



COMMISSION 1 – THE ECO-REGIONS

REPORT ON THE FIRST MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

**15 JUNE 2006 – TORONTO
(CANADA)**

OCTOBER 2006

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1. PRESENTATION OF METROPOLIS' COMMISSION 1: ECO-REGIONS

1.1. Commission 1 management structure

The Ile-de-France region heads up Commission 1 on "Eco-regions" under the guidance of Michel Vampouille, vice-chairman of the Ile-de-France region responsible for the Environment, Sustainable Development and the Eco-region. The vice-chairman of C1 is David Miller, Mayor of Toronto. Finally, the technical secretariat of the commission is ensured by ARENE Ile-de-France (Regional Agency for the Environment and New Energies).

1.2. Commission 1 mandate

The concept of the Eco-region can be defined as the raft of policies enabling a metropolitan territory to initiate an operational sustainable development strategy. The prime objective of Commission 1 is to examine best practices aimed at creating a quality living environment for all city dwellers while keeping the impact on the planet to a bare minimum. The mandate of the Commission runs from 2005 to 2008.

The Commission's work is founded on concrete experiences with the aim being to share cities' expertise and experience.

The work of Commission 1 is focused on 3 themes as follows:

- Eco-region and governance
- Eco-region and management of open spaces
- Eco-region and sustainable economic development: sustainable tourism

1.3. First meeting of Commission 1

Commission 1 began its work by holding its first meeting in Toronto (Canada) during the Metropolis Board of Directors meeting. A day was devoted to Commission 1: 15 June 2006.

2. TORONTO 2006 – THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2006: FIRST MEETING OF COMMISSION 1

2.1. Organisation

The first meeting of Commission 1 was held on Thursday 15 June 2006 in Toronto (Canada). This meeting was organised in parallel with the Metropolis Board of Directors Meeting by the Regional Secretariat in liaison with the Secretariat General of Metropolis and the city of Toronto. Michel Vampouille chaired the meeting.

2.2. Objectives

The objectives of the first meeting were as follows:

- Present case studies on governance, management of open spaces and sustainable tourism,
- Exchange experiences,
- Take note of the suggestions and expectations of Commission 1 members

2.3. Conduct of the meeting

With the exception of the opening sessions presenting the Commission's mandate and workplan and the closing session presenting the Commission's summary and subsequent actions, the meeting was held over three consecutive workshops in plenary session covering presentations of experiences and discussions as follows:

- Workshop 1: governance
- Workshop 2: Management of open spaces. The focus was on two approaches, biodiversity and semi-urban agriculture.
- Workshop 3: Sustainable tourism, one of the biggest industries in the world which concerns all metropolises.

2.4. Participation¹

Ten or so local councillors, representatives of international and national organisations and experts from various countries gave presentations while also participating in and leading discussions. About forty people took part in these workshops, whether elected representatives, executives or professionals.

2.5. Summary of work by workshop

2.5.1. Opening

The opening address, mandate and workplan of Commission 1 were presented by Michel Vampouille, vice-chairman of the Ile-de-France region in charge of the environment, sustainable development and the Eco-region.

Key notions:

- Consideration of governance, related to two major phenomena:
 - The necessary consolidation of skills and institutional powers of metropolises,
 - Changes in social behaviour characterised by individual values, involvement of residents and civil society and the determination to participate in political bodies' decision-making processes and strategies.
- Integration of ecology and improved access to natural areas of quality and proximity in major cities by:

¹See appendix 1: List of member cities and bodies of Commission 1 – Eco-regions

- Reconciling their preservation with the need to accommodate population inflows and the activities associated with such populations,
- Preserving agricultural areas lying adjacent to metropolises,
- Protecting natural areas from urbanisation as well as excessive visitor numbers

- Tourism, an additional tool for establishing sustainable development:

- Build enhancement of metropolises' heritage assets (natural and buildings) into a long-term approach,
- Reconcile mobility, which is a prerequisite for tourism, with the related environmental impacts,
- Promote fair tourism throughout all territories and for all inhabitants.

