

Ile-de-France  
Regional Council

Report for the Regional Council  
June 2007

**Presented by**  
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of Ile-de-France

**REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR  
BIODIVERSITY IN ILE-DE-FRANCE**



## **Regional Strategy for Biodiversity in Ile-de-France**

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PRESENTED BY  
MR JEAN-PAUL HUCHON  
PRESIDENT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF ILE-DE-FRANCE**

**JUNE 2007**



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**STATEMENT OF REASONS**

## What is biodiversity?

Biological diversity or “biodiversity” represents the variability of living organisms of all origins including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and of the ecological complexes of which they are part. This includes diversity within species (genetic diversity), diversity between species (species diversity), and ecosystem diversity. This definition of biodiversity is as given at the General Assembly of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature or IUCN (now the World Conservation Union) in 1988 in Costa Rica.

Biological diversity thus comprises species diversity, genetic diversity, and ecosystem diversity. Biological diversity of species is the most well known form of biodiversity.

Species are units that are distinct, clearly defined, and well known. Each of them can be considered as playing a “role” in the ecosystem, so that the appearance or the disappearance of a species generally has certain impacts on the system as a whole.

Genetic diversity is the variety that exists at the level of the genes, which determine the present and future characteristics and capacities of an organism. For example, modern farming is based to a large extent on monoculture of specimens that are all identical from a genetic point of view.

Mention might also be made of the various types of orchard: namely the industrial orchard that produces a single variety of apple, and the more traditional orchard that cultivates several different varieties. Biodiversity is not measured only at species level and at gene level. It is also defined at the various levels of organisation of the living world, including all ecosystems, ecotones, and corridors that are functionally more or less interdependent, modelled by human activities.

In order to illustrate the diversity of the ecosystems, we might compare the plains of Beauce with the “bocage” country with its mixture of grassland, hedgerows, ponds, crops, copses and woodland.

## 1. The stakes

Maintaining biodiversity is a global issue with global stakes. Nature and the living world play a vital role for humankind. The services they render are essential to life and should not be taken for granted. It is therefore everyone’s duty to contribute to protecting and to valuing natural heritage. This was already stated by the French law on the protection of nature enacted in July 1976, 30 years ago. But in the face of individual and short-term interests, their ecological role is still underestimated and their economic role is difficult to get across.

And yet, today, biodiversity is declining dramatically, witness the numerous indicators in place. Loss of biodiversity makes us more vulnerable to natural disasters. Faced with these challenges and these stakes, research programmes are necessary in order to identify more precisely the causes and the consequences of the decline. Furthermore, actions are possible when certain causes are already known. Although the challenge and the stakes are global, the action is often the responsibility of local players.



## **The international, European, and national stakes**

*The conservation of biodiversity is fundamental to the success of the development process. Conserving biodiversity is not just a matter of protecting wildlife in nature reserves. It is also about safeguarding the natural systems of the Earth that are our life-support systems, i.e. about purifying water, recycling oxygen, carbon and other essential elements, maintaining the fertility of the soil, providing food from the land, freshwaters, and seas, yielding medicines, and safeguarding the general richness on which we depend. Unfortunately, human activities often give rise to irreversible losses in terms of the diversity of life on Earth, and those losses have been faster over the last 50 years than at any other period in human history.*

### The first awakening of awareness

The initial research and consultations started in 1989 in order to think about putting in place a global strategy for conservation. This strategy drew attention to the indissociable link between conservation and development, and stressed the importance of durability. Then, various international reports gave often worrying analyses of the general state of our planet. It was that work that alerted governments. The first action was to adopt the International Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992. Then the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution proclaiming the period from 1994-2003 "International Biodiversity Decade." An international committee for the conservation of biodiversity was set up, made up of scientists, of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and of decision-takers. An alarm network was put in place in order to monitor potential threats and in order to take actions against them. Finally, the last action planned by the strategy was to integrate biodiversity conservation into the processes of national planning. It was after the world summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg in 2002 that France decided to draw up its national strategy for biodiversity.

### A brief reminder of the objectives of the various strategies

#### **1.1 The Global Biodiversity Strategy (World Resources Institute (WRI), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP))**

- Catalyse action through international co-operation and national planning.
- Establish a national political framework for biodiversity conservation.
- Create an international policy environment that supports biodiversity conservation at national level.
- Create the conditions and the incentives for biodiversity conservation at local level.
- Integrate management of biodiversity into all human activities.
- Reinforce the protected areas and zones.
- Conserve species, populations, and genetic diversity.
- Increase human capacities to conserve biodiversity

In 2002, the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity agreed on an objective aiming to “achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national levels by 2010, as a contribution to poverty alleviation and for the benefit of all life on Earth.” (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Report).

#### **1.2 The Countdown 2010 for halting loss of biodiversity (IUCN). European countries are committed to stopping biodiversity loss by 2010**

*Biodiversity is essential to life, and it is in danger. European governments have promised to save biodiversity by 2010. It is time to transform words into actions. The objectives set for the 4 remaining years by the “Countdown 2010” network are as follows:*

- Species and ecosystems need space to develop. 10% of all space should be under protection to maintain nature and natural landscapes.
- Without biodiversity there will be no agriculture. Farming practices should not jeopardize species survival: diversifying farming and reducing the usage of pesticides are key efforts to saving biodiversity.
- 75% of all fisheries are over-fished. Species like cod, haddock and halibut have already disappeared. If we do not move towards sustainable use, there will be no fish left for our grandchildren.
- Roads, factories and housing destroy habitats for animals and plants. If urban and rural development continues to ignore nature, our surroundings will be dominated by concrete and pollution.
- Climate change is considered to be the greatest challenge for humanity. With changing conditions, ecosystems and habitats will change as well. It is an obligation to fight and predict climate change and make sure that species can migrate or adapt to new surroundings.

- If you take a species away from its usual habitat, it might simply die. In other cases, if you introduce an exogenous or alien species, that species can become invasive and destroy local flora and fauna. As you never know how things turn out, reducing exportation of species is crucial.
- Biodiversity is the foundation for sustainable development. Its ecosystem services provide the basis for all economic activity. Biodiversity concerns need thus to be integrated into all areas of development policy making. National and international measures for development assistance should include biodiversity protection.

Although launched only in May 2004, in Malahide, under the Irish Presidency of the European Union, the Countdown has already obtained several important results: full agreement from the European Council of Environment Ministers, backing from the various presidencies, the decisions by Norway and the Region of Noord-Brabant (Netherlands) to implement the Countdown at regional level and thus to serve as case studies for the other European regions.

### **1.3 The Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (Sofia 1995)**

The distinguishing feature of this strategy is its new approach to biodiversity conservation. It proposes, as its prime objective, to set up a Pan-European Ecological Network. 54 countries are involved, including the whole of the European continent and the countries of Northern and Central Asia. It proposes to preserve the ecosystems on which the survival of species depends instead of limiting itself to protecting only endangered species or sites of special interest. Other objectives that it has set itself are as follows:

- integrate biodiversity into the various economic sectors of activity (farming, forestry, industry, transport, tourism, etc.);
- inform and communicate about biodiversity, raise public awareness, and interest and involve players and stakeholders in biodiversity conservation;
- mobilise resources for implementing its strategy; and
- set up a committee of experts for monitoring application of the strategy.

It is these main objectives that are to be found in the Regional Strategy that is proposed to you.

### **1.4 The French National Biodiversity Strategy**

The impoverishment of biological diversity at global level, following on, in particular, from climate change, has become a very major threat. The living world is being hit very hard by this change. This erosion of the living world can still be stopped. It is a matter of political, economic, and social choice. Lack of knowledge, absence of precaution, or inaction are no longer acceptable. France is established on 2 continents, and in 3 oceans (when its overseas areas are included), and it holds a unique place in the world as regards the richness and the density of its biodiversity because it is concerned by most of the great geographical entities of the Earth. Its responsibility is thus immense. It is therefore essential to change our attitude. The national commitments are as follows:

**Halt biodiversity loss by 2010:**

- maintain genetic diversity;
- maintain species diversity;
- maintain habitat diversity;
- improve the ecological fabric: maintain the diversity of landscapes and improve biological connectivity;
- maintain proper operation of ecosystems; and
- put in place the first indicators for monitoring the progress made.

**The national focuses:**

- mobilise all players and stakeholders;
- recognise the true value of the living world;
- improve the extent to which biodiversity is taken into account by public policies; and
- develop scientific knowledge and observation.

