



WHAT'S NEW?

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Indonesian mother at a refuse-filled dam, Jakarta, 2013.
Photo : © AFP

The Environmental Equation

If an entire class is punished because one pupil has misbehaved, I find that unjust. It is all the more so because collective punishment does not stop that one from misbehaving again, even if it is taboo to denounce them.

And the environmental equation today makes you think of this sort of injustice. To admit the reality and urgency of the situation is to make a sort of admission. It would mean admitting to the people of the least developed nations that their future cannot hold the material prosperity they dream of and see on television. It would mean admitting to the least well off in the rich countries that efforts to ensure equality in material success are perhaps over. It would be to admit that the economic model of unlimited growth, which underpins the dreams of development for everyone, is perhaps reaching its limits.

It is not up to journalists to deliver that message. Rather it is the responsibility of those who now must come up with new models for society and convince people to adopt them. As for the journalists, they will have to stop using the "perhaps", replace approximations with precise facts, and cover possible solutions. Journalists can measure the weight of such admissions better than anyone because they know their public and what that public will or will not listen to, and because they know the politicians and what they can or cannot say.

Jean-Marie Etter, CEO
Fondation Hironnelle



Rural market abandoned after 10 months of rain in Haiti, April 2015. Photo : © EU/ECHO/H

Informing on the urgency of climate change

Over the last twenty years, climate change has become a reality, and human activities are now recognized as a cause. This opens a new field of information, in which we need to invest with awareness and determination.

Twenty years after the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, climate concerns have become urgent. Human beings are now almost certain that our actions have an impact on the climate. According to the fifth evaluation report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), published in 2014, the link between human activities and the rise in temperatures is "extremely probable". On average, temperatures in the world have risen by one degree since 1860, the surface water of oceans has risen by half a degree in the last 40 years, melting ice caps have raised the sea level by almost a metre in 100 years, droughts and cyclones are more frequent and more intense. Several million human lives are now at risk each year.

Meeting a year ago in Paris, 195 governments unanimously decided to limit global warming to "well below two degrees". They are meeting again from November 7 to 18, 2016, in Marrakech for

the COP22. Urgent action is needed because carbon pollution is implacable: even if we stopped all emissions of greenhouse gases now, the air and especially the oceans would continue to warm for the next 30 years. To do this, we need to provide information that is accurate and clear. The topic is enormous, relatively new and especially it is very technical: climatology, carbon offset mechanisms, environmental funding, including the effectiveness of money promised through new financial tools (e.g. Green Climate Fund), jargon such as "mitigation" (reforms to reduce greenhouse gas emissions) and "adaptation" (reforms to reduce the damage caused by climate change), etc. This new field of information, which is particularly subject to the influence of lobbies, needs to be approached by the media with unshakeable ethical rules and a continuous desire to improve.

Fondation Heinrich Böll: the Arab world in the run-up to COP22

The 9th edition (August 2016) of *Perspectives*, a review published by the Heinrich Böll Foundation (Berlin) with political analysis and commentary on the Middle East and North Africa, focuses on environmental activists and their interactions with governments in the run-up to the COP22 in Marrakech (7-18 November 2016).

Some salient facts emerge from the issue. The Arab world's contribution to global pollution (4.2% of greenhouse gas emissions, GHG) is less than its share of the global population (5.1%). But the region remains one of the worst polluters in terms of intensity of emissions (GHG/GDP). It also has the three countries whose environmental footprint per inhabitant is the highest in the world: Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

In Arab countries, which often have authoritarian governments and economies based for the last 100 years on oil, civil society movements are timidly attempting to trigger a change in the energy paradigm. They succeed when they are backed by regional or global popular support, especially in countries which do not have big deposits of fossil fuels. Examples are the Moroccan strategic plan to attain 50% renewable energy by 2025, and the guarantee included in Tunisia's new Constitution of a "healthy climate and the right to a healthy and balanced environment".

The full issue can be found online in German and English on the Heinrich Böll Foundation's website: <http://boell.de>.



By the Niger River in Niamey, after several areas of Niger's capital were flooded in September 2016. Photo : © AFP

"Training journalists as climate specialists"

Claude Cirille, Head of Media at Studio Kalangou, Fondation Hironnelle's project in Niger, talks about the environmental perceptions of people in the country and their needs for information on these issues.

The Sahel is one of the regions in the world most affected by climate change. Do people in Niger express a need for information about it?

