



PRIMARY RESEARCH

Territorial capacities as a platform for tourism development in the Guelmim province's territory-Morocco

Malika Ait Nasser *

Laboratory values, society and development (LVSD) and University Campus of Ait Melloul, Agadir, Morocco

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze the territorial capacities of the Guelmim province at the level of its socioeconomic achievements. The socioeconomic promotion programs constitute local possibilities to set up projects dedicated to the tourism sector. Seven territorial capacities have been thoroughly studied in this research. The current work highlights the need to analyze the skills of the territory to judge the optimal availability of the infrastructure and the superstructure for the establishment of the tourism sector. The analysis of territorial capacities goes through the local. They achieve an optimal adaptation of local development programs and policies to tourist opportunities. Roads, water supply, electricity, and human resources are considered in this analysis to justify setting up tourist activities. Towards the end, the presence of these indicators on the province territory encourages tourist activities. The analysis of the seven territorial capacities highlights the remarkable inventory of infrastructure development and supra-structures in the rural and urban areas of the province. These capacities could constitute the evaluation of the well-being of the territory such that it could be a place of life and a place of socioeconomic promotion.

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INTRODUCTION

The Guelmim region is a meeting point between the desert and the mountains, between the Amazigh and Arab communities: a crossroads of nomadic and sedentary cultures. According to local oral tradition, the name of Guelmim comes from the word "Jalmim" which means the sharp limit in the Armenian language. The name is derived from the Arabic verb "jalama" which means to cut or "Kalama" to designate to cut silence. In its general sense, the word means: "cut a continuity". This name is given to the region since it contrasts between the Anti-Atlas Mountains and the Sahara. In the past, its geographical position had made it an international commercial and caravan center. The real takeoff of the Guelmim region was in the 19th century. The great trader, originally from the Sahara, Cheikh Berouk strengthened the region's commercial positioning by relying on the know-how of local Jewish families (Perray, 2011). An important trade of gold, slave, salt and other products had been exchanged at that time in the heart of the medina of

Guelmim. The city was a commercial center between Europe and Africa via Morocco.

The province of Guelmim is created by royal decree n° 22.79.123 of 01/01/1979 and named "Bab Sahara" (gate of the Sahara) by His Majesty the King the late Hassan II. With the new administrative division of 2015, Guelmim belongs to the Guelmim-Oued Noun region, extending over 10,400 km².

The administrative management of this territory includes all the technical and administrative services. But, some services are present in the provinces close to the province of Guelmim such as the Regional Delegation for Employment in the Tan-Tan province, the Directorate General of the National Office of Electricity in Agadir, etc. The administrative management, the geographic positioning and the geopolitical importance of the province highlight the need to assess its territorial capacities for the socioeconomic development. So, what capacities determine the province's territory? How does all this dynamic of socioeconomic projects

* corresponding author: Malika Ait Nasser

† email: malikanacer@hotmail.com

strengthen territorial capacities and constitute opportunities for tourism investment?

In general, the majority of studies on tourism activities only concern tourism projects and their impact on the host territory. While talking about the territory, its seven capacities are mainly indicators to assess the context of a territory able to set up tourist activities. The notion of territorial capacity offers a new approach to the analysis of the territory in its link with tourism. For that, the province of Guelmim is a site for the study and analysis of the relationship between territory and tourism. This analysis can also be initiated for other southern provinces of the Kingdom, in particular with the launching of several socioeconomic development projects in the southern provinces (Ait Nasser, 2019; Boujrouf, 2014).

In our field of study, the province of Guelmim, several types of territorial capacities are worthy of mention. We developed them in the results section. According to the elements detailed and discussed in the following pages, we have identified the importance of major socioeconomic development projects before concluding with personal reflections about the link between those capacities and tourism sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The capacity of the territories is a list of significant resources for the challenges of local development. This study of territorial capacities comes from reviewing the literature on capacities, tourist territories and local development (Dissart, 2012). There are 7 capacities: human capital, social capital, income level, access to employment, access to services, access to housing and the economic sector. We have presented the definitions of these capacities to contextualize them in the results and discussions part.

