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ADAPTIVE GOVERNANCE, SPACE RESOURCES AND MOON VILLAGE

Abstract

Over recent years, the return to the Moon has once again become one of the main topics of public debates in a context featuring now the presence of old and new actors. Indeed, both national space agencies and private companies have shown interest in establishing their presence on the lunar soil. Beyond the return to the natural satellite, which is only the first step of a much longer path of the solar system human exploration, another important incentive has given further impulse to the space exploration: the possibility to use space resources obtained from asteroids and other celestial bodies of the solar system. Nevertheless, along with the need to consider the commercial implications of the utilisation of space resources, the governance of these assets must also be addressed for the future. In order to do so, we will use the theoretical lens of adaptive governance. First, we will analyse the main features of the adaptive governance concept in its attempt to manage uncertainty and complexity in social-ecological systems (SESs). Second, we will apply it to space resources and to the idea of the Moon Village. Finally, by following a comparative approach, we will evaluate if the principle may represent an opportunity to propose a different approach for the governance of space resources.