Territorial project in Reunion Island around living-together as Commons.

Tanika Join

Collective action, commons and commoning: towards the emergence of new forms of territorial development processes?

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SUMMARY

In Réunion Island, a French overseas department in the southwestern Indian Ocean, initiatives and alternatives similar to the defence of the island's common goods have emerged over the last 5 to 10 years. From biodiversity to landscapes, from musical culture to architectural heritage, the Reunion Island's living-together and its history are perceived as a pillar of the island's sustainable development. Referring to living-together as a common, actors from a multidisciplinary panel and multiple decision-making spheres are building projects to deeply transform the society. This common good, around which a diversity of identities, points of view and discourses can be built, faces the challenge of uniting this diversity in a territory project. This ambition is thereby encouraging the meeting of actors for whom the tools of a common work must be drawn and redrawn according to an iterative process, from the setting up to the launch of a project. This communication proposes to explore this territorial project through initiatives developed in Reunion Island around the living -together as Commons. How does the definition of this common good by a group of committed citizens from diverse worlds, question the actors on the ground and encourage a restructuring of territorial action?

INTRODUCTION

Located at 10,000 kilometres from Paris, in the southwestern Indian Ocean, Reunion Island is a French department and an outermost region of Europe with a population of nearly 870,000 inhabitants. It is a volcanic territory nearly three times smaller than Corsica. In recent years, a series of initiatives and alternatives have been structured around the issues related to the vulnerability of the territory and its resources. Initially driven by citizens involved in the territory, discourses have become institutionalized and are now included in the territory's strategic orientation documents such as Smart Specialization Strategy (S3) promoted by Europe to its territories or the White Book of the Sustainable Reunion Island City (White Book). Without ever being named as such, the issue of managing common ressources is spreading in different spheres of reflection and action. The notion of common is used in this communication as reflecting the process of the growing interest of civil society in producing and appropriating politics and territorial management (Brossaud et al., 2019; Dardot et Laval, 2014). This aspect of Commons will be shown by analysing discourses from two perspectives. The first one by territorial projects carried out by civil society: Isopolis and Smarter which are two projects in which the citizen, the politic and the scientist meet to construct a territory project. The second one will be presented by institutional projects that include citizen participation to construct a common vision of the territory. This notion will be used as well in reference to the territorial common goods define by Magnaghi (2014) as the immaterial part of a territory. Here this

common will be studied at the stage of a common image of the territory as expressed by the discourses studied.

Confronted to this double discourse on the commons during my associative experiments and through an action-research process initiated in October 2018, I wanted to build my PhD thesis around the territorial anchoring of participatory processes and the valorisation of the commons in Reunion Island in an urban context. How do these discourses are translated locally into the construction of the city? What do urban commons (Festa, 2016) can bring to the network of interventions on the territory from actors to actions?

In the urban context experiments have been multiplying on the island but are still poorly documented. These experiments argue to respond to the context of strong demographic pressure on land resources (Lajoie and Hagen-Zanker, 2007; Catry and Besnard, 2015) and forced the Reunionese to change rapidly their ways of living from individual home to collective residence (Watin, 1991). In addition to this discourse on the vulnerability of Reunion Island cities, there is also a discourse on the challenges posed by sustainable development. A response to these challenges is based on Reunion Island's living-together, local relationships and its culture, which are recognized buy the followed project as pillars of the territory. In terms of living together, Reunion Island is known for the diversity of cultures and religions that coexist on its territory. In this context, natural environment and social and cultural heritage, these commons which anchor the identity of the territory (Magnaghi, 2014), play a key role in the island's economic strategy. They are valued as a response to the difficulties that Reunionese will have to face in the next years, without being spatially identified in the construction of the city.

In the island, where information flows at high speed on the radio waves and through very dense family, friendly and professional networks (Géraudel, 2011), the dissemination of these speeches encourages the civil society to take advantage of these new opportunities for action. How do these discourses around Commons encourage the synergy of the actors in the territory? And how do they question the territorial development?

