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THE GIZC AN INTEGRATED INSTRUMENT OF PUBLIC ACTION, TESTED ON A REGIONAL SCALE

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COASTAL AREA
MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE
PUBLIC POLICY
REGION

ABSTRACT. – Many norms of protection and public consulting are now regular parts of public policy. It's the case for the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), which was taken as an example in this study. The ICZM was used to evaluate public actions starting from an "integrated approach" managed by the State administration and evolving to a "global governance" with plurality of decision's centres. The present situation shows however a return to an "integrated approach", managed by the State in cooperation with the Regional and the European Union administrations.

It is now well-admitted to speak of sustainable development, of protecting nature, or of integrated management as legitimate concerns of public policy. Likewise, the practices of discussion, public consulting or contractualisation seem evidently integral to good governance. These concepts and practices have not always been accepted. A lengthy period of cognitive, political and institutional changes were required before they became a normal part of public life (Muller 1990).

The GIZC (Integrated Management of the Coastal Zones) is an example of this process. This integrated approach to planned development, protection, and beneficiation of the coast is on the rise within the narrow circle of decision-makers, experts, and specialized associations, but remains little-known to laymen. Closely linked to the rise of the notion of sustainable development by a shared philosophy of cross-sectoral planning and conciliation of multiple interests, the GIZC is today the object of competition among different government levels. While the strategy has its origins at the supranational and European Union levels (OCDE, PNUE), actors at the national and sub-national level are now struggling to take control of it as part of a more voluntary approach to policy. Coastal planning in general and the GIZC in particular have become an important stakes in the 'game' of territorial policy-making played out among French national and sub-national entities, particularly the regional administrations. By tracing the instrumental dimension of this policy, the objective of this article is to understand its present profile as a composite public policy.

The regional councils, as the most recently created territorial authorities in France, have benefited for twenty years from successive waves of decentralization (Dupoirier 1998). Today they have the opportunity of choosing their strategies for territorial policies in a positive way. A number of tools are at their disposal to this end. In this context, the GIZC appears today more like an

attempt of coordinating these instruments than as an instrument itself.

1. An integrated instrument for planned coastal development

a. What is a public action instrument?

Political science has classically been interested in the practice of governments and the sources of political power. For this reason, it tends to focus on the concrete choices of instruments, which are both the sources and the concrete manifestations of power. The study of these instruments is too frequently limited in the scrutiny of technical choices, or the weakening of governance caused by the arrival of new actors. This study is focussed on the instrument itself, hence following the approach adopted by politics who are concerned with replacing the technical aspect of studies by an approach that emphasized the political dimensions of public policy and its instruments. Behind a typology of instruments, hides an eminently political stake in the discriminatory choice of a given instrument, or even a combination of several instruments, to answer a particular problem. The study of political justifications of the choice or modification of any given instrument can allow for a transcending of the *politics/policies* cleavage that still characterizes, sometimes artificially, the discipline of public policy.

Devices and tools of public action

Different types of tools are made available for the public authorities facing with a given problem; they range from those that are constraining to those that structure incentives or merely provide guidance. A tool, *i.e.* policy instrument, can be of a legislative or regulatory type. This would be the case for the "*loi littoral*" of January 3rd 1986

(Lascoumes 1995), now codified as the article L. 321-1 of the environmental code, or of the European Community's framework Directive on Water of October, 2000. It could also be of economical or fiscal types, contractual or incentive types, or simply informative.

This typology is not comprehensive, and does not claim to define the instruments *per se*. A tool can be as well presented by the public authorities as being relevant in a given category, and can end up being completely different when used, or after being analysed.

The types of instruments present variable characteristics in terms of formal application constraints. The political strategic analysis will become meaningful in the two different relationships between the stated intent to take action about a problem and the concrete choice of any more or less "operative" instrument to solve it. A public action is often characterized by a first "agenda-setting"⁽ⁱ⁾ phase, in which the decision-makers must adapt their concrete answer to the demands coming from society. In addition, observations show that a policy is rarely limited to the use of a single instrument, and interactions among instruments become a critical issue. Generalized questions of "policy design," are relevant here.

