

Call for international conference

The Lille Interdisciplinary Transitions Laboratory (LITL)
organizes an international conference on the theme :

***The challenges of international environmental cooperation: advances,
constraints and prospects for the ecological transition.***

From 2 to 3 October 2025, at Catholic University of Lille

Socio-environmental crises are threatening our ecosystems, and are becoming common ailments for humanity, not only for every human being, but also for the elements of the human environment. This is prompting reflection and action at local, regional, national and international levels, to find solutions to the ecological problems we face. The fight against global environmental problems appears to be everyone's business and concern, and not that of an individual, an isolated society or an autarkic state (Pope Francis, 2015). As a result, a planetary order of environmental cooperation is being created at all levels. The international community is mobilising through dialogues, consultations, negotiations, forums, summits of states, conferences, conventions and bilateral and multilateral agreements, with the aim of conserving and limiting greenhouse gas emissions in socio-economic lifestyles (Barriere and Rochegude, 2008). Examples include the Rio and Stockholm Conferences (*CNUE*¹, 1972 ; *CNUED*², 1992), the Johannesburg Summit³ (2002), COP21, COP27, COP Africa", etc. In addition to the conferences that are part of the socio-environmental rationale, there are various environmental cooperation projects, at territorial, regional and international levels (Djefflat, Boidin, 2010).

At local level, for example, the Rev3 regional programme is part of the dynamic of cooperation mechanisms deployed by the Haut-de-France Region to mobilise local and international players to reverse the current trend, with a view to a fair, deeply impactful and universal transition. To this end, the Region is mobilising local, national and international players to engage in dialogue, exchange ideas and cooperate to ensure the success of such a transition project. Aware of the global issues at stake in the current trend, this regional dynamic is looking forward to renewing and strengthening the partnership between economic players, civil society and elected representatives from the region and elsewhere, in order to work towards a fair and environmentally-friendly transition. It is in this spirit of solidarity and collaboration that the stakeholders expect to win the local through the global, while working on an ecosystem, on ambitions and on territorial, national and international requirements, in pursuit of the common and unique objective of "fair and ecological transition".

On an international scale, we are seeing various multinational and decentralised environmental cooperation projects, such as North-South cooperation projects (Djefflat, Boidin, 2010), as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, the Agence Française de Développement and other international bodies and civil society organisations are forging various forms of partnership as part of the ecological and socio-economic transition in the countries of the South.

Despite these efforts, it has to be said that the current logic of international environmental cooperation presents difficulties and limits that need to be rethought if a genuine ecological transition is to be achieved at all levels. As a result, civil society and observers are increasingly dismayed and disappointed by the failures of most supra-state summits and international conventions on climate change and ecological transition (Pape, 2023; Maljean-Dubois & Wemaëre M. 2010, 2015ab). It sometimes happens that the pursuit or preservation of the selfish interests (individual and/or partisan) of certain representatives or members of

¹ United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, 5-16 June 1972, Stockholm

² United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 3-14 June 1992, Rio de Janeiro

³ World Summit on Sustainable Development, 26 August to 4 September 2002, Johannesburg

the government of these institutions leads to decisions being taken that often undermine the global common good. One example among many, which demonstrates the powerlessness of states and supra-state institutions to tame the power of capitalists in the service of the common good, is the withdrawal of the USA from the Paris Climate Agreement in June 2017 on the decision of President Donald Trump (Somabe, 2020). Thus, in the context where some stakeholders in environmental cooperation, confined to their selfish interests and values (positions), the cops/forums turn out to be encounters of conflicts of interests and values. Similarly, the mechanisms for developing and steering environmental cooperation projects in the North and South are sometimes a source of inequality on a local and global scale (Blanchon et *als*, 2009; Deldreve, 2023, 2020) and of environmental interference (Karsenty, 2022) or violence and green colonialism (Blanc, 2022). In this status quo, mechanisms of resistance (Crozier and Friedberg, 1981) and political and environmental conflict develop, to the great detriment of the ecological, societal and energy transition. Similarly, in view of the economic and industrial development needs of the African continent, which is the lowest emitter of greenhouse gases and the most exposed to pollution from the countries of the North, governments and their partners are faced with the paradox of how to ensure these developments without emitting more greenhouse gases, and how to rethink international environmental agreements and cooperation for a fair and equitable transition between the North and the South.

