



What territorial organization for a sustainable urban water policy? The French experience

Julie Niederlaender

► To cite this version:

Julie Niederlaender. What territorial organization for a sustainable urban water policy? The French experience. 7th World Wide Workshop for Young Environmental Scientists WWW-YES 2008: Urban waters: resource or risks?, May 2008, Créteil, France. hal-00298607

HAL Id: hal-00298607

<https://hal.science/hal-00298607>

Submitted on 16 Jul 2008

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

What territorial organization for a sustainable urban water policy? The French experience

Julie Niederlaender

CEREVE-LGUEH, Université Paris-Est – Marne-La-Vallée, Cité Descartes, 77455
Marne-La-Vallée Cedex 2, France (E-mail: julie.niederlaender@nantesmetropole.fr)

Abstract

Local urban water policy answering to questions related to technical, economic, social and environmental performance is a major task for local authorities.

In this research, the institutional framework is considered then 7 case studies in French local authorities are presented.

In the second part of the paper, we demonstrate that a work on the interactions and the reciprocal influences between the local services in charge of water and waste water public services and the basin systems is necessary for a better management of the water cycle.

In fact, urban water management is not only a technical issue but a systemic analysis with stakeholders and deciders. Three examples of a successful integration of environmental issues are presented and analyzed

Keywords

water cycle, sustainable urban water policy, metropolitan management, basin management, French experiences

INTRODUCTION

In France, the institutional water management system is complex. It is composed of several structures responsible for water, at different administrative scales (local, departmental, regional and national), or with the basin as territory. Despite this multitude of scales and stakeholders concerned, water management is above all a question of local policy. Already in 1790, the French law made the municipal power in charge of the local public health. And nowadays, the local authority is the perfect place for water management (Martin-Lagardette, 2004). It is responsible for water supply and waste water management and the mayor has an important police power in that field: “his place in the water policy is one of the key elements of the French system” (Nicolazo, 1997).

Local stakeholders have been confronted, during the last decades, to a significant evolution of stakes linked to water management. This evolution can be analyzed through the evolution of the institutional framework.

Water management has always implied technical and economical stakes. With the urbanization, it became necessary to realize water supply network and then, to evacuate waste water in order to answer to public health necessity. Then appeared the necessity (or not, depending on the type and the quality of the resource) to treat the water to answer to norms imposed by the European

Union¹, and the obligation to treat the waste water before rejecting them in the water natural environment². Networks and treatments represent important investments.

Those technical and economical aspects have been completed by environmental and social stakes. In the environmental field, protection of water environment became a priority when the DCE imposed the good state for 2015. In the social field, the law SRU³ introduced the individualization of the water supply contract. This confronts a number of economically fragile consumers with the necessity of paying a water facture which was diluted in the charges before. That forces the local authorities in charge of water to think of social purviews. The LEMA⁴ adds, in its first article, that “every physical person, for his alimentation and hygiene, has the right to access to water in economical conditions that everyone finds reasonable” and let then an open door to social tariffing.

Local territories confronted to all those stakes often didn't have the means to answer to them. So different types of structures have been created by the legislator: the intercommunalities⁵ for the technical and economical stakes and the basin agencies for the environmental stakes. But, at the local scale, no territorial organization is imposed: almost each local territory has its own one.

Moreover, the actual system clearly separates the water supply and waste water services, managed by classical administrations, from the environmental aspects of water environment protection, managed by specific basin structures. In such a complex situation, it is very difficult for local officials, confronted to those issues implied by a sustainable management of urban water, to choose their territorial organization.

The aim of our research is to help local officials in their decision by finding a territorial water management which permits to have a policy conciliating technical, economic, social, and environmental aspects. The output will be a coherent set of recommendations which could be adapted to local cases and used by them in order to be successful in their search of a sustainable water management.

METHODS

To find answers, several cases of French metropolitan have been analyzed. For each one, the context (political, technical, hydrological, economic...) was analyzed and people in each structures of the territory concern with water were interviewed:

- the responsible for water supply (technical and political)
- the responsible for waste water service (technical and political)
- the animator of the SAGE
- workers from the Agencies of Basin⁶ in charge of the agglomerations

¹ directive eau potable 80/778/CEE du 15 juillet 1980 and directive n°98/83/CE du Conseil de l'Union européenne relative à la qualité des eaux destinées à la consommation humaine du 3 novembre 1998

² directive n°91/27/CEE du Conseil relative au traitement des eaux urbaines résiduaires and directive n° 2000/60/CE ou directive cadre européenne

³ loi Solidarité Renouvellement Urbain du 13 décembre 2000

⁴ loi n°2006-1772 du 30 décembre 2006 sur l'eau et les milieux aquatiques

⁵ We use the word “Intercommunalité” (in French : intercommunalité) to design all type of groups of towns which manage one or several competences

⁶ Basin Agencies (in French: Agences de l'Eau): the French territory is divided into 6 basins. On each basins, there is a structure, the Basin Agency, is responsible for the policy of water management.

