

Durban food system assessment and inspiring solutions

As part of the Let's Food Cities project, the Let's Food association analyzes the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the food system of Durban and identifies initiatives that have a positive impact on the territory. The results of the assessment as well as the inspiring initiatives from the 13 other study areas will help define actions and synergies between local actors that can be implemented locally in order to improve the sustainability of the food system.

The food system of Durban

The province of KwaZulu-Natal and metropolis of Durban benefit from a subtropical climate particularly favorable to agriculture. Durban, ranked as the greenest city in the world in 2019, is a mainly rural and agricultural metropolis. KZN province is also highly agricultural, and organized in rural communities producing vegetables, maize and meat in small quantities for their own consumption and selling the surplus on local markets.

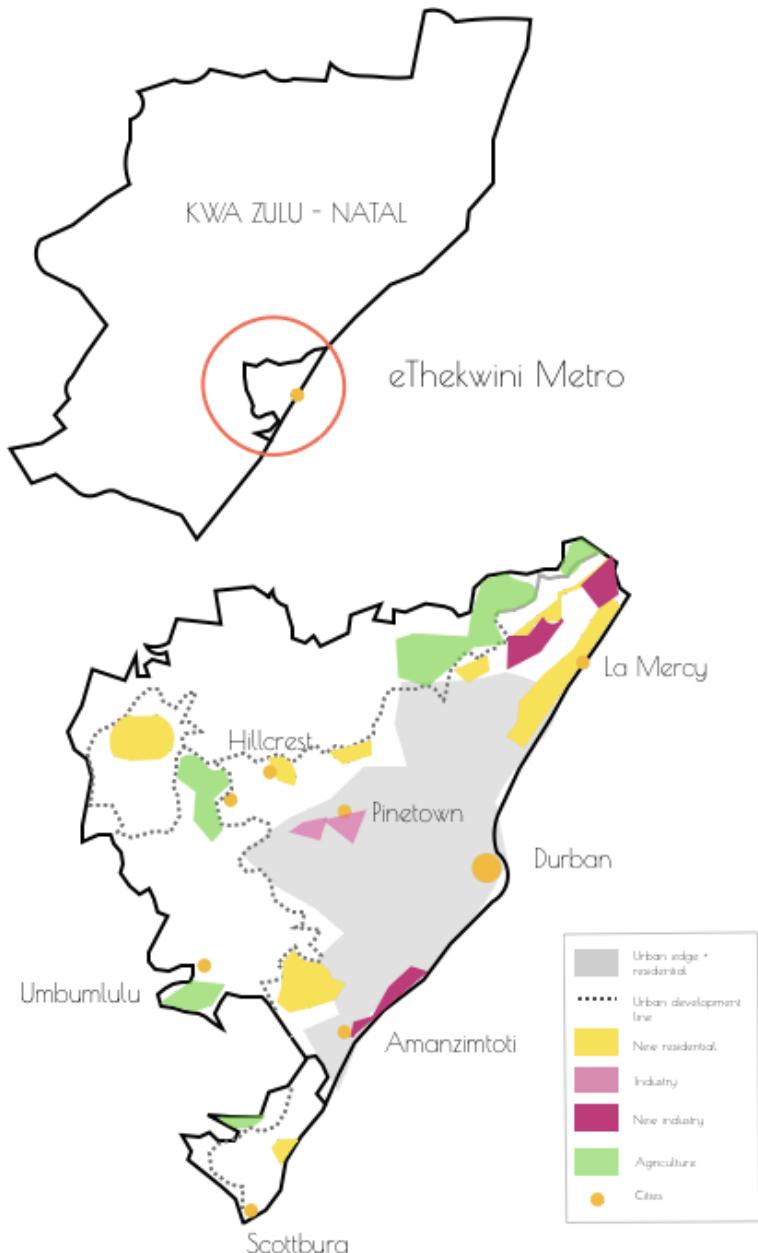
FOOD PRODUCTION AND SUPPLY

57% of the land in the province is dedicated to livestock, and only 17% to crops. Agricultural production is mainly represented by sugar cane, produced industrially for the national market and for export [Africa and Asia]. Soybeans and maize are also important local products as well as some tropical fruits [bananas, mangoes].