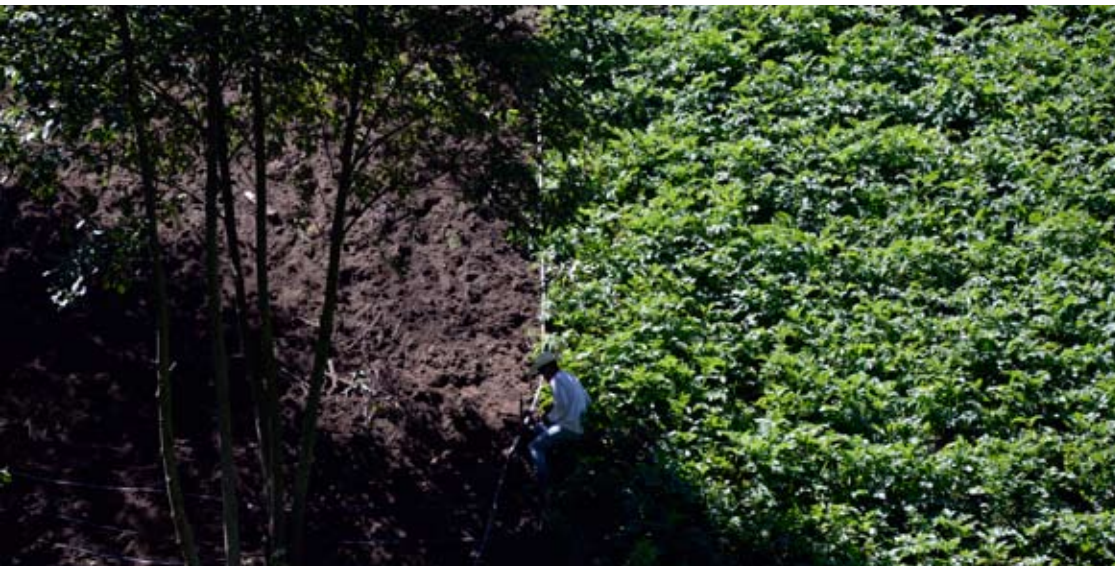
Claude Cirille: The citizens of Niger are faced with chronic environmental problems like the advancing of the Sahara desert in the north of the country, late and increased annual rains, which generate drought followed by floods from the overflow of the Niger River, and finally the increasing unpredictability of harvests. They are aware of the fact that these problems are linked to climate change, but they don't have much understanding on the precise objectives and technical issues of international climate negotiations. In fact they do not necessarily think in terms of "climate change". They express their worries in terms of more immediate, concrete things, such as: "Why do the droughts we are experiencing today seem so different from those of the past?" or "Why have I lost all my livestock that were carried away during the floods, and, more importantly, why wasn't I warned in advance?"

How does Studio Kalangou cover climate issues?

We cover them according to the news. On September 8, 2016, the day that Niger ratified the Paris accord that came out of the COP21, we dedicated an episode of our program "Forum" and several reports to the issue. A month before, on August 3, we also covered Niger's Independence celebrations, which are also a celebration of tree planting. For November's COP22 meeting in Marrakech, we are sending a special envoy to join the Fondation Hironnelle team (see p.3).

Do Studio Kalangou journalists all have the required skills to tackle the issues and meet the information needs of Niger's people on climate change?

Studio Kalangou's journalists have been trained in journalism. They should be able to adapt and report on all issues, provided they work hard enough. But it is true that climate change and the international talks around it, as well as public funding and the dependence on international donors are very technical issues that would no doubt justify that we train specialist journalists. Because if we can give people in Niger the most accurate information about it, that would help them to better understand, and thus to take more action themselves.



An indigenous farmer in Guatemala faced with the effects of climate change, 2016. Photo : © AFP

“Speaking accurately about important issues: climate, biodiversity and fairness”

Hervé Kempf has been informing and warning people about global damage to the environment for more than 20 years, first at *Le Monde* and then via the online daily *Reporterre* of which he is founder and editor. Interview.

Do you think the general public and political leaders, in France and across the world, are sufficiently aware of environmental problems?

Hervé Kempf : In France where I work, people are generally aware of the seriousness of environmental problems. We saw this last year when *Reporterre* published in the run-up to COP 21 a series of reports entitled “*Climat et les quartiers populaires*” (Climate and working class neighbourhoods): In the 20th arrondissement of Paris, in Seine-Saint-Denis, in rural communities of Aisne (in northern France), in the northern neighbourhoods of Marseille, people are in daily contact with noise, the proliferation of rubbish, air and soil pollution. On the other hand, the governing classes, who live in nice neighbourhoods, often fly by plane, are almost never in contact with these social and environmental difficulties. They do not have a physical closeness with these problems, only an intellectual approach, whilst their training – often in engineering, finance or law rather than natural sciences – makes them think they are secondary.

Do you think your work, your environmental journalism can have an impact on public opinion and on leaders?

I like to compare journalism with the work of a craftsman: it produces the same physical satisfaction as a well-finished artwork. I have often noticed that when I get this feeling from a report I have done, that report has an impact on the public and its information is spread in society. I therefore believe in the utility of being honest and following your own feelings. If journalism is honest, it will have impact on society.

Should journalism aim to mobilize public opinion and the political class on environmental issues?