What territorial organization for a sustainable urban water policy? The French experience

Sometimes, other people like the one in the agglomeration in charge of following the SAGE or in charge of environment were also interviewed.

Our first case of study is Nantes Métropole⁷. It permits to define the first elements of the analysis and to establish a version 0 of the approach. Then six other metropolises were selected: the Grand Toulouse⁸, the Bordeaux Urban Community, the Strasbourg Urban Community, the Lille Urban Community, Grenoble Alpes Métropole⁹ and the Grand Dijon¹⁰ (figure 1).

Interviews were elaborated and tested with agents of Nantes Métropole during June 2007. The other interviews were from November 2007 to mars 2008.

To choose the metropolis, the first selection criterion was the population. We have restricted our research to urban centers between 250000 and 1 million of inhabitants in order to stay in the approximately same scale.

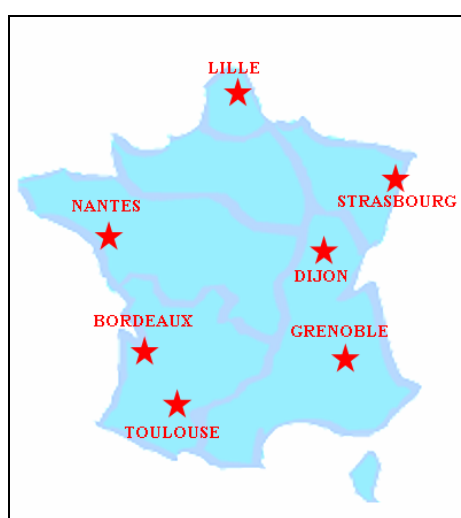


Figure 1: Localisation of the urban centres chosen for the research.

A second criterion was the singularity of the structure, the aim being to have the most different cases possible to study. The singularity depends on the type of the structure, the competences of this structure and the way environmental stakes and basin management are integrated (figure 2):

- We chose Lille Urban Community because it shares its competence of local authority for water supply with a big departmental syndicate¹¹: the SIDEN. Another reason is the recent creation of a Eurométropole, which is the final point to a long history of cooperation which concerns water services too.
- The case of Bordeaux Urban Community seemed interesting because there is a very influent SAGE¹² in the region.

⁷ Nantes Métropole is the name of the Nantes Urban Community

⁸ Grand Toulouse is the name of the Community of agglomeration of Toulouse

⁹ Grenoble Alpes Métropole is the name of the Community of Agglomeration of Grenoble

¹⁰ Grand Dijon is the name of the Community of Agglomeration of Dijon

¹¹ A departmental syndicate is a group of several towns which manages one or several competences (in that case: water supply) instead of the towns.

¹² A SAGE is an orientation document produced at a basin scale by a CLE (Local Commission of Water composed of representatives of each stakeholders) and normally managed by a “structure porteuse”

- The case of Strasbourg Urban Community was interesting because the urban community shares its water and a part of its waste water competences with a big departmental syndicate: the SDEA.
- The Grand Toulouse was chosen because it has only the waste water competence and not the water supply, which could be the fact, even more if you know it could be a urban community considering its population¹³.
- Grenoble Alpes Métropole was chosen for the same reason as the Grand Toulouse (considering the competences) and because of its long history in the field of water supply.
- The Grand Dijon was chosen because of the original structure they chose: a mixed syndicate¹⁴.

| Name of the structure | Type of structure | Water supply competence | Waste water competence | Integration of environmental stakes and basin management |
|----------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Grand Toulouse | CA | NO | YES | |
| | considering its population, it could be a urban community | | | |
| Bordeaux Urban Community | UC | YES shares it with two syndicates | YES | SAGE Nappes Profondes |
| Strasbourg Urban Community | UC | YES shares it with a departmental syndicate | YES shares it in part with a departmental syndicate | |
| Lille Urban Community | UC | YES shares it with a departmental syndicate | YES | |
| | | long history of cooperation with Belgian | | |
| Grenoble Alpes Métropole | CA | NO | YES | |
| | | long history in water supply management | | |
| Grand Dijon | CA | NO | NO | |
| | | managed by a mixed syndicate | | |

CA = Community of Agglomeration

UC = Urban Community

Figure 2: The urban centres chosen and their singularities.

