The politics of risks: justice, discourses and contexts in risk assessment
Julien Rebotier

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Social strategies of adaptation and prevention program

The politics of risks
Justice, Discourses and Contexts in risk assessment

Julien Rebotier – CNRS/SET – UMR 5603
julien.rebotier@univ-pau.fr
1- A social-constructivist approach of risks

- **Risk-hazard perspective**: biophysical, impact oriented

- **Social constructivist view**:
  - Cause oriented research / political economy
  - Discourses and representations as critical drivers
2- Assessing human-environment interactions, a matter of development

Nature \& Society

Nature
Society

Socio-Ecological system

Humanized nature
In which risk situations take place and are given sense

The double-edge Politics of risks

(Socially-constructed) Risk Situations

(Socially contingent) Responses to Risks
3- Risk situations as a snapshot AND as a pathway to development

• What are risks caused by?
• What do risks cause?

Politics of risks

Environment and risks are part of a development process...

How are they involved in justice, governance or democracy issues?
4- Contexts and scales, a long-standing geographical approach?

Wisner et al, 1994, “At risk” and PAR model
Basset, Blanc-Pamard, Boutrais, 2007, “Constructing locality: the terroir approach in West Africa”
Ribot, 2009, “Vulnerability does not fall from the sky” multi-layered but not place-grounded...
Socio-Ecological System = to be situated in **Time**, across **Space** and among **Societies**

Selected **Variables** depend on:
- The situated framing of human-environment interactions
- The research questions at stake
Conclusion: between renewed questions and “more of the same” structural challenges

- Hegemonic and self-legitimate GEC discourse
- Governmentality of risks, uncertainties and more broadly insecurity in a post 9/11 world
- Adaptive strategies to achieve which socio-ecological system?