



Call for Papers

12th AFD International Conference on Development

December 1 - 2, 2016 in PARIS

Commons and Development

This conference is organized by the French Development Agency (AFD) in partnership with the Fondation pour les études et recherches sur le développement international (FERDI), the French Agricultural Centre for International Development (CIRAD), and the Centre de Recherches Insulaires et Observatoire de l'Environnement (CRIOBE).

The conference will be held on December 1-2, 2016, at the French Development Agency: 5, Rue Roland Barthes, 75598 PARIS CEDEX 12 (<http://www.afd.fr/home/AFD/contact-afd>).

Opening remarks by Gaël Giraud, Chief Economist at AFD, CNRS, Paris, France. Confirmed **keynote speakers** include:

- Jean-Michel Severino, CEO of *Investisseurs & Partenaires*, former General Manager of AFD (2001–2010), former member of the United Nations High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, Chair of *Convergences* (a think tank);
- Ravi Kanbur, Professor of Economics at Cornell University, former Chair of the World Development Report, former World Bank Chief Economist for the Africa Region;
- Amy Dahan, Emeritus Director of Research at CNRS and Emeritus Member of the Alexandre Koyré Center (CNRS-EHESS);
- Eduardo S. Brondizio, Professor of Anthropology at Indiana University, Co-Director of the Anthropological Center for Training and Research on Global Environmental Change (ACT), and member of the Advisory Board of the Ostrom Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University;
- Chimère Diaw, Director General of the African Model Forest Network and member of the International Model Forest Network.

Since 1950, development policies have reflected trends in economic history. Although the terms used by these policies have been based on rich concepts, they have not always had settled meanings. Two major concepts emerged from the long and complex exchanges that shaped practices in development aid in the 1990s.

The first is governance, a concept whose meaning has evolved constantly since it first appeared in the economic literature. In the 1990s, structural adjustment programs and the conditionality clauses attached to them strengthened the mechanisms of liberal economics and broke with the idea that firmly structured public policy is an indispensable element of development policy. Over time, this market-centered approach became the core tenet of development discourse on good governance. However, in the face of a growing collective realization that such policies had failed in practice, the concept was broadened. Today, it no longer pertains solely to government measures designed to create a market-friendly environment but also to governments' ability to build effective institutions that reconcile economic growth, poverty reduction, and equity promotion. This approach requires greater open-mindedness, moving beyond the dogmas of neoliberalism while avoiding the dead ends of an exclusively statist approach.

The second concept is global public goods (GPGs). In a context of increased interdependency between countries and the inability by both markets and nation-based policies to rise to global challenges, the concept of global public goods emphasizes the need for regulation and international governance mechanisms in the three core dimensions of sustainable development (Severino 2001): economics (financial stability), society (knowledge, healthcare, peace), and the environment (natural resources, biodiversity, climate change). Climate talks have exposed the illusion of effective public international governance and the need for locally rooted multilevel governance involving public, private, and civil society actors from the local level up (Aykut and Dahan 2015).

The commons approach sustains and revitalizes the discussion about governance and GPGs. It suggests ways of coordinating actors on multiple scales at the interface between market and state and therefore offers a renewed framework for assessing official development aid programs.

The concept of commons grew in prominence after the Nobel Prize was awarded to American political scientist Elinor Ostrom in 2009. She demonstrated empirically that a number of natural resources (or *Common Pool Resources* – CPRs), which are generally renewable, can be effectively managed locally by small and diverse communities that create their own ad hoc norms in order to avert the collapse of their resources (Ostrom 1990). Crucially, Ostrom rejects the “tragedy of the commons” theorized by Garret Hardin, which stipulates that when there is free access to a resource, each user will spontaneously draw on that resource without limitation, leading to its disappearance (Hardin 1968).

Commons are defined on the basis of three components: a resource, a community, and a set of rights and obligations agreed upon by the community. The resource may be physical, such as pastureland managed by a community, or intangible, such as open-source software, or it can be more global in scope (healthcare, education, or climate change). Although research on commons has generated solid findings, these must be shored up and expanded. Refining this field of research is a critical task. Only a cross-disciplinary approach to commons can account for the diversity of viewpoints and go beyond the numerous inaccurate perceptions that frame them (Kanbur and Riles 2008).