¹³ Urban community can be formed when the metropolis has more than 500000 inhabitants

¹⁴ A mixed syndicate (in French : syndicat mixte) is a group of town and groups of town which manages one or several competence instead of the towns and groups of towns which composed it

RESULTS

A metropolitan¹⁵ management coupled with a model based on the notion of organizing authority¹⁶: a way to answer to technical, social and economic stakes.

The case of Nantes Métropole shows that a metropolitan management of water and waste water by the same structure on the entire territory of the metropolis, coupled to a clarification of stakeholders role, in particular the affirmation of the organizing authority and the introduction of the citizen, can lead to technically, economically and socially efficient public services.

A metropolitan management: several advantages

Nantes Métropole is a recent urban community, which has a metropolitan management of water and waste water. This situation presents several advantages.

First, it permits a real simplification of the landscape of stakeholders in water. Before the creation of Nantes Métropole, in 2001, water supply on the 24 towns composing Nantes Métropole was assumed by 6 SIAEP¹⁷ and 3 towns (Figure 3). Collect of waste water was the responsibility of one syndicate (regrouping two towns) and 22 towns, and waste water treatment was the responsibility of 2 syndicates and 5 towns. Now there is only one public authority for all that: Nantes Métropole.

Intercommunality is also a way to have a larger covering perimeter and realize scale economies, to put in common means of all types (humans, financial, technical...) and to have means better and more structured.

All this is confirmed by a national study realized by the cabinet Claude Charier Consultants during first trimester of 1999 which shows that for the majority of the 500 towns who answered to the survey, the intercommunality tool appears like an efficient way to increase the financial margins from the member collectivities (Gazette des Communes, 1999). It is also confirmed by the different interviews. Even if some people think that a management of water in intercommunality is not an obligation, all of my interlocutors agreed to the fact that intercommunality brings some advantages such as a larger territory, technical and financial bigger basis and that this type of management is more efficient, in investment and in functioning, and more adapted to the actual restraints.

By the way, more and more local authorities transfer their competence to intercommunalities. Between 1998 and 2001, the number of local authorities in intercommunalities for the competence «water supply » increased from around 2% and the population concerned from 6% to reach a little bit more than 37 millions persons (IFEN, 2001). It went on between 2001 and 2004 with an increase of 4% for the population concerned by a management of water supply in intercommunality and an increase from 2% for the waste water management. In 2004, 66% of the French had their services managed in intercommunality (BIPE, 2006).

¹⁵ We use this word to define a management by a group of towns or groups of town

¹⁶ The organizing authority (in French : autorité organisatrice) is a way to design the public local authority responsible of an urban service