2.5.2. Summary of the workshop on governance

Chairperson: Marie-Pierre Digard - Regional Counsellor, Chairperson of the ARENE (Regional Agency for the Environment and New Energies)

Rapporteur: Luli NASCIMENTO – Research Officer at IAURIF (Ile-de-France urban planning and development agency)

Presentation by **Roger KEIL**, Director, The City Institute at York University, Toronto

Governance of the urban environment

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The presentation was given in 2 parts. The first part concerned a general overview of governance while the second part consisted in a presentation of the city of Toronto as an Eco-region.

The key points:

The challenge of globalisation

To create the process of globalisation, governance requires 2 types of integration: internal and external. To implement this project, governments must open up the debate so as to identify the administrative solutions for governance faced with the complexity of managing cities undergoing a process of globalisation.

The challenge of democracy

The process of restructuring governance within a context of neoliberalism must take place in line with market principles rather than public ones. New technologies must be used to change mindsets and achieve individual discipline.

Governance beyond government

We need to move beyond the "administrative state" to bring civil society into the decision-making process without in any way undermining the state. It is important to revive public-private partnerships and make citizens true entrepreneurs in the economic process.

Governance and problems with past practices

To resolve these problems, it is firstly necessary to establish good governance with greater effectiveness and an enhanced decision-making capacity while endeavouring to boost initiative taking on the part of citizens. It is also essential to embrace market principles by turning to private initiatives and citizen participation: the city is a business enterprise.

Challenges specific to governance

It is all about identifying a realistic frontier for governmental action, at the level of neighbourhoods, municipalities, regions and nations. In other words, it is important to create the conditions in which an urban region can play a collective role. It is vital to create conditions favourable to linking up the various levels of assigned powers at the central or federal level. We need to promote a democratic process at regional level.

Conclusion:

- On the **economic level**: It is important to develop the learning process and more clearly define the fiscal needs of the various levels of governance;
- In terms of **technical infrastructure**: It is necessary to meet the region's requirements and improve urban amenities so as to be more competitive economically;
- In **political** terms: it is necessary to develop local democracy by giving more autonomy to the various administrative levels of the region;
- In terms of the **environment**: The right to a viable region with a high-quality environment.

Presentation by **Otto ZIMMERMAN**, Secretary General, ICLEI – Local Government for Sustainability

ecoBUDGET for better governance of natural resources and environmental quality

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General context:

Ecobudget is a system aimed at economic management of natural resources and environmental quality, modelled according to financial resources. It represents the application of financial principles and procedures to management of the environment but without assigning monetary value to the environment.

An annual or biannual ecobudget is established in the form of public expenditure frameworks for natural resources such as air quality, climate stability, freshwater, the soil and landscapes, for species and their habitats. A long-term objective must be defined for each theme before submission to the municipality or regional council for approval.

This system of environmental management must enable enhanced administrative management by the political sphere. Political representatives are able to exchange views in a more transparent manner and better manage the process of local environmental policies while defining political objectives.

The main characteristics of the ecobudget:

- via the cycle of the annual budget, taking account of the rarity of natural resources and environmental quality in an ongoing, as opposed to intermittent, manner;
- the political debate, transparency and approval of the annual budget for the environment (with expenditure objectives and budgetary strategies) are ensured by a public procedure involving the business community and feedback on annual performances (reporting or eco-balance sheet);
- via the participation of high-level authorities and business people, the ecobudget enables management at municipal and community level as a whole;
- the ecobudget allows local government to keep the general public informed of the viability of political strategies;

Advantages of the ecobudget:

- the ecobudget is a highly effective means of ensuring and monitoring the establishment of an Agenda 21 (action plan) process;
- the ecobudget can easily be integrated into other management systems such as impact evaluation indicators, EMAS or ISO 14,000, etc.
- the ecobudget is a modular system. Social and economic indicators can be established. As a consequence, the ecobudget can create links between environmental indicators with social indicators such as monitoring the level of poverty within a community;
- the ecobudget is an ideal means of supporting and monitoring Millennium objectives, particularly objective 7 (provide a sustainable environment) as well as the subsequent definition of targets to be attained with evaluation indicators.