Human Capital: Analyze of the Mobilization of Actors and the Social Relations

The study of human capital is based on the characteristics of the population and the methods of investment in education (Tasheva & Hillman, 2019). It concerns the skills available to individuals and groups in their relationship to cooperate and organize themselves in a network. Skills and well-being belong to the level of education and the activity rate of the local population. The level of education for graduates is an issue for the rural area in fixing its human resources in order to fight against poverty, the rural exodus and unemployment. It constitutes a skilled workforce for economic projects and local investments. In fact, the investment in education for the population is essential for the trained workforce (Bekaert & Bosson, 2006). In short, the human capital

determines the dynamics of tourism professionals around socioeconomic activities (Viglia & Dolnicar, 2020). Understanding the logic of social relations of social capital in the study area can emphasize the role of tribal relations in motivating locals to participate in developing projects through tourism.

Social Capital: A Basis for Opening Up to Other Economic Activities

The notion of social capital has marked, in recent years, the orientations of researchers for their interests in identifying the connections between a set of social networks and the cooperation that a territory generates (Jha, 2019). The concept of social capital introduces social objects of different natures: networks of personal relationships, associative fabric, forms of cooperation, etc. These are the connections of mobilized people as resource to overcome the dysfunctions of collective action (Houard & Jacquemain, 2005). The empirical results construct the indicators that are beneficial for the use of public action. For the study of social capital, two approaches treat it: standards as cognitive capital (subjective dimension) and relational networks as structural social capital (relational dimension). However, social capital is not seen as a cognitive or structural dimension but rather as a concrete physical form that this dynamic gives, as a collective good, to a given territory.

Access to Housing and Tourist Accommodation

Apart from the social significance of access to housing for the local population as a human and social right, this capacity determines the link between the rural and the urban in the economic value of housing. In fact, rural areas are increasingly fulfilling other social and economic functions, especially that close to the urban area, by composing small agglomerations (Bekaert & Bosson, 2006). This dynamic is reinforced by the construction of tourist accommodation units (lodges, guest houses, etc.) dedicated to tourist activities in rural areas.

Access to Basic Services

Basic services are the social facilities necessary for the promotion of basic needs for the local population. It is both an important infrastructure and superstructure for a platform for socioeconomic investment and attractiveness for tourism projects. On the one hand, the strengthening of socioeconomic and cultural services introduces the implementation of projects in public services. On the other hand, it reinforces a certain form of cooperation between the various local actors and public administrations, in order to understand more the lack basic service in isolated rural ar-

eas. Roads, water supply, electricity and telecommunications services are considerable in this analysis to justify the possibility of setting up tourist activities.

Access to Employment

It's the territory's ability to provide job and create income-generating activities. It is intrinsically linked to the degree of development of the economic by offering various jobs and economic activities. This capacity highlights the will of local actors to develop local skills and resources (relational, social, natural, cognitive, etc.) in projects for local economic activities (Loubet, 2011).

Income Level

This capacity is an indicator for measuring the rate of poverty and social exclusion in rural areas. Indeed, there are no clearly defined qualitative links between human development and economic growth. The state, in its policies to fight poverty, promotes solidarity values (Bekaert & Bosson, 2006). Otherwise, Zaoual (2011), in his conception of the concept of situated poverty, points out that strategies for dealing with poverty in Morocco do not necessarily have to go through formal institutions. According to him, the individual must go through the solidarity of the group and integrate into a network in his quest for employment. As a counterpoint to the substantiality aspect, a new constructive perspective relating to the apprehension of the phenomenon of poverty, not as a trait of a social layer suffering from lack of basic needs, but rather the situation of people who "benefit assistance or should receive it according to social norms" (Benmakhlouf, 2010). The individual in this definition stands within his social rank and his socio-economic situation.

Economic Foundations

The economy explains the wealth of states, but this desire almost disappeared in the 19th century. At the end of the 20th century, geography emphasized analyzes of human's relationships with his environment and thus juxtaposed with the economic field. Currently, the economy is concerned with taking into account all social, cultural, historical, economic and geographic aspects (Geneau De & Staszak, 2000). The new conception of geography called economic geography; its objective is to make an inventory of the natural, energy, agricultural or other resources of a given country. It designates the mobilization of economic and productive exchanges as well as the natural data that determine the nature of economic activity.

