and five *villes portes*, covering an area of 290.900 ha

Source: author with various sources (PNRM, 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2008a, 2008c)

In the period 1997-2007 the Morvan park organized its action under its third charter signed by 95 communes and ten *villes portes* (PNRM, 2001). For this period, the political board and technical team were engaged in five main areas: i) to preserve and enhance the quality of the natural environment and control landscape evolution; ii) to promote harmonic enhancement of the forest; iii) to reinforce a respectful tourism; iv) to promote cultural development, education and information; v) to improve the local quality of life and guarantee a coherent development strategy. In 2001, the park continued expanding, and so reached an extension of 239.000 ha circumscribing 97 communes, ten *villes portes* and one associate commune[346] (PNRM, 2001). As to the territorial organization of the French territory, transformations related to decentralisation, sustainable development and birth of new inter-communal structures provoked an impact and an adaptation exigency to parks like the Morvan.

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[346] The new *ville porte* is Corbigny and the new associated commune is Uchon.

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BOX 14: ORGANIZATION, FUNCTIONING AND LEADING ACTIONS OF THE MORVAN PARK

The budget (about 4,6 million euro in 2008)

- *Sources*: *Conseil Régional* (40%), central state (20%), *Conseil Général de la Nièvre* (12%) and municipalities (2,5%). The reminding part comes from the park's investments and European funding.

- *Expenses*: functioning (20%), natural and cultural heritage (31%), resources for sustainable development activities (18%) and local animation and solidarity actions (22%) (PNRM, 2008c). 34% of the expenses for intervention go for tourism actions *i.e.* creation of eco-museums; publishing of guides, revues, maps, technical reports; research activities; conduction of EU projects; development exemplary actions; environmental initiatives (implementation of a "water quality observatory"). In 2008, the largest investment was for the creation of the *Maison du patrimoine oral* museum.

The functioning of the park

- The *syndicat mixte:* operates with two executive instruments, the *comité syndical* and the *syndicate mixte office*. The *comité syndical* (140 deliberant members) votes the budget and approves the administrative accounts. The *syndicate mixte office* (28 deliberant members and consultative members), elaborates the park's budget and the action plan.

- The *technical team* gathers about 30 permanent workers under the supervision of a park's director.

Focus, priorities and main actions carried out by the Morvan park[347]

Main actions address three priority domains i) Natural and cultural heritage, ii) socio-economic dynamics and sustainable development and iii) territorial animation and solidarity, and concern forestry, agriculture, energy and water management, tourism, culture, social development, biodiversity protection, and research and experimentation.

1/ Natural and cultural heritage

Natural heritage:

- flora and fauna research and scientific records (*i.e.* swimming capacities of a sea lamprey, prospective studies on white crayfish);

- implementation of Natura 2000 (nine sites begin the phase of animation and contracting;

- restoration of the Montbé peat bog ecosystem;

- coordination of a EU Life Nature project on brooks;

- partnerships with the EU for the development of agro-environmental actions (FEDER) ;

- water quality monitoring in lakes and rivers (*Contrat Territorial des Grands Lacs du Morvan*)…

Cultural heritage:

- guidance and recommendations concerning traditional architecture and housing renovation. The park organised a contest on rural heritage renovation to promote the utilisation of local materials and the respect of the Morvan's traditional architecture.

- Advice for the elaboration of the *Plans locaux d'urbanisme (PLU)[348];*

- inauguration of the *Maison du Patrimoine Oral*, project developed in partnership with the association *Mémoires Vives*;

- cultural and social activities (i.e. support for the creation of a network of cultural actors); cultural heritage and site records.

2/ Socio-economic dynamics and sustainable development

- Climate change, alternative energies and diffusion of information about these topics; implementation of wood-burning boilers;

- Forestry: implementation of labels certifying sustainable practices; experimental actions for a sustainable production of Christmas trees;

- tourism (see section five of this chapter).

3/ Development of a lively and solidary territory

- **Agriculture**: regionalisation of agriculture policies to compensate EU disengagement; links between agriculture and tourism.

- **Culture**: the park's *agence culturelle* in partnership with local association develops periodical cultural events. Among others, the park works with the *Cafés Margot* network and the association *Scènes du Morvan*. In 2008, the Scènes du Morvan performed a spectacle dealing with the integration of newcomers.

- **Pedagogical activities** for school children and adults (i.e. nature walks, expositions, museums, etc.)

Source: author based on PNRM (2008c)

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[347] These are examples of the most emblematic activities achieved during the year 2008. Most of them are a continuation of older projects, thus this list gives an idea of the most important activities carried out by the park.
[348] It is the main urban planning document at the communal level. It might also be used by inter-communal structures.

*3.6.2. **The Morvan park today and its main governance challenges***

In 2008, the Morvan park introduced its fourth charter, with which it reached a population of 52,552 inhabitants, 118 communes and a surface of 290.900 ha (PNRM, 2006b). Broadly, the park continued pursuing action in the same areas addressed during the previous years *i.e* forestry, agriculture, water, tourism, culture, social development, biodiversity protection, alternative energies, etc. These are indeed common domains to all regional parks, as it occurs also with the running of the Morvan park, relying on a multidisciplinary technical team, a directive board and a scientific panel (see box 14). Depending on the area, the Park builds partnerships with different institutions and actors to conduct specific projects. They can take part in a EU programme (Natura 2000, Life, Leader and FEADER), they can be carried out in partnership with regional or local institutions, or they can be developed within the context of a national contractual plan. In most cases, they call on the participation of the local population. Various actions led by the Morvan park are further explored in function to their relationship with tourism and ecotourism.

Which is indeed the new challenge for this period is the territorial organization of the Morvan. In the context of the fourth charter, the Morvan park recognizes the need to introduce changes in the governance of the massif, so as to respond and adapt to major transformations resulting from the flourishing of new inter-communal institutions since 2000. In addition, new governance challenges are also related with the increasing urgency for more territorial sustainability, the complexity due to the enlargement of the park after the joining of new communes, and the incorporation of most of the Morvan park to the *massif central*.

Compared to the park of the 1980s, the institutional map of the present-day park is much more complex. Before the promulgation of the various sustainability laws during the 1990s, the relevant spatial levels making up the governance of the Morvan were **five**: the **supranational (Europe), national (France)**, **regional (Burgundy)**, **departmental (four departments)**, **inter-departmental (Morvan park)** and **communal (from 64 to 118 communes)** levels. From 2000 onwards, new territorial structures were created and the number of layers increased totalling **eight** relevant levels exerting a direct influence on the Morvan: ***pays*** (four pays), ***communauté de communes*** (sixteen) and the **central massif** (116 communes of the park). From the total institutions, at the sub-national level there are three with elected representatives - the commune, the department and the region. The others are either devolved state services or contractual inter-communal institutions, as is the case of the park and the four *pays*. We have also the departments,

still playing a very important role in representing the central government throughout the *Préfets* and *sous-préfets de région*. This politico-administrative framework is completed by the regulatory role performed by the EU and the French national level. As introduced in chapter five, the compilation of spatial levels has provoked numerous difficulties and discontentment among public actors, and especially among regional parks (see Gauchet *et al.*, 2006). In 2005, regional parks celebrated a meeting at Saint-Brisson to discuss about the increasing territorial complexity, and the still relevant role of parks within this new configuration. During this meeting the Morvan's inter-communality and its division by four departments were underscored as exceptional, and for that reason pointed out as a source of major governance challenges that will be impacting this ancient Celt territory during the forthcoming years.

Moreover based on the examination of various documents and interviews with key informants and taking into account its main traditional areas of intervention, the park's main concerns for this new period can be summarized in the following five points:

- *Governance, participation and empowerment*: the discussion, negotiation and drafting of the fourth charter emanated from a participatory process that lasted several months. It consisted of information diffusion on the role of the park, public consultation on the views and wishes of the local population on their home territory, and on the role held by the park. The objective was to define the main development wishes and preferences in a context of competing interests and complexity. It is important to mention that public consultation and participatory processes were also observed during the renewal of the previous charter. However for the fourth charter the intensity of these processes seems to have increased (see PNRM, 2005a, 2005b). Undoubtedly, this has to do with the park's strategy to seek advice and its need to strengthen its image in view of the questioning of the role of parks in the new politico-administrative organization.

- *Collaboration and articulation among territories*: the park has experienced much pressure from the proliferation of new territorial institutions that have fragmented the Morvan into smaller territories. Articulation among them has been complex and challenging. So while acknowledging that collaboration among these territories is needed, at least in the discourse of the park's officials, it is expressed that the park is deploying bigger efforts in this respect.

- The *European level* reaffirms its influence and important roles are attributed to lower spatial levels. The different objectives the park pursues are affected by several European regulations and their achievements depend on EU funding. Getting a EU contract, or even submitting a EU application, is source of pride among the park's officials. Two emblematic initiatives are

a Leader+ project approved for the period 2007-2013, and the candidacy to the European charter for sustainable tourism expected for 2010.

- A complete new territorial focus for this period is the *massif central* scale. The integration of the Morvan to the *massif central* is seen as source of very essential development possibilities.

- *Ecotourism* and *sustainable tourism* are reaffirmed as main lines of development for the Morvan. This is acknowledged in the park's new charter and in the regional tourism plan. It counts on special support from the regional and the EU levels, and also with special subsidies from the *massif central.*

4. THE CONTEMPORARY MORVAN, MAIN ECOLOGICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FEATURES

4.1. The biophysical system

The Morvan Massif, born 300 millions years ago during the Hercynian period, is a granite outcrop located in the heart of the limestone Burgundy (PNRM, 2006c). It is a place of Step Mountains that rise from north to south between 300 and 900 meters up. Its altitude decreases from the north to the south, and the Haut Faulin's 901 meters is the highest point, followed by together with *mont Préneley* (855 m.) and *mont Beuvray* (821 m.) also located in the south. The Morvan's special geology and geomorphology are usually perceived as a kind of intrusion or disturbance compared with its surrounding sedimentary areas (PNRM, 2006c). This soil offers a diverse relief, in which altitudes are usually woodlands, whereas deep embanked valleys are wetlands.

The Morvan's granitic specificity and internal geographical conformation, marked by the presence of valleys, faults and abundant rivers, are at the origin of diverse fauna and flora. The Morvan has rough climatic conditions, characterized by abundant rains, long bad seasons, snow in winter and modest temperatures. Winter is long and rude, spring usually arrives late and summer can be hot but short. Temperatures are moderate with a year average of 10 degrees (PNRM, 2006c). The Morvan boasts a surface of around 240.000 ha. of which approximately 105.000 are extensive agricultural areas, 129.000 woodlands, 1.600 lakes and rivers, and 7.000 wetlands[349] (PNRM, 2006c). The presence of woodlands is a major feature of this territory. They cover one half of the massif's surface, from 6% to 82% across communes (PNRM, 2006a). This landscape diversity, combined with the massif's location allowing oceanic, continental and

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[349] This data is for the surface of the Morvan Park that it is not exactly the same surface of the Morvan.

mountain climatic influences, results in a territory sheltering a unique biodiversity. According to the Park's scientific records, the are about 1500 species, from which sixty are legally protected or at least classified as exceptional sites *i.e. amica de montagnes*, *rossolis*, *pavot du pays de Galles*, *lycopodes, canneberge…* (see PNRM, 2006c). Two species classified *Arrêtés préfectoraux de protection de biotope*, one *Réserve Biologique Domaniale*, a ZNIEFF inventory and eleven sites Natura 2000 show the biological uniqueness of this territory. The diversity of natural and semi-natural milieus makes out of the Morvan an important habitat for sedentary and nomad fauna. The Morvan is the habitat of more than fifty species *i.e.* Wild Cat, Otter, Miler shrew, Tengmalm owl, red and white crayfish, etc.

Undoubtedly, this significant biodiversity is also explained by the presence of numerous rivers, lakes, wetlands and peat bogs, uniformly irrigating the massif. The Morvan has a dense and complex hydrologic network determined by its relief, rain level, and lack of deep-water infiltration. Water has good bacteriological quality, low levels of saltiness and is not chemically polluted, due to low population density and breeding predominance (PNRM, 2006c). This allows the presence of an important flora and fauna. The Morvan's more than 2000 km of watercourses play an important role in supplying rivers like the Seine and Loire. The Yonne and the Cure, in the north, converge in the Seine; in the south, the Arroux and the Aron supply the Loire. Besides rivers, the Morvan contains a number of artificial ponds and lakes, which were created either during the wood-floating period, or later for recreation. The six artificial lakes are the Settons, Pannecière, Chaumençon, Crescent, Saint-Agnan and Chamboux[350]. Among others, the park has played a protagonist role in the elaboration of inventories of the local biodiversity and experimental actions, both seeking to preserve this rich heritage (see PNRM, 2006c).

4.2. People, demographical trends and flows

Fragile, precarious and declining are adjectives employed to describe the social and economic features of the Morvan, which are usually coupled with the tough meteorological and geophysical conditions challenging agriculture, engendering isolation and thus making life more exigent. One major issue for all European rural areas is population decline due to rural exodus and population aging. During the first half of the twentieth century, the number of inhabitants living in the Morvan decreased by a vigorous 60%. This dramatic decline partially slowed down from 1975 onwards, allowing in 1999 the return to the level of the early twentieth century (PNRM, 2006b).

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[350] In addition to leisure the main functions of these lakes have been: wood-floating lake (Settons 320 ha.), regulation of the Seine water level (Pannecière, 520 ha.), EDF hydroelectric (Chaumençon, 135 ha. and Crescent, 165 ha.) and potable water reservoir (Saint-Agnan, 142 ha. and Chamboux 75 ha.) (PNRM, 2006c)

The Morvan is still a very low-density area (23 inhabitants/km2) (PNRM, 2008a) with only 71.372 inhabitants. The communes and settlements located inside the park are very small. Saulieu (2.840 inhabitants), for instance, is the most populated burg (PNRM, 2006b). Given the considerable distance from larger urban poles, the Morvan's socio-economic and cultural life is organized around the six most populated towns, Saulieu, Château-Chinon, Luzy, Etang-sur-Arroux, Moulins-Engilbert and Lormes[351], which concentrate commerce and basic services (PNRM, 2006b)[352]. This low population density and aging worry local authorities, because of the uncertainty about the generation that will take over from those actually running traditional hotels and restaurants. The departure of young people combined with the arrival of pensioners explain the fact that 36% of the local population is more than sixty years old (PNRM, 2006b)[353]. In 2000, young people represented only a 20% (PNRM, 2000).

Nonetheless, this phenomenon needs greater attention. Reasons explaining the Morvan's population recovery observed from 1999 are indeed of great interest. Besides pensioners, we can draw linkages between this slow but progressive repopulation and the growing touristic and residential attractiveness of the Morvan[354]. For the period 1990-1999, statistics show that the Morvan received 10.351 new arrivals, number exceeding significantly the 7.843 departures for the same period. This means that ten years ago, 22% of the current residents did not live here (PNRM, 2006b). The composition of this group of newcomers and its relationship with the Morvan's attractiveness has a particular significance in ecotourism. The Morvan is not the first territory where newcomers have played a key role in the development of ecotourism.

In sum, from a socio-demographical perspective we might conclude that the Morvan is a territory moving at two velocities: a Morvan undergoing population decline and aging, and a Morvan welcoming younger newcomers seeking for a more quiet life and proximity with nature. These two transformations are expressed in the composition of the local economy and have a particular precise effect on the governance of the massif.

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[351] Saulieu (2.840 hab.), Château-Chinon (2307 hab.), Luzy (2.234 hab.), Etang-sur-Arroux (1.836 hab), Moulins-Engilbert (1.571 hab.) and Lormes (1.398 hab.) (INSEE statistics, quoted in PNRM, 2006b).
[352] Other centres are Montsauche-les-Settons (610 inhhabitants) and the towns of Avallon, Autun and Corbigny.
[353] This percentage contrasts with with the 27% of persons with more than 60 years in villes-portes and 30% in the rest of the rural burgundy area (INSEE statistics in PNRM, 2006b)
[354] Transformation to be confirmed with fresh data for this decade and that it is still not available.

4.3. The Morvan local economy and main productive sectors

Declining and restructuring are also adjectives describing the local economy, which certainly applying to many rural areas where agriculture used to be the economic engine. The Morvan precariousness is observed in the level of average household revenue estimated at €11.800[355] and in the income tax exemption for 60% of households (Piers, 2005). As to employment, unlike the strong progression observed in the tertiary sector, representing 60% of total jobs, most to be found in education, health and social sector, the job share of agriculture and forestry has decreased. While in 1975 agriculture represented 36% of jobs, today it only reaches 18,4%. Yet, compared to Burgundy, counting for 13% of its jobs in agriculture, the Morvan still remains over the regional average (INSEE statistics, in PNRM, 2006b). Retail trade (10,3%), services and industry (13%) and tourism (5,4%) are also relevant in terms of jobs. One last transformation is related with economic diversification and farmers' pluriactivity. Despite the still leading place of traditional agriculture, farming and forestry, activities like ecotourism and organic farming have gained socio-economic and symbolic centrality.

BOX 15: EMPLOYMENT IN THE MORVAN

Summarizing, the Morvan economy is organized according to the following productive sectors:

- Agriculture: representing 1.000 agricultural lands and 2400 jobs (30% of the population), from which 35% of concerned workers had more than fifty years old in 2000.
- Forestry: represents today 600 jobs, yet in the forthcoming years an expansion is expected, since the maturity age of a large population of conifers arrives to maturity.
- Tourism: between 800 and 1500 jobs depending the season, and more than 560 enterprises. Most jobs are in accommodation and food services.
- Construction (including artisan class): with 2000 jobs, is considered a rather stable sector. 150 enterprises are devoted to wood transformation
- Services: about 20.000 jobs, from which education, health and social action represent half of the total.

Source: author with information provided in PNRM (2008a)

4.3.1. *Transformations in agriculture and farming*

A reflection on agriculture should start recalling that the Morvan topography and soils are not ideal for cultivation. More than forty communes are classified as lands with limited agricultural potential (PNRM, 2008a). *"The Morvan is not suitable for intensification. Even if farmers try to increase their production, we have the lack to be in a hedge farmland area that does not allow intensification"* (mayor of a Morvan commune). Therefore an important portion of the Morvan is

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[355] Which compared to the one of the *villes portes* (€13.000) and rural Burgundy average (€12.800) is much lower.

devoted to forestry and breeding. In addition, rural exodus, population aging and property concentration provoked the loss of 60% of the farmers between 1970 and 2000. Simultaneously, cultivations changed. Traditional rye and potato crops disappeared, and the implementation of new draining techniques allowed the growing of cereals (*i.e.* wheat). With regard to breeding, the Morvan race was replaced by charolais bovines, which at a young age are transported for fattening to Auxois, Brionnais and Spain.

PHOTO 13: BROAD-LEAVED FOREST **PHOTO 14: FARMLANDS**

Source: author (2006)

Lately, the crisis and sustainability challenges have stimulated the development of alternative agriculture and have also pushed farmers to look for complementary sources of income. Today, 4% of the Morvan professional farmlands are organic. In total, in the Morvan, there are nearly fifty organic farms, consecrated to the cultivation of fruits, vegetables and medicinal plans, as well as breeding and fabrication of artisanal products like honey, herbal tea, cheese, wine… (see PNRM, 2006b; BioBourgogne, 2006). These are small-scale farms[356] with a relative low economic impact. Yet, their impact should be examined taking into consideration other factors that are related to the interests and life quality aims pursued by these farmers that go far beyond economic objectives. Within this social group, we find people trying different solutions to confront rural decline, and so decide to complement revenues through alternative cultivations and ecotourism. There also exists a group of people not previously related to the rural milieu that settle in the Morvan to follow a sort of professional and personal 'reconversion' founded on deep human, family and quality of life reasons. These actors are engaged in ecotourism, organic

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[356] 37% of Morvan organic farms have an extension less than 20 ha (BioBourgogne, 2006)

farming, artistic activities or other. It is important to mention that the park has also played a role in promoting, implementing and supporting innovative agro-environmental practices.

4.3.2. *The multiple uses and values assigned to the Morvan woodlands*

The governance of the Morvan's woodlands is a delicate issue. The large woodened surface of the massif is thus an interesting case to interrogate sustainability and governance from the perspective of forests. This reflection turns pretty interesting if we take into consideration the deep transformation of forests in Europe since the Roman Empire Period, as well as the distinctiveness of the Morvan's forest sharply marked by the wood floating. According to several studies, since the late nineteenth century, the Morvan woodlands have considerably increased. They augmented from 30 to near 50% of the territory's surface reaching an extension of 129.000 (PNRM, 2006b). However, as is happening in most of European forests, we observe a tendency towards a reduction of the variety of species forming these landscapes. In the Morvan, broad-leaved trees and conifers are the two main species, respectively covering 70.500 (55% of the woodland surface) and 57.600 ha (45%) (PNRM, 2006b). It is a pity but, for improving productivity, broad-leaved has been replaced by conifer tress (spruce and Douglas species). This transformation has not been indifferent to the local population, tourists and local environmental NGOs, which have witnessed how the identity of the Morvan landscape has declined. However, the governance of forests seems to be a complex issue. Despite the cultivation of pine started in the Morvan in the mid-1800s, forests in France were essentially broad-leaved until the end of WWII. Between the 1960s and 1970s the French state started distributing incentives to stimulate the introduction of conifers in detriment of agricultural lands (PNRM, 2004a). Conifers in the Morvan passed from 25% in 1995 to 45% from the total surface in the last years (PNRM, 2006c).

The property structure of woodlands gives clues about this transformation. Most of the Morvan forest surface is private property (85%)[357] and only a small portion is in hands of public bodies or other institutions[358]. Better coordination among the actors of the governance of woodlands is particularly difficult due to the very fragmented property structure constituted by 19.000 private proprietors[359] (Glattard *et al.* 2004). Public forests are usually protected under a European or French status, and thus integrating the Natura 2000 network (3.162 ha), the ZNIEFF type 1 and 2

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[357] A similar property structure is observed in the whole country. Marty (1999) points out that France is one of the countries with the largest private woodland surface, reaching in average to 70% of the total woodened area.
[358] 9% of the surface belongs to communes and 6% to the central State under the regime of *Forêt domaniales*. Other institutions, such as banks, insurance companies and pension funds, own 8% of the surface (PNRM, 2006b).
[359] 2% possess half of the total private surface, and 52% of them only 5%.

(8.106 and 58.575 ha) and the *Réserve Biologique Domaniale* (13,8 ha at Glenne). The *monts* Beuvray and Prénelay are also classified sites (PNRM, 2004b).

Basically, there are four main uses given to the Morvan forest: wood industry, Christmas tree industry, energy and ecotourism. While the productive imperatives of the wood and the Christmas tree industry might be seen as rivalling with the ecotourism sustainability needs, the development of technology to produce energy from wood's residuals might be seen as compatible with both, ecotourism and the wood industry. There is no precise information on the amount of harvest wood produced in the Morvan territory. The park estimates that broad-leaved production might cover 150.000 m3 and conifers about 400.000 m3 per year, of which two-thirds are Douglas (PNRM, 2008a). The direct exploitation of forests, from tree nursery to felling, is in hands of about 150 enterprises and wood transformation is done by 140 small firms (PNRM, 2008a). These are essentially nurseries, counting for about five hundred jobs and providing low revenues (PNRM, 2006b)[360]. Additionally, there exists an important number of enterprises devoted to transformative tasks located outside the Morvan either at the North or South of the Massif, or outside of Burgundy (PNRM, 2004a). The dominant augmentation of conifers production during the last twenty years, combined with its external transformation, have stimulated the development of transportation services and connected logistics. The Region counts eleven wood stations, of which six have recently been completely restored[361]. The Morvan internal roads are heavily used for wood transportation (PNRM, 2006b), a practice that does not seem to please the local population or the political sector.

The Morvan forest is also active in feeding the Christmas tree industry. From the 5,5 millions of Christmas trees sold each year in France, between 1,2 and 1,3 come from the Morvan (Passarelle Éco, 2008)[362]. The cultivation of the *Sapin de Noël du Morvan* started in the early 1900s and later expanded during the post-WWII period to satisfy a growing Parisian demand. Today, the production of Christmas trees is an important means to complement farmers' revenues. In the very beginning, Christmas pine forestation employed desert and low-quality lands; today, the proliferation of conifers, including Christmas trees, has been done in detriment of broad-leaved trees. Discontentment with massive tree felling, intensive plantation of artificial species, and the tendency towards conifers monoculture, is observed among the local population and

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[360] A research done by Piers (2005) counted 87 units, from which 10 developed primary transformation (sawing) and 67 secondary transformation activities (15 cabinet makers, 43 joiners and 5 craftsmen).
[361] Autun, Château-Chinon, Corbigny, La Roche en Brénil, Saulieu and Avallon (PNRM, 2004)
[362] The Morvan is the French leader for this production, followed by Vosges and the Central Massif.

environmentalist groups. Since Christmas pines are cut down quite young, they do nothing but cause pollutions due to fertilizers and other phytosanitary products, and impede the benefits of the maturity period. Studies predict that the growing of these pines will cause irreversible soil erosion within three generations (Passarelle Éco, 2008)[363].

The Morvan forest also holds a key role in leisure and ecotourism, because of its aesthetical, symbolic and biodiversity values. A study done by the park estimates at about four million potential users for the Morvan forestlands in the context of tourism (PNRM, 2004a). Among the actors watching over the Morvan forestry biodiversity, I mention the network of tourism structures present all over the territory and very interested in the preservation of the local natural heritage. The forest quality is also controlled by local tourism associations and local environmentalist associations committed since a to the Morvan. With the fast progression of conifers, ecotourism and potential visitors exigencies turn to be a powerful conservation argument for actors fighting the loss of biodiversity in the forest. The discussion on tourism and forestry biodiversity is taken up again the following section on ecotourism

5. TOURISM AND ECOTOURISM IN THE MORVAN

Reflecting governance dynamics at other spatial levels, ecotourism in the Morvan and the park's tourism development plan have undergone important changes since the 1970s. Even if certain tourism spots already existed before the foundation of the park, the history of tourism in the Morvan is closely related to that of the park. As to contemporary times, ecotourism and the European charter for sustainable tourism are the main objectives for this territory.

5.1. Ecotourism in the Morvan: a historical view

The first tourism infrastructures date back to the 1930s and coincided with the start of institutionalisation of tourism in France, after the law on paid holidays. Except for a few sites, like Vézelay, Settons, Avallon, Saulieu and Autun, which host tourism facilities, the first arrivals and investments coincided with the foundation of the park. The park's first charter brought the earliest tourism strategy and tried to give more coherence to its development. This charter adopted a nature-based tourism approach and also advocated for environmental protection, as it was demanded in the regional park's foundation statements. The first initiatives of the park involved the implementation of various tourism infrastructures, such as the first hiking routes

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[363] For complete information see http://autun.morvan.ecolog.free.fr/actu.htm and section 9.5 of this chapter.

(GR13), picnic zones, leisure areas and water sports facilities. During these years the park also invested in accommodation, and gave birth to the first *gîtes ruraux* and *camping à la ferme* of the territory.

Under the second charter (1979-1997), the park pursued the structuring and implementation of a tourism plan for the Morvan, yet it partially changed its focus. Since the Morvan enjoyed a certain touristic image and had a hospitality infrastructure, efforts were directed to improve the organization and quality of ancient tourism infrastructures, created even before the park's foundation. Unlike the previous period, oriented to satisfy external demands, mainly of Parisian tourists, during this second moment energies were redirected towards the Morvan itself and its needs. The local inhabitants were indeed critical of the park's choice privileging the embellishment of the Morvan to benefit others than the local population. *"The previous period demonstrated that it was not only about tourism development or about a rural territory attracting urban people willing to rest. The park had to address the traditional economic activities of this territory. In addition to tourism, the park had to respond to main agricultural and forestry concerns"* (mayor of a Morvan commune). During this period the Morvan tourism supply was organized under a *Programme Pluriannuel de Développement Touristique (PPDT)* that congregated the main tourism agents and defined a set of priorities regarding accommodation, advertising, access, road infrastructure, and commercialisation. In the late-1980s, this PPDT led to the creation of the first *Plan Régional de Coordination de Bourgogne Central*, which in 1989 provided the funding for new trekking, biking and climbing facilities.

