

E U R
P A O
N FR



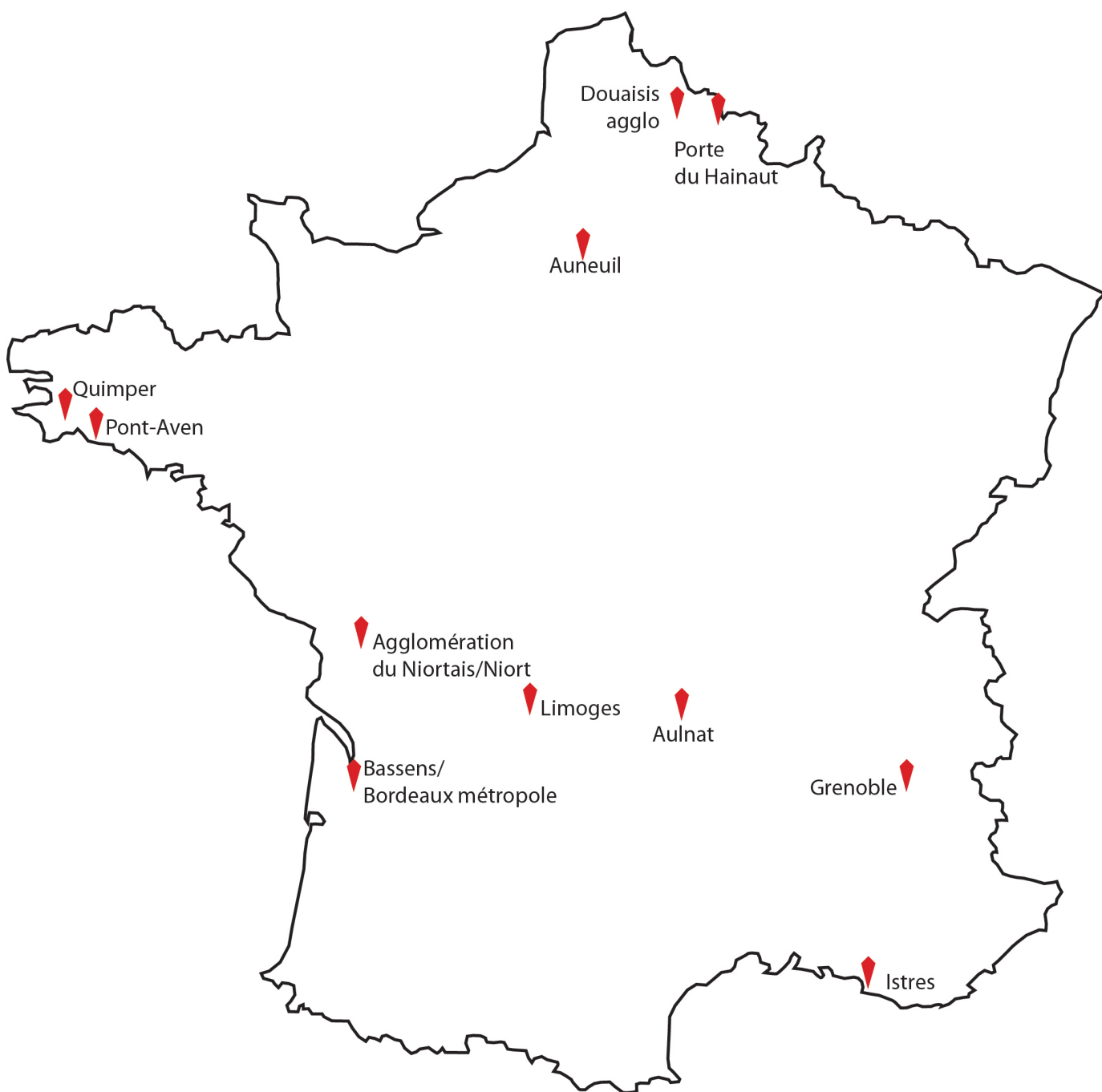
E16 - Living Cities

NIORT

BETWEEN CITY AND MARSHLANDS

Site Brief





Quimper

Pont-Aven

Douaisis
agglo

Porte
du Hainaut

Auneuil

Agglomération
du Niortais/Niort

Limoges

Aulnat

Bassens/
Bordeaux métropole

Grenoble

Istres

SITES, IDEAS, AND MORE!

Europan is once again presenting 11 sites in France for the 16th session, based on the theme Living Cities, Metabolic and Inclusive Vitalities.

For more than 30 years, European has provided an opportunity to experiment with new ways of thinking and creating cities, and the themes regularly address major issues at the heart of their relevance.

It left nobody in any doubt that the word LIVING is at the center of debates, works, research, and that considering the progressive extinction of this world, little by little reached by a dominant human civilization of exhaustion of the resources and the otherness. And as soon as we position ourselves in this thematic, the horizon of the revitalization is huge, and the work to be carried out on the scale of these perspectives.

We often use the term European « competition » when we should be mentioning the overall original process which continues to demonstrate its capacity to adapt. First of all, the sites are identified and then analyzed in collaboration with the various players, starting with the theme and exploring these themes in situ. The meetings, visits and films, and the proposition of articulation between site and theme allow the candidates to reexamine and question them.

The proposals submitted by the teams are once again part of a long and very rich process that will lead in one way or another to a recognized experimentation, that of ideas, encounters, expressed possibilities, and re-expressed questions. The follow-ups will continue the elaboration of a living urban and architectural thought, in evolution and in active transformation.

The theme Living Cities reflects the urgency of thinking differently about human lifestyles, with a heritage that is sometimes fraught with consequences but also very rich: the prospects for renewing, recycling and transforming modes of production associated with a thought of the living are immense.

The European process makes it a unique ongoing event because, like a philharmonic narrative, it allows young generations of architectural and urban designers to speak out and then to be commissioned. European allows them to tell us that we are sometimes wrong, that there are other ways of thinking, of doing things, and of projecting themselves into the future.

This theme Living Cities, after such a particular year of pandemic, is dedicated to them.



EUROPAN 16 THEME : LIVING CITIES

CREATIVE PROCESS-PROJECTS TO REGENERATE INHABITED MILIEUS

In the conditions of the Anthropocene –a new bio-geological period where human activities on the global scale have a destructive impact on life on earth– how to face climate change and inequalities? How to imagine other possibilities to inhabit the planet Earth?

The European 16 topic focuses on living cities as a new paradigm, in which new kinds of synergies can be considered between the environmental, biological, social, economic, cultural and political dimensions. This paradigm leads us to think the space in terms of co-evolution and interactions, and to work with regenerative project dynamics, combining metabolic and inclusive vitalities.

METABOLIC VITALITIES

Metabolic vitalities go beyond the nature-culture combination, allowing the European projects –mixing architecture, urban design and landscape architecture– to identify and to negotiate with an ensemble of transformations taking natural elements into account –like water, material flows, energy...– which are all part of the life cycles. These new relations generate inhabited milieus. These milieus are considered as complex ecosystems generating flows (with entries and exits) and in constant evolution. Developing such cyclic processes leads the design process to minimize the environmental footprint and the consumption of non-renewable energy, and to promote new forms of dwelling.

Metabolic vitalities encourage design processes on different scales. The recycling competence, the enhancement of organic or energy material, the adaptation to climate change, the integration of nature and biodiversity are as many metabolic vitalities that European 16 sites should trigger to allow their own transformation into ecosystems between nature and culture. To be rewarded, the projects should translate this metabolic dynamic in their proposals.

INCLUSIVE VITALITIES

Urban environments are facing increasing inequalities and conflicts produced by invisibility, exclusion, marginalization, and inaccessibility to housing, to work, to education and to public services. To fight against these social fractures, inhabited milieus should become places where new inclusive policies and practices are supported.

Inclusive vitalities put on the foreground modes of doing that can support territorial justice articulating social and ecological concerns. Issues of accessibility to public infrastructures and to housing should get a predominant role, promoting conviviality. Taking care of living environments could promote inclusion by transforming marginalised spaces into places of exchange, co-learning and biodiversity. This could allow new inclusive narratives of inhabited environments across scales and generations, promoting new forms participatory democracy.

When choosing the sites, when defining the programmatic frames that come with their evolution, and when judging the participants' proposals, European 16 will emphasise on the consideration of the inclusive dimension of the inhabited milieus.

CONCLUSION

If we want to face these social and environmental emergencies, we have to address new creative and responsible project dynamics, which should be able to reconnect with the cycles and rhythms of the living nature, associating metabolic and inclusive vitalities.

The European 16 sites should therefore consider these two dimensions in their transformation goals. How can the project spatialize and, at the same time, spare resources, common goods, recycling processes, hybridisations, sharing and the different temporalities ?

This is the question raised for European 16.

EUROPAN EUROPE

*See also : Contributions to the theme Living Cities :
<http://www.euopanfrance.org/publications/single/38>

INFORMATIONS GÉNÉRALES

SITE REPRESENTATIVE : Niort Agglo - Ville de Niort

ACTOR(S) INVOLVED : Parc Régional du Marais Poitevin

TEAM REPRESENTATIVE : Architect, urbanist or landscape architect

EXPECTED SKILLS REGARDING THE SITE'S ISSUES AND CHARACTERISTICS : Architecture, urbanism, landscape, environnement and ecology, programming, agronomy

COMMUNICATION: Promotion of the projects after the competition: publication of a catalogue of the results and national exhibition

JURY – 1ST EVALUATION : With the participation of the site representatives

JURY – PRIZE SELECTION:

Selection of three projects per site. With the participation of the site representatives

Reward: the rewards are granted by the jury independently of the sites: Winner (12.000€), Runner-up (6.000€) and Special Mention (no reward)

POST-COMPETITION INTERMEDIATE PROCEDURE :

- Meeting with sites representatives and 3 selected teams, organized by European France in Paris at the beginning of 2022
- On-site meeting with sites representatives and 3 selected teams organized by cities and partners from January 2022
- Assistance and consultancy to the cities and partners, also their collaborators, for the implementations processes, by European France.