I-   Method: Analysing discourses and their application on the territory

Institutional vision reflecting the Commons

An image of Reunion Island and the discourse on the Commons are studied through the territory's strategic documents (S3 and White Book). These speeches will be compared with actors who are leading to manage the commons on an operational level.

The Reunion Island Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) is a strategic guidance document that sets and structures the conditions for access to the structural funds granted by the European Union within the Horizon 2020 framework. This European agenda, proposed from 2014 to 2020, encourages regions on the path of transition towards "a competitive, sustainable and socially inclusive economy, through innovation and the bio-economy" (S3 of Réunion, p. 8). In this context, each region must identify the limitations and opportunities specific to its territory in order to enable it to "exploit its specific competitive advantages". In Reunion Island, where

public transfers represent 44.6% of GDP and 65% of non-market GDP (INSEE, 2014[1]), the importance of such document conditioning access to European funds is assumed to be significant in terms of impacts for the territory and the economic actors involved in the transition process.

The White Book for Sustainable Reunionese Cities (White Book) is a document co-constructed by experts and actors of spatial planning and urban development in Reunion Island. It highlights the qualities of the sustainable city of Reunion Island and the challenges related to this territory. The urban challenge is raised as one of the major issues facing Reunion Island. The main factors of the vulnerability and unsustainability of the urban system in Reunion Island include a geomorphology that constrains urbanization on the coast, poles that concentrate employment, urbanization that sprawls and road traffic saturation that leads to mobility problems (Simon, 2008; Sora, 2012). The densification of cities and housing supply are introduced as possible solutions to these challenges. This desire of densification is also raising the problem of preserving Reunion Island's living together, built on a model that is undergoing profound mutation.

Without ever mentioning the commons, these two documents support a need to work together to meet the territory's transition challenges.

From speech to action: monitoring the urban project

The implementation of this discourse on the Reunionese territory is study through an action-research approach. In this perspective, three major projects currently taking place on the island are analysed: Isopolis, SmarTerre and the North East Coastal Urban Renewal Project (PRUNEL). They have in common the desire to involve residents in a sustainable transition objective and are part of both S3 and White Book speeches.

- **Isopolis**

Isopolis is a project supported by the Isolife association (www.isolife.org) and the Open and Mutual Societal Innovations Network (RISOM). This project, which has been run on a voluntary basis since 2016, has been supported since 2018 by regional funds (first ALPHA experiment) for the implementation of this ambitious project for the territory. Valuing the innovators ("change makers"), it is intended to be a project to experiment with a new societal model in Reunion Island. Reunion Island is thought as the " City of Open Social Innovation ". To achieve this, it builds on the value of the links between science and society, identity, territory and the environment. Supported by local research actors through the Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD), University of Reunion Island and the International Research Centre in Agronomy for Development (CIRAD), Isopolis wishes to demonstrate that a major strategic orientation is possible in the territorial transition.

- **SmarTerre**

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[1] https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/1285278

SmarTerre is a project supported by the Open Atlas association (www.open-atlas.org) and the Commun'ecter network developed by the same association. Set up as a volunteer network the project is now financed by the Territory of the Western Communes (TCO), one of the four inter-municipalities of Reunion Island. This is part of the TCO's desire to experiment SmarTerre on its territory as part of a ministerial call for applications on Energy Transition Contracts. The TCO project was validated in June 2018 and SmarTerre is now laying the first bricks of the Ecocity project in the city of Le Port where the inter-municipality has been selected to test the first "Insular and Tropical Ecocity". For its development SmarTerre is now supported by Efficacity, a research and development organization on cities and energy transition whose expertise on the subject can be challenged by the discourse on the commons and the territory promoted by SmarTerre and its founders.