During the third charter (1998-2007) actions oriented to improve tourism quality continued, but this time through the stimulation of cooperation among the actors involved in this activity. The discourses were impregnated with the concepts of sustainability, ecotourism and participation, notably from 2005 onwards. The park provided assistance and training opportunities, as well as the facilities and leadership for the organisation of meetings and cooperative actions. From this period onwards, the different segments of the tourism supply were organized in professional associations. *À la belle étoile* for campsites, *Morvan rando accueil* for trekking, *Séjours de charme* for hotels and restoration, *Morvan loisirs et sports nature* for nature-based sports and *Randonnée equestre en Morvan* for equestrian activities. At the same time these associations worked under the leadership of *Morvan tourisme,* an association in charge of coordinating the complete tourism sector. This period ended with an intensive participatory process organized

during the charter renewal period, oriented to define the main development targets for the future years.

The fourth charter (2008-2019) states that the most important aim for this period is the consolidation of the Morvan as a distinctive and high quality nature tourism destination. The environment will be the spearhead in tourism, where ecotourism and sustainable tourism are predominant (PNRM, 2007). In spite of this, at the turn of the millennium the potential and limits of the park's actions became more visible. On the one hand, the complexity of the socio-political framework governing French territories at different scales has constantly generated new governance challenges. On the other hand, the growing demand for nature-based activities is also associated with the practice of motorized sports that disturb the necessary tranquillity needed for ecotourism. Finally, governance challenges are also related with the coordination between ecotourism and the other economic activities developed in this territory. Therefore despite the park's ecotourism plan and the support given by Burgundy (CRB, 2005), there still exist difficulties and inconsistencies to address. One last element typical of contemporary times is the growing number of foreigners settling in the Morvan and offering different kinds of ecotourism services. This has been a key factor for ecotourism.

5.2. Ecotourism attractions: the Morvan's mixture of green and culture

The Morvan is arguably a very important natural area in Europe. It contains a diversity of species, habitats, cultural heritage and social life that together form the ecotourism profile of this territory and determine the affects that will imprint this specific tourism experience. The Morvan basically includes three distinctive types of zones, ranging from hedged farmlands placed over a gentle relief in the north, to the southern higher peaks of the south covered by dense woodlands. In the middle, there are vast bumpy fields combining extensive cultivated farmlands, forests and lakes. The ecotourism possibilities seem limitless: an important number of species of plants, trees and fauna inhabit this place; the woodened mountains and the bumpy fields are connected by hiking trails which before served as rural roads interlacing distant farmlands; lakes, waterfalls and rivers welcome canoeists and kayakers travelling down hundreds years of history; mountains challenge climbers…

Nonetheless, the distinctiveness of the Morvan's ecotourism attraction is not limited to nature. We should also stress its talent to interlace history and nature. Interlaces connecting history, human life and nature produce a strong symbolic sense of place perceived among those who

reside in and visit this territory. This is indeed a very powerful touristic image that certainly constitutes the basis of the Morvan's charm. It is powerful because it does not only captivate tourists, but also nourishes the enthusiasm of those working in this territory. This image stimulates the construction of tourism projects following interests and pursuing objectives oriented to enhance the local territory. This is done to improve the quality of life of locals and visitors, for the good of present and future generations, and thus for building harmonic relationships between humans and nature. Thus despite the specific attractions of the Morvan and the features of its tourism supply, both further explored in the following section, one key engine of ecotourism and 'life' in the Morvan is the constellation of values, wishes and needs underlying the choices and actions carried out by the system of actors governing this territory. The owner of a fancy *Auberge* put into words his relationship with this territory: *"Vézelay has to be merited. I feel a peace while living on the top of this platform… where at some moments of the day there exists such a silence, tranquillity, serenity…. And this pastoral life fits me. It is a veritable way out… I spend my afternoons just walking around…".*

TABLE 42: NUMBER OF VISITORS TO MAIN TOURIST MORVAN SITES

Site	Number of visitors
Vézelay	1.000.000
Bibracte	80.000
Big lakes	300.000
Sautes du Gouloux	40.000
Château de Bazoches	30.369
Septennat museum (Château-Chinon)	22.183
Rolin museum (Autun)	22.713
Saint Brisson area	25.000
Résistance museum and St. Brisson ecomusée	5.000
Pierre-qui-Vire-Abbey	11.000
Bibracte museum	40.000
Saint-Honoré-les-Bains (spa patients)	50.000

Source: author with information obtained from MRNP (2006b)

5.2.1. *Vézelay, Saulieu and the charming hedged farmlands of the north*

The north of the Morvan is a rich natural area characterized by the presence of a gentle relief and hedged farmlands. This habitat combines green environments and rivers with an ancient built heritage represented by medieval towns and churches. The most charming places are *Avallon,* a small city immersed between woodlands and hedged farmlands; *Saulieu,* a town settled in the

middle of an hedged farmlands habitat, and reputed for sheltering the world famous *Relais Bernard Loiseau* and its local museum partly dedicated to the sculptor Francois Pompom. However, the most touristic place is the medieval *Vézelay* town, situated at the top of a green slope covered by vineyards and sunflowers, and world famous for its Sainte-Madeleine Basilica, labelled UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993 and stop along of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela. Very close to *Vézelay*, we find the *Bazoches Castle* and the charming Saint-Père town with its chic restaurant *L'espérance,* owned by the famous chef Marc Meneau. Other charming places are *Quarré-les-Tombes*, town known for the *Merovingian* sarcophagi, and the *Pierre-qui-Vire Abbey,* built inside the *Saint-Léger-Vauban* forest, which is today a relaxation and meditation place. The natural environment of the north Morvan is particularly rich in watercourses providing infinite opportunities for outdoor water recreation. Whitewater kayaking and rafting are emblematic activities performed down the Cure River; canoeing, sailing and fishing can be practiced over the lake Saint-Agnan.

5.2.2. The Settons, Saint-Brisson and the towns of the résistance in the Morvan central area

It is a bumpy landscape (400-650 m) covered by forests and agricultural lands irrigated by numerous watercourses and lakes, and inhabited by picturesque boroughs and towns. Perhaps the Morvan's touristiest points are the *Maison du Parc* at Saint Brisson and the lake *Settons*, whose dynamism impregnates the entire surrounding area. The *Maison du Parc* is a nineteenth century residence that houses the park's administrative offices, a tourist office and a documentation centre. It also hosts two local museums, an arboretum and a botanic garden, and constitutes the starting point of several pedestrian trails. Other emblematic and charming towns are *Dun-les-Places, Planchez-en-Morvan* and *Lormes,* known for their brave *résistance* during the German occupation. As to the local ecosystems, this region hosts most of the Morvan lakes, among which the Settons and the Pannecière have constituted major touristic points since long time. The Gouloux falls and the Ménessaire castle, together with infinite rural museums, churches and monuments, are also places attracting tourists.

5.2.3. Château-Chinon, Bibracte, Autun and the woodened mont Beuvray

The southern area of the Morvan is characterized by an impressive mountainous appearance, despite the rather modest altitude of the highest mountain. This magnified landscape is the result of a sharp contrast between the slender mountains and the deep hollowed farmlands characterizing this zone, and so giving the idea of a mountain region. The most attractive place is *Bibracte*, the historical stronghold site built over the mythic and woodened *mont Beuvray*. This

site, together with its archaeological museum and renamed research center, are among the most visited places of the Morvan. Near the *mont Beuvray* we find *Château-Chinon,* town where the political career of François Miterrand started, and who was its mayor before arriving to the French presidency. Other popular towns are *Arleuf,* famous for the *jambon cru du Morvan* and *Anost* with its hurdy-gurdy festival congregating traditional local musicians playing hurdy-gurdy, bagpipes, accordions and violins. The tour by the southern Morvan is completed with the *Saint-Honoré-les-Bains* spa and *Autun*, the largest town of the area and renowned for its Gallo-Roman heritage, especially the roman theatre.

PHOTO 15: LAKE SETTONS **PHOTO 16: MÉNESSAIRE CASTLE**

Source: author (2006)

PHOTO 17: BIBRACTE EXCAVATIONS **PHOTO 18: HOTEL DU MORVAN**

Source: author (2006)

5.3. Who visits the Morvan and what do they look for? clean environments, slopes, silence, history, culture and nature

Tourism plays a very important socio-economic role in the Morvan, although the local economy remains agrarian shaped. About three million tourists visit the Morvan every year (PNRM, 2008a)[364]. This number includes French visitors, mostly from Île de France, Burgundy and Rhône Alpes, and Northern Europeans, for the most part coming from the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Great Britain and North America. A recent report (Weiss, 2004) estimated that 66% of tourists have a French origin (47% from Île de France and 13% from Burgundy). From the remaining 44%, 60% were Dutch, 10% Germans, 8% Belgians, 7% English and 4% Americans. Most visitors are active couples (67%) aged between 36 and 55 years[365]. An important portion followed higher education and 35% work in an intellectual profession. Retired people represent 14% of all tourists.

Elaborating on information from Weiss (2004) and several interviews, we can conclude on a common range of reasons for visiting the Morvan. Environmental factors are the most evoked reasons, and more precisely the appealing natural setting and its unpolluted state, the bumpy geography and the open landscapes offering large natural panorama. Other relevant elements are the Morvan's wilderness and remoteness thus far untouched by urbanisation, as well as the distance from main cities, producing a silent and peaceful territory. It is interesting to see how isolation and a deficient network of roads, both factors slowing down development and integration into Burgundy, became major sources of charm. These are elements especially appreciated by foreign tourists coming from dense cities and searching for remoteness, silence and large spaces to breathe. Simultaneously, the Morvan is admired for its cultural life and historical heritage, transmitted to present generations through archaeological sites, museums and cultural events, as well as shared through the local gastronomy, recognized for its refinement and tradition. The previously mentioned factors are translated in the high levels of fidelity of the tourism clientele. In 2002, 23,2% of the tourists had already visited the Morvan twice before, and

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[364] Despite consensus on the growing number of arrivals to the Morvan, information on the exact weight of ecotourism demand remains unclear. Finding statistics describing the size of the ecotourism demand is difficult, since ecotourism is 'clumped' together with other forms of tourism (Hawkins and Lamoureux, 2001). Moreover in the case of French protected areas, which are opened to visitors for free and thus without entrance registers, the arrival of visitors and excursionists is too difficult to register. As statistical series on population at work, they also provide limited information for the Morvan, since they do not always differentiate tourists visiting the core of the park or just one of the *villes portes*.

[365] The age distribution is the following: 14 - 25 years (15,3%), 26 - 35 years (22,3%), 36 - 55 years (44,6%) , 55 years and more (17,8%) (Weiss, 2004).

only for half of them was the first visit (Weiss, 2004). This loyalty is confirmed by the number of people arriving to the Morvan as tourists, and later becoming permanent residents.

Tourism is one of the largest sectors of the French economy, and is also important for the Morvan. However, according to interviewees, ecotourism gains are usually modest due to the seasonal character of the tourism demand, explaining the accumulation of various economic activities in one same worker. In many cases gîtes and other rural accommodation provide an extra income, to complement agricultural or other revenues. With regard to the length of the tourists' stays, there is no conclusive information. Some interviewees declared that, unlike Burgundy, with average stays of two nights, the Morvan could host longer sojourns lasting up to fifteen days. Conversely, Weiss (2004) states that the Morvan is rather a stopover for those going south, thus in average tourists spend 1,4 days in hotels and three days in campsites. What is certain is that since the creation of the park, the number of tourists has increased, even if flows have been irregular. Prosperous years might be followed by less dynamic seasons. It seems that the sojourn's length is to a great extent dependent on the weather. Sunny hot years are associated with more numerous arrivals, longer seasons and longer stays. Cloudy and rainy seasons, in contrast, frighten away tourists and take them to the 'south'.

Another reason explaining the low returns from tourism in the Morvan is its short tourist season, which in most cases goes from April to October. Since the main proportion of tourists comes between July and August, only a restricted number of services is opened during the complete year. *"It is necessary to distinguish permanent providers from seasonal. To extend the season we need more structures opened all around the year. The season depends to a great extent on the weather. As soon as there are three or four rainy days, people leave. How can we stop them? One measure was to stimulate the creation of hotels and motor home areas, and to stop the growth of the number of campsites"* (mayor and park's board member) Through the implementation of various strategies, the park has tried to dampen seasonality by extending tourist arrivals all through the year. For example, the Morvan succeeded in attracting a French clientele during Christmas, winter holidays and weekends. Parisian families visit the Morvan in the Christmas period searching to spend this time of the year in a snowed mountain setting. This option has started turning to be a tradition that every year crowds local gîtes and hotels.

5.4. What the Morvan offers: remoteness, varied infrastructure and an ecotourism product merging nature, history and culture

5.4.1. *Transport and accessibility*

The Morvan's location and accessibility play a contradictory role in the development trajectory of this territory and therefore in tourism. On the one hand, the Morvan benefits from an advantageous location for visitors coming from Île de France, Burgundy and Lyon. It is also beneficial for North Europeans, either for those wishing to just make a stopover before going to the South, or for those willing holidays in a middle-sized mountain area but still close to their hometowns. For instance, the distance from Amsterdam to the Morvan is about 550 km. On the other hand, despite the Morvan's carrefour location and its recognized accessibility, notably due to the northern roads N6 and A6 (Paris-Lyon), this territory lacks major routes and means of public transport connecting it with major regional cities. The Morvan's administrative fragmentation intensifies this by recreating inconsistencies and lack of articulation in road infrastructure and in their maintenance. Besides the N81 in the south and the two departmental roads (D27 and D37) joining the north and the south, the other roads are very elementary. Railroads are very limited in number and only irrigate the Morvan periphery. Thus the utilisation of the personal car is of major necessity while visiting this park. 90% of the visitors go by car, which is certainly a contradiction while thinking in ecotourism terms.

5.4.2. *The variety of accommodation alternatives and restaurants*

The Morvan tourism supply is vast and heterogeneous in its quality and composition, notably regarding accommodation and restaurants, which range from traditional rural structures to internationally renowned establishments providing very high-quality services. The combination of this heterogeneous supply with the Morvan's natural and cultural setting, allowing the practice of nature-based tourism activities, produces several tourism alternatives searched by rather different tourist categories.

The Morvan communes have a tourist capacity of 65.000 beds with a density of 23beds/km2 (PNRM, 2008a). Following similar trends observed in a great number of European rural destinations (see Roberts and Hall, 2001), 78% of the Morvan's total accommodation capacity concern second homes (10.400 residences), which in most cases belong to French (Île de France), Dutch and English people (PNRM, 2006b). Commercial accommodation, for its part, has different characteristics and quality levels. It includes small rural hotels, varied types of gîtes

(*étape*, Panda, *séjour*…), guesthouses and camping-motor homes sites. According to recent studies, rural tourism supply, and especially guesthouses, is in full expansion (PNRM, 2006b; 2008a). There exist approximately 560 accommodation structures with a total capacity superior to 12.000 beds (PNRM, 2006b), from which 11% correspond to camping sites, 25% to hotels, 30% to rural gîtes, 15% to holiday rentals, 10% to gîtes d'étape/séjour and 9% to other kind of accommodation (PNRM, 2008a). In terms of the number of structures, this represents 139 hotels, 58 camping sites, 54 gîtes d'étape, 51 guesthouses, 167 rural gîtes (PNRM, 2006b), two holiday rental complex and 12 gîtes Panda (PNRM, 2008c). Additionally, 380 hotels and hotel-restaurants, plus 84 bars and cafés, form the catering sector.

TABLE 43: HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS IN THE MORVAN PARK AND BURGUNDY

Hotels and restaurants classification			Certified hotels and restaurants[366]		
	PNRM	Burgundy		PNRM	Burgundy
Hotel-rest ****	4	12	Hotel- rest ****	3	9
Hotel-rest ***	27	63	Hotel-rest ***	12	123
Hotel-rest **	18	162	Hotel-rest **	6	58
Hotel-rest *	14	59	Hotel-rest*	3	13
			EC	1	9
Non classified structures	25	125	Hotel-rest non labélisés	63	145
Total	88	421	Total	88	423

Source: author, based on DRT Bourgogne and CRT Bourgogne data for 2003, in MRNP (2006b)

The Morvan's accommodation supply, including that of *villes portes*, represents 20% of the entire capacity of Burgundy rural areas. Besides a few major tourist centres (Settons, Vézelay, Saulieu and Autun), accommodation is disseminated all over the territory. However, while higher accommodation standards are mainly applied in bigger towns (*i.e.* Saulieu, Autun and Vézelay), interviewees seem to be worried about the low quality of the structures disseminated inside the Morvan; this might explain the reduced number of campsites, hotels and gîtes awarded with a quality certification or integrating a consortium. However, without dismissing the fact that a quality upgrade is needed, especially for older business, the recent opening of new gîtes Panda and guesthouses should progressively lead towards a global quality improvement.

One common characteristic of Morvan tourism firms is their small-scale and family ownership. They are run by individuals that either do not have the economic means to apply to a quality certification or to do the necessary investments to upgrade their residences, or do not perceive the

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[366] *i.e.* Logis de France, Relais et Châteaux.

potential benefits of joining a consortium or obtaining a quality label. In the case of entrepreneurs willing to improve quality standards, the park plans to give them support through the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism. The situation of those micro-business owners applying higher quality standards but not interested in quality labels or consortia, is rather different. The Morvan arguably presents features that appeal to the creative profiles of those entrepreneur-driven ecotourism destinations in their first stage of development[367]. In addition to the traditional group of entrepreneurs working on tourism, many of the new ecotourism businesses inaugurated in the Morvan belong to a generation of young entrepreneurs that have recently arrived to this territory. They organize and develop their businesses apart from the traditional tourism circuit, so traditional tourism labels do not concern them and new ones are still not so popular or relevant for ecotourism. Instead, Internet, *bouche-à-oreille* and informal social networks are the preferred means to advice and sell their services. In most cases, tourists arrive to the Morvan following personal recommendations and Internet information. The reflection on the impact of tourism labels on the tourism business is indeed a major issue for destinations and services providers. *"Labels and certification like the European Charter are much controversial. Reality shows that a positive correlation between this charter and the number of arrivals is not always true, thus the investments done for obtaining the charter are not always justified or recovered"* (park's official specialist on ecotourism).

5.4.3. *Tourist offices and tourism information*

The nearly twenty tourist offices located in the park give information about the massif's attractions. Most of them are located in the biggest towns and main touristic points (PNRM, 2006b). Thus there are some areas in which tourist information is deficient and others that have two or more concurrent tourist points that are attached to different territorial administrations. In some towns, tourist offices are located very close together and while offering very similar documentation, they produce an image of wastefulness denounced by interviewees. This impression is validated while searching tourist information in the internet and realizing that this is usually provided by communes, CC, pays, park, department and region. For sure, Internet is today a very important mean for bringing tourists to the Morvan, as accommodation owners expressed it during the interviews; nevertheless, an excessive quantity of tourism information might result counteracting.

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[367] See Epler Wood, cited in Page and Dowling (2002 p.121)

5.4.4. Ecotourism recreation activities

Finally the ecotourism supply also contains those service businesses providing the necessary material infrastructure and facilities for the different activities that are practiced in the Morvan. Table 44 summarizes the number of micro-businesses offering the different leisure activities in the territory. These are micro-businesses permanently open from April to September, and part-time open the rest of the year in function of the demand and weather. In most cases, they are specialised in one main activity and in parallel they offer a few complementary services in partnership with similar enterprises.

TABLE 44: TOURISM RECREATIONAL ENTERPRISES IN THE MORVAN

	Park	Ville	Total
Canoeing, kayak and rafting (rent and instruction)	8	1	9
Climbing	7	1	8
Multi activity nature activity enterprises	9		9
Horse riding (horse rental, group and individual tours)	23	2	25
Mountain bike tours (individual or collective)	4		4
Mountain bike rent	23	2	25
Hiking guiding (individual or collective)	7		7
Cross country skiing	1		1
Total	**78**	**6**	**84**

Source: own elaboration with data of PNRM (2002)

5.5. Which ecotourism products offers the Morvan?

As was already mentioned, tourism and ecotourism offered by the Morvan are infinite and in constant renovation. This territory not only includes several distinctive zones and natural resources supporting varied ecotourism activities, but also offers the possibility to enrich the ecotourism product with historical and cultural components. The sections below present the main tourism products offered in the Morvan in two steps: first, the most important nature-based tourism services; second, the way in which they interrelate with the local culture and heritage.

5.5.1. Hiking, cycling, horse riding, canoeing, kayaking, climbing…

Hiking on trails connecting woodened mountains, bumpy fields and picturesque towns: the Morvan's geo-physical and climatic conditions only allow extensive agriculture. So in order to take the maximum advantage of the reduced number of available farmlands found in this

territory, the development of agriculture occurred in parallel with the opening of numerous trails connecting isolated farms and countless little towns and country lodges that served as farmer's shelters. The habitat of this territory is thus covered by a dense network of rural paths and burgs that almost completely disappeared from the rest of the French territory due to the intensification of agriculture. From the early 1970s onwards, the park in partnership with different hiking associations started recovering and valorising this habitat, and ended by developing a network of more than 3500 km of official blazed trails currently used for hiking, cycling and horse riding.

Hiking alternatives include blazed circuits of different lengths and levels of difficulty, and thus adapted to satisfy different publics. Together with more typical GR, GRP and PR circuits[368], there exist in the Morvan a few special circuits, as is the case of trails organized for the discovery of the local flora and fauna[369], and others especially adapted for handicapped people. The GR13 is the most emblematic and ancient of the Morvan's hiking trails. It crosses the massif from north to south passing through the key touristic highlights of Vézelay, Settons and Bibracte, and thus connecting the GR1 trail (Île de France) with the Saône-et-Loire valley. Another emblematic GR circuit is the *Tour du Morvan*, created by the park in 1982 and which goes across the big Morvan lakes. In practical terms, depending on the public, these paths might be either travelled entirely or by one of the 80 shorter thematic segments. For example, Vézelay is a stopover for numerous trails including the Camino Santiago de Compostella. These circuits are a source of pride for the local population and of course one of the pillars of the Morvan's ecotourism structure. Nonetheless, the administrative fragmentation of the Morvan, not always match the coordinated maintenance, coherence and valorisation required by these tourism product (PNRM, 2006b).

The increasing demand for nature based tourism activities in Europe stimulated the implementation of new trails during the 1990s. From this impetus the park implemented shorter circuits of one or a half-day journey, which in most cases are articulated through a local heritage topic. In total, the Morvan hosts more than sixty shorter circuits that also operate as sections of larger ones. Supply diversification also led to the creation of new cycling and horse riding trails.

The challenges of cycling in the bumpy Morvan: with its 2500 km of blazed cycling trails, the Morvan is the first mountain biking territory of France. In total it has more than one hundred circuits varying in their levels of difficulty and length, and thus adapted to a wide range of

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[368] Grande randoneée (GR), grande randonnée du pays (GRP) and petite randonnée (PR)
[369] Humid meadow exploration circuit and Maison du Parc circuit.

publics. The park in partnership with several communes implemented an important number of circuits and also published the necessary tourist guides and documentation. Today, cycling plans development continues with the elaboration of a *Plan Vélo* including among others a circuit called *Grande Traversée du Morvan* that will go from Avallon to Saulieu and a *Tour du Morvan*. Since cycling is a flagship ecotourism activity for the Morvan and Burgundy, its governance is further explored in section 9.3.

Horse riding for trekking: the Morvan might also be discovered by horse for which has a circuit of 500 km named *Tour Équestre du Morvan* connecting ten equestrian centres and twenty equestrian gîtes providing facilities to accommodate riders with their horses, and also several horse rental providers. Maps and information on this circuit can be found in a park's guide and suppliers are organised in the local AREM[370] association located at Saint Brisson gathering equestrian tourism providers, accommodation and breeders.

Canoeing, whitewater kayaking rafting down the Cure, the Chaleux and the steps of the wood-floating industry: the Morvan is a very well adapted territory for the practice of river descents combining the enjoyment of a particular scenery with the presence of calm and brave waters. This asset was confirmed in the choice of the Morvan for the organization of the European and French canoeing-kayak tournaments since 2005. Certain segments of the Cure and the Chaleux rivers are naturally navigable and others are periodically boosted with the controlled evacuation of dam water. Perhaps the Morvan's hydrological conditions are not unique in the French territory, yet the proximity to Paris is a complementary powerful reason for this choice. Most of the enterprises offering the facilities to practice these activities are located in the North of the Morvan (Pierre-Perthuis, Domecy sur cure). They are micro-businesses offering various nature based leisure possibilities, among them whitewater descents, and run by young professionals performing administrative and tourist tasks.

The conflictive tourism role of lakes and rivers: the six lakes of the territory certainly are one of the most important tourist attractions of this territory. Originally constructed for the wood-floating industry, the lake Settons is a major tourism attraction in the Morvan since the creation of the Park. This lake is a nautical base that hosts leisure activities of different nature and ecological impact, ranging from simple boat rides, sailing and low-impact recreation alternatives for children to motorized activities disturbing the peace of the area. For that reason the governance of the lake

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[370] Association pour la Randonnée Équestre en Morvan (www.morvan-cheval.org)

Settons, and the one of the other five lakes are characterised by the presence of conflicts between partisans of sustainable tourism forms and people interested in motorized activities. (see section 9.2)

Fishing in the Morvan lakes and rivers: the rich hydrological conditions of the Morvan yearly attract numerous visitors willing to practice fishing sports. For this purpose, this territory has six lakes, five trout rivers and four tanks for fly fishing, as well as twelve gîtes with fishing facilities and all the necessary information for guiding and regulating this activity.

PHOTO 19: THE NORTHERN MORVAN   **PHOTO 20: GOLLOUX FALLS**

Source: author (2006)

Climbing, canopying and cross-country skiing: are three activities that have increased in demand during the last years for which the Morvan professionals, sometimes in partnership with the park, have implemented the equipments required for their practice. The Morvan has well-adapted conditions for the three activities: tall and close trees for canopying, mountains for climbing and snowed landscapes during winter. To a certain extent climbing and canopying in the Morvan have been developed in an original style. While the implementation of the facilities for canopying intends to respect the environmental conditions of the territory, the facilities for climbing include exceptional infrastructures for blind people.

As it can be observed in the previous paragraphs the Morvan offers a variety of ecotourism opportunities based on the utilisation of a local natural ecosystem and leading towards the

discovery of the local flora, fauna and ecological milieus. Nonetheless, besides the discovery of the local natural environment, the originality of ecotourism in the Morvan is its inseparability from the local cultural and historical heritage.

5.5.2. *Links between nature-based products and the Morvan's cultural heritage*

A strong cultural specificity is what distinguishes the Morvan's ecotourism product. The Morvan ecotourism experience is built in close relationship with the local culture, history and heritage. In most cases, ecotourism activities are combined with a set of cultural products, which together give rise to a hybrid tourist product combing nature and culture. For sure, this hybridity is unavoidable, since the biophysical characteristics of the Morvan are inextricably laced with every historical event undergone by this territory. Basically, we can distinguish three main products in which history, culture and nature merge:

Museums, écomusées and local heritage centers: the Morvan counts with a varied and vast sample of rural ethnological institutions devoted to restore, examine and exhibit the local cultural heritage. This includes an *écomusée network* led by the cultural agency of the park and formed by five thematic museums (*i.e.* galvachers, seigle, charolais, Vauban)[371] and four associated rural centres[372]. This cultural infrastructures also comprises twenty museums i.e. *Musée Rolin* (Autun), the *Musée et site archéologique de Bibracte*, the *Musée du Septenat* (Châteu-Chinon), the *Musée municipal François Pompon* (Saulieu) and the *Musée de la résistance en Morvan* (Saint-Brisson) and a large number of churches, monuments, cultural sites and archaeological vestiges all over the territory. The most famous ones are the Sainte-Madeleine Basilica, the Roman theatre (Autun), the Pierre-qui-Vire Abbey, the Bazoches Castle and the *mont* Beuvray archaeological site among many many others…

Trails and itineraries build upon the combination of natural and cultural heritages: most hiking circuits go through the previously mentioned sites, which depending on the zone might include the visit of ruins, picturesque towns, churches, museums, archaeological sites, etc. Example of these trails are *Les pierres des légendes* in the north, *La Boucle du Flottage* et *Le Chemin du Tacot* in the central area, and *Le tour de remparts de Bibracte* and *Les Galvachers* in the south (see PNRM, 2003a, 2003b).