7 action plans are proposed for turning the focuses into practical achievements:

1. Natural heritage action plan
2. Agriculture action plan
3. Urban planning action plan
4. Spatial planning action plan
5. Land transport infrastructures action plan
6. Sea action plan
7. International action plan

In March 2007, the French Committee of the IUCN (World Conservation Union) assessed the national strategy and its 7 action plans and observed significant progress as regards the actions coming under the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, the results of the assessment are highly insufficient, and France is behind schedule. Only political impetus and increased resources will make it possible to come closer to achieving the objective of stopping biodiversity extinction by 2010. The French Committee of the IUCN has identified 5 significant advances and 5 major obstacles, as follows:

**Positive actions:**

1. Two National Parks have been set (The Reunion Island and French Guiana), and Marine Parks have been set up.
2. The Natura 2000 sites have been designated (1703 sites covering 12% of the land territory of the home country of France).
3. The *Fond Français pour l'Environnement Mondial* (French Fund for the Global Environment) has been renewed (70 million euros).
4. Awareness-heightening tools have been put in place: national communications campaign and publication of a guide for industrial site managers.
5. Durable funding for the Conservatoire du Littoral (Costal Conservatory) has been put in place (30 million euros) and new tax measures have been put in place for natural heritage.

**Little or no action:**

1. No progress has been made on the “territories” plan aimed at integrating biodiversity into territory management.
2. No progress has been made on the “urban planning” and “infrastructures” plans, showing how difficult it is to have biodiversity issues taken into account in policies related to infrastructures and facilities.
3. No major progress has been made on the main challenges: reducing pesticide consumption, developing organic farming, taking up a position on GM crops, sustainable development, and fishing.
4. The last three action plans (forest, research, overseas) adopted in September 2006 have not been implemented.
5. The strategy and the action plans have not been appropriated sufficiently by the environment protection associations and by civil society in the broadest sense, including local authorities and businesses. Implementation of the strategy has remained confined to the sector of the State’s departments and services. We should remember that one of the objectives set by the strategy was to mobilise all of the players and stakeholders from civil society...

We feel it is important to emphasize, before addressing the regional level, that the avowed objectives and the proposed methods both at international level and at national level are to create the conditions for action at local level. To this end, the Region is a pertinent geographic entity if it integrates inter-regional co-operation into its policy. Since 2003, it has gone out ahead of national policy because, working with associations and local authorities, it has been able to implement practical actions to which it brings the necessary resources. Those actions are being conducted in rural zones and in urban zones on forest areas and on all of the other environments, pursuant to adoption and implementation of the Regional Charter for Biodiversity. The Strategy should make it possible to accelerate the actions of the Region and to plan them.

## 2. For a shared regional strategy for biodiversity

### 2.1 The assets and handicaps of Ile-de-France as regards biodiversity

a – the main assets are:

- Varied soil conditions (grain-size, pH, etc.).
- A dense *but ill-treated* hydrographical network (moving and still water).
- A rate of forestation that is relatively high, and interesting intra-forest environments (heaths, peat bogs, etc.).
- Various biogeographical influences.
- Numerous protected areas or spaces (Nature Reserves (RNs), Regional Nature Reserves (RNRs), Prefect Orders for Biotope Protection (APBs), etc.) or areas or spaces in which management of natural environments is a priority (Regional Nature Parks (PNRs), Natura 2000, State forests, regional forests, Sensitive Natural Spaces (ENSs), etc.).

b – the main handicaps are:

- A small surface area (12,000 km<sup>2</sup>).
- No major contrasts as regards relief or climate (but sufficient contrasts to bring slight differences).
- A moderately favourable latitude.
- No geographic isolation (of the island, or high-altitude type, etc.) Therefore: no endemism.
- Population very dense and concentrated on 20% of the territory (urbanisation, infrastructures, pollution, etc.) which has consequences: destruction and frequentation of habitats.
- Intensive arable farming (land abandonment, drainage, fertilisers, herbicides, etc.)

### 2.2 What is the state of knowledge of biodiversity in Ile-de-France?

a – Ile-de-France is renowned for botanic history, which makes historical analysis easier there than elsewhere.

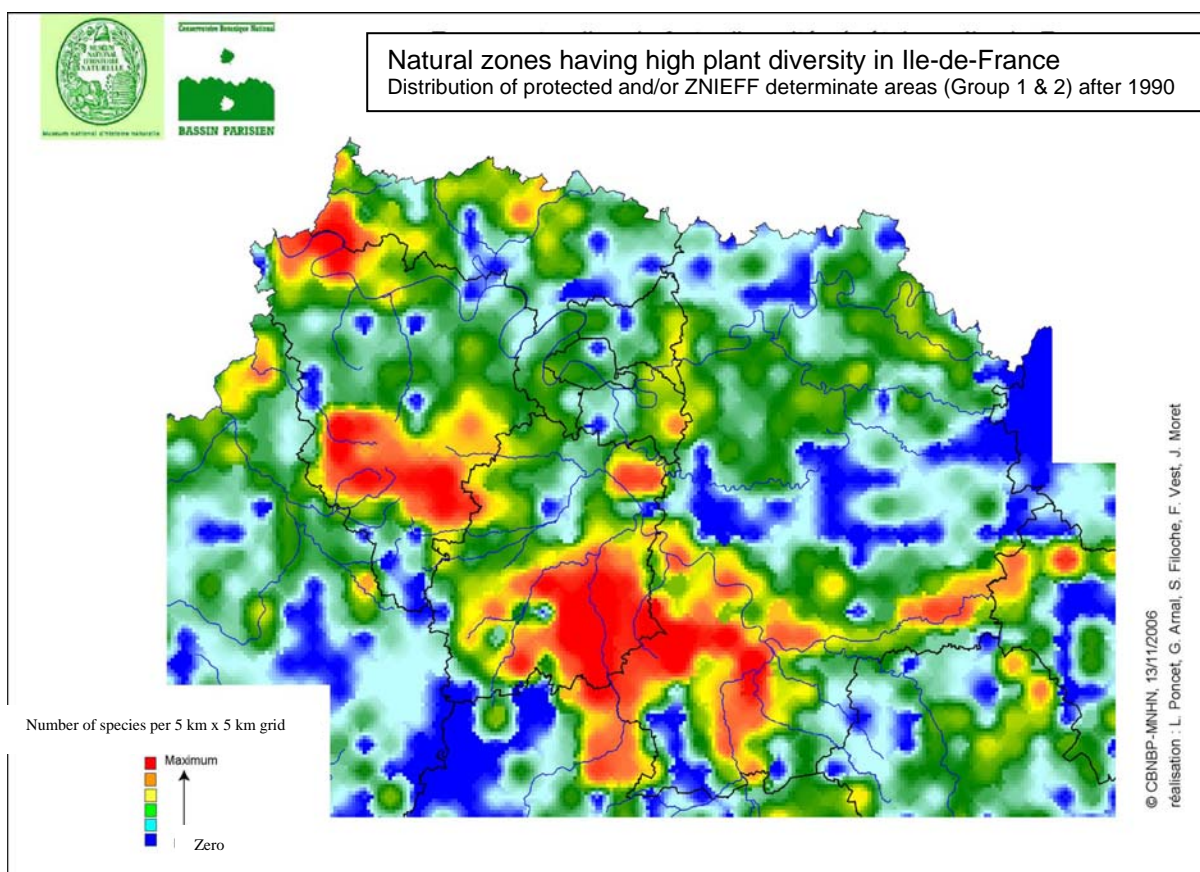
b – After 1980, numerous plant species cease to be indicated in the regional botanic literature. The main types of environment concerned are:

- harvest species on limestone soil.
- alkaline peat bog species (and associated vacuums).
- limestone and sand-and-limestone grasslands and meadows.
- Water meadow and grassland species.

c – A few figures on the faunal species present in Ile-de-France, in comparison with those present in France:

	France	Ile-de-France (IdF)	% in IdF
<b>Birds</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>61%</b>
<i>including regular nesters</i>	285	146	51%
<b>Insects</b>	<b>35,200</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>51%</b>
<i>including Lepidoptera</i>	5,200	2,100	40%
<i>including Orthoptera</i>	220	71	32%
<i>including Neuroptera</i>	160	54	34%
<i>including Odonata</i>	87	45	51%
<i>including Coleoptera</i>	9,600	3,250	34%
<b>Mammals</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50%</b>
<i>including bats</i>	33	19	57%
<b>Reptiles</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Amphibians</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Vascular plants</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>25%</b>

Mapping of the Ile-de-France spaces depending on their floristic interest



(the full presentation of the National Botanic Conservatory of the Paris Basin is appended as a supplementary appendix to the report).

