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Pierre Fournie, Henri Dou

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Competitive Intelligence For Insular Territories

PIERRE FOURNIE

University of Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée-France, pierre.fournie@u-pem.fr

Henri Dou

CI World Wide, douhenri@yahoo.fr

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Competitive Intelligence For Insular Territories

Pierre Fournié

University Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée-Cité Descartes, France
President of Suffren International : <http://www.suffren-consulting.com>
pierre.fournie@u-pem.fr / suffren.international@gmail.com

Henri Dou

CI WoldwideThink Tank, Marseille France www.ciworldwide.org
douhenri@yahoo.fr

For centuries, the intrinsic and ubiquitous parameters of insular territories have governed social, economic and political life within the island and with outer territories. Besides some biological and physical determinism, there exists a psychological factor that conducts islanders to feel that they possess a rich and a unique identity (Gombaudo, 2007:593). Nowadays, islands are impacted by communication technologies and globalization, international law and politics. The opening to tourism, international trade and foreign capital, modifies the usual landmarks and often means that traditional activities and know-how are abandoned.

Historically located at the periphery, islands suddenly appear at the centre of multiple preoccupations, become places of conflict, are concerned by supranational decisions. Foreign bodies (EU-UN-UNCLOS) regulate but mostly challenge the insular ecosystem. Sensitive to pollution and climate change, islands strive to produce energy and water, to preserve the environment, to enhance living conditions and offer jobs.

This paper examines Competitive Intelligence, by offering an innovative, transversal and holistic framework to support island development. This may allow the strong and balanced evolution of a territory, insert it in the regional and national economy, boost the creation of jobs, identify areas of growth and provide added-valued (Dou *et al.*, 2019).

Key Words: island; insular territory; competitive intelligence, territorial development, social cohesion

Introduction

The concept of Competitive Intelligence (CI) developed in the United States in the nineteen eighties (Sassi *et al.*, 2015) and from this period to date, CI is still concerned with an economic vision of the market and by the necessity to overwhelm competitors and take the best possible position inside and outside the country. Even with the development of information technologies and the Internet, the basic principles remain the same. Outside the United States, the concept of Competitive Intelligence (generally called Intelligence Economique in French-speaking countries) has evolved ever since (Dou *et al.*, 2019). Included in the idea of CI are the concepts of national cohesion, territory development, cultural influence, and all lead to the concept of *global security*. Indeed, the current development of the world is disturbed by various threats, whether geopolitical,

economic, religious, climatic, or pandemic. It is therefore with such a perspective, that we intend, in the current work, to develop a Competitive Intelligence for insular territories. In this area, little work has been done (Parker, 2000) and it is only recently that Calof and Wright (2008) developed the dimension of inter-disciplinary aspects of this construct. In 2017, a specific qualification was designed for an island region: The Diploma issued by the University of Corsica for political staff and their support staff (Barboni *et al.*, 2019).

The impact of collapses, in the sense of the weather transition and its implication for the 'Intelligence Economique', for islands were analysed by Dou (Dou *et al.* 2019) and the impact of COVID-19 and its link with 'Intelligence Economique' was introduced by Vellayoudom and Coussi (2020) for La Reunion. The

case of Guadeloupe and its link with ‘Intelligence Economique’ was analysed by Girardot (Girardot *et al.* 2014).

de Backer pictures Islands as ... the ‘Eden of the World’ when describing the East Indies (de Backer, 1874:3). Those ‘tracts of land surrounded by water and smaller than a continent’ (Merriam-Webster Dictionary), have a strange effect on humans: ‘obsessed, excited or terrified by islands and their mysterious, haunting charm’ (Baldacchino, 2005:247). Islands remain a domain of investigation and enthusiasm for all scientists. Given so, ‘alternative thinking’ and ‘prospective vision’ are mandatory in order to value and protect the insular territory and its population; to define and implement customised and appropriate development plans.

Territorial institutions, local companies whether large, SME’s or craft; associations of various types shall be inserted and connected into a large network of know-how and innovation supported by local authorities. Based on daily vigilance and the mastering of the information cycle, the approach requires most of all the abandonment of old traditions of mistrust and secrecy and to go for transparency and data exchanges within the insular territory.