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[371] *Maison des galvachers* (Anost), *Maison du seigle* (Ménessaire), *Maison de l'élevage et du charolais* (Moulins-Engilbert), *Maison des hommes et des paysages* (Saint Brisson) and *Maison Vauban* (Saint-Léger-Vauban).
[372] *Saboterie marchand* (Gouloux), *Maison des métiers du monde rural* (Tamnay-en-Bazois), *Musée du sabot* (Etang-sur-Arroux) and *Maison du vin et de la tonnellerie* (Ourux-en-Morvan).

Source: author (2006)

Ecotourism, agro-tourism and rural discovery: the combination of these three elements gives rise to very innovative tourism experiences combining territorial sustainability, agriculture and tourism. This segment still remains an unstructured tourist product, yet various farms in the Morvan offer the opportunity to discover different facets of the rural life. One interesting opportunity is to visit biological farms or any other farm producing traditional local products. Two emblematic examples are honey producers and medicinal plant growers, whose cultivations in many cases are also subject of individual and collective visits. Within this context, section 9.6 explores into more detail the case of an organic farm led by a couple willing to sharing with visitors their wonderful organic farm. The park, for its part, in an effort to include pedagogical components to the Morvan tourism experience, implemented an arboretum and a botanical garden, as well as several discovery points and panoramic outlooks in the territory.

Gastronomy, between refinement and tradition: the Morvan and more precisely high quality gastronomy and accommodation is world-known famous. Its highly sophisticated hotels and restaurants are recognized for their quality, charm and cuisine excellence led by famous French chefs, as is the case of the *Relais Bernanrd Loiseau*, *Auberge de l'Atre* and *L'Espérance.* Nonetheless, quality gastronomy is not restricted to luxury establishments. The Morvan also counts several charming traditional *auberges* that although do not have labels nor stars are very

appreciated and usually crowded by a loyal clientele. In most cases these are structures run by they owners and regionally well known by word of mouth, as is the case of the *Auberge ensoleillée*, *Chez Gaby* and the *Hôtel du Morvan*. Their menu includes local products (i.e. *jambon persillé*, *rosette du Morvan, jambon cru*) and local thematic dishes like the Galois-Roman menu served at the Hôtel du Morvan. This supply is completed with a wide range of local products (i.e. honey, meat, cheese, wine, juice…) certified by the park ('Parc' label) for their authenticity and quality.

PHOTO 23: GÎTE IN THE NORTH MORVAN   **PHOTO 24: GALLO-ROMAN MENU'S DESSERT AT THE HOTEL DU MORVAN**

Source: author (2006)

Oral, intangible and living cultural heritage: one key component of the tourism supply of a destination is its local ambiance, which is usually identified in the literature as the mattress over which the tourism experience is shaped, and so the lifeblood nourishing the tourism dynamics of the different territories. This local ambiance is thus built on the previously examined tourism products, which for their part were 'woven in different looms' and at different periods, by the different people and events that have formed this territory. Most of these dynamics followed the course of life and came somehow spontaneously. Others have been deliberately carried out to reproduce and recreate the Morvan's socio-cultural life and heritage. Nowadays, there exists a rich associative tissue in the Morvan composed by more than four hundred associations (PNRM, 2008a) conducting actions related to the local heritage, music, theatre and other artistic media. Musical creation and diffusion are very important and since 1979 led by the Association UGMN (*Union de Groupes et Ménétriers du Morvan*) responsible for the coordination of a network of thirty musical associations. Among others, UGMN with the collaboration of partners like the

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association *Mémoires Vives* organize numerous festivals and exhibitions all around the year. Despite their very local character they contribute directly and indirectly to the touristic animation of this territory. A few years ago the park created a cultural agency that today works with the above mentioned associations in cultural projects like The *Cafés Magots* network organizing musical festivals and other artistic manifestations. This cultural tissue is completed with theatre companies and other manifestations contributing to reinvigorate the local life.

PHOTO 25: VIEW FROM MOUX EN MORVAN

PHOTO 26: VIEW OF ATUN AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

Source: author (2006)

5.6. Sustainable tourism and ecotourism, the main tourism objectives of the Morvan park

The institution leading tourism development and trying to implement a global tourism plan is the Morvan park. The specificity of the park's current strategy is its focus on ecotourism and sustainability (PNRM, 2004c; 2008b). This objective is also the role assigned by the Burgundy region to the park (CRB, 2005).

Even if the focus on sustainability already existed in the late 1990s (PNRM, 2001), it was rather an overarching aim for all the domains of intervention of the park at that time. Participation and networking of tourism actors were one of the sustainability objectives of the second charter, from which emerged five associations gathering accommodation, restoration and nature sports professionals, plus one umbrella association gathering the more than 150 professionals involved

in these operation. The aim was to foster exchanges among them in order to improve the Morvan's tourism infrastructure, through the dialogue and a collective learning experience. For different reasons, these professional associations did not work as was expected. *"I take part in the association Séjour de Charme and I like participating, but for me it is difficult to arrive to Saint-Brisson. It is too far away from here. If I decide going to a meeting, I have to assume that I will spend the whole day. This is a complicated decision because I am alone running this structure"* (Hotel-restaurant owner). For others, going to a meeting *"is a waste of time, since meetings are just meetings. French people loose a lot of time in meetings and they decide too little. Nothing changes after a meeting. In the beginning I used to go, but now… We have too much work here to spend a complete morning in a meeting"* (newcomer running a guesthouse). For their part, members of the park's technical team are aware of these difficulties and recognize that today these associations are much less active than a few years ago. A park's official said, *"we made a mistake. It was not intelligent to divide providers according their service. When we think in tourism terms we must consider the entire tourism product. It is complicated because we are divided over four departments. For a meeting at Dun-les-Places, (in the north), people from the south have to travel for two hours and a half… so, they prefer not to come. Additionally, people expect miracles… and the élus do not tell the truth…"* However, they are not completely inactive. Among others, they manage a website with tourism information, they organize meetings and people end up by knowing each other, so informal networks of collaborations prevail.

The focus since the mid-2000 is ecotourism, and more precisely with the goal of fostering the emergence of a veritable ecotourism supply (PNRM, 2008a). In 2004 the park provided an input on tourism for the regional Plan, which stated that ecotourism and sustainability would be the main tourism objectives of the Morvan. This strategy was validated and supported by the region, and was concretely formalized in the candidacy for the European Charter. Actions to develop ecotourism and obtain this European certification focus on three related main issues: tourism supply, image of the Morvan and tourism products.

The quality of the tourism supply has always been a major preoccupation. The novelty from this period is its specific focus on environmental sustainability, eco-accommodation and certification. In order to implement the first dimension of the charter, the park has made a pre-diagnosis of the existing supply structure and of the people willing to reconvert their residence according ecotourism exigencies. In partnership with the Gîtes de France Federation, the park identified a group of structures apt for this operation, and provided the necessary support to reconvert those

gîtes into the WWF Panda label. This initiative has been very successful, with nine new certified gîtes in 2008 in Nièvre. The multidisciplinary team of the park has much knowledge to share in areas such as architecture, renewable energies, eco-efficiency and of course in the tourism valorisation of the gîte and the natural setting in which it is located. The park also contributes to the production of pedagogical information on the local flora and fauna and the development of circuits for the discovery of nature. This last task refers to the park's job to keep up the ensemble of tourism circuits hosted by the Morvan. Building partnerships with the network of tourism professionals facilitates coordination and engagement for an omnipresent and periodic safeguarding of the entire ecotourism equipment.

BOX 16: THE MAIN TOURISM ACTIONS CARRIED OUT BY THE PARK IN 2008

** Ecotourism is the main objective, materialised in the candidacy of the park to the European Charter for sustainable tourism.

Animation and **leadership** in the enhancement of natural sites and cultural heritage for tourism; cultural animation (festivals, exhibitions and other artistic manifestations); maintenance and equipment of hiking circuits.

Tourism certification: one main objective of the park is to obtain the ECST, throughout the implementation of the first dimension. The phases of pre-diagnosis and definition of orientation are ready.

Guidance, **support** and **technical advice** for tourism entrepreneurs: advice for quality upgrades of gîtes (comfort, energy saving, funding possibilities); this task was simultaneously done to a quality evaluation of hiking circuits, oriented to adapt their tracing according to those gîtes meeting the currently required quality standards.

Gîtes panda: the park provided support and guidance to gîtes filling the conditions for reconverting into gîtes panda and willing to obtain this label. The park gives technical support in architecture, renewable energies, heritage, sustainable energy uses, development of pedagogical information on the local flora and fauna, etc. In 2008, nine new gîtes panda were born, totalling twelve structures.

Support to local products: there exists twenty businesses and products labelled *Parc naturel régional du Morvan i.e.* ovine and bovine meat, chicken, honey, cheese and other dairy products, apple juice, snails, Vézelay wine and milk mare, and a network of seven *Bistrots Marque Parc* engaged in a common commercial and consulting strategy. Labelled actors are organized in the Association *Morvan Terroirs*, directed by the park and responsible for commercialisation, publishing of brochures, etc.

Specific tourism examples:

- **In partnership:** Haut Folin project; the running of the park's tourism office; institutional coordination for the maintenance of trekking circuits (departments, communes and CC); technical assistance for the organization of sport events; tourism advice.
- **Led actions**:
    o Pôle d'excellence rurale (PER) "Les Grands Lacs du Morvan": this pole inaugurated a Bird Observatory (Pannecière).
    o Fitting-out of the Settons Lake tour and of its nautical base; studies for the tourism valorization of the other lakes.
    o *La Grande traversée du Morvan à VTT* (240 km from Avallon to Autun): the park leads the implementation of this biking circuit, in partnership with the association *Vélo Morvan Nature* and a network of service providers located all along the circuit (accommodation, restaurants, shopkeepers…).
- **Others**: *Morvan pour tous* and the fitting-out of the park for able and disabled people; implementation of carrying capacity monitoring instruments in fragile ecosystems (10 in the entire Park)

Source: author based on PNRM (2008c)

The effort made for accommodation also has an effect on the Morvan's tourism image and in the elaboration of tourism products, which are the two other main objectives pursued by the park. While making the most of the Morvan's green image, the park is trying to open new business opportunities and stimulate several possibilities of certification to boost quality. In addition to the labelled artisanal products and the network of *Bistrot Parc*, efforts are directed to create and sell certified packaged ecotourism products. This is the target for the forthcoming years, which is identified as one of the main weaknesses of the Morvan and of the entire Bourgogne.

In 2005 most of the Morvan communes joined the *massif central* (see section 9.4), and since then, the Morvan park takes joined the Association *Inter-Parcs massif central IPAMAC*. IPAMAC is a network of parks leading tourism action and territorial marketing, being sustainability the main tourism development aim. It must be said that the IPAMAC strategy, sponsored by the EUROPARC federation, is neither original nor different from the one led by the French Federation of regional parks

In any case, financial support for the different activities and tasks comes might come from the region (*Conseil Régional de Bourgogne*), departments, communes and inter-communal structures, as well as from different contractual initiatives with the national and EU levels. In energy savings, the ADEME might also be involved. Guidance and recommendation for tourism firms is provided by the association Bourgogne Tourisme, the DIREN and the Conservatoire des Sites Naturels Bourguignons (see Perrusson, 2008a and chapter five of this dissertation).

6. THE MORVAN AS AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION

To asses how well the Morvan is meeting or not the criteria of ecotourism examined in chapter three and operationalized in chapter four, it is necessary to evaluate three main points: a) the development of ecotourism according to the criteria and principles defined in chapter two; b) the public, private and civil society efforts to 'green' conventional tourism practices; c) the system of governance and its dynamics favouring or distorting ecotourism and more sustainable territorial action. Section 6.1. focuses on points a) and b), notably on the application of Table 21 (p. 188) to the Morvan case. The final sections of this chapter are devoted to the reflection on the governance of ecotourism for a more sustainable territory and the role of collective action (Table 23 p. 190 and Box 8 p.191).

6.1. Nature based principle

The visitors choosing the Morvan as their holiday destination do so because of its natural and cultural characteristics and its protected area status. Above all, the ecological features of this unexpected mountain are the main tourism attraction, and constitute the main support over which the Morvan's ecotourism experience is built. Certainly, the Morvan houses unique ecosystems and is to a certain extent relatively free of pollution and human intervention compared to other European territories with similar characteristics. The Morvan is a protected area and ecotourism is now viewed as the best hope for territorial sustainability as it enjoys of a loyal clientele deeply in love with its geography, nature, flora and fauna. Moreover, the fact that the Morvan has such a particular history which left a footprint on its forests, watercourses and farmlands, contrary to what we might think, this is not a reason for frightening visitors off, but a factor for attracting them. While the watercourses traced in past years for the wood floating are use today for canoeing and kayaking, extensive agriculture roads and refuges are the support for the renamed Morvan's hiking circuits.

It would be naive to believe that all travellers to natural areas hold strong ecological values. Clearly, people visiting the Morvan are moved by the desire of getting back to nature and escape from their routines. The Morvan offers open landscapes and amazing sightseeing inviting to a deep and long breath. However, there is a difference between these green motivations, perhaps common to all visitors to protected areas, and the attitude and behaviour assumed by travellers. Ecotourists visiting the Morvan are not a homogeneous group and the variety of tourist alternatives proposed by this territory is large. More precisely, it is possible to identify at least five groups of tourists, from which three might enter in the ecotourism category. (i) The so-called hard ecotourist, choosing the Morvan for its natural characteristics and the quality of the tourism infrastructure. This is a group of people seeking a deep interaction with nature and making travel arrangements independently. They engage in long hiking circuits, they stay in the Morvan for about 10 to 15 days, and they mostly choose the gîtes d'étape option for accommodation. This category includes visitors from different nationalities, and even a few isolated travellers coming from North America and Canada with a large ecotourism experience. (ii) There is also a softer category of ecotourists, yet this classification do not necessary alludes to their environmental commitment. It mainly refers to the different profile of this group of travellers, which although their major motivation still is the natural environment, they are moved by a multi-purpose trip. They are rather loyal 'smooth' ecotourists, staying in higher quality campings or caravans, for a period of about two weeks. During the day, they alternate short hiking circuits or other nature-

based activity, the discovery of the local culture and enjoy the typical restaurants, cafes and shops. This is a segment affected by a strong seasonality and influenced by the yearly weather conditions. According to interviewees, two or three days of bad weather might discourage even the most loyal clientele. (iii) Another category of visitors can also be considered as soft or smooth ecotourists *i.e.* visitors spending their sojourn in rural gîtes or guesthouses. Either in the summer period or during the year, this segment selects the Morvan for its environmental qualities and socio-cultural features, and organizes either one week or weekend sojourns in which they share their time between soft nature-based activities, discovery of the local territory and cultural tourism. (iv) The fourth category are persons of nature-based sport activities. This is a special interest segment formed by people visiting the Morvan for the conditions that this territory offers for the practice of a specific sports activity (*i.e.* rivers for kayak or rocky walls for climbing. These visitors, younger in age, might enjoy other elements of the Morvan, yet their essential interest is situated in the practice of a sport. They might go for one weekend or for longer periods, and usually stay in accommodation located near their leisure activity. (v) Finally, a more luxury minded and high-standing segment seeking for sophistication excellence in accommodation and cuisine. In most cases, this group is formed by retired people, both French and foreign, spending maximum one week in the territory. Seasonality within this segment is lower, although stays are more numerous during the summer.

6.2. Environmental and cultural educative aims

The question here alludes to the extent by which the Morvan ecotourism experience builds on environmental awareness and is founded in the respect of the local culture. This issue can be analyzed for visitors and locals since it is expected that the effect of ecotourism in producing environmental awareness among tourists but would also enhance 'greener' behaviours among the local population. In general, the Morvan receives good marks for initiatives carried out by the Park and other actors in this respect, as well as for the effects on both visitors and local population of this green educative élan. Since its foundation, the Morvan Park by means of its multiple museums, pedagogical trails, scientific publications and tourism guides, among others, has deployed a pedagogical approach. In fact, compared to other destinations, France and so the Morvan have an extraordinary talent for enhancing the different local heritage through the development of pedagogical tourism experiences.

Nonetheless, the building of environmental awareness and respect for the local culture is not only the responsibility of the Park. Indeed, the Morvan has other institutions watching over the quality

of its ecosystems: environmental associations engaged in the biodiversity of forests, an agenda 21 trying to introduce more sustainability in the area of Autun, yet this action is not directly related with tourism. In parallel to this more official/institutionalised action, the reproduction of knowledge and awareness regarding the environment is also stimulated by the local population offering different tourism products. In many cases those that today offer tourism services in the Morvan are newcomers who arrived to the Morvan in recent years. This group plays a major role in the transfer of green values among tourists and the local population by using the benefits of ecotourism for the local economy as an argument for environmental preservation.

6.3. Economic, environmental and socio-cultural sustainability

6.3.1. *Economic sustainability*

Over the course of almost four decades, progress has been made regarding the economic role of ecotourism in diversifying and providing stability to the local economic system. Many members of the Morvan society are getting tangible and material benefits from ecotourism, either from running tourism-related micro-business or more indirectly through the repercussions that the investments on ecotourism and tourists expenditures might engender to the territory. The Morvan still remains an economically deprived territory and it is certainly not one of the top-ranked green tourism destinations, yet the benefits produced by this activity are tangible. The Morvan has increasingly been dotted with small locally owned tourism micro-business, run by one or two persons. In many cases these are people combing tourism with other rural economic activity like farming. The number of gîtes and guesthouses has considerably increased over the last years, as well as the structures offering nature-based tourism activities. There are many examples of workers developing more than one activity, context in which ecotourism means a second revenue in addition to agriculture. For instance, farmers are offering horse rental, rural accommodation and several local products i.e. honey, organic products, *liqueur de cassis*, etc. On the other hand, the Morvan has attracted new residents that have thrown themselves into tourism. To develop new ecotourism services, newcomers purchase and restore rural traditional residences. They also get involved in a number of local activities that seek to improve the living conditions of their new 'home territory'. They do this driven by a personal search for better quality of life and by the wish to host tourists in the best possible conditions. Undoubtedly, this low-density ecotourism has not been a revolution for the Morvan in terms of employment and revenues, as might be the installation of a big tourism resort in a given territory. However, because of this moderate and progressive effect, it has being possible to conserve authenticity, and people offering tourism services have not completely abandoned their traditional occupations, so despite seasonality they

are not completely dependent on tourism revenues. With regard to territorial equity, even though the Morvan presents four main tourist sites (Settons, Vézelay, Saint-Brisson and Bibracte), this does not impede the tourist infrastructure and its benefits from being distributed over the territory. In sum, ecotourism has generated new business opportunities for locals, but it is mainly developed as a complement to traditional activities. One interesting example, is the management of rural accommodation integrated to hiking circuits that allowed farmers to join a commercial network, gain extra revenues and above all improve the quality of life and enrich the social networks of a population living in quite isolated situation, notably women.

Ecotourism has also become an argument for attracting different public funds to the territory. More precisely, the European charter for sustainable tourism will necessarily entail the mobilisation of financial and human resources for the improvement of the local tourism infrastructure. In parallel, the recently approved LEADER, entitled *Valoriser les productions et les savoirs faire au service de l'identité et de l'attractivité du Morvan* will bring about 7 M € to the territory, which will be invested in tourism and other local development activities *i.e.* territorial marketing, upgrading of the quality of the tourism infrastructure and actors networking (PNRM, 2008a).

6.3.2. *Environmental sustainability*

Even if the Morvan does not have an official and unique structured model for low-impact ecotourism, a few initiatives have been carried out in this direction. The environment is the spearhead of tourism in the Morvan, and the strategy tacitly agreed by the ensemble of local actors, and expressed in the park's official documents, is the development of diffuse and soft tourism forms, equitably spread all over the territory (PNRM, 2007). Ecotourism is the main objective set for this park, as has been stated in regional and more local documents (PNRM, 2004c, 2007; CRB, 2005, 2007) and officially engaged in the candidacy of the Morvan Park to the European charter for sustainable tourism. Inevitably this plan should minimize the environmental impact of tourism, and thus contribute to the Morvan's sustainability.

Nonetheless, in reality, the Morvan is not free of environmentally unsustainable practices and contradictory development strategies. In assessing the environmental effects of tourism, Pascal Ribaud, ancient director of the Park, identifies three main sources of environmental damage: motorized vehicle practices (motorcycle, Quad, 4WD, jet ski), chaotic and anarchic motor homes parked in unauthorized areas, and mono-cultivations in forestry attempting against one of the

most important symbolic tourism assets of the Morvan, its biodiversity qualities. The incompatibility between ecotourism and these three unsustainable activities has been subject of a lot of discussion among the local population and institutions. With regard to motorized terrestrial activities, which have become a classic icon of discontentment for a lot of fragile green areas (Roberts and Hall, 2001), the Morvan Park became a national example with its *Charte de bonnes pratiques des sports et loisirs motorisés,* several times praised in the journal of French regional parks. Thus the Park, in addition to the implementation of a particular strategy for more fragile areas (*i.e.* G13, the lakes, thematic and environmental discovery trails), organized dialogues among the concerned actors, including moto-riders, to try controlling and better governing this practice. As a result, a few communes have completely forbidden these vehicles in their territories (this is the only spatial scale that has the right to do it) and a good practice code was implemented. However, the problem is still not resolved. In 2008 the park pressed charges to quads riders that took the Cure as a trail (Gillot, 2008). Problems concerning motor homes, woodlands and jet ski in the lakes have still not being resolved, and are not subject of specific charters.

Strategies for a more sustainable Morvan are not only led by the Park, but also involve a plurality of actors that goes far beyond the public sector. The interesting thing here is that these actors are directly related with ecotourism. In most cases, they are engaged with the Morvan and they arrive to this territory as tourists. Later, because of the natural characteristics and beauty of this territory, they become second home proprietors and in many cases tourism micro-entrepreneurs. Along this process, they often start integrating the rural French society and knitting particular governance configurations leading to more territorial sustainability. Ecotourism and its sustainability potential, certainly supported by the fact that this is a protected area, became the argument for struggle.

This reflection is interesting because here we explore the impact of ecotourism in terms of governance and social relationships. Weak points regarding ecotourism in the Morvan concern noise, waste and damaging of ecosystems due to unsustainable tourism forms, as well as other unsustainable territorial activities such as forestry. So the question here is: to what extent can ecotourism and more precisely its governance induce sustainability transformations in terms of environmental protection, rehabilitation of modified spaces and prevention of ecological disasters, among others. Through the examination of nine micro-cases, section nine deepens the question about the how and who foster socio-institutional change for a more sustainable Morvan,

and what is the role of ecotourism in creating new niches that might socially empower citizens for conducting actions favouring sustainability.

6.3.3. *Socio-cultural sustainability*

The role of ecotourism in fostering social and cultural sustainability might be observed from at least three interrelated viewpoints: sustainability of the cultural heritage; the social benefits of ecotourism and; governance for sustainable development. Undoubtedly, tourism and ecotourism has been a stimuli to conserve, rehabilitate and enhance the Morvan cultural heritage. This has been done in different ways and led by different partners. One example is the rehabilitation of the wineries at Vézelay that conjointly ended by embellishing the local surroundings, producing a new local product and recalling the local history to visitors and inhabitants. Ecotourism activities have also been the reason for recovering the collective memory past events and put it at the service of hiking trails this making it touristy meaningful. The flourishing of different kinds of museums in this territory is also closely related to the growing number of visitors arriving to the region mainly for its natural characteristics. The list might be infinite, yet it seems important to stop to look into more detail at the role of the repopulation of this territory by newcomers and their investments in the restoration of traditional houses and farmlands for living and touristic reasons.

One last point to highlight in this section concerns the socio-cultural impact of ecotourism, in terms of the new social opportunities that this practice implies for the traditional rural population living in very isolated conditions since a long time. The following words of an interviewee rejoin the reflections in chapter three on the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism. According to him *"farmers and forestry workers are today tourism entrepreneurs. Their wives, that used to be isolated, are now engaged in the running of a gîte or a guesthouse. This is a very important transformation, because these women are no longer isolated and shut in alone in their houses. This is a source of mental and intellectual progress for them"* (Mayor of a Morvan commune).

7. THE MORVAN AS A SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE: THE CONSTELLATION OF ACTORS FORMING THE MORVANDELLE SOCIETY

Even if the number of inhabitants living in the Morvan has decreased over the years, the heterogeneity of the social tissue shaping the character of the *morvandelle* society has gained in variety. During the last decades the traditional local society, essentially formed by peasants and forestry workers, has undergone significant transformations thanks to the increase of the number

of farmers practicing more than one economic activity, and the arrival of new inhabitants. Tourism, and more precisely the growing demand for ecotourism, has played a central role in this mutation. On the one hand, more farmers diversify their sources of income through tourism; on the other, a new wave of French and foreigner population has settled in the Morvan to start ecotourism activities. This group of entrepreneurs joined the local population working in the tourism sector since long date. This whole of actors is completed with newcomers who moved to the Morvan for developing other nature-based activities needing unpolluted environments, as is the case of organic and experimental cultivations.

Another relevant transformation is the proliferation of new groups of the civil society committed to natural and cultural heritage preservation. Echoing the second wave of environmentalism, regional environmentalist groups have closely being keeping a close eye on the only protected area of Burgundy. Simultaneously, a renewed interest for local traditions has fostered the creation of new groups and associations engaged with the rescuing and enhancement of the material and immaterial cultural heritage of this territory. To the same extent as environmentalist and cultural initiatives cannot be dissociated, the groups involved in these actions are heterogeneous and congregate members of the traditional *morvandelle* society, French and foreign newcomers and members of the public sector working in different local institutions. Below I examine in more detail the interests, values and world visions guiding these people.

7.1. The traditional Morvan population: a present built out of strong memories

Lumberjacks, *flotteurs*, *galvacheurs*, wet-nurses and *maquis* represent different facets of the *morvandiau* identity which also witnesses of isolation due to altitude, economic difficulties, migrations and people with a hermetic human character. The Morvan has always been described as a clammed up territory, populated by left wing people, brave resistants and rude farmers. Nonetheless, if there is one single adjective that describes the Morvan, it is its inhabitants' capacity to constantly feed a sentiment of deep belonging and cult of collective memory (see Vigreux, 1987, 2003a, 2003b; Séverin, 1995). Despite deprivations, isolation, crises and political divisions, the Morvan people keep a sentiment of respect and pride for their natural territory, history and culture. This part of the Morvan identity is an essential ingredient of the sense of place attached to this territory, which becomes tangible in the talks visitors might share with local people, and is materialized in the ensemble of rural museums, local festivals and writings about the Morvan. All these symbolisms and means of communicating them take part and shape the system of local governance, and also feed the tourist image of this territory. Ecotourism is about

meeting, encountering, sharing, interpreting and transmitting. From this perspective, the Morvan natives play a pivotal role. Moreover as the Morvan native population occupies a role in agriculture, farming, forestry, tourism or other, they are fundamental in the protection, enhancement and transmission of the local traditions, heritage and culture. This might be intentionally done, through the development of tourism related business, or in a more indirect way, just continuing living in this territory, taking part in the local associative tissue and if possible sharing with visitors.

7.2. The native population directly invested in tourism since long time and its role in transmitting the local culture

Among local inhabitants, there exists a group of *morvandiau* who have been involved in tourism since a long time. Basically, they are natives running family restaurants and/or small rural accommodation structures. Since they are simultaneously the owners, managers and in many cases the chefs of these establishments, there exists a lot of uncertainty concerning succession to this generation of workers close to retirement. Among many others, Françis (*Auberge de l'Atre*), Cecile (*Hôtel de la Poste, Chez Cecile*) and Annie (*Auberge Ensoleillée*) are veritable living institutions in this territory. They do not only appear in every tourism guide, but they are very important personalities, which have progressively become local leaders among their partners and public actors.

