

The Greater Dunkirk Urban District Council Sustainable Development



*An example
of an innovative
industrial
area*



Located on the edge of the North Sea, near the French-Belgian border, the Greater Dunkirk Urban District Council (CUD), chaired since 1995 by Michel Delebarre, former Minister of State, groups together 18 municipal areas and a total population of 210,000.

The Greater Dunkirk district is an industrial and seaport conurbation, marked by the establishment of an internationally-ranking iron and steel centre in the 1960s. In the late 1980s, it went through a major economic crisis that caused a sharp increase in unemployment, complete weakening of the economic fabric, and profound repercussions in social and urban life.

Obligated to think of a different future, the area chose to maintain its industrial character, but with new rules, more harmonious for the people and their environment.

Under the sign of innovation

In 1996, the Greater Dunkirk Urban District Council (CUD) signed the Aalborg Charter of European Sustainable Cities and received the 1st European Sustainable Cities Prize in Lisbon in 1996, rewarding its long-term commitment.

The CUD was the first voluntary joint urban district council in France (created in 1969), and was also the first to put in place waste separation at source on a large scale (1989), to set up an air quality monitoring system (1976), to have the most powerful wind power station "of its time" (1996), to establish an industrial environment master plan including environmental requirements negotiated with companies (1993), to create a secretariat for the prevention of industrial pollution (1990), to obtain double ISO 9002 and 14001 certification for the Triselec waste sorting centre (2000), etc.

Many other significant measures have been taken. They concern urban renewal (implemented since 1977), participative planning (preparing development plans with the local population), international cooperation (with Palestine, Cuba, Senegal, China, etc.), nature conservation (dunelands), High Environmental Quality public housing, etc.



Today, ... a comprehensive strategy of sustainable development

Today, Sustainable Development is the common thread in all framework papers : the 2000-2015 Urban District Plan and the 2000-2006 Urban District Development Agreement, the District's local Agenda 21, and the wide range of topics addressed by schemes such as the Urban Travel Plan, the District Education Agreement, the District Health Programme, etc. As a result, sustainable development is applied in all public policies (health, transport, education, culture, water, energy, waste, development economic, town planning, etc.) and to all the area's players : public authorities, companies, institutions, community associations.



More than just a declaration, contractualisation obliges the partners involved in these programmes to honour their commitments. The 4 institutional partners (State, Regional Council, Département Council, CUD) and the area's players define precise objectives and financial commitments for the years 2000-2006.

To facilitate the transition to this comprehensive strategy, a participative method for assessing projects and policies with respect to sustainable development was created. Intended for all the area's project promoters, it provides concrete, effective and simple means and resources. Under the impetus of a process of continual progress, local players apply these means to existing and new projects and policies. The method is used for re-examining the policy or project, to identify new possible directions, or to provide a complete vision of the objectives and the measures to be taken.

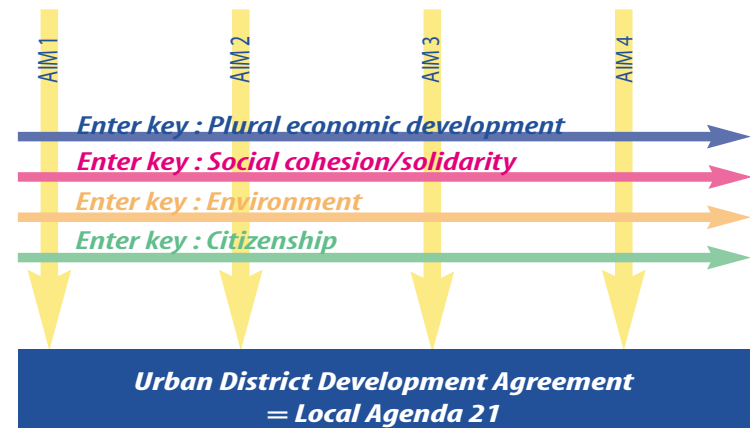
Lastly, the area's sustainable development indicators are being devised by partners. They will highlight the concrete advances of sustainable development in the people's everyday life.

