

*The environment plays a major role in health and its deterioration leads to sometimes serious harm. The new health-environment plan mobilises all the actors concerned to reduce these exposures on the basis of an overall assessment.*

*The Environmental Conference on 27 and 28 November, chaired by the President of the Republic, will address the issue of health and the environment.*

## DECISIONS ALREADY TAKEN

### Reduce the use of PESTICIDES



*The impact of pesticides on the health* of agricultural workers and local residents is increasingly well known. Since spring 2014, Ségolène Royal and Stéphane Le Foll have decided:

- to permanently prohibit the aerial spraying of pesticides;
- to permanently prohibit ground spraying in the vicinity of places where sensitive people are present;
- to prohibit the use of chemical pesticides by local authorities, in the scope of the charter *Terre saine*.

### Improve AIR QUALITY



*The energy transition law for green growth* promotes the use of clean vehicles, electric in particular, and introduces a conversion premium for the replacement of an old diesel vehicle with a clean vehicle, based on resources and with priority for areas affected by poor air quality. Together, the bonus and the conversion premium could be up to 10 000 euros. Tools for management of indoor air quality will be developed by the end of 2014, for places where children are present.

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### Reduce exposure to ENDOCRINE DISRUPTERS

*The national strategy on endocrine disrupters*, adopted on 29 April 2014, reinforced the ban on bisphenol A in feeding bottles and in materials in contact with foodstuffs.

To go further, France proposes banning bisphenol A in till receipts and will evaluate five new substances each year to determine the appropriate management measures.

# The 10 immediate actions



supported by **Ségolène Royal**,  
Minister of Ecology, Sustainable development and Energy  
and **Marisol Touraine**,  
Minister of Social affairs, Health and Women's rights



## Improve the quality of the SOUND ENVIRONMENT

**Noise is one of the main nuisances suffered by the French** in their daily lives and their neighbourhood environment. Indeed, 86 % of French people say that they are annoyed by noise<sup>1</sup>, mainly from transport infrastructures and from neighbours.

As Anses recalls in its 2013 report, noise exposure has so-called extra-auditory health effects: some in the short term (sleep disturbance, discomfort, etc.), and others after relatively long exposure times (difficulties in learning at school, cardiovascular effects, etc.).

These effects, which are not specific to noise exposure and can be observed in other situations of environmental stress, have not yet been sufficiently taken into account.

<sup>1</sup> IFOP survey The French and noise nuisance, October 2014

**ACTION** Rapidly publish a guide to improve acoustic quality in schools, to develop noise and citizenship education, especially among young people, and to make an application available to the public on the 15 points to be verified concerning noise in housing.



## Reduce exposures linked to ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION OF SOILS

**Like air or water, the soil is an environment where pollutants can be concentrated**, due to certain industrial, agricultural or urban practices, but it is also the interface with other environments (aquatic environments – surface and underground water – atmosphere and biosphere). Changes in soil contamination occur over much longer time frames than for other environments.

Actions to prevent and reduce exposures must take into account all the specific characteristics of soils, focusing on the exposures of children for whom the ingestion of dust from polluted soils or frequenting polluted sites represent special health issues.

**ACTION** Carry out a preventive diagnosis of the soil condition of establishments receiving sensitive people (crèches and schools in particular) with a view to committing to the necessary actions.



## Ensure vigilance on the potential risks linked to NANOMATERIALS

**The nanosciences are the subject of intense efforts in research and innovation.** The evaluation of the potential risks is still very incomplete, however. A great many parameters are involved in the toxicity mechanisms of nanomaterials. Identification of the dominant factor(s) in various biological models is a major challenge in toxicology research. Because of their size and structure, these particles still raise questions about their mechanisms of action. In general, the evaluation of the properties of the substances is the responsibility of the manufacturers, and how they should be taken into account within REACH at European Union level must be specified.

**ACTION** Evaluate exposure to nanomaterials in foodstuffs and carry out measurement of nanomaterials in outdoor air at manufacturing sites.



## Reduce the exposure of populations to ENDOCRINE DISRUPTERS

**Certain products or objects in everyday use**, such as detergents, cosmetics, textiles or paints, may contain substances classed as endocrine disruptors. This latter term groups numerous chemical substances that can interfere with the hormonal regulation of living beings and affect reproduction, growth, development or behaviour. The effects on human health and the environment, which are now documented, call for action to prevent risks and limit the exposure of populations, especially pregnant women and young children.

With the adoption of its national strategy on endocrine disruptors, France is becoming a driving force in the preparation of the European strategy on endocrine disruptors. The introduction of the *Tickets without bisphenol A* mark and the search for substances classed as endocrine disruptors in toys are some of the measures announced to accompany the national strategy on endocrine disruptors.

**ACTION** Introduction of the *Tickets without bisphenol A* mark and the search for substances classed as endocrine disruptors in toys.



## Improve the **QUALITY OF WATER** intended for human consumption

*In recent years, there have been several news reports of episodes of pollution of water* by unregulated micropollutants leading to usage restrictions (nitrosamines, perchlorate, etc.) in particular in catchment areas for water intended for human consumption. The operation of a drinking water supply system requires effective management, which must make it possible to detect contamination early enough to limit its possible consequences on public health. To this end, it is necessary to promote the implementation of specific local plans for the safeguarding of drinking water supplies, in line with the experience in Poitou-Charentes.

**ACTION** Secure drinking water supplies, increase the number of protected priority catchment areas and better monitor emerging substances in water.