MISSION DONNÉE A LA (OU LES) ÉQUIPES SÉLECTIONNÉE(S) POUR LA RÉALISATION :

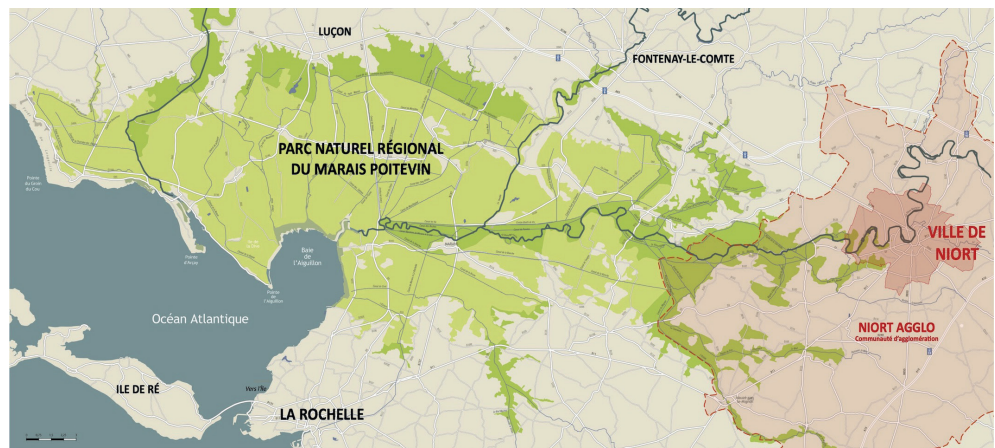
Project management and urban and/or landscape strategy commissions / Feasibility studies for sites and project territories identified by European teams / Ad hoc design and project management commissions.

Encouraging an operational and/or architectural contract with associated clients.

**THE TOWN AND THE
MARSHLANDS**
FR-NIORT-SS-Po1



**LOCATION OF NIORT IN THE
MARAIS POITEVIN REGIONAL
NATURE PARK**
FR-NIORT-C-Mo2



CONNECTION TO THE THEME OF LIVING CITIES

A VAST STUDY SITE FOR EXPLORING PROJECT PROCESSES RELATED TO A TERRITORIAL PROJECT

An urban area within the natural environment of the Marais Poitevin

Because of its geographical location between land and sea in a natural area that is particularly sensitive to climate change, the proposed EUROPAN site in Niort fits very naturally into the theme of living cities; interactions and interdependence between the natural environment and human activities are very vividly expressed here. The Niort urban area (agglomération) is a living territory in more ways than one. Its natural, cultural and urban heritage is the result of a long history of evolution, adaptation and interactions between humans and their environment. Niort has the particularity of being the only French city of its size to be entirely within a Regional Natural Park (PNR). The Sèvre Niortaise River, which runs through the city and is navigable by small boats, connects the city directly to the heart of the Marais Poitevin, the second largest wetland in France. The Marais Poitevin Regional Nature Park encompasses 18 other municipalities in the urban area, 11 of which are part of a territory recognized as a «Grand Site de France», a designation reserved for listed natural sites of great renown and extremely high numbers of visitors.

The city and the greater urban community (Communauté d'agglomération) derive a sense of both pride and responsibility from being part of this immense natural and cultural heritage, which is expressed in their cultural and environmental policies and town planning documents. The current economic development and urban planning initiatives come up against the vulnerability of an environment that is as remarkable as it is fragile and needs to be valued, preserved and restored.

By participating in the EUROPAN approach, the city and the agglomeration hope to reinforce a territorial project involving several municipalities, soliciting the ideas of multidisciplinary teams who will have the freedom to make conceptual, strategic or operational proposals at various levels of the project. In response to the issues set out in this site file, the EUROPAN teams are asked to come up with project approaches adapted to the specific characteristics of the Niort area and the study site with the possibility of widening or narrowing the focus.

**Introductory statement
by the Mayor of Niort, President of the Agglomération du Niortais**

Niort Agglo and the city of Niort are committed to proven, rigorous approaches to sustainable development and urban planning that respects the living environment and landscape. Planning frameworks such as Plan Climat Air Energie Territorial (PCAET), Schéma de cohérence territoriale (SCoT), the roadmap for ODD Niort Durable 2030 integrate these principles based on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted in September 2015 by the UN and in coherence with our own context and assets.

The city and the agglomeration hope, by pooling their respective competencies and by aligning with an environmental, social and economic transition adapted to global challenges, to be able to construct a sustainable territory for the future. Our ambition is to develop an innovative model for a mid-sized city that is attractive, solidary and responsible and that will be able to guide the development of this unique territory rooted in the Marais Poitevin Regional Nature Park.

Our participation in the European 16 competition is perfectly in line with this objective, as it opens up the discussion to professionals in urban planning so that they can give us alternative innovative perspectives. We are hoping to be able to use their input, which will undoubtedly be very rich, to broaden our approach to sustainable development of the territory.

The competition focuses on a coherent unifying perimeter that nevertheless presents major problems for urban development at the heart of the agglomeration. The aim is to reduce the impact of road infrastructures in the landscape while maintaining a mobility that allows access to the area and its services. By designing the Living City in this area surrounding the heart of the agglomeration, we are aiming to diminish the disruptions caused by roads and restore continuity through natural infrastructures, create a neighbourhood environment that is a sign of conviviality and good communal living and integrate and provide support for the activities that are essential to the vitality of the area.

Jérôme Baloge

**VIEW OF THE MARSH FROM THE
COMMUNE OF MAGNÉ**
FR-NIORT-SS_AP04
© Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



A site that varies greatly: from «city entrance» to «in between cities»

The proposed study site corresponds to an «intermediate territory» lying in between the city of Niort and five municipalities in the heart of the agglomeration that have similar issues of connection, landscape assessment, development of new uses and diversification of agriculture along the city/marshland interface. These are essentially transitional spaces (neighbourhoods on the edge of town, outlying businesses, industrial zones along the highways, rural spaces, meadows, fields, pastures or fallow land).

These transitional spaces are the legacy of poorly controlled urban development during the 20th century that has led to a degradation of the landscape. Wide, straight, heavily-trafficked avenues with poor, often insignificant frontages cut through the areas. These infrastructures should no longer be just roads reserved for traffic, but should become supports for many other functions (alternative mobility, more integrated shops, biodiversity and so on).

At issue is not only the quality of «city entrances», but a more general question of landscape, use of these areas «in between cities» and the role of these intermediate spaces exposed to a variety of pressures. For the city and the agglomeration, these transitional spaces need to be more attractive landmarks and should become the subject of a full-fledged development and management project in collaboration with the Regional Nature Park, neighbouring municipalities and local partners (farmers, businesses, associations, residents, etc.).

The city and the agglomeration's expectations from the EUROPAN competition

In addition to its strong cultural ties to the Marais, the Niort agglomeration has an important rural dimension owing to the presence of a the strong farming sector and is recognised as an area with a high level of biodiversity. The agglomeration, the city of Niort and the NRP are working together to ensure that «urban development» and «environmental and landscape quality» are consistent with each other based on major objectives defined in the PCAET¹ and the SCOT². The city has undertaken major initiatives to improve its centre (Place de la Brèche, Port Boinot industrial wasteland) along side an ambitious policy to integrate more nature into the city as in the «Niort Canopée» plan currently being drafted. Niort wishes to extend this strategy out to the edges of the municipal territory in order to improve city entrances and the landscape along the main arteries while improving the connection to the other municipalities at the heart of the agglomeration.

These objectives are broken down into practical programmes, including free public transport, the fight against urban heat islands, the creation of a green network and assistance with tree planting. They are part of the learning initiative «Objectifs de Développement Durable ODD³ et Territoires» carried out by the Ministry of Ecological Transition and Solidarity. «Niort Durable 2030» is a commitment to the 17 sustainable development goals adopted by the UN in 2015. The agglomeration and the city are making use of their respective competencies in the environmental and social fields to promote the territory through innovative programmes benefiting

1. Plan Climat Air Énergie Territorial (Territorial Climate Air and Energy Plan)
2. Schéma de cohérence territoriale (Territorial Coherence Scheme)

3. Objectifs de Développement Durable (Sustainable Development Goals)

4. Plan Local d'Urbanisme
Intercommunal
(Intercommunal Local Urban
Plan)

a revamped urbanism. They endorse the «new model for an attractive, solidary and responsible medium-sized metropolis» which underpins the territorial project and is in line with the European 16 theme, which addresses ecological issues (harmonious interaction between natural and urban environments) and economic issues (changes in business areas, agriculture, development of local food chains, services for inhabitants, etc.).

Local authorities are expecting the EUROPAN teams to provide new, distinct points of view on one or more project sites. They are looking for new ideas for developing an overall approach, tested in existing areas, with a view to translating them into the PLUi⁴ currently being drawn up and to lay the foundations of new principles for the development of public spaces or facilities. Following the competition, the city and the agglomeration plan to develop and carry out the selected proposals on territorial sites, routes or areas chosen together with the winning teams.

Based on the city/marshland relationship, the place of plants and water in the urban fabric and landscape, three major themes are proposed:

- Nature and health: benefits of natural environments, biodiversity, reducing noise and air pollution, adapting to climate change, greening of the city;
- Mobility and flow: active mobility as an alternative to the car, everyday and tourist routes, pedestrian and cycling routes, local production and consumer networking, etc.;
- Economy and land management: reclassification or transformation of abandoned land in the vicinity of road infrastructures, preservation and diversification of agriculture, treatment of commercial or residential sites on the city/marshland border.

