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Sandrine Fournis. **“Redesign of the French
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This booklet has been made from the paper Redesign of the French National Agenda 21 policy written by François Jégou, Christophe Gouache and Sandrine Fournis and presented at the Final PERL Conference: Preparing, Engaging, Responding and Learning about Responsible Living, hold at UNESCO the 10-11 of march 2015 in Paris

Abstract

Agenda 21 processes emerged from the Rio conference in 1992 and developed since then with various levels of success and local sustainable transformation in the different countries around the world. After more than 20 years, the core Agenda 21 principles are still valid references. But compared to the many sustainable bottom-up movements (from Transition Town to Slow Food) emerged recently from social innovation, citizens' empowerment, participative governance or social networking, Agenda 21 tends to appear old-fashion and less appealing. In France in particular they face a paradoxical situation: Agenda 21 are criticized as top-down, heavy and administrative processes and, at the same more than 1000 local public authorities (municipalities, departments, regions) are actively involved in Agenda 21 and this number is constantly growing.

The French Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and Energy, which organizes the national Agenda 21 label, launched in 2013 a large participative redesign process of its national Agenda 21 policy.

The paper will start from a rapid overview of Agenda 21 development in France since 1992 and of the current challenges and opportunities it faces. It will then present the methodology developed to involve for more than one year over 100 stakeholders covering all French territory and all governance levels in a creative and participative process to reinvent and renovate the national Agenda 21 policy. It will show in particular the range of tools used, mixing off-line and online interactions, involving story-telling, scenario building, simulation and quick prototyping technics issued from the emerging field of design knowledge applied to public policy. Finally the paper will present the results obtained and the complete transformation of the national Agenda 21 label into a lighter and more useful process for local authorities, based on participation, peer-to-peer interaction, capacity building and mutual learning between stakeholders.

The conclusion will focus the methods used in the case of the French Agenda 21 label presented. In particular it will discuss how action-research, community-driven and participative design, co-creation and direct experimentation with stakeholders, sense-making and peer-to-peer interaction are renewing policy making processes, reconnecting them with users and field realities and stimulating public policy innovation.

INTRODUCTION

It's in Europe that the local Agendas 21 developed the most (in 2002, there were more than 6000). However, situations between countries are very heterogeneous (Bouteau, 2009): mandatory processes, significant subsidies and abandonment, or at least a lack of interest, in looking at more thematic approaches around the climate issue for instance. In France, the situation is quite different: a unique collaboration between the State and the local authorities, a totally voluntary approach, even though its definition is written in the law (law about the national commitment to the environment). In 2002, in Johannesburg, the French State decided to support the local authorities in launching and conducting their Agenda 21 projects. The support took several forms: a methodological support (production of a frame of references collectively built with the local authorities), Agenda 21 network management (National Committee Agenda 21 composed of Ministries, major associations of elected officials and NGOs) and the organization of a recognition process (voluntary, organized by the Ministry in charge of sustainable development, allowing communities who wish to have their Agenda 21 project analysed in regard to sustainable development principles and to benefit from a recognition by the State).

The financial support is also possible via the European funds, the State and Regions' Plan Contracts and funds from the Ministry in charge of sustainable development. In 2014, more than 1,000 local authorities are engaged in Agenda 21 and, so far, the Ministry in charge of sustainable development recognized 470 of them. Many local authorities, of various sizes, applied to the national recognition process. Although Agendas 21 are quite active in France, many new regulatory, sectoral tools (climate plan, urban local plan, etc.) emerge (a summary of the Cour des Comptes, in September 2014, has stressed that these tools could even replace Agenda 21). Agenda 21 raises many criticisms and is sometimes perceived as "too environmental, too heavy, too procedural". And yet, on the field, we observe more and more local authorities that engage in Agenda 21 projects despite the local elections and its political team changes. In February 2015, 1100

local authorities were engaged in Agenda 21 projects and more than 60 of them submitted their project to the new session of recognition. These conflicting signals have led the Ministry for Sustainable Development to propose a year of collective reflection on “the Agenda 21 of tomorrow”. The idea: taking time to redraw the Agenda 21, with local authorities and Agenda 21 stakeholders, partners (members of the National Committee Agenda 21), all convinced of its pertinence to face the grand challenges of our time.

Agenda 21 is the only non-binding, voluntary approach that allows both innovation (compared with regulatory tools) and the articulation and coherence of public policies. Redesigning the Agenda 21 could only be done through what makes it an original process, which means doing it in a creative, innovative, collaborative and experimental way.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This part will present a selection of key points of the design methodology used along the redesign process of the French Agenda 21 national policy. For each of the 6 key methodological points, the same structure will be proposed: first, a description of the design-driven methodological approach in general terms, and second the description of an example of application of the redesign process of the French national Agenda 21 policy.

Co-design with stakeholders

Redesigning the Agenda 21 national policy means involving stakeholders from all the French territories. More than 1100 local authorities (recognized or not yet recognized) from different administrative levels are carrying an Agenda 21. They are supported by a series of public institutions such as local representations of the national Ministry of Environment, public research centres and institutions, regional Agenda 21 committees, etc. A number of non-for-profit organizations and private consultancies are also taking part in facilitating the elaboration and approval of Agenda 21. Building a stakeholder process in order to redesign the French Agenda 21 national policy implies to engage collaboration with a good sample of all these institutions and organizations ensuring a good coverage of the French territory and of the multi levels of governance. A co-design process, at this scale, over a period of one year, means the organization of a specific logistic in order to enable good and frequent enough collaboration between involved stakeholders.