METHODOLOGY

This research have chosen 9 communes out of 20 communes in total: 1 urban commune and 8 rural one. The field of study can be explained for two reasons: on the one hand, by the presence of the majority of particular tourism resources in rural areas. On the other hand, the major tourism policies vision 2010 local development programs aim to put rural tourism in its particularities. Consequently, an important dynamic conceived from the mobilization of local territorial capacities.

We are looking to identify the possibility of analyzing the interaction between territorial capacities and the objectives set for the tourism development of certain rural tourist resources. In fact, in order to define this relationship between territory and tourism in its possibilities of mobilizing tourist resources in local development projects, we propose two approaches: theoretical and empirical. The first approach aims to compile a set of documents useful for understanding the process followed in carrying out territorial development projects. It is a question of developing:

- A bibliography and analysis of the documents available (programs, plans, reports, tourism projects, initiatives, etc.)
- An inventory of the achievements of the province (Tourism Delegation, communes, associations, public administrations, etc.)
- Identification of the typology of tourists and pilot tourism projects
- The compilation of reports of meetings carried out with a view to local development through tourism activity.

The information compiled allows us to feed the theories with the reality of the territory in its capacities cited in the theoretical framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of the 7 territorial capacities highlights the remarkable inventory of development of infrastructure and supra-structures in the rural and urban areas of the province. We are based on administrative reports and documents provided by public administrations and on information collected through interviews with officials from public, private and voluntary sectors. These capacities are presented as follows.

The Local Population: A Young Population Highlighted

Currently, the local population of the province has an annual growth rate of 3.2%¹ due to the migratory flows of the population of the north thanks to the employment opportunities that the southern provinces and its developing

¹ The monograph of the province of Guelmim, 2010

basic infrastructure (electricity, road, etc.). Therefore, the growth of the population is a condition or a consequence of the socioeconomic development. The attractive of the

province provide the settlement of the local population and also the reception of the population from different corners of the Kingdom.

TABLE 1. Distribution of the rural and urban population of the province of Guelmim

Year	1994	2004	2014
Urban population	88 444	114714	139 246
Rural population	58680	51971	48 562

Source: High Commission for Planning

According to the table above, the total population of the province is estimated at 187,808 inhabitants in 2014 against 166,685 inhabitants in 2004 and 147,124 inhabitants in 1994, which represents an overall growth of 21.7% between 1994 and 2014. As reported by the "Municipal Plan" of the urban municipality of *Ait Nasser* (2019), the city marked its largest growth of 2.4% of the population between 1971 and 1982, especially after the creation of the province in 1979. On examination of the structure of the population, the age group between 15 and 59 dominates more in the age groups of the local population, representing 60% of the overall population. The human development index, which is also similar for the other southern provinces, is estimated at 0.690 2004 statistics.

The schooling rate is 91% for the primary level, 86% for the college level and 81.6% for the qualifying level. An infrastructure in three preschool, primary and secondary levels is developed on the basis of a faculty from both the private and public sectors with a level that varies between the baccalaureate level to the baccalaureate plus 5 years of training. On the other hand, illiteracy, according to 2004 statistics, concerns 39% of the local population, 50% of which is marked in rural areas and 33.9% is reported in urban areas. In general, women are most affected by literacy in both rural and urban areas.

The presence of a university complex in Guelmim and the institutes of the Office of Professional Training and Work Promotion (OPTWP), the Specialized Institute in New Information and Communication Technology and the Specialized Institute in Tourism and Tourist Accommodation consolidate the infrastructure for vocational training after high school. The strengthening of higher education, through the creation of a university core through the Higher School of Technology (university professional training) and the Faculty of Law and Economics, develops local skills in university and professional training.

Access to Employment: Contextualized Training

In the province of Guelmim, public services such as the Regional Investment Center (RIC) and other public directions (southern agency, etc.) provide more investment opportunities for young graduates from the province. Supporting young people in carrying out projects and funding community or socioeconomic projects are also part of the services provided.

To reduce the unemployment rate among young graduates, for example the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (NAPES), with its programs and services, makes available to this category considerable number professional training programs. These are the *Taehil* program, the *MKW* program and the *IDMAJ* program, which aim to provide qualifying training for young graduates in tourism and other sectors of socioeconomic activity. In short, the variety of programs has also affected several sectors, in order to meet the needs of the local market in terms of the profiles requested and to take advantage of the local resources available.