¹⁷ SIAEP are syndicates in charge of water alimentation

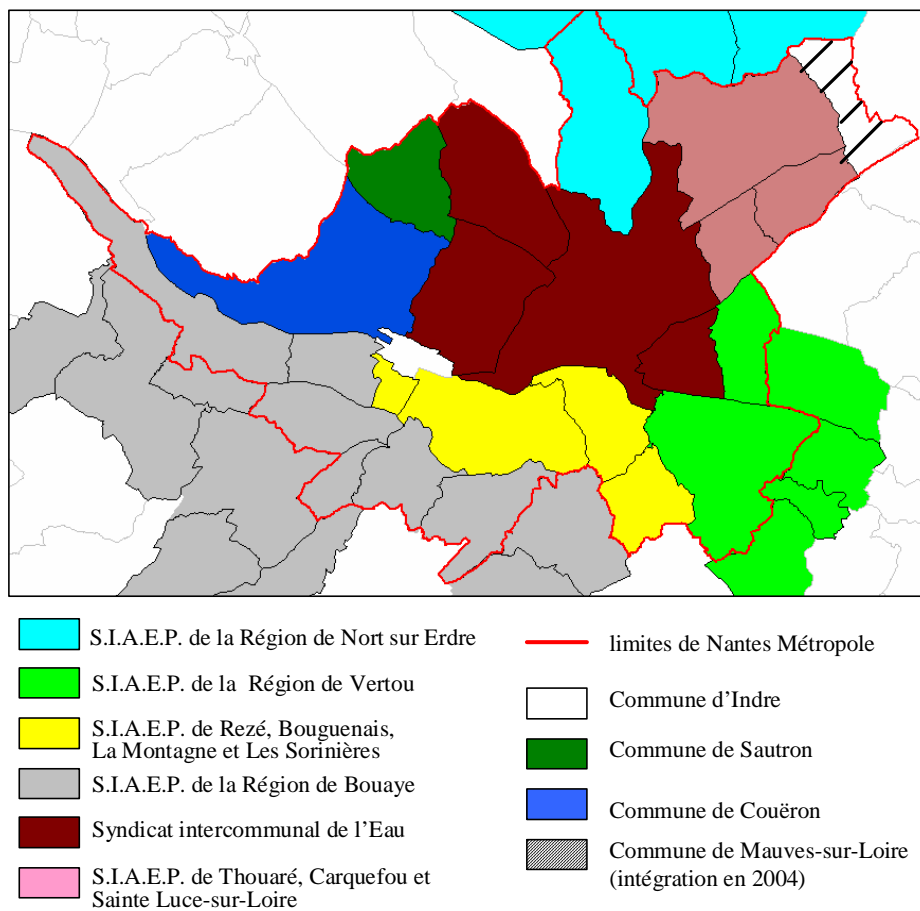


Figure 3: The public authorities in charge of water supply before the creation of Nantes Métropole (2001)

A model of organization which thwarts the classical disadvantages of intercommunality

So intercommunality brings some advantages non negligible but it also shows two major problems underlined by my different interlocutors. First, you can inherit from different situations depending on the town and so have a service non homogeneous on the territory and different prices, which is not such a big problem but is not very coherent if you want to speak of integration. For example, the Grand Toulouse, which has a metropolitan management of waste water, has inherited from the past of different types of contracts with different operators and so have different prices. They want to harmonize it but it is very difficult because that implies a lot of negotiations with the different operators. Secondly, in intercommunality, there is a lack of proximity with the citizen. The organization that Nantes Métropole chose to adopt is a way to solve those problems. In fact, Nantes Métropole adopted an organization model based on a triangle which links three stakeholders: the organizing authority, which is responsible for the general interest, the operator and the citizen-user (Lorrain D., 1995; Martinand C., 2001). This model defines the links between the three actors (figure 4).

At its creation, in 2001, Nantes Métropole inherited from a complicated situation in the field of management modes and operators. For example, there were 10 different contracts and one public corporation of a syndicate for the water supply. Rather than converging to an unique mode of management, which could have taken a long time (waiting till the end of each contract) or cost a lot of money (if they broke the contract before the end), they chose to conserve this different modes and to make an asset from it in order to have, for example, an emulation between the

What territorial organization for a sustainable urban water policy? The French experience

different operators. This was made possible by the triangle model and the affirmation of the organizing authority and its role. This permits to Nantes Métropole to impose itself as responsible of the service delivered to the consumer and as the guarantor of the general interest and to impose certain restraints to the different operators to result in a harmonization of services and rates. Several additional clauses to the contracts permit to obtain an unique price of water on the first January of 2006, an harmonization which didn't penalized the habitants since, on the period 2001-2006, only 5% of the consumers have seen their facture increasing more than the inflation when 60% saw it increasing less than the inflation and 35% saw it sensibly decreasing (between 10 and 35%). Moreover, the signing, by the private and public operators, of a quality charter with 12 points of engagement permit the harmonization of the water supply service, in 2006 too (François M. & Marest P., 2006).