A feature of Ile-de-France is that it includes sites of exceptional biological richness. They form a sort of arc extending from West Vexin to La Bassée through the Boucles de la Seine (the Seine Meanders), the Forests of Rambouillet and of Yvelines, the valleys of South Essonne, and the Forests of Les Trois-Pignons and of Fontainebleau. The valleys also contribute to this exceptional biological wealth: the Seine, Marne, Loing, Morins, Ourcq, Viosne, Mauldre, and Oise valleys, as do the other great forests (Montmorency, Carnelle, Armainvilliers, Notre-Dame, Sénart, Villefermoy, Jouy).

And yet, in the Ile-de-France Region, biodiversity must also be protected and preserved in “ordinary” natural environments. Such spaces, situated outside the above-mentioned remarkable spaces, are, in general, of smaller surface areas and are often isolated, and they undergo stronger pressure from human activity. Therein lies the considerable importance of the issues, stakes, and actions to be conducted in the agricultural environment, the urban environment, and the peri-urban environment.

With a population of 11 million living in 2% of the national territory, Ile-de-France is characterised by a strong urban influence. However, we should not forget that the urban areas cover only 20% of its territory. Natural and rural spaces account for 80% of the Region’s territory: 52% for farmland, 24% for woodland, and 4% for natural spaces. The pressure from urbanisation is very high. From 1982 to 1999, about 1700 hectares (ha) of natural, agricultural, and forest spaces disappeared every year. Furthermore, city dwellers need the countryside that they “consume” in a wide variety of ways: a place in which to walk, a place in which to treat various waste and pollution, a place in which to locate pollutant activities, a corridor through which to build infrastructures, areas for leisure and relaxation activities, etc.

In addition, through the richness of its soils, Ile-de-France is fortunate in being a major agricultural region. Its formerly very varied output that was dedicated mainly to supplying the Paris market has become specialised and has made considerable progress in productivity, enabling it to be exported to a large extent.

On the other hand, this intensification in the farming has reduced the number of types of produce, and, above all, has changed the rural space. In addition, land consolidation and implementation of cultivation methods mainly focussed on productivity gains have changed the rural landscape while undermining the habitats of numerous species. The almost total disappearance of stock farming and of fruit growing has also changed the landscapes, mainly in the valleys and on the hillsides.

**That is why the sustainable management of the Ile-de-Franc Region has today become essential. To this end, maintaining biodiversity is also essential because it is the foundation for Sustainable Development.**



## **2.3 The services that nature and biodiversity render to humankind**

*(Extract from the Regional Charter for Biodiversity, Appendix, p. 41)*

Nature and the living world in its diversity play a vital role that can be presented as including so many services: water, air, soil for cultivation, insects for pollinating plants, nature as a place for leisure, etc. These essential services are very generally taken for granted. What do humans stand to gain from nature conservation?

### **1. Utility for the landscape and for culture**

Nature, in particular the living world and its diversity, offers a wide diversity of landscapes. Hedgerows, copses and groves, and isolated trees are all structuring elements of the agricultural landscape. Open-air activities contribute in many ways to economic life but, above all, they improve quality of life. Since this aspect is impossible to quantify, debates on conservation generally exclude it completely. Only the economic revenue that humans generate when they go to natural zones can be measured. However, that revenue constitutes at best only a very insufficient barometer of the real impacts. Furthermore, nature in its diversity should be accessible to everyone, and should improve the lives of every Ile-de-France resident.

### **2. Medical utility**

70% of medicines in current use are still extracted or derived from natural products. Bark, for example, has given us three well-known remedies: aspirin (from the willow tree); quinine (which contributes to preventing malaria and that is found in the bark of the cinchona tree); and taxol (derived from Pacific yew bark and used in treating cancer). And the list is long... Today, we do not know exactly the number of compounds of plant or animal origin that could be used, and it is this potential that we must preserve for future generations.

### **3. Ecological utility**

Safeguarding the greatest possible biological richness is essential. It underpins the stability of ecosystems and the capacity of living beings to evolve to cope with changes in their environment. Numerous natural elements slow down the changes the might occur, or indeed even prevent them. For example, forests prevent erosion and prevent heavy rain from degenerating into flooding. The natural processes also stabilise climate, at least to a certain extent. Climate change is today experiencing an unprecedented acceleration due to human activity. Depending on this change, ecosystems and habitats will change as well. It is an obligation to fight and predict climate change and make sure that species can migrate or adapt to new surroundings.

## **4. Economic utility**

Nature procures huge direct and indirect economic advantages. The services rendered by ecosystems serve as a basis for all economic activities. There are increasing numbers of businesses related to the environment. The environment is a concept that sells well: organic produce, sustainable tourism, and open-air leisure activities, corporate communications about nature used by numerous firms in various sectors of activity, etc.

And yet:

### **2.4 humans are responsible for the reduction in biodiversity**

In Ile-de-France, France's capital region, the causes for the reduction in biodiversity are mainly:

- a worrying shrinkage of natural and rural areas;
- segmentation and compartmentalisation of natural areas by networks of all types that degrade, in particular, exchanges between species;
- pollution of habitats, in particular due to phytosanitary products being used both in rural and in urban environments;
- artificialisation of environments;
- quite simply destruction of the environments in which species live and reproduce; and
- introduction of invasive exotic or alien species.

These threats are reinforced by climate change.

## **3. Assessment of the actions conducted since the adoption of the Regional Charter**

For its part, the Region has led a broad think with the players and stakeholders of Ile-de-France, and mainly with the naturalist associations on protecting biodiversity and on giving greater value to natural environments. The results of that think and the proposals made have been transcribed into a Regional Charter whose aim is to bring all of the Ile-de-France players and stakeholders to implement a shared strategy. In addition, it has adopted a financial assistance and grants scheme in order to assist its partners in their biodiversity protection actions.

Since the end of 2003, numerous actions relating to biodiversity have thus been conducted in partnership with the associations, local authorities, and public establishments. The Region has thus become the main partner of natural space managers, and the main regional player in biodiversity protection. A few examples of actions launched since 2003 are given below by way of indication. They do not constitute an exhaustive list.

As early as 1999 and without waiting for the national strategy to be put in place, the Region mobilised all of the players and stakeholders in Ile-de-France. At the 1<sup>st</sup> Regional Forum on Biodiversity, it consulted the associations of the Region, and the main players and stakeholders in biodiversity. From 2001 to 2003, theme commissions (whose themes were the city, the forest, agriculture, the other environments, and a more general theme of “making biodiversity known”) were set up with the regional partners (associations, federations, large companies, local authorities, and public establishments) for the purpose of drawing up a regional charter for biodiversity around common objectives.

In order to support the local players in the actions to be put in place within the framework of the Charter, and in order to be operational rapidly on the ground, we have put in place financial regulations for allocation of regional grants and assistance that were adopted with the Charter. The financial regulations enable actions to be funded on 3 priorities:

- acquiring greater knowledge of the Region’s biodiversity;
- improving management of the natural heritage; and
- improving the awareness of the public and achieving better communications on the integration of biodiversity into spatial planning.

The list of the signatories of the Regional Charter comprises, in 2007:

74 *communes*;  
2 communities of *communes*;  
4 agglomeration communities;  
7 départements;  
12 public establishments;  
3 Regional Nature Parks;  
7 nature reserves;  
10 unions/corporations;  
12 leisure areas;

63 associations;  
4 chambers and 5 federations; and  
3 large firms.

i.e. about 200 signatories.

These signatories are not all involved in a programme of actions with the Region. Today, about 50% of them conduct actions that enjoy regional financial assistance. A campaign will be run in 2007 for accelerating memberships.

The various applications presented to the Standing Commission have enjoyed scientific and technical advice from a board put in place by the biodiversity section (“*mission biodiversité*”) and comprising representatives from:

the French National Natural History Museum;  
the Botanic Conservatory of the Paris Basin;  
CNRS (French public-funded National Research Centre);  
IAURIF (Ile-de-France Region Institute for Urban Planning and Development);  
LPO (League for the Protection of Birds);  
CORIF (Ile-de-France Ornithological Centre);  
the French Herpetological Society;  
OPIE (Office for Insects and their Environment);

the Regional Hunting Federation;  
the National Office for Water and Aquatic Environments (ONEMA)

Pursuant to the 3 main issues of the Charter: knowledge, management, and heightening awareness of biodiversity protection, the main projects conducted since 2003 are presented below.