- **PRUNEL**

The National Agency for Urban Renewal (ANRU) is one of the action levers identified by the White Book. After experiencing a first series of Urban Renewal Projects (PRU) on Reunion Island, a new generation of projects has recently been supported by ANRU and the municipalities concerned. These projects are part of the objectives of sustainable and integrative territorial development of the population throughout its design. From ANRU's speech to the co-construction of the project by the actors, PRUNEL makes it possible to articulate the question of commons with urban policies and traditional actors in the construction of the city. In the context of the action-research the following actors are those who are leading the project from the city of Saint-Denis.

This action-research approach is based on the parallel monitoring of these three projects over a period of 6 months. The project monitoring corpus is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Corpus followed by projects.

Date	Investigated	Topic covered	Tools
17.10.2018	Public meeting - PRUNEL	Information meeting Butor	Minutes and personal notes
29.10.2018	Public meeting - PRUNEL	Information meeting Marcadet Maréchal Leclerc	Minutes and personal notes
12.03.2019	Citizens' Council meeting PRUNEL	Meeting and progress report with the PRUNEL Citizens' Council	Minutes and personal notes
11.02.2019	General public conference organised by ISOPOLIS	Gilles Charest conference - Sociocracy	Minutes and personal notes
27.02.2019	General public conference organised by ISOPOLIS	Conference on Gross National Happiness	Minutes and personal notes
13.03.2019	Steering Committee - PRUNEL	Funding, donor roles, progress report, assessment of actions carried out	Minutes and personal notes
09.04.2019	Meeting on local urban management actions - PRUNEL	Organisation of a "Netoy Nout Kartié" (Clean your neighbourhood) event	Minutes and personal notes
10.04.2019	Reunionese Association of Popular Education (AREP)	Territorial diagnosis Butor by AREP as part of PRUNEL	Minutes and personal notes
27.04.2019	SMARTERRE Policy Officer	Link between action-research with SMARTERRE, Commons and Community	Open interview

13.05.2019	Founder and coordinator of the SMARTERRE	SMARTERRE presentation project	Open interview
16.05.2019	Head of Participatory Democracy in the City of St Denis	Presentation of the Participatory Democracy Department of the City of St Denis: its actions and links with the territory	Open interview
06.02.2019	Human Development Officer - PRUNEL	ISOPOLIS and PRUNEL development of the participatory approach	Open interview
08.03.2019	Human Development Officer - PRUNEL	Deployment of the participatory approach on PRUNEL	Open interview

II-   Results: From territorial commons to the territorial cooperation.

Based on the questions raised by the ERSA call for papers for the Session on the Commons, these discourses will be used to propose a first analysis of the cohabitation of these discourses on the commons. First of all, I would like to present what is common in these speeches and how these closer connections encourage an innovative "common action" for territorial development. Secondly, how these actors manage to mobilize more widely throughout the territory. And finally, how behind these discourses their implementation raises profound questions about territorial development.

1.   What are the common features of the territory, how do they develop in Reunion Island, and how do they contribute to innovation and territorial development?

Table 2 summarizes the concepts and terms used by the stakeholders interviewed that reveal a common vision of the territory. It highlights a recurring discourse on the challenge of preserving the living-together in Reunion Island, the exceptional nature of its territory and the importance of participatory development to preserve its characteristics.

Table 2: Living together and territorial development, a common discourse in Reunion Island.

Living-together	S3: "This agility that prevailed during the last centuries and decades is no longer of the same order today. It must also deal with the disappearance of several societal shocks that have facilitated living together due to conflicts of uses, congestion effects, lifestyle changes, etc. In an island territory, the urban dimension is of great importance. It is a question of the model of living together conditioned by the island's ability to welcome its population in quantity and quality. »
	LBVDR: "the cultural heritage resulting from its history, tangible as its architecture and gardens, or intangible as its living together. "The Reunion Island city of tomorrow must organise the cohabitation and transition between these models, in particular by safeguarding and disseminating the collective founding values of Reunion Island living together"; "Our wealth to be preserved must also be sought in the specificities of Reunion Island lifestyles".
	ISOPOLIS: "Reunionese culture as a cement: cultivating through culture the "living together" already acquired as fundamental to assume a societal transition towards resilience".
	SMARTERRE: no discourse identified on this notion in the SMARTERRE project
	PRUNEL: "cultivate our singularities and enhance our living environment; organize the environmental resilience of our urban development model".
Territoire	S3: "Many wonders about the alchemy that prevails in Reunion Island where, despite alarming social indicators, social stability remains overall".