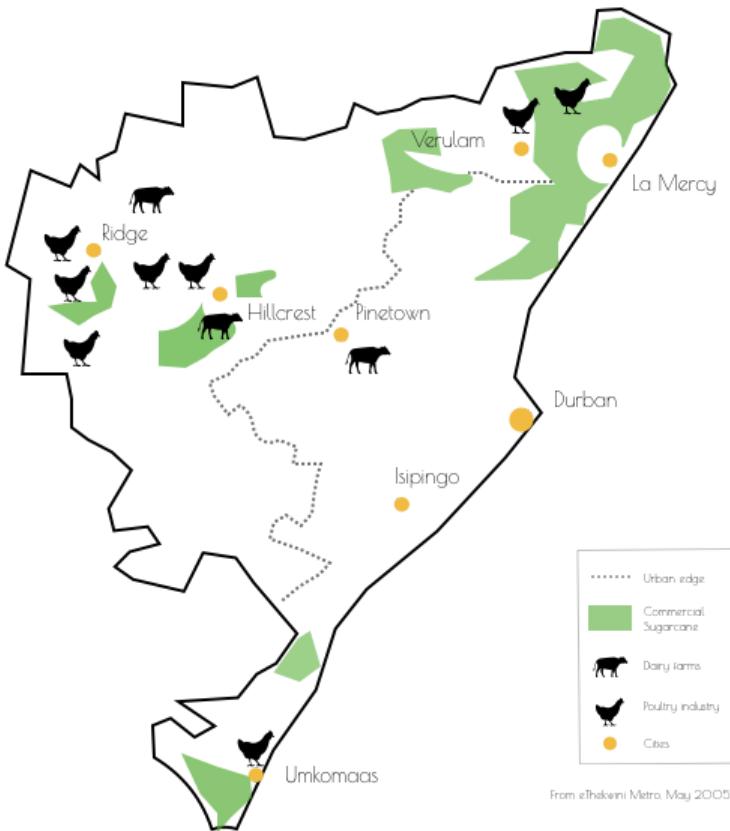
The metropolis of eThekini must therefore import a large part of the products consumed locally in order to cope with a growing urban population [3.7 million inhabitants in 2016, + 6.8% between 2007 and 2016] due to a significant growth in rural-urban migration.

95% of the fruits and vegetables entering and leaving the KZN province pass through the "fresh produce market" located near the harbour, or the 'Dube Trade Port', which are two national and international platforms facilitating export, import and distribution of food products in supermarkets and restaurants in the province and in Durban.

Cereals are imported from a neighboring province [Free State], 80% of vegetables and fruits come from other provinces [Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Free State] or even abroad [Europe, Argentina]. The meat is produced locally in the province [Midlands].



From eThekini Metro, May 2012



ACCESS TO LAND

South Africa is mostly supplied by a few large producers [30,000] who own farms of 2,000 to 10,000 hectares. The 400,000 remaining smallscale producers share land distributed by traditional leaders, in the KZN province. Land tenure is weak and does not allow farmers to access credits and infrastructure necessary to develop. Their low production levels limit their access to structured markets.

FOOD PRACTICES

In KZN province, the main dishes and products consumed are maize, red beans, sweet potatoes. Meat is also at the center of food traditions [beef, pork, chicken, etc.] including the famous braai [barbecue], a moment much appreciated by Durbanites. However, the Indian influences [in the province of KZN, 7.4% of the population is of Indian origin, 86.8% is black, 4.2% is white, 1.4% is colored] also allowed the development of many vegetarian options including curries, typical of Durban.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITIONAL SITUATION

Faced with an unemployment rate reaching 35.6% among the youth in the KZN province and the loss of interest in agriculture, many are leaving the rural areas to join the cities in search of a job. This partly explains urban poverty and growing economic inequalities in Durban [with a GINI index of 0.63 in 2016, Durban is the 4th most unequal city in South Africa].

eThekweni has the second largest township in the country, the township of Umlazi, whose official population is 500,000 but the actual population is estimated at 2.5 million. Access to food for all therefore remains a major challenge. Financial difficulties, the over-represented offer of fast food and industrialized products in supermarkets [as well as related advertisements], lack of education or even aspirations to be part of a consumerist society are all obstacles and barriers to a healthy and sustainable diet in most of the disadvantaged households.

This leads to major nutritional problems: overweight and obesity, undernutrition, deficiencies and diabetes co-exist. In South Africa, almost 70% of women and 30% of men were estimated overweight in 2018. These situations impact on school performance, ability to find a job, etc. Many sports areas have been set up in the city but sometimes remain inaccessible for some households.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

The informal sector is very active throughout the food chain: from small producers, to street vendors, to the recovery of plastic or others waste by waste pickers. Some initiatives try to support them and/or integrate them into the formal job market by developing new fair relationships providing a living wage.

