

Submitted Abstract

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First Author First Name Last Name	Carine (1,2) Pachoud
Submitting Author First Name Last Name	Carine Pachoud
Correspondence	carine.pachoud@hotmail.fr
Co-Authors >> E-Mails will be not listed	
Organisations	1: Univ. Grenoble Alpes, Labex ITTEM, Grenoble, France 2: Univ. Grenoble Alpes, UMR Pacte, Grenoble, France.
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Abstract

Studies on sustainable transitions have multiplied in recent years, driven by the need for radical change in our practices and values to escape crises. Such radical transformations are situated in space. A spatial approach towards transformative processes can thus inform about the conditions and contexts of such dynamics. Recent publications on the geography of transition are tackling this issue, but still give little importance to the constructed and relational nature of place and the role of multi-scalar relationships. This contribution presents a conceptual framework for the socio-spatial analysis of transformation dynamics by adopting the French-speaking literature on territoire. This framework is applied to a case study in mountains, located in Gresse-en-Vercors, in the French Alps. We show that the concept of territoire appears highly relevant in the study of sustainability transitions, especially in mountains, because it allows to grasp three fundamental dimensions of transformation, i.e the material, institutional and ideal dimensions. This concept enables thus to study transformation dynamics in a systemic way. It also reveals the political dimension among actors involved in such dynamics, enabling researchers to grasp multiple and intertwined power relationships. Lastly, it integrates the influence of administrative levels in shaping transformation dynamics.