	LBVDR: "The sustainable city of Reunion Island must also make it possible to preserve what is currently appreciated[...] in the first place, the richness and proximity of natural spaces and landscapes, but also the cultural heritage resulting from its history, tangible as its architecture and gardens or intangible as its living together. »
	ISOPOLIS: "Reunion Island, City of open societal innovation: For a green, harmonious and balanced island"; "Reunion Island, through its capacity for resilience, its economic structure in networks, its skills, its natural resources and its integrative culture, contains the seeds that make it possible to constitute an exemplary model of an agile, resilient and harmonious territory, adapted to the challenges of the new economy, and this on a global scale. "we have everything we need on the scale of Reunion Island to create a new model of society"
	SMARTERRE: "experimental territory"; "The first Insular and Tropical Ecocity"; "putting the commons at the heart of the construction of the territory"
	PRUNEL: The discourse on the island is **absent** from the PRUNEL project, or indirectly in reference to "the national framework of the ANRU, which does not take into account the local specificities of the island", discussed by a donor during a public meeting.
Participation	S3: **Economic actors, encouraging innovation through entrepreneurship:** p.102 in the section "Strengthening proximity to develop ideas and projects: the challenge of territorial intelligence"; "Participation and cooperation: it aims to involve local actors to produce, exchange, pool knowledge and collaboratively develop projects through shared tools"; "Participation of local actors"
	LBVRD: **Residents:** "Diversify and systematize citizen participation"; "Encourage citizen participation in the management of their neighbourhood"; "The participatory approach, often desired by all parties, remains complex to implement and few projects have a specific budget dedicated to participation"; "ANRU and eco-neighbourhood approach at work in Ravine Blanche"; "The participation of residents, users, associations, managers and communities from the outset of the project will make it possible to better understand the needs and involve all these actors over time beyond the implementation of the operation"; "Integrating vulnerable groups"; "To promote this "living together" and better understand the expectations of the inhabitants, it is essential to create a favourable dialogue with them, to actively involve them, to provide social and human support" "Taking advantage of what the city can bring when it is conceived from the inhabitants and the territory" (p.11); "A city thought and designed for and with those who live it"
	ISOPOLIS: **Citizens** "integrating the population into the research and evaluation process of projects".
	SMARTERRE: **Citizens** "build territorial objectives, build together, reintegrate the citizen into the territorial construction"; "Smarterre is a project that was created for the 2016 AlternatibaPéi Village, it is the volunteers on the organization of the Village who met in thematic working groups to build a common territorial project".
	PRUNEL: **Inhabitants and urban actors** "we have had funding, we have to mobilize together to build" (donor at a public meeting); "People have to get involved, come to the meetings, to the workshops we organize, come to the sessions we will implement. And participate, get involved, be strong in proposals, you can't conceive of participation any other way" (Human Development Officer PRUNEL); "This participation approach is essential for the success of the project, to miss it is to take the risk that the project will be blocked"; "we must work on communication so that as many people as possible are actively involved".

With regard to the question of living together and the relationship to the island territory, SmarTerre stands out with a discourse that is much more rooted in the very notion of "territorial commons". Alongside this the others actors anchor their discourses of the territory around landscape qualities and the identity of the territory return as qualities defined as remarkable but vulnerable. These discourses, which reveal an emotional attachment to the territory and its specificities, encourage actors to redefine their tools to operate on the territory. Participation and co-construction are valued to ensure the preservation of living together on this territory. Therefore, beyond the common characteristics given to territories, these projects and strategic

documents agree on the place to be given to the citizen and to the active participation of local inhabitants and actors as agents of innovation (Girardot, 2004). In this context, the environment as well as social and cultural heritage, which are part of the identity of the territory (Magnaghi, 2014), play a key role in the discourses on the island's urban development strategy at every level of intervention.