So far, there is no structured waste sorting and recycling strategy for organic waste. The majority of organic waste [food scraps, etc.] that could be used as compost or biogas is now stored in landfills.

► Difficult preservation of agricultural land between peri-urban growth and traditional governance

Regarding the distribution and use of agricultural land, the municipality of Durban has authority only over a certain area ('urban development line'). Beyond this line, traditional rulers under the Zulu King decide on how land is distributed. This corresponds to over 55% of the territory of the municipality. Land beyond the urban development line does not have access to certain public services such as running water or electricity. It is therefore sometimes difficult to limit the fragmentation and protect agricultural land. In addition, when producers are granted land, they do not own it and can be dislodged at any time, which limits the possibilities of access to loans.

► Rural exodus and urban poverty: agriculture is no longer attractive

In South Africa, as in many countries, agriculture is no longer attractive to young people. The youth, and particularly those from rural areas, who often saw their parents working hard for low incomes, now aspire to new technologies and other aspects of city life. There is an urgent need to revalue the diversity of jobs and practices existing in the agricultural sector and to ensure attractive incomes and good working conditions. This means encouraging the development of small producers and improving access to markets. Building a local food system that is fair and respectful of the environment would create new jobs at each step of the food chain.

► Food "choices" that lead to malnutrition, guided by many factors

Consumers' food choices are influenced by many factors, both internal [preferences, esthetic of the body, etc.] and external [cost, cultural and social influences, availability of certain foods compared to others]. The need for recognition and social belonging, the low purchasing power as well as the strong media pressure and over representation of industrialized products loaded with fat, sugar and salt explain the high prevalence in Durban of overweightness and obesity, the numerous deficiencies as diabetes. Malnutrition then creates an impact on other problems, such as intellectual performance: children and students from Durban and the KZN province are thus particularly concerned.

► Urban agriculture projects that are emerging but struggling to sustain

Durban is seeing many urban agriculture projects led by various actors: municipality, student organizations, associations, communities, churches and sometimes individuals. Urban agriculture is a proven response to limit food insecurity and educate consumers about healthier food. However, monitoring and supporting long-term projects is sometimes difficult because of lack of funds and regular mobilization of beneficiaries and volunteers.

► Waste Management: towards a public service that creates jobs and resources?

32.7% of the food produced is lost or wasted in South Africa. 50% of this waste or loss takes place at the production or post-harvest stage, 20% at the distribution stage, 25% at the processing and packaging stage, and 5% at the consumption stage. The majority of this organic waste is disposed of in landfills and not recovered. Some isolated initiatives attempt to address this waste issue, particularly at the distribution and consumption stages. The informal sector is also active in recovering unsold items from distributors in particular. However, the public authorities have not put a real strategy in place, despite ambitious international commitments [- 50% by 2030].

► Difficulty of actors to work together, lack of long-term support from local authorities

Many initiatives exist in the territory of Durban for sustainable food and agriculture. However, local players note a lack of coordination and silo work on the part of the different organizations. Multi-stakeholder dialogue bodies and tools are necessary to build the confidence necessary for the emergence of food governance at the territorial level. Synergies must be created to advance further and faster in the agroecological and food transition of the territory of Durban and its region.

1 - Make agriculture attractive for young people and facilitate access to markets for smallscale farmers

DURBAN - FAIR FOOD COMPANY : SUPPORT EMERGING FARMERS AND ADD VALUE TO THEIR PRODUCTS

The Fair Food Company works with emerging farmers in the KZN province by facilitating their access to high value-added markets, and by supporting them in improving their production. The company adds value to these products by pre-cutting and packaging them in their facility in Mariannhill, then supplying supermarkets, canteens and producers' stores in the province.



DURBAN - SOUTH DURBAN COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE : DEDICATED SPACE FOR LOCAL PRODUCERS WITHIN THE FRESH PRODUCE MARKET

The 'South Durban Community Environmental Alliance' is an NGO working for environmental justice in Durban. They have set up a space dedicated to smallscale local producers within the 'fresh produce market' of Durban, which corresponds to the main transit platform for foodstuffs. This allows easier and direct access to the market for these producers.