**THE EASTERN ENTRANCE TO
THE CONURBATION - AVENUE
DE LIMOGES**
FR-NIORT-SS_AP09
© Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



SITE ISSUES IN RELATION TO THE SESSION THEME

Metabolic vitality: unite and synergise city and marshland resources

The concept of urban metabolism involves resources of a territory, flows of energy and materials that enable it to function and its ability to produce wealth or revive derelict areas. The Niort site offers an excellent opportunity for experimenting with this EUROPAN 16 sub-theme around four major elements of the territory: water, earth, vegetation and urban environment. How to strengthen the synergy between the Niort agglomeration urban system and the agro-ecosystem of the Marais Poitevin? How to take advantage of the natural, architectural and cultural wealth of the area to organise or regenerate derelict/degraded areas? How to organise space and flows to promote the local economy? How to accommodate human and natural habitats without the former degrading the latter?

Inclusive vitalities: use and accessibility of the edges of a ‘gateway city’ in the Marais

Niort and the greater urban area is one of four urban centres in direct contact with the wetlands and described as «gateway cities» to the Marais Poitevin. «The gateway cities have cultural, sporting, medical and tourist facilities and services, which are a resource for the Regional Nature Park. Likewise, the riches of the Marais to be discovered or exploited are so many links to be forged between the wetland and the gateway towns. Partnerships are being established to raise awareness among the urban population of the natural heritage and encourage tourists to visit the Marais and purchase local products.»⁵

The unique topography of an urban area built in the Marais recalls the idea of «territory city» that solicits a different way of looking at the urban periphery. The issue raised in Niort is reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Broadacre City and other utopian cities set in nature or agricultural ecosystems. The sub-theme questions access and mobility for inhabitants and visitors to the Marais, natural and physical ties for interconnecting environments and human movement. The development of this «intermediate city» may mean developing new uses in between city and marshland, restoring the patchwork bordering main avenues and integrate housing into the environment.

5. Charte du PNR du Marais Poitevin (Charter of the Marais Poitevin Regional Nature Park)



SITE DE RÉFLEXION
FR-NIORT-SS-APoo

Nature and description of the Marais Poitevin environments (from : Charte du PNR)

The Marais Poitevin is the second largest wetland in France after Camargue and the largest of the western coastal marshes. Surrounded by four greater urban areas - Niort, La Rochelle, Fontenay-le-Comte and Luçon - the rural area of the Marais is increasingly affected by this proximity and by peri-urbanisation. This former sea gulf has been gradually transformed by natural developments and the strong presence of man. Since the Middle Ages, all the development that has taken place to improve agricultural has had to do with the control of water. Over the centuries, the Marais Poitevin has become an engineered agricultural area, a vast agro-ecosystem. The Marais has two characteristic environments with distinct management methods:

- The **dry marshlands** cover the largest area, surrounded by dikes protecting them from the ocean and waters from the catchment basin flooding back. They are wide-open spaces with few trees. Dikes, drainage ditches, hydraulic works and large grain fields are evidence of man's control over the environment.
- The **wet marshlands** include the principal floodplains of the Vendée, Sèvre, Lay and Curé rivers and a complex network of ditches and canals designed to collect the water and carry it to the sea.

CONTEXT AND TERRITORIAL STRATEGIES

THE TERRITORY'S NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL STRUCTURE

MARAIS POITEVIN

A dynamic multifunctional agro-ecosystem

The Marais Poitevin Regional Nature Park has 95 communities within its boundaries and covers an area of more than 200,000 hectares across three departments (Vendée, Charente-Maritime and Deux-Sèvres). The wetlands (more than 100,000 hectares, 68,000 of which are registered Natura 2000) are the defining element of this territory built by and with water, the foundation of social, cultural, economic and ecological history of this vast area subject to natural and anthropic evolution. The Marais Poitevin regulates the storage and release of water through a large network of canals and dams that have managed water levels since the 11th century.

The richness and complexity of the marsh comes from its multifunctional character and the interdependence of the natural environment and human activities. The wetland has a hydraulic role (as a receptacle for water from the catchment area), a natural and ecological role (fauna and flora), an agricultural role (crops, livestock and market gardening) and a recreational and tourist role (openness and accessibility for the public). The running of the park involves hydraulic, environmental, economic and socio-cultural issues. The need to find a balance and synergy with nature, agriculture, housing and human activities is particularly relevant on the park's edges and along the interface with neighbouring towns.

A natural environment transformed by agricultural practices

Designated a Regional Nature Park in 1979 (a status lost in 1996 but reinstated in 2014), the Marais Poitevin has seen a great deal of controversy around development, a willingness to modernise farming and a commitment to preserving wetlands. At issue is reconciling ecological concerns with those from the economy, agriculture and tourism always keeping in mind that each change impacts hydraulic management.

Until the 1950s, traditional agriculture adapted to the constraints of the natural environment and winter flooding. Modern agriculture and farming methods led to the draining of wetlands. Irrigation systems were then developed on the dried-out fields on the periphery of the wetlands. Over the last 30 years, almost 30,000 hectares of natural wet grasslands have been ploughed under for cultivation. Tiling and water pumping for irrigation have contributed to the increase in drying out of the ground and further loss of natural habitats. Aware of the fragility of this sensitive environment, the agricultural world is now adapting its practices and contributing to the planting of hedgerows.

A mosaic of typical landscapes

The omnipresence of water defines the marsh landscape with its network of canals, wide navigable ditches (conches) and smaller ditches (rigoles) that define a grid of parcels of land: meadows, poplar groves, pastures, wooded vegetable gardens and often fallow land somewhat like a natural labyrinth. The flat boats (barques plates) used to visit the marsh or to transport livestock (cows and goats) are reminiscent of Venetian gondolas. Trees pruned into arches over narrow canals filter the light and create an intimate atmosphere. The pollard ash trees (frênes têtards) along the canal banks are emblematic of the Marais Mouillé (pollarding consists of regularly beheading (étêter) the trees for firewood). To this range of aquatic and terrestrial environments can be added the architectural heritage of market garden houses with their colourful shutters, typical of the traditional village-rues. Built up village-tas along with farms and isolated hamlets are on the edge of the wet marshlands (Marais mouillé), along with other reminders of former times (mills, washhouses, fountains, bridges, footbridges, ports, coves, huts, etc.).

THE URBAN SÈVRE NIORTAISE

FR-NIORT-SS-Po2

THE NATURAL SÈVRE NIORTAISE

FR-NIORT-SS-Po7



THE GREATER URBAN AREA OF NIORT AGGLO

An area defined by water with a long agricultural tradition

In an area that gradually transitions from land to sea, the agglomeration is defined by a dense hydrographic network made up of rivers and canals with approximately 577 km of permanent waterways. This network is centred on the Sèvre Niortaise River and its tributaries. The territory is on a gentle grade (from 1 to 145 m altitude) with a few topographic discrepancies in the valleys and the Marais Poitevin, an exceptional area lying just one to three meters above sea level.

The agglomeration territory is mainly agricultural (77%) and nature (9%) with just 19% urbanized or artificialized. The ground is essentially calcareous, stony and red in colour. Low water retention means it's good for winter crops (cereals, rape, fodder) but not for spring crops (maize). There are some non-calcareous red clay plateaus to the north of the agglomeration with better water retention and better yields. In the valleys, the wetter areas are more suitable for spring crops, permanent grasslands and poplar plantations, while the higher, dryer terraces produce good crops of wheat, maize and sunflower. Finally, the 'wet' marshland is home to crops similar to those found in the valley or market gardening.

An area for tourism

Part of the Regional Nature Park, including Niort, was designated Grand Site de France in 2010, confirming its remarkable nature and importance for tourism. The Marais Poitevin is indeed highly valued for tourism (approximately 850,000 visitors a year) and for residential purposes (densely populated, attractive area) but also for agriculture (good agronomic soil). Unfortunately, the attractiveness of tourism puts the municipalities under pressure from new leisure facilities whose need of space and poor integration into the landscape can sometimes cause difficulties. New developments should respect the charter for regional nature parks (Charte du PNR) to preserve biodiversity and landscapes. As «gateway town» to the Marais, Niort is a destination in itself and a starting point for visiting the Marais, particularly via boating on the Sèvre Niortaise.

NIORT LANDSCAPES

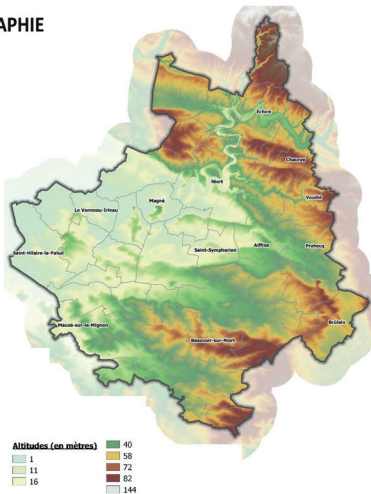
The Niort conurbation is made up of six landscape units identified at regional level: the urban core (the city and its suburbs), the valleys of the Sèvre Niortaise and its tributaries, the plains of open fields that form an agricultural ring around the conurbation, the bocage plain stretching to the south of the city to meet, the «Green Venice», a remarkably unique landscape of wet marshes. Three typical landscapes are detailed following.