In the case of the national Agenda 21 policy, this co-design process involved more than 150 different institutions representing 10-15% of the French stakeholders engaged in Agenda 21 as shown in Figure 1. They dedicated in total 250 man-days taking part in workshops between January and October 2014.

ATELIER : COHÉSION SOCIALE, TERRITOIRES DE CO-RESPONSABILITÉ (SPIRAL)

ARPE PACA | Agence régionale pour l'environnement
CEREMA - Direction territoriale Centre-Est
Commune de Grenoble
Commune de Mulhouse
Commune de Nancy
Conseil de l'Europe
Conseil Général Gironde
Conseil régional Rhône-alpes
Fabrique SPINOZA
Forum Français pour la Sécurité Urbaine
Grenoble Alpes Métropole
Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable et de l'Energie - CGDD
Ministère des Affaires Sociales, de la Santé et des Droits des Femmes
Ministère des Outre-Mer
Nomadeis
Région Wallonne
Rennes ville santé OMS
Réseau FAIR
SGCIV Secrétaire général du Comité interministériel des villes
Université Lyon II
Ville de Feyzin
Ville de Lille
Ville de Paris
Ville de Strasbourg

CHANTIER EXPLORATOIRE : AGENDA 21 ET RISQUES NATURELS

AFFCN
ANEL
CEPRI
Conseil Régional PACA
EPTB Seine Grands Lacs
Fédération PACT
FNE
IRSTEA
Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable et de l'Energie - CGDD
Ministère de la culture et de la communication
Ministère des Outre-Mer
Mission Risques Naturels
UNCPIE
Université Paris X

ATELIER : ÉCONOMIE TERRITORIALE DURABLE

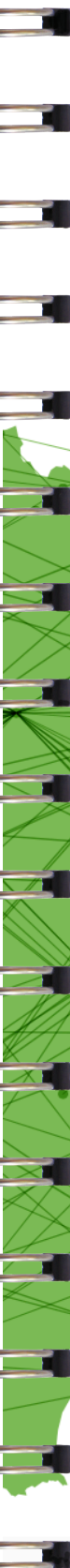
ADF | Assemblée des départements de France
AMF | Association des maires de France
Association 4D
Association ETD
Association Orée
CERDD | Centre ressource du développement durable
CFDT | Confédération française démocratique du travail
Chef d'Entreprise
Communauté d'agglomération Seine-Eure
Conseil Économique, Social et Environnemental
Conseil Régional Île de France
Conseil Régional Nord-Pas de Calais
DREAL Lorraine
FPNR | Fédération des Parcs naturels régionaux
Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable et de l'Energie - CGDD
Université de Paris I

ATELIER : DISPOSITIF DE RECONNAISSANCE

Alterre Bourgogne
ARPE PACA | Agence régionale pour l'environnement
Association Notre Village
CEREMA - Direction territoriale Est
CEREMA - Direction territoriale Ouest
Comité 21
Commune de Montambert
Commune du Havre
Conseil Général du Loiret
Conseil Général Seine-Saint Denis
DDT Côte-d'Or
DREAL Aquitaine
DREAL Haute-Normandie
DRIEE Île de France
Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Agroalimentaire et de la Forêt
Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable et de l'Energie - DGEC, CGDD
Ministère de la culture et de la communication
SGAR Midi-Pyrénées
Université Aix-Marseille

ATELIER : COHÉRENCE ET ARTICULATION DES POLITIQUES PUBLIQUES

ACUF - Communauté urbaine Charbourg
ARENE Île-de-France | Agence régionale de l'environnement et des nouvelles énergies
ARGOS Consultants
CEREMA - Directions territoriales Ouest, Est, Centre-Est
Comité 21
Commune de Haguenau
DREAL Alsace
DREAL PACA
DREAL Pays de la Loire
DREAL Rhône-Alpes
Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable et de l'Energie - CGDD



ATELIER : ÉVALUATION, L'IMPACT RÉEL DES AGENDAS 21

ADEME Angers | Agence de l'environnement et de la maîtrise de l'énergie
ARFOS Consultants
ARPE PACA | Agence régionale pour l'environnement
AUDAP | Agence d'urbanisme Atlantique & Pyrénées
Communauté d'agglomération de Pau-Pyrénées
Commune de Auch
Commune de Feyzin
Commune de Mérignac
Conseil Général Gironde
Conseil Général l'Allier
Conseil Régional Nord-Pas de Calais
CVRH | Centre de valorisation des ressources humaines
DREAL Bretagne
DREAL Languedoc-Roussillon
DREAL Poitou-Charentes
Ehifinance
Ministère de l'Écologie, du Développement durable et de l'Énergie - CGDD
Planète Publique
RAEE | Rhônalpénergie-Environnement
Saint-Brieuc Agglomération