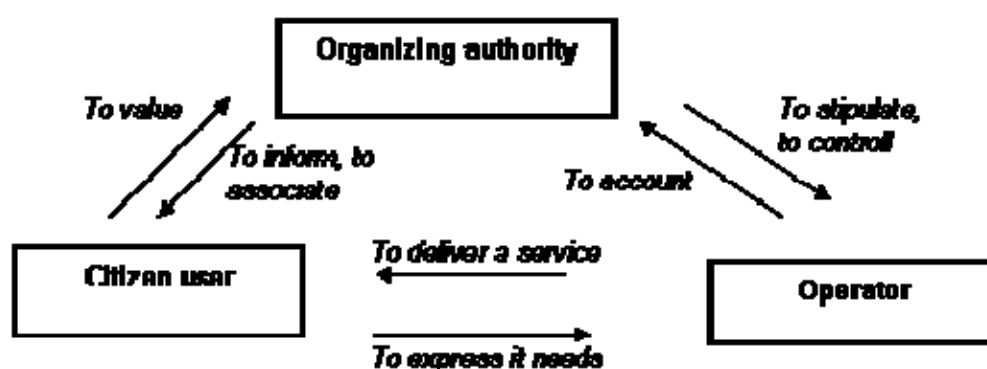


Figure 4: The triangular model adopted by Nantes Métropole

Moreover, if the triangle and the affirmation of the role of the organizing authority permit to solve the problem of harmonization, their putting into practice were accompanied by a analysis about, and a clarification of, every stakeholders role, in particular that of the citizen. The idea is to make him more places in a very technical domain and to introduce the participation of the citizen to the water management and policy. In fact, the role of the organizing authority is to inform the citizen and to make him participate to its local policy, and the citizen has to value the policy of the organizing authority. But this is only a theoretical model and the balance between the three stakeholders is very difficult to obtain: the link between the organizing authority and the citizen has to be reinforced. The real functioning of the CCSPL (French commissions of consultation which regroups the users of a public service) illustrated well this affirmation. This assembly is composed by 28 members (elects, consumers associations or environment associations) and meets two times a year to examine the annual reports of urban services. Despite the interest provoked by the themes linked to water supply (price, quality, economies of water...), we noted an important absenteeism which can reach 71%. This lack of participation can be explained by their lack of institutional and technical knowledge in the field of water and the absence of debates: subjects tackled are more technical than democratic.

Competences necessary to answer to actual stakes of water management

On the field of the competences that a structure must have, the comparison between Nantes Métropole and other cases illustrates the fact that it is better to have a whole competence on the whole territory. First, to have the whole competence, which means to be responsible of production and distribution in the case of drinkable water and to be responsible of waste water collect, transportation and treatment in the case of waste water, permits more coherence and a more global vision. This has been confirmed by people I interviewed and who worked in both situations. Secondly, it is an advantage to have the competence on the whole territory which is

curiously not always the case. For example, Lille Métropole has to share its water supply competence with a big departmental syndicate which managed it on 23 towns. The Strasbourg Urban Community is in the same situation with the SDEA which manages water supply on 15 towns. In such cases, it is difficult to have coherence in the policy on the whole territory. So people from two different towns of the same intercommunality can have different prices, different quality of services and, in particular, different orientations in the water policy.

Moreover, my interviews show that it is better to have water and waste water and other competences like urbanism and roads department. In fact, Nantes Métropole has those competences which presents some advantages for the coherence of the global public policy because water supply and waste water management are strongly linked to those elements of development or re-development of the territory. This coherence is more difficult to obtain in the case of the profession intercommunalities or even in the case of project intercommunalities¹⁸ who didn't chose the competence of road department (non obligatory in the case of community of agglomeration or community of towns). In those cases, even if water or waste water management benefits from the advantages of intercommunality listed before, which is a perfect solution when the aim of the pooling is the putting in common of the means, this type of intercommunality is, depending on my interlocutors, a little bit overtaken by the transverse stakes of sustainable urban water management. So they can be confronted to difficulties of coherence with the other public policies conducted by their members and the restraints linked to the profession aspects remove them from those linked to territory development, which are more taking into account stakes from another order: social, economic or environmental.

The analyze of the model of Nantes Métropole and the comparison with other intercommunalities seem to show that a metropolitan management of water, waste water and other competences such as road department or urbanism on the whole territory of the intercommunality, coupled with the putting in practice from the triangular model, including the affirmation of the organizing authority and the introduction of the citizen, is a good way to answer to technical, economic and social stakes of urban water management : you can have the same services at the same price on your whole territory and control its development and try to conduct a more democratic policy by introducing the participation of the citizen. But to answer to the environmental stakes of sustainable urban water management is more difficult.

To work on links between administrative structures and basin structures: a way to answer to environmental stakes

The necessity of a more integrated water management

For water protection, the French model is based on a territory: the basin. This territory is presented as the natural territory for resource management and its legitimacy as a water management territory came naturally from its definition¹⁹. So the basin is « *praised as the ecological and economic management unit* » (Futuribles, mars 2000), seems to be « *the spatial unit logic to use* » (Maksimovic C., Tejada-Guibert A. & Roche P.-A., 2001) and « *the pertinent scale of planning* » (Launay J., 2003). It is institutionally recognized since two kinds of basin systems exist: the duo "Basin agency / Basin Comity", introduced by the French law of water of

¹⁸ Profession intercommunalities are in our case groups of towns which have only water or waste water management competences on the contrary to project intercommunalities (Urban Community, Community of Agglomeration and Community of Towns)

¹⁹ The basin is a territory where all the waters (underground, surface water) flow out to the lowest point by following a naturally gradient and meet to form a river, a lake or an underground sheet of water.

