

Mining and the Politics of Compensation in New Caledonia

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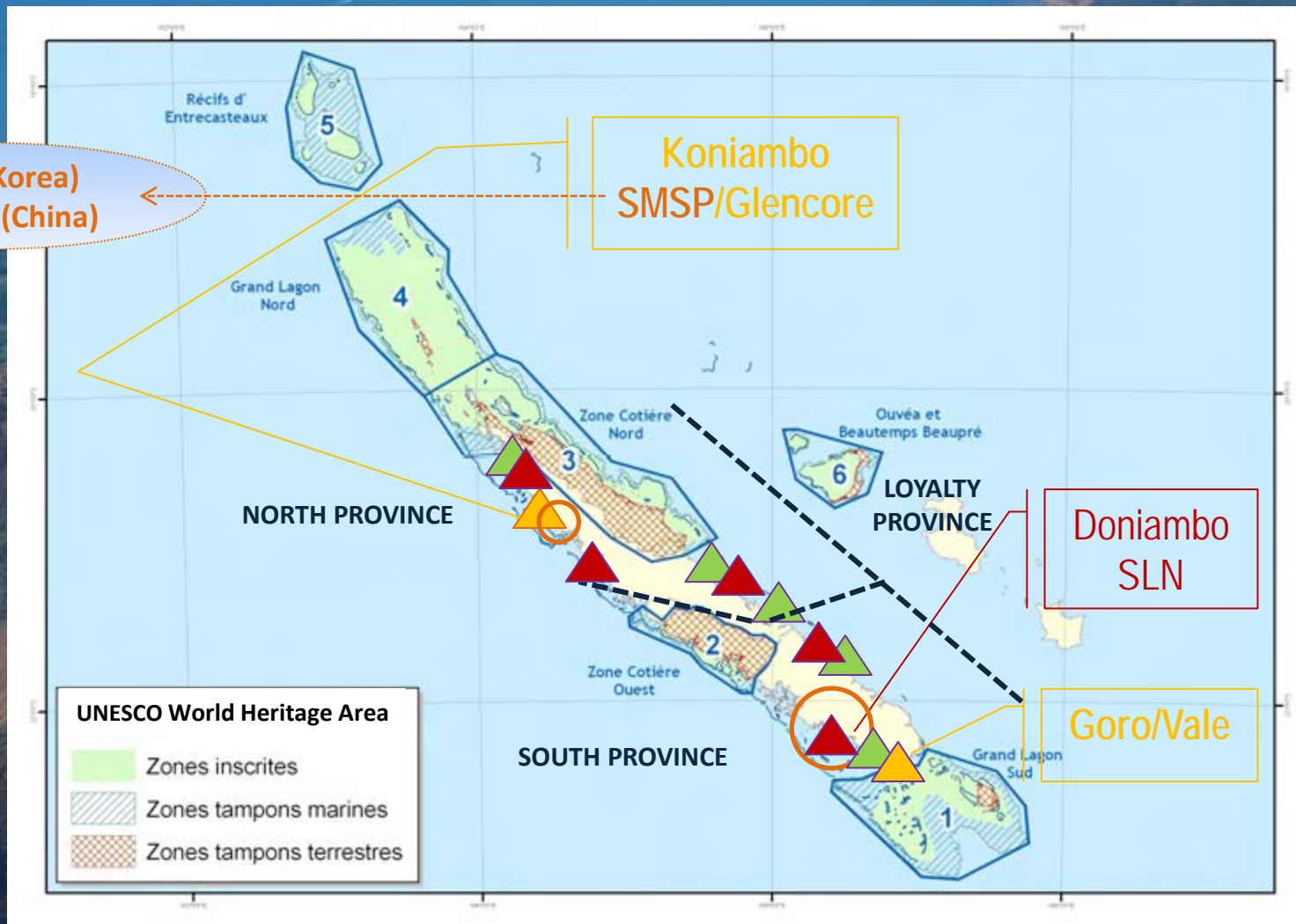
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International
Mining for
Development
Centre



- ✓ A long history of settler colonization, racial/spatial segregation and mining development
- ✓ An original process of ‘negotiated decolonisation’ (1984 ‘events’ civil/decolonisation clashes, 1988 and 1998 political agreements)
- ✓ A strong development of the mining sector:
 - New projects (Koniambo, Goro, Posco + SLN/Doniambo)
 - New actors: multinational companies (Vale, Glencore, Posco), BINGOs, indigenous and environmental associations
 - New discourses: CSR, sustainable development, indigenous rights, environmentalism
 - New arenas and regulations: ICM, UN
 - ⇒ *A (rather) classical situation of capitalist globalisation?*
- ✓ But: strong/multilayered action of the NC ‘state’ (central, NC, provinces): policy, regulations (mining code, environmental codes), capital investment...
 - ⇒ *Speed race between mining development and mining policy*
 - ⇒ *The compensation as an arena of contest*



✓ **Broad topic**

« The English word 'compensation' has a strict and narrow sense, in which it represents the cost of damage to one's self, one's body or one's property, and a broader, figurative sense, in which it can apply to almost any form of payment » (Filer, 1997 : 157).

✓ **Old topic (in Melanesian social anthropology)**

- Compensation and reciprocity: property rights, landowning, social relations and networks extension
- Compensation and redistribution: royalties, mining/land rent, taxation,

✓ **New topic (in policy and science studies)**

- Ecological compensation: whom/what/where/how?
- Tensions between 'naturalizing', 'commoditizing', and 'socializing' (human/non human continuum) nature

✓ **Regulatory approaches**

- Environmental code (2008): compensation and impact study (industrial infrastructures, clearing permits within project footprint: compensation costs approach); avoid/reduce/compensate 'linear' doctrine
- Mining code (2009): mining sites regularization (exploitation authorization, planning over 15 years, EIS actualization): entry-point for social impact assessment/monitoring?