RIO+20 ET APRÈS : LE FUTUR DES AGENDAS 21

ADEME | Agence de l'environnement et de la maîtrise de l'énergie
AMF | Association des maires de France
ARPE Midi-Pyrénées | Agence régionale du développement durable
Association 4D
Association ETD
CERDD | Centre Ressource du Développement Durable
CNFPT | Centre National de la Fonction Publique Territoriale
Comité 21
Communauté d'agglomération de Marne et Charleraine
Communauté d'agglomération de Plaine Commune
Communauté de communes du Pays des Herbiers
Communauté urbaine de Dunkerque
Communauté urbaine de Lyon
Commune d'Échirolles
Commune de Pessac
Commune de Saint-Nolff
Conseil Général Essonne
Conseil Général Gironde
Conseil Régional Auvergne
Conseil Régional Midi-Pyrénées
Conseil Régional Nord-Pas de Calais
DREAL Bourgogne
Ministère de l'Écologie, du Développement durable et de l'Énergie - CGDD
Ministère de la Culture et de la communication
Pays Coeur entre Deux Mers
Pays du Val d'Adour
Strategic Design Scenarios

BOÎTE À OUTILS VISIONS+21 : PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPATIVE

Comité régional Agenda 21 Bretagne
Conseil Général Gironde
DREAL Midi-Pyrénées et plate-forme Territoires et développement durable de Midi-Pyrénées
Lorient Agglomération
Ministère de l'Écologie, du Développement durable et de l'Énergie - CGDD
Ville de Saint-Orens

ATELIER : MOBILISATION DES DÉCIDEURS

CNFPT | Centre National de la Fonction Publique Territoriale
Communauté urbaine de Dunkerque
Commune de Lille
Commune de Longvic
Commune de Niorf
Commune de Saint-Maur des Fossés
DREAL Basse-Normandie
DREAL Bourgogne
DREAL Midi-Pyrénées
INET Strasbourg
Mairie 2000
Mairie Conceil
Ministère de l'Écologie, du Développement durable et de l'Énergie - CGDD

ATELIER : ENCOURAGEMENT ET ACCOMPAGNEMENT PAR LA SPHÈRE PUBLIQUE

ADCF | Assemblée Des Communautés de France
ADF | Assemblée des Départements de France
Caisse des dépôts et consignations
Conseil Régional PACA
DDT Côte-d'Or | Direction départementale des territoires
DDT de Haute-Loire
DREAL Bourgogne
DREAL Limousin
FPNR Fédération des Parcs naturels régionaux
Ministère de l'Écologie, du Développement durable et de l'Énergie - SG, CGDD

ATELIER : 2^{ES} ET 3^{ES} AGENDAS 21

CEREMA - Directions territoriales Centre-Est, Ouest	Commune de Rillieux la Pape
Communauté d'agglomération de Saint-Étienne	Commune de Saint-Egrève
Communauté d'agglomération Val d'Orge	Conseil Général Finistère
Communauté urbaine du Grand Lyon	Conseil Général Gers
Commune d'Annecy	Conseil Général Gironde
Commune d'Ayey	Conseil Général Isère
Commune d'Échirolles	Conseil Général Tarn
Commune de Chambéry	Conseil Régional Franche-Comté
Commune de Le Sequestre	durable et de l'Énergie - CGDD
Commune de Mérignac	Métropole Nice Côte d'Azur
Commune de Mouans-Sartoux	Ministère de l'Écologie, du Développement durable et de l'Énergie - CGDD
Commune de Pessac	Nantes Métropole



Figure 1a: More that 150 stakeholders, involved in Agenda 21 from different governance levels and covering the French territory, collaborated together during one year on the redesign process of the Agenda 21 national policy.

In order to manage the collaboration at this scale, the process that was organized with the Ministry of Environment was based on 11 interrelated workgroups focussing different aspects of the Agenda 21 national policy. A main workgroup questioned the core Recognition process which so far consisted of a quality check of the Agenda 21 action plan and attribution of the Agenda 21 Local France label.

Around this core workgroup a first circle of workgroups questioned dimensions relating directly to the elaboration of the Agenda 21: the Coaching and support resources available on the territories to help local authorities to build their own Agenda 21 process; the Engagement of local leaders and administration decision makers in developing a sustainable development territorial project such as an Agenda 21; the Foresight activities necessary to build a long term vision of the local territory; the Assessment and continuous improvement process of the Agenda 21 action plan.

Then a second circle of workgroups questioned societal concerns and policy cohesion relating to local sustainable transformation processes: the Natural risks management and the role of Agenda 21 in reducing them; the Sustainable and territorial economy aspect, often lacking in Agenda 21; the Social cohesion and the Co-responsibility of local stakeholders underlining the social dimension in Agenda 21; the Sustainable policy cohesion where Agenda 21 may facilitate articulation; the Second and third Agenda 21 investigating new territorial sustainable transformation process beyond larger and more complete and mature Agenda 21 projects (also called "second or third generation Agenda 21").

The organization of the co-design process in 2 circles of workgroups allowed involving a large number of stakeholders. It had also the inconvenient to recreate 11 separated silos likely to work on their own and lacking of cohesion. In order to avoid this pitfall the core workgroup Recognition worked as a backbone on which the 2 circles of the other 10 workgroups were connected and have contributed. The transversal interaction between workgroups was organised as such: each peripheral workgroup started with an update of the



core Recognition process redesign. In return, the core recognition process workgroup received systematic feedbacks from all the other workgroups on the implications of their specific streams of work. These continuous loops of interaction between the core workgroups and all other peripheral workgroups allowed maintaining coherence and generating a collective brief for the redesign of the Agenda 21 national policy. This brief, that was collectively generated, consists in 10 key words intending to orient the whole co-design process:

- **Useful:** the recognition process should not be an extra burden for the territories. On the contrary all tasks required to get the Agenda 21 label should be useful either helping maturation, reflexivity, development or communication of the Agenda 21;
- **Collective:** instead of a coaching and assessment of Agenda 21 based on a one-to-one process, the recognition should be collective, mutualizing efforts and generating emulation between territories;
- **Continuous:** the recognition shouldn't be a temporary effort but a continuous improvement process;
- **Adapted:** the recognition process should be adapted to the specificities of the territories in terms of size, level of the local authorities or according their experience in developing Agenda 21;
- **Light:** institutionalization of processes usually tends to make them more procedural, technocratic and time-consuming. The Agenda 21 recognition process should be lighter through more mutualisation, autonomy, dialogue, etc;
- **Empowering:** the recognition process should be first a self-empowerment process of the territory based on self-assessment and peer review;
- **Field-oriented:** the recognition process should favour direct human contacts and exchange of experience rather than administrative forms filling;
- **Territorialized:** the Agenda 21 should not be the initiative of one leading institution but rather a collective process involving all stakeholders of the territory;
- **Peer-to-peer:** the Agenda 21 recognition process should be less top-down, centralized and take more the form of a collective agreement and peers' recognition where the national level ensures balance, equity

and diversity across territories.

- **Distributed benefits:** beyond the recognition of the territory for its Agenda 21, the benefits of the recognition should be more distributed across all public and private institutions taking part and empower each single actor.

Simulating potential tools

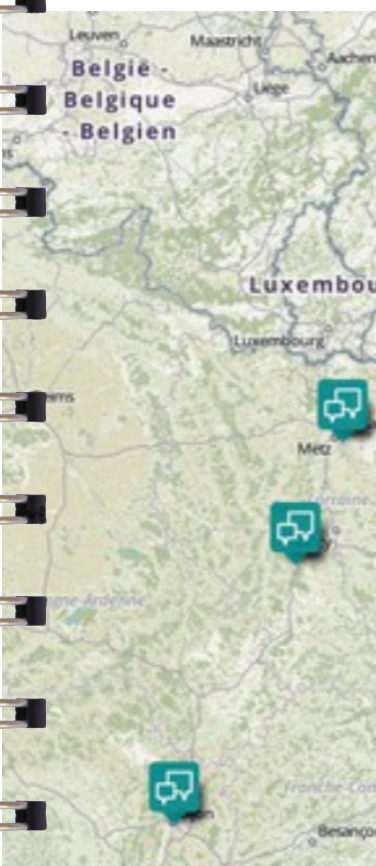
Simulating, starting with trying and doing, allows participants to discuss and design solutions. The stakeholders are involved in the current process of Recognition, they know its qualities, strengths but also weaknesses but as 'users' of this process they're not often asked to question it nor used to have to design what could be a new process of recognition. The process does not, usually, benefit from its users' experience and expertise to adjust and improve itself.

In our case, stakeholders were asked to simulate and build what could be the new Recognition process both based on what they know of the previous one and at the same time trying to get away from it to imagine completely new aspects of the process. There is a tension between the old process stakeholders are used to and have as a common reference and the exercise of designing a new one, which requires allowing the stakeholders to get away from what they know. This resistance effect can be tackled by focusing on building what they would like the recognition process to be instead of just trying to improve it, which means doing and simulating the new one, then discussing it.

As they start suggesting new ideas, stakeholders feel more open about the process and go further than what could have been expected from them in a limited exercise of improving the existing process rather than creating a new one. In a second phase, a process of 'reality check' is done in order to confront the old version with the new one and identify, first, why it's better, and then, how it could be done to be feasible/realistic. In this light 'reality check' exercise stakeholders discuss the

Figure 2: a prototype of a cartography was developed as a collaborative web tool allowing each local authority to see what kind of supporting resources and peers' experiences they could find around them.





solutions based on their experience of the former recognition process.

As an example in the redesigning process of Agenda 21, a cartography of the support available on the territory was started. In complement to the national Recognition process, public institutions (Ministry, DREAL, DDT, Conseil Régional, Conseil Général...) of very various levels actually support local authorities in developing their Agenda 21 project. But they do not support them equally. Some institutions provide financial support others do not. Some provide technical and methodological support but each of them with different competences and modes. And this varies from a region to another.

Besides the issue of misbalance between the support available in different territories, there is a communication issue. Many local authorities, conducting their Agenda 21 projects, have not a clear idea about the help that is available to them, the support they can ask for. And most of the time, they do not know whom to ask for this support. Besides the institutional support that is provided to help local Agendas 21, which is quite a top-down approach, the idea of a more peer-to-peer support was raised. Indeed, local authorities conducting their local Agenda 21 are in the best position to help their peers who are willing to start their local Agenda 21 as they've gone through it before and encountered the same difficulties.

In order to work on this issue and start doing something concrete about it, we simulated an open and collective cartography that displays all the supporting institutions but also the supported local authorities (Figure 2). The nature of the support is described, whether it's a technical/methodological/financial help, as well as the contact details for each institution.