DURBAN - ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY: TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR PRODUCERS WITHIN THE METROPOLITAN AREA

The municipality of eThekini, through its 'Spatial Distribution Framework' and its land development policy, has frozen the use of certain lands for agriculture. Some land dedicated to agriculture is located in the urban area of Durban, and others in the rural area. This requires consultation with traditional leaders.



ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY: AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION

55% of the territory of the municipality of eThekini is rural. eThekini supports its producers through 7 'agrihubs' spread over the city, allowing farmers to access certain infrastructures (irrigation, fencing) and markets. The 'AgriHubs' play the role of logistic platforms, to collect the production of the smallscale producers, to then supply school canteens, soup kitchens, and some supermarkets. The program allows farmers to improve their food security and generate income.

DURBAN - SPAR: FOOD SUPPLY FROM EMERGING FARMERS

The 'SPAR' supermarket chain engages with smallscale South African producers by providing them with easier access to their markets. In December 2018, SPAR had deployed 3 'rural hubs', in 3 different provinces, centralizing the produce of nearly 100 emerging producers, whose produce are then sold in SPAR stores.

DURBAN - WOMEN ADDING VALUE TO THE ECONOMY, CO-OPERATIVE

WAVE [Women Adding Value to the Economy] is a group of women from South Durban who produce and transform their production into jams, sauces and other pickles. Thanks to this group, women can have better access to the market, and can help each other in making their products or lending equipment.

NANTES - NANTES MÉTROPOLE: SUPPORT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF LOCAL PRODUCERS

Since 2001, Nantes Métropole has set up a financial support system for farmers who wish to settle in the metropolis. The municipality gratifies the farmers an additional bonus of € 4,000 when the farm aims to be certified organic.

NANTES - OCEANE COOPERATIVE

Océane is a cooperative in Nantes that brings together 35 vegetables producers from the area. With an annual production of 62,000 tonnes, the cooperative has invested in the construction of a 7,000 m² logistics platform. The 35 farmers market their vegetables themselves through vegetables baskets distributed to consumers. In 2017, 18 million baskets were sold.



FRUITS ET LÉGUMES NANTAIS

NANTES - LOCAL AND ORGANIC PRODUCTS FOR SCHOOL CANTEENS

In France, all public schools have a canteen, managed by the local authorities. The central kitchen of Nantes prepares 14,000 meals a day distributed in schools in the city of Nantes. Priority was given to the introduction of local and as far as possible organic products in the menus in order to support producers. Thus, for example, in 2018, in the high school canteens, 16.3% of the products were organic and 8.2% came from Loire Atlantique Department.

FEZ [MOROCCO] - TRAINING CENTER FOR AGRICULTURE

In Fez, the Training Center for Professional Skills offers a variety of diploma and professional training for all, making it easier to enter the job market. Training is provided to learn agriculture related jobs: caper production, seed conservation, nurseryman, rural tourism, etc.

NANTES - "LES ECOSSOLIES": SUPPORTING THE SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

Les Ecossolies have been working with Nantes Metropolis since 2002 in supporting social business initiatives. They support social entrepreneurship projects, facilitate networking, as well as provide access to services dedicated to social enterprises. Food and short circuits are part of the main topics of the Ecossolies.



NANTES - AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRIES ON THE WHOLESALE MARKET

Nantes's wholesale market brings together more than 100 companies, including 40 local producers and sellers. The market creates 2,000 jobs and can accommodate more than 200 businesses. Many activities are present or in the process of setting up: banana ripening; wholesalers of fish and seafood products; instant organic powder preparations; aromatic herbs, edible flowers, salad shoots and exotic fruits; etc.

NANTES - NANTES MÉTROPOLE: CLEARING UNUSED LAND FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES

Due to land pressure, the Nantes metropolis was witnessing the apparition of many unused plots of lands, and under-exploitation of land intended for food production. A diagnosis established that 3,700 ha of land could be used for agricultural purposes. To date, 49 sites [442 ha] have been cleared and put back into operation for livestock and vegetables production. The remaining land is being converted.

2 - Transform food supply and demand to move towards healthier diets



Develop the offer of healthy and sustainable products

DURBAN - BIOWATCH

Biowatch is an NGO which wishes to encourage the practice of agroecology to strengthen the sovereignty and food security of households and territories. The NGO works with a group of emerging producers in the North of the province, advising them on the practices to adopt.

DURBAN - MUNICIPALITY AGROECOLOGICAL PROGRAM

eThekwini supports its local producers by providing them training and advices to implement agroecological practices. The municipality decided to go against the national agricultural strategy by encouraging permaculture practices.