Beyond the theoretical issues to which they give rise, the commons presents a multitude of operational cases that make it possible to break from the state/market dichotomy and to reexamine notions of resource ownership. They invite us to reconsider social spaces as well as the institutions associated with them. The commons refer more to a process than to categories of goods or services. The choice therefore hinges on explicit collective political decisions.

While the systemic approach fosters rethinking development based on the concept of commons, this starting point allows us to assess the performance of an organized system beyond actors' strategic capacities to make decisions on the basis of immediate individual cost and profit maximization. A system's efficiency cannot be reduced to Pareto optimality, the weaknesses of which have been well documented (Giraud 2010). Rather, it must be assessed through a dynamic and multi-criterion approach that incorporates equity and sustainability. This view of efficiency hinges on solid social capital, solidarity between members, reducing transaction costs through trust, and a willingness to achieve shared well-being (Brondizio, Ostrom, and Young 2009). Lastly, it is expressed in the system's ability to withstand shocks and to evolve in the face of both endogenous and exogenous shifts (Diaw 1998).

For a development aid agency, the commons approach makes sense. It urges greater consideration of challenges that might be otherwise neglected, including biodiversity, healthcare, education, and security. It places users and beneficiaries at the core of regulation and management processes. However, the commons may be vulnerable. The topic of the commons and development policies is rife with questions in need of answers.

The aim of this conference is to bring together researchers and their work and to stimulate dialogue at the intersection between commons and development dynamics on an international scale through recourse to a variety of analytical frameworks and disciplines. Papers dealing with one of the following four non-mutually exclusive research themes are preferred, while cross-cutting analyses dealing with more than one research theme are also welcome:

- Research Theme 1: What do commons teach us in terms of development impacts on countries of the South?
- Research Theme 2: How can we understand commons in terms of actors, legal models, and indicators?
- Research Theme 3: How can we describe commons in terms of interactions with the public, the business sector, and political arenas?
- Research Theme 4: How do commons enrich our understanding of global public goods?

References

- Aykut, S. and A. Dahan. 2015. *Gouverner le climat? 20 ans de négociations internationales*. Paris: Presse de Sciences Po.
- Brondizio E., E. Ostrom, and O. R. Young. 2009. "Connectivity and the Governance of Multilevel Social-Ecological Systems: The Role of Social Capital." *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, Vol. 34: 253–278.
- Diaw, M. C. 1998. "From Sea to Forest: An Epistemology of Otherness and Institutional Resilience in Non-Conventional Economic Systems." Paper presented at the Seventh Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of Common Property on *Crossing Boundaries*, Vancouver, BC.
- Giraud, G. 2010. *La Théorie des jeux*. Paris: Flammarion (3rd ed.).
- Hardin, G. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons", *Science*, Vol. 162, No. 3859: 1243–1248.
- Kanbur, R. and A. Riles. 2008. "And Never the Twain Shall Meet? An Exchange of the Strengths and Weaknesses of Anthropology and Economics in Analyzing the Commons." In *The Contested Commons: Conversations between Economists and Anthropologists*, edited by P. Bardhan and I. Ray. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Ostrom, E. 1990. *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Actions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Severino, J.M. 2001. "Refonder l'aide au développement au XXI^e siècle", *Critique internationale* 2001/1 (no 10), p. 75-99. DOI 10.3917/cii.010.0075.

Proposals must be submitted by Wednesday June 1, 2016. They should be sent by e-mail to the following three recipients: Stéphanie Leyronas (leyronass@afd.fr), Sylvain Perret (sylvain.perret@cirad.fr), Grégoire Rota Graziosi (gregoire.rota_graziosi@udamail.fr) and Tamatoa Bambridge (tamatoa.bambridge@criobe.pf). Submissions must include:

- An information sheet containing a 5- to 8-letter keyword the title of the paper, the name and affiliation of the author(s), and detailed contact information;
- A 500- to 800-word abstract that describes the proposed topic, methodology, the theoretical framework, some results and discussion

Proposals may be submitted in French or English and will be subject to double-blind review. Selected submissions will be announced by July 31, 2016. Final versions of papers must be submitted no later than October 31, 2016. Selected papers may be published in the *Revue d'Économie du Développement* (<https://www.cairn.info/revue-d-economie-du-developpement.htm>) or in a special issue of the journal *Tiers Monde* (<http://www.revues.armand-colin.com/geographie-economie/revue-tiers-monde>).