Presentation by **Caroline MANCEL**, Head of External Relations
Department of the Ministry of the Brussels Capital Region

The neighbourhood of Ursulines

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An example of citizen involvement in a project to develop a public space in Brussels

At the outset, the square in the Ursulines neighbourhood was a somewhat non-descript area sited above a tunnel in the city centre but it was subsequently restored, integrated and linked up with the city centre. Responsibility for managing this area was taken over by the IBGE in 1995:

- firstly used as a car park during work on the Place de la Chapelle,
- the possibility of retrieving 20 ares in a city centre sadly lacking public green spaces,
- the project entailed conversion of a non-functional area
- near the Mont des arts (skateboarding),
- near Recyclart.

The project (those behind the Recyclart project + l'Escaut + Brusk)

It was a question of:

- favouring originality, creativity and urbanity
- ensuring land management,
- guaranteeing a dynamic partnership-based approach
- organising a competition with a jury comprised of art schools, architectural and town planning colleges,
- organising a project support committee: SNCB+AATL + Ville Bxl + Recyclart + Brusk + Cbt Ministre,
- setting up a worksite monitoring group....

Participation and conduct of work was achieved with:

- the involvement of neighbourhood and school committees.
- input from work groups,
- the organisation of guided tours,
- the scheduling of evening debates, etc.

Today, the public space has become:

- an area of relaxation,
- a versatile central zone built with highly resistant materials since the space is heavily used,
- a platform with a screen intended to reduce noise pollution from the site around the clock.

Conclusion:

A successful co-operative effort by different players working on a development project for a public space within an urban environment.

Presentation by **Alberto MOECH**, Secretary of the environment, Municipality of Porto Alegre (Brazil):

Environmental governance: the participative budget, the experience of Porto Alegre

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General information on the city:

The city was founded on 26 March 1772. Porto Alegre is the capital of Brazil's southernmost state lying close to the border with Argentina and Uruguay. The city hosted the first World Social Forum.

Population: 1.4 million inhabitants.

Regulations in favour of the environment

Federal legislation does not allow the felling of trees without financial compensation. To meet this requirement, the municipal laws require all new urban developments to offset any trees felled as part of the operation. For any new urban development, new tree-lined public spaces must be created. This may entail assistance with managing public highways such as watering trees along public highways or planting in existing public areas. These decisions are taken in consultation with the local population.

The case study

For the creation of the German Park, a dialogue was established between the municipality and the local population to consider exemption from the local land tax (IPTU). The municipality organised environment awareness days and over 3,000 trees were planted at the request of the local population as part of the "Adopt a Tree" Programme. In all, 57 public squares, 2 urban parks, and 55 gardens and roundabouts were redeveloped.

In addition, a second programme was created: "Programme to Restore the City's Historic Heritage". This programme involved restoration of monuments which were in a bad state of repair due to the ravages of time or vandalism. To implement this project, a research and conservation laboratory was set up manned by a multidisciplinary team working 24/7 in partnership with the municipality, the private sector and civil society.

Conclusion:

The participative budget and/or joint action with inhabitants of the city of Porto Alegre has made it possible to develop new partnerships concerning flooding, protection of water resources and a programme to prevent air pollution.

General conclusion

The work group's four presentations demonstrate the complexity and importance of establishing an effective linkage between public and private players in defining urban, environmental and tourism policies. The linkage and fragmentation of political power, the interaction of regional levels, citizen consensus-building, the need to build awareness,

difficulties in communicating, etc. highlighted by the various presentations illustrate the challenge which establishing good governance represents.