On the other side, the "supported" local authorities are also displayed so that they can freely and mutually get in contact if they wish to (building a peer-to-peer community). To start the web cartography and try it, in real, two institutions (the DREALs of Bourgogne and Lorraine) decided to act as the pilot tests and filled up their "supporter identity"

Figure 3a: visioning tool box resulting of 8 rounds of experimentations with different local territories and updating of the prototype to reach the stage of 5 working tools with supports, examples of application, case studies, advices for implementation, etc.





forms. They gave immediate feedback on missing information, useless and/or useful ones, etc. This first and light feedback allowed readjusting the cartography and its functionalities. To keep the simulation light and cheap to test, we decided to build the cartography on an open platform : <http://umap.openstreetmap.fr>. The two testing institutions were then used as demonstrators for the others and gave qualitative insights to convince their peers in the interest of the tool.

Prototyping and experimenting

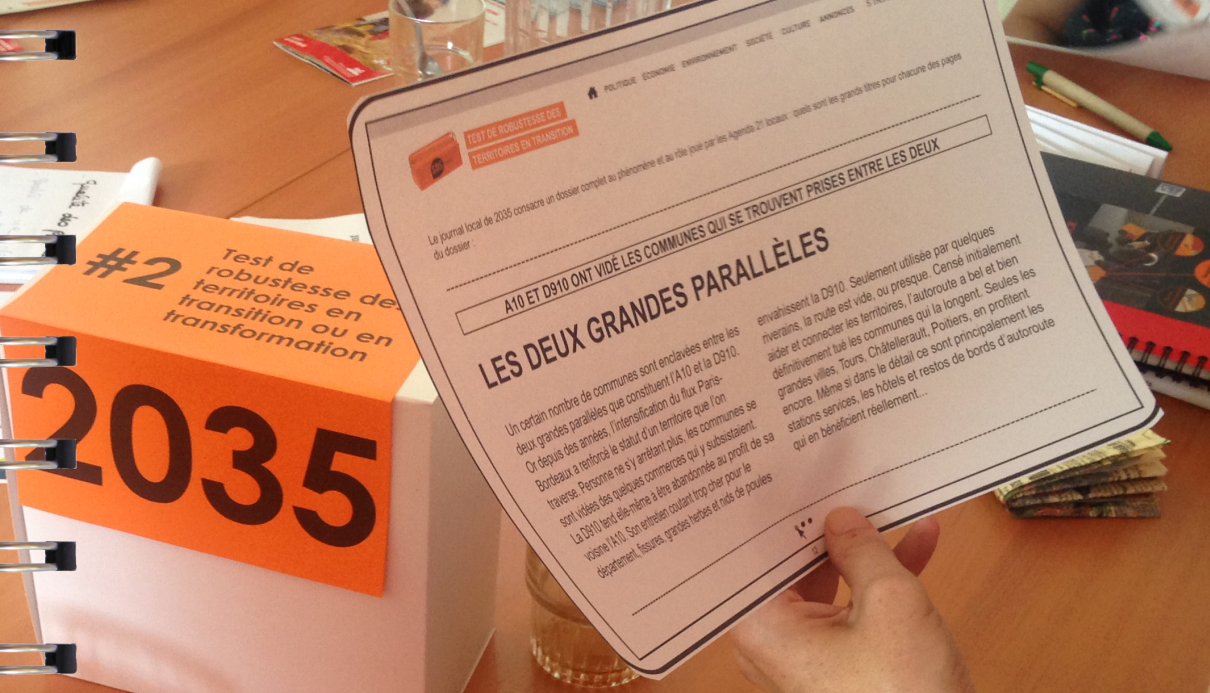
Prototyping, experimenting, testing are not so common words in the public administration's vocabulary. Although coming from the field of the design and engineering practice, they appear quite meaningful when applied to the policymaking process and/or the elaboration of public services.

Indeed, in the classic approach of policymaking it appears there is a lack for testing out policies, adjusting, refining, re-testing them before doing any large scale implementing. This culture of experimentation, failing, redoing and prototyping is definitely a new promising approach for building more adapted, flexible and smarter policies. This lighter and iterative way of thinking means to take time, in the earliest stages of the policymaking process, to properly think the policy (in collaboration with the coherent stakeholders) and to recognize the importance of going through a number of loops in order to progressively adjust the policy.

When some might argue this approach takes longer than the regular process as, indeed, it increases the "thinking and designing" phase of a policy, it saves time, in the end, as the policy has been tried out at a small scale, adjusted then validated by users/citizens/stakeholders, and ends up being more coherent, pertinent and concerted. Moreover, it's also often a saving compared to the risk that expensive deployment of policies represents when they have not been properly tested and may be found inappropriate.

Figure 3b: the VISIONS+21 toolbox allows a group of 30-40 local stakeholders to build a collective and desirable sustainable vision for their territory in one and half day.





This policy-prototyping approach is also a meaningful tool to get the stakeholders engaged on something very concrete, tangible that can be tried out very quickly and easily out in the field, in real. This 'reality check' gives immediate and qualitative insights and feedbacks to the public administration on how the policy is being perceived, seen and if it is pertinent or not. The testing may be done in multiple situations and contexts in order to get a richer feedback and identify finer and more constant reasons on what's working and not, what to change, and why.

The most emblematic example, conducted during the redesign process of the Agenda 21, was the visioning toolbox called Visions+21 (Figure 3a & 3b). This toolbox has been made to enable local authorities to conduct a light and quick visioning exercise of their own Agenda 21. This toolbox is meant to invite actors to imagine their territory at 15, 20, 30 years ahead and go over, by doing so, the limited political mandate timeframe (of 5-6 years at most). Visions+21 was built in a very open and participative way through on-site experiments. 5 territories of various levels and sizes (the City of St Orens de Gameville, the Conseil Général of Gironde, the DREAL of Midi-Pyrénées, the Agglomeration of Lorient and the DREAL of Bretagne) volunteered in conducting local experiments of the beta version of the toolbox. Specific problems were identified each time and the toolbox has been readjusted/refined after each experiment.