DURBAN - GREEN CAMP GALLERY

Green Camp Gallery is a place located on the Umbilo road with a triple objective: biodiversity and urban agriculture hub, museum and art gallery. By bringing nature and agriculture back to the city, Green Camp wishes to renew the link between rural and urban areas, while raising awareness on food production in the city.



DURBAN - UMBILO BUSINESS FORUM

Umbilo Business Forum aims to support the Glenwood-Umbilo neighborhood through its businesses, by employing people excluded from the job market. Farming in parks is also a way to improve food security and strengthen social cohesion.

NEW YORK CITY - Coupons for the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables

New York City distributes coupons through community-based organizations to the beneficiaries of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP] for purchases at farmer's markets. For example, a SNAP recipient who makes a \$5 purchase at the farmer's market receives a \$ 2 coupon that he or she can use toward the purchase of fresh fruit and vegetables at the market.

TORONTO - The Mobile Good Food Market : Ensure a healthy food supply in all neighborhoods

The Mobile Good Food Market operates as a not-for-profit market on wheels, serving low income communities across the city. Operated by FoodShare with support from Toronto Public Health, the retrofitted Wheeltrans bus enables the MGFM to serve low income neighbourhoods where residents tend to have long distances to travel to the nearest grocery store.

Limit the supply of industrialized products

SOUTH AFRICA - Taxes on products high in sugars

In 2018, South Africa's government passed a law to tax products with high levels of sugar: Highly sugary products are 20% or 2.29 cents per gram of sugar more expensive. South Africa became the first African country to implement the tax.

LONDON - Withdrawal of advertising for junk food on the entire public transport network

In February 2018, the city of London decided to ban advertising for junk food on the entire public transport network of the city. This decision was taken in order to tackle childhood obesity.

Sensitize consumers

DURBAN - NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME [NSNP]

The National School Nutrition Programme [NSNP] currently provides meals to over 9 million learners in South Africa and 428 000 in eThekweni. Through this program, students from low income neighborhoods can benefit from one hot meal a day, improving their food security, and therefore their performance at school. In Durban, the municipality has been appointed to supply the schools with food. 3 years contracts were set up with local emerging farmers to partly supply the canteens. A space at the fresh produce market was dedicated to gather, cut and pack the fresh produce to be distributed in the schools.

DURBAN - ETHEKWINI : ROOF TOP GARDEN "PRIORITY ZONE"

In 2010, the municipality decided to invest the roof of one of its offices, located in the city center, in order to create a space dedicated to agriculture. The objective of the garden is to educate about the importance of self-production and the consumption of fresh vegetables, and to create a replicable model. 5 people work full time to maintain the garden.



NANTES - "The 5 senses garden"

'The 5 senses garden' is a place open to all aiming at reconnecting our senses with nature. Different experiences are offered to raise awareness of the importance of keeping nature in town.

CHILE - Labeling of food products and healthy food allowance for students

In 2016, Chile implemented a strict labeling system for food products. All products exceeding a certain threshold in terms of quantities of sugars, fat or salt must have a black hexagonal logo indicating its content in a visible manner for consumers. Other measures were then taken based on this labeling. For example, the allowance distributed to students for food is only applicable to foods that do not have a black logo.



3 - Organize the recovery of unsold food items, the food donation and the management of organic waste

DURBAN - SOUP KITCHENS - Example of "Carrots and Peas" in Kenneth Gardens municipal housing

'Carrots and Peas' distributes a hot meal 3 times a week [Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday]. Food is collected from committed individuals and bought by the volunteers working in the soup kitchen. 3 people prepare the meals on a daily basis. The municipality of eThekwin also manages nearly 90 soup kitchens in the metropolis.



FRANCE - SOLAAL : FACILITATE THE DONATION OF WASTE PRODUCTS AT THE PRODUCTION STAGE

In South Africa, like worldwide, most of the loss and waste takes place at the production stage. Solaal is a unique NGO in France which facilitates donations between farmers and food aid associations. It offers a free service that fights against food waste and offers fresh produce to the most disadvantaged people via a phone application.

NANTES - "LE COMPTOIR DES ALOUETTES": PROVIDING ACCESS TO FRESH PRODUCTS FOR ALL AND CREATING SOCIAL COHESION

'Le Comptoir des Alouettes' aims to facilitate access for all to fresh and local produce and to recreate social cohesion within a neighborhood around food. Located in a low income area, the 'comptoir' offers local fruits and vegetables at reasonable prices, or for free if unsold the days before. The 'comptoir' also offers cooking classes followed by free meals for all.