### 3.1 Knowledge

The actions comprise mainly:

- **research programmes**, on invasive species (Florida turtle, tamias or Korean chipmunk), on the survival of common birds in Ile-de-France as indicators of urban biodiversity, e.g. on the sparrow and the house martin (STOC programme for monitoring common birds over time), and on urban ecology problems (e.g. on the pigeon in the city) etc.;
- **major regional inventories** and local inventories on fauna and flora, on endangered species, and on habitats;
- **ecological diagnostic surveys** performed in compliance with specifications that are adapted as a function of the urban or more rural spaces, and conducted jointly with the Regional Directorate for the Environment (DIREN). These surveys make it possible to develop multi-year programmes with the local authorities for halting loss of biodiversity in the local territories. **Few local authorities have started this process.** This approach can be of interest to businesses, public establishments, etc.

### 3.2 Management of environments

The following have been subsidised:

- in ordinary areas: drawing up a programme for differentiated management of green spaces, and ecological planning programmes in order to recover more biodiversity (opening up environments, creating ponds, reconstituting reed beds, converting cereal crop land into pasture (grazing) land, etc.), studies for creating ecological continuities, etc.
- in protected areas: feasibility surveys for creating Regional Nature Reserves (the report on the new regional competences over the natural heritage of Ile-de-France was adopted by the Regional Council in October 2006), financial assistance for drawing up management plans, implementing arrangement and maintenance work on the former voluntary nature reserves (RNVs), etc.
- in forest environments: ecological management work, and a programme of forestry certification for all of the Ile-de-France forests (public and private).

### **3.3 Educational activities / awareness heightening/ communications**

The following have been supported:

- multi-year programmes for schools and the general public: educational activities with the associations (creation of Nature Clubs in high schools (lycées), nature activities in open air leisure areas, etc.), educational outings for discovering nature in the city, etc.
- putting in place educational equipment in urban parks, on municipal sites and in protected areas (nesting boxes, observatories or watching posts, information boards, creating educational circuits, etc.); and
- creating and distributing teaching aids: communications brochures for professionals or local authorities (e.g. public purchasing guide for wood for use by local authorities or public establishments, datasheets “for mobilisation in favour of house martins” for use by businesses, architects, and private individuals), miscellaneous posters and leaflets, exhibitions on biodiversity, etc.

**PROJECTS SUBSIDISED SINCE  
ADOPTION OF THE REGIONAL CHARTER FOR BIODIVERSITY  
OCTOBER 2003 – MARCH 2007**

**1: Knowledge** (inventories, research programmes, ecological diagnostic surveys, miscellaneous surveys, etc.)

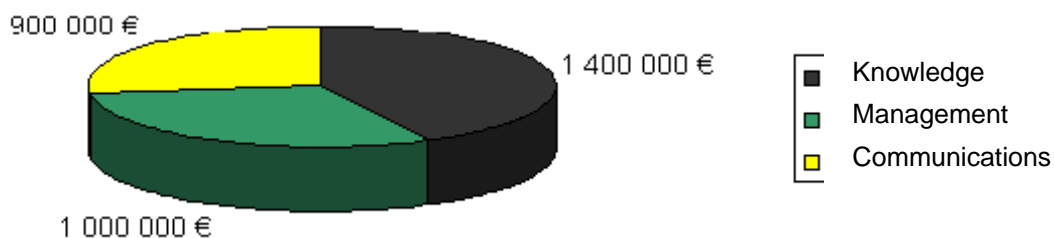
**2: Management** (management plans, feasibility surveys, arrangement and maintenance work)

**3: Communications** (teaching aids, educational equipment and facilities, and educational activities, etc.)

**Total subsidies: 3.3 million euros**

Knowledge	€ 1,400,000
Management	€ 1,000,000
Communications	€ 900,000

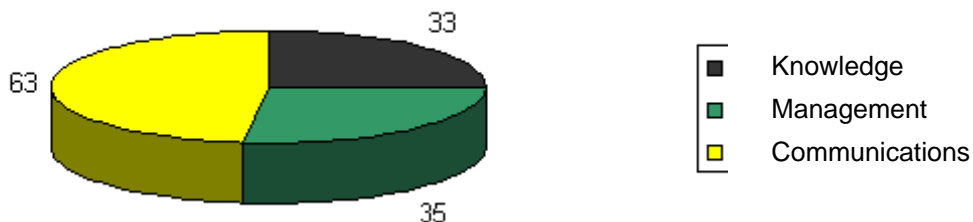
**Financial assessment of the projects subsidised since adoption of  
the Regional Charter for Biodiversity  
(Oct 2003 – March 2007 as a function of the amounts allocated)**



**Number of allocations of subsidies: 131**

Knowledge	33
Management	35
Communications	63

**Types of projects subsidised since adoption of  
the Regional Charter for Biodiversity  
(Oct 2003 – March 2007 as a function of the types of the projects)**



It is these three priorities that are to be found in the objectives of the various international and national strategies.

In 2003, the Charter was sent to all of the local authorities of the Ile-de-France Region. The actions put in place since then have been actions proposed by research centres, by local authorities, by associations, and by public bodies. Certain large public establishments have signed the Charter and have started conducting action plans with the Region.

It is however necessary to accelerate the process under way with the various partners. Thus, it is proposed to you today to implement the Regional Strategy for Biodiversity that is presented to you below.

## 4. The Regional Strategy

An awakening of awareness is necessary if the Region wants to obtain results that are measurable, significant, and sustainable in the long term. And it is mainly on attacks on biodiversity that we must act, in overall manner and with means additional to those already used today. The measures currently taken need to be reinforced and integrated into all regional policies. Otherwise they will not be capable of stemming a general impoverishment of the Ile-de-France territory.

*(cf. assessment of the actions conducted under the Regional Charter, see below).*

In addition, it is important to emphasize the role of the Ile-de-France Regional Master Plan (SDRIF) in protecting biodiversity. One of the five objectives of the draft SDRIF is to preserve, to restore, and to value natural resources, and to give access to a quality environment. The map giving the general uses of the various portions of the Region's territory locates the farmland, woodland, and natural land to be protected and the green breaks and ecological continuities to be maintained. Reinforcing the compactness of the Ile-de-France conurbation that is already dense, the new Draft Master Plan focuses on taking the environment better into account (*cf. environmental assessment of the Draft SDRIF/February 2007*). The SDRIF was drafted in consultation with all of the representatives from the institutions and from the civil society of Ile-de-France.

It is proposed that the Region commit itself to the following **5 main objectives**:

1. Stop erosion of biodiversity by 2010.
2. Reclaim natural spaces in favour of biodiversity.
3. Create the conditions for the return of certain emblematic species.
4. Value and extract added value from the natural heritage of Ile-de-France
5. Enable ecosystems to operate properly, in particular by re-establishing biological continuities.

It is proposed to translate these five general objectives into 10 operational objectives that will constitute the backbone of the Regional Strategy for Biodiversity. The objectives follow on from the Regional Charter for Biodiversity that we adopted in September 2003 and translate our commitment.

- Maintain and restore the ecological continuities.
- Develop a network of protected areas.
- Reduce the pressure on natural environments.
- Improve knowledge of biodiversity and monitor changes in it.
- Mobilise all of the players from the civil society on all of these objectives.
- Help the players integrate biodiversity into all of the policies in cross-cutting manner.
- Make biodiversity better known.
- Develop co-operation on biodiversity from the inter-regional level to the international level.
- Assess and anticipate the impacts of climate change.
- Be an example.



The objectives of the Regional Strategy for Protecting Biodiversity must apply to all urban, peri-urban, natural, and rural areas, be they ordinary or remarkable.

One of the most advantageous and interesting actions at regional level is to re-establish a network interconnecting all of the ecosystems, which could be established on the basis of a regional ecological links plan comprising 5 major networks (*cf. 1<sup>st</sup> action plan*).

These five types of network have been developed as a function of the different types of habitats, of dissemination modes, and of movements of certain populations of emblematic species who are rare or endangered. The plan also proposes to reconstruct continuities for maintaining or for re-establishing certain species (*cf. ecological continuities and species plan*).

**In order to translate these objectives into actions, it is proposed as follows:**

- Set up the Regional Agency for Nature and Biodiversity – “NATURPARIF”.
- Define 10 action plans on the basis of the rationales of the players;
- Adopt biodiversity objectives contracts for reinforcing the dynamic drive generated by the Regional Charter for Biodiversity.

The means for implementing the strategy are of the regulatory, funding, and land acquisition types.

#### **4.1. The Regional Agency for Nature and Biodiversity**

The Ile-de-France Agency for Nature and Biodiversity is a structure for exchange between the associations community and the institutional community that is designed to optimise the capacities for observing and capitalising on information. This agency aims to foster a better-co-ordinated approach, at regional level, between the various bodies, including the naturalist associations, and the National Botanic Conservatory for the Paris Basin, acting in the fields of monitoring and protecting biodiversity, in particular in the context of climate change. The setting up of the Agency for Nature and Biodiversity is a commitment of the Regional Council that appears in Article 18 of the Regional Charter for Biodiversity. It is also written into the 2007-2013 projects contract signed with the State on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2007.

