

SYNTHESIS OF THE 2013-2014 REPORT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN PARIS

This fourth report on sustainable development takes stock of the actions conducted in 2013, the trends for 2014 and the 2015 prospects for the initiatives taken by the City of Paris on its territory and in its own services. In particular, it addresses the main priorities of the new municipal team: adaptation to climate change, reduction of pollutions and solidarity towards vulnerable populations. It spotlights the players involved, the opportunities for innovation and the cooperation with other local authorities in the context of the construction of the Metropolis.



FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE AND ADAPTING THE CITY



Cities have a fundamental part to play in the fight against climate change. The City of Paris spearheads this movement with the Climate Plan adopted by the Paris Council in 2007 and updated in 2012. Urban development projects cover 10% of the territory. They are laboratories to fight climate change and enhance biodiversity. For instance, on the Pajol Mixed Development Zone, the “Halle”, delivered in 2013, is a positive energy building fitted out with the largest urban photovoltaic installation in France (3,500 m²). The Paris municipality has also opted for the recovery of the heat from wastewater and for geothermal energy.

In public spaces, the modernization of public lighting (first area of electricity consumption of the Paris administration) has permitted to save 18% energy between 2004 and 2014: the equivalent of the annual consumption of a city of 300,000 people.



Paris in 2020 – © Yannick Gourvil et Cécile Leroux, collectif « Et Alors? », Mairie de Paris, DEVE, AEU

Improving energy efficiency in Paris buildings is a major energy stake (33% of total consumption) as well as an important economic and social issue. The City of Paris is playing a critical role in this respect through the creation of new social housing buildings and renovation operations. Thus 21,000 new social housing units were funded since 2008. The energy efficiency objectives set by the municipality for social housing landlords are taken into account in these projects. The Housing notebook, published in 2013, specifies 46 concrete measures that must be implemented in social housing and private buildings.

Paris carried out the retrofitting of 100 municipal schools. The aim of 30% reduction of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions has been achieved.



Official signing of the Paris Climate Action Charter – © Mairie de Paris

The tertiary sector is also encouraged to participate through the Paris Climate Action Charter signed by 12 big French companies between 2013 and 2014 by which they pledge to reduce their consumption of energy and their greenhouse gases emissions. Besides, in the tertiary sector notebook that will be drafted in 2015, the growing number of signatories of the Charter will be taken into account and a support will be offered to store owners and craftsmen to improve their energy efficiency.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF AIR QUALITY

Air quality remains a problem in the Ile-de-France region, especially in the vicinity of major car traffic and lorry routes. In order to reduce chronic pollution, since 2001 the City of Paris has been implementing a pack of measures aimed at expanding the offer of public transport and at developing mobility patterns that are more respectful of the quality of air and the climate. Since January 2014, the reduction of the speed limit on the ring road from 80 to 70 km/h is also part of this approach. More than 50 zones in which speed is limited to 20 or 30 km/h have been created or broadened during the year 2013. People are also encouraged to walk thanks to new developments on the river banks and on Republic Square. Among the steps in favor of biking, the creation of new bike lanes is on the agenda. In 2014, Velib' has beaten several records in terms of number of users. The number of Autolib stations is also expected to reach nearly 1,000 by the end of 2014. The single zone of the Navigo Pass during weekends and school holidays is aimed at boosting the use of public transport.

In order to adapt the transportation of goods to new urban, economic, and environmental requirements, 80 partners from the sector signed the new Charter on Sustainable Urban Logistics in September 2013. Municipal services are trying hard to reduce the impact of waste collection and street cleaning activities on air pollution and noise. The pneumatic collection of household refuse is being installed in the Clichy-Batignolles eco-neighbourhood: five buildings will be connected to this new vacuum collection network by the end of 2014.



Waterways transport – © François Grunberg

ENHANCING NATURE IN PARIS: GREEN AND BLUE CORRIDORS

Nature in cities contributes to improve the quality of life of citizens and mitigate the effects of urbanization and climate change. The new municipal team wants the Paris Biodiversity Plan adopted in November 2011 to become a structuring element of its action. This will include more vegetation in public spaces, the creation of new green areas and the greening of roofs and façades. An overall reflection has been launched on the benefits provided by nature in a dense urban environment, especially concerning the thermo regulator role of green spaces and wetlands.



One of the city's cemeteries – © Mairie de Paris, DEVE

Strengthening ecological continuity facilitates the movement of animal and vegetal species that is absolutely necessary for their adaptation and survival. This blue and green grid must connect natural spaces on the urban territory and on the scale of the region.

The diagnosis of the Paris territory will be based on tools created in 2013: typology of Paris habitats, list of priority habitats, of target species... The diagnosis of biodiversity in the Seine River and on its riverbanks published in early 2014 has been made in cooperation with the Paris Port Authority and the French Waterways Authority.

The development of high quality green roofs and walls on public and private buildings provided for in the Biodiversity Plan will be sped up. A 3 year experimentation has permitted to better define the methods that can be used to set them up. Besides, the Parisians have been invited in 2014 to actively participate in the greening of their city and to make suggestions for the creation of green walls and roofs in their neighborhoods.

In 2013, a call for projects on the production of fruits and vegetables in Paris has been launched to test innovative methods of urban agriculture. The number and diversity of projects proposed have evidenced the potential of the city in this field. The success of community gardens also reflects the need of the Parisians to meet their neighbors and establish direct links with the production of fresh and diversified food products.