Through the Isopolis and SmarTerre projects as project that could be assimilated as commons, it will now be addressed how these projects use a differentiated mobilization process according to the key actors to be reach.

2.   How do these commons mobilize the territory, its resources, its actors and its proximity?

The mobilization is primarily made towards the public authorities. The challenge of this mobilization is to release public funds already guided by Europe on these actions and which remain underused at the local level. This mobilization is similar to citizen lobbying. This lobbying is based on a linguistic set of vocabulary that has been used in strategic documents and that actors such as Isolife and OpenAtlas use to encourage political actors to get involved: "innovations", "vulnerability", "experimentation", "spin-off", "living-together". This mobilization is made by volunteers involved so that people who already bring initiatives related to commons can be given the means to do so. It's a relevant point in the last General Assembly of the Isolife association on May 20, 2019, repeatedly mentioned to ensure the continuity of the actions. Similarly, the first bricks of the SmarTerre project were laid during the organization of the Village des Alternatives in 2016 at the Possession City, as evidenced by the project coordinator during a presentation meeting with the SmarTerre team on 13 May 2019 at the association's headquarters:

"The synergies that were created on this occasion revealed six themes on which different groups of volunteers were involved to imagine a utopian society, these themes, which you will find on our website, are: Education, Citizenship, Third Places, Municipalities, Construction, Health, Waste"; "The consolidation of the SmarTerre project and the connection with the TCO should help these communities to exist"; "On our platform, we identify all the entities that do not usually associate and we see afterwards how we can involve them in projects that are being built".

In the framework of the Isopolis project, where the research part plays an important role in evaluating and supporting territorial innovation, the actors are working, in parallel to mobilise scientists and encourage them to follow their project. The approach taken by the Isolife association consists in seeking out scientists, so that they can get involved in issues identified in the field, and on which the challenge is to work in pairs with "change makers". Isolife involves scientists by showing the potential in terms of research, but also in terms of research funding once the project is set up. The association emphasizes the need to evaluate and measure the impacts of change makers to encourage spin-offs by demonstrating impact. This programme is based on a set of interventions; its aim is to encourage the actors on the ground and beneficiaries of the actions to get a first-hand experience of the impacts of these innovations that are developing in the territory. In this way, their evaluation is facilitated, as well as their appropriation and acceptance in an approach centred around the "learning territory". This approach is based on the principles of intervention research (Potvin, 2013) including a willingness to empower, co-construct and transmit knowledge between the actors of the project.

The approach is attractive from a scientific point of view, with the involvement of the main research institutes in Reunion Island: IRD, University of Reunion Island, and CIRAD, which have expressed a positive opinion and support for the approach. On the other hand, mobilisation is more hesitant on support for project implementation and on the field approach, for which ERDF funds require a high level of commitment. To support Isolife in the setting up of the Isopolis project, IRD has already committed itself to a first phase of intervention and consolidation of the project to obtain ERDF funds. This first phase of support should continue with the identification of researchers and doctoral candidates who can be involved in field research with "the makers" during the operational phase of the project.

Finally, the mobilization of local actors takes place within the framework of Isopolis through a proposal for occasional training courses on the main themes of the project: "sociocratic governance", "Gross National Happiness", "Intervention research" and a cycle of conferences mobilizing by snowball effect those who revolve around the project and wanted to change the society themself. The financing and organisation of these conferences and free training courses for participants is the result of a mobilisation work with each actor and the co-construction of a coherent and mobilising project supported by the consolidation of the RISOM network.

Isopolis and Smarter are built on local and international expertise to deploy an action research programme involving entrepreneurs and "actors of change", public experimenters and academics. By their capacity of mobilisation, these projects thus appears to be a pivot between public policies, scientists and the community of associations and committed citizens on the ground.