1964 and the duo “CLE/ structure porteuse of SAGE” introduced by the French law of water of 1992. But even if the French model generally seems to be a good one for foreigner, especially for the UE who retake it in the DCE, it doesn’t work so well in reality.

« If the basin notion can assume several ecological assets and impose itself through its apparent natural simplicity, it is another thing for the concrete organization of water management which stays a more complex business » (Vieillard-Coffre S., 2001). The influence of the basin organisms on the water local policy still is limited. *« The basin agencies, [for example], fundamentally depend, for their interventions, on the goodwill of users liable to taxes, and so are reduced to certain inefficiency »* (Barraqué B., 1999). The basin organisms have no police power and no competence of contracting authority. Their influence is limited to the produced documents: SDAGE and programs for the basin agencies and SAGE for the CLE. The logics of the administrative and basin structures are very different: the ones are more on an economic and technical logic of services and networks management and the others, the basin structures, are on a logic of environment protection. So the problem is that the orientation documents often amount to list of good intentions. During my interviews, I met people who worked in the water field but totally ignored the existence of a SAGE on their territory!

But water environment is the receptor for waste water services and the resource for water supply and the local responsible are the principal contracting authorities of the actions proposed by the basin organisms. So a work on the bond between the different structures and on the influence that documents produced by the basin structures have on the local policy of water supply and waste water management is necessary for a more integrated management which is demanded by the DCE. During my research, I noticed three cases which can lead to a more integrated water management.

The agglomeration contract Neptune between Nantes Métropole and the basin agency Loire-Bretagne: an example of taking into account the whole water cycle

Nantes Métropole has the competences water supply and waste water management²⁰ but also the following ones: “actions for planning of waterways” and “prevention and management of natural risks and fight against the pollution”²¹. Since it also manages the rainwater, Nantes Métropole controls the entire water cycle. Nevertheless, the services managing water, waste water or waterways are clearly separated : in the organization chart (they belong to different general direction), financially (water supply and waste water services have their own budgets, in part financed by the consumers, when actions on the waterways and for rainwater are financed by the general budget) and in the logic adopted (logic linked to services for water supply and waste water management, and environmental logic for the waterways management). To have more coherence in the policy of water cycle and to rationalize its relation with the basin agency, Nantes Métropole has signed an agglomeration contract with the basin agency Loire Bretagne: the contract Neptune.

The contract Neptune, which concerns the whole cycle of water, is an old partnership, initiated in the beginning of the 90’s. The first contract was on the putting of the waste water collect and treatment infrastructures which is classical for such a contract. But Neptune 2 already developed the idea of water environment restoration through actions by basin. And Neptune 3, the actual contract, is in the same logic with, moreover, a part about water supply. Neptune is piloted by a transversal service and so permits to rally services as different as water supply, waste water

²⁰ Imposed by the article L 5215-20-I of the Code Général des Collectivités Territoriales

²¹ Extracts of the statutes of Nantes Métropole

collect and treatment and waterways management. They all have the same aim: protection and management of water. The agents of Nantes Métropole consider Neptune as a project which forces them to recognize the limit of the basin and concerns a work and action scale which is very interesting in the field of water environment. Neptune permits a work in common which was not possible before. Among the projects, we can quote the water capture of security in the Erdre. Nantes Métropole is nowadays alimented by only one resource: the Loire and requires so a second one, just in case of pollution in the Loire. So they have this project of water capture of security in Erdre which belongs to the project Neptune and is linked to the will of ameliorating the quality of the Erdre, another side of Neptune which implies measures in the field of waste water rejection and basin restoration.

The SAGE Estuaire of the Loire: an example of an upstream work on the links

The Sage Estuaire of the Loire was voted by the CLE in December 2007 and is now submitted to the public. It concerns Nantes Métropole. The principal stakes of this SAGE concern the quantitative management of water for the alimentation, the quality of waters and water environment, the overflow and the one which interest us: coherence and organization. This stake is the trademark of the SAGE Estuaire of the Loire.