Moving beyond the technical and functional vision that often characterizes the study of the objectives and assessment of a public action and its instrument, we could dwell on the values and representations that these underlie. Studies have shown that instruments can have several concomitant or contradictory goals, which, in such cases, become less significant than the study of the logics and *referential*⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ which clarify more accurately the context of the public action in which these instruments were chosen. For example, the obligation to consult, which animates many of the public action plans since the decentralisation laws (from 1982 and then 2000), illustrates logics linked to the wider context of public actions that tend to push decision-makers to choose contractual and consultative instruments.

b. The Integrated Management of Coastal Zones, an instrument for coordination

First of all, it is important to clarify in which terms the GIZC was seen as a public action tool, and more generally, at what public action level it was placed. As a political will to organize a particular territorial area, the GIZC can

be understood, from the political science point of view, as a territorial development policy in the French tradition of a so-called "*aménagement du territoire*". It also encompasses, through its multi-sectoral aspects, the concept of the "integrated approach" found in the European Union's regional territorial development policies. This management is "integrated" in the sense that it unites the logics of planned development, environmental protection and best use of the coastal area. The GIZC is a part of an environmental policy, but also directly relevant to fisheries, tourism, and urban planning (for all the built-up parts of the coasts). Finally, this integrated policy is territorialized, which makes it a component of the regional policy led by the European Union. By being a transversal policy, it contains a project for a particular space, a set of representations and knowledge concerning that space, players and institutions involved in this project, and the tools applied, all at once.

Today, the promotion of the Integrated Management of the Coast (GIL), or the Integrated Management of Coastal Zones (GIZC)⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾, as an **instrument**, essentially relies on the recommendations made by European Union institutions to member states coming. It is carried out through various local actions, which will be examined in more detail. First, let's take the example of the 'communication' of the European Commission (2000) aiming at defining the E.U.'s position concerning the GIZC (Integrated Planned Development of Coastal Zones)^(iv). This decision by the Commission was justified in the text by "*the answer that it brings to two requests of the Council asking for the development of an AIZC European strategy*"^(v); It places the Union's institutional actors at the centre of the reflection for this policy. The E.U. wants to be "the inspirer and the coordinator" of the "strategy" with regard to planned development and integrated management of coastal zones, which must reach this development "in each of the member states" with an integrated coastal policy. This strategy is seen as a part of a global orientation of governance, which generally underlies the European policies:

"[...] an integrated approach with a territorial and participative aspect is put forward to guarantee the ecological and economical viability of the planned development of the European coast as well as its cohesion and social equity".

⁽ⁱ⁾ Belonging to a sequential and top/down, type of analysis of public action (Meny, Thoening 1989), the writing down in a planner can be described as the moment where "a problem or a request arrives which becomes a preoccupation for the public authorities" (Massardier 2003, p. 36).

⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ The theory of the "referentiel d'action publique" assumes the understanding of the "creation process of shared direction by the players of public action to act together" (Muller 1990).

⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ Several acronyms designate the same policy of integrated management of the coast: the GIZC (Integrated Management of the Coastal Zones), or GIL (Integrated Management of the Coast) and the AIZC (Integrated Planning of the Coasting Zone). These three expressions could be interchanged in this article, according to the sources analysed by the author (ex. AIZC is used in the official texts of the European Commission).

^(iv) /*COM/2000/0547/final*/

^(v) Request recorded at the Official Community Paper JOCE 135, 18.5.1994, p. 2

This strategy consists in several distinct actions or tools:

- A first instrument of the informative type: a research campaign or demonstration programs were carried out by the European Commission ("The influence of the E.U. policies on the changes of the coastal zones" and the document entitled "Lessons to be learned from the demonstration program of the European Commission on the integrated planned development of the coastal zones"), which identifies a certain number of political fields, including some already mentioned, which should be treated with special attention.