Francis Salamolard, son and grandson of Burgundy farmers, is a native from Auxerre and settled at Quarré-les-Tombes since 1985. After travelling and working in Holland, Germany and England, he founded the *Auberge de L'Atre*, a structured that evolved from being a simple bar to a sophisticated restaurant and seven-room hotel, renowned for its wine cellar and dishes made of locally caught trout, regional cheeses, charolais meat, and honey, mushrooms and raw ham of the Morvan, among many others. The boss, a wine passionate, is the chef of a fifteen workers team. He welcomes local and regional clients during eight to nine months per year, and a foreig passing through clientele (English, Dutch, Germans, Belgians and Swiss) from July 15 to September 15. In his words, *"these are clients looking for a good ambiance, conviviality, qualité de la table and wine culture" (…) "the secret of success is the restaurant's small scale, warmth and the fact that the boss is simultaneously at the kitchen and sharing with the visitors. A group of clients follows us since more than twenty years"*. Nonetheless, Françis Salamolard daily moves far beyond his hotel and kitchen. Since his arrival to the Morvan, he has developed and led numerous activities and projects. He is indeed a well-recognized and appreciated figure in his town and at the Morvan

scale. He simultaneously leads the local association *Promotion Quarré Morvan,* carrying out intensive cultural and tourism action at Quarré-les-Tombes, and *Morvan Tourisme*, association created at the request of the Park and gathering the Morvan's tourism professionals. Another witness of the Salamolard's leadership, combining dynamism, passion and love for its territory, was the complete renovation of the *Hôtel du Nord – Restaurant le Saint Georges*, originally constructed at Quarré-les-Tombes in 1854. In fact, agreeing with the Park's representatives, Salamolard is worried for the deficient quality of the accommodation sector, which certainly is a major incentive for his involvement in the associative sector.

Cécile, *la patrone* of the *Hôtel de la Poste - Chez Cécile* (Grande-Verrière) is a great personality of the south Morvan. Although she takes part in different tourism associations, according to her, it is *"the bouche-à-oreille what attracts her clients"*. In her words, *"clients visit the Morvan for the beauty and greenness of the massif (...), La-Grande-Verrière for its proximity to Bibracte (...) and go dining Chez Cecile for meeting her and trying her delicious and mysterious specialities"*. Going to have dinner Chez Cecile is always a bet. She cooks according to her daily insights and local products availability. For their part, visitors are always longing to come back.

In the same corner, at *Saint-Léger-sous-Beuvray* town, tourists might also bump into the traditional *Hôtel du Morvan* with its traditional Gallo-Roman menu and savoury regional kitchen. At Châteu-Chinon, the great panoramic view and good quality of the table of the *Hôtel-restaurant Au Vieux Morvan* still keeps the prestige that convinced François Mitterrand to choose the same hotel room for staying each time he visited his circumscription. Last, but not least, I mention the *Auberge Ensoleillée* and Annie, the boss, at Dun-les-Places, in the North, where I had the pleasure to conduct several interviewes and to share delicious dinners with park officials. Certainly, the quality and the role of these people and their traditional tourism structures play in perpetuating traditions, sharing the local cultural and flavouring the Morvan touristic experience, yet fear regarding their continuity prevails. As expressed by a Park's official, *"Annie will soon go into retirement… and who will relieve her? There is no one for doing so. This is a pity because Annie takes part in the group of tourism actors that keep their business open all around the year, and this is fundamental if we want to extend the tourism season"*.

Although nature is the tourism strength recognized by all these people, the words environmental preservation and sustainability are not part of their discourses. It is not that they are not concerned at all by the natural environment, but their focus is rather on the traditions, local cuisine and

cultural heritage. As to their implication in associative and collective activities, there is a relationship between their closer or longer distance to Saint-Brisson. Those who are located closer to the park's headquarters are more active.

7.3. However, the Morvan's charm is not only the outcome of the local inhabitants efforts

One important piece of the Morvan's system of governance has been imported by newcomers. Since a long time the Morvan has experienced the arrival of an increasing number of new inhabitants, either coming from France or from north European countries. This is quite an eclectic population, coming from far beyond Burgundy and in many cases not connected at all with the rural world. Of course, this is not an exclusive phenomenon of the Morvan and restricted to present times. British in the Perigord and Italians in the Provence are an old story (see Diri, 2008). However, findings gathered for this research show the significance of this socio-cultural transformation for the governance of the Morvan, ecotourism and territorial sustainability. For a local Mayor *"the Morvan population has two origins: the morvandels and the external people, called neo-ruraux twenty years ago. The neo-ruraux were the ones that helped the park to evolve, because they have a different vision compared to locals. Newcomers pushed the evolution of the Morvan, through setting up examples of integration and agricultural, tourism and artisanal development. The richness of this territory is not only due to autochthon people. We have to make the marriage of both"*.

The new arrivals and governance dynamics fostered by newcomers are related to major environmental transformations of the contemporary society, as well as with the process of diversification of the tourism sector from which ecotourism emerged. What is going on inside the Morvan is an example revealing how spatial and temporal scales relate. A small protected area like the Morvan, with its internal governance, integrates and connects with a more global discourse on the quality of life and the need for a more close and harmonic relationship between human beings and nature. The sentiment lying beneath this discourse, spread among an increasing urban population, carries new inhabitants to territories like the Morvan. For the last decade, statistics show how the number of newcomers to the Morvan, both French and foreigners, considerably increased. According to INSEE Bourgogne (2005), between 1990 and 1999 at the same time as the Morvan park welcomed 10.900 persons, 7.840 persons left, leaving a positive migratory difference of 3.060 persons and denoting that almost 24% of the Morvan inhabitants did not live in the Morvan before. The interesting question is to explore who are these newcomers, why do they arrive here and how do they become part of the Morvan society.

Newcomers are moved by similar motives than the ones expressed by tourists, which basically are the natural characteristics of the massif. With the development of communications and transport means, well-located natural areas offer simultaneously a 'change of scene' and the possibility to still be connected. For its part, ecotourism, especially for urban people that have already been ecotourists, is a viable and enjoyable activity matching the new green values, life-styles and interests moving these people. Certainly, ecotourism is not the only possibility. Organic agriculture, artistic activities, teleworking and services are also viable economic alternatives. Yet, directly or indirectly, they are all related with the enhancing and sustainability of the territory, thus with its tourism charisma. As to the question about who are these newcomers, INSEE Bourgogne (2005) identifies three main groups: newcomers from Burgundy, newcomers from other French regions and foreigners.

7.3.1. Burgundian and French newcomers

French new arrivals come from Burgundy or from other French region. According to INSEE Bourgogne (2005), regional newcomers reached about 4.800 people for the period 1990-1999. In most cases, they are young couples with ages ranging from 30 to 40 years that decided moving to the Morvan for its natural characteristics. This study also reveals that there exists a wave of Burgundy people, coming from Autun and Avallon, going to live inside the Park, as well as a smaller group, from Dijon and Nevers, moving the park's *villes portes* towards the Morvan's inner lands. Château-Chinon, Saulieu and their surroundings are the preferred towns.

While most of this population lives inside the park but works outside its perimeter, implying daily trips between two distant towns (INSEE Bourgogne, 2005), a growing group lives and works inside the Morvan. This is the case of the owner of a nature-based tourism micro-business near Vézelay. He is a young native of Avallon that lives and works in the Morvan since a few years ago, after studying at Dijon *"After school I did a professional training to become and animateur sportif. In the beginning I was a climbing instructor and a few years later I built this business with a colleague. We have moved inside the Morvan until finding the precise place we needed for our activities. Since we needed to be closer to a river (the Cure) and Vézelay offered interesting tourism perspectives, we moved to Saint-Père".*

Nonetheless, French inhabitants not only come from Burgundy. The previously cited study revealed migratory fluxes from Paris-Île-de-France (about 3320 persons, including 650 Parisians), Rhône-Alpes (400) and PACA (220). The environmental quality of the massif and its location are

decisive arguments for choosing the Morvan as their place of residence. Especially for those coming from Paris, the Morvan is a relatively close green and charming area, offering proximity with nature and the city. Two Parisians women, working in tourism, admit that the Morvan is simultaneously a charming and exotic territory, and located very close to Paris. *"We arrived to the Morvan because we wanted to leave Paris. Paris is saturated of people. We were searching for tranquillity. Founding a small inn was a good alternative for earning our life".*

A very interesting and innovative case of French newcomers is the couple Elisabeth and Didier, who arrived in the Morvan in 1996. In 2000, they installed an organic farm for the cultivation of aromatic and medicinal plants at the locality of Brassy. *"We chose the Morvan for its nature and environmental protection standard. We need an unpolluted territory for organic cultivation. The Morvan is free of large farms and industries, it thus offers the qualities we were searching for".* After years of hard work, this farm became an impressive heaven of green and colourful natural beauty opened to visitors, which deserves further analysis (see section 9.6).

7.3.2. *The North-European presence: Dutch, Belgians, Germans and British*

INSEE Bourgogne (2005) data counted 550 foreign residents living in the Morvan. Most of them come from northern European countries and, with 130 coming from the Netherlands. The first foreigners that arrived to the Morvan did it in the early 1960s. They were German people that came to invest in the forestry sector. Later, in the 1970s, the Morvan started receiving Dutch motor homes, and since then the Dutch presence significantly grew. They form today a group integrated by tourists, second homes owners, and permanent and intermittent residents. Certainly, the Dutch are not the only foreign nationality represented in the Morvan, yet statistics reveal their majority by far. While the average of Dutch second homes in French territory is near 8%, in Nièvre it reaches 70%, totalling 1520 second homes, followed by British (8%), Germans (5%), Belgians (5%) and Suiss (5%)[373] (Deschamps, 2005)[374]. Without dismissing the impact that the presence of all these newcomers might have in the territory, the Dutch preponderance calls for a deeper reflection, since the Morvan is one of the most important French territories in hosting Dutch people. In most cases, this population firstly arrive to the Morvan as tourists. After a couple of seasons, they invest in a traditional house, for either spending holidays or settling. Statistics for the last four decades show an increase in the acquisition of houses for multi-residential and permanent living. From the 550 foreigners arrived in the 1990s, 130 were Dutch

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[373] A similar pattern is reproduced in the French South East with the elevated presence of British inhabitants.
[374] British and Germans prefer the Saône-et-Loire, the Dutch both Nièvre and the Saône-et-Loire, and the Belgium are uniformly distributed all over the territory (Deschamps, 2005).

retired people (INSEE Bourgogne, 2005). However, agreeing with Cognard (2008), this dissertation shows that the Morvan Dutch population is quite more diverse. This variety is still not visible in the statistics because of the population flows, the open European frontiers allowing free circulation, and the recent exacerbation of this transformation thus far not measured by census data. This information is also incomplete due to the existence of non-declared gîtes and permanent residents for tax evasion reasons (see Van der Lee, 2009). Cognard (2008) detected a high presence of foreigners in two communes of Nièvre and the Saône-et-Loire. Ourux-en-Morvan (670 inhabitants) had in 2003 eighty foreign residences hosting nearby 200 newcomers, of which twelve Dutch couples became permanent residents and had several children at school. Similarly, Cussy-en-Morvan (471 inhabitants) hosted seventy foreign families, among which forty Dutch. A local real estate company estimates that near three thousands residences are owned by the Dutch (Cognard, 2008).

It seems crucial to reflect on the reasons explaining the decision of this group to settle in the Morvan, as well as on its role in the local system of governance. Broadly, the Dutch are attracted by the massif's biophysical characteristics, specially by its bumpy geography, spacious landscapes and spectacular panorama, combined with its low population density and remoteness. These are features particularly appreciated by natives from dense urbanized countries looking for a different way of life. *"It is very nice and so great that my children have the opportunity to grow up in this natural area, far away from consumption, aggressions from the city, pollution, noise… We are very happy here, and we are not really so far away from our country"* (Dutch tourism micro-business owner). The Dutch appreciate the nearness of the Morvan to the Netherlands, compared to other mountainous destinations demanding longer trips. The Morvan has a 'connected-disconnected' quality, related to the lack of interior large roads and its external carrefour position. Last but not least, they mention the price of the Morvan residences, which compared to other territories with similar characteristics, appears to be very attractive for people willing to invest in a natural area. The fact that the Morvan is a park constitutes a guarantee for this population, recognized in Europe for its environmental consciousness and affection for nature.

The Dutch are not only visitors or permanent residents, they are also a group of people who highly appreciate the Morvan.As to those living in the territory, besides retired people, a growing group of younger residents works in ecotourism and offers accommodation and food services. The different tourism guides usually highlight the good quality of their services and their warm

welcoming. In most cases, they are people developing more than one activity. This is the case of a young couple with two children who arrived to the Morvan a few years ago. As she put it in an interview, *"our visitors have the possibility to stay in our guesthouse or to camp in the garden, depending on the weather. (…) Besides the guesthouse, we renovated another house for renting, we are supervising the renovation of other residences owned by Dutch people, and during the winter we look after the houses of the ones that do not live here. We also take care of their gardens".* The Dutch's long-term objectives in the Morvan are reflected in their implication in the collective life of the territory. The Morvan hosts the biggest Dutch association in France, called *Club du Morvan.* This association is active in several domains with the aim to facilitate the integration of the Dutch into the French system. For instance, it provides updated information on laws and regulations that might concern the Morvan Dutch population. Since the complexity of the politico-administrative and legal system of France is a major difficulty, a few months ago, they organized a workshop on the creation and management of rural gîtes for those willing to start a business of this kind. Other topics addressed are the purchase and renovation of houses, gîtes rentals, language barriers and cultural differences, participation in the local associative life, the potential inclusion of Dutch people in the elected political life, nature preservation, sustainability of the local economy, the role of the Dutch community in the Morvan, communication and information diffusion, etc. (Van der Lee, 2007). One landmark in the evolution of the association has been the translation of their website into French.

7.3.3.   The role of the varied tourists and ecotourists visiting the Morvan

It is difficult to asses the specific role performed by visitors. In the case of ecotourism, it is expected that visitors will contribute to the sustainability and enhancement of destinations. This contribution might be either direct, throughout the payment of an entrance fee that will be reinvested in nature preservation, or indirect, related to the effects that the presence of tourists might induce to the locality. The entrance to a French protected area is free, thus direct benefits obtained from visitors are not possible. As to indirect benefits, they can vary and depend on the profile of visitors and their practices, especially in the case of a semi-protected area like the Morvan. Certainly, while an important number of visitors are ecotourists moved by green values and motivations, there also exist visitors who go to the Morvan to practice a motorized sport activity that do not respect at all for the local territory and its population.

Nonetheless, for the good or for the bad, the arrival of visitors induces changes in the governance of a destination. Either temporarily or in a more permanent mode, tourists get involved, exchange

and thus feed the system of governance of the visited destinations. Disruptive motorized practices produce conflicts and discontent among the local population, and therefore impose the need for a dialogue among the concerned actors. In the case of the quads, this dialogue resulted in a good behaviour code for quad riders, which emerged from a collective reflection on the kind of tourism and life conditions wished for the Morvan. This conflict also provoked the complete prohibition of the quads in a few communes of the park.

The positive effects that ecotourists might produce in a certain territory are varied and more complex. The growing number of tourists arriving to the Morvan combined with the ecotourism fashion have progressively been integrated in the mentalities of a segment of the local population, which today uses the words 'ecotourism' and 'sustainability' as the arguments for demanding more environmentally respectful actions and policy decisions. Even those that are not directly connected with tourism as a business, employ the sustainability potential of ecotourism as a strong reasoning in favour of a more sustainable governance. This argument is elaborated in two main senses. On the one hand, it refers to the economic loss due to a reduction of tourists' numbers. If the environment is spoiled, ecotourism would not be possible and this would be a loss for the local economy. On the other hand, the green values associated to ecotourists are used a value argument for nature conservation. Environmentally respectful ecotourists are seen as wise people representing a lifestyle of sustainability. In words of interviewee, *"why are we going to destroy our marvellous natural environment, our nature, in circumstances where people come from very far away for visiting it, for seeing it. It is stupid. We have to learn about that behaviour"* (local association member). The influence that visitors might have on the local populations is not restricted to environmental issues. If the Morvan has traditionally been an isolated territory, this means that the local inhabitants are not used to be in contact with other populations. The arrival of visitors thus is a source of openness and a socialization opportunity for farmers offering tourism services. Ecotourism is about meeting people and dialogue between hosts and visitors, and therefore a source of openness, socialization and learning not only for tourists but also for the local population. Women particularly appreciate this contact, since the offering of tourism services take them out of their isolation.

7.4. Environmentalist and socio-cultural associations

Individuals belonging to the traditional *morvandelle* society and newcomers, sometimes in partnership with public actors, have created associations for organizing collective action in the fields of tourism, cultural heritage and nature preservation. While tourism associations seem less

active and less influential, the network of actors working in the cultural field is much more dynamic, as is revealed by the multiple cultural activities led by these groups. Although both have an impact on ecotourism, the strategis of these two types of associations are rather different. Tourism groups are mainly focused on marketing, deploying a strategy that mainly benefits the tourism professional actors. Cultural associations, for their part, bring into service a broader action with repercussions on the different segments of the system of governance of this territory. It revives local traditions and convokes the commitment of all actors willing to participate. As a result, new dynamics reinvigorate the social tissue, recall local traditions and memories, and therefore nourish the Morvan's sense of place. Festivals, local markets selling traditional products and exhibitions in rural museums, while insufflating life to the different localities, are also charming and inimitable tourism attraction.

Together with tourism and cultural groups, the Morvan hosts environmentalist associations of two types. Associations approaching the Morvan as an entire entity coexist with civil society groups or committees dealing with environmental problems at the communal scale. *Autun Morvan Ecologie (AME)* is the most active association in the first group. *"It was created in 1989 by young people from Autun wishing to defend the environment. The aim was not to deal with a particular conflict between neighbours, but with the environment in general"* (AME director). Today one of the main preoccupations of this association is the sustainability of the Morvan's forest. Assuming a proactive leadership, AME contests and leads action to repair the losses in the forest biodiversity, due to the uncontrolled proliferation of conifers in detriment of broad-leaved trees and mechanic clear-cutting methods. Environmentalist groups of the second type lead actions at the communal level and emerged as a reaction against specific projects menacing local ecosystems. In two zones of the Morvan, civil society members constituted associative organizations to collectively respond and fight against territorial projects threatening the natural environment of their home territories. The *Comité de Défense du Site de Chamboux* at the northeast of the Morvan fought against a large-scale tourism project, and the *Association Vital Sud-Morvan* contested the instalation of a dumping site. Beyond the functioning and aims of these associations, in every case ecotourism appears as an argument for nature preservation. For the AME, mono-plantations spoil the beloved Morvan's panoramas. The inhabitants of Chamboux state that a large-scale tourism project is incompatible with a strategy of low-density ecotourism. Finally, for the Remilly population, a dumping site in the Morvan will completely kill the Morvan's green image which is a main ecotourism requirement (see section nine).

7.5. Configuration and reconfigurations of the politico-administrative territories

Without public institutions, and more precisely without regional parks, the development of tourism in the Morvan would have been completely different. Today the park's technical team and political board work for obtaining the European Charter in 2010. Certainly, the roles accomplished by the park, together with the different actions carried out to foster ecotourism and to build a more sustainable Morvan, are far from perfect or free of contradiction. However, in any case this checkmates the leading role of this institution in tourism.

Nonetheless, since the foundation of the park during the pre-fordist crisisuntil today, the institutional panorama of the Morvan has changed. At the height of its forties, besides the above examined actors, the park shares the governance of the Morvan with various other public institutions that a few years ago did not exist. For all these institutions ecotourism is a development alternative to be implemented in this territory.

In sum, at the same time as ecotourism came to be a very important articulation of the Morvan's *vivre ensemble*, thus becoming a means to sustainably develop the Morvan and an argument to advocate its sustainability, the politico-administrative framework governing this territory changed and became much more complex. The impact of the density of the current politico-administrative framework governing the Morvan is further examined in the section below. The various concerned institutions and spatial levels are analysed in relation with the actions conducted by the park. I argue that there exists a superabundance of institutions fragmenting the Morvan and creating internal boundaries that mismatch and its activity domains do not always foster sustainable paths.

8. INTERPLAYS, ARTICULATIONS AND CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN THE MORVAN, THE PARK AND COMPLEX NESTED STRUCTURES OF GOVERNANCE

Nine relevant spatial levels compose the governance system of the Morvan that compiles numerous institutions with responsibilities in this territory (see table 45). Among them, the Park remains the only institution whose perimeter matches the surface of the Morvan massif, thus it is the only institution leading action in this territory that adopts an encompassing perspective, despite its limited financial and human means, and its weaker political power compared to other territorial institutions such as the *pays*, which are endowed by a bigger budget.

TABLE 45: TERRITORIAL SCALES AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES WITH RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE MORVAN

Territorial level		¿Who are the institutions intervening in the Morvan?
Supranational	EU governance level and other European institutions for nature protection and protected areas (EUROPARC)	Funds for regions and localities, environmental regulation, and voluntary instruments for environmental protection and sustainability.
Central State	French state governance level	Still very important level in France, represented at the sub-national scale by departmental authorities named *préfets*.
Regional	Burgundy level (1980)	Slow but progressive rise of regions with democratically elected authorities, and growing resources and political legitimacy. The central state is also represented at this level through deconcentrate services.
Departmental	Four departments existing 1970: Côte d'Or, Saône-et-Loire, Yonne and Nièvre	The *préfectures* are sub-national central government instruments to guarantee territorial control (inherited from the French revolution).
Inter-departmental	Morvan regional park (1970)	Environmental protection and sustainable development institutions created by the central state, but as a result of a bottom-up process in which regional and local institutions apply and negotiate with the central authority.
Inter-communal	4 *pays* (created since 2002) 14 communautés des communes Agenda 21 attached to the *CC Autunois-en-Morvan*	Considerable flourishing of inter-communal institutions since 2000. Their creation seeks to overcome municipal fragmentation and facilitate the territorialisation of public policies. Sustainability is a discourse and objective hold by these institutions. The *pays* and CC have become increasing powerful inter-institutional structures in rural areas.
	116 communes classified *massif central* (2005)	Group of communes sharing common biophysical and socio-economic characteristics considered as a handicap to their territorial competitiveness (*i.e.* isolation, altitude, deficient socio-economic dynamism)
Local	118 Communes	Despite the growing power of inter-communal institutions, in rural territories the commune remains a very important level of community organisation and collective action.

Source: Parra (2010)

When analyzing the history of the Morvan we can identify three main moments in which its governance has been redefined: i) 1970: the foundation of the Park; ii) mid-1980s: the first decentralisation steps and the larger presence of the European level; iii) late-1990s and 2000: the birth of new contractual and inter-territorial institutions aiming at sustainable development and democracy by shared parties. Firstly, we observed how the foundation of the park provoked a feeling of hope among local actors, who were, for the first time, given the opportunity of creating an institution to govern the Morvan in its totality, transcending the differences due to the departmental division, the relative isolation of the Morvan, and the urban focus of the spatial policy at that time. A second moment is marked by the strengthening of the regional and European levels, and the progressive transfer of responsibility from the central state level in favour of Burgundy, through the CPER contracts, and at the European level through biodiversity conservation directives, rural development programmes, structural funds and also a group of non-binding tools for protected areas. Finally, the birth of new inter-communal institutions, which rapidly multiplied throughout the territory, has fragmented the Morvan into numerous smaller territories. Since 2000, sixteen CCs and four *pays* have been created inside the Morvan, adding two new territorial levels (see figure 21 – maps d and e).

8.1. The difficult relationship between the Morvan, the park and the 'others'

For several reasons the coexistence between the Morvan massif, the park and the diverse institutions that have to do with this territory has not been fluid or comfortable. In their founding statements, regional parks already carried potential conflicts. Regional parks are protected areas having as a main objective to conciliate social, environmental and economic sustainability. They were created during the fordist period, but as post-fordist semi-decentralised structures for nature protection. This was done during an epoch in which nature protection and protected areas were a central state issue, conducted in function of top-down decisions built upon scientific expertise homogeneously applied to all territories of this kind. Regional parks, conversely, are pre-fordist structures seeking sustainability, decentralization, empowerment, participation, because the central state at that time decided so. This has led to a number of contradictions in actual governance practices. The trade off among these rivalling aims, together with their governance dynamics, seeded today's difficulties in managing the park.

A second element is the lack of legal power of regional parks, to act and mandate in the different relevant arenas. *"The park does not have juridical power. It has only a persuasive power. It advises, it expresses an opinion and sometimes it is the master builder of specific projects"*

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(mayor of a Morvan commune). This means that in the defying task of conciliating the three main sustainability aims, main governance tools are persuasion and the building of awareness among the local population. Regional parks are not protected by global and strict rules for nature protection. So, how to foster sustainability in such a contradictory socio-political context? With regard to the woodlands, a Morvan mayor recalled that, *"most of the land is private property. Only the forêt domaniale belongs to the state. The park can buy pieces of woodlands, but with a specific objective. For instance, we bought the mont Beuvray site to protect it and to redevelop the area for tourism and cultural activities"* (Morvan Mayor). Additionally, the economic means of parks are reduced. *"Our resources are very limited. The revenues of each canton are weak. We are the poorest area of Burgundy, so our capacity to levy taxes to construct a road or a trail is very reduced. (...) We have a true problem of fiscal capacity"* (park's technical team member).

From a human and social capital perspective the environment also seems complex. On the one hand, members of the park's technical team feel that the Morvan holds a too pessimist image. In the words of a member of the park's technical team *"the Morvan has always been seen as a territory with a negative image for its climate and rain. People carry this image of rude territory, in which every innovation or development perspective is seen as impossible. We have to severely combat this strong rural mentality, go beyond it and show that tourism is today an essential activity for the Morvan (...) It is a veritable challenge to the struggle against this rural mentality"*. On the other hand, for the local population the problem is situated in the park's team and board, which are perceived as distant, technocratic and locked up in their duties. A gîte owner said, *"we do not know what the park does. They are just doing a couple of experiments here and there… But besides that, I do not know their true work"*. And a nature-based tourism entrepreneur stated further *"they are always saying that they do not have too much money, but at the same time they invest in ridiculous projects. They inaugurated a climbing wall for blind people that was very expensive. How can you invest in such an specific niche if there are so many deficiencies in the basic tourism infrastructures?"* Assuming the defense of the park, a member of the political board declared, *"the problem is that French rural people have a propensity to keep in mind the negative aspects (...) The park has to do things people will be able to remember, visible things. When the park does experimental actions, the local population does not appreciate (...) The animation team has to be motivated to exchange and communicate with the local population"*. On the other hand, according to the park's technical team expectations regarding the park seem to be high and do not match with its assigned role **"people would like to have a government for the**

Morvan. They complain because the roads are not maintained as they should, but the park cannot do anything in this field. We only can explain the others what must be done" (park team official).

Further reflecting on the internal governance of the park and its relationship with its entourage, one senior park's official pointed out that there has always existed a huge gap between the aim of the political board, the technical team and the local population. He affirmed, *"even if today there are not so many problems between the politicians, the technical team and the working groups, we have another problem. We have 120 élus that we rarely see. There are always fifteen motivated élus, but this is not enough. The problem is that the élus have more and more mandates. The pays, the CC, the park… before, the park was the only institution, today there are many more".* The deficient commitment of the *élus* is also observed in other territorial institutions. Interviewees always characterized their relationship with the *élus* as a constant effort to convince them of different topics, especially when it is about the environment. In this respect, a report written by Mottet (2006) reveals that politicians mistrust the park. *"Antagonist views also coexist among the élus, which recognize being suspicious, sometimes disappointed, but in any case they nourish large expectations vis-à-vis the park"* (Mottet, 2006 p. 53).

Collaborative governance dynamics and partnership among territorial institutions situated at various spatial scales is needed to guarantee sustainability and stimulate it through ecotourism, especially if we are in an unfavorable context. In the case of the Morvan, the geography of the massif, its division into four departments and the distance with the regional capital have played against the building up of more sustainable governance dynamics. Ecotourism and sustainability involve much more than a set of small individual projects implemented separately in a territory; perhaps from this perspective that the Morvan park has failed. The park is certainly implementing ecotourism actions and is trying to build collaboration with the civil society and other territorial institutions. Isolated projects and cooperative initiatives to this purpose exist indeed. The weakness lies in the incapacity to develop a coherent set of principles and practices to build an eco-destination. The effort to build a careful plan involving the ensemble of actors is taking shape in the Morvan through the candidacy for the EUROPARC charter and implementation of European funding schemes.

