

# Plantons Le Décor – Support for the production and sale of local plants

## Contact name

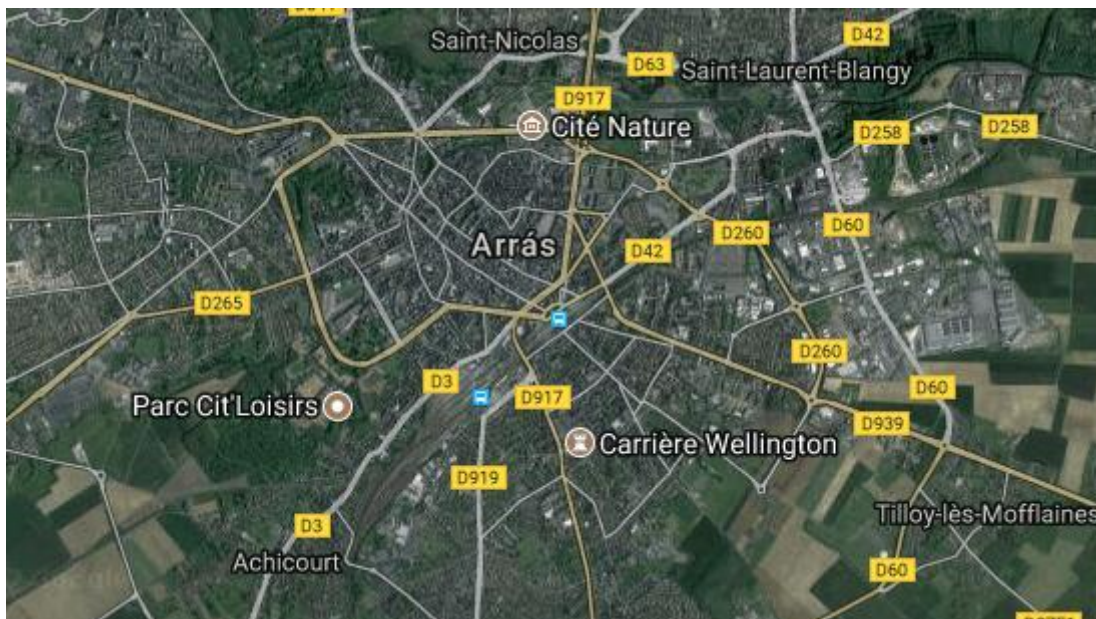
David MOULIN

## Institution name

Espaces naturels Régionaux (ENRx)

## Region & country

Hauts-de-France region



## Summary

The preservation of landscape biodiversity can be done through the application of ecological engineering and by planting gardens using indigenous plants and heirloom varieties rather than exotic or ornamental species and cultivars.

For this, it is thus indispensable to have a network of producers and suppliers at regional level. These producers should be capable to produce and sell these local plants, to guarantee their traceability and the quality of the plant products, and to facilitate the sale of these plants to all potential customers (residents, communities, associations, businesses, farmers).

This is how ENRx tackle the lost of biodiversity in landscapes and supported the development of the local economy in Hauts-de-France region by the creation of the programme Plantons le Décor.



*One of the activities of the Plantons le Décor initiative - Photo by David Moulin*

### **Background of the project**

Residents in the area of regional nature parks, as well as the majority of the population, mainly buy their plants, fruit trees and vegetable seeds in big garden retailers. The plants offered in this type of businesses are in its majority products from beyond the region and sometimes are poorly adapted to the region's soil and climate.

Furthermore, these purchases made in large garden centres do not support the local economy, specifically the producers present the region, which hinders the development of a region-based economy.

In order to preserve the floral and landscape diversity present in the gardens of the region, the next points were identified:

- For the trees and shrubs indigenous to the Hauts-de-France region, it was necessary to facilitate the harvest of seeds for their cultivation in regional nurseries and guarantee their production traceability from seeds to plants;
- For heirloom varieties of fruit trees (apple, cherry, pear, or plum trees), it was necessary develop the capability to multiply the numerous identified and safeguarded varieties in the regional repository orchard managed by ENRx.

### **Solution and actions taken**

To meet those needs ENRx came up with the creation of the programme Plantons le Décor, which included:

- Creating lists of trees and shrubs adapted to the region's soil conditions and climate.
- Raising awareness on the local population about the importance of showing and planting local plants and heirloom varieties.
- Selecting and create a list of heirloom varieties of fruit trees and vegetables, identified according to the different regional territories.
- Identifying producers, nursery owners and tree growers, set up in the region.

Within the Plantons le Décor, the next specific actions were undertaken:

- To establish agreements with tree nursery owners for the grafting of fruit tree varieties from our regional collections;
- To create seed orchards with indigenous trees and shrubs certified by a national botanical conservatory to guarantee their origin and to facilitate the harvest by the nursery owners;
- To establish technical specifications for production and sales which enables the guaranteed traceability and quality of the plants sold;
- To deploy a regional collective order with local communities.

### **Other institutions or parties involved**

The next partners and institutions were involved for the development of this initiative:

- 24 local communities (towns, townships, urban communities, metropolis) which mobilised a technical point person and an order manager.
- Six nurseries, one economic interest group and one seed producer;
- One service provider for the market platform (MangoPay);

- One service provider for the development of the Internet site and integration of the Market Place solution;
- One financial partner, the Hauts-de-France Region to finance ENRx engineering and the digital investment.

### **Results**

In 15 years, the number of partner communities has grown from 6 to 24. Two French departments (Nord and Pas-de-Calais) are covered by Plantons le Décor. The total number of orders have increased significantly between 2003 and 2016, and the turnover generated by Plantons le Décor is €200,000/year distributed across 7 producers.

Likewise, the number of indigenous trees and shrubs planted will reach one million in 2018!

### **Challenges**

The main problems faced during the implementation were next:

- The increase in the annual orders, management of paper order forms and cheque payments led us to modify the website of Plantons le Décor (<http://www.plantonsledecor.fr>) site by incorporating an online bank card payment system (Market Place), which was effective since the 1st of September 2017.
- The growth in the number community partners and the probable extension of Plantons le Décor to the new Hauts-de-France region will force us to optimise and adapt the collective order and communications systems.

### **Lessons learned**

The deployment of a system such as Plantons le Décor with a regional scope requires:

- Taking into account the needs of interested users and parties;
- The association and commitment of all interested parties, in the definition and implementation of the organisational and logistic process;
- A well-established, planned and methodical organisation;
- To envision a solution with several parties takes time;
- It is preferable to test practices, to develop them and to adapt them.

### **Other resources**

- **Plantons le Décor Website - Espaces Naturels Régionaux**

<http://www.plantonsledecor.fr/en>

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### **Website(s)**

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