The Sèvre Niortaise and its tributaries

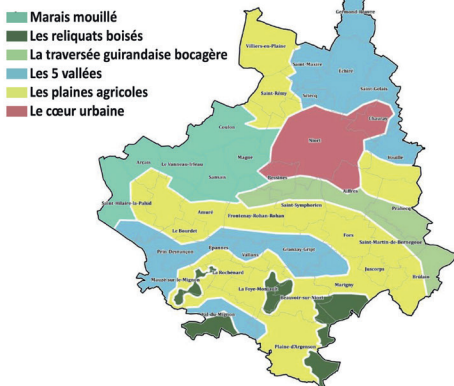
The Sèvre Niortaise River valley is one of five wet and dry valleys that strongly shape the Niort landscape. Upstream, the river meanders across a wide, flat wet floodplain covered by meadows, humid woodlands and poplar groves and dry, shallow valleys or meander cutoffs that have been drained for cultivation. From Sciecq to the southwestern edge of Niort, the Sèvre narrows and the river becomes less visible and less physically accessible. The large agricultural lands surrounding

LANDSCAPE UNITS
FR-NIORT-C-Mo4
© Niort Agglo

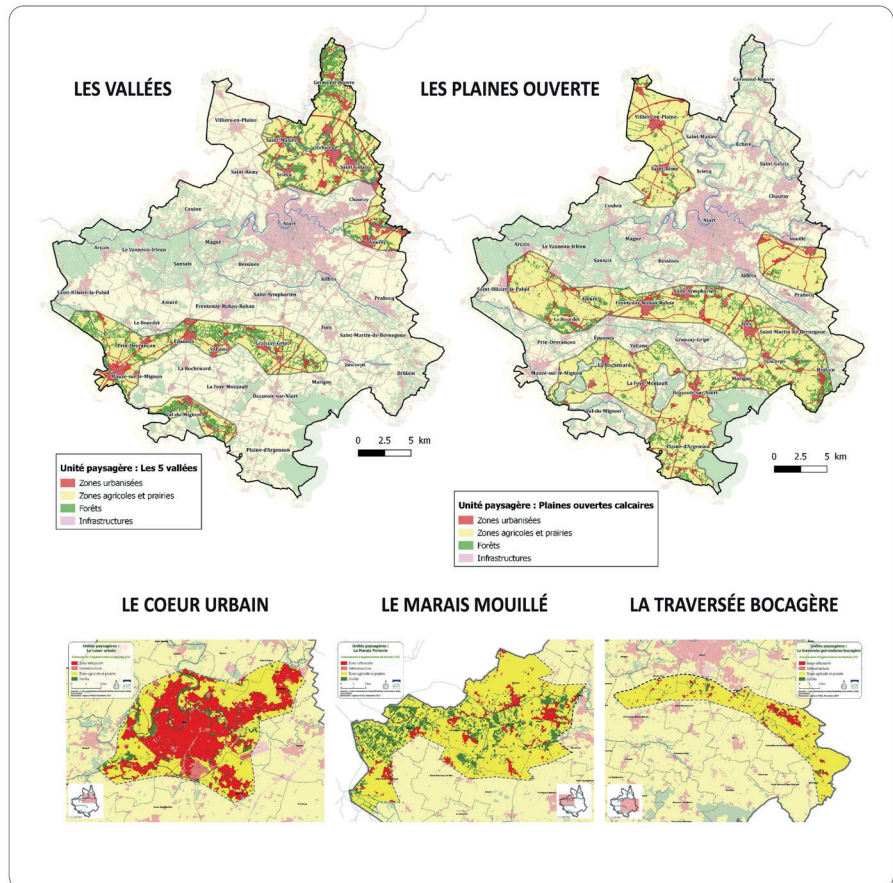
TOPOGRAPHIE



UNITÉS PAYSAGÈRES



UNITÉS PAYSAGÈRES



the river leave little direct access for a hiker, often only narrow paths. Several villages, such as Chauray and Sciecq, are located along the river, on low cliffs (Chauray, Sciecq, etc.) or near crossings (bridges, fords, locks or footbridges).

The agricultural plains

The agricultural plains to the north and southwest of the agglomeration represent the most extensive landscape unit. They appear as a group of clearings for grain farming. To the south, hedgerows, small woodlands and landmarks such as bell towers, water towers, sheds, agricultural silos and groves stand out in this relatively flat landscape and enrich the visual perspectives.

Old villages are largely well preserved, although several have suffered from urban sprawl and the construction of large commercial and industrial zones (Aiffres, Chauray, etc.). Paradoxically, villages have more vegetation than the surrounding cultivated plains and hedgerows create breaks and green edges. A few hamlets and historical buildings, sometimes abandoned, contribute to the beauty and identity of the villages. The many busy tree-lined roads sometimes with excellent vantage points are a perfect way to discover the area.

The bocage paths south of Niort

This strip of land is rhythmized by the typical bocage hedgerows. The wetter ground is ideal for livestock, pastures, some vineyards and orchards and has, therefore, been preserved from intensive cultivation. The hedgerows form a wide range of environments and landscapes suitable for walking and horse riding. However, the landscape is not always accessible or clearly visible due to a proliferation of private paths, visual barriers and the flatness of the land. Buildings are more dispersed and protected from view by a dense network of hedges. The rural quality is stronger along the edges of the marsh where vegetable gardens signal the transition from built up areas to the more densely wooded marsh.

REGIONAL LOCATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

FR-NIORT-C-Mo3

© Niort Agglo

GREEN VENICE AVENUE

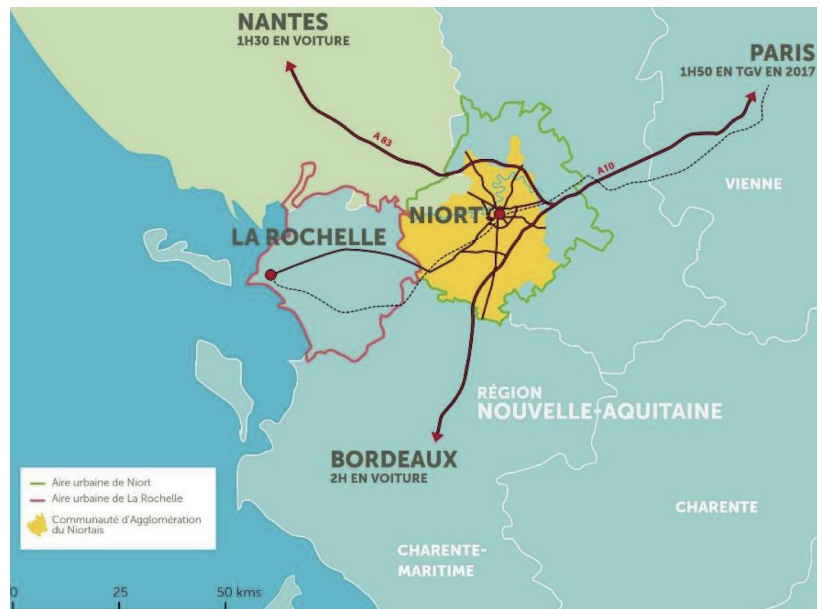
FR-NIORT-SS-APo2

© Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone

AVENUE SAINT-JEAN D'ANGELY

FR-NIORT-SS-APo7

© Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



THE URBAN FABRIC AND NETWORK OF INFRASTRUCTURES

A CROSSROADS AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC HUB

The Niort agglomeration unites 40 municipalities with over 120,000 inhabitants. The A83 (Nantes-Niort) and A10 (Paris-Bordeaux) motorways and the TGV Sud Europe Atlantique line provide very good regional and national access. Niort Agglo, La Rochelle and Rochefort Océan form a greater metropolitan area that has a population of 500,000 and where the agglomeration is developing economic partnerships. The agglomeration is economically and demographically strong and enjoys a residential appeal due to its location two hours by train from Paris, Nantes and Bordeaux. The fact that there are more jobs than working people living in the conurbation (more than 30% of jobs are filled by people living outside the conurbation) is proof of its attractiveness.

The tertiary sector accounts for more than 80% of jobs, i.e. nearly 9,000 direct employment positions in the insurance sector and nearly 11,000 in the financial sector, making Niort the fourth largest financial centre in France. In the 1950s, the baby boom, rural exodus and development of large private insurance companies lead to major developments in Niort. In 1970, Niort became the «capital of insurance companies». It remains a major centre of the tertiary economy in Aquitaine and about ten national complementary insurance headquarters (MAAF, MACIF, MAIF, SMACL, SMIP, GROUPEAMA, IMA, DARVA, etc.) and regional bank headquarters are located here.

The agglomeration is experiencing sustained population growth that testifies its attractiveness based on a rich rural/urban living environment, threshold to the Marais Poitevin. Like many medium-sized towns, it has an ageing population, although there are a significant number of families. The population is essentially middle-class with a large proportion of executives with relatively high incomes.

NIORT AND THE HISTORY OF ITS DEVELOPMENT

The city of Niort is home to half the population of the agglomeration. It has a diverse range of public services in all fields that serve an area extending well beyond the limits of the agglomeration. Major finance and business headquarters and metropolitan offices are located here and connected to the other major metropolitan areas of western France.

The historic centre was founded in Roman times along the Sèvre River and was known for weaving and tanning. Trade began with England in the Middle Ages and the city prospered in the 18th century as a result of the chamois industry. The town has preserved a rich architectural and urban heritage as well as an industrial and port heritage. The Sèvre Niortaise River has shaped the town and its historical development. With the Lambon River, they form a green belt that contrasts to the mineral quality of the city and its rich built heritage. Niort forms an amphitheatre centred on the confluence these two rivers.

The city of Niort began early on to improve its living environment, transforming spaces that had been heavily mineralised in the 20th century due to the automobile. Bernard Bellec, Mayor of Niort from 1985 to 2002, initiated the Brèche gardens project on a former parking lot, creating a cool, pleasant space for the public in the heart of the city (Victoires du Paysage prize, 2014). In the same spirit, the reconversion of the Boinot industrial wasteland (25,000 m²) is a sign of the city of the future, introducing nature areas into the city that link the urbanized area, territory and river. This new island of freshness in the city is a first step in the creation of a natural urban park that will cross Niort and run along the Sèvre. To mitigate the effects of and adapt to climate change, the city is developing its arboreal heritage with the «Niort Canopée» project. This includes the enlargement of natural areas (adding a Regional Nature Reserve to the Marais Galuchet-La Plante) and a major tree-planting programme throughout the area (chemin du troisième millénaire, neighbourhood public spaces, micro-forests of Japanese botanist Akira Mivawaki. etc.).