- The integration of tools for the GIZC within the pre-existing financial, regulatory, and incentive tools, illustrating the cross-sectoral approach adopted: "*diverse financial instruments of the EU open the perspectives of developing the best practices regarding integrated planned territorial development and supply applicable knowledge to the coastal zones. These include the INTER-REG III and URBAN programs, as well as the LIFE III instrument project. In the framework of its research program, the Commission is developing assessment methods for the application efficiency of the quality guidelines for water in terms of the socio-economic cost and benefits and the water quality in the river basins and coastal zones, in order to identify the best practices in this sector*" (Extract from the European Commission communication in 2000). A number of "coastal" aspects were included in the community programs for 2000-2006, which were decided in 1999. This is the case in the research program (6th PCRD), with a view to encouraging research and enquiry in terms of a "remarkable ecosystem." This is also true for the Common Fisheries Policy (PCP) (Lequesne 2001), for which obligations for protecting the marine ecosystem (stock sampling, zoning,...) were added. The greatest effort is made towards funds destined for the regional policy of the EU (structural funds), with which territorial authorities can concretely ask for economic support of the EU in the name of preservation and planned coastal development.

The policy of coastal management on a community level is primarily the object of the coordination of policy instruments. It contains also specific incentives for the States and sub-national territories. It is significant that structural funds – a privileged financial tool of the EU's regional policy^(vi) and a source of political competition between E.C. and member states for its control – are con-

sidered as a key factor of the (*re*)territorialisation of public action (Smith 1995). Since 2000, and even before with the requests of the Council in 1994, an increase of transversal preoccupations with respect to coastal areas can be noticed. This corresponds to the crucial problem of the massive migration flows towards the coastal areas, crises in the fishing sector, flourishing of coastal tourism, frailty of specific ecosystems, etc.

While this European policy, at the crossroads of several sectors, claims to encourage action at the local level and supply common instruments to infra-community actors, it is well and truly from the local practices that this policy obtains its legitimacy. Indeed, as early as the 1960's, certain actions were carried out on a local or regional level. From that time instruments were progressively established, not explicitly by the GIZC, but with the intent of taking into account the greatest possible number of actors and problems arising of the coastal area management.

II- ... in the prism of regional territory

Regionalisation is one of the largest processes that influence public action today (Pasquier 2004). The factors, as well as the stakes, are numerous. Among these factors, the arrival of the European level has led to the reterritorialisation of a great number of policies, especially due to the principle of subsidiarity. In virtue of this principle, the European Union recommends the intervention of the most suitable level of governance to address a given problem, so as to take the interests of citizens into account most effectively. Therefore in the case of the GIZC, the Commission encourages the local communities to take possession of the instruments proposed in order to form a local coordination policy with actors and interests linked to the coastal zone. In light of its ability to attract financing from the structural funds, the regional institution is particularly capable of seizing this opportunity to create a genuine territorial policy in favour of the coast.

In addition to Europeanization, the various decentralisation reforms in France have had the effect of reinforcing both the authority and the effectiveness of the sub-national levels of government. In France, since 1982, the State has been progressively devolving capacity to the various territorial authorities. Since the "Raffarin" laws of 2002, the French regional administrations are catching up^(vii) in terms of skills and capacities to finance their own policies. Among these, planned territorial development is a key question for those regions seeking for a competitive

^(vi) The vocation of the structural funds is therefore defined in the Maastricht Treaty, article 130 A: "In order to promote a harmonious development in the whole community, it must develop and pursue its action, tending towards the reinforcement of its economic and social cohesiveness. In particular, the community aims at trying to reduce the gap between the levels of development in the diverse regions and the delay of less well-off regions, including rural zones."

^(vii) For a long time the French regions count among the least equipped communities in terms of skills and finance, especially when compared with their European neighbours. Today an European converging process is trying to reduce this gap.

development. This assumption of responsibility for managing these areas seems to be a sign of the achievement of regional political capacity (Pasquier 2004) as it is shown by the empirical research.