3.   How do these phenomena question territorial development? How do they contribute to the renewal of the model, methods and approaches?

Thanks to this voluntary investment, these projects, which bring together the local actors around the desire to build a new societal model, are being consolidated, clarified and encouraged the political world to get involved. Isolife is positioned on Regional ERDF funds granted by the S3 and its project is included in "the Territorial Agility" action sheet. SmarTerre is alongside the Western Communes Territory (TCO) funded by the Ministry of Ecology's Energy Transition Contracts. This mobilization of the policy requires the structuring of the project and its modelling to enter into the targeted financing boxes:

> "We are constantly running and having to adapt to the socio-political context on the setting up of this project"; "once, it's the yellow vests, then it's deadlines that change, that are advanced, funding that is postponed, on this project "change is all the time", "to mobilize, it's very important to have a place [...] we move forward with the Region on a convention [...] and then it's true that we're very much waiting for their return, already postponed by two times ".

(Isopolis coordination team at the General Assembly, May 2019)

The Isopolis and SmarTerre projects seem to be at odds with the traditional project financing tools of calls for expressions of interest and calls for projects. The need to secure the people invested in the projects, or to cover operating costs, places these actors in a need for public funds. In this way, the coordinator of Isopolis mobilises the Region on the creation of a special action sheet that fits the S3 framework, so the project could beneficiate of ERDF. And

SmarTerre is positioning itself alongside the Territory of the Western Communes (TCO) to apply for the Ministry of Ecology's Energy Transition Contract, thus implementing a "bottom-up" approach in line with the public authorities' programme. In both cases, the projects are already built and are too complex to fit into the boxes of the current calls for projects. Conscient about the potential of their project for the political actors the coordinators of Isopolis and SmarTer used their competences to adapt them to the context.

> "To be able to apply for funding, it was first necessary to create an action sheet that had not yet been made, this sheet had to be validated at national level to be able to enter the ERDF framework and today to be able to answer it and use this sheet, we still have to run to get within the deadlines"

> (Isopolis project coordinator, May 2019)

> "ADEME's calls for projects are extremely restrictive, you have to go into a filter that doesn't fit in the boxes. With SmarTerre, the projects in the territory that corresponded to their vision were identified, the funders just had to divide their investments, it reversed the vision of traditional calls for projects. This time we were asked "What boxes do you need", it completely changed the way projects are set-up"
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> (SmarTerre project coordinator, May 2019)

III-   Discussion: From Territorial Commons to the Territory institutional intervention scales, the difficult territorialisation of a Common project.

Nevertheless, these approaches, which value the participation and co-construction of a common society, are deeply questioning territorial development. The question of the compatibility between ANRU's regulatory urban planning, the civil society projects (Isopolis and SmarTerre) and the institutional discourses presented above can be raised as a potential constraint to the development of a territory project based on commons. On the urban level, the inhabitant approach is supported by a set of actors and places that are only revealed when one is part of the traditional urban project that has shaped and continues to shape Reunion Island cities. These actors and places are the keys to the entry of urban public policies into the city. They are at a local scale mainly carried by the Municipality, the Department, and the Intermunicipality administration. This tangle of scales can blur the entry points in the framework of participation projects with residents to other actors such as SmarTerre or Isopolis who plan to mobilize citizens and inhabitants in projects to build a new societal model driven by the common and the sharing of knowledge. As part of the follow-up to the PRUNEL project, these actors take the form of: "associations under contract", "City policy", "Citizen democracy service", "Citizen council", "neighbourhood councils", "relay adults", "Street Watch Man", annex town hall, social landlords... With them, specific spaces for mobilization (media libraries, building bases, schools, neighbourhood houses, …) are used by these actors and are known by the residents. Each actor has its role, each participative instance acts according to the urban planning frameworks and services of the city concerned. During an interview with the head of the Citizen Democracy Department in the city of St Denis on 16 May 2019, she stressed the difficulty even for residents to identify the limits of these institutional frameworks:

> "With their budget, neighbourhood councils can only propose projects that affect the municipal domain, but it is not always easy for them to identify the boundaries between departmental or municipal domains, then it is necessary to support them".