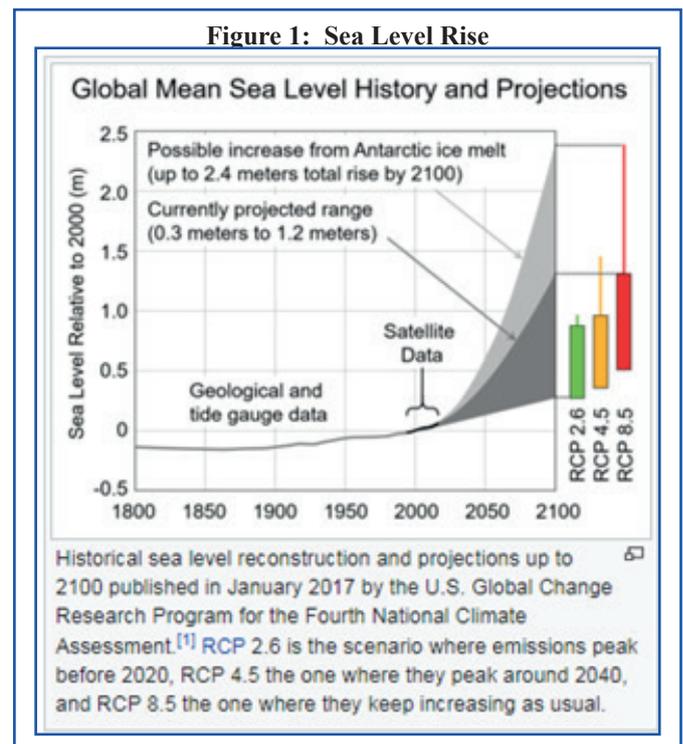
Competitive Intelligence shall then be understood at the same time as a strategic and operational approach to support ‘island development’, protect the environment, enhance social cohesion while also identifying and monitoring potential risks. Various studies have been undertaken about insular development, but almost none have been published about the link between insular society and Strategic (or Competitive) Intelligence. Today, classical studies about insular development face a new challenge related to weather change at first and secondly to the fact that inequalities between large cities and rurality is continually increasing. The role of Strategic Intelligence in insular development shall be presented in consideration of those interactions. Islands, by nature, depend on air or maritime transportation. Any modification on any insular system will have a major impact on development. Islands widely depend on sea conditions as well as on water facilities. Given so, resilience and predicament will be considered as two main points in this discussion.

Island Geographical Situation

Islands are limited in size and widely dependent on sea conditions. Both aspects will interact in such a way that the changes experienced may create a threat for the islanders. Let us explain further.

Sea level impact

In many islands in the World, the land elevation is very close from sea level. Based on the forecast, and due to climate change, the global sea level will rise about 1 meter or more by the end of the century (Figure 1). Therefore, some islands will not follow the classical (Lockhart *et al.*, 2002; Gurnell *et al.*, 2019; Mikus *et al.*, 2018) ways to locally create economic development. They shall instead develop new systems able, not only to resist the changes but also to attenuate their effects during the period of transition.



Water availability

Global climate change will have an impact on water availability. The precipitation regime destabilisation will, most probably, bring dryness or worse still, major fires. The development of several alternatives to gather and secure water during the periods of rain will become mandatory. For instance, in the report: *The Mediterranean and Water Scarcity* (2007), the examples of Cyprus

and some Greek Islands are persuasive. In Indonesia, the same situation will happen, and those hazards will occur in almost every place (Nunn & Kumar, 2018). Of course, the use of various technologies to obtain clean or drinkable water from seawater remains possible, but the cost of those technologies is far too high to be generalised. Such a situation will impact not only the inhabitants but also agriculture and tourism, two important resources for the islands. As pointed out by Nunn and Kumar (2018), climate change poses diverse, often fundamental, challenges to livelihoods of island people. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that these challenges must be better understood before effective and sustainable adaptation is possible. Understanding past livelihood impacts from climate change can help design and operationalise future interventions.