The purpose of this final section is to show that the extent of the GIZC instruments implementation at a regional scale depends on the political ability of the region to establish itself as an institutional leader. For the regions, taking control of this policy, and the consecutive institutional learning, constitutes an important factor in the overall development of regional political capacity.

a. The GIZC in the region. Comparative examples: Brittany, Languedoc-Roussillon, Aquitaine

The comparative method was used to consider several local integrated management strategies for coastal zones. While all three of the cases have in common their status to integrate coastline development as a part of regional authorities, their approaches illustrate three different strategies to achieve a common goal (Negrier 1998).

The case of the Brittany coastline provides the example of a great diversity of management tools used by a large number of actors, in some cases without a great deal of a consultation:

- Planned development and coastal management tools: SALBI, SAUM, SMVM (Trégor-Goëlo, Gulf of Morbihan...), shipping country, SCOT, PLU, tools for sectorial planning (wind machines, ports, outdoor sports,...)

- Tools for protection and enhancement of coast: *Pro - tection of the water quality*: Bay contracts (Brest harbour,...), SAGE (Vilaine,...),... *Protection of the biodiversity*: Natura 2000 (Trégor-Goëlo,...), natural reserves, ZNIEFF, ZICO,... *Protection and enhancement of shared living space*: Regional Natural Park (Armorique, Gulf of Morbihan,...), National Marine Park (Iroise),...^(viii)

According to the CESR in Brittany, these integrated management tools “aim at promoting a suitable management style, while taking into consideration economic, social and cultural demands”. However if certain actors consider that their compilation adds up to an integrated management policy on the coastal zone, it seems rather that “*the absence of articulation and coherence between these procedures tend to create confusion and a lack of legibility*” for the local actors involved. Indeed, “we don’t know who does what anymore, nor why, nor with whom”. In other words, the same CSER wrote “a lack of coherence (temporal and spatial)” between the tools aiming to achieve the integrated management of the coastal zone.

Nevertheless it is undeniable that these tools are not only put in place on a regional level but managed locally, and that the Region plays its leadership role as a manager

in the field of these planned development policies. Its relationship towards the State is one of solicitation and/or rejection of projects.

In the case of Aquitaine and the Languedoc-Roussillon, the tools are similar:

- SMVM (Thau), Bay Contract (Thau), SCOT (Montpellier, coastal aspect), PLU, etc.

- Natura 2000, ZICO, ZNIEFF, protected reserves, especially for under-sea areas (Banyuls), SAGE, etc.

Despite these instrumental similarities between Brittany and the two southern regions, the policy outcomes are not everywhere identical. An important additional variable in all of these cases is provided by the context of public action, more specifically the interaction of initiatives taken at the regional and national level. Whereas Brittany managed its territorial policy very early^(ix), since the end of the 50’s, the common characteristic of both Languedoc-Roussillon, and the region of Aquitaine, was the establishment of mission-oriented top-down administrative structures.

In the region of Languedoc-Roussillon the outcome of this interaction was a pattern of piecemeal development, focused on the creation of major seaside resorts, of which the best known is the “new town” of La Grande Motte. While this policy was initiated largely at the initiative of particular local elected officials, the role of national authorities proved to be determining. During two decades, from 1962 to 1982, the national government was in charge of the planning for the Languedoc-Roussillon coast, acting through a specialized agency, the ‘Racine Mission’, named after its director, Pierre Racine. Even if the resulting action plan was produced after an efficient consultation between the state-owned development contractors and local personalities, its implementation established a pattern of “partnership” in which initiatives came chiefly from the centre (Valarié 1997).

The instrument of this state policy at a local scale was the PUIR* (regional urban development), started in 1962. It mapped out the potential space that could be used along the coast by the Mission, consolidating a top-down “cartographic” vision of development policy. This document was a source of support and legitimation when time came to deal with the State services (particularly with the DDE, in charge of public works infrastructure) long after the ‘Mission’ ended suddenly in 1982. Although the State was rather quick to disengage itself from this unfinished business (several resorts were not completed before the end of the ‘Mission’), elements of the transversal vision of the developer-contractor civil servants would survive them in the regional territory in the form of green belts, a series of location of seaside resorts, projects for marinas,...

