



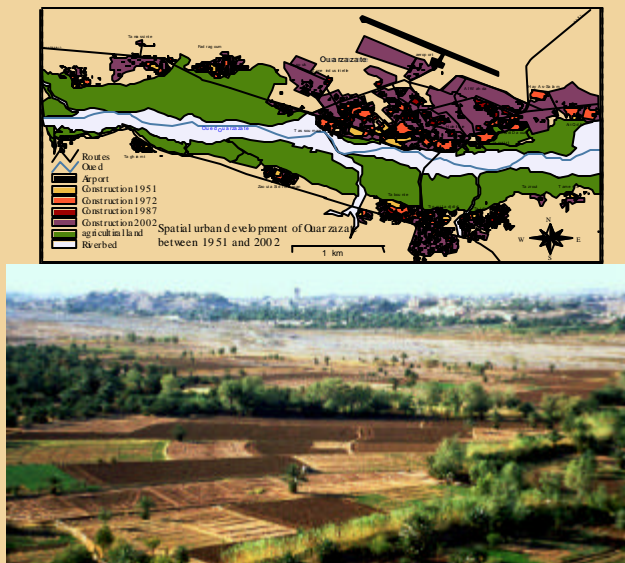
Water Distribution, Rights, and Conflicts

Urban and rural water users in Ouarzazate

In the region of Ouarzazate fundamental changes in water use and distribution have taken place in the last decades.

The growing competition between urban and rural water use is due to a remarkable growth of the urban population. The pronounced development of a touristal and administrative infrastructure leads to high water needs.

In addition, increasing water consumption was triggered by social changes influenced by immigrant workers. The number of houses connected to the public water supply has doubled in one decade. Water once considered a scarce natural resource now becomes a commercialised commodity which could be wasted and spilled.



Economic strategies and local knowledge in the Draa catchment

Anthropological research was extended towards the catchment-area of the Draa, north of Skoura. It includes investigations on highland economies, water use systems and socio-political relations.

Current research focuses on the impact of the regional administration on local political actors as well as on strategies to cope with unfavourable economic and environmental conditions.

Moreover, local knowledge systems are analysed in the vicinity of some sites of botanical research. These studies aim at comparing scientific and indigenous concepts of knowledge about natural resources.



Water distribution, rights and conflicts

Common perspectives

The aim of the B4 sub-project is to analyse water distribution and water use in the Draa-Valley and parts of the High Atlas region. Local land- and water rights have to be identified and related to the power-positions of various social groups involved. Social stratification along ethnic or economic lines is common in most of the communities. Water distribution often is organized according to these principles. Although local water distribution systems were still operative in many rural settlements, modern influences like labour migration or tourism have altered traditional patterns both in the urban and rural context.

The main objectives of B4 are:

- Dynamics of socio-economic change in water management and water rights among agricultural communities in the Draa-Valley and its catchment-area.
- Conflicts between local vs. governmental institutions and rural vs. urban user groups concerning water distribution.



Tiraf and Ait Unzâr nomads in Ktaoua

Tiraf is the village where Ait Unzâr nomads, a fraction of the Ait Atta Berber, for the first time established relations with a sedentary population.

Research in this area provides significant information about relations between both groups concerning resource management (especially water) and the interaction between modern and traditional political institutions.

Two tribal assemblies, representing the Draoua and Ait Unzâr participate in decision-making and in solving local conflicts alongside state institutions.

The analysis of domestic units shows the variability of strategies to cope with crises, and allows to forecast future adaptations of rural communities to environmental constraints.

Blida

The study in Blida focuses on the strategies adopted by the social and ethnic groups to get access to drinking and irrigation water.

In addition to hierarchical structures governing social life, the inhabitants of Blida rely on social networks within and between different groups to gain access to drinking water.

Analysis of a second important factor, i.e. labour migration, should provide information about the dynamics of economic change and its effects on the exploitation of water resources.

