

Journal *Autrepart* – Call for papers and notes

Autochthonous knowledge and development

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The concepts of environmental governance and sustainable development were adopted simultaneously by national political agendas. The purpose was to balance economic growth, social justice, and the conservation of natural resources for life. In Developing countries, adopting these concepts prompted a process of reassessment of autochthonous knowledge. On the one hand, in the—mostly developing or emerging—megadiverse countries, different forms of knowledge on natural resources are carried by autochthonous and local populations obtaining their main resources from them. The visibility of these forms of knowledge has recently started increasing. Over the past fifteen years on the other hand, those countries, once preoccupied by technology transfer, have started incorporating environmental protection into their political agendas. This trend has recently further strengthened through the new focus that the international community has put on climate change. These developments have taken place in a context of increasing political democratization. Diverse stakeholders have appeared within the full spectrum of the intervention chain, from the conception to the implementation and assessment of development projects.

Several international agreements and international protocols (article 8j of the Convention on biological diversity, 1992; Nagoya protocols, 2010) define the role of autochthonous knowledge, which is considered essential for economic and social progress as well as for environmental protection. National governments increasingly need to be mindful of social movements. New elites set up projects based on autochthonous knowledge—Via Campesina, African centre for biosafety, etc.— to fight against the rapid spread of intensive agriculture (genetically modified monocrops), extensive herding, biofuels production, or to defend bioprospection against biopiracy. Traditional knowledge is at the heart of the discourse and practice of social movements, particularly in Latin America and India. The new stakeholders promote decentralized management of natural resources, local seeds bank projects, synthetic chemistry free agriculture, local markets development, and defence of intellectual property rights of local and autochthonous populations. This diversification of discourse and practices is also a source of tensions and conflicts due to the different views that underlie them and range from protectionism (conservation) to the promotion of balanced or rational resource management.

This raises the question of the operational participation of autochthonous knowledge in—and therefore, of the populations who carry it and had traditionally been excluded from—development projects, as this type of knowledge is now summoned by a number of development agents at different stages of the decision process. A number of studies have analyzed the difficult relationships between technical efficiency, cultural relationship with nature, and pressure exerted on fragile ecosystems. They show that the increasing number of clashes between the different rationalities of stakeholders (individuals, groups and organizations) is one of the reasons of natural resource use conflicts—especially between local populations and private companies, technicians, scientists, government officials, and international organizations.

This issue of the journal *Autrepart* intends to go beyond analysis and denunciation of rationalities to examine the sociocognitive dynamics of the use of natural resources. The aim is to improve our understanding of the combination of autochthonous, scientific and technological knowledge in development projects historically built on the notion of technology transfer.

This special issue invites papers to address one or several of the following areas:

- Social, economic and political mobilization of autochthonous knowledge. Processes of environmental governance can be examined under various forms of historically situated political configurations: what

are the forms and practices of new projects linking agricultural development and environmental protection? How are different types of autochthonous knowledge mobilized in the vast Unesco programmes to make culinary and clothing traditions part of heritage or in the great projects such as the Indian Traditional Knowledge Digital Library, or the Mexican Biblioteca Digital de la Medicina Tradicional, designed to promote national autochthonous knowledge?

- Reshaping of scientific and technological knowledge. How to describe the knowledge emerging at the junction of traditional and scientific knowledge such as agroecology, ethnobotanics, or environmental studies?
- Consequences of knowledge restructuring on the construction of sustainable development policies. Can these policies be conceived as new arrangements of local populations now considered as development stakeholders? Do these arrangements lead to relocating scientific knowledge, thus replacing the 20th century technology transfer modernization project?

We welcome contributions bringing together autochthonous and scientific, technical and expert knowledge in contexts of conflicts, controversies or convergence in the design and implementation of development projects, particularly if they allow for a comparison of different models of social dynamics and collective imagination. Special attention will be given to proposals combining empirical investigation and theoretical interpretation.

Proposed Abstracts should be submitted to the Journal. Abstracts may be up to 250 words in length (including the title and tentative list of authors) and are due 15 February.

Abstracts will be reviewed by the guest Editors; a select number of submissions will then be invited to submit a full paper for peer review. Please note that an invitation to submit a full paper does not guarantee acceptance; all papers will be subject to the full peer review process as per any submission to Autrepart.

Revision and translation:

The journal accepts abstracts and articles in French, English or Spanish, but in case of acceptance, the author(s) will provide an edited French or English version of the text.

**Full (invited) manuscript submissions are due 30 April.
Book reviews on the theme of the special issue are due 30 May.**