

# **How facilitation in agroecological transitions at the territorial scale may favour open ended processes: Two experiences from Brazil and France**

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**ATTER**  
Agroecological Transitions for  
Territorial Food Systems

Coordination by

**INRAE**



# Open-ended versus determinist visions of transition

Two perspectives on change processes:

- a “**determinist**” perspective which considers mechanisms of change in a causalist way and often (not always) *predefines* precise targets and/or steps
- an “**open-ended**” perspective which considers mechanisms of change as partially *undetermined* and where futures are left open and targets and steps adjusted along the way (**transformation** rather than transition)

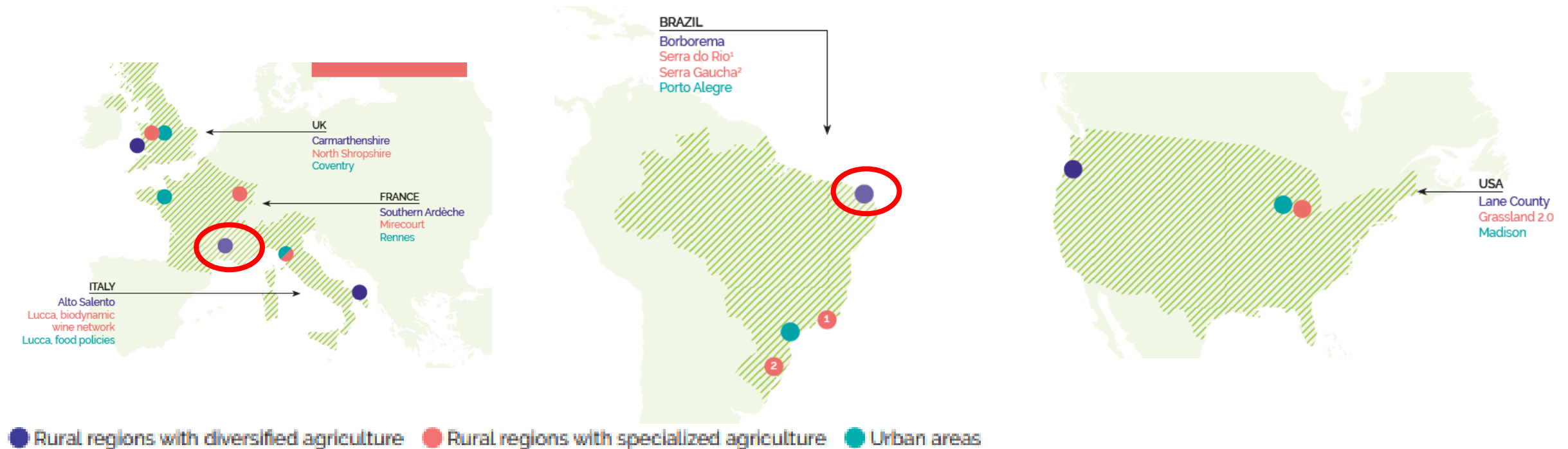
D. Magda, C. Lamine, M. Rivera Ferre, T. Marsden. *Agroecological transition, between determinist and open-ended perspectives*, Peter Lang, 2021

**How facilitation in agroecological transitions at the scale of territorial food systems may favour (or impede) open ended processes?**



# Insights from 2 territorial case studies and experiences of facilitation

ATTER project/network: a portfolio of 16 case studies



**Analyses of territorial agrifood systems transitions, of public policies (and their impacts on transitions), on facilitation approaches**

## Southern Ardèche, France



- rural with small towns and mountainous deserted areas; diverse landscapes
- diverse agriculture with a few specialised productions (fruit, wine), strong presence of quality signs/chains
- heterogeneous trends: diversification and specialisation; concentration and small farms

## Borborema, Brazil



- a semiarid rural region
- small farm units, diversified agroecosystems
- issues of water security, access to resources, gender
- a territorial network involving family farming organizations and a strong women movement;