## Prevent the risk OF **ALLERGY LINKED TO POLLENS**

*Allergic diseases* (respiratory, skin or digestive) related to the air or food environment are a real public health issue. The increasing prevalence of these diseases is linked to a major change in our allergenic environment.

Monitoring of pollens, with the aim of informing the population and health professionals about their atmospheric concentrations, has been put in place. This allows medication to be taken pre-emptively or for an activity to be put off. The challenge now is to reduce the risk at the source.

**ACTION** Reduce the presence and development of allergenic pollen-emitting plants by distributing information on the allergic and / or toxic risks when the plants concerned are sold, and by training the staff in charge of managing green spaces in communities.



## Better understand and reduce exposure to **NATURAL ASBESTOS**

*Asbestos is a proven carcinogen for humans.* Although actions to prevent asbestos-related risks in buildings and in the workplace have been implemented since the 1990s, account should also be taken of the environmental exposures associated:

- with emissions of asbestos fibres from natural asbestos-containing outcrops or caused by human activities on asbestos-containing land or rocks;
- with possible emissions of asbestos fibres during work on structures containing quarry aggregates likely to contain such fibres.

**ACTION** Define and implement an appropriate prevention framework for construction sites and activities involving materials giving off natural asbestos.



## Evaluate the risks of exposure to **ELECTROMAGNETIC** waves

*The development of technologies using electromagnetic waves* and the uses associated with them has greatly increased over the past 20 years. These technologies are likely to increase the exposure of the general population or users and are accompanied by multiple questions and concerns, particularly regarding their possible health impacts.

Scientific uncertainty on this subject requires vigilance and follow-up, as well as the pursuit of an objective of transparency of information and restraint in the emission of electromagnetic waves.

**ACTION** Collect data related to the level of exposure and possible risks associated with electromagnetic waves and make it available to the public.



## Control and gradually restrict the use of **PESTICIDES**

*The use of pesticides over decades* has led to their release into the environment and, for some of them, persistence over the long term. Intake studies demonstrate an exposure of the population. There are concerns about the health effects of pesticides, particularly for people who are sensitive or particularly at risk. Several measures to reduce the use of pesticides have been implemented in recent months, under the impetus of Ségolène Royal and

Stéphane Le Foll. Issues related to the monitoring of pesticides in the air to assess their potential health impact will be addressed within the scope of NPHE3.

**ACTION** Launch a campaign to monitor pesticides in the air, document the use of pesticides by individuals and continue the ban on the most dangerous substances..



## Encourage **NATURE IN THE CITY**, to create **THERAPEUTIC GARDENS** in healthcare establishments

*The positive impacts* that can come from the natural environment have been demonstrated. There are now many scientific studies highlighting the value of developing therapeutic gardens in healthcare facilities. Their benefits are proven for patients, especially those suffering from Alzheimer's disease, as well as for hospital staff.

**ACTION** Review current knowledge and identify the most promising avenues for the development of natural spaces beneficial to health, in particular by generalising therapeutic gardens.

# Health-environment, a priority topic at the ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE on 27 and 28 November 2014

Based on the work of the NPHE, the Environmental Conference will focus on four public policies that should be accelerated.

- **Health and biodiversity**, a theme that has not yet been adequately addressed and where the issues are increasingly well known.
- **Improvement of air quality** which remains a priority health issue despite the progress made in recent years.

- **Noise reduction** in the environment.
- **Reduction of the impact of chemical substances** of most concern, in particular toxic substances, endocrine disruptors and nanomaterials in products used by the public, in particular cleaning products and pesticides.

## CREATE A DYNAMIC IN THE TERRITORIES around health and environment issues

Around these concerns, it is necessary today to mobilise the actors in the territories: local authorities, associations, companies and State departments. All these actions will only make sense if a national and territorial dynamic is created around environmental health issues. It is also a question of informing and educating, by encouraging knowledge distribution. Four priorities of the third health and environment plan are aimed at its adoption by all.

- *Encourage the involvement of the population* in decisions linked to health and the environment.

**ACTION** Establish a concerted State-region call for projects, in regions that are willing, to support local health and environment initiatives.

- *Translate the national plan into regional plans*, adapted to local priorities.
- *Put tools in place* to help communities cope with situations of accumulated environmental exposures.
- *Continue efforts* in education, training and information about health and the environment.

**ACTION** Create an Internet portal for health and the environment, bringing together innovative local initiatives and facilitating their multiplication, in order to make information easily available to all citizens.

## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**ANSES** will support, in particular through its calls for research proposals, the development of substitutes for hazardous substances, risk assessments related to new technologies and improved knowledge of the effects of pesticides.

**INERIS** is developing the *Ticket without bisphenol A*

mark and guides for the improvement of indoor air quality and is developing methods for measurement of nanoparticles in the air.

Moreover, one of the themes of action of the **2nd Programme for Future Investments** (PIA) will be to support the most innovative initiatives in these fields.

## IN BRIEF

### A CONCERTED road map

▶ **THE THIRD national plan for health and the environment** has been developed by the Ministries of Ecology and Health, in consultation with other ministries, local authorities, associations, social partners and companies, brought

together within the health-environment group chaired by member of parliament Gérard Bapt.

▶ **THE FRUIT OF A WIDE CONSULTATION**, it is based on proposals from several groups open to all stakeholders in health and the

environment. These proposals have been prioritised and enriched by a scientific support committee.

▶ **THE PLAN WILL BE IMPLEMENTED** nationally by all the ministries and agencies concerned. To take account of particular local

issues, regional health and environment plans will be developed.

▶ **THE PLAN WILL BE SUBJECT TO REGULAR FOLLOW-UP** by a specific steering committee bringing together the national stakeholders.