Papers may focus on any type of commons, including land or natural resources, networked services, information, cross-sectoral commons, global commons, etc. Monographs may be proposed so long as their findings are generalizable and replicable. Cases from developing and emerging countries will be preferred. Partnerships with research institutions in countries of the South are especially welcome. Papers may be presented in French or English. Participants' travel and accommodation costs may be partially covered.

Review Committee

- Sigrid Aubert, CIRAD
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Organizing Committee

- AFD: Stéphanie Leyronas
- FERDI: Grégoire Rota Graziosi
- CIRAD: Sylvain Perret
- CRIOBE : Tamatoa Bambridge

Annex – Questions (non-exclusive list)

Research Theme 1: What do commons teach us in terms of development impacts on countries of the South?

- Goals of commons: Management (or lack thereof) of trade-offs between economic, environmental, and social objectives in communities and societies of the South, adverse outcomes, etc.;
- Sustainability of commons: Social, environmental and economic sustainability, sustainability of “commons action,” etc.;
- Resilience of land commons to external shocks (migrations, crises, conflicts, etc.) and national or international constraints (vertical funds, creation of value chains, etc.);
- Commons and equity: Power relations, inclusion and exclusion, power sharing, etc.;
- Commons and participatory democracy, legitimacy of actors, etc.;
- Cases of failure, breakdown, loss of influence of collective arrangements, and negative impacts of development aid.

Research Theme 2: How can we understand commons in terms of actors, legal models, and indicators?

- Legal models: Legal qualification and recognition of communities, appropriation types, decision process, institutionalization and practical application;
- Extrapolation to other scales: From analyses of local commons toward replicable or geographically broader models;
- Influence of macro drivers such as the Sustainable Development Goals (MDGs) and local or regional practices and political debate;
- Indicators: Legitimacy of actions (e.g., creation of new commons), empowerment processes, collective action, role of official development aid, etc.

Research Theme 3: How can we describe commons in terms of interactions with the public, the business sector, and political arenas?

- Emergence, evolution, and functioning of commons: Interactions between public authorities (centralized, deconcentrated, and decentralized), the civil society and the private sector;
- Economic models of commons: Economic sustainability, relations with the private sector, (social and solidarity economy, collaborative economy, etc.) etc.;
- Role played by public policies in promoting and preserving commons and, conversely, role played by commons in legitimating public action;
- Role played by private companies in creating commons and social capital;

- Multi-territorial commons (value chains, rural areas, interface between rural and urban zones, etc.): Links between local spaces and international injunctions and recommendations, appropriation processes, regulatory arrangements, intersection between public and private interests, territorial interface (between the local, regional, and sometimes global levels);
- Common services (water, electricity, irrigation, etc.): Challenges specific to networked services (technical capacities, financial capacities, access targets, etc.).

Research Theme 4: How do commons enrich our understanding of global public goods?

- Conflict and complementarity between commons and GPGs in the context of developing countries;
- Fractal nature of commons: Endogenous local drivers and bottom-up approaches versus exogenous political drivers and top-down approaches, degree to which outcomes and actions of institutions working with local commons can be extrapolated to other scales (natural resource protection, biodiversity, etc.) or not (healthcare, security, etc.), degree to which the governance of GPGs can be apportioned locally (as in the case of knowledge), importance of social capital, etc.;
- Regional commons and strategic resources: Institutional challenges, interface between institutions and collective actions, multi-centrism, etc.;
- Possible topics (broad themes):
 - o Climate change, deforestation, biodiversity;
 - o International taxation, bank liquidity, market regulation, financial stability;
 - o Food security, healthcare, security, migrations, etc.
- Multiple scales and capacities to strengthen social capital.