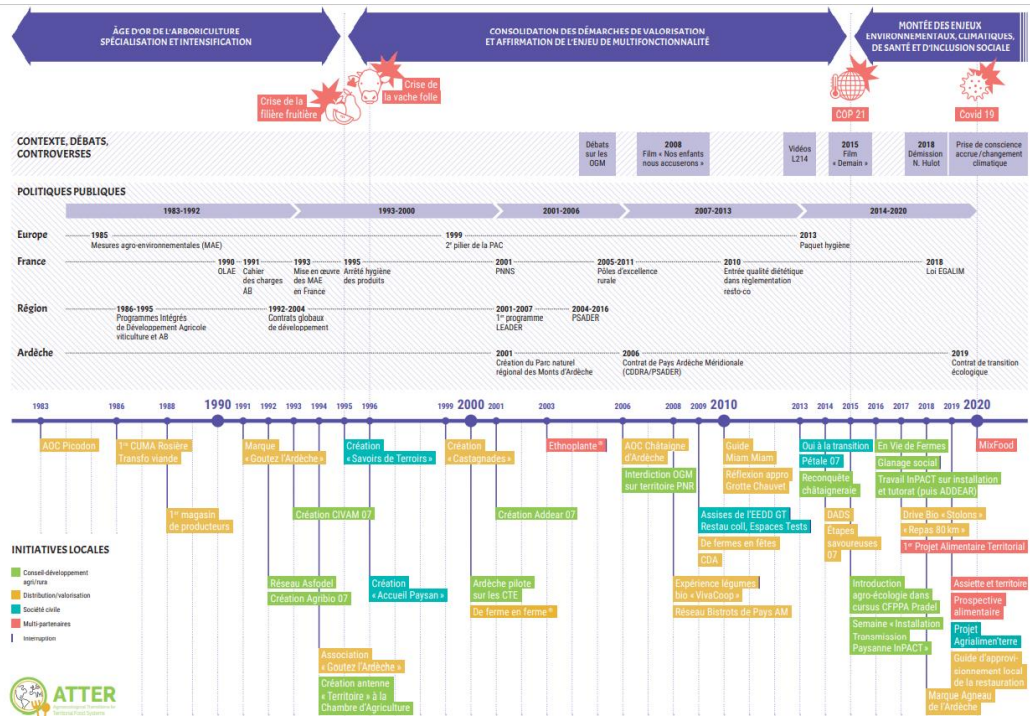
**How different facilitation approaches may (or not) favour open ended processes for agroecological transitions ?**

### Analytical grid

- the trajectory of projects and networks that have been set up around AET
- the main actors involved in the facilitation of AET at the scale of territorial food systems
- the approaches they develop and apply.



# Trajectories Southern Ardèche



Successive projects carried out by different networks on the (agroecological/food) territorial transition with contrasted visions (products' quality for export vs social inclusion of new farmers and of inhabitants)

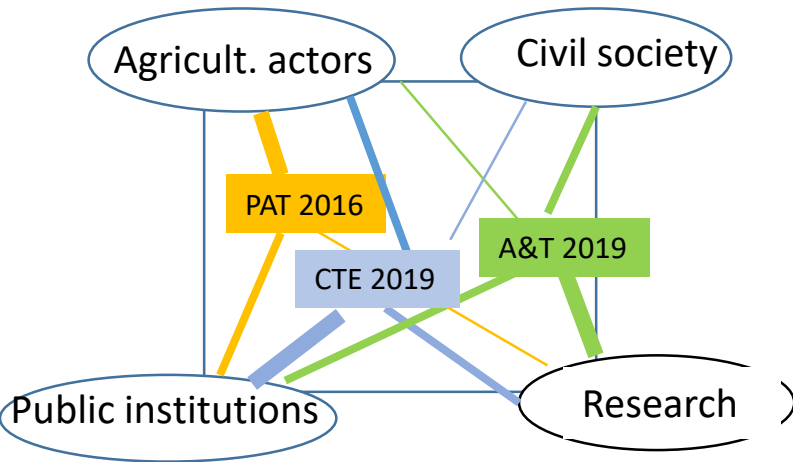
# Borborema

**Polo da Borborema (20 years) : articulation of local farmers' unions and leader of a territorial strategy for agroecology**

Programs and actions focused on agroecological practices, water management, collective marketing and sociopolitical organization, conservation of local seed varieties,

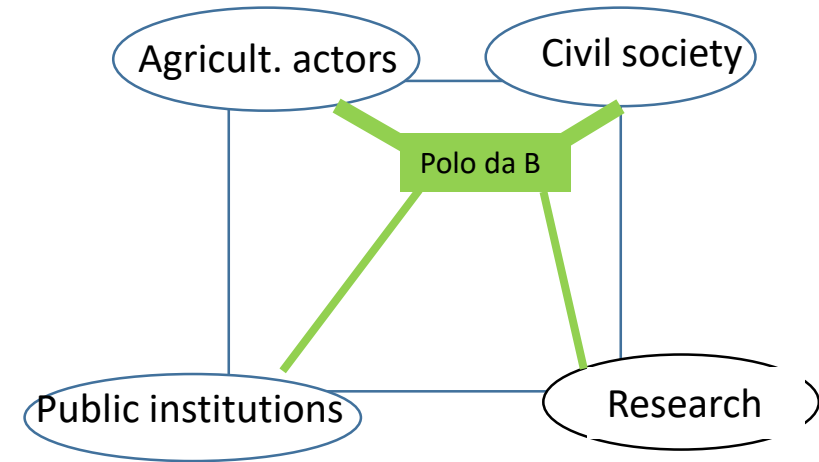


# Main actors Southern Ardèche



Change in leadership balance over 3 successive projects: one carried out by a chamber of agriculture, one by a local authority, one by **researchers + 2 civil society networks + 2 local authorities** (action research projet L'Assiette et le Territoire, recently transformed into a local food council)