Its main missions will be:

- To be acquainted with biodiversity in Ile-de-France and to monitor changes in it, in particular with respect to the impacts of climate change.
- Heighten awareness of and inform professionals and the general public about biodiversity protection.
- Improve assistance to local authorities and Ile-de-France planners and developers as regards conservation and taking account of biodiversity.
- Foster consultation and concerted efforts between the Ile-de-France players on the theme of biodiversity and of adaptation to climate change.

- Foster integration of biodiversity into the spatial planning policies, by organising dissemination of data, in particular national and regional inventories, in order to foster having such data taken into account in the planning documents;
- Conduct experimentation operations for preserving and restoring ecological continuities, in particular by implementing the Regional Guidelines for Managing Wild Fauna and Habitats (ORGFH), and in compliance with the regional plan for ecological continuities proposed by the Ile-de-France Regional Master Plan (SDRIF).
- Develop futurology as regards biodiversity and adaptation to climate change.
- Make it possible to assess the actions under way in the fields of knowledge of natural environments, of dissemination of knowledge, and of restoration of the environments, in particular by defining a shared indicator base.

This agency supplements the regional means for action on biodiversity that already exist and that are constituted by the Green Spaces Agency (AEV) for the land acquisition actions, for planning/laying out and managing regionally owned property, and the Ile-de-France Institute for Urban Planning and Development (IAURIF), for assessment tools.

## 4.2 THE 10 ACTION PLANS

### **1<sup>st</sup> ACTION PLAN ON ECOLOGICAL CONTINUITIES**

**Objective:** restoring the ecological continuities throughout Ile-de-France pursuant to the Regional Plan written into the Regional Master Plan (SDRIF). This general plan comprises:

#### **5 networks (integrated into the SDRIF):**

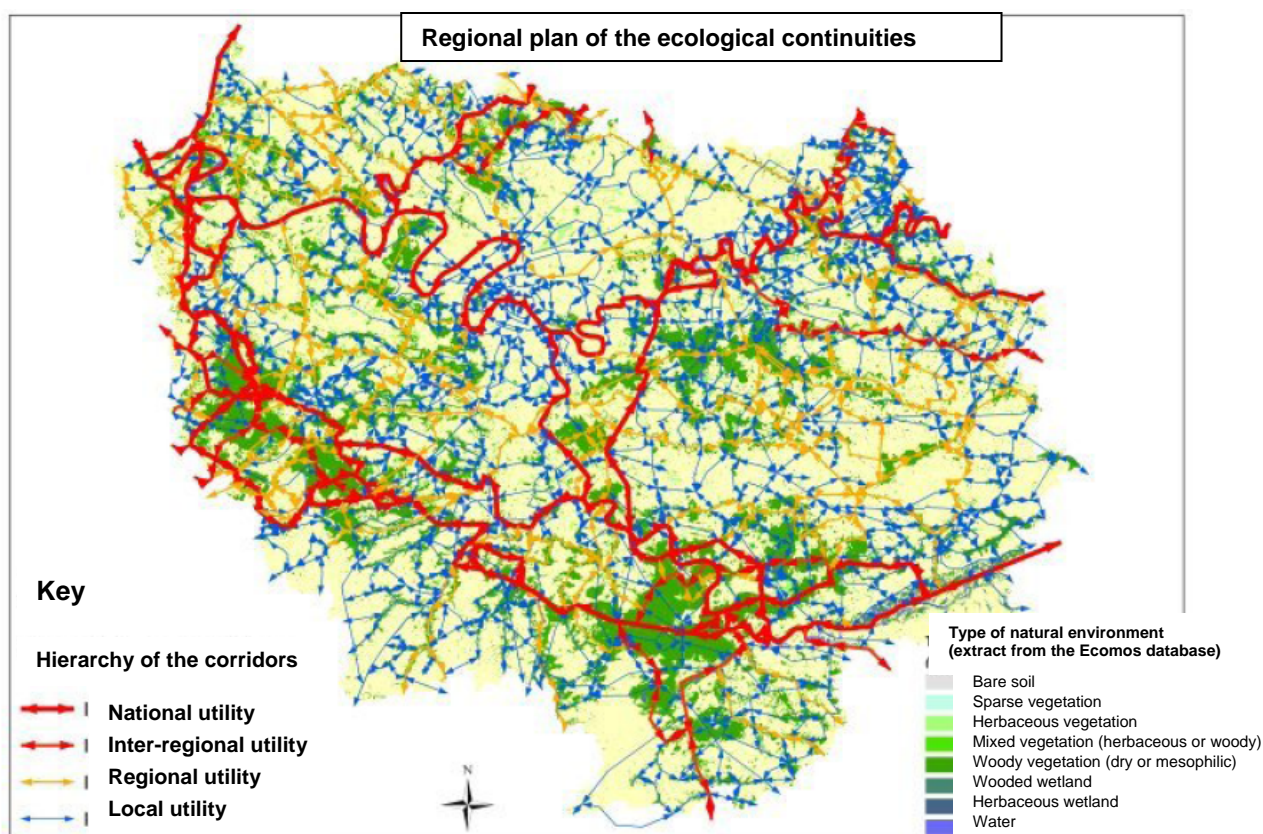
1. **network of moving water.** This network is based mainly on the minor and major water courses and on the fabric constituted by vegetal river banks.
  - the otter and the beaver are species restricted to the aquatic environment; the salmon symbolises the link with the Seine Estuary.
2. **network of wetland zones.** The marshes, ponds, small stretches of water, lakes, zones for overspill from spates, and wetland zones that served as the fabric on which to build the network.
  - batrachians are species representative of wetland environments.
3. **network of grassland.** This is a continuous herbaceous green fabric that mainly houses species having low mobility.
  - main species related to these environments: insects, reptiles, and certain batrachians.
4. **network of trees and hedges.** This is a discontinuous linear fabric, mainly in built up areas (lines of trees, and hedges), but it can also be reconstructed in certain places.
  - main species related to these environments: certain reptiles and certain insects.

5. **network of large mammals.** It is the “large fauna” fabric mapped in 2000 by the Hunting Federations and the National Office for Hunting and Wild Fauna. It is mainly formed by areas of forest and seedling copses on farmland all representing greenways and passageways for ungulates. Priorities have been defined by taking account of the distribution area of the stag, and of the hosting possibilities of spaces not populated by the species.

- Main species related to these environments: stag, roe deer, etc;

It is important to emphasise that these five types of network can provide most of the necessities of life for all of the species living in the Ile-de-France Region, or who might colonise it. Although the problem of invasive species is not an urgent issue for the moment, the risks related to climate change impart a strong responsibility on the Region. Climate change will lead to displacement of distribution areas of numerous species, and the Region should not constitute a barrier.

**Map of the ecological continuities (Source: IAURIF)**



(the full IAURIF presentation of the ecological continuities is appended as a supplementary appendix to the report)

These large networks are classified depending on their utility or interest:

- national utility;
- inter-regional utility;
- regional utility; and
- local utility.

The priorities for re-establishing these continuities will be defined on the basis of scientific criteria in terms of habitats, of ecosystems, and of protection of species that are indicators and that are emblematic.

However, pursuant to the Region's commitment to stop loss of biodiversity by 2010 (Countdown 2010), other priorities for action might appear, for example, depending on the choices finalised in the Region's Master Plan (SDRIF) for planning in strategic territories, depending on territories weakened by high urban pressure, and also depending on the will of managers of spaces to act quickly.

### Short-term (2007-2010) and medium-term projects

- **Seine Plan: ecological continuity**

The objective of this action being conducted by the Ile-de-France Region is to enable fish to move freely in classified sections and to restore the ecology of the banks and of the remarkable wetland zones. Ecological continuity is aimed both at enabling the fish to migrate and at gradually organising an ecological link between the wetland zones of the major routes of the basin. The actions chosen are intended to serve as a basis for a wider project throughout all of the regions, enabling them to be connected up so as to improve the biodiversity of the river. The main operations are: to restore the wetland zones of La Bassée, to restore freedom of movement of fish, to restore the banks through vegetal engineering, and to put in place an **inter-regional environmental plan for the river banks** (*cf. report to the Regional Council: Seine Plan, February 2007*).