In order to meet the Millennium objectives defined by the UN, it is vital to better organise management of public policy. The eight objectives define 18 targets to be reached and 48 indicators serving to measure the progress made in achieving Millennium objectives for development. This series of indicators has been unanimously agreed on by a group of experts from the Secretariat of the United Nations, the IMF, the OECD and the World Bank, etc.:

- objective 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- objective 2: Achieve universal primary education;
- objective 3: Promote gender equality and empower women;
- objective 4: Reduce mortality levels for children under 5;
- objective 5: Improve maternal health;
- objective 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- objective 7: Ensure environmental sustainability;
- objective 8: Develop a global partnership for development.

Since some of these objectives cover the key concerns of the Eco-region, it would be desirable for these objectives to be factored into the work of Metropolis' Commission 1.

In the current context of economic globalisation, governance has moved centre stage. This process of internationalisation of the economy means we must give thought to the changes required at the various political levels. Faced with major global challenges, governments must offer new forms of organisation to tackle climate change, loss of biodiversity, etc.

Facing up to the major global challenges presupposes the provision of appropriate financial resources. And this is why sustainable development has emerged as the necessary premise for "public private partnerships". Against this backdrop of globalisation, Christian Lefèvre has already noted that we are witnessing a fragmentation of the power of cities and regions in terms of social, economic and political systems. This fragmentation results from the coming together of 3 intervening processes:

- multiplication of seats of power;
- transformation of the competing interests of the public and private sectors in terms of their multiplicity;
- increased conflict between players and/or networks of players.

In fact, governance has become complex in this context since we no longer clearly identify the jurisdiction of institutions in managing political, legal, administrative, financial and technical resources. Tailoring responses to requests from collective and individual players in the relevant regions is no easy matter.

2.5.3. Summary of the "management of open spaces" workshop

Chairperson: Shelley Grice, the city of Toronto's department of the environment and green spaces

Rapporteur: Catherine Ribes

Shelley Grice, the workshop's chairperson gave a run-down of the various speakers and presentations scheduled as follows:

1. A presentation by Deborah Martin Downs from the city of Toronto's Department of Conservation, on the "Rouge Park" natural space located on the city's outskirts.
2. A presentation by Julian Hill, Executive Director of the division of strategic development at the ministry of the environment and sustainability on the policy of

development and, more specifically, factoring diversity into this policy established by the city of Melbourne.

3. A presentation by Antoni Alarcon I Puerto Director of environmental projects for the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona (RMB) on development of the RMB's open spaces.
4. A presentation by the city of Kinshasa's Department of technical services of semi-urban agriculture and its food-producing role. The city has set up land tools and other support tools to encourage farmers to set up in or remain in city outskirts.

The chairperson declared that this fourth presentation was cancelled since none of the representatives from the city of Kinshasa present was able to cover the theme in question. The workshop was therefore primarily devoted to taking account of biodiversity in development of major cities.

Presentation by **Deborah MARTIN DOWNS**, Director of Conservation and Ecology, City of Toronto

Deborah Martin Downs gave a brief recap of the local context and jurisdiction of the city (since 1946) with regard to management of 9 water tables which the "Park rouge" river depends on. The city's planning policy was: "the living city and the natural city". This planning was reflected in the creation of numerous green spaces in the city and by the restoration of extensive wetlands on the city's outskirts.

The principal development decision was therefore focused on restoring this large natural space situated close to the city and outlying areas.

We will therefore recap the general context then present the Park Rouge project.

Context:

- The loss of farming zones in urban and semi-urban areas,
- Modification of land occupation,
- The urban zone which is slowly eating into natural areas and farming land,
- Unorganised natural spaces with excessive visitor numbers which leads to erosion phenomena.

To this general context can be added the loss of biodiversity, in view of which the city of Toronto has decided to work on a new development system which comprises:

- A percentage of natural zones to be preserved,
- Taking account of different forms of environmental pollution,
- A ratio of penetration of natural spaces in urban areas,
- Revision of land use (reparcellation?),
- Preservation of habitats in agricultural and urban areas,
- Interpretation of the 3 forms of land use: agriculture, urban and natural.