Social Capital: CDP as an Example of Local Intelligence

To illustrate this territorial capacity well, the organization of Communal Development Plans (CDP) is a political will and a suitable legal basis for the development of municipalities as the main actor of local development. This will is illustrated by the royal speech of December 12, 2006 ²: "Our great ambition is to allow cities and local authorities the opportunity to unite with the State. The private sector and civil society constitute a real partnership in the overall development process of our country, as they are considered as a force for proposals for the mobilization of the various international strategies".

The CDP ³ have the purpose of creating a common vision on the future of the municipality in consultation with the local population, while guaranteeing the conservation of natural

² Royal speech translated and published on the website of the southern provinces: <http://www.portailsudmaroc.com>

³ Safeguarding and development Program for Southern Oases (POS), municipal economic and social development plan for the rural commune of Asrir, June 2009

resources. Indeed, the CDP refer to the interaction between the local, the regional and the global in terms of the dynamics of social capital which aim to strengthen the capacities of the actors to mobilize projects, according to the local needs and the objectives of the global.

While talking about this coming and going between the global and the local, we emphasize the CDP as motivation of skills at the municipal level to cooperate with other local actors for the financing of projects registered in the CDP. This motivation changes from one municipality to another depending on the profile of its president. The example of the rural commune of Asrir, as the first commune on the national level which was able to carry out its CDP (2009-2014), was able to concretize largely the projects of the CDP conceived according to the possibilities and the limits of the common.

Access to Housing in the Province

According to the monograph of Guelmim in 2010, an area of 4,514 m² (2009 statistics) is divided between Modern Moroccan House (MMH) and villa as authorized accommodation, covering almost 50% of the area of the urban municipality of Guelmim. According to studies done on this relationship between tourist accommodation and inhabitant housing, the study region has not yet developed the tourism sector in a context where conflicting relationships are overwhelming between tourism land and social housing. The problem of the land assessment is a difficult to overcome for major projects by foreign investors.

Based on interviews with local decision makers, such as presidents of municipalities and officials at the Regional Investment Center, the land assessment is embarrassing for the major tourism projects of the 2020 vision, as is the case with the resort the White Beach which links the long delay of its development to the question of the land assessment. Such a situation required collaboration between the municipalities and the local authorities for the acquisition of land for 40 projects, including 10 in the Province of Guelmim. The land bases to be mobilized are distributed as follows: 2 are in the private domain of the State, 2 are communal on the other hand, only one land base belongs to collective property (private property of a family group or a tribe).

Access to basic Services

According to the 2014 provincial monograph, the electricity coverage rate, both in urban and rural areas, is 98%. On the other hand, the drinking water service, provided by the

National Office for Drinking Water (NODW), has a coverage rate that varies between 94% and 100%. However, there is a rate of 60% in the commune of Plage Blanche due not to the absence of liquid equipment but to the desire of the local population to use the traditional tanks. In addition, solid and liquid sanitation is marked by a set of projects carried out and others in progress, in order to serve rural communities well in the face of the great ecological interests accorded to the protection of oases and watercourses against pollution.

Also, the province has public and private health facilities through the presence of two hospitals, a public and a military hospital, u the health centers, laboratories, pharmacies and medical offices of several specialties. All meet the needs of the local and regional population for services vital medical. The presence of epidemiological surveillance programs and the preservation of maternal and child health strengthens the structure of the public health sector. Again, for the management of cultural affairs and youth, the province appropriates several infrastructures granted to this aspect of social life, set up in both rural and urban areas. The presence of a considerable number of cultural associations, libraries and media libraries, women's centers, etc. covers the lack of cultural infrastructure.

Finally, communication as a basic service not only for the movement of individuals and their contact with those around them, but also a necessity for the development of the economic sectors of the province in terms of communication services and transportation. The post offices cover all the municipalities through. Telecommunication services (3G internet and mobile phone) are also available in municipalities with the dominance of the national operator Maroc Telecom.