Fishing stock

Fishing is a key resource for many islands. But because of industrial fishing, the World's fish stock is threatened. Some species have almost disappeared. Overfishing will cause serious damage and the combination of overfishing with weather alteration may cause an irreversible and dramatic change (Jackson *et al.*, 2001; Fish stock, 2020).

Social Consideration of Islanders

Islanders, due to the specificity of their history, of their spatial context, of their language, of the various constraints they face (climatic, physical (wars, migrations) or recently legal and political) have acquired unique characters that make them different from the inhabitants of the mainland. Besides, landscapes and geography which have created specific identities, there is also the cement of an island's society. This implies the creation of networks of complicity, mutual aid and action so particular, that they are often misunderstood, especially when the island has not yet acquired a sufficient level of political independence¹. Interestingly, those characteristics have forged such a different imaginary and identity, that we must rely on both to achieve economic development, but also to create the necessary consensus. We will see in

¹ This does not mean total independence, but acquiring sufficient control over decisions (political, administrative, etc.) and implies the respect of local imaginary and creativity, without systematic opposition of the Central State upon which the island depends.

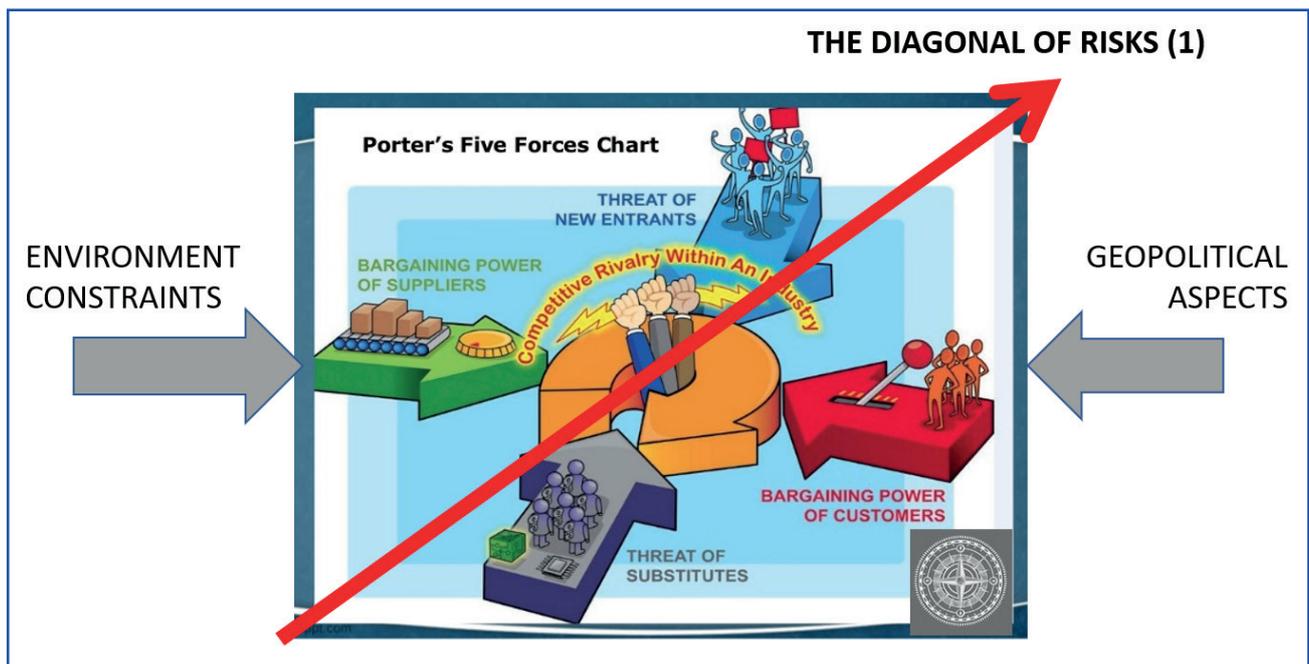
the following sections, that this imaginary will be widely used in Economic Intelligence to create the conditions allowing change and adaptation. Many examples, mostly from the Mediterranean islands, demonstrate how misunderstanding, local histories, networks, ways of life and local conditions lead to political conflicts and even radicalisation (Fabiani, 2018).