The Park Rouge is Toronto's principal nature zone. The site serves as an experimental site. Analysis of the ecosystems and landscape is established and mapped according to the quality and uses of the space. This analysis comprises a selection of land according to natural coverage and sensitivity to urban aggression. Supervision of the site is established, regular inventories are taken of the fauna and flora. A species classification enables endangered species to be identified. A scientific advisor monitors the project.

Conclusion

The city of Toronto is keen to transfer this Park Rouge experiment to other sites even outside Toronto and eventually apply it on a larger scale. An evaluation is now possible with a view to preserving quality land (fauna and flora).

Deborah Martin Downs pointed out that the city of Toronto had to include these programmes in the urban plan so as to track its changes over time and modify the city's process of development.

Presentation by **Julian Christopher HILL**, Executive Director of the Strategic Development Division, city of Melbourne

The project presented by Melbourne is a brief presentation of an urban planning approach incorporating protection of the environment and, more particularly, biodiversity.

The context is as follows:

Many points in common with the city of Toronto. The city of Melbourne comprises 3.7 million inhabitants and is governed by 31 distinct municipalities whose planning policies fall under the authority of the central government. The population is ageing. Housing is old and well conserved. There is a genuine need for renewal of the housing stock in order to attract a younger population. Two key objectives have been adopted for the long term (30 years): "the metropolitan strategy by 2030".

- Key challenges and perspectives in the urban centre:

The 30-year plan breaks down as follows: protecting the environment in a highly urbanised context and with a very large population.

The urban plan provides for densification so as to avoid natural space being eaten away. Five growth centres have been defined. Planning is on the basis of protection of sensitive areas. The city of Melbourne coordinates all construction projects. It draws up specifications concerning inclusion of buildings in natural spaces and improvement or renaturation of these spaces. Biodiversity is also factored into development for densification of the urban centre. As a function of this protection, new rules have been drawn up for development of both public and private land.

A land acquisition policy has been established by the city to protect natural spaces within the city's boundaries.

- Around the city

Protecting the green belt from intensive urbanisation and identifying spaces to urbanise by favouring the development of centres.

Three types of action are favoured for the semi-urban agriculture zone:

- Limitations
- Incentives
- Land-based

The city of Melbourne has set up 2 types of intervention vis-à-vis farmers aimed at maintaining biodiversity. Firstly in the form of strict limitations to improve farming practices and secondly by means of financial incentives.

Depending on the economic loss in yields, farmers are awarded compensation payments.

A land acquisition policy has been set up by the city to protect farming areas in outlying districts.

Conclusion:

Improved information and greater awareness of the need to protect biodiversity are necessary to take this plan through to completion. It is also vital to ensure that these rules are applied in both the public and private fields.

Presentation by Antoni Alarcon I Puerto, Director of environmental projects for the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona

Presentation of the metropolis:

The Metropolitan Region of Barcelona (RMB) has 4.6 million inhabitants which corresponds to 65% of the population of Catalonia. The level of urbanisation is both high and rising which puts considerable pressure on natural spaces.

Evaluation of land use reveals a mosaic of natural spaces (forest and mountains and other environments) of agricultural zones and urbanised zones. The agricultural space is spread between large plains, vineyards, and horticulture production in the delta. The rest of the agricultural activity is spread across the land troughs of the pre-coastal area. Farming land is extremely vulnerable and coveted by urbanisation.

In the midst of this mosaic, the city has built infrastructures and activity hubs, largely in the flood plains of rivers.

Challenges:

The large natural spaces need continuity to function which is why it is important to create a network of ecological continuity.

Prospects and objectives:

Although it is evident that development and growth are inevitably accompanied by an impact on the environment, clearly defined criteria, standards of intervention and compensatory elements will make it possible to pursue growth while retaining those elements which underpin the quality of natural spaces and favour protection of biodiversity. This is what emerges from the "Territorial Mosaic" study established by Pr. Richard TT Forman for the RMB. According to the finding, all players need to be consulted so as to arrive at a consensus. This approach is aimed at placing the emphasis on the most outstanding sites from an ecological viewpoint but does not define spaces.