The principle was that the national ministry of sustainable development was co-financing the experiments with the local authorities that were also providing concrete testing grounds (each time different, specific with its own difficulties but all enriching the toolbox through real applications). Experimenting workshops were usually happening over 2 to 3 days with around 20-40 participants each time, so that around 150-200 people actually tested and contributed enriching the toolbox. In the end, the toolbox and its 5 tools went through 8 versions each round of experimentation resulting in an update of the toolbox. The process of co-constructing the toolbox with the end-users and test it in real conditions helped in providing a coherent and more complete



tool that better fits the needs of the local authorities. Each tool's explanation and format were discussed with the actors and allowed the co-writing of an illustrated Visions+21 manual (giving examples of use, tips and tricks, clarifying the objectives of each tool, defining when to use them, with who, at what stage of an Agenda 21 process...). This prototyping and experimenting process also valorised the volunteering authorities, as they were involved in an innovative process co-piloted at a national level. To put it in more simple terms, this meant for them taking part to something innovative and bigger than themselves and that they became co-authors of.

Working with the policy image

Designing a new public policy means to work on its usage value: how does it work? Does it match citizens' expectations? Does it reach its goals? Is it generating a fluid process in their daily living? Etc. Designing a public policy also means to question its perception value: is the policy well perceived among the population? What is its image, notoriety and reputation? Etc. Both of these complementary dimensions should be considered in the redesign process for an effective and complete transformation: as for a product or a service, form and function of a public policy should fit and be intimately interwoven.

In 2012 the French Ministry of Environment took the new World Conference as a pretext for launching a foresight exercise called: Rio+20 and after, the Agenda 21 of tomorrow (Jégou & all, 2012). The aim of this year of work was to question the Agenda 21 as a tool that has been invented 20 years ago already. Imagining how it could be updated proposing a set of new advanced tools. The foresight activity, at its beginning, led to question the reputation of the Agenda 21 as an international brand investigating in particular its image on the French territory. This exercise led by the foresight stakeholders' group in different territories depicted Agenda 21 being perceived mainly positively as a serious and efficient process for sustainable transition. Some negative elements also emerged: a certain intransigence, a lack



AGENDA +21 are the forest
you protected without knowing it



For the citizen participation,
AGENDA +21 collaborate
with Transition Towns.



of flexibility and empathy with the other services of the local authority, a too-critical posture sometimes missing to facilitate and contribute in finding solutions.

In 2014, the redesign process of the national Agenda 21 policy took stock of this situation and investigated, more in-depth, the reasons of the negative part of the image: Agenda 21 was born with the enthusiasm of Rio 1992. 20 years later at the pace of society change, they appear as a quite old tool. They don't appear as much of a political asset. It's a territorial tool requiring a systemic approach involving all local stakeholders and that may appear complex to implement. They also appear somewhat dusty when compared with the vigorous citizens' empowerment movements (i.e. Transition Town, Slow Food, Incredible Edible, etc.) and similar participative bottom-up dynamics such as collaborative consumption, shared economy, etc.

The Agenda 21 redesign process investigated this issue, first, working internally and taking the hypothesis of a communication campaign on Agenda 21: How could Agenda 21 be communicated to the larger public than the regular stakeholders? How can we attract their attention to a policy tool promoted at national level in France since 2002? How can we change its image towards a more positive posture, focussing all citizens, engaging wider participation, etc. Some examples of outputs of this internal exercise are presented in Figure 4. These images were used to stimulate the strategic conversation with internal stakeholders and trigger a change in the mind-set among them. For instance, it shows that a systemic and cohesion policy tool should not be in competition with other policy tool but include them in its communication, promote potential synergies and inclusiveness. It also questions the posture of making unsustainable behaviours and stakeholders guilty pointing only defaults instead of demonstrating empathy, showing progresses made and encouraging more engagement in a positive education state of mind.

It helped stakeholders to recognize and adopt a more positive, open, inclusive and territorial approach in the redesign process. It also allowed to generate and agree on the corporate identity of the

Figure 4: internal research exercise simulating an advertisement campaign where Agenda 21 appears more positive and empathetic (a public policy that improves sustainability of all of us), more open and territorial (a systemic approach pointing links with other sustainable policies and movements).

redesign process based on '+21': all workgroups were renamed: 'Recognition+21'; 'Vision+21'; 'Assesment+21', etc. acknowledging explicitly the renewal of the Agenda 21 national policy on top of assets inherited from its past achievements.

Public authorities as a new broker

Public authorities are looking for new postures in front of growing budgets shortages at all levels and decrease of their influential power in the stakeholders' interplay. They are less and less able to assume the former 'command and control' posture and shift to a new role based on intermediation between stakeholders. They tend to act as a broker (Jégou & all, 2015), listening to the stakeholders, designing policies to create synergies between them, generating economies of scope, developing collaborative public services building on participation and self-service society. At the same time, they ensure the public authorities role of mediation and regulation between the different actors. It makes particular sense at higher governance levels where a top view of stakeholders interplay allows public authorities to give visibility to emerging promising practices, linking actors likely to collaborate and provide each other mutual help, synergize and propose the rearrangements of the stakeholders toward more fluid and fruitful interactions in society (Gadrey & Cordonnier, 2013).