- **Gas transport network:** agreement with GRT Gaz Val de Seine for re-establishing ecological continuities over 500 km of network, programme 2007/2010.
- **Other networks** (electricity, annexes to rail and road networks, moving water): managers: RTE (French Electricity Grid Infrastructure Corporation), RFF (French Rail Track Corporation), Motorway Corporations, VNF (French Waterways Board), PAP (Port of Paris Authorities): negotiations in progress for re-establishing ecological continuities and better management of these areas.
- **Putting in place ecological continuities** in agricultural areas (survey in progress on the territory of Seine et Marne with the Chamber of Agriculture (see Appendix 2).
- **Creation of a regional network of wetland zones** with the French National Society for the Protection of Nature and its network in Ile-de-France.

Putting in place all of these actions with the network managers can make it possible to create and manage major and lasting ecological continuities in the Region, conducive to displacement and movement of species.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> ACTION PLAN ON SPECIES**

### **Objectives:**

- Heightening public awareness of the presence of protected species or of common species in Ile-de-France as indicators of biodiversity.
- Showing that if we change our management practices and if we foster protection of certain environments, certain species can come back.

### **Priorities in the short and medium terms:**

- Preserve endangered species: in particular the yellow-bellied toad, the western marsh harrier, the stone curlew, the large-flowered sandwort (*arenaria grandiflora*), etc.
- Foster the return of species that have disappeared: the otter, the beaver, the salmon, the Eurasian bittern for nesting, and the osprey, etc.
- Programme for researching and conservation of species that are emblematic of the Ile-de-France environments: the stag, the pike, the great Capricorn beetle, the peregrine falcon, the little owl, etc.
- Programme for research against invasive species: Florida turtles and tamias (Korean chipmunk), water primrose, Japanese knotweed, etc.
- Programme for research and monitoring over time of common birds in Ile-de-France (STOC) for the common sparrow, the house martin, etc.
- Programme for monitoring and heightening awareness of the presence and diversity of garden butterflies in Ile-de-France (programme for the general public).

## **3<sup>rd</sup> ACTION PLAN FOR THE CITY**

**Objectives:** to reduce the pressure on natural environments and to restore ecological continuities.

### **Priorities in the short and medium terms:**

- Foster putting in place differentiated management of municipal green spaces.
- Install nesting boxes for common kestrel, swift, and swallows, and roosting sites for bats in municipal buildings.
- Do pruning and façade rendering/painting outside the bird reproduction season.
- Plant indigenous species.

- Limit use of pesticides and foster organic treatment;
- Develop and disseminate widely (in particular electronically) good management practice guides, and organise training.
- Foster vegetal roofs.

*For the other measures to be put in place, refer to Chapter 1 of the Regional Charter for Diversity (Biodiversity and the City).*

#### **4<sup>th</sup> ACTION PLAN FOR THE FOREST**

**Objective:** improve ecological management of forests, and restore ecological continuities.

**Priorities in the short term (2007-2010) and in the medium term:**

- Forestry certification for all Ile-de-France forests by 2010 (*cf. Chapter II, Article 6 of the Regional Charter*).
- 5-year objectives agreement with the ONF (National Forestry Office) and the CRPF (Regional Forest Protection Board). Annual assessment.
- Ecological forestry management of all forests.
- Re-establishing ecological continuities between the areas of forest (regional plan for wooded continuities and large mammals).
- Installing 5 wooden fauna passes/crossings by 2010.

*For the other measures to be implemented, refer to Chapter II of the Regional Charter for Biodiversity (Biodiversity and the Forest).*

#### **5<sup>th</sup> ACTION PLAN FOR WETLAND ZONES**

**Objective:** to protect all of Ile-de-France's wetland zones.

**Priorities in the short term (2007-2010) and in the medium term:**

- Put in place a regional network of wetland zones.
- Protect all of the marshland and alluvial forests by setting up RNRs (Regional Nature Reserves).
- Conserve and create ponds (see regional plan for wetland zones).
- Conserve and restore flat hill-bottom areas.
- Restore 500 ha of reed beds
- Heighten awareness of the players about the importance and the role of wetland zones.

*For the other measures to be put in place, refer to Chapter IV, Article 11 of the Regional Charter for Biodiversity (Biodiversity and the Other Environments).*

In addition, in its chapter on protection of remarkable spaces, the Regional Master Plan (SDRIF) mentions the special protection to be given to particularly weakened and threatened wetland zones. Such zones must be maintained and reclaimed, pursuant to the laws on water of 1992, 2001, and 2006 (30<sup>th</sup> December 2006) and to the Development of Rural Territories (DTR) law that are aimed at "preserving aquatic ecosystems, wetland sites, and wetland zones." (*cf. environment assessment of the draft SDRIF/February 2007*).

### **6<sup>th</sup> ACTION PLAN FOR THE OTHER ENVIRONMENTS**

**Objective:** protect and manage all of these environments that participate in the ecological continuities and that are necessary for the diversity of habitats and thus of species.

**Priority in the short term (2007-2010) and in the medium term:**

- Protect limestone environments, heaths, meadows and grassland, cliffs, flat hill-bottom areas, screes, and old quarries and pits, through the setting up of Regional Nature Reserves.

*For the other measures to be put in place, refer to Chapter IV of the Regional Charter on Biodiversity (Biodiversity and the Other Environments).*

### **7<sup>th</sup> ACTION PLAN FOR AGRICULTURE**

**Objective:** have farmland areas participate in restoring ecological continuities, develop practices compatible with biodiversity protection, and maintain open farmland spaces in peri-urban zones or in urban zones.

**Priorities in the short and medium terms**

- Increase by 1000 ha the area of organic farming by 2010 (from 6000 to 7000 ha).
- Double the number of farms who are signatories of a "PRAIRIE" programme as part of the agri-environmental measures.
- Put in place agreements with farmers for re-establishing ecological continuities (e.g. Chamber of Agriculture of Seine-et-Marne).
- Maintain peri-urban agriculture and develop taking account of biodiversity.  
*(cf. Appendix 1 of the present report).*

These objectives will be reproduced in the agro-environmental policies of the Region.

### **8<sup>th</sup> ACTION PLAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURES**

**Objective:** integrating taking account of biodiversity into infrastructure projects (see Regional Charter for Infrastructures, March 2000).

**Priorities in the short term (2007-2010) and in the medium term:**

- Re-establish ecological corridors interrupted by infrastructures, by building multi-species fauna passes/crossings.
- Improve operation of all of the existing passes/crossings.
- Build passes/crossings for amphibians.
- Extensively manage the areas of land along roads, motorways, railway tracks, high speed railway (TGV) tracks, electricity lines, gas pipelines, etc.
- Differentiated management of rainwater retention pools for motorways.
- Think about the design of the pools.
- Provide training on differentiated management.

## **9<sup>th</sup> ACTION PLAN ON REGIONAL PROPERTY**

### **A – Manager: Green Space Agency of the Ile-de-France Region (AEV)**

**General objective:** regional land watch and control at the service of biodiversity

The land acquisition and management policy of the Region is entrusted to the Green Space Agency (AEV) which is a regional public establishment that acts within priority areas for land ownership intervention (PRIFs), in farmland and natural spaces in peri-urban zones, in sensitive natural areas in co-operation with the *Départements*, in protected areas and sectors to be rehabilitated, and the big greenways of regional utility. Within these areas, land ownership control associated with planning and development projects, opening up to the public, and heightening awareness of the public sustains the protection of the spaces in question. The PRIFs represent 34,000 ha, 12,500 ha of which are owned by the Region. Taking account of biodiversity in the natural sites has, since 1999, yielded fauna and flora inventories and management recommendations. In addition, diagnostic surveys prior to planning and development programmes contribute to the extent to which biodiversity is taken into account.

#### **Main objectives:**

- Focus the actions so as to meet the new challenges of the Regional Master Plan (SDRIF), mainly for protecting ecological continuities and natural and agricultural peri-urban spaces.
- Implement the Regional Charter through the PRIFs and the financial assistance granted to local authorities and associations for acquiring, creating, or arranging/laying out green spaces and natural environments.
- Heightening the awareness of the public about biodiversity in the regional properties/estates (e.g. junior forestry programme, and “nature activities” on the regional nature sites).

#### **Priorities in the short and medium terms**

- **Create PRIFs:** biodiversity is one of the key elements in creating PRIFs. In particular in order to take up the challenges defined by the regional system of open spaces and by the regional operating plan for farmland, woodland and natural land in the SDRIF, the AEV will reinforce its action on remarkable environments, zones of ordinary diversity, and ecological continuities, consistently with the objectives of the SDRIF.
- **Subsidies:** the criteria for eligibility are being reworked so as to take biodiversity better into account, in particular in zones lacking green spaces. The AEV is helping Pronatura Ile-de-France to acquire and lay out/arrange natural environments of major ecological interest.
- **Knowledge and monitoring:** continuing the programme of acquisition of knowledge of the biological heritage in order to assess the policies implemented, instigation of habitat monitoring protocols, long-term monitoring for validating the types of management, and putting in place indicators of the environmental quality of the sites.