Strategic Intelligence

The concept of Competitive Intelligence - better known as Strategic Intelligence developed in the United States around 1990 (Strategic Competitive Intelligence, 2020). Countries have customised their approaches since then, and today, most researchers in the field consider Competitive Intelligence as an approach not only to overcome competitors but also to create wealth, employment and to participate in the social cohesion of the country, of the region, or of the territory (islands included). Dou *et al.*, (2019), underlined that Strategic Intelligence in the XXI first century should enlarge to encompass prospective, local development, influence and global security. Dou (2018), indicated that the development of the information function allows the modifying of the individual and the corporation thanks to the epigenetic. Modern Strategic Intelligence requires the development of a holistic view of all 'facts' positive or negative, which are able to impact the 'life' of a company or community. This is the reason why the use of Strategic Intelligence in an insular context will have to embrace very different aspects of the insular system: from the local existing economy, to potential resources, behaviour and way of life, people's expectations, facilities to communicate with the mainland (virtual, physical), etc.

Strategic Intelligence and 'classical ways of development'

In such a context, all the recommendations made to build up new industries or to develop local ones will have to be adopted: inventory of local resources, existing know-how, touristic facilities, etc. But, in the island context, light technologies must be privileged, for instance communication technology, 3D printing, consultancy and expertise, etc. In this framework, the island will have to build up a sphere of influence (Clerc & D'Avebi, 2016) to be able to disseminate a positive feeling outside the island. An influence such as this shall be helpful to

Figure 2: Two More Forces To Deal With In The Porter Diagram: Approaching A More And More Complex World

(1) Concept firstly used by Jakobiak F., Exemples commentés de Veille Technologique, Les Editions d'Organisation

Source: Khatri (2013) <http://www.slideshare.net/mayurkhatri5/porters-five-forces-26443199>, modified and completed by Pierre Fournié & Henri Dou for Suffren Consulting (2017)

sell, distribute and use the products developed locally. Such an approach applies to 'hard technology' but shall be extended in this case to culinary specialties, culture and tourism. In a book dealing with Global Technological Change, Zhouying (2018:261) pointed out that

Economy softening could be defined as a 'soft' phenomenon of the entire economy which arises when the added value created by 'soft' (or intangible) factors surpasses that created by 'hard' (or tangible) factors in economic activities.

This point of view fully applies in the island context. If we use some sort of Porter diagram (Prasad & Warriar, 2016), it will be necessary to add above the classical plan containing the 5 forces, another dimension, which will encompass climate change and its effects on geopolitics (Figure 2). Therefore, thinking of development will require to take into accounts other facts, threats, disruptions and changes that the island's people and the island's institution cannot control or change. Given so, those elements shall be acknowledged and included as fixed parameters in the context of development. This opens the way to the main question: how to build resilience in an insular context?

Strategic Intelligence and Resilience

Many studies (Meadows *et al.*, 1972; Orlov, 2011; Servigne, 2019) underlined that at the beginning of the 21st century, it is too late for sustainable development. In fact, because of the increasing impact of carbon dioxide, and a fierce run to economic growth, there will be a sort of global collapse (more or less close in time) which will impact the world as a whole (Meadows *et al.*, 2004). Islands will, because of their specificities, be among the most vulnerable territories. This implies that islands must consider as a priority - while at the same time ensuring their development - the analysis on how they will be able to develop their resilience. Because the changes that will be induced are inevitable, the term 'predicament' is perhaps better than the term resilience. The consequences are important and induce a new way to analyse the island context as underlined by ALTERS²:

The territory shows a dual nature, material and ideal. At the same time geographic, technical, social, economic, cultural and human, the territory is a complex evolving system which

² ALTERS is a 'Resilience Observatory' and an Internet platform dedicated to resilience, which is under development in France (<https://www.alters-association.com/>).

Photo 1 - West Papua - Environment, mining and tourism pressures (September 2017)



Courtesy Pierre Fournié

associates a set of actors, on the one hand, [with] the geographic space that these actors use, develop and manage.