In 2013, the national Ecojardin label (created in 2012) was awarded to 38 Paris gardens. It rewards the ecological management of a green area: no chemical treatments, sparing use of water, monitoring of biodiversity etc. The objective is to obtain this label for almost all green spaces by the end of 2015. On the initiative of the municipality, managers of private green spaces have mobilized in 2013 and 2014 to generalize these management methods that are respectful of the environment. Alternatives to chemical weeding and mowing are being tested in cemeteries and in horticultural activities. Eco pastures, for instance, have been tested since 2013 on the Archives plot (19th district) and in Vincennes wood.



Vegetable garden on a rooftop – © Mairie de Paris, Jacques-Olivier Bled

The City would like to promote an ecological, comprehensive and solidarity-based management of water. A better control of water consumption is encouraged in housing units and in administrative buildings thanks to the dissemination of educational and good practice tools. New principles in the field of rainwater management have been approved by the Paris Council in 2012: rainwater management per plot, limitation of soil sealing, installation of systems that permit to reduce runoff and pollution.



CONTRIBUTING TO THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF ALL CITIZENS



The Paris Solidarity Fund in favor of housing includes several types of aids targeted to households in difficulty so that they might be able to stay in their apartment. The conditions in which families are entitled to an accommodation under social assistance schemes have been improved.



Workshops for school children – © Mairie de Paris

The city of tomorrow is on the making at school: children are invited to participate in awareness activities and workshops on the environment, the protection of the planet and citizenship (identification of wild plants, Eco gestures, making of objects with recycled materials...).

The city must be accessible to the greatest number of people. The plan aimed at improving accessibility to streets and public spaces in Paris has permitted to make 97% of pedestrian crossings accessible to wheelchair users at the end of 2013. In order to clear more comfortable paths, the removal of hurdles from the public space is under way and new fixtures improve accessibility to buildings open to the public for people with all types of disabilities.

Concerning environmental noise, the fight against traffic noise is primarily targeted to “actions at the source” : low noise surfacing, improvement of the rolling stock, lower speed, in keeping with the mobilization in favor of sustainable mobility. The improvement of the habitat provided for by the Climate Energy Plan also implies a better insulation of housings affected by traffic noise.

In order to reduce the exposure of the Parisians to electromagnetic waves, the new charter on mobile telephony signed in December 2012 with the four operators sets maximal levels of exposure that are much stricter than the national limits (the strictest in France).

Monitoring the quality of the living environment in day care centers and schools is a priority; measurement campaigns have been made to assess the quality of indoor air and check the absence of soil pollution. By means of the application “Dans Ma Rue” (“In my street”) launched in 2013, users can report on problems they have noticed in public spaces.

The City also pays particular attention to health and safety at work, vocational training, the professional integration of disabled people and the promotion of gender equality.



STRENGTHENING SOCIAL COHESION AND SOLIDARITY BETWEEN TERRITORIES AND GENERATIONS



In the fight against major exclusion, the possibility of having access to a single social advisor, a stabilized accommodation, a health follow-up and a system of economic integration has proved its efficiency. A Parisian Pact against major exclusion, that brings together all the players involved, is going to be available by the end of 2014. A wide range of measures targeted for children and families in order to prevent marginalization and facilitate integration and social promotion are implemented with the support of 35 social centers.

According to the departmental Scheme for the autonomy and access to rights for the Parisians in a situation of disability, the integration of disabled people must be part of every action undertaken by the City. Territorial social coordinators contribute to make social action more accessible and more visible. The City provides a strong support to organizations that foster integration through economic activity and permit unemployed people who are facing social and professional difficulties to obtain work contracts.



Community gardens – © Mairie de Paris

In 2013, the program of community gardens celebrated its tenth anniversary. It includes 96 community gardens, 12 of which were created in 2013. This system encourages social mix, solidarity and intergenerational relationships, as well as the greening of the city. Some of these gardens are solidarity-minded: the Harold garden that opened in 2013 invites people in a situation of social and professional exclusion to break out of their isolation by participating in ecological and community gardening activities.

The policy conducted by Paris in favor of employment and professional integration comes along with specific measures for people in difficulty. The Social Cohesion Urban Contract promotes the employment of the most vulnerable citizens, supports innovative projects run by associations, helps improving the living environment, fosters academic success and supports neighbourhood associations that contribute to prevent risk behaviors.



FOSTERING RESPONSIBLE MODES OF PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION AND SHIFTING TOWARDS CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Since 2010, the City of Paris has been implementing a program of actions aimed at developing sustainable food in its collective restaurants. In 2013, 43.5% of the food served in day care centers came from sustainable production (organic, Marine stewardship, red label). This rate reaches 24.3% for municipal catering as a whole. Prior to production, Eau de Paris (the water supply agency) encourages the development of organic agriculture in the catchment areas that supply Paris with drinking water.

The City is actively involved in making the public aware of the necessity to reduce, reuse and recycle waste. Gestures aimed at preventing waste are being tested at the work place. Original participatory actions have been initiated in 2013 on the occasion of the signing of the national Pact against food waste. Lastly, the City of Paris is supporting the activity of seven recycling centers where abandoned objects are collected, repaired and recycled.



Mobile waste sorting equipment – © Mairie de Paris