✓ **Voluntary approaches**

- Convention for the conservation of biodiversity (2009): South Province / Vale
- Working group (2013): mine and environment administrations + natural scientists: ecological compensation

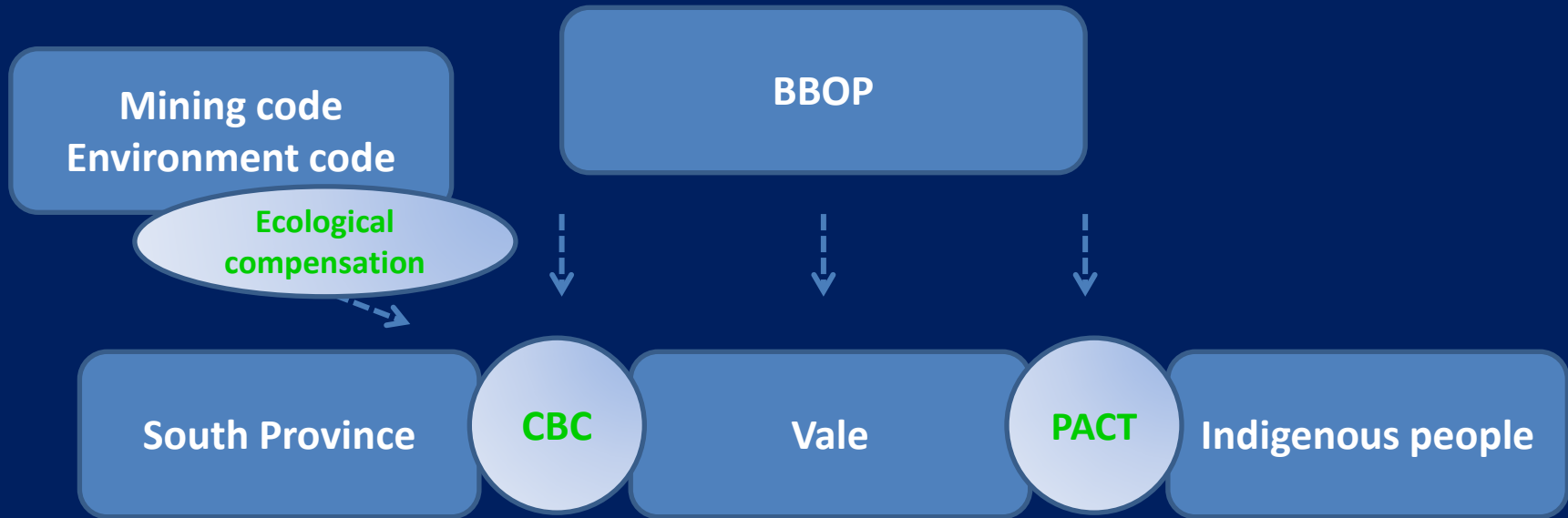
✓ **Negotiated approaches (IBAs)**

- Pact for the Sustainable Development of the Great South (Yaté, 2008)
- *Chavaa Xua* Association (Thio, 2013)

- ✓ Mine and environment administrations initiative...
- ✓ ... mobilizing scientific expertise (working group with biologists)
- ✓ Goal
 - Classifying ecosystems (without talking of ecosystem services)
 - Creating a scale of value (synthetic index/matrix)
- ✓ Shortcomings
 - Limited to static/poor criteria: degree of biodiversity, species rarity, endemismity...
 - Nothing about functional dimension of ecosystems: impossible (?)
 - Compensation measurement (technical issue) + threshold effect (beyond a certain threshold there is no compensation possible) = political choice
- ✓ Next step: testing the matrix
 - External consultancy: what about scientific shortcomings?
 - Via CNRT (agency funding research on nickel): bringing the mining companies in?

- ✓ Convention for biodiversity conservation (CBC): voluntary agreement between Vale and the South Province?
- ✓ 4 axes: improving ecological knowledge, experimenting restoration techniques, protecting ecological corridors, restoring biodiversity
- ✓ 'Avoid, reduce, compensate' doctrine and BBOP international standard
- ✓ Compensation measures (2009-13)
 - Developing a network of protected areas
 - Assessing ecosystem services losses (abandoned)
 - Re-vegetation/ecological restoration (reduced)
- ✓ Interpreting CBC
 - As part of a negotiated process (of environmental monitoring) around the 'Goro project' (Vale) pushed by the South Province
 - As filling a legal vacuum (before mining/environmental codes) (for the S. Prov.)
 - As a strategy to abide with global norms (for Vale)
 - As a specific instance of IBA (at provincial level)?

- ✓ Localized mining conflicts: Thio (1996, 2013), Yaté (2005-06)....
- ✓ and agreements: for instance, the Pact for the Sustainable Development of the Great South (PACT), Yaté (2008)
- ✓ Negotiating compensations: sharing the rent and/or restoring social and environmental balance...
- ✓ Localization (beyond the mining enclave): mining site, commune, clans customary areas of influence (chiefships networks)?
- ✓ Belonging: defining the collective to be compensated and the company as a local actor (from corporate social responsibility to corporate citizenship?)
- ✓ Beyond compensation: negotiating local (corporate, indigenous, communal) citizenship (cf. local taxation)?



- Ecological compensation
 - Values (of place): biodiversity, ecosystem services
 - Extension: enclave vs. ecosystems?
- *Measuring*

- Environmental compensation
 - Values (of place): belonging, livelihood, sovereignty
 - Extension: customary network vs. commune?
- *Negotiating*



Thank you for your attention!