LA BRÈCHE GARDENS
FR-NIORT-SS-Po5
© Niort Agglo

PORT BOINOT
FR-NIORT-SS-Po6



THE RADIAL AND PERIPHERAL INFRASTRUCTURES

The main avenues

A crossroads of major regional routes and commercial arteries, the urban area is structured by a radial system of roads and avenues forming major urban corridors and city entrances of very diverse quality. The main tree-lined departmental roads become urban avenues converging for the most part on squares in Niort city centre.

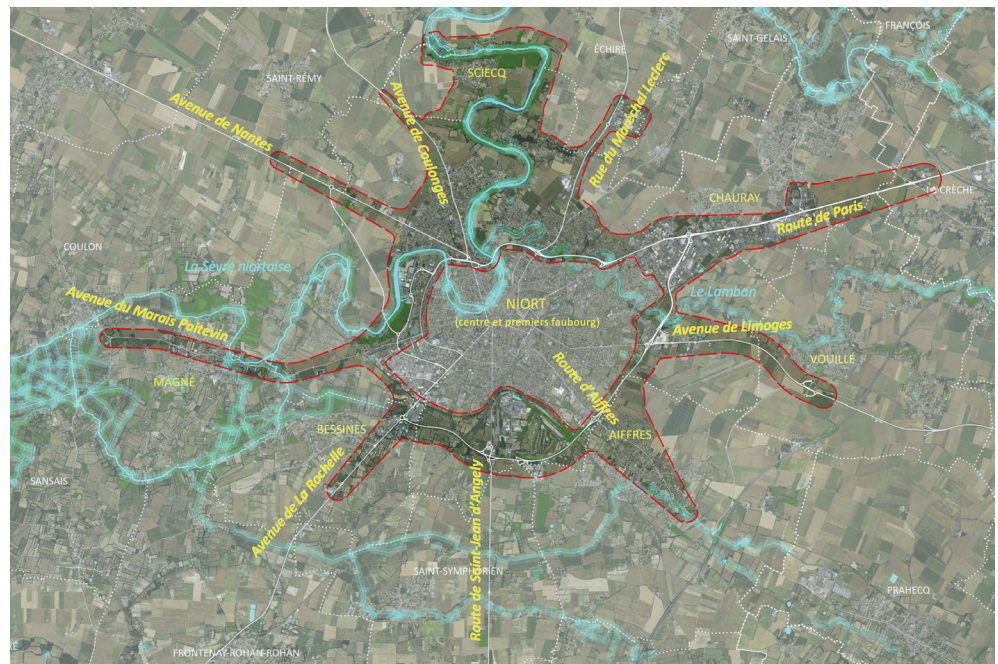
Landscapes at town entrances are often nondescript with fragmented urbanisation. The urban fabric, a mix of housing and business zones, is in a state of disrepair. The improvement of the landscape of these straight roads is important for inter-communal mobility and a more harmonious integration of town, marshland and the peripheral ring of nature and agriculture.

The ring road and the peripheral boulevards

The major road infrastructures created in the 20th century and superimposed on the radial system of avenues form an incomplete spiralling ring road. Roads such as Boulevard de l'Atlantique and Boulevard Pierre Mendès-France at Aiffres have created major physical, landscape and environmental barriers at the price of rapid efficient movement. Their transformation to allow for other mobility systems and a better integration of these infrastructures is now necessary.

CITY ENTRANCES AND MAIN AVENUES

FR-NIORT-SS-M02



EXTRAITS FROM THE SCOT (INTERCOMMUNAL LOCAL URBAN PLAN) OF NIORT AGGLO

FR-NIORT-C-Mo5 - FR-NIORT-C-Mo6

© Niort Agglo

A - ASSURER UN DÉVELOPPEMENT ÉQUILIBRÉ AU SEIN D'UNE ORGANISATION TERRITORIALE

ÉLÉMENTS D'ORGANISATION

- NIORT
- CŒUR D'AGGLOMÉRATION
- COMMUNE D'ÉQUILIBRE
- COMMUNE DE PROXIMITÉ
- COMMUNE DU CŒUR D'AGGLOMÉRATION
- COMMUNE DE PROXIMITÉ

INFLUENCES EXTERNES

- PÔLE ATTRACTIF EXTERIEUR AU TERRITOIRE
- INFLUENCE DES COMMUNES D'ÉQUILIBRE OU DES PÔLES ATTRACTIFS EXTERIEURS
- INFRASTRUCTURES DE TRANSPORT
- AUTOROUTE
- PRINCIPAL AXE ROUTIER
- VOIE FERRÉE

B - PENSER LE TERRITOIRE DANS LA TRANSITION ENVIRONNEMENTALE, ÉNERGÉTIQUE ET CLIMATIQUE

ESPACES VÉGÉTAUX, BOIS, HAIES, PLANTATIONS, ESPACES NATURELS

- ESPACE VÉGÉTALISÉ, BOIS, HAIE, PLANTATION À DÉVELOPPER, PRÉSERVER
- ESPACE NATUREL REMARQUABLE, SENSIBLE À VALORISER
- PÉRIMÈTRE DU PARC NATUREL RÉGIONAL DU MARAIS POITEVIN
- ZONE HUMIDE

RESSOURCE EN EAU

- COURS D'EAU

C - PROMOUVOIR UNE URBANISATION RESPECTUEUSE DU PATRIMOINE ET DES PAYSAGES

PROTÉGER ET VALORISER LE PATRIMOINE PAYSAGER ARCHITECTURAL ET CULTUREL

- ESPACE NATUREL À ENJEUX
- TERRE CULTIVÉE
- PATRIMOINE BÂTI (MONUMENT HISTORIQUE)

PRÉFÉRER LE RENOUVELLEMENT URBAIN, LIMITER LA CONSOMMATION FONCIÈRE ET L'HABITAT DIFFUS

- ENVELOPPE URBAINE

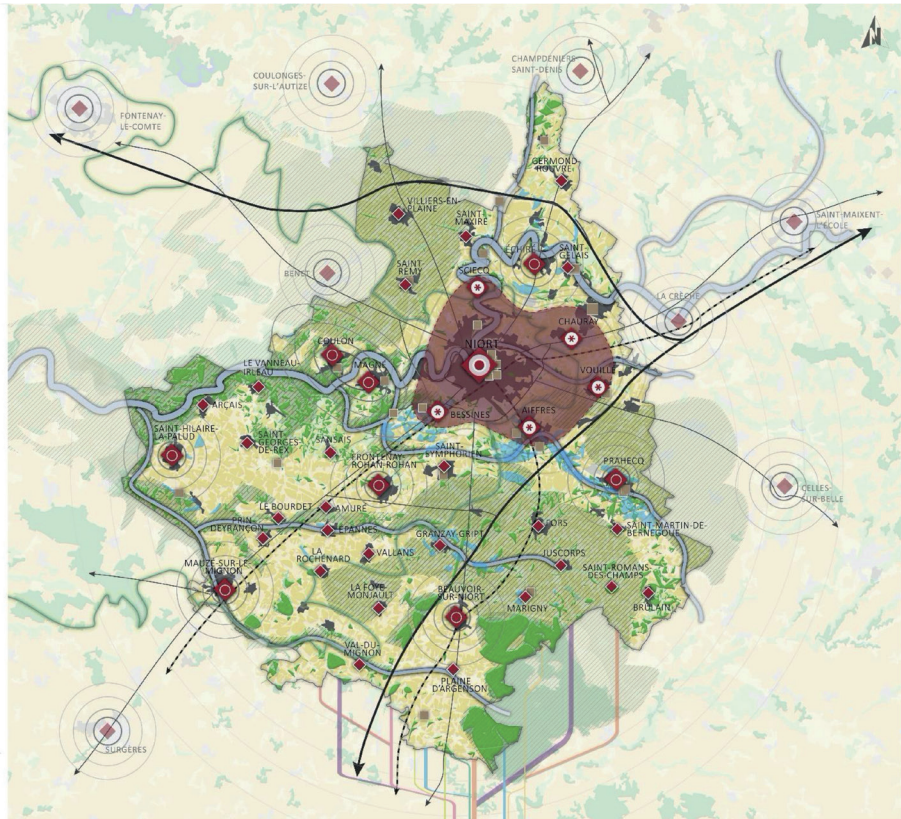
D - ACCOMPAGNER LE TERRITOIRE DANS LA RÉVOLUTION NUMÉRIQUE

FAIRE DU NUMÉRIQUE UN VECTEUR D'ATTRACTIVITÉ ET DE DIFFÉRENCIATION DU TERRITOIRE

- DÉVELOPPER LE TRÈS HAUT DÉBIT, ÉVOLUTION DES TECHNOLOGIES NUMÉRIQUES, NUMÉRIISATION DE L'ÉCONOMIE

OCCUPATION DU SOL (MÉTHODE CLC - 2012)

- ESPACE NATUREL
- ESPACE AGRICOLE
- ESPACE URBANISÉ



LA TRAME VERTE ET BLEUE (TVB) DU SCOT DE NIORT AGGLO

LA TRAME VERTE

- RÉSERVOIR DE BIODIVERSITÉ
- LES CORRIDORS ÉCOLOGIQUES :
- CORRIDOR DIFFUS DES PLAINES AGRICOLES OUVERTES
- PRINCIPAL CORRIDOR DE LA TRAME VERTE
- CORRIDOR FORESTIER À PRÉSERVER (DONT LES CORRIDORS ÉCOLOGIQUES FORESTIERS EN BON ÉTAT)
- CORRIDOR FORESTIER À REMETTRE EN BON ÉTAT