In the light of these worrying situations for our planet, we need to look more closely at the forms of action and cooperation mechanisms that need to be put in place to drive forward the process of fighting together for the ecological transition. This raises the following questions: how do mechanisms of inequality, resistance and conflicts of interest, values and geopolitics develop in the context of environmental cooperation? What alternatives and solutions can be devised to get us out of the current geopolitical status quo, so that environmental cooperation is viable, fair and effective for the ecological transition? How can we work together beyond our differences, for a common cause or to safeguard our common home? How can those involved in environmental and geopolitical cooperation overcome their differences, divisions and disagreements to find a common framework for agreement and joint action, with a view to the ecological, economic and societal transition?

In proposing an understanding of the issues involved in international environmental cooperation, we aim to diagnose the constraints and prospects for the ecological, economic and societal transition. In addition, this conference project aims to make a contribution to the discussions and actions that form part of the joint and cooperative fight against climate change, for sustainable environmental protection, over and above the specific socio-economic and cultural challenges of national and geopolitical territories.

1. OBJECTIVE AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The aim of this conference is to bring together researchers, researchers, teachers, locals and international actors of environment cooperation, and civil society players to take a cross-disciplinary look at the issues involved in international environmental cooperation, with a view to diagnosing the constraints and identifying pragmatic solutions for a genuine ecological, economic and societal transition.

2. AREAS OF CONTRIBUTION

The symposium will include papers, panels and workshops. The main themes to be addressed are as follows:

Theme 1 : Stakeholders and environmental governance: mechanisms, resistance, conflicts and disagreements

Area 2 : Inequalities and environmental cooperation

Axis 3 : What cooperation mechanisms are needed for a sustainable and fair transition?

3. PARTICIPANT PROFILES

The conference will focus on contributing to the dialogue between research and members or organizations of civil society. The following are expected to take part in the conference:

- academics from different disciplines (philosophers, historians, lawyers, political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, ethnologists, economists, researchers and technicians from various fields);
- managers, civil society, students, teachers (at levels other than higher education), other interested parties...

4. VENUE AND DATE OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference will take place at the Catholic University of Lille from 2 to 3 October 2025.

Abstracts (**250 words max and a brief biography**) are due no later than 15 April 2025 at the following address: martinsomabe@gmail.com.

Deadline for return of shortlisted abstracts: 30 April 2025

Authors of shortlisted abstracts must send their paper (25,000 characters) by 30 June 2025 at the latest, in French or English.

Conference languages : French and English.

Submission of the publication project for the texts selected by the scientific committee to the publisher ISTE ÉDITIONS, by 1 December 2025 at the latest.

5. INDICATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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6. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND ORGANISING COMMITTEE

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE	ORGANISING COMMITTEE
Prof. Emmanuel Picavet, UMR 8103 Laboratory, ISJPS, University of Paris 1(France)	Louis-Marie Clouet, ICL
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Prof. Benoît Robyns, Lille Interdisciplinary Transitions Laboratory (LITL), Junia (France)	Benoit Bourel, ICL
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Dr. Kokou Somabe, LITL-FGES-ICL, CERAPS	Rousselle Maryline, ICL
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Prof. Bruno Boidin, Clersé Laboratory, University of Lille (France)	Alandou Waby Balogun, ICL
Prof. Dr Shahid Rahman, STL UMR 8163, University of Lille (France)	Alexis Montaigne, CERDD
Dr. Monkouna Lardja, Technical Adviser to the Togolese Ministry of the Environment (Togo)	Polus Leboucq Geraldine, ICL
Prof. Deldrève Valérie, ETTIS Unit (Environment, Territories in Transition, INRAE-Montpellier(France)	
Mr Mody Diaw, ETTIS Unit (Environment, Territories in Transition, INRAE-Montpellier(France)	
Dr Ginelli Ludovic, ETTIS Unit (Environment, Territories in Transition, INRAE-Montpellier(France)	
Dr Maud Lelievre, IUCN French Committee (France)	
Prof. Essè Aziagbédé Amouzou, University of Lomé (Togo)	
Prof. Minkilabe Djangbedja, LaRBE, University of Lomé (Togo)	
Dr. Sotima Tchantipo, University of Parakou (Benin)	
Dr Ibrahima Alamako Keita, Laboratoire Socio-anthropologique de Guinée - LASAG(Guinea).	
Dr Diarra Zoumanigui, Julius Nyerere University, Kankan (Guinea)	
Dr. Earsom Joseph, ESPOLE-LAB (France)	
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Dr. Kristin Reynolds, Food and Social Justice Action Research Lab (USA)	
Dr. Josiane Gnassou, CSR Department, ICL (France)	
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