FIGURE 21: TERRITORIES AND SPATIAL SCALES GOVERNING THE MORVAN
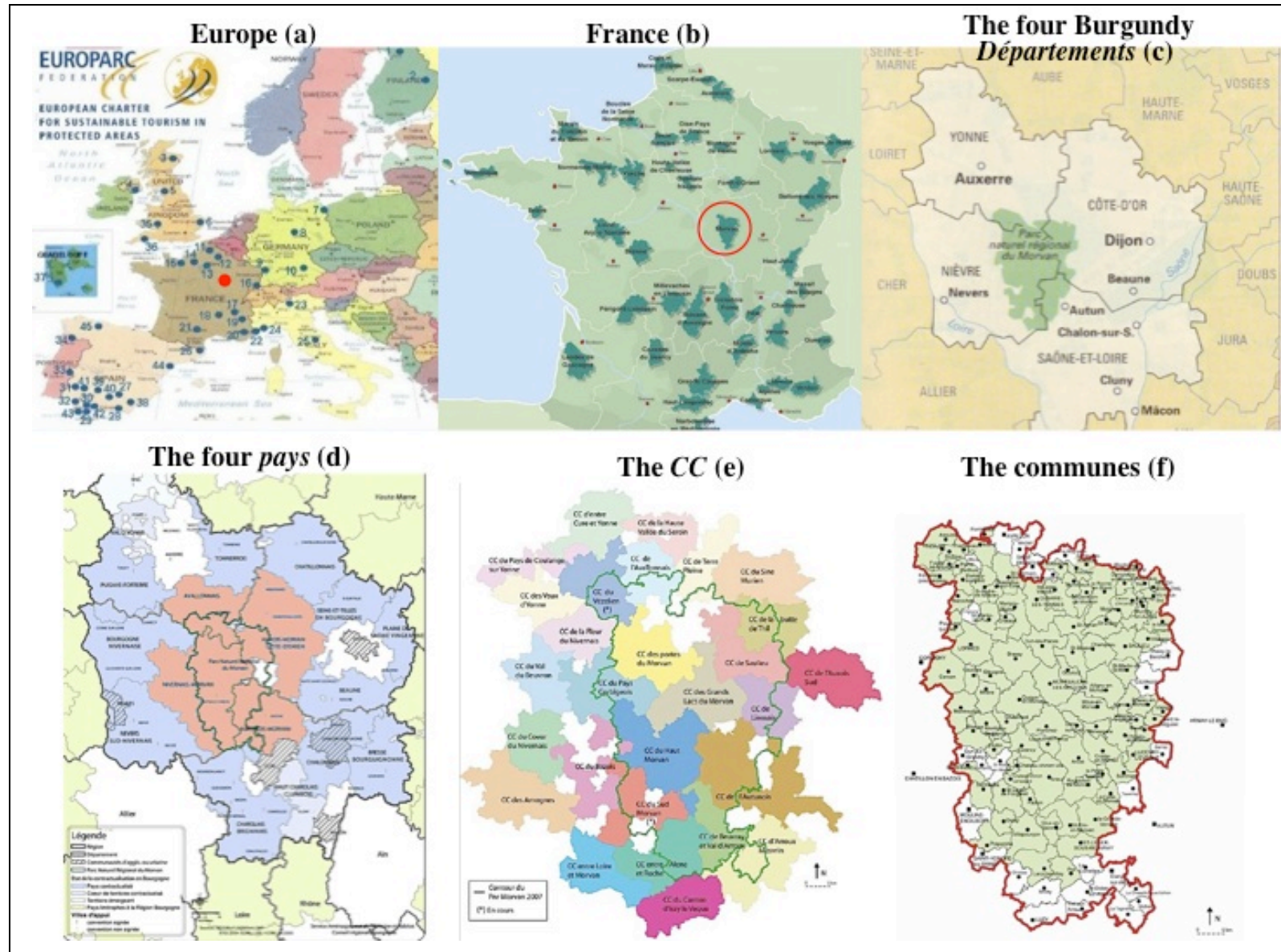
Sources: Europe (**http://www.europarc.org/european-charter.org/map_neu.htm**), France (PNRF, 2008b), the four Burgundy *départements* (Gloaguen, 2006), the four *pays* and the CC (PNRM, 2006a), the communes (PNRM, 2006b).

8.2. The Morvan, Burgundy and the park

The relationship between regional parks and regions is supposed to be based upon a close and permanent collaboration. Regional parks are created as a result of an explicit demand of the regional level in agreement with the ensemble of local institutions adhering to this project. Once the park is created, regions continue playing a major role in the periodical charter renewals and also assume important responsibilities in the parks' budgets. More precisely, regions engage park's missions and budgets according to the CPER's orientations. In tourism, the role of parks has started been defined and engaged in the regional tourism plan.

The relationship between the Morvan and Burgundy has always been ambiguous, context in which geographical and political factors merge. From a biophysical perspective, the altitude and hostile climate have always separated the Morvan from the rest of the region. This biophysical has then provoked a sort of disinterest of the region in the Morvan, territory seen as mysterious, remote, backward and difficult to access. Instead of building the necessary infrastructure for integrating the Morvan into the region, this has turned into *"une perte de vue"*. In other words, biophysical characteristics reinforced remoteness through a deficient system of roads and public transport, enlarging and reproducing the sharp socio-economic and cultural gap between the Morvan and Burgundy.

Nonetheless, explaining this gap only in function of biophysical variables would be ingenuous. Internal differences and contrasts are to a large extent the result of the cultural and socio-political division of Burgundy and the Morvan. While the Morvan has always been identified as a left-wing bastion, Burgundy is recognized for being a region with a weak political unity. The Morvan thus has been dependent on the political fluctuations of the region and the one of the four departments. *"There is a lack of political vision, but this is either the fault of the 'pays' nor of the park. We must not forget that in 2004 we had regional elections, and therefore the region changed its political composition. We could have developed a project earlier, but we were forced to follow the regional level",* recalls a high official of the park. He continues, *"note that the region was on the right then changed to the left. Until 2004, the region annoyed us, pissed us off, it kept us from working. When it changed, so did our ideas and our means (…) Our struggle was a principled one and we won, ten years after".* However, it is difficult to affirm if the positioning of the park was a self-won battle, or rather the effect of the change in the political colour of the region. Bearing in mind that the park's political board is presided by a socialist deputy of Nièvre, and that most of the park's surface is located in this department, this evoked political mutation of

Burgundy necessarily would have an impact in the Morvan. Indeed, *"the president of the park is a politician, deputy, vice president of the region, president of the pays Nivernais-en-Morvan and president of the park"* (park official). If this was also accompanied by a positioning struggle from the park, transformations are expected to be deeper, as they have indeed been. Yet, we must not forget that the park also has been affected by a renewed socio-cultural and socio-political context putting forward protected areas as the green lungs of many urbanized and polluted cities. The regard given to the Morvan has changed in the last decades, especially for a region having only one protected area.

Moreover examined transformations, the interplays and flows between the Morvan and the region are still contradictory. It is true that the park for the first time succeeded in getting a specific *Contrat de Parc* as part of the 2007-2013 CPER. Together with the park's commitment in the CPER sections addressing biodiversity, hydrological resources, tourism and territorial development, the *Contrat de Parc* envisages resources for the running of the park and for carrying out the actions defined in the charter *i.e.* environmental, artistic and cultural actions, tourism promotion, ecotourism, forestry activities and renewable energies. Ecotourism takes a very important position among these tasks, as defined in the CPER and corroborated in the tourism regional plan (CRB, 2005). Ecotourism has become a main new objective for Burgundy, the Morvan was chosen as the territory for its implementation and the park was designed as the executor leader. With a lot of pride a park's official tells how they were involved in the regional tourism plan *"the regional tourism plan was designed in 2004 and the park was a member of the pilot committee. We succeeded in positioning the park in several chapters, notably in an specific item on ecotourism and sustainable tourism, actions defined in the European charter".* However, despite the political support of Burgundy to the park, inconsistencies between these two levels have still not disappeared. Section 9.3 examines the implementation of the French green biking policy from which the park was excluded.

8.3. The Morvan, Yonne, the Côte d'Or, the Saône-et-Loire, Nièvre and the park

The division of the Morvan into four departments has always been seen as an incapacitating factor explaining the lag of this territory, as well as a reason justifying inoperative management. *"The main problem of the park is that it is located over four departments. It is like the European Union, which has to govern a territory divided in various European countries. Building consensus in this context and hierarchising development priorities, for example in the domains of tourism, education or others, is too difficult" (Gîte owner).* However, this fragmentation is not

just a geographical problem. It is connected to the political divisions of the region and the particular planning traditions of each department. As explained in chapter five, whereas Yonne and Côte d'Or are right wing territories and the Saône-et-Loire fluctuates, Nièvre has always been a left-wing department. *"We have political problems with every department (...) In 2001, the four departments contributed financially to the park, now only three do so (…) Today the state and the region support the Morvan. We also receive funding from the massif central (...) I think that the main political difficulties come from Yonne, which does not have a veritable spatial policy. In France, we have a region and a department with a policy. Yonne has a very rigid understanding of this policy. In Nièvre, the director of the pays is paid by the Conseil Général, in Yonne no. We also discovered that in the 'pays' Auxois each inhabitant pays 4 euros for having someone in charge of this institution. At Nièvre they pay only 50 cents. The vision of each department can be very different, even if they all receive the same central state mandate"* (High park official).

These differences are also reflected in their tourism approaches. According to the *Schémas départementaux de tourisme* (CGCD, 2006; CGN, 2005; CGY, 2003), except for Nièvre, none of these plans mentions ecotourism or the European charter. The four departments exploit the park's green image for tourism marketing, yet apart from Nièvre they are not concerned by the Morvan. Even though in the four plans partnership and institutional collaboration is an essential objective, the park is rarely involved as a partner. A member of the park's technical team stated *"Our work is to build coherence in the Morvan territory and this is just starting, with the tourism plan of Nièvre that puts the environment as the priority. The Saône-et-Loire is revising and updating its plan and we are associated to their pilot committee. On the contrary, Yonne and the Côte d'Or did not seek any collaboration or advice from us. There is no connection between their plans, our green image and the sustainable tourism plan carried our by the park"*.

8.4. The Morvan, the park, the *pays* and the *communautés de communes*

The examined fragmented governance was replicated with the division of the Morvan by inter-communal territorial institutions. The interplays between parks, *pays* and CC is a delicate issue not only mentioned in the Morvan park's documentation, but also in a large amount of publications of the regional parks' federation (PNRF, 1998, 2008b). The Morvan park is sub-divided by four *pays* (*Auxois Morvan-Côte d'Orien*, *Autunois Morvan*, *Nivernais Morvan* and *Avallonais*) and sixteen CC. Figure 21 – map (d) shows that none of the four *pays* concerning the Morvan is mainly or integrally situated inside the borders of the this territory, and that only a minor portion of their communes, inhabitants and surface concern the Morvan. This map also

reveals how the delineation of the perimeter of each *pays* follows the same departmental borders that have historically fragmented the Morvan. A similar situation is observed in figure 21 – map (e), showing the configuration of the CC, apart from four cases that are integrally situated inside the park. According to a park's official *"the main problem is that none of the four pays lies inside the park: they intersect for 20%, 10%, 20% and 42% with the park. When a pays gets together for a meeting, it is not a Morvan territory, it is another thing. Some pays have 200 communes… they* (the pays) *are not necessarily interested in the Morvan"*.

At first glance, we observe how the organization of the *pays* in Burgundy reproduces spatial dynamics that not only reiterate the old division of the Morvan by four departments, but that also give primacy to urban centres at the detriment of rural territories. Since urban areas host a major proportion of the inhabitants of the *pays* whose administrative offices are located in these towns, projects launched by each *pays* reach these localities without disseminating benefits to the Morvan communes. For an official of an inter-communal institution of the Saône-et-Loire this is a very logic situation. *"This is related to the existing democratic system. We have a group of elected representatives who are based at Autun, meetings take place at Autun, decisions are taken here, therefore actions will necessarily be concentrated at Autun (…) Investments are much more easily in the same place where decisions are made. If the population was more spread over its communes and towns, why not… but this is not the case"*. Another interviewee added *"Autun is a politically stronger city. It is a city that has more resources. The mayor is the president of the CC and belongs to the Conseil Général, so it will be always like that, unless the different rural communes come to an agreement… but this is not so simple due to the conflicts among the small communes. Moreover the rural milieu is not unified (…) It is difficult to work together when you are in a diffuse territory like this one"*.

In addition to the deficient articulation of competencies between public institutions, there is also a a difficulty in coordinating the rural and the urban in a territory like the pays Autunois. *"This is a true difficulty in a territory like Autun. We must find a good articulation between the urban and the rural. We cannot imagine that we are going to construct a swimming pool in every rural commune. Necessarily, the swimming pool will be situated at Autun. A big library also will be located at Autun. Then it is true that a serious effort must be made to let people living in the periphery enjoy from all this. Last year there was a mobile toy library that moved each day from one to town to another"*. For others, the geographical distinctiveness of the Morvan is a very decisive factor obstructing territorial collaboration *"I do not think there could be much*

integration. The Morvan has a very particular cultural, historical and geological identity. This morvandelle culture has nothing to do with the communes located on the plateau of Montilly"(CC official).

Despite the existence of written park-pays agreements, either for political or geographical reasons the collaboration between these two institutions is still insufficient, except for the case of Nièvre, explained by the fact that both institutions are presided by the same Socialist deputy of Nièvre. Even if the parks and the *pays* recognize that collaboration would be very beneficial, since the park has the knowledge and human capital for addressing all the relevant domains affecting the Morvan, and the pays has the resources for funding different projects, collaboration among these institutions is still in an embryonic phase, limited to meetings and the negotiation of protocols trying to organise cooperation. In the words of a park's high official *"Cooperation happens at three levels: inexistent, existent and very good relationships. We are in the second stage"*. He continues explaining that, *"for me these four pays are a mistake (…) Like all these projects, the pays started with a lot of enthusiasm! The park tried to work in partnership with the pays, playing a role of animation, advice and awareness. In the French administration, the support and means for implementing a dry kiln, to build a gîte or any other investment results from the pays"*. In any case, both park and *pays* are aware of the irreversible need and exigency of collaboration. The same park official assumes that *"the most important difference with the previous charter is that the Morvan is now shared by four pays. We are in a phase of negotiation and contracting. We went from a cohabitation to a coordination phase. One example of a common decision is the Morvan park's candidacy to the European charter. In this new charter the environment is much more important" (…)*. From the above mentioned protocols, broadly speaking, these institutions agreed that the park will be the main responsible for environmental issues and the *pays* will focus on employment.

Regarding the relationship between the park and the CC, with the exception of the two CC integrally located inside the park, collaboration is also deficient. This is surprisingly observed in the almost inexistent interaction between the park and the team leading the unique Agenda 21 of the territory under study, which is attached to the *CC de l'Autunois* (the brown portion of figure 21 - map (e)). At the time this Agenda 21 was a project, the Ministry of the Environment selected as a regional example the first Agenda 21 of Burgundy (see section 9.7). For one of the responsibles of this Agenda 21*"the park prefers working with the communes. At the time they opened the negotiations to update the charter, the park reviewed the situation of the number of*

CC and inter-communal associations, and reflected on the possibility of working with them. A priori, finally they did not choose this alternative. For now, the park prefers to work with the mayors. We have a few relationships with their technical team. They are helping us for the day of the tree and sometimes we contact them for tourism issues, but the contact stops there. We have no deep collaboration with the park. There is no cooperative structure nor common project between the park and this CC". According to him, there must exist historical reasons justifying the fact that the park prefers to go on working with the communes that are at the root of the foundation of the park and that have less financial and technical means than the *communauté de communes*. He also thinks that *"there must also exist a lack of knowledge of their respective projects and competences"*.

We can also draw links between location factors and collaboration. Most of the park's projects are carried out in the Nièvre section and more precisely in the surroundings of Saint-Brisson. For instance, most of the leaders of the tourism associations run structures in that territory, the totality of the Panda gîtes inaugurated in 2008 are located in Nièvre and the main tourism activities surround the Maison du Park and the north of the Morvan. This choice is certainly related with the virtuous and more fertile institutional interplays with the *CC du de Grands Lacs du Morvan*, integrally situated inside the Park (light brown area in figure 21 – map (e)). The territory of the *Grands Lacs du Morvan* is one of the Morvan areas currently showing interesting synergies and collaborative governance forms, and for that reason it is cited in various park's documents and interviews as a booster example (PNRM, 2008a, 2008c). From the period 2000-2008 the park led the *Contrat Territorial des Grands Lacs du Morvan* for improving the governance of the local resources of that area in view of more sustainable uses, water quality and environmental protection. According to different evaluations, institutional actors, users and *élus* were very satisfied with this collective operation and which they seek to extend during the forthcoming years through a *Contrat Global Yonne amont / Cure / Cousin* (see Delfolie and Galiana, 2009; PNRM, 2008c).

8.5. The Morvan, the park, the central state and the *massif central*

The links and exchanges between the Morvan, the park and the central state are also very relevant for this study. The Morvan is regulated by the whole set of laws, programmes and projects promulgated by the central state (see chapter five), which might be directly applied to the territory or pass through the region. One very important decision taken at the central scale, and more precisely by the Ministry of the Environment, is the periodical evaluation in view of its renewal.

Connections with the central level might also occur through competing projects launched by state ministries and institutions. One relevant example for the territory under study is the French rural programme *Pôles d'excellence rurale*, created by the DIACT in 2004. During two years the DIACT awarded 367 territories with a budget for rural development. Drawing on the territorial synergies produced for the *Contrat territorial des Grands Lacs du Morvan*, the park presented the project *Les Grands Lacs du Morvan*. This is a tourism initiative connecting the Morvan lakes[375], which adopted a sustainability perspective bearing in mind that the lakes in question are simultaneously tourism places, water reserves and very rich biodiversity milieus. Among the results of this initiative, we can cite the creation of a Bird Observatory at the lake Pannecière, the inauguration of the *Maison des Grands Lacs*, the fitting out of a pedestrian trail around the Settons, and a feasibility assessment for the implementation of trekking trails around the lakes Saint Agnan and Crescent. Last year this project received recognition of the DIACT for its particular innovative nature articulating this group of lakes. As is further examined in section 9.2, the Morvan lakes are indeed a delicate issue, notably due to different forms of tourism over them, ranging from ecotourism to massive projects and motorized activities.

A second example where it is possible to see the role played by the central state is in the *massif central* policy. In 2005, after long years of requests and mobilization, notably from the part of the *élus* of the park's communes, the Morvan was attached to the *massif central*, after a decision of the central level. Given the importance assigned by the local actors to this attachment and the foreseen benefits that this decision might entail, section 9.4. examines this process into more detail.

8.6. The Morvan, Europe and the park

The emergence of the European level and the distribution of funds to sub-national territories were dependent upon decentralisation, for regions and other sub-national areas to establish direct connections with the EU to implement the different programmes. It was not possible for each specific territory to negotiate via the central state. In the case of the Morvan, its links with Europe involved hard-law and soft-law projects.

In the field of ecotourism, connections between Europe and the Morvan have been knitted through voluntary and soft-law programmes, which require and depend on participation and governance by shared parties. This is the case of the two most emblematic projects that currently

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[375] Saint-Agnan, Pannecière, Chamboux, Settons, Chaumeçon and Crescent.

concern the Morvan: the LEADER+ Morvan 2007-2013 (EU) and the European Charter for sustainable tourism (EUROPARC). Certainly, other European programmes are also relevant to the Morvan and might have an impact on tourism since they are devoted to nature protection, as is the case of the Natura 2000 and LIFE. Nonetheless, only the LEADER and the Charter are primarily tourism projects.

Both, the LEADER+ and the Charter, are soft-law instruments, to which the Morvan park has voluntary applied and presented its candidacy. Even if the LEADER project is already running and the Charter is still in its candidacy stage, for several reasons both initiatives are of major importance to the Morvan. The most obvious one is their capacity to draw economic resources for the restoration and upgrading of local tourism infrastructures. A second reason is the production of a deep reflection on the kind of development and tourism wished for the territory. The submission of a candidacy to the European charter expresses the desire and the engagement of a territory to advance towards more sustainable tourism practices. However, perhaps the most important effect of this type of programme is its impact on the local system of governance. Already in their application stage, such projects impose the need to foster a community dialogue and a collective reflection among the actors and institutions that could be interested in participating in these experiences. In fact, these two programmes impose and subordinate their acceptance to the configuration of a system of governance where collaboration, participation and the creation of synergies among territorial actors and institutions are major requisites. In the case of the Morvan, this meant that the park, that leads both operations, knocked on the door of those territorial institutions in the hope of improving collaboration. This has been pretty interesting in the case of the LEADER project that ended by involving territories that are external to the park, notably the other part of the CC and the *pays* that are not entirely situated inside the park. Remarkable, as connects departments with considerable differences in party politics. The reason that might explain this is the pride that European projects engender among these local institutions, as it was observed during interviews. The prestige and the resources involved in European projects have the power to articulate spatial scales that in other circumstances did not relate to each other. Certainly, these projects are not free of contradiction and difficulties. For instance, with regard to the European charter, it is interesting to observe that even though the concerned perimeter is the entire park, the upgrading of tourism structures, notably the WWF labelling of gîtes, has only been done in the Nièvre corner. Nonetheless, with this type of programmes the park and the other local institutions became aware that participatory governance was at least needed for obtaining a project, and therefore for implementing it. It is interesting to observe how

the same institutions pushing and needing decentralisation, simultaneously demand the construction of partnerships and cooperation among localities and territorial institutions, which in the case of France are numerous, to lake these projects possible. This requirement goes beyond partnerships among public actors. As is further explored in section 9.9., the Charter and the LEADER are usefulness without the collaboration of tourism micro-business owners and local artisanal producers.

8.7. What do this changing governance structures produce?

Summarizing, the Morvan is an interesting case to analyze how the governance of a natural territory has evolved, from the foundation of a protected area aiming to match a natural territory with a human agency to foster environmental conservation and sustainability, to the fragmentation of the territory into numerous smaller pieces. Despite the fact that both, the foundation of the Park and the birth of the CC and *pays* pursue comparable sustainability and participatory governance objectives, the coexistence and articulation between these territorial institutions is far from simple. There exist two kinds of factors to explain deficiencies in inter-territorial articulation: factors inherent to the multi-level governance of French territories and reasons related to the territorial specificity of the Morvan.

There is certainly no consensus about the ideal institution to govern the Morvan. Whilst some of the population contends that the fragmentation of the park's area by several inter-territorial institutions implies stepping back thirty years in history, others argue that the size of the *pays* is more suitable to cope with sustainable governance challenges than that of parks. Thus, with regard to institutional superposition, it would be preferable to maintain the *pays*. Nevertheless, this duality park-*pays* does not take into account the specific role of the Morvan Park as a protected area responsible for watching over a particular territory, but focuses on the role of parks, whose legitimacy is questioned by the new territorial institutions.

A very important question within this reflection on the multi-level governance of the Morvan park is the role held by private actors and civil society members. The idea here is to explore how the local population interacts with public institutions anchored at different spatial levels. The park, the pays and the European projects not only seek involving the local population in the different participatory processes, but they depend upon the commitment of the local population to succeed in the implementation of the different projects. The section below, through nine micro-cases, deepens the reflection on the role of governance and ecotourism in paving more sustainable

paths. Bearing in mind the complexities of the multi-scalar system of governance in which the Morvan is anchored, the section below elaborates on the role and action carried out by the 'others' but the state. This research permitted identifying a few emblematic situations connected to the practice of ecotourism, which resulted in revealing the role played by the different actors, the main governance dynamics and the outcomes produced by these processes.

9. WHO FOSTERS SOCIO-INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE MORVAN? REFLECTIONS OBTAINED FROM NINE EMBLEMATIC MICRO-CASES STUDIES

Controversies related to the superabundance of sub-national territorial institutions have engendered unease among the local communities, who declared during interviews to be disconcerted face to this complex institutional magma and also upset by the social, economic and environmental losses that territorial inconsistencies might provoke. In order to deal with this context and express discontent to public representatives, in some cases civil society members have organized collective action under the form of local associations led by local leaders. In other cases, local inhabitants opt for a more silent and less visible combat, as is the case of reconverted citizens settling in the Morvan for a 'greener' life. Bearing this in mind, the section below examines nine micro-cases with the aim of figuring out the role of the different actors and spatial levels in fostering socio-institutional change for a more sustainable Morvan.

9.1. Remilly, the association Vital-Sud Morvan and the dumping site

Remilly is a small town located in the Morvan's southwest, at a few kilometres outside the frontier of the park. Although Remilly belongs to the massif and has similar biophysical characteristics as the area circumscribed by the park's border, it does not adhere to its charter and is not constrained by it same regulation. In February 2005, the local population heard about the imminent implementation of a dumping site. Subsequently, a group of inhabitants took the initiative in the foundation of *Vital Sud-Morvan*, association conceived to lead mobilisation against this project, expected to be operational in 2007 (COVED, 2005a).

The project CEDENOR 58 Remilly[376], performed by the company COVED (*Société de Collecte Valorisation Energie, Déchet*[377], intended to build a dumping site for a daily take-in of a 250 tons delivery of waste (75.000 tons per year) to be buried over an area of 48 ha, for a period of ten years. It was supposed to be a dumping area for non-recyclable waste produced by households

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[376] Acronym for *Centre de Déchets Non Recyclables*
[377] It manages 25 dumping sites in France (COVED, 2005a).

and industries[378]. The impact of this site was subject of controversy, and led to a four year lawsuit confronting COVED to the Remilly community, represented by Vital Sud-Morvan. According to COVED, the impact of the dumping site would be negligible, since it considered several means to control trucks' traffic flows and pollution. Water pollution was a source of common preoccupation, given the proximity of the site to the river Alène and to Saint Honoré-les-Bains, a spa village treating people with respiratory diseases. COVED's studies intended showing that Remilly has soils with reduced permeability and feeble sub-terrain water circulation, so the ecological impact would be minimal (COVED, 2005b)[379] compared to the advantages[380]. In contrast, for Vital Sud-Morvan, the enounced benefits were insignificant compared to the ecological impact, notably in a context in which a new site was not at all necessary given the proximity to similar sites. An interviewee denounced a proliferation of dumping sites in France, as a result of the birth of wasteland markets, subject to real estate speculation and international trade in waste. For their part, neighbouring communes responded with more than five thousands signatures supporting Vital Sud-Morvan's action. The main argument presented by the whole group against the project was ecotourism and the green image of the Morvan. *"If a dumping site is constructed, the whole Morvan's green image will be dead. This will be the end of tourism in the Morvan and the end of the park"* (member of Vital Sud-Morvan).

Finally, in March 2009, after four years of struggle, the Prefect of Nièvre rejected and cancelled the project, presenting the same arguments as Vital Sud-Morvan in a letter written to the prefecture in 2005. Press articles of March and April 2009 show the happiness and relief of the Remilly population after long years of action (see table 46).

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[378] According to the CODEV, industrial waste consisted of banal waste (*Déchets industriels banals,* in French)
[379] "The location of the *CEDENOR 58 guarantees the innocuous effect on the Saint Honoré les Bains spa due to the existence of completely distinct and independent geological and hydro-geological systems"* (CODEV, 2005b, pp. 15)
[380] Benefits mentioned in the report are the creation of six jobs, landscape restoration, economic benefits and professional taxes for the locality, an indemnity of 0,76 euro/ton during five years sponsord by the ADEME aiming at inciting French localities to host this kind of sites (see COVED, 2005b)

TABLE 46: A DUMPING SITE IN REMILLY?

February 2005	Presentation of the project CEDENOR 58 Remilly by COVED to the local community. All along 2005 the different local media gave high coverage to the project.
April 5 2005	Birth of Vital Sud-Morvan
June 2005	180 adherents to Vital Sud-Morvan
Oct. 12 2005	Vital Sud-Morvan sends its first letter to the Prefecture to warn about the risks and consequences of the CEDENOR 58 project for the environment, tourism, aesthetics, agriculture, the Remilly and the park's image.
April 5 2006	COVED requests from the Prefect of Nièvre the authorisation to implement a dumping site at Remilly.
April 13 2006	Vital-Sud Morvan sends its second official letter to the Prefecture.
March-April 2007	Public inquiry at the commune of Remilly. According to Vital Sud-Morvan the CEDENOR project started engendering a negative effect in the real estate market of the locality.
May 2007	The public inquiry leads to the rejection of the project for environmental reasons, traffic and pollution.
2007-2008	Two new impact and feasibility assessments conclude that the CEDENOR project could be implemented. However, the Prefect decides to take longer time to decide. In parallel, the COVED introduces a few changes to the project (it reduces to 55.000 tons, but extended the delivery for a 20 year-period)
2008-2009	Vital Sud-Morvan has more than 300 members and the mobilisation goes far beyond the borders of Remilly. In total, more than 5.000 people signed the petition against the project.
March 24 2009	The Prefect of Nièvre finally decides to reject the project arguing the same ways as Vital Sud-Morvan: environmental impact on a protected territory, trucks traffic in the surrounding area and the proximity of another dumping site.
March 28 2009	Big celebration during Vital Sud-Morvan's annual meeting. For this occasion two experts in recycling were invited to give a new orientation to the association's action. Besides maintaining a vigilant attitude, from now on Vital Sud-Morvan will focus on recycling and awareness.