Income Level

For the study area, the Human Development Indicators (HDI) are particularly distinctive compared to the other cities of the kingdom's territory. This concretely gives the results of colossal efforts by the state to promote the territorial capacities of the province. The following table highlights some important indicators: its reading explicitly detects the gains of state policies in its desire to acquire a certain "territorial equity" between the southern provinces and the rest of the Kingdom's territory in terms of basic socioeconomic infrastructure. However, the efforts invested develop more the southern provinces HDI as indicated in the table below:

TABLE 2. Human Development Indicators (HDI) in the southern provinces

Indicators	Regional Rate	National Rate
Electricity	95.2%	71.6%
Potable water	57.7%	
Telecommunication (cellphone)	72.8%	60.6%
Quality of social facilities		(except Casa and Rabat)
Urbanization rate	From 60% to 92.8%	55%
Poverty	9.6% (2004)	
Schooling rate (from 6 to 22 years old)	77.5% (2004)	
Child mortality (-1year)	From 22 to 33%	33%
Life expectancy	73.4 years old	71.8 years old
GDP per capita	3.3%	1.7%
HDI index	0.8 (2009)	0.672

Source: La vie éco newspaper website

Varied Economic Bases

The region of our study, with its geographical particularity, is endowed with economic resources particularly linked to its geographical position and nature:

Agriculture and animal farming: the agriculture of cereals comes in the first rank since it spreads over an area of 21,500 Ha, or 21.5% of agricultural land compared to forage, crops and fruit plantations. With the presence of an immense 900,000 ha course, breeding in the province is varied since there is the presence of several species: camels, sheep, cattle, goats and horses. However, it is, in general, sedentary oasis and only concerns reduced numbers of cattle and small ruminants. Besides these sectors, it should be noted that beekeeping and poultry farming is slowly but surely positioning itself in the variety of the agricultural sector.

In the relationship of agriculture with the tourism sector, local products in agricultural sectors are among the constituent elements of demand for rural tourism. Local know-how and the variety of agricultural production impact the production of handicrafts based on local agricultural prod-

ucts. Local gastronomy, as a tourist product, is also based on the production of local products linked to the skills of rural women. In an organized structure, the enhancement of agricultural products feeds the quality of local products from cooperatives introduced into tourist circuits.

Investment: the majority of the investment concerns services and Public Works Buildings (PWB). From 2011, tourism began to position itself as an important investment object thanks to the installation of foreign investors and residents (195 foreigners, 51 of whom settled in rural areas according to 2014 statistics) and the capacity of local young people to set up their own project supported by the advantages granted by public services such as investment aid, financing, support, etc. Also, national investors from neighboring cities like Agadir and Sidi Ifni prefer the agricultural and tourist sector for their investment. This justifies the State's encouragement to national and foreign investors in their desire to set up economic projects in the province of Guelmim.

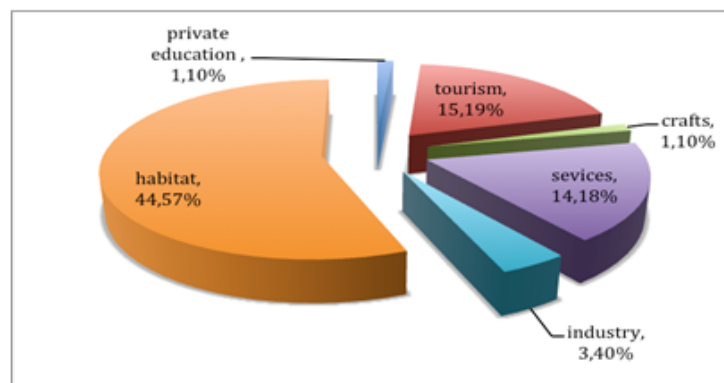


FIGURE 1. Distribution of approved files by activity sector (2003-2014) Source of information: Guelmim province monograph, 2014

Transport: the transport sector is one of the basic aspects for opening up areas, economic growth and investment. The province of Guelmim has a road network of 1,117 km, of which 627 km are paved. It is in perpetual promotion to open up rural areas and facilitate the movement of people and goods. The following table highlights the percentages of work carried out at the road network level. Provincial roads experienced a significant extension between 2010 and 2014: they reached 72.25% of paved roads.

Air transport completes the region's need for air traffic with the opening of Guelmim Airport in 2006. With a capacity of 20,000 passengers per year, the airport is well equipped to international standards. Funding under agreement, between several partners, has enabled the opening of the internal air transport line linking the cities of Casablanca, Guelmim and Tan-Tan. The agreement is concluded for a renewable period of 2 years with a maximum total annual cost of DH 19,950,000. This project not only targets the opening of the province to the rest of the kingdom's territory, but also to serve the region as domestic and foreign tourists.

