

## **Alliance des collectivités françaises pour la qualité de l'air**

### ***Alliance of French Local Authorities for Air Quality***

#### **A National Network for Living in Breathable Local Authorities**

##### **1. Who are we?**

The Alliance of French Local Authorities for Air Quality, a network of elected officials launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2017, was set up as an association in September 2018 in order to bring together local authorities (communes, intercommunal bodies, etc.), which are faced with the challenge of air quality. With regard to our commitment to achieve "breathable cities and conurbations within 5 years", and considering the awareness raised by citizens' initiatives in this field, the threat of European litigation procedures or the desire to share experiences on the subject, we are open to all local authorities.

**This Alliance aims at exchanging concrete experiences, sharing best practices, dealing with difficulties, and making the voice of local authorities heard.**

This approach lies at the convergence of different issues:

- The challenge of embarking on a new stage in mobility;
- The urban challenge in the way we build and shape the city;
- The challenge of setting up a coalition of participants, residents, industrialists, farmers, etc. - to regain air quality;
- The challenge of citizenship in the capacity to build territorial dynamics based on the right actions to adopt.

This demonstrates a shared desire to strengthen our local policies and to make air quality for all our fellow citizens a requirement for local authorities.

##### **2. Air quality, a major challenge for our local authorities**

Article 1 of the Law on Air and the Rational Use of Energy (December 30, 1996) recognises the right of everyone to breathe air that does not harm their health. This is not the case everywhere in our country. Despite numerous initiatives taken by local authorities, France, like other European countries, is still under the threat of European litigation for failure to comply with obligations concerning ambient air quality.

Some forty conurbations (cities, metropolises, inter-municipalities) are part of the network.

Each of them puts forward a series of concrete measures, responding to the specific situations of their territories: road traffic issues, urban planning, heating, emanations linked to agriculture which are not articulated in the same way according to their history, their geographical situations, the importance of the conurbation, etc. However, regardless of the nature of the contexts, the issues are identical and there is a real sense of urgency.

### **The reasons for an alliance of local authorities**

The stakes of air pollution are now known.

They are health-related: it is estimated that 67,000<sup>1</sup> people die each year in France from breathing polluted air, and life expectancy is shortened by 2 years.

They are economic: the report of the inquiry commission of the Senate on the economic and financial cost of air pollution, published in July 2015, estimates the cost of air pollution at more than 100 billion euros per year, at the national level.

They are also social: there is a significant difference in vulnerability to air pollution among the population, the most vulnerable being young children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people suffering from chronic diseases.

Finally, they are societal, with citizens carrying out numerous initiatives to defend their right to breathe good-quality air.

**Although it is a global issue, our public policies can have an impact. Today, the air quality challenge must be taken on at a local level.**

### **The diversity of the actors involved**

The ATMO network monitors air quality throughout the territory. It is developing a high level of expertise, fuelled by its forecasting models, its targeted studies, and the support it offers during the development of new initiatives. Considering its independent expertise, guaranteed by the plurality of actors who contribute to its financing, it is an indispensable and valuable aid for local authorities.

ADEME is heavily involved in supporting various funding opportunities and offering its expertise to local authorities.

A plethora of initiatives can be observed in the territories, at a local level. Associations are involved in this field alongside professionals and local residents. Working in schools, neighbourhoods, sociocultural centers, etc., they raise awareness, provide information, mobilise citizens and support public debate.

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<sup>1</sup> Study published in the *European Heart Journal*

Economic players, chambers of agriculture, chambers of commerce and industry, etc. are involved in supporting changes in practices and technological modifications. Academics and start-ups advance knowledge or offer new technologies for experimentation.

### 3. Why an Alliance?

#### **The creation of the Alliance**

In order to demonstrate its long-standing commitment to restoring air quality in its territory, the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg has organised two conferences in 2015 and 2016 on the subject. The first conference provided an initial diagnosis of the current air quality situation in the "Upper Rhine air basin", with several French, German and Swiss experts.

The second colloquium at the Council of Europe was an opportunity for the French conurbations that won the call for projects "Breathable cities in 5 years", to gather in order to have exchanges and share expertise at national and European levels to rapidly implement effective solutions.

As a result, the Alliance of French Local Authorities for Air Quality, initiated by Strasbourg, was set up at the end of the conference. The first meeting, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2017, brought together around ten local authorities.

#### **Why become involved?**

##### **➤ An active network for the exchange of experiences**

The Alliance is dedicated primarily to interested communities. It facilitates the dissemination of knowledge and the sharing of experiences in order to launch new initiatives and re-examine our practices.

##### **➤ An operational tool**

The Alliance aims at implementing solutions through;

- Capitalising initiatives and their transferability;
- Searching for solutions applied in countries other than our own;
- Seeking support from French or European public authorities; - Mobilising expertise and innovation developed by multiple actors.

##### **➤ A network to make air quality a component of public policies**

Reclaiming air quality has an impact on urban planning, housing, mobility, energy and agricultural policies, etc. It is intended to guide the choices made by local authorities. The Alliance intends to make its voice heard so that air quality issues are integrated into the various forms of projects. It intends to favour a committed approach to social and environmental issues.

## ➤ **An open approach**

The Alliance aims to be open, while maintaining an operational perimeter. Local authorities committed to the conquest of air quality, whether or not they are involved in calls for projects, are welcome. The same applies to local authorities threatened by European litigation.

The approach is also open to European local authorities other than French ones, which have often developed innovative experiences over the last few years.

Exchanges will be woven with other institutional actors as well as with the associative network.

### **In September 2018, the Alliance acquired a legal status.**

The presidency of the association (to be renewed regularly) is ensured by Françoise Schaezel. As both Vice-President of the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg, and public health doctor, she is the spokeswoman of the association.

## **Join the Alliance of French Local Authorities for Air Quality**

### **Cities and metropolises participating in the network**

EUROMETROPOLIS OF STRASBOURG, EUROPEAN METROPOLIS OF LILLE, BORDEAUX METROPOLIS, URBAN COMMUNITY OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY, CHAMPLAN, RENNES METROPOLE, VILLEURBANNE, CLERMONT AUVERGNE METROPOLIS, METZ METROPOLIS, URBAN COMMUNITY FAUCIGNY GLIÈRES - BONNEVILLE, DIJON METROPOLIS, GRAND LYON, GRENOBLE ALPES METROPOLIS, DIJON METROPOLIS, PARIS, LILLE, STRASBOURG, MONTPELLIER MEDITERRANEAN METROPOLIS, TOULOUSE METROPOLIS, URBAN COMMUNITY OF DUNKERQUE, URBAN COMMUNITY OF ARRAS, METROPOLIS ROUEN NORMANDY, URBAN COMMUNITY OF CANNES PAYS DE LÉRINS, URBAN COMMUNITY OF GRAND AVIGNON, EPERNAY, URBAN COMMUNITY OF HAVRAISE, URBAN COMMUNITY OF ANNEMASSE, SAINT- ETIENNE METROPOLIS...

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