



# Environmental Justice framework and French Sociologies

Valérie Deldrève



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE 2019

# Introduction

2

- Environmental inequality (ei) introduced in France (2000) with sustainable development framework (in terms of ecological inequality)
- Not a lot known and studied in french Sociology, in despite of a rich literature about social inequality (Bourdieu's theory) included in french Environmental Sociology (1980s : Kalaora, Chamboredon, Larrère, Fabiani...)
- First works about ei deal with terminology and urban issues (Theys, Emelianoff, Laigle, Faburel...)
- not a lot connected with Environmental Justice literature (Laurent)
- That has been changed in french and francophone research field over this last decade





# Introduction

- My works deal with :
  - French and European fisheries
  - Coastal uses and conservation issues
  - National Parks in France and social distribution of environmental effort
  - Mobilisations against red dust and mud of bauxite from alumine production of Altéo
- These different fieldworks have led me to work with the ei notion and to define an analysis framework
- This one has been based on:
  - Environmental Justice scientific controversies
  - French Sociology, crossed by other controversies  
constructivism vs materialism ; critical approach vs pragmatism; class inequality vs intersectional approach



3



# Introduction

4

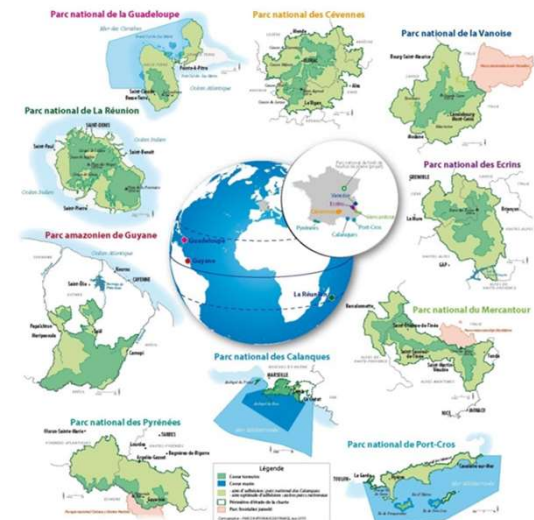
- This analyse framework doesn't aim an unified theory, but an operational frame to study different kinds of ei
- But why and how couled be combined different traditions?
  - with what output?
  - and what limits ?
- Implementation: Effijie program (ANR Socenv)



# EFFIJIE Environmental Effort as Inequality? Justice and inequity in the name of the Environment

*For a comparative analysis of biodiversity and water policies in metropolitan and overseas France*

ANR Socenv, 2014-2019,  
Candau et Deldrève coord.



## Environmental Justice scientific controversies

A limited meaning

- Risk overexposure of ethnic and racial minorities
- Cultural and political context of US (Fol et Pfiegler, 2000)

A new anthropocentrism

- Distributive justice
- Compensatory

Controversial statistical studies  
Challenged environmental racism  
fundings (Ghorra-Gobin, 2000)

- who is the first ?
- a dynamical statistical approach

A full meaning

- Different social and environmental burdens (Holifield, 2001)
- Poor and colored Peoples, a majority in the world (Martinez-Alier, 2014)

Justice for Peoples and Nature (Les Principes, 1991)

- Justice : also procedural, recognition, capabilities (Schlosberg, 2009)

Environmental racism is

« structural » (Pulido, 2000)

- Interaction between processes, policies...on the territory
- necessary socio-historical studies (Taylor, 2014)



## Analytical framework

<b>An integrative definition of EI</b>	<b>EI as social and intersectional inequalities</b>
<b>IE as injustice</b>	<b>IE as process</b>

⇒ 3 combined methodological approaches :  
**descriptive, comprehensive, socio-historical**

# Analytical framework

8

## 1. An integrative approach of environmental inequality



- Related to various relationships of people and social groups with their environment
- risk exposure, access to resources, environmental impacts, ability to act, effects of public policies (Pye et al., 2008)
- inequalities in "capacity to benefit" (Ribot, Peluso, 2003) from a healthy and fruitful environment
- social inequalities, nested, embedded
- i.e participatory inequality as peer (Fraser, 2005)





## Analytical framework

An integrative definition of EI	<b>EI as social and intersectional inequalities</b>
IE as injustice	IE as process

⇒ 3 combined methodological approaches :  
**descriptive, comprehensive, socio-historical**

# Analytical framework

## 2. An intersectional approach (Fassin et Fassin, 2006)

- Intersection between unequal distribution of economic and cultural resources and of environmental burdens (Pellow, 2005)
- Relationship between people and their environment through the prism of "race", social class and gender, cannot easily be separated (Taylor, ibid : 523).
- Lead poisoning overexposure (Bullard, 1993)
- Nature conservation (Taylor, 2000)
- Wilderness narrative (MM Evans, 2008)