- **Heightening awareness of the general public and of school children:** reinforce nature activities throughout the areas, in particular in the future RNRs, and extend the Junior Forestry programmes to other sites with a view to Region-wide balance.
- **Regulatory protections:** initially, on the seven regional properties/estates already enjoying management similar to the management of protected areas, classification as a Regional Nature Reserve will be proposed.
- **Peri-urban farmland areas: on its agricultural properties/estates,** and on the agricultural land on which land watch is performed under the PRIF scheme with the agreement of the SAFER (corporation for land-use planning and rural settlement), the AEV, in partnership with the local farmers, will encourage the development of production systems involving farming practices that are favourable to biodiversity. The development of a biodiversity that is useful to operation of the farming systems will also be sought. The convergence of means for assisting farmers in developing such practices will be sought. The practices to be encouraged are manifold, e.g. : choice of varieties or of breeds, rotations, working of the soil, managing factors of production or input and crop protection, valuing zones for spate/flooding overflow, collection areas, maintaining and developing fixed elements of the landscape, etc. Organic farming production systems will, in particular, be encouraged.
- **Regional forests:** continuing with ecological diagnostic surveys prior to establishing planning and development plans, fostering the network of areas of senescence, secondary species, intra-site biological continuities, forestry certification for all of the regional forests. Continuing with the programmes for restoring intra-forest ponds.
- **Wetland zones on regional property/estates:** integrate planning and management of catchment areas, guarantee water supply for wetland habitats, combat silting up, and stabilise the habitats of heliophytes.
- **Moving water, islands and stretches of water:** develop hydraulic inventories, restore river banks, and foster fish-breeding habitats.
- **Natural meadows, grassland, and heath on regional properties/estates:** foster exporting of mowing cuttings, temporarily suspend access to some habitats so as to limit the impacts of over-frequented, sustain arboreal and shrub habitats while limiting invasion of woody plants.
- **Degraded habitats on regional properties/estates:** continue with reclaiming environments through ecological engineering operations (re-naturalisation).
- **Nature 2000:** on the NATURA 2000 sites that are situated on regional properties/estates, it is proposed that the Region chair the steering committee (COPIL) and that AEV handle the objectives documents or "DOCObS".

**B – Manager: Corporation for Outdoor Leisure Areas**

Total surface area of the Outdoor Leisure Areas (BPALs): 3000 ha

**Objectives:** preserve certain zones of biodiversity and promote nature activities.

**Priorities in the short term (2007/2010) and in the medium term:**

- Provide biodiversity conservation zones in certain leisure areas (RNRs).
- Heighten awareness of biodiversity protection through nature discovery equipment (bird-watching posts, beehives, signs, etc.).
- Create or reinforce nature discovery activities.

**C – Manager: the high schools (lycées)**

**Objective:** Establish avenues for working on how to take biodiversity into account in managing high schools.

**Priorities:**

- Take account of biodiversity in designing high schools located close to reservoirs of biodiversity: an ecological diagnostic survey could be integrated into the eco-building (HQE) approach for operations of the renovation and construction programme (PPR/PPI) to be started and that are of interest in this respect.
- Put in place differentiated management of green spaces and more particularly for high schools where the quality and/or size of the spaces are remarkable: recommendations can be made to the schools and introduced into training of staff in charge of green spaces.
- Educational activities related to nature discovery: associations who wish to act in this field with high school students can be helped, under the Region's environmental policy, as can projects originating from high schools or high school students by way of "High School" or "Passion" projects.
- For agricultural high schools: introduce, as part of the training, spaces dedicated to agricultural practices that are environment-friendly and biodiversity-friendly, in agreement with the DRIAF (Regional and Inter-*Département* Directorate for Agriculture and Forestry).

### **10<sup>th</sup> ACTION PLAN FOR CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS (Awareness-heightening, Education, Training, and Co-operation)**

**Objective:** support implementation of the action plans, and develop partnerships.

**Priorities in the short-term (2007-2010) and in the medium term:**

**A – Set up the Regional Agency for Nature and Biodiversity “Nature PARIF” (see missions, page 25). Setting up the Agency is written into the State-Region project contract for 2007-2013.** On setting up the Regional Centre for Nature and the Environment (*Maison Régionale de la Nature et de l’Environnement*), consideration will be given to geographically grouping together in the same place all of the environment agencies or observatories in which the Region participates. The objective of this approach is to offer Ile-de-France residents and all of the players and stakeholders of the Region a space that is easily accessible and that gives a panorama of the environment in Ile-de-France and of the action by the Region and by its partners. This “*Maison Régionale*” will thus be a network-head resource centre in co-operation with the *département* and local branches and with the reserves “*maisons*” scheme.

**B – Set up of a regional network of theme centres (“*maisons*”) on nature (*département* centres for birds, insects, nature, or the environment, the Regional Nature Park (PNR) centres, the Regional Nature Reserve (RNR) centres, etc.).** The survey concerning developing the scheme for reserve centres adopted in the report to the Regional Council meeting of October 2006 (CR. 30-06) will be broadened to all of the theme centres of Ile-de-France.

**C- Set up a conservatory for regional biological heritage.** A survey is in progress with the CERES (Centre for Surveys and Research on the Environment of Savigny-le-Temple), the *commune* of Savigny le Temple, and the *département* of Seine et Marne.

**D – Regional Environmental Education Policy**

**E – Survey on local councillors on application of the Regional Charter for Biodiversity**

**F – Annual forum of biodiversity players and stakeholders**

**G – Integrate the regional policy for protecting nature and biodiversity into the communications policy of the Region depending on the main national and international events:**

- Sustainable Development Day.
- RAMSAR Wetlands Day.
- Environmental Education Fair.
- Environmental Film Festival.
- Nature Festival
- Biodiversity Day

**H – Participate in international and European networks for nature protection**

By way of examples of the projects in progress:

- LAB/ICLEI programme of local action for biodiversity.
- Membership of the IUCN (World Conservation Union) (project in progress).
- Membership of the “Countdown 2010” network.
- Eco-Region Commission. Metropolis “peri-urban agriculture and biodiversity”.

## 5. The means to be implemented

### The regional tools

For this purpose, the Region has four complementary channels. The first is of the regulatory type, through the Regional Master Plan (SDRIF). The second is the contractual channel based on financial incentives for the various players and stakeholders. The third is land acquisition action through the Green Space Agency (AEV). The fourth is direct action from the Region; through better governance, better communications and better heightening of the awareness of the public, through regularly consulting the partners, and finally through co-ordinating the various actions at regional level.

#### 5.1. The regulatory means

The regulatory means of the Region mainly come under the Ile-de-France Regional Master Plan (SDRIF). It should be noted that, although natural environment protection is today the subject of over thirty different Central Government procedures, only the Regional Nature Parks (PNRs) and the Regional Nature Reserves (RNRs) come under the competence of the Region. In addition, like the National Parks and the National Reserves, they have the particularity of being tools for managing areas that have received labels for their environmental quality.

In addition, it should be noted that these procedures are not co-ordinated, or at best ill-co-ordinated, without a hierarchy of objectives and of action having been identified. Improving the system is the domain of the State's legislative and regulatory bodies. It should be based on prioritisation of issues and stakes and on consistent decentralisation to the right level of local authority governance and should be accompanied by the necessary support means.

Nevertheless, and without waiting for that, the Region must define its own action for preserving biodiversity. The Draft SDRIF finalised by deliberation of the Regional Council on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007 defines in its spatial guidelines the importance of preserving, restoring, and valuing the natural resources that contribute to biodiversity (cf. environmental assessment of the Draft SDRIF/February 2007). It has thus, in the context of the Draft SDRIF, defined a scale of regional values for natural spaces comprising:

- the "remarkable" spaces or areas (bringing together all of the PNRs, of the reserves, of the ZNIEFFs (natural zones of ecological, floristic, and faunal interest), ZICOSs (Areas of Community Interest for Birds), and SPAs (Special Protection Areas), of the areas under biotope orders, and of the Natura 2000 areas);
- the ecological continuities that can be situated in "ordinary" areas; and
- the Natura 2000 sites.