Source: author, with various sources (interviews, letters, documents, http://vitalsudmorvan.org, Vital Sud-Morvan, 2008; LJC, 2009, Henriet, 2009)

For several reasons the Remilly case appears to be an instructive example for the reflection on governance, sustainability and ecotourism. The role of Vital Sud-Morvan, and the governance dynamics triggered by mobilisation produced forms of socio-institutional innovation and sustainability that go beyond cancelling the dumping site. The composition of the association and the role assumed by the different participants is significant in this respect. The southern Morvan is an area with a high presence of foreigners (tourists, residents and ecotourism micro-business owners), mainly natives from the Netherlands. Integration between French and foreigners has not been easy, as is observed in similar areas where outsiders are not easily welcomed by locals due to the fluency by which they run tourism structures. In the southern Morvan, various xenophobic and intolerant comments were registered during the interviews done for this research.

Nonetheless, since the possible creation of a dumping site concerned the entire community, distances between locals and newcomers were progressively toned down, through the opening of new spaces of dialogue and the creation of new forms of cooperation among people. Once the different actors began to know each other, they started performing complementary roles according to their particular skills and means. While the direction of the association has always been in the hands of M. Margerin, Dutch representatives manage the bilingual French-Dutch website of the association, which turned out to be an irreplaceable tool of communication and awareness. The involvement of the Dutch community, represented by the association Club du Morvan, is also expressed in the gift of three thousands posters put up all over the locality expressing the hostility against the project. In interviews and printed documents, Remilly inhabitants show gratitude for the Dutch commitment. Simultaneously, this case also brings to light the importance and role of local leaders. In the Remilly case, mobilisation emerged and was led by local leaders who not only solicited the participation of the local population, but also mobilised public actors. In 2008, the president of Vital Sud-Morvan, until then a local schoolteacher, was elected mayor of Remilly.

FIGURE 22: REMILLY AND VITAL SUD-MORVAN

Source: author with various sources (http://www.vitalsudmorvan.org)

Beside civil society actors, Vital Sud-Morvan received the support of the neighbouring communes' mayors and other local institutions. The role played by the park provides interesting clues for the reflection on multi-level governance and territorial equity. Although the park was aware of the negative effect that the dumping site could provoke to the Morvan, Remilly and Saint-Honoré-les-Bains, the park was not allowed to directly support Remilly since this town was not a member of the park. The administrative solution was to provide technical assistance passing through Saint-Honoré (a park's *ville porte* at that time), on the effects that a dumping site could have on a thermal village. However, the park could not directly assist Remilly or formulate requests to higher governance scales, despite water pollution that would have had a more direct effect on park lands than in Saint-Honoré itself, given the proximity of Remilly to the park's border (red circle in the map of figure 22). This situation is interesting for it feeds the debate on the governance of protected areas, and more precisely on the function and permeability of the political borders of these territories. The Remilly case reveals core issues concerning intra-generational equity and the correspondence between natural territories and politico-administrative agencies. If a dumping site would have been located in Remilly, the environmental consequences arising from this decision would certainly have transcended the park's borders, hence questioning the role and efficiency of this institution.

The most visible outcome of the Vital Sud-Morvan struggle is the irreversible cancellation of the dumping site, decision that constitutes a tangible contribution in terms of territorial sustainability. This decision should also be related to the expected recovery of the local real estate market, depressed since the beginning of this conflict, as well as with the strengthening of the ecotourism image of the area. Nonetheless, after so many years of struggle, the impact of the campaign against the CEDENOR 58 project produced infinite intangible outputs in the local system of governance. At the same time as Vital Sud-Morvan leads the local struggle, it succeeded in convoking the participation of people from other towns opened a door towards the integration of the Dutch population, and questioned the role of regional parks in borderline towns. A new knowledge was produced from a collective dialogue and new primary networks among civil society members were created. This dialogue reached other French and European regions facing similar waste conflicts, requesting advice from Vital Sud-Morvan members.

The role and scope of protected areas is also a relevant subject. Remilly highlighted the question about the frontiers of protected areas and more precisely the need to make natural areas match politico-administrative territory. By definition protected areas have borders, yet the question

about the governance and regulation of those territories interests in their immediate vicinity remains open in this case. One alternative could be the creation of a transition space, as is observed in some Central American countries. But French regional parks still do not have such a transition spaces which is certainly due to their mixed socio-environmental aims and particular form of functioning. According to a high park's official the Remilly experience fosters an internal reflection on the role of the Morvan park, *"in the new charter the park took a position against this kind of situation. In the old charter this was not a relevant subject. In the new charter we took position against nuclear plants, high voltage power lines and dams. Before the Morvan park was very reluctant to take such positions fearful (...) Today the role of the park is to give technical help to the communes by feeding them with arguments. In the future, the role of the park will be to become a civil party to fight against unsustainable investments and infrastructures. The new charter allows the park to become civil party"*

One last point concerns the future role and actions of Vital Sud-Morvan. It would be interesting to follow the process of reconversion and adaptation of this association after the project was cancelled. According to press articles, the association intends to continue leading actions on waste issues, but this time through recycling, as it was announced at the meeting led by Vital Sud-Morvan where the cancelation of the dumping site construction was announced.

9.2. The clash of the *Comité de Défense du site de Chamboux* and *Pierre & Vacances*

Another revealing experience took place at Saint-Martin-de-la-Mer, a small town located in the Morvan northeast zone. In 2002, Pierre & Vacances, the biggest tourism real estate company of Europe, attempted building a medium-sized resort on the shores of lake Chamboux, source of potable water for 20.000 inhabitants. Over a surface of about 35 ha, P&V planned a tourist centre with 300 residences organised around tourist entertainment area, conceived to host 1500 visitors. On September 2001, the local community read about the resort in a newspaper article indicating, among others, that a public budget of about eleven million euro would be assigned to the construction of the entertainment area, signifying the public support to the private company. In fact, when the announcement was made the project already had already obtained authorisations of Nièvre and the Côte d'Or prefectures, as well as the support of the mayor of Saint Martin. Civil society mobilisation against the project, due to its scale and public support overlooking the fragility of Chamboux, was not long in coming, and led to a three-year legal action that ended with the cancelling of the resort's construction (see table 47).

In some way Chamboux is comparable to Remilly, as in both cases associations led the struggle in favour of local sustainability. Nonetheless, Chamboux presents specific features that differentiate it from Remilly where all actors were against the dumping site. In Chamboux, on the contrary, public, private and civil society groups supported rivalling positions, despite the agreement among local actors on the need to constraint tourism practices to sustainability imperatives, as indicated in the park's two latest charters. The main opponents to the project organised contestation under the *Comité de Défense du Site de Chamboux*, whose action was based on the denouncement of several administrative and legal irregularities in the procedure authorizing the urbanisation of the Chamboux area, and thus allowing the construction of the P&V resort. The *Comité* denounced fraudulence in the management of Chamboux, and more precisely in action carried out by the *syndicat mixte* in charge of the site. Normally, the unique responsibility of this syndicate was water production, yet it also managed without legal authorisation a small rural campsite in the area. According to the *Comité*, the syndicate was very indebted due to a deficient management, and the P&V project seemed a good alternative to ctify its financial situation. The facility with which the syndicate obtained various building permits and the high public investment in the project seeded the first suspicions among the population, and urged the *Comité* to request from the region the overturn of an inter-prefectural agreement authorizing the project, signed by Nièvre and the Côte d'Or. The *Comité* additionally requested the closing of the campsite for its deficient sanitary and security conditions. Finally, the results of a public inquiry resulted in July 2003 in the suspension of the planning permits of the site, the cancellation of the campsite and abandonment of the P&V project. Since then, the *Comité* has fought for the classification of Chamboux as a protected area.

The construction permit for the project was only obtained with the support of very fervent Côte d'Or *élu* and the mayor of Saint Martin, regarding the arrival of P&V to the Morvan. The idea of building a resort of this kind fits with a declaration done by a park official denouncing that there is no connection between the Côte d'Or tourism plan – assuming they have one – and the green image and ecotourism plan promoted by the park. The park adopted a rather favourable position to the project, yet on the condition that ecological exigencies regarding water use, renewable energies, aesthetics, construction materials and edification close to the lake would be respected. According to a park official, the Morvan's fragile socio-economic context does not permit rejecting a project of this nature, mainly for its potential in terms of job creation. *"The position of the park is 'yes, but'. We could not refuse this tourist project for its economic impact, yet we agree that it should be implemented respecting the particular context (…) M. Gallant's*

association drives us to the other side, which is an extreme! They went against everything and this is very dangerous". For their part, the *Comité* members contended that a P&V resort in no way matches with the Morvan's ecotourism strategy, defined as low-density and based upon soft nature tourism practices.

TABLE 47: CHAMBOUX AND PIERRE & VACANCES

Sept. – Oct 2001	A local journal diffuses the information on the P&V project. It is openly recognized that the transformation of the land use plan of Saint-Martin-de-la-Mer above all seeks to allow the implantation of the P&V resort.
Feb. 2002	Creation of the *Comité de Défense du Site de Chamboux*. Launch of a *Plan Local d'Urbanisme* (PLU) authorizing the urbanisation of the Chamboux Site.
July 2002	The *Syndicat Mixte du Barrage* requests Nièvre and the Côte D'Or to cancel the public utility declaration of the site, in order to allow its urbanisation and authorize the construction of the resort. It succeeded.
Sept. 2002	The *Comité* asks to the Administrative Court of Dijon to overturn the inter-prefecture order of July 2002
April 2003	Realisation of public inquiry on the legitimacy of the PLU, operational since July 2002. The *Comité* supports its petition with more than 4.000 signatures against the project
June 2003	The Administrative Court of Dijon overturns the order and declares that the Nièvre and the Côte d'Or Prefectures took a decision that bypassed their competence.
July 2003	The official inquiry rejects the urbanisation of the site
Sept. 2003	The *Comité* denounces the poor sanitary conditions of the Chamboux campsite managed by the syndicate.
Jan. 2004	Cancellation of the campsite by the Côte d'Or prefect.
Dec. 2004	The *Comité* demands the classification of the Site as a protected area.
2006	The Comité continues vigilance and actions oriented to protect Chamboux and the Morvan.

Source: author, with various sources (interviews, official documents and http://sauver.chamboux.free.fr/index.html)

Chamboux also provides interesting elements for the reflection on governance, protected areas and sustainability. This case reveals that even for ecotourism, activity over which there exists a consensus as to its suitability to the Morvan development profile, agreements among the different governance levels are still not so tied. While the mayor of Saint Martin and the Côte d'Or approved the project, the local community rejected it and the park claimed its adjustment to sustainability conditions. Another element drawn from this case is the role of local leaders and the power of a well-organized and informed civil society. From the combination of an enduring enthusiasm and the meticulous utilisation of legal arguments, the *Comité* managed to have the P&V project cancelled, despite the support received from all public actors. According to an interviewee, this targeted served for consciousness-raising among the local population about the home territory. The community of Saint Martin feels very proud of its victory and affirms that the

Comité not only impeded the P&V project, but also stimulate long-term environmental vigilance and awareness. Within this context, ecotourism and the sustainable tourism plan of the park once again acted as argument for those defending territorial sustainability. *"If the park defined that ecotourism and sustainable tourism are the tourism practices allowed in the Morvan, because they are compatible with the local fragile ecosystems, resorts as the that of P&V are incompatible"* (*Comité* actor). This is a nice case revealing how a reactive behaviour against the concentration of economic power of a mass tourism actor evolved towards a more proactive, informed and conscious civil society, which ended by demanding the strict protection of the site. One last reflection concerns the role of regional parks and their challenging mission to conciliate socio-economic and ecological sustainability. The potential of the P&V resort in terms of employment was an argument in favour of the urbanisation of Chamboux. Yet a few years later, perhaps the park realized that cancelling the resort allowed the integration of every Morvan lake into the sustainable tourism proposal contained in the *Pôle d'excellence rural Les Grands Lacs du Morvan.*

9.3. The Morvan, the region and the *Tour de Bourgogne à vélo*

The implementation in Burgundy of the national policy on cycling greenways is another micro-case study providing rich information on articulation among spatial levels, and on the integration of the Morvan to the region. This case reveals territorial inconsistencies and incongruence among institutions leading tourism planning in Burgundy. Despite naming the Morvan park as the regional ecotourism leader, the implementation in Burgundy of perhaps the most important French ecotourism policy paradoxically does not involve the park at all.

The *Tour de Bourgogne à Vélo* is one of best known greenways in France. Burgundy was one of the first regions in tracing a cycling circuit, and today is one of the few regions that have already accomplished it. This *Tour* is formed by five interconnected trails along canals towpaths, winery trails, old railroads and small rural routes[381] (map 14). In total, it covers around 800 km connecting the four departments and thus allowing the discovery of emblematic heritage sites, historical villages, wineries and castles, as well as a complete ensemble of tourism services needed for a trip of this kind[382]. It is expected that this greenway will expand yearly and evolve, so as to join up with similar European and French circuits. The Burgundy greenway has won the

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[381] 1) The Bourgogne du Sud, from Chalon to Maçon; 2) From the Saône to the Loire, through the Canal du Centre; 3) The Canal du Nivernais, from Decize to Auxerre ; 4) Along the Canal de Bourgogne, from Migennes to Dijon; 5) The Voie des Vignes, from Beaune to Santenay.
[382] See http://www.la-bourgogne-a-velo.com and Bourgogne Tourisme (2007)

media attention and the public recognition as an ideal cycling opportunity. Undoubtedly, this is a very nice and innovative initiative benefiting of the work and partnership of various actors and institutions, especially since the aims of the regional level are not easy to match with the preferences of the four departments. However, it is difficult to understand why the Morvan is not involved in this project, since its natural characteristics and politico-administrative framework meet the requirements for its implementation. Surprisingly, a central state mandate conceived to be implemented by regions in protected areas, was not applied in conformity in Burgundy, resulting in the implementation of a greenway that circumscribes the external border of the Park.

During interviews and conferences I had the opportunity to discuss this issue, and usually the Morvan's bumpy landscape and bent were indicated as possibly incompatible with cycling and justified the Burgundy cycling track favouring flat areas. For others, the region simply preferred a circuit going through the most important cities with the beautiful Morvan scenery as a back curtain, reproducing once more the long habitual tendency of isolating the massif from the flat area, and thus reproducing the uneven socio-economic distribution pattern inside Burgundy. Finally, arguments pointed out the fact that the Morvan already had a cycling project led by the park, therefore it was not necessary to include it in another project with similar characteristics. Perhaps the negotiation process that conducted to the final shape of the Burgundy tour was complex and congregated much more arguments, for sure anchored in the different political views and economic options of the involved representatives.

In reality, different forms of cycling are practiced in the Morvan, not only despite the relief, but perhaps because of it. Proof for this argument is the existing associative tissue conducting action around this activity, and the maintenance of the different trails. One example is the association *Vélo Morvan Nature* created in 1993 under the impulse of the park. Among the Morvan's network of blazed cycling trails, the most emblematic circuits are the *Grande Traversée du Morvan*, that traverses the massif from Avallon to Autun (trace red in map 16), and the *Tour du Morvan à vélo* (trade red in map 15). According to the park's *Plan Vélo* (PNRM, 2005d), other circuits are in the course of implementation and it is expected that the *Traversée* will rejoin in some areas the Burgundy *tour*. But, the Morvan is completely absent in all the documentation on the Burgundy *tour* consulted for this work. As map 14 shows, the Morvan park is not even drawn in the official maps promoting the Burgundy tour.

| MAP 14: TOUR DE BOURGOGNE À VÉLO	MAP 15: TOUR DU MORVAN

According to an interviewee the tracing of a cycling trail is very complex, and subject to long studies and negotiations, combining technical and political factors *"Solidarity among territories can exist, however technical feasibility is also very important"*. This same *communauté de communes* official deepens his explanations with the example of a departmental cycling project *"We know that in this territory it is possible to implement a greenway, the local élus have worked on this project and know that it is possible to do it. However, now that the project has been designed at the local level, its final realization depends on a decision taken at the departmental level (...) We can try to persuade them about the positive impact of our project and about its feasibility; however the decision falls outside the scope of our (the CC) activities (...) Territories have needs, yet it is another spatial scale that will try to satisfy them"*. He continued explaining that these negotiations become more complex when they involve other departments or the region, reason that drives them to remain inside their boundaries. Finally, in agreement with the incomprehension felt by the local population regarding such a large number of institutional levels involved and the long negotiations, with regret he illustrates this apprehension through the departmental cycling project *"The pays started with a first study, the CC did a second one, and*

now the department after having acknowledge these studies did a third evaluation before deciding. We thus have an interlocking of studies carried out during the four last years, and there is still no political decision for implementing any of the projects. Perhaps this means that cycling is not a priority for the department".

MAP 16: GRANDE TRAVERSÉE DU MORVAN
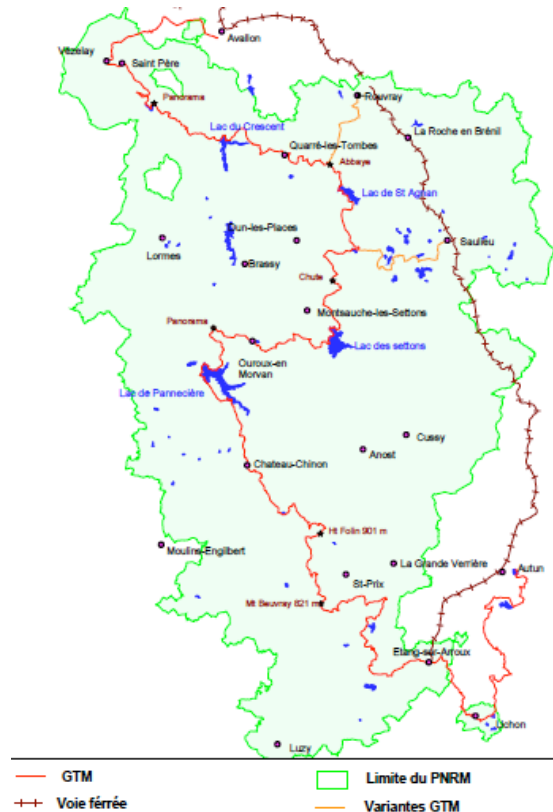
PNRM (2005d)

9.4. The incorporation of the Morvan to the *massif central*

For people working in the Morvan Park, 2005 is identified as a crucial year. After long-live work carried out by native geographers since the mid-1950s, concluding that the Morvan's topological and natural characteristics, as well as its agriculture, forestry and population lifestyles, were typical features of middle-sized mountain territories, 116 Movan's communes joined the *massif central*. This decision adds one extra layer to the already complex set of scales governing this territory. As was expressed by the park's president Christian Paul, this decision is the offspring of the persistent shared work of the associative sector represented by the *Comité d'Étude et*

d'Aménagement du Morvan and a group of Morvan elected representatives adhering the *Association Nationale des Élus de la Montagne* lobbying for several years for this decision (PNRM, 2006e). Since then, the Morvan is linked up with the French massif policy dating back to the 1960s, allowing this territory to benefit of special credits for deprived middle sized mountain regions[383]. The interregional plan for the *massif central*[384] identifies three priority development axes: i) to attract new populations, both French and foreign; ii) to foster economic development through innovative and sustainable practices; iii) to improve accessibility to the massif (DIACT Massif Central, 2006). As to tourism and protected areas contained in the *massif central* area, there exists a specific plan and platform supporting sustainable tourism and ecotourism practiced in parks located in the *massif central*.

MAP 17: THE *MASSIF CENTRAL*   **MAP 18: PARKS IN THE *MASSIF CENTRAL***

Source: http://www.auvergne.pref.gouv.fr/e_lettre/massif_central.php and DIACT Massif Central (2006)

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[383] As part of the rural renovation policy started in France in 1967, the French state launched the first Plan addressed to the Central Massif in 1975, which was later complemented with the 1985 *Loi Montagne* differentiating the various French massifs and with the extension of the central massif in 2005 towards the inclusion of the Morvan.

[384] In french *Schéma Interrégional du Massif Central* (see http://www.parcs-massif-central.com/)

Since the integration of the Morvan into the *massif central*, a very deep optimism has permeated reigned among the park's technical team and board. In words of a high park's official *"The Morvan became massif, so it is attached to the massif central, after more than fifty years of work. This decision situates the Morvan in Europe as a veritable mountain region. This is certainly the best news that the Morvan has received since its creation. With this recognition, Europe recognizes the principles of insularity and handicap affecting the Morvan (...) Since 2002 all the park's élus with our president put pressure on the senate and deputies for obtaining this recognition. (...) Now the Morvan fits in the park's and massif policy. This nomination will permit to request special credits for mountain massifs (...) The region will invest five million euro and will recuperate fifteen to reinvest them in the territory. It is the belle époque that begins. We will see the benefits in 2030-40. This is very important for European territorial policy".* Moreover whether this spatial joining is justified or not from a human geographical perspective (see maps 17 and 18), at a first glance the exacerbated optimism shown by the park's team is very impressive, and consequently a factor to consider in the reflection on the Morvan's system of governance. Press articles and interviews reveal that this annexation could operate as a miraculous solution to the socio-economic problems experienced by the Morvan. Indeed this late institutional joining is also evoked as the reason explaining the Morvan's socio-economic problems and backwardness. Mottet (2006 p. 56) concludes that from now on the Morvan should be 'thought' from a '*massif central* logic' perspective, and no longer from a 'park's' one.

The confidence expressed by these actors shed an interesting light on the governance complexities lying beneath the politico-institutional system under study from at least two viewpoints. From a more general perspective, it is a corroboration of the propensity of the French public system to multiply institutions and instruments for the development of territories, yet without questioning the role of the pre-existing institutions as well as the coordination of their activities with new agencies. The annexation of the Morvan to the *massif central*, through a contractual inter-regional instrument, exactly means that, from now onwards, the coordination efforts deployed by the park should also consider the articulation with the *massif central*. If coordination between the already existing institutions was already difficult and the human means to guarantee synchronization were insufficient, why would the new situation produce governance processes with more sustainable outcomes? This question is especially pertinent for a context in which the geographical conditions do not facilitate meeting and hamper periodical meetings. Yet the adhesion of the Morvan to the *massif central* can be perceived by the park's team as a sort of liberation from the disparities and internal divisions of Burgundy. This institutional shift permits

to somehow compensate the abandonment experienced by the Morvan by the region, the departments and the *pays*. This new engagement of the Morvan, now in cooperation with an extra-regional institution not at all concerned by the Burgundy political differences, allows the park to simultaneously meet the inter-territorial collaboration requirements of the current French and EU policies, and also somehow exempts the Park from the obligation to collaborate with regional institutions. In sum, joining the Morvan to the *massif central* permits to appease the existing local institutional stress and to look towards other horizons. This is almost an issue of pride among the Morvan's actors, which pushes the old persistent rivalries to the background and allows focusing energies and hopes on a new institution. The question remains if this new institution will be a source of sustainable development for this territory, as a few people envisage, or if it will only be a new politico-administrative subdivision of this territory engendering unease among its inhabitants.

9.5. Uneasiness due to the progression of conifers in the Morvan woodlands

The Morvan forest unites the plurality of interests and values driving the complexities of the relationship between human beings and nature. Broadly speaking, there are three main views and attitudes regarding the sustained progression of conifers in detriment of broad-leaved trees, which is one of the most delicate environmental problems faced by the Morvan: i) private woodlands investors in pursuit of higher productivity are the main responsible for the expansion of conifers; ii) ecotourists, ecotourism micro-business owners and the local population feeling dissatisfied with the transformation of the original Morvan forest, as well as local environmentalists associations leading collective action for saving the forest; iii) the park who tries conciliating the different views and needs of the ensemble of actors.

Autun Morvan Écologie (AME) born in 1989, is the oldest and most active association fighting what they call the massacre of the Morvan's forest. Young Autun's inhabitants created this association to defend and protect the natural environment, and after a few years they adopted the forest as their main mobilisation target. They supported, in the 1990s, the struggle of a Morvan woman to impede the clear-cut of a broad-leaved forest at Roche Millet, which was finally bought by the region and the park for its conservation. Among others, AME petitions private investors (*i.e.* AXA*, Caisse d'épargne de Paris*) for stopping planting conifers in the Morvan; they also petition the park's president to do something to save the forest. In the words of AME's president, *"douglas is an imported specie. It is not a local tree! Let's fight to preserve local species… otherwise, in twenty years, if we continue at this rhythm, we will need to go to the arboretums to*

show our kids that there existed chestnut trees in the Morvan, beeches, maples… and that would be scandalous. We, the AME, as far as we have the strength and the resources, we will fight with all our means against the massive and uncontrolled destruction of the Morvan forest". By destruction, they mean the loss in biodiversity, erosion and soil acidulation, and the ruining of ecosystems with clear-cutting mechanical practices. One of the most important actions led by AME is the creation of the *Groupement forestier pour la sauvegarde des feuillus du Morvan (GFSFM)* that purchases broad-leaved forestlands for their preservation. This is done with the money coming from more than 4.500 people adhering the *Comité de soutien des feuillus du Morvan,* created in 2000. The most emblematic example is the *Montmain* forest, located inside a 300 ha broad-leaved massif, which was conjointly bought in 2004 by the GFSM, the *Conservatoire de Sites Naturels Bourguignons* and Autun for its preservation. The GFSM also owns forest at Aligny en Morvan (23 ha near the Chamboux lake), Laizy (16 ha), Autun (28 ha) and Roussillon en Morvan (1,5 ha). In 2006, at the occasion of a public inquiry made before the renewal of the park's charter, the AME affirmed that despite the high competence of the park's technical team, the *syndicat mixte* has not been capable of developing a veritable strategy for a more sustainable management of the local landscapes. Thus the AME conditioned its support to the park, to the realisation of strong and exemplary preservation actions[385].

This way of thinking of the park is reflected in the implementation of the *Charte forestière de Territoire du Morvan*. Echoing the Rio conception on sustainable management, the French state promulgated in 2001 a forestry law[386] allowing the development of local management plans based on multi-partner contracts. The singularity of this instrument is its participatory governance focus creating spaces to confront divergent conceptions and sensibilities regarding forests. In 2002, the Morvan park started conducting the process that led to the implementation of a forestry charter (PNRM, 2004a). This process included a territorial diagnosis, audit and investigation (see Daudet, 2003), as well as the organisation of workshops with the local population, politicians, and forest owners. Two main conclusions emerged from this process: to conjointly satisfy social and environmental demands; and to improve competitiveness of production, harvest, transformation and valorisation of forestry products (PNRM, 2004a).

In addition, through the charter the park recognizes the need to combine environmental with socio-economic issues. The most important concern is production, as is revealed in the words of

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[385] See http://autun.morvan.free.fr/actu.htm
[386] *Loi d'orientation sur la forêt du 9 juillet 2001*

the park's forest official *"This is the first time that there is a forestry engineer in the park. It is quite remarkable. Before, the forest was addressed through an environmentalist perspective. For example, identification of remarkable areas and realisation of inventories and studies were major tasks. However, with the forestry charter the vision changed. The forest is no longer exclusively its environmental aspect, but also its productive one. Both go together (...) We start from the principle that the park is a forested territory. The forest is one of our main economic activities because in the Morvan there are not so many industries. Agriculture, forestry and tourism are the three main economic pillars. The forest is also a very important cadre de vie and leisure place. Our philosophy is the valorisation and the development of the forest, and thus of the wood sector, but without forgetting the other functions. Our challenge is to conciliate the different activities".* According to this interviewee the park's priority is *"economic development. This is very clear. We cannot stop producing. People do not have money here, therefore it is very difficult for them to conduct environmentalist action. The position of the park is economic development; otherwise the Morvan will die. Only economic development will allow fostering new activities and ideas".*

BOX 17: THE BOIS ÉNERGIE

A field where the Morvan has been quite innovative is the production of *bois énergie.* One promising use given to the Morvan's tree wood has been as combustible for wood-burning boilers.

