



Scientific research is a driving force to strengthen various socio economic activities at local level

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The Linkages Between Scientific Research and Socioeconomic Activities in Mountain Regions: Experience from the Research Project RefLab to Tourism in the Ecrins Massif (French Alps)

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INTRO

- Mountains are an open-air laboratory for sciences and humanities.
- Huts are their advance bases.
- How can a scientific program contribute to socio-economic activities?
- What are the impacts of science communications?
- Does scientific research contribute to the link between science and society?

REFLAB PROGRAM

- Partner huts in different parts of the French Alps.
- A transdisciplinary approach.
- Four lines of research (frequentation and practices, meteorology and climatology, geomorphology and risks, biodiversity).
- Protocols co-constructed by researchers and huts guardians.
- Three levels of involvement to adapt to the needs and constraints of each guardian.
- Different tools and forms of knowledge communication.
- A support for new socio-economic activities

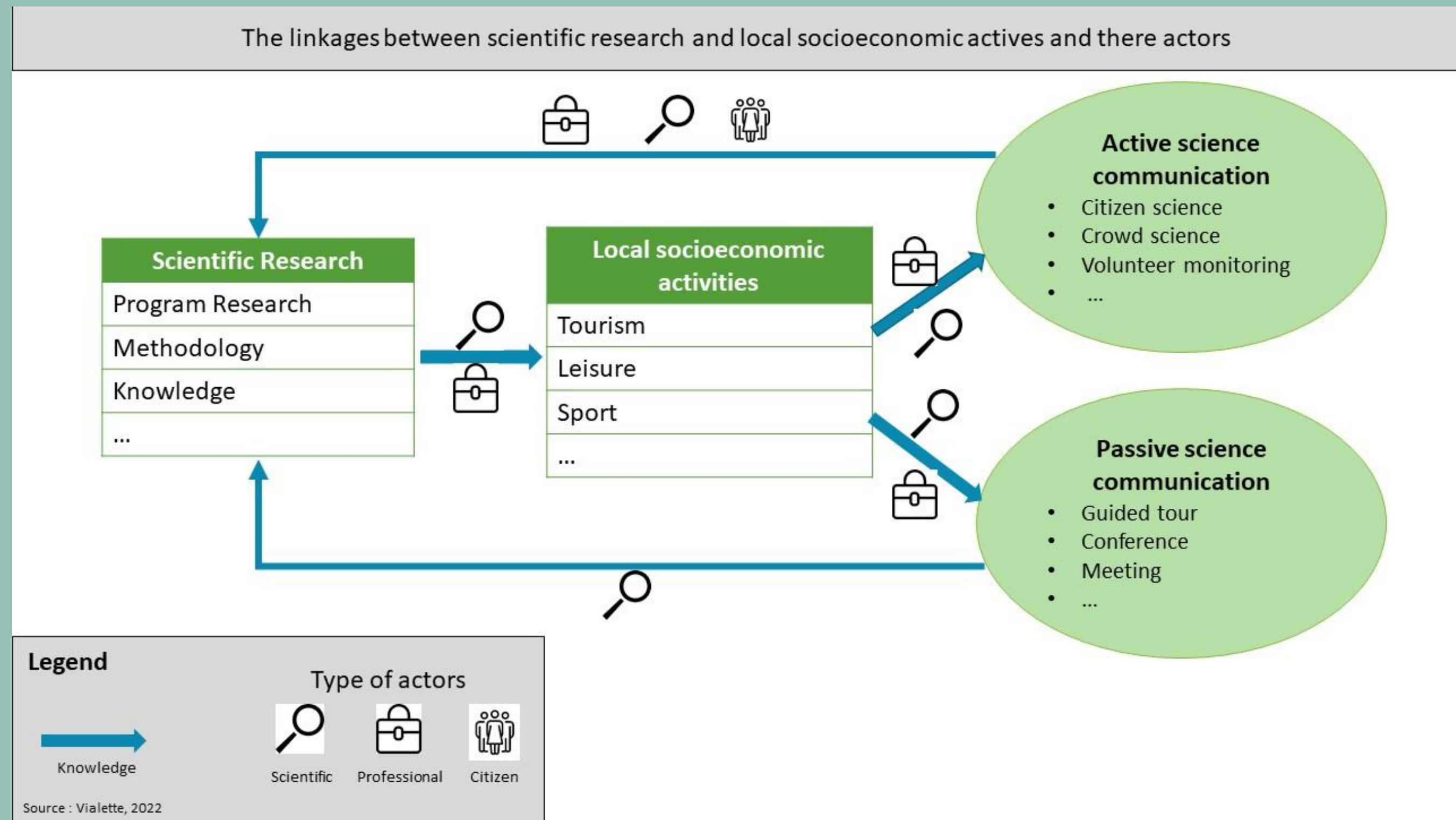
METHODE

- Bibliographic approach around RefLab.
- Semi-directive and informal interviews with different people related to the project (researchers, professionals).
- Participant observations and semi-structured interviews with tourists participating of the Itinerary in Sentinel huts.

Scientific research is a driving force to strengthen various socio-economic activities at local level and knowledge mobility reinforces science-society interface.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- Mountains are very adapted to study science-society interactions by its scientific interest (understanding, management, protection) and its attractiveness (image of nature and freedom),
- Huts are unique places for these meetings (illustration 3).
- Science practices and knowledge are factors of attractiveness for the territories (illustration 1, 2 & 3).
- Knowledge and forms of communication can allow the implementation of new local dynamics particularly in tourism and leisure.
- Science communication is a factor of understanding of the environment, increases scientific curiosity and makes live unique experience (Illustration 1).
- Active science communication leads to better understanding and is more likely to lead to behavioral changes (illustration 2).
- Active science communication can lead to joint actions.
- The scientific communication stimulates the affect and the feeling of inhabiting (temporarily) in the landscape.



DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN RELATION WITH REFLAB

“this idea of a scientific itinerancy, it's the idea of understanding something, not just thinking that it's beautiful”
(a participant of the Itinerary in Sentinel Huts)



Illustration 1 : Itinerary in Sentinel Huts, a scientific hiking



Illustration 2 : Scientific Eco-volunteering in Sentinel Huts



Illustration 3 : Refuge Remix