**At European level, natural environments have been the subjects of preservation policies since the end of the 1970s, with the “Habitats” Directive and the “Birds” Directive. In addition, a new action plan on biodiversity was presented in May 2006 in order to end the impoverishment of biodiversity in the EU by 2010. In this context, the SDRIF defines, in its spatial guidelines, quality, consistent, and sustainable planning that takes into account preservation of natural areas, in particular remarkable ones, the ecological links and the need to keep consumption of space under control, all necessary prerequisites for maintaining and developing biodiversity. (cf. environmental assessment of the Draft SDRIF/February 2007).**

For each level, instructions relating to the spaces to be protected, and recommendations for the natural continuities and links to be maintained or to be re-established are mentioned.

One of the most significant is the integration of a regional ecological network. This network is made up of large reservoirs of regional biodiversity or “source zones”, of “relay zones” constituting zones of like nature that are suitable for hosting biodiversity comparable to the large reservoirs, of “buffer zones” around the reservoirs so as not to degrade operation of the reservoirs, and finally of ecological links between the large reservoirs making it possible for exchanges to take place between populations. These zones are the subjects of protection in the SDRIF. The ecological links, shown by arrows at regional level could be the subject of recommendations or instructions at the levels of the inter-municipality Territorial Consistency Plans (SCOTs) and of the Local Urban Planning Plans (PLUs). Those instructions or recommendations will be accompanied by a regional toolbox (equipment and funding assistance) so as to enable them to be implemented at *commune* level or at *inter-commune* level.

## 5.2 The funding means

### **Objective: adapting the regulations for allocating regional assistance to the new strategy**

The financial incentive policy of the Region, and the means and modalities implemented, have already been defined by the deliberation of 25<sup>th</sup> September 2003, when the Regional Charter for Biodiversity and Natural Environments was adopted. It is proposed for that policy to be adapted, or indeed extended, and its means and resources increased in order to cope with the regional challenges and stakes (management of protected areas, assistance with maintaining the continuities appearing in the SDRIF, and support for conservation and for reconstructing the biodiversity of ordinary nature). They will also aim to:

- reclaim areas of biodiversity;
- re-establish continuities (infrastructures, urbanisation);
- help Ile-de-France agriculture to adapt to the constraints related to protecting biodiversity and to the qualitative expectations of the market, by modifying its practices;
- encourage owners of public land (State – RFF – RTE – VNF – PAP, *départements*, and motorway corporations) to launch programmes for reconstructing and managing natural heritage;
- encourage local and other public authorities to write biodiversity protection into their planning and development programme by means of the regional contractual policy (rural, regional, or territory contracts, watershed contracts, and AEV subsidies);
- encourage local authorities to integrate biodiversity protection into road, roundabout, and infrastructure projects; and

- encourage the State's local-level departments to use differentiated management of public areas.

The proposals for amendments are given to you in the table appended to the deliberation.

In order to have a better understanding of the Region's action for putting in place the 10 action plans, and in order to display more clearly the Region's policy on biodiversity protection, it is proposed to you, under the regulations for allocating regional assistance (cf. appendix to the deliberation):

- to increase the rates from 40% to 50% (outside the RNRs and corridors, which remain at 70%);
- to add to article 2, in the list of beneficiaries: "private individuals" for creating ecological continuities that can be situated on private property or estates (cf. Regional plan of ecological continuities written into the SDRIF);
- the ceilings of article 5 are upped to make it possible for actions to be taken at regional scale and for multi-year programmes to be planned for regional inventories and research programmes; the financial agreements will be presented on an annual schedule. The subsidies will be allocated on presentation of an execution report and a financial assessment, both of which are annual.
- In Article 5.3 "teaching equipment and facilities": the theme centres (*maisons à thèmes*) are added to the list of equipment and facilities; those centres will be subsidised only after the regional plan has been drawn up (survey written into the Report CR 30-06 of October 2006 on New Regional Competences over Natural Heritage) which will specify the sites of location of the various centres; that plan will take into account all of the centres (PNR centres, Environment Centres, *Département* Centres, Nature Centres, etc.) in order not to multiply this type of facility, in order to use the existing structures, and in order to create a regional network of centres on nature and the environment.

The Regional Nature Reserve centres will also be the subject of the same survey and will thus be strictly located on sites that do not already have theme centres and that are well served by public transport.

The budget earmarked for implementing the strategy will remain within the budget framework of the CPER (State-Region Contract), for the operations concerned by that contract, and within the framework of the annual balanced budget requirements.

### 5.3 The land acquisition means

#### Changes in the regional estate since 1976

Land acquisitions are made within the boundaries of 71 regional areas for land ownership intervention (PRIFs) set up by the Ile-de-France Region. The total surface area of the areas in which the Green Spaces Agency is authorised to intervene currently extends over some 34,000 hectares. The estate acquired in this way in those areas today totals about 12,500 hectares, including about 9,250 hectares of forest, 1,750 hectares of farmland, and 1,125 hectares of natural environments.

*For all of the actions, see the chapter on the action plan on regional property/Green Space Agency of the Ile-de-France Region.*

### 5.4 Direct means

The Region takes part with all of the players and stakeholders in Ile-de-France in communications and information programmes on biodiversity. But it has not defined its own policy. It is thus absolutely necessary to put in place, very rapidly, a genuine regional communications and information policy on protecting biodiversity in Ile-de-France.

One of the main focuses for drawing up the Regional Charter was the project to create a regional platform for biodiversity. The setting up of that platform is requested by all of the Ile-de-France players. It has been the subject of a survey that has identified all of the Ile-de-France needs, the expectations of the partners, the objectives, the missions, the organisation model, and the means and statutes to be considered. It should be built on 4 pillars:

1. The Regional Scientific Committee for the Protection of Nature (CSRPN) that gives scientific opinions on regional action.
2. The standing forum for biodiversity players and stakeholders, which is a place for encounters, exchange, and partnership.
3. An observatory for biodiversity, knowledge and monitoring of species and habitats.
4. A place of reception/welcome, information, awareness heightening, and communications for Ile-de-France residents and based on a network of theme centres (*département* or association "*maisons*") spread across the territory of Ile-de-France.

The latter three pillars would be grouped together into a single regional body: the Regional Agency for Nature and Biodiversity in Ile-de-France ("NATURE PARIF") provided for in action plan No. 10 appended to the deliberation.

The Region, in order to lead by example, can also firstly launch actions on the regional properties/estates, and secondly encourage taking account of biodiversity in all of the Region's policies.

It is proposed to submit a “biodiversity” objectives contract to the local authorities, large public establishments and firms who enjoy regional grants and assistance. A project commissioner (owner/client) who applies to the Region for financial assistance would be asked to sign the “biodiversity” objectives contract in order to integrate biodiversity protection into his or her project. That contract is appended to the deliberation. It remains a voluntary measure designed to value commitment from project commissioners.

Its aim is to integrate biodiversity protection into spatial planning and more particularly into the operations mentioned in Article 1 of the objectives contract (e.g. objective of safeguarding a protected species: observed presence of barn owls in a belfry – plan work as a function of the preservation of the species).

The “biodiversity” objectives contract is not a binding financial agreement. It accompanies the contractual policies of the Region, depending on the rules and the legal and financial framework of each one of them. It can be amended as a function of the regional policies that it accompanies. It is negotiated by the various departments and more particularly by the mission leaders at the time at which the subsidisable project is being drawn up.

The objectives contract will enable the Region to reinforce its action for stopping the loss of biodiversity in its territory. By signing it, the signatory adheres to the Regional Charter for Biodiversity. In addition, it is proposed for impact surveys for projects that are subsidisable by the Region to include a biodiversity section;

Finally, the Strategy will be assessed annually, and that assessment will be accompanied by a report on the assistance granted by the Region. That report will be presented to the Environment Commission of the Regional Council. A report on the action plans will also be presented to the other commissions depending on the themes addressed. It will also be presented to the Forum of Biodiversity Players that has met at least once per year since the Regional Charter for Biodiversity was adopted.

## **5.5 The schedule**

The Region adheres to “Countdown 2010” and, to that end, is committed to reducing loss of biodiversity before that deadline. A regional experiments and experience datasheet will be presented to the next meeting of the working group of the network. The Charter marked a first step down this path, and assessment of its action will also be implemented as of 2007. There will be a further campaign targeted on project commissioners (owners/clients) at the end of 2007.

The action plans that are submitted to you will be put in place, as of 2007. The actions conducted by the various partners from the association and institution worlds and that are the subjects of applications for regional subsidies will have to comply with the new funding regulations that are proposed to you as an appendix to the deliberation.

Please now deliberate.

**The President of the Regional Council  
of Ile-de-France**

**JEAN-PAUL HUCHON**