

Contribution to the Under 2°C Memorandum of Understanding

The Region of Pays de la Loire stands for 32 000 km² of French national territory and over 3.5 M inhabitants. It is one of the most dynamic regions in Europe in terms of population growth, which makes it especially concerned with planning the future. The Regional Council engaged in “Pays de la Loire 2040”, a large-scaled prospective agenda that opened on a more specific work upon energetic transition.

In order to mobilize its territory on the matter, the Regional Council organized “regional conferences of energy” in early 2013, which lead to the adoption of a Strategy for Energetic Transition in 2014. This multi-actors project is coordinated by the Regional Council and accounted for during regular Conferences of Energetic Transition and Climate Change.

1. Regional objectives

Meanwhile the Regional Conferences of Energy, an energetic prospective was carried so as to propose three scenarios of evolution. The actors in the conferences finally agreed upon the intermediary scenario, which was adopted as its objectives by the Regional Council. They stand as follows:

- Return region-wide Green House Gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, reducing emissions by -23% per capita, and reduce per capita GHG emissions by - 80% by 2050 based on 1990 levels.
- Reduce energy consumption by 16% by 2020 and by 50% by 2050, based on 2008.
- Increase share of renewables in region-wide energy mix to 21% by 2020, and produce the equivalent of regional electricity consumption with renewables by 2050.

Considering the region’s fast-growing population, these objectives may seem ambitious. But they were build according to serious statistics and with consideration to the actor’s capacity of action.

2. Regional actions

The Regional Energetic Transition Strategy stands upon three pillars divided into 30 axis of action

Pillar 1: A better and lesser energy consumption

The cheapest energy is the one we do not need. Hence the first step to engage regional territory in the path of transition is to have a better control of our energetic consumptions. Actions:

- Support energetic rehabilitations of buildings
- Invent a sustainable model of mobility to escape oil dependency
- Improve general energetic efficiency in companies' production processes
- Encourage collective progresses towards a soberer way of life

Pillar 2: energetic transition as an asset to develop our territories

Energetic transition is an opportunity for economic development. Given the strength of current international competition for companies, and the risk of energetic poverty for households, it is necessary to enforce new sectors of our economy. By developing business and social solutions for energetic efficiency and renewable production, we mean to ensure local jobs and innovations for our territory. Actions:

- Support key economic sectors for energetic transition
- Develop local renewable energy production
- Improve energy grids towards a smart balance of productions and consumptions

Pillar 3: act together

The success of energetic transition lies upon a common dynamic of actors, which has to be maintained since the Regional Conferences of Energy. As a public actor in charge of energy matters, the Regional Council has taken upon itself to organize concertation and governance of the regional strategy.

3. A specific attention to climate change matters

The Pays de la Loire will be one of the most climate-change-impacted regions in France. Contribute to reducing climate change and prepare to it therefore constitute two priorities in regional strategy.

Reduce our territory's greenhouse gas emissions

A few regional policies are meant to contribute to the common objectives as they are stated above. Among them, the regional contribution to energetic renovations is one of the most important: 10 000 households have already benefited from this financial support to improve their house's energetic efficiency. It lead to reduction in emissions of about 24 000 T CO₂e a year. The regional council also supports renovation in social housing and renovates its own buildings with a high performance objective.

The Region also works together with companies on a "Third Industrial Revolution" project, to accompany them in their mutation towards new forms of economy. Inspired by the work of Jeremy Rifkin, this project is focused on improving production processes, produce energy from renewables, and develop circular economy and the use of big data to fasten it all. This "revolution" also applies to agriculture: a specific regional project called "Climagri" aims to prepare this sector to climate change, and help it reduce its emissions by changing its ways.

Reduce our territory's greenhouse gas emissions

The regional council has constituted a local Committee for Climate and Territories, which is meant to build bridges between scientific knowledge on climate change and local public policies. This group of actors works to prepare actions on different sectors, in order to adapt our economies and ways of life to climate change. Its goal is to make information accessible on the matter, as much for citizens as for leaders.

In the perspective of the upcoming COP21, the Regional Council saw it a priority to enforce education on climate change issues, and to have youth participate in proposing sustainable development solutions. COP21 is indeed a unique occasion to involve French civil society in the global action on climate change, and especially those mostly concerned among us: our youth.

- COP21 ambassadors are students who went to organize debates in high schools on climate change and sustainable development.
- COP21 reporters followed the negotiations all year long, to train in media coverage and make this issues a priority of their future career
- COP21 sentinels are high school pupils who will participate in the events in Paris by promoting a manifesto, and then come back to tell their fellow pupils what they saw and thought of COP21.