LA TRAME BLEUE

LES RÉSERVOIRS DE BIODIVERSITÉ :

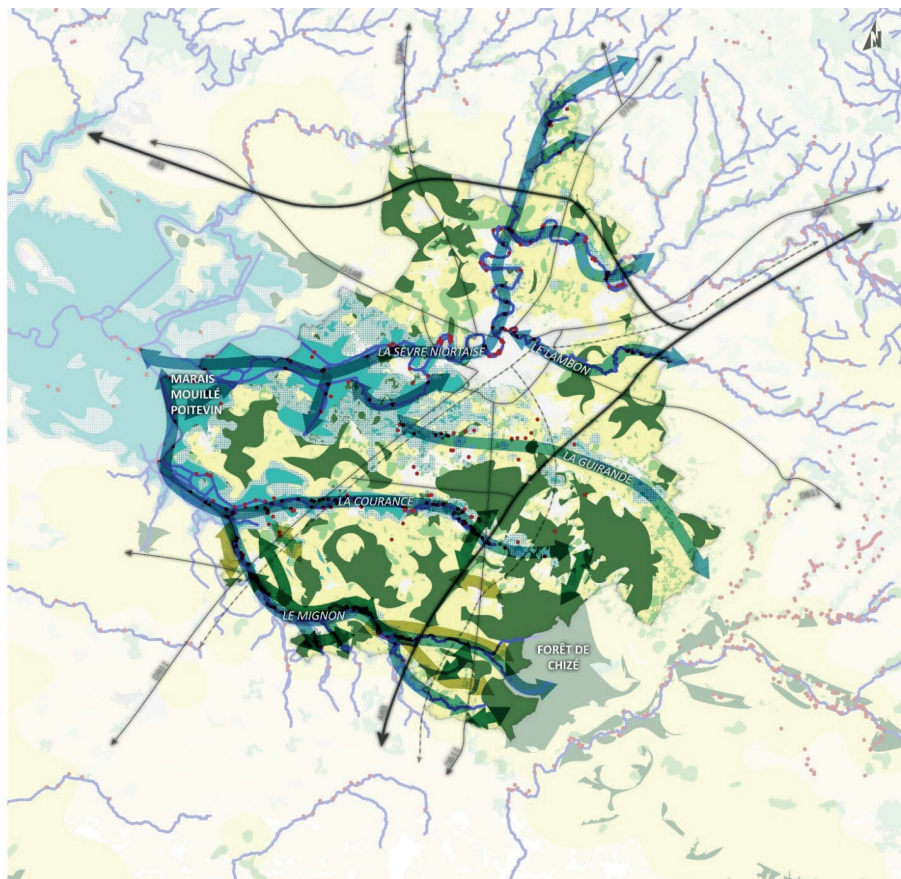
- RÉSERVOIR DES MILIEUX HUMIDES
- RÉSERVOIR DES MILIEUX AQUATIQUES

LES CORRIDORS ÉCOLOGIQUES :

- CORRIDOR DES MILIEUX AQUATIQUES
- CORRIDOR DIFFUS EN PAS JAPONAIS DES MILIEUX HUMIDES

AUTRES ÉLÉMENTS

- OBSTACLE À L'ÉCOULEMENT
- INFRASTRUCTURES DE TRANSPORT :
- AUTOROUTE
- PRINCIPAL AXE ROUTIER
- VOIE FERRÉE



TERRITORIAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO THE EUROPAN THEME

XXL – AT THE SCALE OF THE TERRITORY AND REGIONAL NATURE PARK

Two organisations are involved in the management of the Regional Nature Park. The Etablissement Public du Marais Poitevin (EPMP) is responsible for water and biodiversity in the wetlands and catchment basin. The Syndicat mixte de gestion du PNR (SMMP) as coordinator and project leader assists public and private developers and manages projects of exemplary, experimental, innovative or collective interest as defined in the charter. They mobilise and coordinate actors and partners involved in the fields of agriculture, biodiversity, tourism, regional planning and economic development or education.

The Regional Nature Park management SMMP is partner in the EUROPAN project. The study site raises issues for improving and managing interfaces and interactions between the «gateway city» and the Marais in terms of landscape quality, soft mobility and accessibility.

XL – AT THE SCALE OF THE NIORT AGGLOMERATION

Development at the heart of the agglomeration

The Niort Agglomeration and the centre city are committed to establishing consistency in «urban development» and «environmental and landscape quality» as laid out in the SCOT for Niort Agglo and based on four principal guidelines for balanced urban development, ecological transition, digital development and landscape and heritages. The SCOT sets out several objectives for ecological transition, which apply in particular to the European study site:

- Reinvent urbanisation that favours biodiversity, and nature in the city,
- Favour urban renewal and reuse of wasteland to limit land consumption,
- Identify agricultural and natural areas at risk in order to adapt urbanisation,
- Fight against the degradation of landscapes, particularly in transitional areas,
- Limit the use of space through new urban forms,
- Strictly limit scattered housing to preserve rural life and landscapes,
- Preserve and improve the architectural and cultural heritage.

The SCOT establishes a central area or «heart of the conurbation» that includes Niort and five neighbouring communes (Aiffres, Bessines, Chauray, Siecq, Vouillé), 60% of the population and all major urban services and public facilities. SCOT foresees the arrival of 16,000 new inhabitants by 2040, half coming to the heart of the conurbation, implying the development or renewal of housing and increasing services and public facilities to meet the needs of this new population.

Connections between the centre of Niort and other communes in the heart of the conurbation are therefore crucial, as is the alleviation of barriers created by major road infrastructures: this is one of the issues of the EUROPAN site.

Transition to sustainable agriculture and the Projet Alimentaire Territorial

Agricultural land covers 70% of the territory of the Niort agglomeration. Cereal production (50%) and cattle raising (24%) dominate. There are nearly 450 farms, of which about fifty participate in short food-supply chains. There are also local food processing and packaging companies (butchers, dairies, canneries, breweries, etc.). Niort Agglo's agricultural policy encourages traditional agricultural practices such as livestock farming, which enhances the value of wet meadows while at the same time favouring the diversity needed for sustainable local agriculture.

In 2019, Niort Agglo and the Communauté de Communes Haut Val de Sèvre embarked on a Territorial Food Project (Projet Alimentaire Territorial or PAT) to deal with issues of food, economy, health and the environment (protection of water resources and biodiversity). The excellent quality of the soil makes it possible to diversify into other areas of production such as market gardening, arboriculture or other less common crops (angelica, tobacco, truffles).

The agglomeration can count on a strong social and solidarity economy (SSE) network: vegetable production, shared gardens, distribution points and solidarity grocery shops. Niort Agglo benefits from a large network of local distribution sites (producers' shops, apiaries, farmers' markets) in an area of 120,000 people.

The many head offices of tertiary companies (insurance) in the area present real opportunities for foodservices. Other avenues in agritourism and the history of Marais Poitevin are being explored. Since 2015, Niort Agglo edits a guide and digital map promoting local production and know-how (one producer in five now sells their products locally).

L – AT THE SCALE OF THE CITY OF NIORT

The city of Niort is pursuing several ecological transition and environmental improvement initiatives (Niort Durable 2030, Cit'ergie, Plan de Biodiversité, Niort Canopée, etc.), which provide support for numerous urban renewal and public space development projects, some of which are part of the national Action Cœur de Ville programme. Two directly linked to the study area and to the theme of living cities follow :

Plan Niort Canopée

The city is currently drawing up the «Niort Canopée» project aimed at extending the arboreal canopy and developing nature in the city. The planting of one tree

LOCAL PRODUCERS MAP

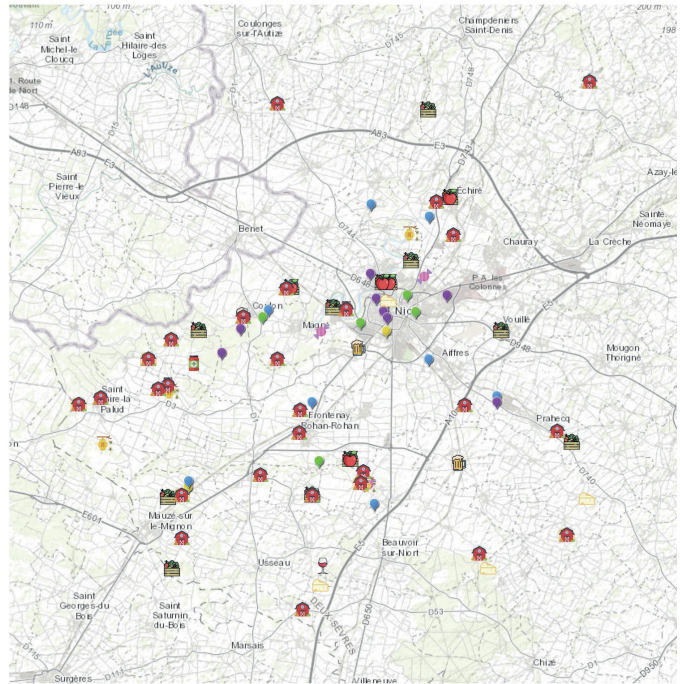
FR-NIORT-C_M07

© Niort Agglo

niortagglo
Agglomération du Niortais

Repérage des producteurs locaux ouvrant leur exploitation à la vente directe ou proposant leurs produits dans des lieux de vente (marchés et AMAP)

	Viandes	27
	Fruits	5
	Légumes	14
	Fromages et produits laitiers	10
	Epices, condiment et miel	4
	Spécialités sucrées	3
	Spécialités salées	5
	Vins	1
	Bières et cidres	3
	Point de vente	25



per inhabitant by 2030, approximately 60,000 trees, is planned. This project is part of the Niort roadmap towards the Objectifs de Développement Durable 2030 (sustainable development goals) and Niort Agglo's Plan Climat Air Énergie Territorial 2020-2024 (territorial climate air and energy plan) that includes the planting of 125,000 trees in the agglomeration. The Niort Canopée is a means of limiting and adapting to climate change with a view to preserving and restoring biodiversity while respecting the area's natural landscape. Planting vegetation is a means of restoring ecological corridors for the movement of species and strengthens the presence nature in the city.

