

Good practice summary

Charter All united for more biodiversity

Loss of biodiversity, climate change, urban spread... Nowadays, there is no lack of environmental challenges. And taking them in account is not becoming optional, as they impact increasingly our daily life. To face these challenges, all the stakeholders must work together to offer a complete solution.

First, it is worth remembering that the Eurometropolis has many important natural resources: rare are the cities with classified natural reserves (Rorschollen island and Forest of Neuhoef-Illkirch) or in the way to be classified (Forest of the Robertsau). This natural patrimony is completed with the presence of protected animal species, as the green toad or the European hamster.

In the first place, the commitment of the local administration is needed. That's why the city and the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg stopped the use of pesticides in 2008 and started the differentiated management of green spaces in the beginning of 90's. It permitted to change the perception of the plants in the city: they became part of it, and no more enemies. The municipalities searched for new techniques of green spaces management. For example, the municipality of Fegersheim sowed some flowery meadows to help pollination, coupled with hives and activities with schools for the honey harvest. A teaching guide about pollinators permitted to value the children's work (*See Support package -GpSummary1*).

The associations and the citizens also contributed, with spontaneous projects (for example, the association "Envie de quartier" who started gardening at the bottom of the trees – *see Support package -Gp Summary2,3*).

Once the public authorities, citizens and associations were all involved or had the chance to do so, the Eurometropolis of Strasbourg decided to extend the sustainable management and urban planning by involving the professional stakeholders as well. Businesses, organisations, sponsors, administrators and developers as well as the communes within the Eurometropolis were invited to sign a charter named "All united for more biodiversity".

The principle? Any green space could be favorable to biodiversity: gardens, terraces, parks, gardens co-properties and public institutions, business forums, around warehouses...

The goal? To enhance, strengthen and preserve biodiversity. Each square meter managed ecologically becomes a structural element of the global ecological network (*See Support package – GpSummary4*).

How is it working? On the charter, 13 actions are proposed, classified in 4 categories: Preserving the environment, Saving energy and resources, Planting for biodiversity and Protecting and developing the ecosystem. Among them, the signatories have to choose 6 actions that could be abandonment of pesticides' use, reduction of watering or light pollution, creation of a pond or plantation of natural hedges. The signatories are also committed to regularly attend information sessions which are set up to exchange on various themes.

In return, the Eurometropolis undertakes to highlight the partnership and good management, to promote the charter to extend the community and to organise information sessions to extend the

knowledges. It also commits to supply communication tools to provide information for users of green spaces (bee guide, natural gardening guide, etc.) as well as to create a green network of the land established by each ecologically-managed space (*see the Support package -GpSummary5*).

Each year, new signatories are joining the project. Today they are 75 taking part in this approach. The Eurometropolis of Strasbourg follow them, train, regularly conduct surveys to identify weaknesses/difficulties... and evaluate. And tomorrow we will be more likely to develop and sustainably manage the territory.

It seemed important to share this practice with European cities, because this project could work beyond the frontiers and if many cities applied it, there would be a possibility for a real, rich network of knowledges and green spaces.