In parallel with these mobilizations at the neighbourhood level, mobilization projects through action research, intervention research or common platforms, such as Isopolis and SmarTerre, have not yet made their entry into this local public sphere. In this way, they still constitute a framework for intervention parallel to the urban project. They are built around a common discourse whose stake is established in terms of territorial strategy by documents such as the LBVDR and the S3, but whose links with the city's practitioners have not yet been established. Indeed, this territorial strategy, which involves a multitude of actors at different decision-making levels, requires discipline and flexibility from these project leaders in the construction of their actions. This flexibility allows them to bring a vision of civil society that is already engaged and active on the island's strategic development issues, at the European level for ERDF and the French Ministery level for Energy Transition Contracts. On the other hand, this flexibility also inevitably contributes to weakening the field actions on which these projects have been built, in favour of negotiating with the public authorities. From this perspective, one of the challenges of managing the city as a whole is the articulation between the different scales of intervention allowing the construction of participatory management. If this management is not made the risk for projects as SmarTerre and Isopolis is to construct a model project labelize at the European and national scale (Béal et al., 2015) without ever being applied following the specificities and the contribution of the territory. This issue, which reveals the problems of urban management, is highlighted in the introduction to the White Book on Reunion Island's Sustainable City.

> "The sustainable city of Reunion Island is not an object, a model to be achieved, an end in itself, but a permanent process that concerns all scales and all subjects affecting the city, from the most concrete and every day to the most distant and prospective" (White Book, p. 11)

The cities of Reunion Island are young and urban culture is still under construction. While a number of scientific studies were carried out in the 1990s to document the practices and uses of Reunion Island's urban space (Watin, 1992; Watin et al., 1992; Simonin et al., 1997), the identification and analysis of this urban character through the commons, and what is common in the urban space in Reunion Island, could offer an anchor and enable the transformations and territorial projects presented above.

CONCLUSION

The Reunionese context was presented here through a shared discourse on the management of the commons in this island territory, highlighting by the analysis of two strategic orientation documents of the territory: The Intelligent Specialization Strategy (S3) and the White Book of the Sustainable City of Reunion Island (White Book). This analysis was put into perspective with the development on the territory of three projects promoting the participation of the inhabitants and a sustainable transition of the territory: PRUNEL, Isopolis and SmarTerre. The development of these projects has been supported through a research-action process allowing the follow-up of these three projects.

This approach made it possible to confirm the place of living together in Reunion Island as a carrier of a common vision of the territory by public policies and the actors involved in territorial transition issues. This common vision crystallizes the problem of structuring a

common territorial action affecting several scales of intervention. This question of scales is explicitly revealed in PRUNEL project where the different scales and their actors are combined into a perimeter defined by the project. The inclusion of these actors in the project's urban intervention frameworks implies their coordination in a legal way. These frameworks, well known to the actors and unknown to the inhabitants, allow the former to coordinate themselves within the framework of participatory actions to build a common vision of their interventions. On the other hand, these frameworks are much more implicit in the Isopolis and SmarTerre led by civil society. In these projects, the vision is that of a territory where the commons are a project of society. This society, which is intended to be utopian and desirable by the actors, is based on citizens' initiatives already implemented on a small scale in the territory and which are directly in line with the two strategic documents mentioned above. It is on this correspondence that Isopolis and SmarTerre positions itself as a cornerstone between public policies and the actors for whom they bring the societal vision. For public policies, their project is legitimized by a large network of people working for the transition, and the involvement of scientists and researchers. The scale issues are here not mentioned but no less important for the construction of the commons. These scales of regulatory interventions contribute, when they are not known, to opaque the territory and weaken the construction of mobilizing actions on the common and the living together.

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