The redesign process of the Agenda 21 national policy involved a large number of stakeholders as described above, organized in a range of workgroups. Therefore, it requires implementing a system of intermediation between the workgroups in order to activate their interaction and generate synergies. An internal blog platform was designed for the project core team to facilitate interaction and cross-fertilization between the different workgroups. The Office of territories, the unit of the French Ministry of Environment managing the Agenda 21 national policy, could experience this new posture of animator and mediator between the stakeholders involved in the policy redesign process.

Figure 5: The new NETWORK+21 web tool for the Territory Office of the Ministry of Environment is designed as a simple re-publishing page (based on Netvibes) in order to foster the posture of broker facilitating exchange of promising practices, stimulation, engagement, mutual help between territories.





The redesign of the national recognition process of Agenda 21 evolved in itself towards a form of animation of territorial transition towards sustainable development. Beyond the recognition as a quality control of the Agenda 21, the role requested by stakeholders of the Ministry of Sustainable development enlarged including motivating more territories to engage in Agenda 21, stimulating political engagement and support at local level, facilitating capitalization and exchange of good practices between the territories, empowerment of regional Agenda 21 peer-to-peer networks, etc. In order to facilitate and stimulate this new role, a web tool was developed based exclusively as a re-publishing process of existing information already posted by the local stakeholders on the territories as shown on Figure 5. This strategic choice intended to emphasize the peer-to-peer level and the intermediation role of the national level: no top-down action from the Ministry but only brokering of existing content. The added value is to stimulate exchanges, focus promising innovations and intensify peer-to-peer flows. It also continues the official recognition and capitalization process by a more informal and reactive level of promotion of local Agenda 21 practices.

Documenting and disseminating

As the process of redesigning the Agenda 21 was a first-time exercise for the ministry and the participating stakeholders, we emphasized on the importance of documenting the process, capitalizing on the experience and sharing and disseminating the outputs all along the process. In very concrete terms, this meant regularly feeding a blog, taking pictures of the co-construction workshops, capturing videos of key intermediate productions in order to share, transparently and openly, the work done all along the process (also with the stakeholders that could not attend or participate to the redesigning sessions). The co-design process requires, for the public actor, to learn to “let-go” a little, meaning also letting-go with sharing unfinished findings and deliverables. The public administration feels more comfortable when

Figure 6: progress results and first tangible outputs of the redesign process were illustrated into an exhibition and a set of cards that stakeholders were invited to share during a national event and after as ambassadors of the redesign process when they were back on their territories.





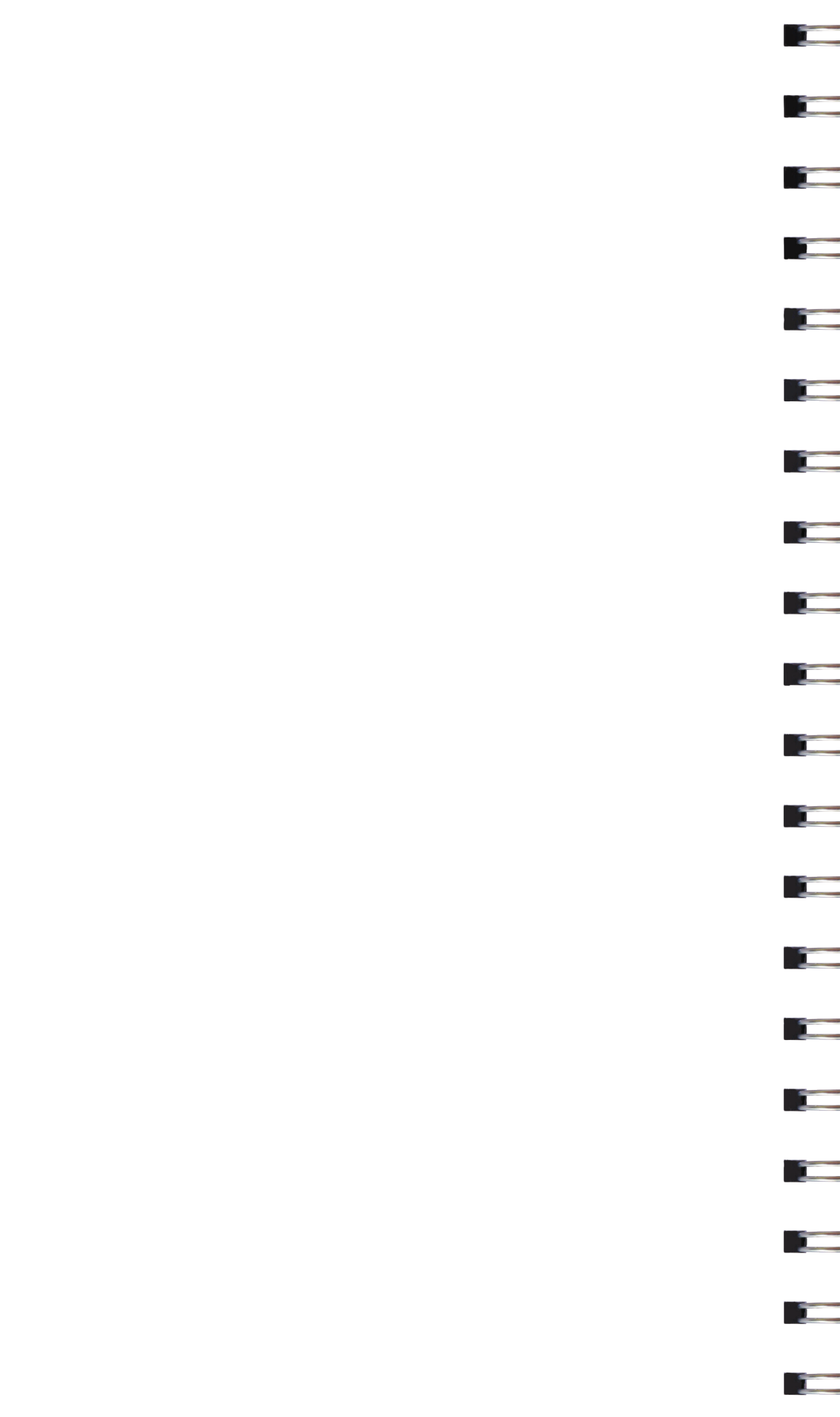
things have been checked, corrected, validated and authorized before doing any 'official' publication, although this often ends up being a long and cumbersome process. But in a participative process, the transparency and reactivity is key in order to keep the dynamics of the exercise, and that means sharing draft work being better than not sharing anything. Sharing informal but still releasable information (Coglianese and all, 2008) is key in a collective and participatory process. "The open sharing of information creates trust and facilitates consensus-building on collective concerns and priority action" (UNEP, 2007).