The Morvan has a comparatively long history in the implementation of automatic wood-burning boilers. The first commune equipped with this technology was Château-Chinon in 1983. A few years later, the Morvan park started a partnership with the region and the ADEME for the development of renewable energy initiatives. The purpose since 1995 has been to create alternatives to valorise the potential of the Morvan forest, to stimulate alternative energy sources (wood energy, in this case) and to develop a new wood subsector from jagged wood. The list of actors involved in these initiatives has considerably expanded throughout the years, to include today the DRAF, ONF, CRPF, Aprovalbois, Cumas, among many others (PNRM, 2004).

Today the Morvan sums six communes equipped with an automatic boiler room. The most emblematic example is the town of Millay that became in 1993 the first *Village du bois énergie.* A few years later, several communes of the massif inaugurated similar installations, as is the case of the Park's headquarters at Saint Brisson and the communes of Autun, Ruchers du Morvan and the Abbaye de la Pierre qui Vire (MRNP, 2006b). For its part, the Autun has one of the most important French wood boilers.

Source: author

Within this context, the park has focused its effort in creating synergies among the wood actors and has also run campaigns for convincing the local carpenters of the quality of the douglas wood. According to Piers (2005), the level of precariousness of these artisans and their lack of connection with the extra-local wood industry justifies the concern and actions by the park. On the other hand, the choice of the park to address forestry issues from this perspective must also be related with the weak commitment of the private sector to biodiversity preservation. Already observed by authors like Marty (1999), sustainability constraints imposed to private forest owners in France are still weak and affect very few people. The Morvan is not an exception, despite a few experimental activities conducted by the park for the organic cultivation of Christmas trees.

The fact that the park had privileged wood production rather than ecological sustainability has perpetuated the unease of those wishing more strict environmental regulations. This explains the conditional support given by AME during the public inquiry in 2006, and the struggle led by the AME against the support given by the park to Christmas tree cultivations. This latter AME action took place in 2007, at the moment the *Tour de France* traversed the Morvan. It is also important to remember that these forests are a very important factor of the Morvan tourism attractiveness, a very strong symbol of the local identity and thus the locus in which the ecotourism pact is founded. Certainly, the Morvan forest hosts many governance challenges and many pending negotiations. Questions concerning the role of the park and the role of the public sector are very important

9.6. Organic medicinal plants in the Morvan and their ecotourism attractiveness

One of the most interesting talks I had during my research was with Elisabeth and Didier, the owners of a beautiful organic farm situated in the middle of a Natura 2000 site. They own a field of six ha devoted to the organic production of aromatic and medicinal plants, which are commercialised to different French laboratories. Additionally, they produce and sell essential oils, herbal tea, cosmetics and honey. Since their beginning in 2000, they received the ECOCERT certification, due to the good quality and cleanness of their lands, in circumstances that farms take in average three years to obtain this certification. The rapidity with which they received this label confirmed their choice for the Morvan.

PHOTO 27 AND 28: ELISABETH AND DIDIER'S ORGANIC FARM

Source: author (2006)

After working in different domains not related with agriculture, Élisabeth followed a professional training course in agriculture, allowing her to benefit from public funding for their farm. She completed her know-how on organic and medicinal plants with information from books, technical files, visits to farms, meeting people and informal talks. Yet, *"the medicinal plants milieu is very secret. It is very difficult to obtain information, so finally we learn almost everything from practice on the farmlands. In the organic agriculture sector, things have evolved. Today is easer to obtain information, but at the time we started information was scarce (...) Finally, you learn to know which are those plants that are comfortable in the Morvan lands. We do not want to transform the soil composition, we try to respect the environment we received"*.

In the beginning they pass through a local cooperative to sell their plants, but after a couple of years they decided to contact the laboratories and sell them directly. Producing medicinal organic plants is a very laborious activity. *"Everybody wants to cultivate medicinal plants. It was my dream since I was very young... We receive a lot of people and trainees, but only few of themstart a farm. They say it is a crazy work"*. Economic reasons and difficulties related to manual weeding and manual harvesting, supply of seeds and unforeseen climate events persuade them to start producing and selling artisanal products (*i.e.* cosmetic creams, essential oils, herbal teas, etc.), welcoming visitors and offering guided visits. *"During the summer we work with tourists, because the Morvan is a little touristy. For me, the Morvan still does not have the notoriety it merits. People like a lot going back to nature"* (...) Happily during the summer two nephews

come visiting and helping us… Contact with people is extremely nice. People are very interested. We invite them to discover plants, taste flowers, smell their perfume. We also explain them the uses of these plants… When we have a passion for something, we can go on talking for hours… It is great!" They do not have the intention of expanding their farming area. Instead, they plan to go on developing different forms to share their knowledge with visitors, through written documents, guided visits and pedagogical meetings for children. She continues, *"we wish people leave knowing something more about organic cultivations. We want them to learn that it is possible to live, earn a little money and, at same time, protect nature. At the end, when people leave, they feel very happy".*

At the moment of the interview, she admitted knowing the Park and other local institutions. Nonetheless, contacts with them were exceptional, beside the financial support obtained from the region and a subsidy from the *Pays Nivernais-en-Morvan* to buy a plant dryer. As to their relation with the park, they know people from the technical team, yet exchanges are limited to selling herbal teas to the park's tourist office. In 2003, the Park, in partnership with other regional institutions, launched a good practices code for sustainable harvesting of medicinal plants in the Morvan (PNRM and SEDARB, 2005). However, she was not involved in this initiative, nor with the tourism pole of the Park. It is a pity that people who know the Morvan so well (*"Once we organized a circuit around a wetland, with flora and fauna observatories. It is an area with a lot of butterflies")* have no further connection with the park or other institutions.

9.7. The force of the convinced and innovative local leaders in sustainable development and ecotourism

One important conclusion obtained from this research concerns the role adopted by the local leaders in the transition towards a more sustainable Morvan. More precisely, their role in creating new social spaces in which the local population might be empowered, and leads them to collective action favouring sustainability.

As it was seen in the cases of Remilly and Chamboux, a first category of leaders are mainly concerned by their hometowns that might eventually be menaced by the construction of a local infrastructure like a dumping site or a tourism resort. Interesting here is the post-conflict moment, when a reactive and very specific struggle arena converts into a more proactive one with a higher regard given to the territory. This widening of the development perspective creates in the words of interviewees produce an enduring caring over the territory. In the case of Remilly, the

recognition of the role performed by the leader even resulted in his election as Mayor of the commune. A second type of leadership concerns the native population involved in tourism. The personalities reviewed in section seven, show how these people have a particular affection for their territory that drives them to actions with very broad perspective, including their investment in the restoration of local infrastructure to enhance the appeal of their localities and their work in the associative field. It is true that motives are not only altruistic, yet there is a mixture of interests underlying their decisions that go far beyond the wealth of their micro-business. They are charismatic people speaking about their territory with a lot of passion. A third social category corresponds to newcomers. Perhaps they do not necessarily fit the profile of a leader, since they are still not steering collective action, yet they can at least be defined as pioneers. While settling in the Morvan, they act as innovators in exploring a new way of life based on a specific psychological preference structure privileging quality of life and proximity to nature. Perhaps they are not traditional leaders, yet they hold a discourse and act according to pro-environmentalist values that they transmit to their children, neighbours, friends and visitors.

One last example of leadership is the one embodied by Benoît Kubiak, ex-director of the unique Local Agenda 21 in the Morvan (Autun). He quit his job at Autun to make a world tour with the purpose of studying how the different world localities deal with global warming. He has travelled since January 2008 in Asia and Europe, and his next travel destination is the 2009 Copenhagen conference. His trips, ideas and collected materials might be consulted in his personal website *Un voyage à travers l'Europe et l'Asie sur le thème du changement climatique* (http://avenirclimat.info). When he is in France, he does presentations and multi-media exhibitions to transmit his travelling and learning experiences. At the time Kubiak worked at Autun, and I had the opportunity to discuss with him, and could enjoy his energy, conviction and knowledge while he talked about sustainability, participation and territorial equity was very impressing. Within the framework of the Local Agenda 21 at Autun, which was the first in Burgundy, despite his young age he led the participatory process from which emerged the Autun's Agenda 21 action programme[387]. Among many other projects, he recalled the participatory process that led to the writing of a guide of practical behaviour that citizens might adopt to incorporate sustainability in their daily life. "*The first thing we did was to constitute a committee for writing the document. It included the association Autun Morvan Écologie, the pays Autun en Morvan, local social assistants, a consumers' association, people working on family action, etc. Together we wrote this guide and we finally obtained a 'Ruban développement durable', which is a national price*

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[387] For more information on the Autun's Agenda 21 see CC de l'Autunois (2002, 2004, 2006).

for the quality of our document". One important issue for him was the challenge of matching the interests of *élus*, technical team, privates and local population. Since for him this was a quite difficult challenge because sustainable development is still not a political priority, he managed to develop a strategy to involve the political sector. In his words, *"today we integrate participation via the evaluation of the current actions of Agenda 21 and through those we are trying to implement* [which were defined during a long participatory process]. *I visited all the concerned municipalities and Mayors of the CC for trying to understand how the élus perceive the Agenda, its utility, impact, etc. Regarding the actions for 2007-2008, I ask them about their priorities. This exercise politically engages them to implement the projects that they have selected"*. In this way it is possible to bypass differences and at least advance in those areas that are common priorities, as is the case of tourism and cycling. Summarizing, this Agenda 21 is an interesting case of a territorial institution that lacks real power, since it is dependent on political decisions moving sustainability forward because of the ability of B. Kubiak to commit politicians. Becoming aware that much more work has to be done to revert the existing environmental damage of the planet, B. Kubiak decided travelling around the world looking for alternatives and deploying a communication strategy to create awareness.

9.8. The role of the park in leading exemplary actions: the Vézelay vineyard, the *marque parc* and the good behaviour charter for off-road vehicles

The park plays many direct and indirect roles in ecotourism, ranging from biodiversity actions enhancing the ecotourist image of the Morvan to conducting of specific tourism projects. For their innovative characteristics and impact on the Morvan's territory, this section focuses on three initiatives that can be qualified as exemplary: the restoration of the Vézelay vineyard, the certification of local products under the label 'marque parc' and the implementation of a good behaviour code to regulate motorized leisure activities.

The resuscitation of the *Vignoble du Vézelay* in the northern Morvan is an original and famous initiative directed by the park that combined agriculture revitalisation, local heritage renovation and tourism enhancement. The Vézelay vineyard (100ha) is situated in a UNESCO World Heritage site and, since 1997, it has held two AOC appellations. The Vézelay vineyard, that dates back to the Gallo-Roman period and highly reputed among the Burgundy Dukes, was completely destroyed by phylloxera at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1971 an exhibition recalled this vineyard and a group of local actors started envisaging its recovery. Under the direction of the park, both agro-biological experiments for the selection of grape varieties and managerial

operations were carried out since 1973 and more intensely from 1984 onwards. A Mayor of a neighbouring commune involved in this operation as the Park's vice-director of that time recalled that *"from 1984 the park led the gathering of lands* [owned by different people]*, the preparation of land for cultivation and the recollection of the resources needed for its exploitation. All this was done by the park, which was also the responsible for recuperating different cultivation rights and transferred them to the syndicate. Today the winery has 100 ha"*. The resuscitation of this vineyard is a very strong source of pride for the park's members, and from a tourism perspective it is a very successful operation that covered the *colline de Vézelay* with wineries that boost de locality's beauty. From a governance perspective this is also a celebrated operation that succeeded in enthusing the local population and farmers, fostering collaboration among different structures and producing as an outcome much more than the restoration of vineyard. Among others, a new economic activity and novel wine varieties were born, a new cooperative of farmers was created and the sense of place was strengthened. In sum, a positive and self-confident collective atmosphere was reproduced regarding public-private collaboration and the relationship between people, their local territory and nature.

Another initiative led by the park and that combines agriculture, local traditions and enhancement of tourism attractiveness is the certification of local products with the label *marque parc.* Local artisans and production of traditional products are major elements for ecotourism. In the case of the Morvan a wide variety of honeys, cheeses, wine, charcuteries, jams and berry liquors, among many others, constitute the set of local artisan productions as an integral part of the Morvan identity. The park has already labelled twenty micro-businesses and products such as the wine from Vézelay and several farmers. All labelled actors are organized under an associative structure directed by the park and responsible for marketing and advertising tasks. As affirmed by a park official *"our objective is sustainability. Here I refer to high quality products, labelled products, AOC, marque parc, organic agriculture, reintroduction of new species"*. In the case of the *marque parc,* the park acts as promoter of local artisan productions for their strong tourism symbolism, but also acts as the certification institution. This is an initiative that acts as a stimulus to recover local traditions and productions. It also has an effect on the system of governance allowing the creation of a network of actors that discuss and advance the development of a local know-how.

A completely different initiative is the Morvan's *Code de bonne conduite* to regulate motorized leisure activities, whose originality has been acknowledge by the French federation of regional

parks. Since the end of 1990s, motorized activities are considered critical black points (PNRM, 2006a) needing urgent regulation. Thus in 2002 the park, together with the association *Morvan loisir sport nature,* led the implementation of an experimental code aiming at fostering more respectful practices. This initiative followed collective discussion including the park, local mayors and privates. The code involves the participation of representatives of the different motorized disciplines to act as mediators in the conflicts link to these activities and as permanent territorial observers. The original idea was not to completely forbid these activities, but rather to confine them to certain specific zones and paths. However, while it seems that this code has been successful in regulating the private leisure sector, it has not been effective in controlling individuals. In the words of a local leisure sport micro-business owner *"we respect the charter, we belong to the professional sector, so we are forced to respect it. But there exist an increasing number of particular individuals that do whatever they want. How can we control them? This is a real problem because their behaviour is a thread to our activity"*. Across the years this apprehension has slowly been softened with the total interdiction of quads in certain communes, the zoning of fragile areas and more strict vigilance that might include legal action. Despite the limits shown by a soft-law instrument like a code of good conduct, the positive effects in terms of awareness, vigilance, commitment of the private sector and collective reflection need to be taken into consideration for its sustainable ecotourism benefits.

9.9. Connections with the European scale through the LEADER and the Charter for sustainable tourism: an opportunity to (re)build territorial coordination and consensus?

Despite the Morvan's fragmentation and the above examined governance inconsistencies, there exists evidence on movements going in the sense of a territorial re-composition. This rather signifies that inarticulate dynamics observed in the interactions among specific territories coexist and co-evolve with experiences embracing more collaboration and articulation. Simultaneously and involving a similar group of territories, we observe spatial dynamics of disintegration and integration that either reaffirm pre-existing territories or produce new ones. This is especially relevant in the context of this dissertation because ecotourism plays an important role in the processes leading towards more fluid territorial dialectics.

It is interesting to observe that the European level has been the source of the projects that today operate in the Morvan as a force towards more territorial articulation, specifically throughout the LEADER+ programme and the European Charter (see chapters five and two). While LEADER has being identified in the literature as one of the most proactive and successful bottom-up EU

initiatives (Roberts and Hall, 2001), the impact of the Charter remains less explored and more controversial. Yet certification and eco-labels are recognized as very important tools to guarantee that eco-destinations meet the sustainability standards of ecotourism (Honey, 2002). These are voluntary governance mechanisms, which act as intermediaries between the segments of the ecotourism product and the different levels of government (Page and Dowling, 2002), and therefore have the power to redefine the existing governance relations (Honey, 2002).

In the case of the Morvan, European programmes and approved projects are an important source of pride and self-esteem for public institutions, explaining the dynamics of cooperation that they produce. With a big sense of achievement a park's high official expressed *"in four years we obtained a LEADER+ project, a LIFE project from a partnership between Burgundy and Franche-Comté, the EUROPARC charter candidacy (…) Things will change from now on, because we have the resources for doing it"*.

In the Morvan, the European charter is still in an embryonic stage. Bearing in mind the Morvan's environmental quality and its ecotourism suitability, the park's main objectives fixed in the view of obtaining the EUROPARC label concern with the quality of the tourism supply, the Morvan's tourism image and the elaboration of ecotourism package deals. The Morvan park, candidate to the charter since 2006, as part of the application had to prepare a territorial diagnosis, a tourism strategy for five years and an action plan in tune with these objectives. Collaboration among the actors and institutions involved in the candidate's protected area is a pre-requisite for the elaboration of the previous documents and thus for obtaining the charter. In the case of the Morvan they acquired the form of meetings, forums and visits to accommodation structures susceptible to engage in an eco-reconversion since the mid-July 2004. In the next step, the Morvan should receive the visit of evaluation experts that will decide on the attribution of the charter for a five-year period.

However, the final certification of the Morvan as a sustainable tourism destination needs a lot of human efforts and economic resources. According to the park's high official *"our objective is that 10% of the accommodation-food services structure has the level of the European charter, but that depends on the money we will receive, because it is expensive to upgrade heating, water, and energy provision to the charter's standard"*. In the words of the park's tourism official *"the main actions effects cannot be visible but after a budget of five million euro that are needed to conduct actions within the charter's context. Inside there are a number of actions including the*

development of soft practices, notably cycling that is a priority… To develop the Tour du Morvan costs between 1 to 1,5 million euro. The upgrade of accommodation structures, communication and advertising, environmental preservation, carrying capacity studies…. all that sums up to five million". He continued explaining that since *"the park is not a vector of credits, it supports its actions on the pays and the communautés de communes (CC), because they have money. So we must succeed in inscribing sustainable tourism within the contracts of the pays and in the orientations of the CC, for them to finance related actions. (..) We can give advise to these gîtes, guide those who want to lead a project, but we do not have money. The pays and the CC, yes".*

The need of economic resources together with the exigency of the Charter work with the participatory governance forced the park to develop collaborative bridges with the various concerned institutions. One first victory was the inscription of ecotourism in the regional tourism plan and succeeded in somehow repositioning the Morvan inside Burgundy; a second one, has been a catalyse of enthusiasm and collaboration of territorial institutions. Additionally, the Morvan park's candidacy has created new spaces of exchange and collaboration with other French and European parks undergoing a similar process. As to the outcomes of this process we can mention the inauguration of a section of the *Tour du Morvan*, and of nine panda gîtes during 2008. Certainly, all of them are located in Nièvre, revealing that collaboration and tourism coherence with this department is easier, but changes have to start somewhere.

For its part, the LEADER project has also been a vector for more territorial cooperation and dialogue. Similar to the European charter, the LEADER and the LIFE are also programmes that forced the park to include the civil society and towards institutional collaboration, because their approval depended on the involvement of these partners. For sure this was not an easy task, as explained by a park's official, *"it is complicated for us because of distance. Everything is too far away. We need sub-groups, perhaps from a federation. The LEADER was approved because we worked as crazy people. The technical team and the involved civil society worked as knights. They are people with strong personality, very committed to their locality. They are the people from the bistros, café Magot, UGM, les glacers, memoires vives, theatre groups…. We should not be naive, there was money to distribute… but anyway".* Also remarkable was the involvement of an entire CC, since it is not completely situated inside the park and does not share the same political views. Further research is needed during the forthcoming years to see if the LEADER and the Charter instances will produce enduring collaboration among territorial institutions and spaces to empower civil society in favour of more sustainability.

One last point evoked by several interviewees that became evident while visiting the Morvan is the difficulties of fostering participatory governance processes in a low density and dispersed territory like the Morvan. Reaching a certain geographical point for participating in a meeting takes too long and people feel discouraged. This idea is very well summarized in the words of a high official of the Morvan park *"it is very difficult to foster participatory governance in such a large rural area only because of distance. Internet is not enough. Perhaps urban and peri-urban areas have more complicated problems; however they have a particular density that allows closer social mechanisms of participation. Governance is different in each milieu, in the Cordillera de los Andes or in Paris."*.

10. CONCLUSION

This chapter narrated the story of the Morvan, a charismatic territory that has been modelled by the needs, the way of life and the variety of interests of the populations that have lived there, as well as by the influences and decisions by French governments at different historical periods. Simultaneously, the character of the Morvan people and the organizational culture of its institutions have been marked by the biophysical characteristics of this small rural mountain that have always produced a feeling of isolation and loneliness among the inhabitants. However, to a large extent, this remoteness, geography and location on the French map help to explain the Morvan's life-course; for instance, the interest of Romans soldiers for the Morvan, the wood-floating, the arrival of *maquis*, the practice of ecotourism, the conflict at Remilly, and so on… In fact, it is too difficult to tell apart the geographical, natural, political, economic and socio-cultural history of this territory.

The few pages telling the interesting story of the Morvan since ancient times give evidence that to the history of this territory transcends the park's foundation date. And these pages also show that even if ecotourism was chosen as the activity to explore territorial sustainability in this dissertation, its multi-functional, multi-sectoral and sustainability features demanded a broader grasp of the Morvan's socio-economic and ecological systems. It is not possible to understand the governance dynamics of ecotourism without understanding its relationship with other sectors that might be threatening (*i.e.* conifers forestry) or contributing to the Morvan's sustainability (*i.e.* organic farms).

Ecotourism has a twofold nature. It is a tourism experience conceived to enjoy, understand and learn about a 'nature' destination, and it is also a tourism experience that must contribute to the ecological and socio-economic enhancement of the host locality. This activity is thus dependent on a system of governance that should foster territorial sustainability. With this I mean that the practice of ecotourism, involving ecotourists, suppliers, public institutions and local population, should have the capacity to constitute an empowering arena favouring sustainability. Section six of this chapter was clear enough in showing that, within its specificity, the Morvan fulfils the ecotourism criteria analysed in chapter three. Despite its modified ecological systems (and sometimes because of them, bearing in mind that water activities are possible thanks to the wood floating), people visit the Morvan because of its natural characteristics, suitable for discovering nature and the practice of nature-based activities. In many cases ecotourism in the Morvan implies a transfer of ecological and cultural knowledge from hosts to visitors, from visitors to hosts, and of course the diffusion of knowledge inside the locality. As to the economic sustainability of ecotourism, we can conclude that even if the Morvan continues being a territory with low revenue, ecotourism has played a role in the process of diversification of the local economy, either through farmers pluriactivity or the opening of new tourism micro-business that entails a local revival. Even if the discrete tourism development of the Morvan, compared to very popular areas in France, as is the case of the Luberon and the Var, has not entailed a territorial economic revolution, this slow development has permitted to protect the Morvan's cultural and natural authenticity. Certainly, we cannot dismiss unsustainable practices, like motorized vehicles and forestry mono-cultivations transforming the Morvan's landscapes. However, the emergence of these two problems has entailed the opening of a collective reflection and dialogue that should soon be fruitful. Finally, it is important to mention the impact of ecotourism in the process of recovering and restoring the local cultural and natural heritage, as it happened for example with the Vézelay vineyard that sprang from an original operation combining agriculture, tourism and environmental objectives.

For many reasons (eco)tourism has brought to the Morvan changes in the life-styles of its inhabitants. When tourism is disruptive, it bothers the local population and challenges public authorities. Ecotourism provides complementary incomes and new sources of jobs; more specifically ecotourism is an economic opportunity for those desiring moving to and earning their life in a nature park. When ecotourism might be the reason for attracting new public money to be invested in the Morvan, it injects territorial institutions with energy and shakes public institutional inertias. Finally, when the Morvan's sustainability is menaced, ecotourism becomes a strong

argument or alibi for environmental protection, even for people who are not related with the tourism sector. As a result, this ecotourism context configured a particular socio-institutional constellation consisting of newcomers, locals, politico-administrative institutions, the park, forestry, farmers and local associations, and characterized by the presence of conflicts and negotiations, which have become a source of new opportunities and challenges for this territory.

The interesting point here is how the Morvan ecotourism governance structure, founded on specific green values and quality of life options, relates with the somehow 'crazy' politico-administrative French context. Drawing on the conclusions of chapter five, we can analyse the Morvan in terms of the impact of the re-scaling of environmental, spatial and tourism policy. The Morvan is a very nice example showing the territorial effects of the transition from a Fordist policy for nature protection towards a post-fordist regulation in which the international agencies and the French governments progressively delegated action to sub-national territories and partnerships. Within this context, it is relevant to see how regional parks – *i.e.* institutions created during fordism but with post-fordist aims – relate and adapt to the new post-fordist decentralised governance arrangements. Since the Morvan massif and its governance dynamics are embedded within a complex and changing multi-level system of governance, a very important conclusion of this chapter is related to the outcomes of the confrontation between the ecotourism governance scenario and the complex multi-level system in which the Morvan is anchored.

This is an important issue because the complexities of this multi-scalar and multi-partner governance formed by more than ten territorial levels in many cases act as a threat to the Morvan's sustainability. And this is very paradoxical and worrying because this multi-scalar and multi-partner system of governance has been conceived to foster participation and governance by shared parties, expecting that they will bring more sustainability to French territories. Since the profusion of institutions has been so large, territories like the Morvan have been fragmented in many overlapping little pieces. The ensemble of territorial fragments has overtime produced a kind of territorial mosaic, whose pieces miss the necessary articulation required to foster sustainability. We could also use the metaphor of a kaleidoscope to understand the Morvan, and argue that its reflections vary in function of the direction by which one looks at the territory, and which in many cases are not including. In the same way as the reflections offered by a kaleidoscope change in function of its rotation, the Morvan's nested territories vary in function of the direction of the regard given to it. For example, if the focus is the department, we perceive four pays and four strong urban epicentres that are located outside the Morvan carrying out

actions whose benefits rarely reach to the Morvan. If the target is the park, we see the almost entire Morvan, with more intensive social dynamisms in its northern and central areas; to a less extent it also lights the 'exterior' south with the *massif central* in mind. If the point of reference is Burgundy, we discern a massif separated by its altitude, deficient roads and distance from Dijon, divisions materialised in the Burgundy green cycling circuit. If we rotate the kaleidoscope to discern political power, we see a territory that is subordinated to the political inclinations of the region and to those of the four departments that divided it…

FIGURE 23: THE MORVAN: A TERRITORY GOVERNED AT VARIOUS NESTED SCALES
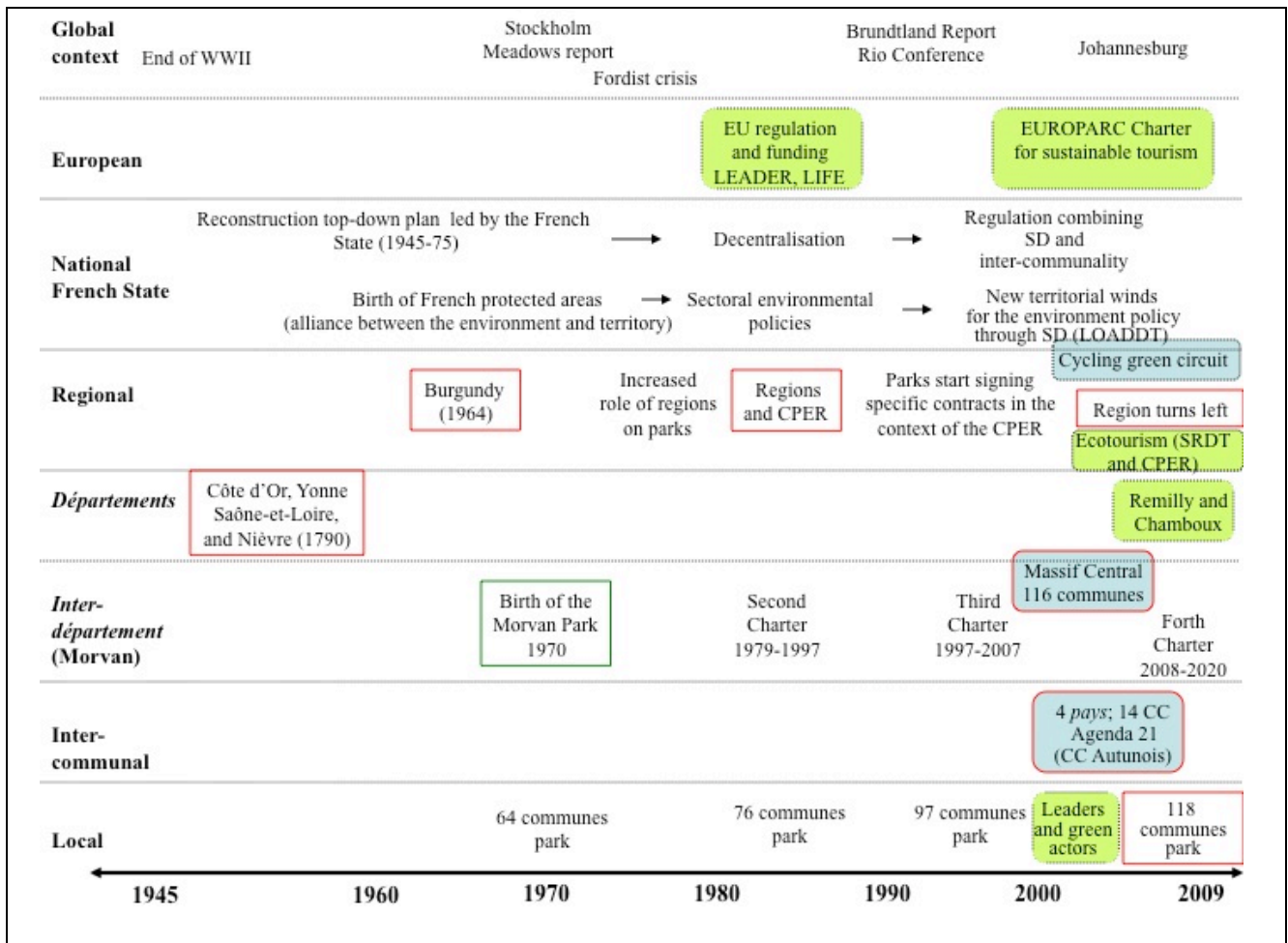
Source: Parra (2010)

Certainly, such territorial complexity is not limited to this case; however the Morvan's specific biophysical characteristics and politico-administrative location have worsened this condition. We saw that regional parks are protected areas that were created during the fordist period but with

rather post-fordist and sustainability aims. Regional parks are the result of a demand done from the regional scale to the central government; however, the policy framework regulating these parks is homogeneous for all French parks of this kind. Secondly, regional parks are institutions with missions (environmental protection, territorial sustainability and governance by shared parties), but with little power and resources. Therefore they essentially act as mediators, articulators and institutions to create awareness and show the way in different negotiations. Additionally, over the the last years regional parks have assumed the role of territorial leaders in the coordination and implementation of European programmes for these territories (LIFE, LEADER+, Charter, Natura 2000). However, when regional parks tried to find their way through the new context formed by a large number of compiled territorial institutions, they became painfully entangled. More precisely, their missions and role got very confused to the extent of questioning their pertinence to the new decentralised configuration including *pays* and CC. The Morvan case is interesting because together with the above described complexity challenges also concern the biophysical characteristics of the massif and its politico-administrative structure.