The four aims of the Plan and the Agreement :

- Aim 1 : An enterprising Urban District that diversifies activities, encourages economic initiatives, and develops jobs.*
- Aim 2 : An Urban District built around a dynamic of urban renewal and urban quality.*
- Aim 3 : An Urban District where it is pleasant to live, facilitating the individual and collective fulfilment of its people.*
- Aim 4 : An Urban District in cohesion with its people and linked in a network with surrounding areas.*

A descriptive datasheet is provided for each strategic aim, presenting the objectives, the results to be achieved and the result indicators.

2000-2015 Sustainable development Urban District Plan 2000-2006 Action Programme





The **Greater Dunkirk Urban District Council**, setting an **exemple** for all

With its 1,200 employees, the Greater Dunkirk Urban District Council (CUD) is one of the area's largest employers. Since three years ago, believing that public services must be exemplary, it has applied sustainable development measures within its own administration.

Agenda 21 Criteria **for public procurement contracting**

Support for economic activities that respect people and the environment is possible by integrating environmental and social criteria into public procurement contracts. To this end, the CUD purchases energy-efficient, recyclable or ecological products (maintenance products, paper, paint, etc. certified by an ecolabel). A certificate of compliance with international conventions concerning Human Rights at Work is included in all contracts. Also, certain products (coffee, tea) are Fair Trade products (with the Max Havelaar label) that guarantee a decent income for small producers.

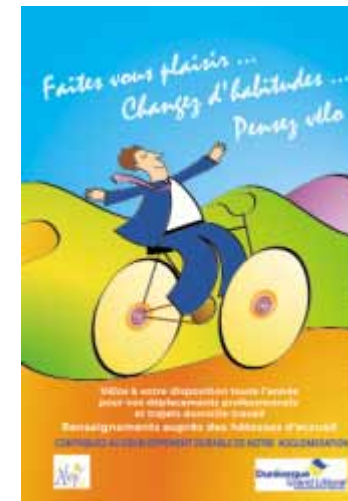
An active member of the French network of public authorities for Fair Trade purchasing (in accordance with Human Rights), the CUD takes part in the development of strategies and practical resources for public purchasers. In the mid term, this consists in motivating companies to perform corporate audits, and to apply for ISO 14001 certification, etc.

Encourage socially **responsible behaviour**

With ten years experience in waste management, the CUD had a duty to put in place separation at source of its office and garage wastes. Due to training of administrative and cleaning staff, the quality of sorting is higher than 90%. Double compartments waste bins are used to separate recyclable waste and non-recyclable waste. There are also special waste collections of batteries, cartridges, neon lamps, computer equipment and household electrical appliances.

In general, in-depth research is performed for each product, to find the most satisfactory solution from the environmental and job creation viewpoints.

In transport, 25% of travel by employees currently uses a mode of travel other than the motor car. To take this further, a Travel Plan for Public Services Employees (in progress) aims to reduce the environmental impacts of transport systems created by public administration bodies (air pollution, noise) and to support the creation of new jobs. This Plan will apply to 1,200 people in relation to their travel between home and work and travel as part of their work.



Since three years ago, a pool of 20 bicycles has been made available for staff. To support job creation, this fleet of bicycles is maintained by an employment integration association (a nonprofit body that provides jobs for integrating the socially-excluded). The use of public transport is also encouraged by a 50% reduced season ticket. A special study has been performed for car sharing schemes (car sharing grant, etc.). Lastly, the fleet of vehicles is gradually using ecological fuels (gas-fuelled buses, testing electric dump trucks, etc.). Other types of socially responsible supportive action programmes are welcomed by the CUD's personnel. This may entail supporting job creation by employment integration organisations with the aid of "Service Job Vouchers" (welfare cheques to pay for domestic help work, etc.), buying organic farming produce, etc. Or it may mean helping the employment integration of disabled people (6% of the total numbers), or voluntary work to create a "job shadowing" network for young people.