It helps building transparency and trust between all the stakeholders and ensures the legitimacy of the decisions that are taken all along the process. In this context, the Ministry acts as the animator of this creative and collaborative process and as a broker between the various propositions of the stakeholders rather than as a top-down decision-maker.

In order to share in an open and transparent way and ensure peer-to-peer exchange and transversal transfer between the different work groups, an intermediary exchange event was organised on October the 17th, 2014. This one-day event was the occasion for the 150 stakeholders that took part to the redesign process to gather and exchange and find out about what the others have come up with. The event put forward the progress of the process, the first tangible results and an exchange of all the work done by each workgroup through a set of cards to collect and put together by exchanging them with the other participants (like a collection game), and a set of selective workshops to attend (Figure 6). Each card (looking like a mini-poster) to collect was displaying the specific outputs of each workgroup. The idea was both to make the participants literally exchange and discuss the cards during the day, and return, at the end, to their local authorities with a set of paper cards to show and tell to their colleagues and play the role of "Agenda 21 ambassadors" of the process. Each participant received, at the beginning of the day, a different set (with multiple copies of certain cards and many cards missing). To gather and put



together the complete set, participants had to go talk to each other and exchange cards. A poster version of the cards was also displayed in the form of an exhibition. The results that were displayed in the cards were of various levels of progress, some were drafts and still at the stage of ideas, some more advanced and formalised (concepts) and some almost completed and tangible (prototypes). It was very important, at this stage, to be able to show what achieved every workgroup rather than only the finished work. Indeed, some had a smaller number of meetings, were dealing with more complex and wider issues (example: The sustainable territorial economy) whereas some had few or many participants, easily reachable subjects and so on. This heterogeneity necessarily led to various levels of advancements and tangibility. However, the process being transparent and the “intermediate” character of the event being totally assumed, it was obvious that the process had to display incomplete results. Finally, the event was in-between a formal and official meeting (the event being organised by the Ministry and inside its walls) and an informal and convivial event (with “officials’ ” speeches brought to the minimum) to thank all the stakeholders for their involvement and the work that has been done so far.





CONCLUSIONS

The Agenda 21 governance at national level is looking, through this redesign process, for a new posture. Looking back at the transformations made so far, this posture tends to evolve from a pure censor of the quality of Agenda 21 to a form of partnership and co-production with the territories. It stimulates and facilitates engagement of local authorities with less means and therefore less power on the territories. The participatory redesign process was a mean to reach the design of the new Recognition policy but also a learning process to progressively learn how to work with networks and to make better use of the national level to promote cooperation and inspiration between territories.

Through the redesign process, the national recognition policy tends to broaden its focus from strict Agenda 21 to recognize different kind of territorial projects of sustainable development. It induces a general approach more open, light, efficient and bold in each dimensions of the Agenda 21 process represented by the 11 different workgroups. Nevertheless an ambitious, systemic and long term approach such as Agenda 21 requires political engagement, strategic thinking among stakeholders and time to deeply transform territories.

The participatory design approach diffuses in the Agenda 21 national policy beyond its redesign process. The collaborative working methods in large stakeholder groups based on peer-to-peer exchange and permanent innovation improvement used for the redesign process have been adopted as principles for the policy itself: Inter-Territorial Ateliers will be organized as a regular working process between local authorities at various levels, regional stakeholders, supporting actors and national level; 2nd and 3rd Agenda 21 may evolve towards forms of experimentation labs likely to further innovate in terms of local sustainable transition processes.

Finally the redesign of the Agenda 21 national recognition process has been recognized as a good practice. The General Secretariat at the Modernization of Public Action organized a Public Innovation Week promoting new and promising practices introducing new processes, projects, remarkable actions in terms of public innovation. The redesign process of the Agenda 21 national policy was part of it.

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