FRANCE - TOO GOOD TO GO PHONE APPLICATION

Too good to go is a smartphone application that was created in June 2016. It connects retailers with users in order to sell them unsold fresh produce of the day.

DURBAN - ENACTUS : VERMI COMPOST PROJECT

In Pietermaritzburg, a team of students from the ENACTUS network is setting up a project to collect food waste from professionals in order to produce vermicompost, which would then be redistributed to local producers to fertilize their soils.

NANTES - LA TRICYCLERIE: WASTE COLLECTION FROM RESTAURANTS

'La Tricyclerie' organizes the collection of organic waste from restaurants to transform it into compost, which is then sold in town. Waste collection is done by bicycle.

NANTES - METHANISATION PLANT FOR WASTE COMING FROM FOOD INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESSES

In the city of Issé, a methanisation plant has been put in place to process organic and food waste collected from food industries, supermarkets and restaurants in the department of Loire Atlantique and neighboring departments. The process can produce energy and compost for producers of the region.



4 - Facilitate synergies between local stakeholders and provide long term support to projects

DURBAN - ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY : BUILDING A FOOD STRATEGY

The municipality has mandated the African Agricultural Council to draft a food strategy for the metropolis. Within this strategy the food system will be assessed, in order to bring coherence among the current programs.

DURBAN - ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY : FOOD SECURITY COMMITTEE

The 'Food Security Committee' brings together public authorities at national, provincial and local levels, as well as all the private and associative actors involved in food security programs at eThekini level. The committee is being reactivated, and will allow participatory decision-making processes.

NANTES - TERRITORIAL FOOD STRATEGY - INVOLVE THE ACTORS OF THE FOOD SYSTEM INTO BUILDING A TERRITORIAL FOOD POLICY

In 2016, Nantes Métropole launched the process around the definition of its territorial food strategy [TFP]. A TFP makes it possible to define holistic strategies for a more equitable and sustainable production, supply and distribution of food. Its definition involved the consultation of all the actors involved in the food system



NANTES - "THE GREAT DEBATE" - INVOLVING CITIZENS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC POLICIES

Nantes is a city recognized for its participative approaches. Every year since 2014 it has organized a major metropolitan debate, in which everyone is called upon to contribute. The themes are different from one year to the next. In 2016-2017 it was sustainable energy, and in 2018-2019 "longevity". The consultation take different forms: individually with an online contribution, or through group consultations and debates.

USA - FOOD POLICY COUNCILS

The concept of 'Food Policy Council' was introduced in the 80s in the United States, in order to bring together the actors involved in the food supply and distribution system of a city, for a more efficient and adapted decision making processes. Different forms exist, the council can be advisory or decision-maker.

NANTES - "CITIZEN DIALOGUE" CONSULTATION PLATFORM

The metropolis of Nantes has set up an online platform dedicated to citizen consultation on specific subjects. This platform is called "Citizen Dialogue" and brings together all of the possible contribution topics, as well as upcoming consultation events

PARIS - PARTICIPATORY BUDGET

The City of Paris offers residents the opportunity to decide on projects and improvements to be made with 5% of the city's budget. This system has, for example, made it possible to set up vegetable gardens in schools.



NANTES - SIGNING OF THE MILAN URBAN FOOD POLICY PACT

In 2015 Nantes signed the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact. By signing the Pact, Nantes is committed to cooperating internationally to accelerate this global transition to more sustainable food systems. This commitment also makes it possible to strengthen synergies within the municipality between the departments in charge of agriculture and food issues.

NANTES - "THE 48 HOURS OF URBAN AGRICULTURE"

'The '48 hours of urban agriculture' is a national event which aims to raise awareness and educate on agriculture in the city. Activities are organized in the main French cities for 48 hours in April each year.

Actors of Durban's food system

The Let's Food Cities project aims to encourage the exchange of good practices and experiences in order to accelerate the agro-ecological transition of city-regions. Many actors operate in the food system: they must all be consulted in order to define a shared vision of the city-region. Thank you to all the stakeholders who agreed to receive us and share their expertise with us.

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Jayiya Vuyo, eThekwini Municipality, Agri Business unit
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Mkhize Xolile, Mangosuthu University of Technology
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