



English version of the text in the program for the meeting of September 2015

Text 1:

The methodology adopted by the Bluegrass team seeks to overcome some limitations usually found in social science studies on water management. The first stage of the investigation necessitated a detailed description of the territories, official infrastructures and institutions involved in the operation of a particular socio-technical system. The Bluegrass team therefore aims to analyse new layers of complexity by focusing on controversies and conflicts over the management of water. It develops an approach centred on the actors involved in power struggles around water management. These conflicts and controversies are a privileged observation context. They make it easier to incorporate into the analysis all stakeholders, breaking with approaches focused solely on the role and powers of official institutions in charge of water management. This break with an approach by official institutions is strengthened by the fact that the methodology of Bluegrass is built on individual actors, their characteristics and their relationships with each other, not only on their membership institutions. Thus become visible divisions and alliances between actors that cannot be confined to the logic of official institutions. Multilevel policy coalitions are in this context the main conceptual tool. These coalitions bring together actors who share some common values or preferences in terms of public policy. Although belonging to sometimes distant social worlds or acting on different scales (local, national or international), they rallied around a common issue (access to water for example). Coalitions are structured by relational regularities between the actors that compose it and by the various resources that these actors are able to mobilize or exchange. Here, exchanges have been observed to take form in funding, institutional affiliations, as well as varying degrees of expertise. For individual actors, being part of a coalition can be considered as a resource. In the end, this resource is requisite for engaging in power relations.

The Bluegrass team relies on the analysis of coalitions to build a comparison between the different case studies. The study of the variations and the invariants in the configuration of coalitions between different conflicts allows Bluegrass to take into account the differences between national regional and local contexts. The presentations to be held during the second Bluegrass meeting articulate with each other on the following questions: What are the issues of the conflict or controversy? Is there a confrontation between different coalitions? What are the characteristics of these coalitions? By which actors, in what way and with what consequences are institutional resources mobilized? Do these resources subvert power relations within the studied conflicts or at the contrary do they contribute to a permanence of the present political structure?



Text 2:

The second part of the Bluegrass meeting should allow, from localized case studies, to engage a collective discussion on the internationalization of conflicts and controversies around water management. Following the Bluegrass methodology, the discussion will focus on the actors involved in power struggles around water management. It has been observed that the actors can mobilize international resources at the local level: belonging to a coalition, institutional affiliations, participation in international events or commissions, financing, speeches (sustainable development or new public management for example), education abroad or technical and administrative cultures.

Among the various resources mobilized by the actors particular emphasis will be placed on coalitions to which they belong, on their characteristics and composition. Bluegrass multilevel analysis team seeks to complete and go beyond the studies insisting on the imposition of international management models from above (top-down), on the one hand and local appropriations of international models (bottom-up) on the other. Although unevenly distributed and of different natures, the international resources are not reserved to the political and economic elites. International resources can be used by actors whose work is enrolled in the local, as members of a local assembly or local representatives. This resources can also be used by brokers actors whose work is at the interface between the local, national and international, as some NGO leaders, activists and experts.