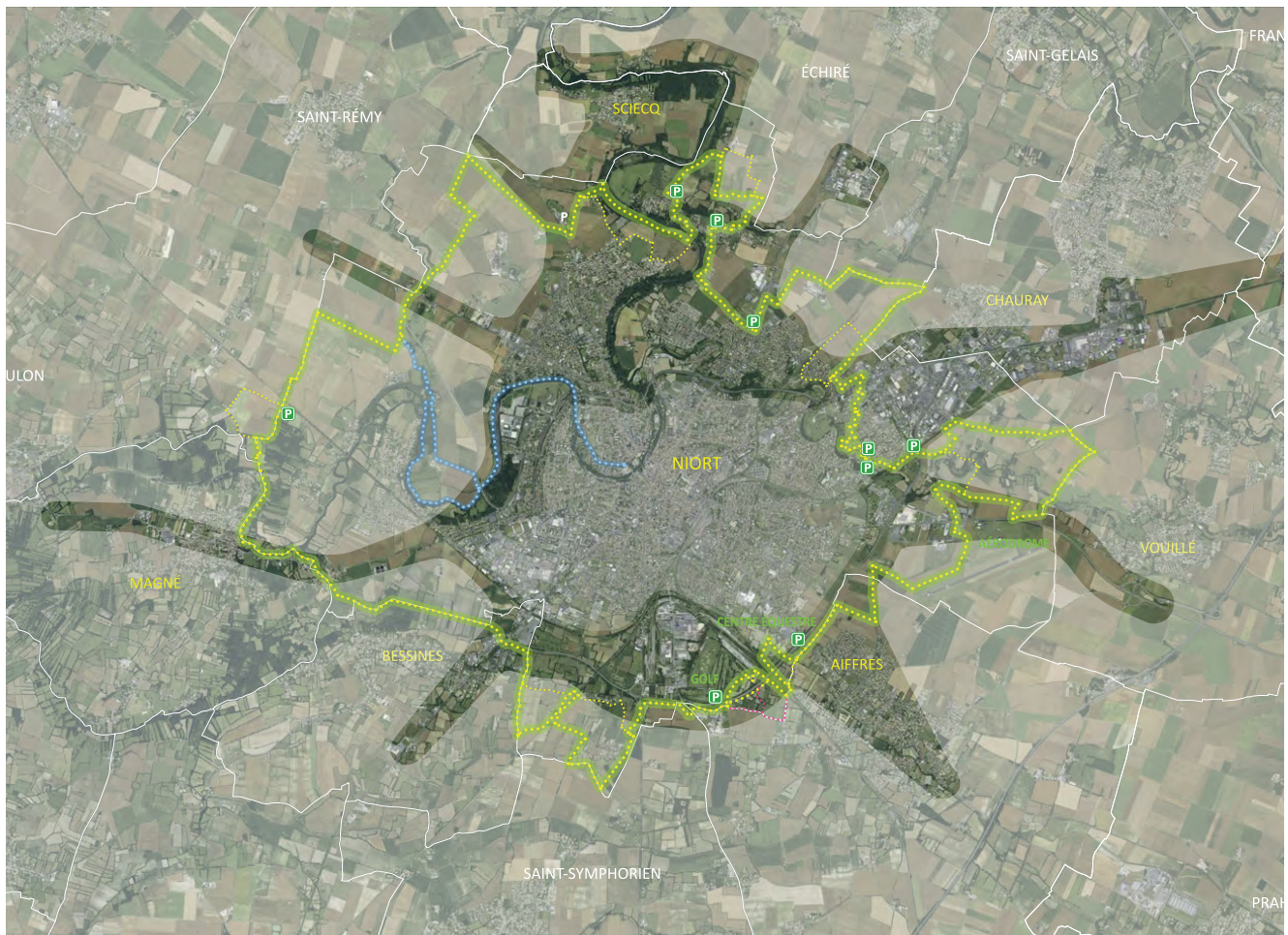
Chemin du 3e millénaire

The Chemin communal du IIIe millénaire is a trail for discovering agricultural, nature and aquatic landscapes on the edge of town. Begun by the city of Niort in 1999, the walking and cycling path is now 53 km long. The city, which owns 95% of the land, has over time planted 1,500 trees. There are 9 routes: Romagné, Fief Joly, Lambon, Fontenelles, Surimeau, Buffevent, Marais de Saint-Rémis, Grenouillet, Tranchée that cross plain, bocage or marsh landscapes. Panels at the beginning of each route provide information on distances, natural environments (flora and fauna), the architectural heritage and local history. The restoration of this route follows on a precise diagnosis by the city's services and Niort Canopée.

THE THIRD MILLENNIUM TRAIL

FR-NIORT-SS-M03

© Niort Agglo



GUIDELINES AND QUESTIONS FOR EUROSPAN TEAMS

STUDY SITE

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A LARGE-SCALE LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGICAL AND AGRO-ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The study site defines a territory of interfaces between city and marshland, between urbanised areas and the agricultural land surrounding those areas, between the centre of Niort and the other municipalities that are the heart of the agglomeration. It extends out in «fingers» to reach main entrances to the town and access routes to the Marais Poitevin. It questions the role, use and evolutionary potential of this mid-sized city where the interweaving of natural, inhabited and cultivated spaces is not yet the result of a general spatial vision, uniting ecology, landscape, mobility and habitability issues. It's exploring a project over a large landscape to organise the transition from urban to rural, from a dense city to the open spaces of the marsh and countryside:

- Strengthen the position of agriculture, assisting in transformations and diversification,
- Develop the potentials for tourism and micro-tourism based on natural, cultural and landscape heritage,
- Improve city entrances and main thoroughfares of Niort,
- Develop the use and frequency of nature areas while protecting them.

DEFINE A PROJECT FOR THE EDGE OF RESIDENTIAL, NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS

Over the past 50 years, ecological units such as lowland crops, rich wet grasslands and hedgerows have been fragmented and significantly reduced in area in favour of business and residential urbanisation. The functioning of natural environments has been greatly altered over the years by a continuous artificialization of land within a general context of abandonment of grazing and traditional agricultural practices in favour of intensive farming.

The EUROSPAN teams are invited to propose a landscape project to reconcile territory and geography, city and nature, built forms and open spaces, inhabited

STUDY SITE

FR-NIORT-SS-Mo1



PROJECT SITES

FR-NIORT-PS-Moo



spaces and cultivated land by exploring the potential for new uses particularly through the development of short food supply chains and micro-tourism.

TRANSFORMING INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEPLOYING NEW ACTIVE MOBILITY ROUTES

In the medium and long term, the city and the agglomeration aim to «transform heavy road infrastructures reserved solely for automobile traffic into public amenities with multiple functions, territorial landmarks». This aim can be expressed by three objectives or guiding principles:

- The architectural and landscape quality of the infrastructures themselves, re-vegetation or greening programmes,
- Public facilities and infrastructures need to contribute to maintaining and developing biodiversity and to reducing air and noise pollution,
- Change parking lots and parking garages into multi-modal multi-functional facilities.

These revamped transportation infrastructures have to allow for the development of new modes of transport and the organisation of intermodal systems (electric, cycling, walking) linked to housing, agro-business or recreation projects on land that is currently abandoned.

PROJECT SITE 1
NIORT - RSIECQ INTERFACE
 FR-NIORT-PS-Mo1

**How to re-establish
 landscape unity and create
 a networking grid between
 diverse poorly connected
 neighbourhoods?**



AVENUE DE NANTES
 FR-NIORT-PS1-APo6
 © Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone

ROUTE DE COULONGES
 FR-NIORT-PS1-APo3
 © Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



PROPOSED PROJECT SITES: FOUR INTERFACE AREAS

Four project sites along the Chemin du IIIe Millénaire are proposed for the development of strategic proposals and for follow-up of the competition. These four interface areas on the border between centre city and neighbouring municipalities in the heart of the agglomeration, between suburbs and surrounding nature and agricultural areas. Each site represents a particular type of situation and an issue to be addressed. The sites are large and EUROPAN teams are not expected to develop all four sites. In the spirit of a conceptual competition, the teams may select one or more sites, focus on smaller project sequences or even propose other project sites according to their own understanding of the area.

1. INTERFACE AREA NIORT - AVENUE DE NANTES, SIECQ: THE CITY BETWEEN RIVER AND MARSH

Site and issues

The extreme diversity of the area (agriculture, residential, exhibition centre, large tertiary-sector, nautical centre, university centre, etc.) and a degraded business park on the Avenue de Nantes make a confusing, unattractive entrance to the city when arriving from Nantes. The urban structure that has developed over time, largely suburban housing, does not do justice to the city nor does it permit any notion of the Marais. Straight, featureless transport infrastructures (Avenue de Nantes, Route de Coulonges) do not encourage neighbourhood activities, there are few pedestrian and cycling paths and it is difficult to get to the riverbanks of the Sèvre Niortaise. This area, close to both city centre and surrounding countryside, has a wide range of infrastructures and facilities and much to attract a population looking for a place to live close to nature and the market garden environment.

Questions for European teams

How can a major thoroughfare be improved while remaining an importance entrance to an urban area? How to signify the presence of marshlands on the edge of an urban area? What possibilities exist for local agriculture? How to improve both urban and natural environments in residential areas near the river? What soft mobility systems would ensure a clearer urban organisation and to treat the interfaces with the agricultural plains and rural paths leading to the Marais Mouillé (wet marshlands)? How to increase accessibility and connect the components of a living city: housing, university, nautical base, exhibition centre, business park?