Handicrafts: the province is known for the diversity of its customs and traditions translated into creativity and made into handicrafts. A varied sector subsequently creates jobs for more than 4,500 artisans. The organization of craft activity is marked by the presence of operational craft cooperatives in number of 23 and professional associations around 20 associations (monograph of the province of 2010). The craft industries are jewelry, traditional leather goods, wood, traditional sewing and carpet weaving.

The richness of the crafts reflects the customs and traditions of the inhabitants of the region: the past, the millennial traditions as well as the diversity of its Arab and Amazigh population. The presence of the craft complex (grouping of 24 artisans, 3 cooperatives) and a local products company in the urban municipality of Guelmim introduces crafts into tourist circuits organized in the urban area.

Tourism sector: the various assets offer a typical range for varied tourism products between ocean and desert, tangible and intangible. The variety of tourist offer owes its particularity to the socio-cultural and natural context of the province. Examples are: seaside tourism, cultural tourism, ecotourism, hunting tourism, spa tourism and adventure tourism, speleological tourism. In short, this province occupies a place of choice by its geographical position, its history, its cultural heritage, its traditions and its natural assets making it a privileged destination with a range of diversified tourist products.

The capacities that we have highlighted constitute the evaluation of the well-being of the territory for its capacity to

be, both, a place of life and of socioeconomic promotion. The dimensions of the National Human Development Initiative (NHRI) correspond to what Sen (1979) calls functioning (operations). They thus represent the different choices actually made by individuals on an individual or collective scale. In general, this list of territorial capacities makes it possible to grasp the reality of the inventory of basic needs for an expected development (road network, communication, water and electricity supply, medical services, etc.) and then highlights, both the resources available and the organizations in the management of their territory (Dubois et al, 2008; Loubet, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Since the 1980s, the State has not lost sight of meeting the needs of the local population in terms of vital social services: social integration, local infrastructure and services, schooling, health, education, etc. In addition to these services, there are other capacities with which major economic projects are associated, especially in the tourism economy. Currently, the region, with its geographic positioning and the particularity of its population, has been able to form the basis of its power to influence neighboring regions (the other provinces of the Guelmim-Oued Noun region). It is building a tourist pole for a new tourist destination called "Atlantic Sahara".

The development of socio-cultural, administrative services, economic activities and local governance are the subject of several large-scale territorial capacities, especially in the rural areas of the province. To this end, municipal planning highlights the institutional location of the municipality and local political activity. It calls for a harmonization of the municipality's modes of practice in the face of the demands of those around it. It is planning that is fueled by the dynamics of actors who aim, at the same time, to minimize the risks of the fragility of the territory and increase its development opportunities. While talking about the opportunities, the diversity of the components of the economic sectors calls for the resources mobilization for tourism. A participatory diagnosis of the territory makes it possible to identify the challenges for the development of the tourism industry. The nature of tourism resources and their predominantly rural location explain the hard work to strengthen basic infrastructure in rural communes. Rural and green or ecotourism tourism are forms linked to this truth.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Like any other research, this study has some limitations which must not be overlooked. Researcher encourages fur-

ther investigation in this domain to enhance the reliability of the findings.

Moreover, this study provides insights for practitioners and policy makers too. Despite the availability of an important tourist resource, there is a strong contribution of agriculture, animal husbandry and the transfer of money from abroad in the development of local socioeconomic conditions. The obstacle to promoting the tourism economy is not because of less resources; it's the scarcity of managing an unstructured sector with weak market positioning. As a result, the tourism sector in the study area remains very marginal since there is no real tourism policy adapted to the tourism potential offered by the oases, taking into ac-

count the very specific features of its ecosystem. This new reality is not a choice or an option; it is a current socioeconomic requirement. Such a desire to promote the region puts under stress resources already fragile and limited. In the face of progressive socioeconomic demands, the respect of the tolerance threshold of this territory once determined is so critical. To get out of the embarrassment of choosing between economy or environment, why not choose appropriate principles that will both command public action and guide the behavior of different individuals? In the collective conscience view, have the local actors properly framed the limits of the exploitation of the territorial heritage to identify the socioeconomic needs?

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