The idea of the stake “coherence and organization” is to think about the future putting in practice from the project and about the financing of the actions and their contracting authorities, since the beginning of the project of SAGE. The organization will be on two levels:

- The first one is the level of the entire territory. On this territory, the CLE with an animation cell will be responsible of the pursuit of a certain number of debates and will be the referent in the field of water. It will bring homogeneousness and supply methods and watch out for the general coherence in the putting into practice.
-
- The territory of the SAGE is divided into several smaller territories called the under basins (figure 5). These under basins are the second level. For each one of these territories, one structure called the “referent structure” will be the relay of the animation cell on the territory. Those structures will have two missions: one of contracting authority for their competences and for the actions without contracting authority and one of animation of a co-ordination with the other contracting authorities and with all other stakeholders. They will be either existing structures which will maybe have to enlarge their competences or new structures. In all cases, the structure must have a pertinent territory, a competence linked to water management and don't have to take the competences of the other structures of the territory.

Moreover, the link between the SAGE and the financiers were also thought. For example, the basin agency will finance only if the askers put in place coherent programs fur a number of years and with a perspective at the basin scale.

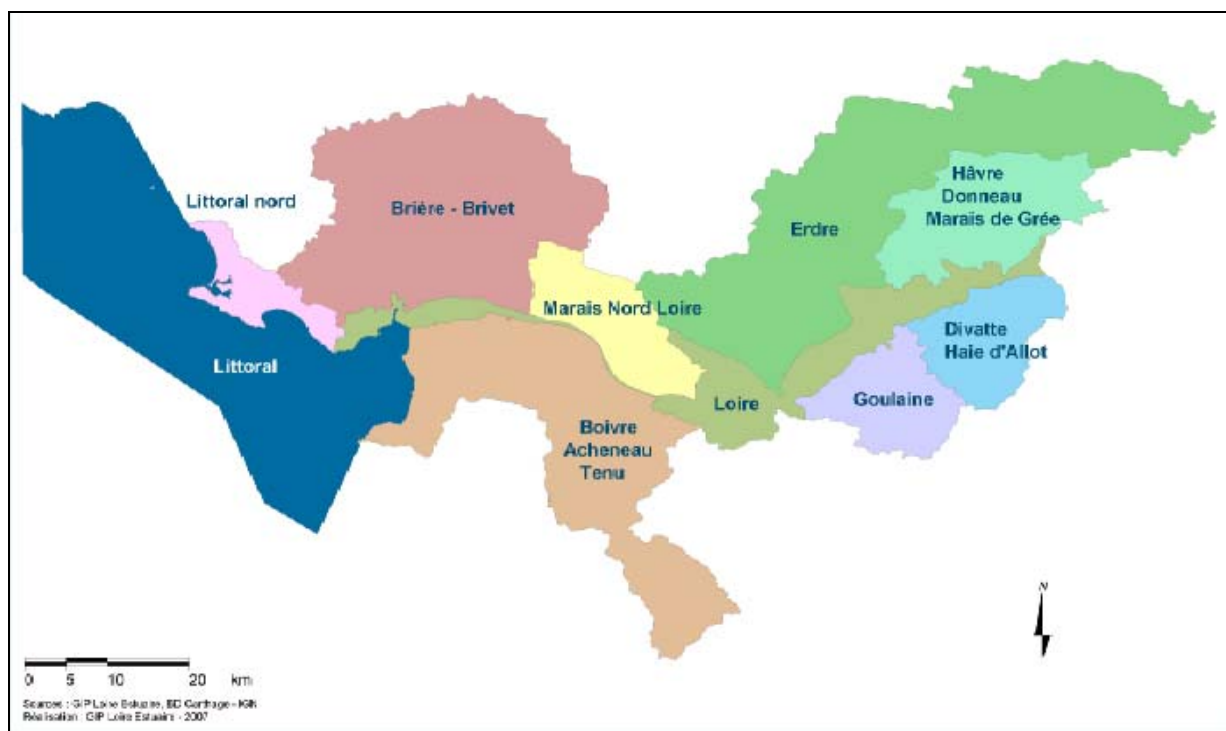


Figure 5: The territories of the referent structures of the SAGE "Estuaire de la Loire", i.e. Loire River estuary.

The SAGE Nappes Profondes of Gironde: an example of a work on the links during the whole project

The SAGE Nappes Profondes of Gironde is one of the two SAGE which concern the Bordeaux Urban Community. Its territory corresponds to the department of Gironde and concerns four aquifers: Miocène, Oligocène, Eocène et Crétacé. It represents 542 towns, that means 1227000 habitants. The Bordeaux Urban Community on its own represents almost 50% (637612). The principal stake is the quantitative management of water for alimentation, agriculture and industry. It came into effect the 25 November of 2003 and its aim is fixed for 2010.