PROJECT SITE 2
NIORT - CHAURAY INTERFACE
 FR-NIORT-PS-Mo2

How can the landscapes of commercial areas and road infrastructures evolve?
How can a network of vegetation be established and environmental quality restored to highly artificialized areas?



AVENUE DE PARIS
 FR-NIORT-PS2-APo1
 © Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



AVENUE DE PARIS
 FR-NIORT-PS2-APo5
 © Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



2. INTERFACE AREA NIORT – CHAURAY : BOUNDARIES AND PERMEABILITY OF A COMMERCIAL AREA

Site and issues

Large 20th century business parks still dominate city entrances disrupting the landscape, the environmental grid and alternative transportation networks. The Pierre Mendès-France business park on the border between Niort and Chauray is one of the largest commercial and artisanal zones in the agglomeration. Avenue de Paris, the busiest road in the agglomeration (30,000 vehicles/day in 2013), runs through it. Niort Agglo and the municipalities, landowners and companies concerned would like these areas to be redeveloped; reconciling commercial/business aspects with a need to repair and transform these extremely artificialized areas. The objectives are:

- Optimise the land used for commercial activities,
- Improve legibility, image and functioning of the commercial zone,
- Improve the environment and the integration of landscape,
- Develop other modes of transport,
- Reduce energy consumption and develop the production of renewable energy.

Questions for European teams

This site has been identified by the Agglomeration as a strategic area that can be used as a laboratory for experimenting with new development practices and processes for transforming old business parks. The EUROPAN teams are not expected to carry out a complete redevelopment project, but rather to make proposals for landscape and environmental repairs (management of boundaries and interfaces with agricultural and natural areas, physical and environmental permeability, de-densification or sharing of areas, production of renewable energy, etc.) capable of guiding a gradual transformation strategy.

PROJECT SITE 3
NIORT - AIFFRES INTERFACE
 FR-NIORT-PS-Mo3

How to better integrate transport infrastructures, reorganize the inter-communal landscape network and develop new uses? How to deal with the edges of urbanised areas and avoid degraded landscape at town entrances?



ROUTE D'AIFFRES - TOWARDS NIORT
 FR-NIORT-PS3_APo1
 © Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



ROUTE D'AIFFRES - TO THE TOWN CENTRE
 FR-NIORT-PS3_APo4
 © Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



3. INTERFACE AREA NIORT – AIFFRES : INFRASTRUCTURE AND INTERCITY LANDSCAPES

Site and issues

This interface area between Niort and Aiffres exhibits issues of continuity and rupture found often between the centre city and neighbouring municipalities. Road infrastructures have cut up the landscape into a patchwork at the edge of each municipality. Having crossed the ring road via a double roundabout, the «route d'Aiffres» becomes the «route de Niort». The road lined with business and commercial establishments and occasionally freestanding when closer to the interchange is the main artery from the suburban areas to the centre of Aiffres. A discontinuous and undifferentiated urbanisation links the two towns without providing any real landscape separation or transition. The role and future of this in-between area raises urban, ecological and landscape questions, as well as issues of mobility, accessibility and use, bearing in mind that municipal boundaries do not influence the daily lives of people.

Questions for European teams

How to improve with this in-between area? What should be done with these neglected «urban edges»? How to lessen the divisions imposed by major road infrastructures? How to put quality and purpose back into these intermediate spaces? How can they be transformed into areas of interaction or meeting points, vibrant places of social life and biodiversity? How to treat the entrance to the town and express the town's identity? How to structure urban patterns and vegetation in this in-between area? These questions are an outgrowth of the Niort Agglo SCOT guidelines and EUROPAN represents an opportunity to experiment new ways of structuring interactions between the city, nature and infrastructures in this particular area that could then be deployed in other municipalities in the agglomeration.

PROJECT SITE 4
NIORT - BESSINES INTERFACE
 FR-NIORT-PS-Mo4

How to redevelop a marshland access road to express the transition from city to nature? How to established landscape and environmental continuity?



BESSINES - ROUTE DE LA ROCHELLE - TOWARDS THE MARSHALL
 FR-NIORT-PS4-APo4

© Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



BESSINES - ROUTE DE LA ROCHELLE - TOWARDS NIORT
 FR-NIORT-PS3_APo1

© Niort Agglo - Toutatis Drone



4. INTERFACE AREA NIORT – BESSINES : THE MARAIS ROAD

Site and issues

The Route de la Rochelle is a heavily trafficked commuter road. It is also one of the main access roads to the Marais Poitevin via the town of Bessines, a gateway to the wet marsh as is also Magné further to the north. Isolated sports facilities, scattered businesses, commercial establishments and residential houses border this road infrastructure. This landscape does not reflect the marsh nor is it pleasant for cyclists or hikers. The development of commercial and business areas has left the road without character and illegible.

Questions for European teams

How can the «Route du Marais» be made into a landscape experience and an invitation to the area? How can the immediate proximity of the marsh be made more apparent and visible? How to recreate the functional and environmental links that have been severed by business premises and parking lots? How should urbanisation evolve over the medium and long term? Which activities and uses would reflect the resources and economy of the Regional Nature Park (tourism, lodging, agriculture, etc.)? How to modify the road infrastructure and include commercial zones in a much larger transformation that truly transitions from city to marsh? How can legibility and image be restored and this in-between town integrated into its natural landscape?

COMPETITION FOLLOW-UP

Project management and urban and/or landscape strategy commissions

The proposals coming from EUROPAN teams are going to help strengthen the larger territorial strategy and spatial planning processes. The selected teams could be asked to develop and implement a landscape and environmental strategy on the scale of the study site, exploring together with the Agglomeration, city and PNR du Marais Poitevin new development practices.

Feasibility studies for sites and project territories identified by European teams

The agglomeration or city may commission feasibility studies on one or more project sites presented in this dossier or on others identified by EUROPAN teams. The aim will be to select demonstration sites where project procedures can be further developed in coordination with public or private partners (municipalities, companies, farmers, associations, inhabitants, etc.).

Ad hoc design and project management commissions. Finally, the city and agglomeration are likely to entrust European teams, once further consultation has taken place, with project management assignments on areas controlled by local authorities or in partnership with others in the EUROPAN initiative.

**AERIAL VIEW OF THE
CONURBATION**
FR-NIORT-C-AP01
Source BDOrtho IGN





PROJECT SITE 1 FR-NIORT-PS1-APoo



PROJECT SITE 2 FR-NIORT-PS2-APoo



PROJECT SITE 3 FR-NIORT-PS3-APoo



PROJECT SITE 4 FR-NIORT-PS4-APoo

LISTES DES DOCUMENTS EN TÉLÉCHARGEMENT

CONURBATION - TERRITORIALE SCALE

FR-NIORT-C-Mo1 : conurbation map
FR-NIORT-C-Mo2 : situation of Niort in the PNR of the Marais poitevin
FR-NIORT-C-Mo3 : situation and regional accessibility
FR-NIORT-C-Mo4 : landscapes units
FR-NIORT-C-Mo5 : SCOT map
FR-NIORT-C-Mo6 : green and bleue infrastructure of the SCOT
FR-NIORT-C-Mo7 : local producers map

STRATEGIC SITE - URBAN SCALE

FR-NIORT-SS-AP00 : aerial picture of the study site
FR-NIORT-SS-AP01 à AP07 : oblique aerial pictures (2021)
FR-NIORT-SS-Mo1 : study site map
FR-NIORT-SS-Mo2 : town entrances and main avenues
FR-NIORT-SS-Mo3 : 3rd millennium communal trail
FR-NIORT-SS-Po1 to P16 : ground pictures

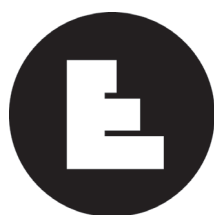
PROJECT SITES - URBAN-ARCHITECTURAL SCALE

FR-NIORT-PS1-AP00 : aerial picture Project site 1
FR-NIORT-PS1-AP01 à AP06 : oblique aerial pictures Project site 1 (2021)
FR-NIORT-PS2-AP00 : aerial picture Project site 2
FR-NIORT-PS2-AP01 à AP05 : oblique aerial pictures Project site 2 (2021)
FR-NIORT-PS3-AP00 : aerial picture Project site 3
FR-NIORT-PS3-AP01 à AP04 : oblique aerial pictures Project site 3 (2021)
FR-NIORT-PS4-AP00 : aerial picture Project site 4
FR-NIORT-PS4-AP01 à AP04 : oblique aerial pictures Project site 4 (2021)
FR-NIORT-PS-Mo0 : project sites map
FR-NIORT-PS-Mo1 : map of the Project site 1
FR-NIORT-PS-Mo2 : map of the Project site 2
FR-NIORT-PS-Mo3 : map of the Project site 3
FR-NIORT-PS-Mo4 : map of the Project site 4
FR-NIORT-PS-Po1 to Pxx : ground pictures

SOMMAIRE

FOREWORD	p. 03
THE THEME : LINVING CITIES	p. 05
RELATION TO THE THEME OF LIVING CITIES	p. 09
A vast site for exploring in the Marais Poitevin Site issues in relation to the session theme	
CONTEXT AND TERRITORIAL STRATEGIES	p. 15
The territory's natural and agricultural structure The urban fabric and network of infrasturcures Territorial strategies related to the Europan theme	
GUIDELINES AND QUESTIONS FOR EUROPAN TEAMS	
STUDY SITE	p. 29
PROJECT SITES	p. 33
COMPETITION FOLLOWUP	p. 39

E U R
P A O
N FR



niortagglo
Agglomération du Niortais