However, the natural spaces plan fixes limits pending consolidation of the Natura 2000 network.

Development proposals from the RMB

the existing laws and regulations: Landscape law, coastal master plan, forests plan, ecological connections plan, urban planning law. However, agro-forest zones, garrigue, fallow land and other farming land are not protected. This is why the emphasis must be placed on the role of these spaces, known as local natural spaces, which preserve the local identify and protect farming and livestock production practices.

Special protection: Natura 2000 network and PENI (administrative type protection), and ecological continuity.

Regional structuring elements: structuring elements of the landscape, main rivers, sensitive zones, agrarian parks, urban separators. This concerns the principal elements of the territorial matrix since that includes the vast expanses at the foot of mountains and most river basins.

Preventive development elements: interstitial sites between urban zones and protected natural spaces

Conclusion:

Regional planning of free spaces is indispensable in order to establish the rules of the game. It is not simply a question of developing these spaces, it is about setting up compensation, management and monitoring mechanisms for these spaces which are fundamental to preserving a regional mosaic and offering future generations the kind of quality environment and wealth of biodiversity which are currently under threat. A new development model is possible with the structured and sustainable growth of the Metropolitan Region of Barcelona.

Presentation by **Christine ALFSEN-NORODOM** from UNESCO, New York, MAB and CUBES

Christine Alfsen-Norodom posed a number of questions to introduce her presentation with attendant solutions:

What kind of separation exists between urban and rural areas around the world?

For instance, in Asia everything depends on private property. In Africa, people are flooding into the cities. All depends on the problems encountered such as access to water. Account should also be taken of north-south differences. If every country lived like the United States we would need four planets to sustain our lifestyles..

Biodiversity in cities: percentage given for major north American cities.

The question: why worry about nature and cities?

UNESCO's tools:

- **The MAB programme**

Explanation of this concept from early 1972 WEB site, 40 Sites in the United States

The concept exists to protect and highlight zones of biological interest. **The question is: "How can this concept be applied to urban regions?"**

Evaluate application of the MAB concept.

A different angle is proposed: the socio-economic aspect must also be factored in: Example of Cap Down (South Africa), problem of health. Poverty and protection of biodiversity. Major difficulty??

- **CUBES project**

Bringing together all problem sets, Example of New York, Chicago etc.

Work between universities to establish the concept.

Evaluation planned for 5 years, difficult public concerned because major difference between north and south hence the complexity of influxes.

Proposals:

Institute of Sustainable Development

Example of Sweden: project of Stockholm MISTRA Institute (SMI)

Project with an annual budget of 5 million euros: to study the ecological and social system on a larger scale. The following cities have a CUBES project:

- Stockholm
- Istanbul
- New York
- Cap Down
- New Delhi
- Phoenix

Other examples: ethnic geographical map after flooding

Location of black populations in New Orleans: a major disaster since Black Populations had been moved into flood-prone areas.

Conclusion and proposals:

Christine Alfsen-Norodom is currently continuing with this project and remains at the disposal of Metropolis to discuss it. She proposes "the Metropolis as a catalyst for global change". She is keen to work more specifically on health, education, property and services with the various N-S countries.

2.5.4. Summary of the sustainable tourism workshop

Chairperson of the workshop: Sylvie DUFFRENE, Regional Councillor, Chairperson of the Ile-de-France Tourism Space (ETIF)

Participants: Christine OUDINOT, Director General of the association, Actions pour un Tourisme Urbain Durable (ATUD) – expert; Thierry COT, Director of the Vexin Français Regional Nature Park and Kevin CURRIE, Chairman of the Green Tourism Association (GTA).