There are two aims to combine: to do economies of water and to find new resources. As water for alimentation represents the biggest part of the samplings (74% against 17% for the agriculture and 9% for the industries), the majority of the actions logically concern water supply and its local responsables. So the links between the SAGE and the local authorities or intercommunalities in charge of water supply are very strong. The Bordeaux Urban Community is particularly concerned since it represents the biggest part of the samplings (48,4% in 1998). By the way, the SAGE has been traduced in the contract between the urban community and its operator who is charged of putting in practice the SAGE, with objectives of samplings and economies of water. The policy of water of the Bordeaux Urban Community is the SAGE.

Since the beginning, they were conscious of the fact that they need means to function. So they put in place a specific tax. This tax is based on the principle of tax for dispensed services which consists of making financially participate those who made a project necessary and those who find an interest to it. It is modulated in function of the zones defined by the SAGE (in function of the available water quantity). It is tiny (some cents of euros by m3) but symbolic. It is used on several plans: for the contract between the actors of Gironde and the basin agency, to major the

agency subventions, to aid to projects out of program upon acceptance of the CLE and as a compensation for those who are making efforts.

Moreover a territorial challenge has been signed between the basin agency, the CLE of the SAGE, the Bordeaux Urban Community and other structures for the protection and the improvement of the management of the underground water from the department of Gironde for the years 2003-2012

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the model developed by Nantes Métropole and the comparison to the other cases permit to find major principles for a territorial organization of water management which answers to issues implied by a sustainable urban water management :

- The management of water and waste water would be assumed by an intercommunality.
- This intercommunality would have adopted a triangular model based on the affirmation of the organizing authority with a real taking into account of the citizen.
- This intercommunality would also have other competences linked to water management as road department and urbanism.
- And, to take into account the environmental stakes, this intercommunality would have a contract with the basin agency including the whole water cycle or would participate to a SAGE who works on links between the different structures.

Those principles, stemmed from a first analysis and mostly based on the case of Nantes Métropole, must be confirmed by an analysis of the other cases and must be taken as recommendations to adapt to each particular territory.

REFERENCES

- Barraqué B. (1999). Entre public et privé : l'eau et ses agences. In Cultures, usages et stratégies de l'eau en Méditerranée occidentale, pp371-395.
- François M. & Marest P. (Décembre 2006). Nantes Métropole - Eléments pour une nouvelle gouvernance des services urbains. In Pouvoirs Locaux n°71.
- Launay J. (2003). Rapport d'information sur la gestion de l'eau sur le territoire au nom de la Délégation à l'Aménagement et au Développement Durable du Territoire.
- Lorrain D. (1995). Gestions urbaines de l'eau. Economica.
- Martinand C. (2001). La maîtrise des services publics urbains organisés en réseaux. Avis du Conseil économique et social
- Martin-Lagardette J.-L. (2004). L'eau potable et l'assainissement : le cadre juridique, les acteurs, la qualité de l'eau potable, l'assainissement, la protection des milieux, outils et modes de gestion, la démocratie de l'eau, le prix de l'eau. Editions Johanet.
- Maksimovic C., Tejada-Guibert A. & Roche P.-A. (2001). Les nouvelles frontières de la gestion urbaine de l'eau : impasse ou espoir ?. Presses de l'école nationale des Ponts et Chaussées.
- Nicolazo J.-L. (1997). Les agences de l'eau. Editions Johanet.
- Vieillard-Coffre S. (2001). Gestion de l'eau et bassin versant : De l'évidente simplicité d'un découpage naturel à sa complexe mise en pratique. Hérodote n°102
- L'eau au XXIème siècle : De la vision à l'action. Editions Futuribles, mars 2000.
- Les communes jugent les structures intercommunales. La Gazette des communes, n° 1500, 3 mai 1999, pp. 6-11,

What territorial organization for a sustainable urban water policy? The French experience

- Etude de l'IFEN (2001) : Enquête « les collectivités locales et l'environnement », volet eau, La gestion de l'eau potable en France en 2001
- Etude BIPE/FP2E (octobre 2006) : Les services collectifs d'eau et d'assainissement en France. Données économiques, sociales et techniques.

3-Niederlander-WWW-YES-HAL-2008-08-16.doc (16/07/2008 version)