The success of these initiatives is based on publicity and information campaigns by means of articles, posters and individual follow-up for mobilising employees. This information strategy will also include an induction process for new employees, in which the principles of sustainable development will be explained and their concrete applications presented. Therefore, from their arrival, new employees will be made aware of the Urban District Council's values and commitments in favour of sustainable development.



Improve property management

Since 2000, any new or rehabilitated building of the CUD is built according to High Environmental Quality techniques (water savings, energy savings, reduction of noise and of effects on health, etc.). There are two existing examples: Wemaere educational farm and the new administrative building.

Energy management is also a priority area. At the moment, the CUD is starting a comprehensive energy audit of its buildings and properties with a view to reducing their energy consumption by at least 10%. According to the opportunities, forms of renewable energy production will be installed (solar heated hot water, etc.).



The **greenhouse effect**, a challenge for the Greater Dunkirk District

The Greater Dunkirk urban district is a European energy hub. It has Europe's most powerful nuclear power plant (6 X 900 MW), the world's largest offshore gas pipeline, 'Franpipe', and the industrial-seaport complex, with major petrochemicals and iron and steel groups of companies. This geo-economic characteristic makes the fight against the greenhouse effect a major challenge for the area.

Control energy consumption

Reducing energy consumption is a prime stake in the fight against the greenhouse effect. The aim is to reduce consumption by 10% within 5 years. This requires a comprehensive approach agreed and coordinated between local players – public authorities, companies, citizens.

High Environmental Quality (HEQ) construction is based on principles of water and energy savings, the use of healthy and ecological materials, noise reduction, etc. The systematic use of these techniques has diverse range of concrete applications: information and communications technology business incubator, university building, administrative building and public housing. Thus, in December 2001, following two pilot experiments for construction and rehabilitation of HEQ public housing, the CUD adopted its new policy of public housing favouring HEQ.

The control of city expansion is based on a strong policy of urban renewal and reaffirmation of urban centrality. For this purpose, we are currently working on the design of a "sustainable urban neighbourhood" on the former site of Dunkirk's shipbuilding yards, called Neptune.

The Greater Dunkirk Urban District Council has also committed itself to strategic transport planning programmes including the Atmosphere Protection Plan and the Urban Travel Plan. This development plan offers new perspectives for the development of public transport and clean modes of transport. In 2 years' time, 50% of urban buses - representing 70% of distances travelled - will run on natural gas.

The economic world is organising its action around the Industrial Environment Master Plan, the first of this type in France, and systems for joint consultation between companies and civil society. These voluntary and negotiated approaches have reduced atmospheric discharges and improved the environmental performance of companies.

Industrial ecology is developing strongly in the Greater Dunkirk district. It aims to recycle waste (materials, heat, etc.) by creating links between companies. The waste of one company becomes a resource for the second.

As regards the Port of Dunkirk, it is above all a railway port for goods transport (50% of goods are transported by railway, 11% by waterway, and the rest by truck). The planned wide gauge canal will improve these results even more in the future.

Lastly, to mobilise players and affirm the role of the public authorities, the CUD organises the Assises nationales de l'Énergie (National Energy Conference), which brings together almost 500 participants from public authorities on subjects such as housing, transport, etc. In addition to child education measures, Energy Information Points are made available to provide the population with free advice on potential savings.

Give priority to local energy resources

The present 3 MW of wind energy production will soon be increased by 20 MW, with 15 new high power wind turbines. A wind turbines plan will organise development of this sector in our coastal area.

Cogeneration (combined heat and power generation) is gradually developing, and will soon produce 40 MW. It is used for optimising the district heating system (35 MW planned) and for individual sites (hospital: 4.6 MW, swimming pool: 2.6 MW). The experimentation of two micro fuel cells will open up a new energy channel in the area (3 and 4.5 kW).