Water shortage

One of the effects of climate change will be water rarefaction. Islands will be extremely impacted by this phenomenon. They must adjust their structures to manage water supply capacity during the dry periods (mini dams for instance). They must adapt their agriculture not only with technical systems (special pipes, spray, etc.) but also with varieties needing less irrigation. It will be necessary to spare water, not only in agriculture but also in ordinary life. Such a change in behaviour shall be achieved through education.

Coastal protection

In many parts of the world, coastal protection will become a major problem for islands. The problem is not restricted to sea level increase but includes nowadays storms and hurricanes, which in minutes can devastate almost completely most of the infrastructure and houses. Among various examples is the status of the Bahamas

islands after the passage of storm ‘Dorian’ as discussed in the following:

Just over a month after Hurricane Dorian slammed into the northern Bahamas, parts of the island nation are still in ruins, thousands of people remain displaced and rebuilding has only just begun (Beaubien, 2019).

Tourism

Tourism is still viewed as one of the main activities able to develop the economy in islands. This position remains dominant, and various congresses and scientific works follow that direction. But, in the future, tourism will have to cope not only with ‘sustainability’ but also with resilience. The question then will be how to develop ‘resilient tourism’? Overtourism degrades the environment. Moreover, in many cases, the cost / benefit (because of the necessary equipment) of this activity is not positive. For instance, many Pacific islands are in danger because of overtourism:

Unfortunately, those postcard landscapes and the unspoiled shores risk becoming just a memory: the phenomenon of mass tourism is giving a hard time to the fragile environments of

Photo 2- Mytileni - Lesvos - Greece - OTAN Naval forces preparing for migrants support - the pressure of geopolitics

Courtesy Pierre Fournié

these countries. The destruction of some parts of the territory to make room for resorts and the problems related to waste disposal are just a little part of the damage caused by tourism overcrowding (Ombellini, 2019).

It is obvious, that creating a form of resilient tourism is an area of research that should be explored.

Energy

Energy is necessary for any type of development. That is why the matter shall be carefully considered. Today, most of the energy in islands is produced with fuel. With the problems arising from high carbon dioxide concentration, it will be necessary to move to alternative energy sources. If the photovoltaic is widely developed today, the problem of energy storage is not yet solved. Experiments such as the *Mirte Corsica* (Simoncini *et al.*, 2018) program are interesting since it provides a good way to store daily energy via a hydrogen cell, to be reused at night.

Towards A New Model of Development for Insular Territories

The discussion above stresses that different types of constraints which must be considered when speaking of island development. If Strategic Intelligence can help to model the situation and to have a prospective vision of the development, it will be necessary, in a second step, for the people engaged in such a process, to initiate the building up of a new type of island society. If islands want to remain friendly for the inhabitants, it will be necessary to create a resilient base for society. The problem is how to begin and what to do?

A global risk approach

This point, in Strategic Intelligence, is known as ‘global security’. It implies that a careful analysis of all types of risks must be undertaken, not only for the present but also for the future. If this approach was difficult some years ago, today with the increase of drought and natural disasters, the opinion of people changes and makes it easier to integrate the reasoning of ‘global security’. Doing it this way is interesting: it interlaces the classical

development concepts and systems with the notions of risk, not only punctual risks but global ones as well. For instance, taking flood zones into account in construction programs, scarcely done in the past, is nowadays essential. This opens the way for brainstorming, scenarios, and visions which will take time. It shall be pointed out that these approaches may differ from political agendas as today most of the political policies consider short laps of time (the time between two electoral mandates in most instances). Taking into account longer periods is both a link with the historical past but also an opening towards possible futures.

Scenario and prospective

In the past, many prospective studies were only the extrapolation of the past but, today, with the development of innovation and its interaction with policies of global security, the vision of people will expand, and alternative schemes will develop. Unfortunate examples such as drought, hurricanes, floods, etc. widely related in the media, contribute to change the mental model of people and consequently (we hope) to change the mental model of the decision-makers. This helps to develop new visions. For instance, the ‘scenarios Energie-Climat’ (2019) introduces various scenarios according to the