Rapporteur: Réka CSEPELI, Project Officer, ETIF

Sylvie DUFFRENE, Regional Councillor, Chairwoman of the ETIF, Ile-de-France

In her introductory speech, Sylvie Duffrene stressed that the tourism sector represented an economic activity of prime importance which concerned many sectors; tourism gave rise to significant economic, social and environmental challenges which were not sufficiently taken into account.

Presentation by **Christine OUDINOT**, Director of ATUD, Ile-de-France

In her presentation, Christine Oudinot endeavoured to place sustainable development within a sustainable development strategy **at the level of regional conurbations**.

The following finding was made:

Since the diversity of tourism activities consistently led to poor visibility of the economic and environmental impact of tourism, the development of tourism was treated in a sector-based manner by metropolises. There were 2 co-existing themes: the tourism sector and the sustainable development decisions made by metropolises. This is reflected in a continual mismatch between the information disseminated by the cities' tourism promotion bodies and the metropolises' urban policies for sustainable development which impact on the perception of the regional identity by tourists.

Similarly, **the WTO** (World Tourism Organisation), which forecasts 1.5 billion journeys by 2040, still favours the growth in tourism in economic terms without combining these forecasts with an evaluation of the ecological footprint for the sector.

The example of Denmark's "**Destination 21**" initiative is a concrete illustration of the different phases of an over-arching process combining sustainable development and tourism. It concerns a successful example of tourism management for a territory based on the commitment of municipalities to introducing an Agenda 21 in the tourism sector, as well as mobilisation of all categories of players impacting on the region.

It concerns both a process for labelling regions and tourism products and a management system leading to award of this label. This label must also allow tourists to recognise the sustainable development approach which has been undertaken by the region.

CONCLUSION:

To take account of the specific nature and complexity of the tourism sector, it is indispensable to find a place for the sustainable development of tourism on the basis of:

- A long-term vision of the objectives to be attained, with consensus building among the different stakeholders (municipalities, local players, companies, residents, tourists, etc.);
- Incorporating changes in tourists' behaviour in the long term.

Presentation by **Thierry COT**, Director of the Vexin Français Regional Nature Park (PNR), Ile-de-France

In his presentation relating to the experience of sustainable tourism in the Vexin Français Regional Nature Park, Thierry COT spoke of the specific features of this peculiarly French concept which dates from 1965 and whose main objective is to preserve local heritage. The first park was set up in 1969. There are currently 44 PNRs in France, covering 12% of the national territory.

Thierry COT stressed that the principal purpose of the rural territories, which have local residents (unlike National Parks), is to protect and enhance natural heritage. Many territories would like to obtain PNR classification.

A joint policy between the regions and the State ensures the administration and management of Parks. Once the certification has been obtained, the PNR is certified for twelve years.

The PNR's five-fold remit:

- contribute to development of the territory,
- protect and manage local heritage,
- contribute to economic and social development
- welcome and educate the public
- experiment and innovate.

The charter of the Vexin PNR is a contract presenting the directions and commitments of the signatories. It concerns a public establishment comprised of the State, the Region and 84 communes. Approach based on joint objectives. Vexin: clear-cut challenges: support a vibrant rurality in IDF, enhance heritage and consolidate territories.

The **European charter for sustainable tourism in protected areas**, backed by the EUROPARC European network, was set up between 1995 and 1999. It was drawn up with 10 pilot parks in 6 countries. This charter is a methodological tool: 12 principles targeting 3 areas: protected areas, tourism businesses (hoteliers, restaurateurs, etc.), tour operators and major airlines. The value of this charter lies in the sharing of experiences at European level through exchanges or transfer of experiences between territories.

A few examples of actions: creation of accommodation, restaurants and products labelled, training workshops, creation of houses eventually, Baladobus, nature and discovery outings.

Conclusion: Tourism is central to the challenges: it is a sustainable development tool within a regional project. Tourism is one of the components of a rural zone. For the Vexin region, it forms part of the regional project.

