



# CDE Programme

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## **A national park of the Calanques of Marseille? Construction territorial forms of consultation and principles of legitimacy**

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**Abstract:** In order to combine many ecological and socio-economic stakes inherent in the integrated management of coastal areas, the city of Marseille and the “Marseille Provence Métropole” Urban Community put forward, in 2005, an inductive and reiterated management approach to the littoral, earthly and maritime space within the framework of a SCOT, or area plan,. This approach has been accompanied by a strong determination to obtain the agreement of the various actors concerning the plans. We propose an analysis of the consultation process used in this perspective, through a case study: the National Park of the Marseilles’s Deep Narrow Creeks. The Deep Narrow Creeks are a natural spot (5,000ha) with a recognized ecological and patrimonial value (top-ranked in 1975 and Natura 2000). A Public Interest Pool was created in 1999 to increase the protection of the site, and, in 2002, it was entrusted by the Environment Minister with a mission to prefigure the National Park of the Deep Narrow Creeks. These creeks have a particular status, because of their location in the periphery of a metropolitan area of more than one million inhabitants. On the one hand, the anthropogenic pressures inherent in tourist traffic and leisure activities are heavy (over 1.2 million visitors) and numerous (in the earthly and maritime spaces). On the other hand, the recognition of this patrimonial value and the attraction to the littoral setting has increased the value of land and property in the potentially vacant spaces in the Deep Narrow Creeks area and its urban periphery. The consultation process for the creation of the Deep Narrow Creeks National Park, relaunched in 2006, is to end in 2010. We suggest analysing the genesis, the ways, the advances and the obstacles in this process. What kind of objectives and controversies emerge? Which legitimacy principles are confronted and take precedence over all others in the decisions? What sort of relationships (and of democracy) are created between the different actors? How can the consultation issue be assessed? Does it guarantee the validity of the decision? Can this process be transposed? The Deep Narrow Creeks area, located in the Marseille periphery, calls for a second analysis connected with the setting-up of a relationship between the Marseille districts, their populations and the natural spaces. From the mid-nineteenth century to the 1970s, the Deep Narrow Creeks space was developed extensively and considered as a marginal urban space where unstable and underprivileged populations were relegated. In this perspective the famous “Baumettes’ prison was built in 1934 and so was the “Grand Arénas” camp in “La Cayolle” after the Second World War. The next episode in this urban story was the creation of some spaces called “sensitive urban area” in the 1980s: “La Cayolle” in “Les Hauts de Mazargues”. However since 1980s, the growing

value of the amenities relative to housing locations close to a littoral space with a high ecological and landscape value, has made this urban margin very attractive for a more privileged section of the population. The outlines of two districts have been drawn in the « Hauts de Mazargues »: one a marginalized and defaced urban space, the other, the value of which has increased with the Deep Narrow Creeks nearby. Two types of population with opposing social characteristics live there, born out of those territorial construction processes. The big social inequalities, concentrated in this once urban fringe, could be increased with the creation of the Deep Narrow Creeks National Park. This hypothesis induces us to ponder on how the ecological inequalities are being taken into consideration in the creation of the National Park. . At the same time, the bordering urban spaces, notably the “La Cayolle” district will be the object of an urban renovation Policy, under an “ANRU” convention. What are the relations between the creation process of a National Park and the renovation of urban spaces nearby? Could the potential littoral value inherent in the Deep Narrow Creeks be an opportunity for the change process in the district? The questions raised by this call for propositions are pertinent to analyse the relations between the consultation process and the ecological and social inequalities. Would the current or planned decision process reduce or, on the contrary, increase these inequalities? How is the population diversity taken into consideration in the consultation and decision processes? Which ways are used by the underprivileged populations or minority users (within the consultation process suggested by the GIP or outside it), who want to improve their relation with the natural space?