

Abstracts

Environmental conflicts and injustices. Fragility and resistance in Basque socio-environmental conflicts

by Jone Martínez Palacios and Iñaki Barcena Hinojal

Following several years of studying and analyzing ecological conflicts in the Basque Country the present article aims to analyze the main reasons that explain why such high levels of socio-environmental conflict are found there. We know that more protests occur in the Basque Country in proportion to its population than in other neighboring regions or even in other European countries. We ask whether such high levels of conflict are rooted in the dynamics of the Basque national protest or, on the contrary, are linked to other questions of territorial or social fragility.

In this article we propose a model for determining the reasons why in the face of infrastructural projects with comparable characteristics (road and rail projects, incinerators, dumps, ports, combined cycle power plants, high-voltage power lines, wind farms or *fracking* projects) conflicts arise in some cities and areas but not in others.

We apply the model to five Basque socio-environmental conflicts in order to analyze the keys to the successful outcome of protests, and to determine whether or not each place has its own “ecosystem of conflict” that particular characteristics of which cannot be exported elsewhere.

Key Words: Environmental conflicts, conflictual ecosystem, environmental injustice, Basque Country

Resistances to wind farms in the Northern Apennines (1995 - 2012)

by Alessandro Mengozzi

With the application of the EU incentives for renewable energy, new wind farm projects have been proliferating, in the Northern Apennines as well. The article offers an overview of the projects, carried out or refused, and focuses on some em-

blematic disputes. The fragile area considered – one of the “extremely disadvantaged” rural area in Italy – has variedly reacted to wind farm proposals. In many cases, grassroots groups have shown no inferiority complex, being proud of living in places that they have chosen and regard as sources of wealth – provided that they remain as they are. Environmental associations are almost always very active in this area, even in the absence of local mobilizations; they constantly monitor the area and offer counter-expertise in disputes. In the light of the costs of implementation of wind farms a revision of the Environmental Impact Assessment procedure, according to a more participatory approach, is suggested.

Key Words: Wind farms, local oppositions, NIMBY, green economy

Oil extractions in Basilicata: between opposition and compensations

by Davide Bubbico and Domenico Nardoza

Val d’Agri is an area of the province of Potenza interested for about twenty years by the extraction of oil and gas. The volumes of hydrocarbons that are extracted amount today to 7% of oil and gas consumption in Italy. In 1998, some years after the beginning of this activity and in anticipation of its growth, Eni and Basilicata Region signed an agreement which contains several measures of compensation over royalties.

This type of activity (along with the first oil treatment in the Oil Center) produced initially forms of opposition from environmental groups, which led to committees and associations, born in the last years. Yet the response of the local population to these initiatives has been weak. We argue that different measures of compensation, although considered insufficient so far, have contributed to contain the protests. However, plans for a further expansion of extraction and some events affecting the state of the environment and the protection of health are increasing awareness of the risks and impacts associated with this activity.

Key Words: local development, institutional regulation, social conflict, oil industry, ecological impact.

Environmental injustice in the Po river basin: the conflict between Polesine and Milan over water pollution

by Giovanni Carrosio

Watersheds have always been an object of study for their strongly unequal distribution of environmental “bads” between upstream and downstream areas. The Po valley is an exemplary case: with a succession of sources of pollution and artificial and natural purification systems, many polluters and many territories serve as

downstream collectors. The article discusses the conflict over water pollution between the Po Delta area of Polesine (Veneto Region) and the city of Milan, which has developed through a series of trials. The conflict was solved before the end of the civil cases, when the city of Milan introduced important purification systems. However, this dispute was followed by other environmental and judicial issues. Production and disposal of sewage sludge from the urban waste water treatment provoked a respatialisation of environmental injustice. Pollution – this time in the form of sludge – results again disposed of in fragile areas that, differently to Polesine, are located in the Lombardy Region, to which Milan also belongs.

Key Words: polluters, downstream collectors, fragile areas, respatialization of environmental injustice, Po Delta

The strategy of consent in the Peccioli waste landfill case

by Stefano Caspretti

The article focuses on the reasons for the public consent towards the Peccioli's landfill. It begins by examining a set of basic descriptive issues. More precisely, the fragility conditions of Peccioli are analyzed, as well as the importance of the landfill in the waste policy of the Tuscany region and the events related to the landfill. The "Peccioli system" is well-known at national level and has obtained remarkable media coverage. In this study I combine a political science and a sociological perspective to analyze the reasons for the approval. Results point to the role of the public policy legacy, of favourable political and environmental resources and of the utilization of symbolic policies as well as an effective communication strategy.

Key Words: consent, landfill, Peccioli, waste policy