Presentation by **Kevin CURRIE**, Chairman of Green Tourism Association (GTA), city of Toronto

Kevin Currie presented this structure to promote urban ecotourism which was founded in 1996 with the goal of **guiding tourism in Toronto towards a sustainable future**. Among the other objectives fixed by the association: supporting local economies, preparing an eco-friendly tourism industry, contributing to respecting cultural and natural heritage.

By setting up eco-friendly tourism activities, the GTA's goal is to encourage tourists to adopt sustainable transport methods and leisure pursuits. To achieve this goal: promotion and marketing, business development, procedures to make the tourism industry ecologically responsible.

The GTA currently has over 150 members (NGOs, SME/SMIs, tourism bodies, representatives of municipalities, city residents).

Their motto: apply the principles of eco-tourism to an urban context: ensure environmental responsibility, economic vitality and cultural diversity.

Statistical data relating to tourism: 9% of visitors to Canada go to Toronto, i.e. 16.3 million people generating an economic windfall of 3.34 billion Canadian dollars.

Concrete actions: the plan to revitalise the quays, map of cycle lanes, TourGreen campaign (become Ambassador for the protection of the environment in the context of a tourism approach), publication of "Another guide to Toronto", etc.

CONCLUSION:

Kevin Currie stressed that Toronto was ideally placed to develop sustainable tourism projects. It was unique in terms of its green pedigree underpinned by the political will to take these projects forward.

The debate:

The key question for selecting criteria for selection and evaluation of sustainable tourism products was posed (Ch. Oudinot) with regard to the example of the Green Tourism Association. It turned out that it was an important point to implement to build on the credibility of the approach and that it was vital to have a preliminary phase for training and building awareness among tourism professionals.

Tom ROPER, Honorary chairman of Metropolis, intervened at the end of the meeting, recalling the importance of ensuring that tourism is as respectful of the environment as possible, particularly in terms of constructing establishments and transport. Tom Roper raised one of the key problems of the tourism sector and its sustainability: transport and the environmental damage caused.

General conclusion:

To conclude this workshop, which has benefited from valuable input on all sides, we shall quote a contribution from Antoni Alarcon I Puerto, representative of the RMB, made during the debate when he stressed that **fields where sustainability was hard to apply (such as tourism) required a strong commitment from the public and political authorities.**

2.6. Subsequent actions

- Organise the **second meeting of Commission 1 in Paris in September 2007,**
- Offer **training based on the Eco-region and themes**
- Send out a **call for proposals** to all C1 member cities on precisely what an Eco-region consists in.
- **Develop consideration of application of the Eco-region concept in Ile-de-France and produce a benchmark document.**
- **Identify the approaches to be followed in the context of the Eco-region** so as to anticipate climate change and the erosion of biodiversity.

For more information on the commission 1 – the Eco-regions, please contact the commission secretary:

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APPENDIX 1

**LIST OF CITIES AND INTERNATIONAL BODIES PRESENT AT THE 1ST MEETING OF THE COMMISSION 1
– ECO-REGION**

CITIES

Antananarivo, Madagascar
Brazzaville, Congo
Dakar, Senegal
Gwangju, South Korea
Gyeonggi, South Korea
Kinshasa, Congo
Melbourne, Australia
Colombo, Sri Lanka
Brussels, Belgium

Mexico City, Mexico,
Ile-de-France Region, France
Porto Alegre, Brazil
Puebla de Zaragoza, Mexico
Teheran, Iran
Toronto, Canada
Barcelona, Spain
Moscow, Russia

INTERNATIONAL BODIES

International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

LIST OF CITIES RESPONDING TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE COMMISSION1 – ECO-REGION

Kinshasa, Congo
Mexico City, Mexico
Alexandria, Egypt
Amman, Jordan
Mashhad, Iran
Barcelona, Spain
Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Ile-de-France Region, France
Turin, Italy
Melbourne, Australia
Brussels, Belgium
Puebla de Zaragoza, Mexico
Antananarivo, Madagascar