Using gas from the Sollac steelworks blast furnaces and Norwegian natural gas, the 800 MW 'DK6' electricity power plant will become France's largest combined cycle power installation.



"Clean" waste

Currently, most domestic waste (two thirds) is transported to the landfill site by train according to an innovative technological principle called "polyrail", with which crates of waste are transferred by translation from the train to the truck (a principle similar to container transport), and the remaining third is transported by truck.

In 2004, with the new Domestic Waste Energy Recycling Centre, alternative transport will be provided for both outgoing residue (clinker and incinerator residue) and incoming reactants, by railway and a canal branch. It shall also produce 7 MW of electricity by 80,000 tonnes waste incineration.



Socially responsible

economic development

Dunkirk is the 3rd largest seaport in France, with 45 million tonnes of traffic in 2001. The 7,000 hectares harbour area (with 3,000 hectares still available) includes iron, steel and aluminium industries, petrochemicals, chemical engineering, energy production, food processing, etc. A total of around 5,400 companies have a total of 52,500 employees, and more than 55% of jobs are in industry.

Environment & industry, a possible marriage ?

In 1990, the CUD made a decision to continue industrial development on condition that it provided itself the means to control the industrial environment and to give the industrial city a new image. Two initiatives came out of this decision :

- a technology transfer centre linked to the creation of the Université du littoral Côte d'Opale (Opal Coast University): the Dunkirk Centre for Industrial Environment Research – CREID (1993)
- an Industrial Environment Master Plan, rationalising the establishment of new incoming companies with a strategy for protecting the environment and local communities (1993)

The Industrial Environment Master Plan is the fruit of a voluntary collaboration between the CUD and the representatives of the world of industry. There are three parts: a development plan, a schedule of requirements specially adapted to the area concerning air, water, waste, technological hazards, and a procedure for ratifying the establishment of new companies. Thus, any project for implantation or extension of a business is presented at the early stages to community associations and to local elected representatives. The Master Plan is currently being updated, extending its field of action to a wider area and to new issues (health, noise, etc.).

Integrated into this thinking on development and management, a strategy for environmental management of business parks has been undertaken since 2000 in 2 stages. A first experience in the Grande Synthe business park highlighted the priority issues and possible forms of organisation and management of these areas. Then a trial strategy of environmental management with the association of local industrialists will develop a management method that can be applied generally to the entire Greater Dunkirk Urban District.

In line with this work, industrial ecology initiatives have arisen. These synergies have developed as part of private initiatives according to the needs and interests of companies: retreatment of steel slag for the manufacture of plant-care products, exchange of products between the steam cracker and chemicals companies, a project for recycling gases from steel blast furnaces in an electricity power plant, etc. To multiply these measures, the Ecopal association was created, grouping together local industries and public administration bodies. The aim is to find concrete solutions for

recycling industrial waste (materials or energy).

The "enterprise synergy" project, based on a waste census, will result in the generalisation of waste separation at source and will propose industrial outlets for waste recycling. The feasibility of an industrial waste grant shall also be studied.

All this work involves the population through a unique strategy of creating consultative bodies: the Secretariat for the Prevention of Industrial Pollution, the Local Nuclear Energy Information Commission, Local Environmental Commissions of large companies, the Industrial Environment Master Plan, etc. This consultative approach achieves significant results: -70% of sulphur oxide emissions, -30% nitrous oxide and -30% dust in ten years.

Provide jobs for everyone

Despite a decrease in unemployment (-20% in three years), 10,000 people are still jobless. The challenge consists in assisting these people through training and learning a trade that is appropriate for the job market. In 2001, 3,500 people followed an integration process at the end of which around half found a real job.

In the area, 1,200 people have a physical disability, which is a factor of exclusion. A support system helps 200 people to find a job every year. The rate of disabled personnel in companies is around 4.5%, and the objective is 6%.