It should be unfair to affirm that the situation of the Morvan park is completely blocked. It seems as if the 'park' passed a long time sulking and refusing to talk with the departments, region, pays and CC, until five changes started operating: i) the joining of the Morvan to the *massif central*, which produced great satisfaction to the park team and board; ii) the region turned politically left; iii) European instruments like the Charter and the LEADER+ insisted on the need for territorial collaboration; iv) the process preceding the charter renewal in the mid-2000 led to a auto-evaluation of the park and also fostered the need to include civil society participation; v) the emergence of micro-conflicts referring to the Morvan's sustainability and increasing pressures coming from civil society groups.

In fact, during the last decade the Morvan inhabitants became suspicious about the park's role, and in a more general way they were unable to understand the complexities of the institutional system governing this territory. This critical regard coincided, and was also fed by a rise in the complexities of the social tissue inhabiting the Morvan and other protected areas. Organic farmers, ecotourists, retired people going to live in nature areas and ecotourism micro-business owners arrived to the Morvan, and joined the effort made by local leaders connected to their land and heritage with a strong affection. Impregnated by green convictions and needs, echoing the normative approaches diffused throughout the events of the first and second wave of environmentalism, a growing population has started reconsidering its urban life in search for

higher levels of quality of life which they find in territories like the Morvan. The social tissue formed instrumental to ecotourism and connected to the sustainability aims of this activity is thus a new one, and is characterized by a strong conviction, passion and awareness about their life setting.

In short, the novel practice of ecotourism led towards the progressive creation of new social spaces that initially acted as imperceptible guardians of the Morvan's sustainability, and that later became manifest through more noisy actions. While Remilly and Chamboux were in their beginning reactive battles, Élisabeth, Didier, Kubiak and Salamolard are personal, proactive and more silent crusades. Along these battles, ecotourism started developing as a persistent rhizome that has been responsible for facilitating the creation of a particular and completely novel socially empowering 'locus'. Furthermore, ecotourism opened new arenas of dialogue and negotiation between civil society members, associations, the state and the private sector. And new emerging governance structures advocating and defending the sustainability basis of ecotourism, are confronting pre-existing forms of unsustainable governance. What is nice about the Morvan case is that it shows several examples of tenacious efforts to foster socio-institutional change for a more sustainable Morvan that have been successful. More precisely, this case study shows how the proactive governance of a multi-dimensional and multi-functional activity aspiring and depending on environmental sustainability, as is the case of ecotourism, introduces changes in terms of values, interests and post-normal knowledge that have the capacity to counterbalance or/and block unsustainable forms of utilisation of natural resources such as forests and land.

For its part, the park has adopted different attitudes, revealing its conflicting interests and ambiguous role. While in some cases it supported civil society concerns (motorized vehicles, and indirectly Remilly), in cases like Chamboux it was against the Comité. With regard to forestry the park has not been able to act with more decisiveness in responding to the AME association's requests. In parallel, the park continued leading very important ecotourism actions (marque parc, restoration of sites, museums, trekking signposting, etc.). Finally, the European Charter and the LEADER+, and more precisely their role in bringing different politico-administrative territories closer, as well as to officially seal an ecotourism agreement for the Morvan already recognized by the regional level, should be stressed.

One last situation I would like to point out is the low population density and dispersed settlement pattern of the Morvan. They are one of the specificities of the governance of protected areas and

more specifically of the Morvan that is rarely evoked in the literature on the topic. Nonetheless, for the Morvan case, I conclude that even though this dispersed pattern does not facilitate participation and or encourage the meeting of the northern and southern Morvan people, some micro-cases show that despite dispersion, it was possible to organise collective action at the communal level. Moreover, because of dispersion, it is possible to keep an eye on the entire Morvan, despite its low population. To a certain extent, civil society action carried out at the local level by actors involved and supporting ecotourism and sustainability, has permitted to counterbalance the deficiencies related to the complexities of the French multi-level system. Moreover, the population's dispersed territorial location permits to form an omnipresent network of green civil guards. I believe that the knowledge, green values, life quality choices and sustainability convictions of this network of actors might be at the foundation of a new societal environmental citizenship, which might be very effective in the promotion, mobilisation and demand for environmental rights, notably because of its convinced and territorial omnipresence. An essential question here would be the following: is the state prepared and open enough to listen to those wishing to foster socio-institutional in favour of more territorial sustainability?

General conclusion

At the moment I was finishing writing this dissertation, newspapers had already started informing about the second version of the Dakar rally (formerly the Paris-Dakar) that will take place in South America, and more precisely will pass over Chilean and Argentinean territory. As a Chilean social scientist specialised in the multi-level governance of sustainable development and having studied it for the Morvan Park, I am aware of the difficulty or even impossibility to organize today a competition of this kind that would crisscross French parks, or parks in any other European country, for its elevated ecological impact. As this dissertation shows, not only European countries are *regulated by an ample legal framework* that would impede about five hundred motorized vehicles traversing fragile ecosystems with such high levels of aggressiveness, but I also suspect that even the most *loyal supporters* of car races would never authorize a rally of this kind to irrupt into the Morvan or into any other protected area. Not to talk about the effect that the mere intention of performing such an event would have on the numerous *environmentalist associations*, and among the *local and neo-local populations* that could potentially be affected. Elaborating on the words of Gibbs and Jonas (2000), the Dakar is *unthinkable* in the current European context tinted with 'ecological crisis' discourse and filled with permanent struggles trying to compensate for failures in governance over environmental sustainability at the different state levels. Conversely, at the eyes of people involved in this competition, Chilean protected areas, like the Atacama desert, the pink flamingo reserve, the salt pans and the millenary Aymara towns, appear to be a perfect backdrop to organise the Dakar's second 'life'. On top of this, this race is often presented as a chance for South American countries, given its media impact, tourism potential and accompanying economic benefits, which together are identified as 'development' opportunities that should be rejected.

I have decided referring to this rally in the conclusion to this dissertation, because it illustrates very well the stakes raised in the previous chapters, connecting *sustainable development, governance* and the *practice of ecotourism.* In a certain way, the fact that the Dakar race takes place in South American protected areas, confronted with the governance dynamics impeding today the organization of this race in France, is symptomatic of the differentiation of the dynamics in governance guiding sustainability in the two continental realities. More precisely, those socio-institutional arrangements that are leading the way to more sustainable societies, as well as the reasons explaining the failure of societal sustainability attempts, were at the core of this research. This dissertation is a first step in the sense

that it contributes to the understanding of sustainable governance issues for the European and French context. Further research on the governance of protected areas in South America, with a special focus on Chile, will be the next step in which the analytical frameworks, normative positioning and research methodology developed for the realisation of this dissertation will be adapted, applied and nourished with a comparative research aim. The tendency of transnational groups such as the Dakar organisers to export 'governance of sustainability' problems to more fragile territorial systems in other continents will then become an issue.

The current coexistence of *different modes of governance* – allowing the Dakar to take place in South America and simultaneously producing more socially innovative ecotourism forms in the Morvan – *confirms my confidence in the feasibility to collectively govern territories in different world regions in a more sustainable way.* I am not saying that this is an easy mission, nor that ecotourism is a sort of perfect sustainability panacea for all territories and that, therefore, can easily be exported from one territory to another. *I rather believe in the existence of a plurality of governance modes and territorial development alternatives from which to foster sustainability.* By choosing ecotourism and protected areas to look at sustainability and its governance, I simply wished to signal *one* possible route, among many others, to start building more sustainable societies and learning further about how to do it. This was the overall goal of this thesis: to elucidate more fully the character of the socio-institutional arrangements underpinning a transition towards the construction of more sustainable societies via the examination of the governance dynamics of ecotourism in the Morvan park. In short, *the results of this research reveal the rhizoidal power of ecotourism as a socially embedded innovative force enabling the fabrication of more sustainable territorial paths. Certainly, ecotourism by itself will not metamorphose the world order and transform existing unsustainable governance dynamics as a whole; however, I am convinced that it is indispensable to start without delay from somewhere.*

The theoretical starting point of this dissertation

Polanyi's (1944) concept of *societal embeddedness* summarizes one of the most fundamental starting points of this dissertation that led towards the construction of a socio-institutional and territorial approach to sustainable development. A re-consideration of the contributions of social theorists analysing the economy as a social phenomenon evoked the multidimensional and multifunctional role that *social interactions* played in shaping any kind of economic activity. As stated by Bourdieu (1994, 2000), economic structures and economic agents are social constructions that cannot be separated from the whole set of social relationships constituting the social order. Thus the economic 'field', shaped by distinctive socio-institutional dynamics, originates in a large and heterogeneous collection of

behaviours, symbolic constructions and worldviews, plural interests and deep motives driving human action, which can in no way be reduced to rational and a-historical economic interests.

To understand the collective production of more or less sustainable realities from this perspective, I looked at what Söderbaum (2000) calls the *sociality of the environmental problematic*. On the one hand, this sociality refers to the socially reproduced ethical belief that without healthy ecosystems human life is not possible. On the other, it means that the different ways towards human fulfilment should be collectively and democratically constructed according to the existing and evolving ecological constraints. Results from the Morvan park case study are not only abounding with examples showing the contemporary relevancy of the embeddedness thesis, the Morvan also proved to be a very meaningful 'society' shedding light on the socio-institutional dynamics orchestrating the ongoing negotiation for socio-environmental change.

Collective action and the sociality of the environmental problematic were interpreted using the concepts of *governance* and *sustainable development,* and through the social practice of ecotourism and the distinctiveness of protected areas. Sustainable development was *socially conceived* and therefore scrutinized as a *dynamic constellation of governance relationships in which the socio-economic and ecological dimensions of sustainability interrelate over time and across spatial scales, and therefore hold the capacity to bring into being unique territories and governance scales*. To this conception underlies an interpretation of governance in terms of its *dynamic nature* and infinite capacity to address sustainability challenges, renew governance relationships and foster socio-institutional innovation in favour of more sustainable society-nature relationships. What might be called *'societally embedded sustainability'* captures one overall ambition of this dissertation that was *to restore the (ecological) sustainability concept with its human and social distinctiveness*. Within this attempt, the territoriality of ecotourism destinations was selected as a privileged focus to reflect on sustainable development as governance. Thinking about ecotourism as a socially embedded practice, seeking and depending upon sustainability, leads to the belief that at eco-destinations the governance of the interaction between sustainability dimensions comes to the fore. Therefore, studying this governance should reveal the characteristics of the socio-institutional plexus that will conduct societies to more sustainable life patterns.

The territoriality of sustainable development and its application to ecotourism

This dissertation confirms the meaningfulness of the concepts of territory, place and scale to address the territoriality of the sustainability problematic. A socio-institutional approach to sustainable development employs a concept of territory that is not only restricted to its geo-physical setting. *Territories have been understood as crystallisations of social relations, human agencies and politico-administrative systems, in which the governance of smaller territories – with their own social relations - is embedded in the social relations of larger ones*. The sustainability of territories will thus depend on the type of governance relations that meet, which will in turn be shaped and affected by the existing geo-physical forms. Within a multi-scalar context, governance relationships and therefore territories are seen as the result of multiple and changing nested socio-institutional interactions operating at various spatial scales and institutional levels. This means that places are affected by the governance of other territories and also have the capacity to influence governance dynamics and institutions at other scales.

Within this multi-scalar reality the *local governance level* has been recognized as pivotal in the fostering of sustainability. More precisely, the particular identity of localities, their culture and history hold an important potential of socio-institutional innovation and therefore explains their capacity to introduce changes allowing a transition towards more sustainable forms of development. From this perspective, our vision of territory includes a place-likeness of scales and territories, which underscores their living, dynamic and changing nature, capable of (re)producing new governance scales and contents at different time horizons. The implementation of the three dimensions of the *concept of social innovation* – satisfaction of human needs, changes in social relations and increasing socio-political capability (see Moulaert *et al.* 2005) – at the light of the sustainability problematic brought about a concept of socio-institutional innovation for territorial sustainability that refers to a *collective definition of sustainable paths of development, innovation in the governance for sustainable development* and *enhancement of environmental rights – as a basis for new environmental citizenship rights*. Therefore socially innovative relations within their indissoluble affinity with nature have the capacity to produce what might be called "socio-nature embedded scales" feeding sustainability aims and environmental rights enhancement into the governance agenda of the different territories. Within the context of state rescaling these "socio-nature scales" coexist and intersect in a nested way with the scale dynamics of state and non-state governance.

According to this perspective, (sustainable) ecotourism destinations and protected areas are territories that result from a governance combining more strict environmental regulation with a more 'friendly' society-nature relationship. For its part, ecotourism from a governance perspective has been understood *as a multi-functional and multi-dimensional social practice involving a variety of actors*

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interweaving with a more careful society-nature relationship and therefore collectively heading toward the production of more sustainable territories. Among others, the territoriality of ecotourism was approached underscoring the capability of the governance of ecotourism to enhance *collective learning, community post-normal knowledge* and *socio-institutional change for more sustainability*. At this point, ecotourism destinations were represented as *cradles of socio-institutional innovation carrying the potential to pave more sustainable development paths, and were characterised as being governed by more proactive, empowering and sustainable socio-environmental relationships.* Since in most cases ecotourism takes place in protected areas, 'eco-tourism scales' relate and interact with specific state institutions for the purpose of nature protection. Following the analyses of Bauriedl and Wissen (2002), we can conclude on a view of protected areas as places that are simultaneously socially connected to global environmental processes and that are part of the relationship which people collectively knit with the natural environment in their every-day life. Thus, eco-destinations are not only territories of nature-enjoyment but also of struggle and resistance against unsustainable forms of tourism and development paths.

Transformations in the governance of the Morvan: from a disarticulated territorial mosaic to a governance reconfiguration based on new scales of environmental citizenship

In analysing ecotourism in the Morvan park we observe a territory connecting *external* and *internal* governance forces, which together shape and produce the ecotourism distinctiveness of this destination. External governance forces, as part of the complete socio-institutional system in which the Morvan is embedded, are characterized by the system's complexity, disarticulation and 'craziness' in both stirring and managing conflict over territorial sustainability. Throughout the examination of the territorial dynamics affecting protected areas in Europe within a context of changing spatialities, the Morvan park case showed that the rescaling of the French state, and more precisely, state restructuring through regional decentralisation and creation of new inter-communal institutions, conflict with the sustainability of regional parks. In other words, the Morvan case reveals how the increasing proliferation of sub-national institutions, despite their sustainability and participative democracy aims, has failed in dealing with the territorial articulation on which the sustainability of protected areas depend. In fact, because of the profusion of state jurisdictions and their institutions, the Morvan has been fragmented in too many overlapping layers. This profusion has *produced a territorial mosaic whose pieces miss the necessary articulation required to foster sustainable development and its (sustainable) governance.* Certainly, this institutional complexity is not limited to the Morvan (park); nonetheless, there is no doubt that the biophysical and socio-political particularities of the Morvan have reinforced the detachment of this territory from the recent (re)territorialisation movements. This

recalls the importance to address territories by taking into consideration their path-dependent reproduction in interaction with other spatial and institutional scales.

Summarizing, the Morvan case shows how state rescaling has not only created new rivalries among 'old' and 'new' 'sub-national state spaces pursuing their 'own?' sustainability, but also how this state restructuring revives older political divisions that counter collaboration. The *pays* are quite emblematic in this respect, since they reproduce the same historical departmental political dividing lines; indeed, through the relatively new four *pays* the distances/disparities between the Morvan rural territories and the main departmental towns were actualised. Considering the difficulties found by the park and the four *pays* in acting jointly leads also to think that the incorporation of the Morvan to the *massif central* is probably not as promising as the park's actors expect. To a certain extent this institutional transformation allows the Morvan park to jump or skip ('scale jumping') older institutional rivalries and obtain specific new resources; yet there is no reason to believe that this institutional 'fusion' will magically produce the sustainable territorial cohesion that the Morvan has looked forward to for decades. Indeed, territorial cohesion and sustainability need significantly more than politico-administrative fusion. Especially important here is the question how the different actors are involved as partners in the consultation and decision-making procedures of the new governance institutions.

As observed through the stories of Remilly, Chamboux, the *Tour de Bourgogne à vélo*, the progression of conifers and the practice of unsustainable forms of tourism, among others, the Morvan park does not *succeed* by itself in guaranteeing territorial sustainability. Nonetheless, being institutionally unsuccessful or relatively powerless does not necessarily mean that, as observed in Remilly and Chamboux, the Morvan park would play an irrelevant role in the pursuit of a sustainable territory hosting sustainable ecotourism. Briefly, these two socio-environmental struggles from which an essentially *reactive* mobilisation against specific projects judged by the local population as unsustainable was launched, transformed into and produced what might be called two effective 'socio-environmental scales' favouring sustainability. This is particularly interesting since it shows how conflict among sub-national state institutions produces new territories of struggle, based upon powerful environmental convictions and symbolically materialised by the nature protection status of the park. Summarizing, Remilly and Chamboux illustrate how from a conflict between economic development objectives and ecological sustainability emerged new institutional spaces led by 'others than the state', seeking to counter the unsustainable impact of institutional-scalar mismatches. What is more, with the political election to become Mayors of the two leaders of these associations after successful associative mobilisations, these cases also show the itinerary of political transformation by which the local state level is currently greening.

The rhizoidal role of ecotourism in the governance transformation of the Morvan park

The role of the institution "regional park" in the governance leading to more sustainable societies has been analysed in this dissertation from (at least) three different perspectives. First, the role of regional parks within the French effort to produce new policies to foster territorial sustainability and forms of governance facilitating this ambition Second, the specific characteristics and role of regional parks within the French system of protected areas. Third, the particular role of parks within the world governance system of protected areas.

The creation of regional parks. Both national and regional nature parks were created in France since the 1960s as a means of counterbalancing or keeping fragile nature spaces safe from an exploitative society-nature relationship that was characteristic of Fordism. From a governance perspective, while the foundation of national parks stems from a central state decision with very limited participation of the sub-national levels, the foundation of a regional park has always followed from a multi-scalar agreement involving different state levels, and in which regional and local scales are the demanding party for the creation of new parks. Another important difference between these two kinds of protected areas is their specific goal. National parks were basically conceived as nature conservation institutions. Regional parks, for their part, were assigned a pioneering sustainability task that came to rejoin their rather modern multi-partner and multi-level governance structure. Besides the problems observed in the coexistence of what I called 'old' and 'new' territorial institutions, which are mainly the result of perhaps an excessive state downscaling that produces and compiles too many spatial levels, the question about the role of regional parks seems very important.

The role of regional parks today. Born before the fist wave of environmentalism, as a means of safeguarding fragile ecosystems from the effects of an exploitative society-nature relationship, which might be the role of protected areas and regional parks today? This is indeed a very relevant question because the current advanced state of the environmental crisis demands deep governance restructuring involving a redefinition of the relationship between men, society and nature. From a policy perspective, this redefinition requires a *transversal* inclusion of the sustainability values into all policy fields and at every governance scale, as was mandated to regional parks in the early 1970s. Does the integration of sustainability into all policy arenas necessarily attenuate the role of regional parks or does it rather call for their institutional redefinition, as is somehow suggested by partisans of the *pays* in detriment of the parks? Following the results of the Morvan park case study analysis, in my opinion the answer to both questions is no.

By definition, protected areas have exclusive environmental tasks. Environmental protection, conservation of ecosystems and cohesive management have traditionally been *specific* roles of

protected areas, which operate with and depend on financial support of the central state and, since a few years, also count with EU resources. For that reason, the progressive policy transformation aiming at introducing sustainability and higher environmental standards in a more transversal manner into the governance and policy agendas of other (old, new) territorial institutions should not downplay the essential role of protected areas. Their role in contemporary societies is related to the specific symbolic, historical and cultural meanings of territories like the Morvan, and which are the reasons evoked by local actors and ecotourists for living or visiting this territory. The specificity of French ecotourism and its governance is indeed founded in the inseparable combination of nature and culture and which is mainly materialised in protected areas.

Parks within the world governance system of protected areas. The Morvan park case is rich in elements for understanding main governance challenges related to ecotourism, sustainability and nature parks for the contexts of France and Europe. Nonetheless, it seems also important to take a look at these parks from the perspective of the *emerging* world system of protected areas, as well as within the ongoing process of creating new protected around the planet, which in terms of their institutional design and creative power vary significantly.

Regional parks are inhabited territories, hosting fragile ecosystems needing protection and often very rich in their cultural composition. These are territories co-governed by central state and sub-national institutions in growing partnership with local associations, representatives from the private sector and civil society agents. This multiplex governance is explained by the necessity to protect regional parks whose land is essentially private property. This is in fact the reason why these parks face on an almost daily basis big governance challenges reflecting the tension between private (land) property rights and public (environmental) interest. Unlike strictly protected areas, that are usually non-inhabited, regional parks are territories meeting a very 'awakened' civil society that is quite sensitive to environmental issues. Additionally, in these parks converge a large variety of sustainability conflicts derived from their multifaceted system of governance, but also from the complex multi-scalar character of their power relations, as shown in the Dakar rally example mentioned earlier in this conclusion.

In short, because of the institutional specificity of French regional parks, these are parks that might play a very relevant role in thinking about how contemporary societies deal with biodiversity protection, sustainability and the necessary governance for achieving these goals. While protected areas in general are cornerstone institutions in this respect, regional parks provide an original and experimental sustainability alternative that might be very helpful in guiding biodiversity protection systems all over the world.

Regional parks and the birth of innovative sustainable citizenship forms. One main conclusion of this dissertation is that the specific 'sense of place' hosted by the Morvan park and the particular society-nature relationship giving life to territories of this kind, and therefore allowing the development of ecotourism, plays a very important role in developing new and *innovative sustainable citizenship forms.* On the one hand, it is this territorial uniqueness on which ecotourism is founded; on the other, this territorial distinctiveness, meaning a particular environmental sociality, is reproduced and recreated from socially innovative practices connected to ecotourism.

The Morvan case study is enlightening in this respect because it shows that the sustainable governance through which 'new environmental citizenship scales' are emerging in European parks not only (nor mainly) follow from struggle (Remilly, Chamboux, conifers). The Morvan case indeed also shows that these new environmental citizenship scales also stem from original and socially innovative practices. They can take the form of *proactive and persistent leaderships* (Kubiack, Salamolard), the implementation of *voluntary codes* of good behaviour, innovative and environmentally friendly forms of *agriculture* (Elisabeth farm) and the emergence of new institutional *alliances* among 'old' and 'new' state institutions promoted by the EU level (LEADER +, Europarc Charter), among many others.

What these practices have in common is their focus on ecotourism as a powerful stake in the institutional bargaining over territorial sustainability. Ecotourism helps to calibrate the discourses on governance and sustainable development with more coherent, concrete and feasible arguments as employed by those pursuing the Morvan's sustainability. This calibrating effect is observed even among those actors not directly involved in tourism activities. Certainly, a sustainability aim for the development of tourism has existed since the foundation of the park, and has later been somehow confirmed by the creation of the various new public institutions that have appeared in this territory and which have manifestly similar sustainability objectives. However, the specificity of the practice of ecotourism in the twenty-first century is its capacity to introduce sustainable changes at other governance scales than those directly concerned with ecotourism, as well as its role in enriching the composition of the social plexus governing the Morvan. In this way, it fosters a multiscalarity that is institutionally articulated – one scale 'imports' from and 'exports' to the other – and socially inhabited.

Thus, the Morvan case shows how the contemporary practice of and growing interest for ecotourism in Europe have produced *new multi-scalar spaces of negotiation between the state, the private sector and civil society agents.* One interesting point here are the processes that have led to the emergence of what might be called a 'new ecotourism empowering locus' hosting actors of diverse plumage, who while advocating for sustainable ecotourism also contest ongoing unsustainable governance dynamics.

These processes it have shown an infinite empowering capacity to produce collective learning, post-normal knowledge and new socio-institutional reconfigurations to foster sustainability and to contest unsustainable forms of territorial production, consumption and state regulation. Within this context, the dispersed and omnipresent character of the governance structures leading action in the Morvan seems to offer 'economies of overview' heightening the capacity to keep an eye on the entire Morvan despite its low population density.

In fine and in prospect

To finalise this conclusion, it seems important to come back once more to the human composition of the actors field involved in the governance of the Morvan. As stated earlier in this dissertation, the development of ecotourism has entailed the arrival of new actors to the territory, including among others ecotourists, micro-tourism business owners, organic farmers, French and foreign newcomers as well as proactive tourism leaders. The Morvan park case showed how the leadership, struggle, conviction, green values and socially innovative actions of these actors have been essential in introducing governance changes for more territorial sustainability. In other words, the Morvan case study documents the distinct socio-institutional dynamics that produce the Morvan society or the Morvan 'field'. More precisely it explains the complexities from which a new societal environmental citizenship might be emerging. The collection of behaviours, the symbolic constructions and guiding worldviews, as well as the plural interests and deep green motives driving the action of some of the personalities congregated in this research, show – especially in their combinations - possible ways out from the current environmental cobwebs.

In this respect, one very interesting *piste de prolongement* of this research would be to further explore actions conducted by people and communities wishing a different life based upon more friendly nature-society relationships built through the application of values of democracy, fairness and justice. The last *Courrier International* (2009) entitled *Changer le modèle face à la crise* provides many examples of people searching for alternatives to *stop*, to *reflect on*, to *make things move* and to *innovate* in favour of a deep environmental transformation. A long list of alternative crusades, including *carrotmob*, *guerrilleros 'verts'*, guerrilla gardening, *frémissents verts*, the slow life movement, the *villes vertes*, among many others, constitute very interesting settings or opportunities to continue research on the character of the social forces paving a transition towards more sustainable societies.

While believing in a coexistence of institutional arrangements and governance dynamics that might lead towards more sustainability, and at the same time being curious about the role of the

contemporary 'simmering' of a new environmental citizenship, the initial invitation to inter-disciplinarity has led to the need for a combined inter-and trans-disciplinarity, meaning not only the dialogue and methodological integration among disciplines but also the involvement of practitioners (Moulaert, 2010). Given the richness and intensity of experiences by those embodying the early exploration of new nature-society based citizenship scales, the production of new post-disciplinary (Sum and Jessop, 2003) instances prove very promising in understanding the new environmental pact 'under construction' between human beings.

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