^(viii) Source: report from the Economic and Social Council for the Brittany Region, for a combined management of the coast, June 2004.

^(ix) For a history of the territorial and regional leadership in Brittany, see Y Fournis, op. cit., p. 152 to 156 especially, and R Pasquier, op. cit. on the role of the CELIB.

The MIACA (the Interministerial Mission for planned development on the Aquitaine coast), had a similar experience. Put in place in 1967 and removed in 1988, it had produced a master plan for development, whose geographical imprint can still be seen on the coast. Local political forces, however, played a different role in the two regions. While the impetus for development in Languedoc-Roussillon was initially provided by pro-development local notables, the politics of development in Aquitaine was more influenced by the action of local associations for environmental defence. The result was a slower pace of overall development. Outcomes were less marked by the technocratic vision than for the Languedoc coast.

b. The instrument as a factor of change: taking control of the GIZC in the regions

In both Aquitaine and Languedoc-Roussillon, the State has recently responded to EU incentives for an integrated approach to planned development with the re-constitution of interministerial Coastal Missions. It does not imply a return of the policies of the 1960s. Since the 1990's, the structures implemented by the central government include the repositioning of the State with respect to territorial development policies. While these structures remain undeniable instrument of central power, they are no longer exclusively vertical and authoritative arbiters of action, but are structured rather as incentives, information resources and planning guidelines. Their vocation is to coordinate the action of all the local and central actors involved in coastal management. The tools produced by these new missions are a good example: the "Sustainable plan for the coastal development" in the Languedoc-Roussillon, and the "Blue Book" setting out the conditions of the Aquitaine coast. These tools are resources for planning specialized propositions for development, derived from advanced diagnostics of the regional area. They are not a top-down plan imposing significant restrictions on regional policy.

Unlike the case of the report produced by the CSER in Brittany, the production of these documents did not directly involve regional decision-makers; they are interactive only in their timing. It was important that these development plans be produced in time to be applied by the CPER (Planning Contract between the State and the Regions). This planning contract is a document that structures the partnership between the State and the region for a period of six years.

In Languedoc-Roussillon, the section of the planning contract devoted to the coastal zone included a number of recommendations made by the coastal Mission directly. In Aquitaine, the late creation of GIP XI made it impossible for the CPER to include their recommendations in its orientation plan. The existence of the GIP and the partnership founded between the region and the State for coastal

management purposes, *bears witness to greater willingness of all participants to embrace this coordination policy*. It remains to fill the gap between the means given to the State-led mission in the early 80's, and the means of territorial authorities such as the region, today. A partnership between these actors seems to be the safest way to divide the resources.

In Languedoc-Roussillon, the strategy is not definitely fixed, but the stakes are clear. It is essential to obtain resources from the EU in order to sustain the local budget, and to establish a contractual and effective coordination tool for a development policy with the objective that regional authorities take on a leadership role. The conflict history of coastal management in Languedoc-Roussillon seems to be an institutional asset, even if the instruments are still not completely assimilated among the objectives of the policies. The actual goals for the Region are the approval and coordination of the GIZC tools, in order to propose a global vision at the regional scale.

In the context of Europeanization of public action, regional authorities in France are caught up in a broader process of change (Pasquier 2003). Their capacity to take control of their own destiny, notably by assuming meaningful control of the instruments of sustainable development, may be decisive. The GIZC is an important instrument for this issue. As an instrument of public policy, the GIZC shares common features with a number of other tools: their objectives, their effects or their institutional origins. The integrated coastal management concept brings together elements of planning, regulation, protection, and financing tools from the national, European, and regional levels. The instruments together are the product of both historical experience and contemporary deliberation and collective decision-making. For the regions, taking control of this tool can lead to more autonomous management of territorial problems, as well as a direct dialogue between the different levels of government.

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