A journalist’s aim should be above all to provide good information. That means speaking with accuracy, honesty and modesty about what is going on and what seems most important. Now, in the early 21st century, we are at a crucial point where humanity is reaching the limits of its ecosystem, leading to an ecological crisis that is unprecedented since *Homo sapiens* appeared some 100,000 years ago. So the most important issues for me today are the climate, biodiversity, food, traditional farming, desertification, the biosphere, ecology, living together, and finally global fairness because, in the infinite ecological crisis we are going through, we are interdependent.

Fondation Hironnelle at the COP22

The COP22, which takes place from November 7 to 18, 2016, in Marrakech (Morocco), is being announced as the “COP of action” following the historic agreement reached in Paris in December 2015. After a positive experience at the COP21, Fondation Hironnelle has decided to set up a radio production studio in the Innovation Area, at the heart of the event with civil society and business representatives.

The Fondation Hironnelle team will produce daily media productions consisting of multimedia content, reports, and interactive debates to shed light on the impact of climate change in Africa, on the potential for innovation to reduce greenhouse gases and on adaptation strategies to mitigate the damage caused by climate change.

The production team will be composed of five African journalists from media either created or supported by Fondation Hironnelle (Radio Ndeke Luka, Studio Tamani, Studio Kalangou, Studio Hironnelle, and the National Radio Télévision of Burkina Faso). Production will be broadcast through Fondation Hironnelle media (FM and websites) and the Hironnelle network of 190 FM community radios. It will also be available on a dedicated website and associated social media. The potential audience is more than 20 million people.

Myanmar: Improving Media Coverage of Parliamentary Work

A partnership with the Myanmar Parliament has led to a series of workshops aimed at improving media coverage of the legislature for citizens around the country.

After several years of preparation, Fondation Hirondelle's activities in Myanmar are finally underway. A partnership between the Myanmar *Hluttaw* (parliament) and Fondation Hirondelle has led to the organization of a series of participatory workshops and coaching, beginning in June 2016, for staff from the *Hluttaw's* press office and local journalists reporting from parliament for a variety of media outlets. The goal of these sessions is two-fold: to build the capacity of the media to provide accurate information on the legislative process, and to improve working relations between the parliament and accredited media.

Working first with the press office, we explored their role in Myanmar's bicameral

legislature, the legal framework underpinning access to information and best practices for facilitating the work of the media. We then brought press office staff and journalists together for journalism training and joint reporting activities and to address issues around access, communication, and the flow of information from parliament to the media and general public. Follow-up workshops are planned for the coming months.

These activities are part of a larger project with the Myanmar *Hluttaw*, which aims to improve the population's understanding of the political process through better reporting and access to information, enabling greater transparency and accountability for Myanmar's fledgling democracy.



Electoral campaign in Karen State, Myanmar, for the historic elections of November 2015 that brought Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy to victory. Photo: © Thierry Falise

Innovative media study on Studio Tamani

Researchers from the University of Zurich have carried out an innovative study on Studio Tamani's contribution to the peace process in Mali.

How do you measure the impact of a professional, independent news media on the resolution of a crisis? This is a central question for all those who work in media development. Thanks to funding from the PeaceNexus Foundation, Fondation Hirondelle launched an ambitious and innovative study on its Studio Tamani project in Mali.

The study is led by researchers from the Institute of Applied Media Studies at Zurich University and was carried out in the first half of 2016 in Mali. It combined comparative analysis of content (news bulletins and debate programmes), in-depth interviews

with groups of listeners and non-listeners in three localities, and in-depth interviews with opinion leaders, actors in the peace process and participants in Studio Tamani's "Big Debate" (*Le Grand Dialogue*) programme. The results indicate several effects of the programming: Studio Tamani provides more information on the conflict than other media, and its listeners feel better informed; listening to Studio Tamani provokes political interest amongst its audience, encourages discussions on the peace process, and promotes a preference for dialogue as a solution to conflict.

Jean-Marie Etter to retire but stay part of the family

Fondation Hirondelle has been built on the commitment of hundreds of courageous journalists, dozens of visionary people, support staff at all levels, and the support of numerous partners. It was born from the idea of three founders. François Gross and Philippe Dahinden have passed away. Jean-Marie Etter is now leaving the post of CEO that he has held for the last nine years. He has decided to retire on December 31, 2016. Leaving a house that one has built and passing the torch that one has carried for more than 20 years is certainly not easy. But leaving the house does not mean leaving the family.

The new top management and the Fondation Board wish to continue benefitting from Jean-Marie Etter's experience. To this end, he will be Senior Advisor, acting at the request of management or the Board on mandates or issues linked to editorial policy, conference participation and fundraising. In September, Fondation Hirondelle also set up an Editorial Committee composed of volunteer journalists and experts, who will support the operations and editorial management notably in monitoring output and developing training. Jean-Marie Etter will be a member of this Committee and will lead it in 2017.

Caroline Vuillemin,
new CEO of Fondation Hirondelle

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