## Analytical framework

An integrative definition of EI	EI as social and intersectional inequalities
<b>IE as injustice</b>	IE as process

⇒ 3 combined methodological approaches :  
**descriptive, comprehensive, socio-historical**

# Analytical framework

12

## 3. Inequalities as injustices

- Included a diversity of justice language (Martinez-Alier, 2008)
- Linked to social subordination (Walzer, 1997)
- Structural... or « situational »
- Anchored to experienty (frame of reference)

## 4. Inequalities as process

- Complex interactions over time
- Framing effect (Snow, 2000 ; Gilbert and Henry, 2011)

⇒ **3 combined approaches :**

descriptive, comprehensive, socio-historical

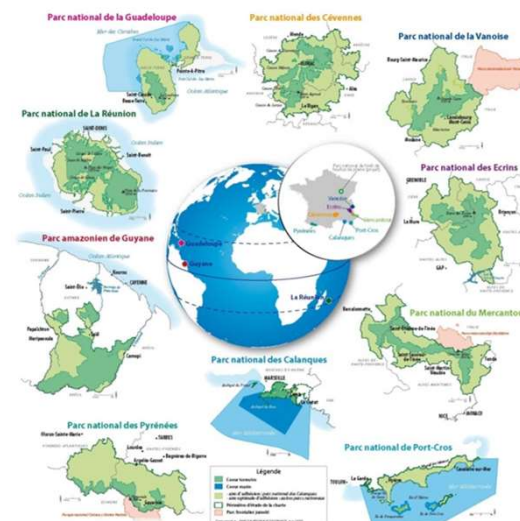


<p><b>Descriptive Intersectional approach</b></p>	<p><b>Objectifying environmental inequalities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- what is the environmental damage (types of pollution or threatened resources, destruction of dunes, etc.)?</li> <li>- causes held responsible (industrial, urbanization, natural disasters, etc.)</li> <li>- ecological, health, economic and social effects</li> <li>- who does suffer (nature, human populations, social groups)?</li> <li>- <b>Intersectional inequalities?</b> What are the decisive or combined structural variables (socio-economic, ethno-racial, gender, etc.)?</li> <li>- what are the local power asymmetries (depending on the configuration of stakeholders, issues)?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Socio-historical approach</b></p>	<p><b>Identifying the processes involved in producing the observed environmental inequalities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- history of the activities causing environmental damage</li> <li>- interactions with migration, division of labour, etc.</li> <li>- influence of economic, urban, environmental and other policies on the area</li> <li>- putting the problem on the agenda/academic research/publicizing or hiding the issue/damage management-compensation.</li> <li>- framing the problem in the public sphere: mobilizations, definitional struggles</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comprehensive approach through feelings of justice</b></p>	<p><b>Examining perceived inequalities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how has each population and social group, including the least visible (counter-publics?) experienced the damage?</li> <li>- which principles of justice are mobilized to justify or denounce inequalities?</li> <li>- which feelings of injustice are generated?</li> </ul>

# EFFIJIE Environmental Effort as Inequality? Justice and inequity in the name of the Environment

*For a comparative analysis of biodiversity and water policies in metropolitan and overseas France*

ANR Socenv, 2014-2019,  
Candau et Deldrève coord.



# Conclusion

15

- Critical Research tradition on inequality in France
- Environmental Justice participates in renewing it
- Including the effects of the environmental materiality
- Taking seriously the question of feeling of injustice (Dubet, 2005), the principle of justice such as an ordinary skill of people (Boltanski, 1990)
- Ei is injustice in this framework, but injustice extends beyond inequality (Perelman, 1975 ; Kellerhals, 1995...)
- Our different research fields show how mobilisations frame the environmental issues as an environmental injustice (without using this term)
- The shared feeling that, for instance, the red mud and dust linked to Alumines production by Altéo Gardanne weaken the functioning of the residents, the fishermen, the Sea and the Land where they use to be dropped
- The shared reading of an asymmetry between ordinary citizens and the powers of the world





- This framing is consistent with the evolution of Environmental Justice movements since Katrina in US or its development in other countries (Schlosberg 2013, 2014). 17
- But it tends to mask in the public sphere some inequalities which were very important in the fledgling Environmental Justice movement in US or in the southern Hemisphere:
  - the overexposure of the workers, captive, or of the resident who are descendant of italian immigrant workers
  - and nobody talks about the workers, resident and environment of Guinea mines from where bauxite is extracted
- According to Beck (1986) everyone will be affected by risk (boomerang effect)
- Moreover injustice gathers maybe more than inequality
- ... But it can make invisible inequalities that both intersectional and sociohistorical approaches highlight...

A scenic landscape photograph showing a rocky beach in the foreground, a small harbor with several boats in the middle ground, and a town built on a hillside with mountains in the background under a cloudy sky.

Thank you!