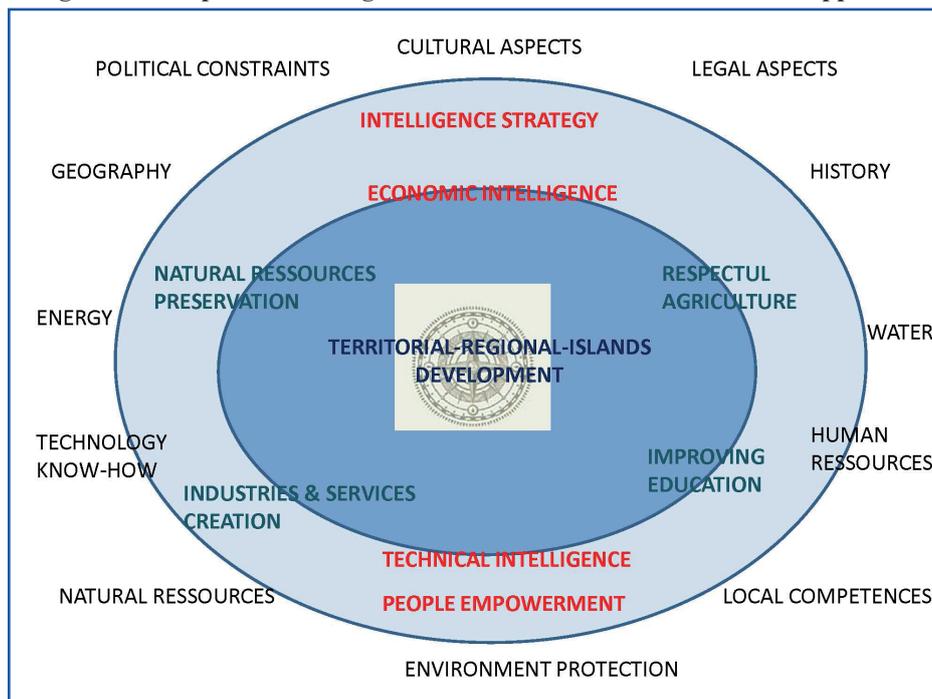
recommendations of the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial risk Disclosure (TCFD). One of the main recommendations of the Working Group focuses on the resilience of the strategy of an organization according to different scenarios related to climate, including a scenario 2°C or less

Other strategies such as agriculture adaptation (Paradis *et al.*, 2016), food systems (Bell *et al.*, 2016), sustainable energy (Child *et al.*, 2017) etc. are possible.

Conclusion

Strategic Intelligence as a mean to facilitate economic planning and development on islands is important since it provides an efficient way to understand and take into accounts all aspects of development. Strategic Intelligence offers a holistic vision (Figure 3) that integrates the new parameters related to global changes. Strategic Intelligence may also be used as a catalyst to create among stakeholders a positive dynamic (Dou & Manullang, 2004). This view provides a way to build up more realistic scenarios of sustainable growth for the mid and long term. It also contributes to creating comprehensive models which can be adapted according to the situation (Fournié & Dou, 2018). By this holistic dimension, strategic intelligence also integrates the

Figure 3: Competitive Intelligence for Insular Territories: a holistic approach



Pierre Fournié - Suffren Consulting (2017)

social dimensions of the islands and can be considered as a means of mediation between local and national policy (if the islands are not a Nation).

It is necessary to integrate scientific results indicating profound changes in weather, agriculture, drought, etc. into the 'old' framework of development, also encompassing the concept of global security as one of the keys of Strategic Intelligence. The recent development of the COVID-19 pandemic supports this point of view. In fact, in the 'old' framework even if people were developing prospective issues, they were limited in doing so because of their education, culture and mind archetypes which did not enable them to think the unthinkable! Nevertheless, this is what happened. This pleads for a wider open-mindedness and the integration in the groups of analysts, people coming from the most diverse horizons. In a world where stresses of all kinds can be exerted, unexpectedly, the integration of the concept of predicament becomes a necessity. It will not be possible to deal with all problems, but learning to resist better becomes a necessity. In this context, inter-disciplinarity should be the rule. This is difficult because of the structure of most disciplines in research (Brown *et al.*, 2015). Nevertheless, islands, because they have specific problems and a population widely concerned by their development, should be a good place to experience these changes.

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