# Borborema



Key role of women  
Positions of leadership  
Collective learning,  
reflexion on inequalities



# Approaches - Southern Ardèche

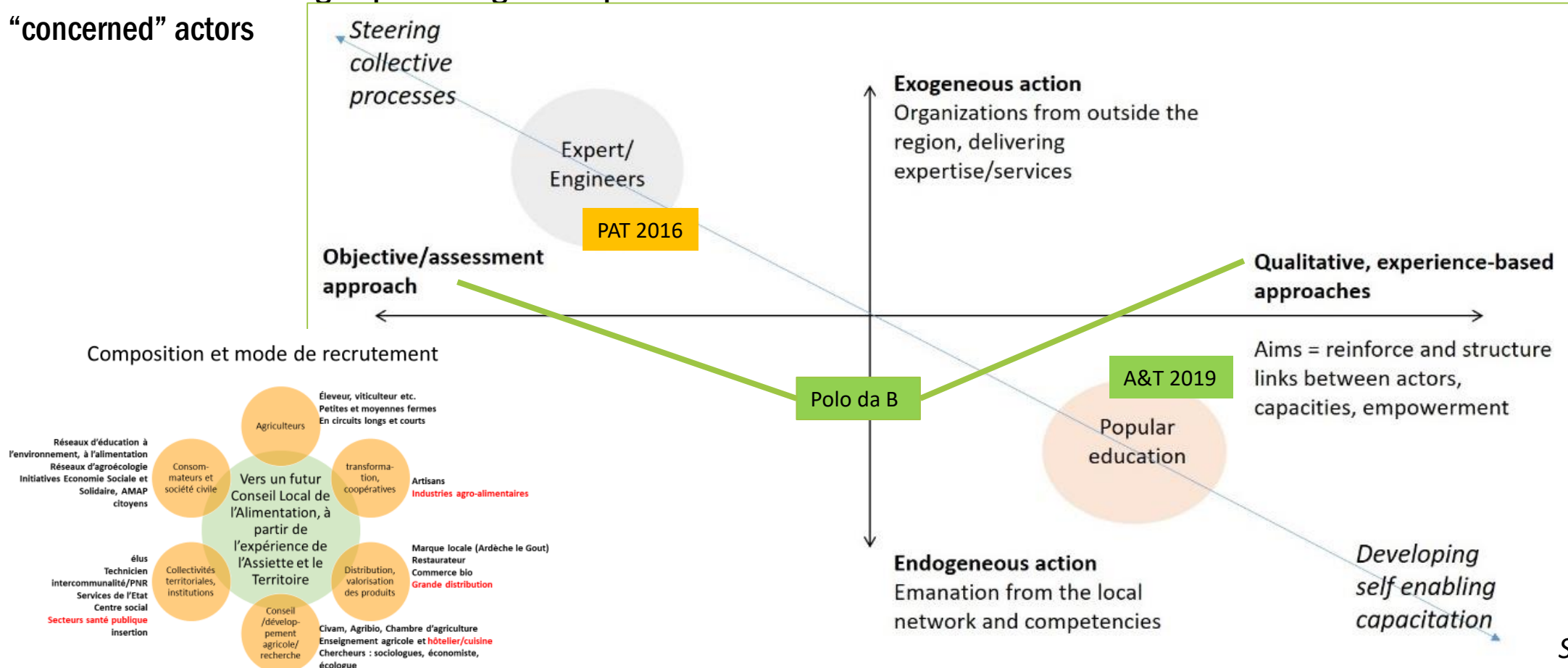
Institutional projects (PAT) : classical **diagnostic-swot-planning** processes, with more or less multi-actors arenas, in a context of strong institutionalization of Territorial Food Projects

Action research project : process of collective **knowledge building**, expression of collective priorities (with a manifesto), experimentation, based on a multi-actors group involving both representative and “concerned” actors

# Borborema

Original positioning of the Polo da Borborema between evidence-based and experience-based approaches

....and of the Ardèche network on the issue of including the diversity of actors and visions and identifying missing ones



## Conclusion

- **Role of exchanges with other territories/networks (translocalism)**
- **Fluxes of information in different directions -> open-ended (vs unidirectional = deterministic)**
- **Importance of collective reflexivity on facilitation approaches**
- **Necessity of a balance between analytical stances and experimental ones (analysing inequalities in participation, in accessibility + implementing mechanisms that help fostering them)**

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