The campaign against employment discrimination requires long-term work. A special working group is responsible for analysing complaints and their development. An observatory will also monitor the results of the measures taken.

Develop new commercial activities

The enterprising Greater Dunkirk Urban District Council aims to facilitate the emergence of new commercial activities: support for the creation of a vanilla trade with the Comoro Islands and organic farming with Senegal and Brazil according to Fair Trade principles, research into High Environmental Quality construction, research into new environment-related employment possibilities, etc.





Decentralised cooperation, solidarity beyond the borders

The concept of sustainable development came out of thinking on a world scale: it consists in enabling the world's entire population to enjoy a shared improved well-being while protecting the environment. However, the local application of a sustainable development approach may lose sight of this universal dimension.

For it is easy to forget that:

- ✓ our economic and social development, while it may be locally sustainable, may compromise that of developing countries
- ✓ our local difficulties can appear relatively minor compared to those experienced by the planet's most deprived people
- ✓ our local choices can upset the balances present distant countries

On the basis of these observations, the Greater Dunkirk Urban District Council has committed itself, since 1996, to a programme of joint actions with local public authorities of developing countries.



Reciprocity and participation by citizens

Above and beyond the central requirement of transnational solidarity, international cooperation projects are part of a perspective identical to those that guide the area's local "Agendas 21". Thus:

- ✓ the support given to partner public authorities must lead to sustainable improvement of the quality of people's lives
- ✓ reciprocity must guide exchanges: while material and financial resources are desperately lacking in the South, developing countries have countless resources that may be of benefit to communities and public bodies in the North
- ✓ the partnership and participation of local people are vital conditions:
 - the beneficiary citizens, and their organisations and representatives, must be mobilised in this strategy
 - the projects devised together must be compatible with the (relevant) orientations taken on national, european and international levels
 - the projects are devised in consultation with other public authorities and bodies that are active in the field
 - the projects involve citizens and partners of our areas so that they adopt them as their own.



Pilot project: housing rehabilitation programme in Regla (Cuba)

The Joint Urban District Council of Dunkirk and Brou-sur-Chantereine (in the Seine-et-Marne area) has been cooperating with the Cuban town of Regla – where Havana's seaport is located – since 1998 in the field of urban development, and more particularly housing. Together, they have forged a project aimed at long-term reduction of the housing problem in Regla, and more generally in Cuba. The project also aims to encourage the participation of citizens (both on the ground and in public bodies), to contribute to North-South, South-North and South-South transfers of expertise and, lastly, to act as a support for an international solidarity education project. The local town planning agency and the United Nations Development Programme are involved in this project.

Concretely, the project is centred around an applied research programme that should result in the development of a new sustainable construction technique (for structures and roofs). The solution must be economical, use local resources and must be easily applied to all of Cuba, or even beyond. The results of the research carried out by the Cuban Materials Technology Centre (based in Regla) are tested within a rehabilitation programme of fifteen dwellings belonging to deprived families in the Casablanca quarter. The rehabilitation work is carried out by the occupants themselves, according to the self-build principle.



A technician from a Dunkirk employment integration enterprise will go to Regla to introduce Cuban self-build teams to French building standards. In return, three Cuban self-build specialists will come to France to introduce local employment integration enterprises to the self-build methods that are applied in Cuba. Apart from exchanges of technicians, the project includes an awareness programme for young citizens, through local educational institutions associated with the initiative.

In order to give the project greater scope in space and time, it is integrated into another research project on urban renewal in Regla, co-directed by Dunkirk University (ULCO), the Town Planning Agency and the Faculty of Architecture of Havana, Versailles School of Architecture, the National Higher School of Landscaping and Harvard Design School. A workshop on this topic, prepared in Regla by an ULCO student, is to be held in Regla in late 2002.

It is also planned, as part of the Urb-al II European Programme, to put Cuban players in touch with other players from Latin America (including Brazil) in order to disseminate and improve the technique that is developed.





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