

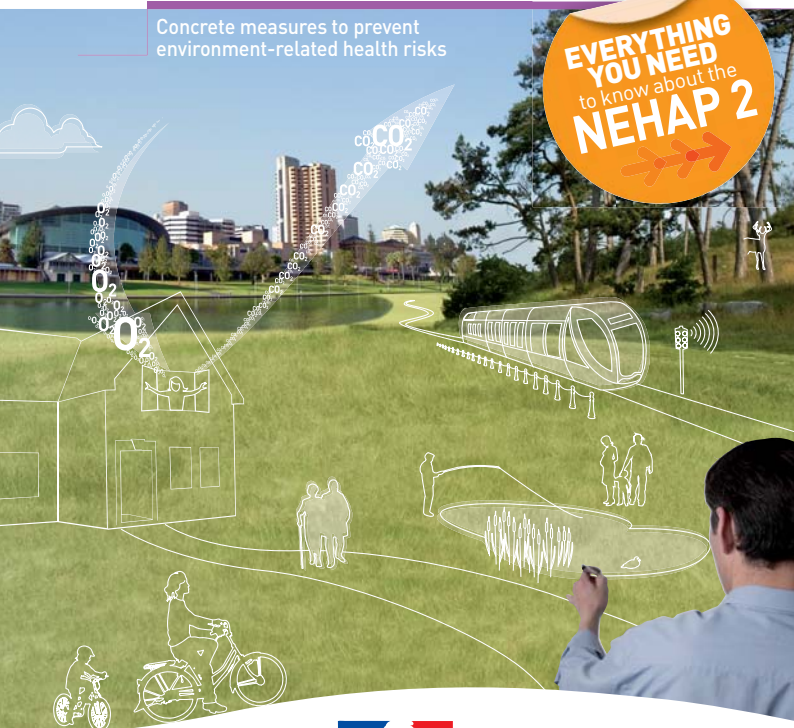


Health Environment

2nd National Action Plan 2009 > 2013

Concrete measures to prevent environment-related health risks

EVERYTHING YOU NEED to know about the NEHAP 2



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RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

MINISTRY OF ECOLOGY,
ENERGY, SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
AND THE SEA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
AND SPORTS

MINISTRY OF HIGHER
EDUCATION AND
RESEARCH

MINISTRY OF LABOUR, LABOUR
RELATIONS, FAMILY,
SOLIDARITY AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

The 2nd French National Environment and Health Action Plan (NEHAP 2)

Following the Grenelle Environment round table talks, the French government made a commitment to draw up a second national environment and health action plan. This has been accomplished.

This new 4-year plan is based on a report from a task force chaired by Professor Gentilini, Honorary Chairman of the Academy of Medicine.

This is an occasion for all of us to become better acquainted with the health and environmental challenges and France's initiatives in environment-related health risk prevention.

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4 concrete examples p. 11

10 good habits p. 20



7 questions
that answer all
your questions
on environmental
health

1 WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH?

It is all the health effects of our living conditions (exposure at home and/or in the workplace) and the contamination of different environments (water, air, soil, etc.).

2 HOW DO ENVIRONMENT-RELATED HEALTH PROBLEMS MANIFEST THEMSELVES?

There are many potential environmental impacts on health, but they are difficult to measure in the general population. Several studies have shown that air pollution plays a role in cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. The medical and scientific community have described other illnesses related to exposure to high concentrations of pollutants: cancer (caused by asbestos or other chemical substances), kidney disease (caused by exposure to heavy metals) or nervous system disorders (for example, after exposure to certain pesticides), etc.

→ The NEHAP timeline



3 WHY ARE THESE ENVIRONMENT-RELATED HEALTH PROBLEMS DIFFICULT TO DETECT?

There are three possible reasons for this problem:

- the environment is only one factor among many that deteriorate human health. So it is difficult to prove the environmental source of an illness;
- the illness often starts several months or years after exposure to the risks;
- not all people react the same way to their environment. Some are more sensitive due to their age, state of health or genetic makeup. Children and pregnant women are considered to be especially sensitive populations.

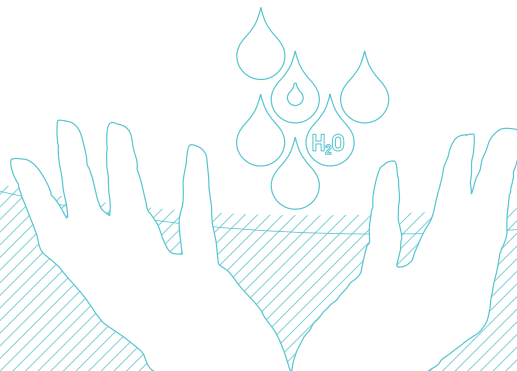
4 WHAT SOLUTIONS IS THE NEHAP 2 PROPOSING?

1. Reduce by 30%

- concentrations of fine particulate matter in the ambient air by 2015 through a national action plan (the particulate matter plan) and its regional programmes;
- emissions into the air and water of six toxic substances by 2013: mercury, arsenic, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH), benzene, perchloroethylene (PCT) and polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB).

2. **Introduce a health warning label** on building and decorating materials and products that release the highest levels of substances into the air inside buildings. Also make it compulsory to use the lowest-emitting products and materials in schools and day-care centres.
3. **Promote non-motorized means of transportation** by setting aside zones for pedestrians and cyclists and making the issue part of urban planning tools.
4. **Set up a system to protect the catchment areas of the 500 water harnessing points most at risk.**
5. **Improve knowledge and reduce the risks relating to the release of pharmaceutical residues into the environment.**
6. **Set up a programme to biomonitor the health status of the population as of 2010.**
7. **Test a system for tracking occupational exposure** in four regions of France.
8. **Improve procedures for testing substances,** products and items marketed in France, especially those aimed at children.
9. **Reduce exposure to suspect substances in the home** and in buildings used by children
10. **Develop a network of healthy home or indoor environment counsellors** who will visit people with certain medical conditions in their homes, and suggest targeted measures to improve their living environment.
11. **Pursue the programme to combat standard housing,** with the aim of cleaning up 20,000 homes a year.
12. **Identify and deal with environmental blackspots** that are likely to cause over-exposure to toxic substances.

→ Key Figures of the NEHAP 2



5 WHY A SECOND NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH ACTION PLAN?

The first action plan (2004-2008) made the theme of environment and health a top priority for society and across the country.

After the consensus reached at the Grenelle Environment round table talks, the new action plan is intended to spur a second wave of initiatives with two key objectives:

1. **Reduce exposure leading to high-impact diseases**
2. **Reduce environmental inequalities** relating to age, each person's state of health, socioeconomic background or geographic location.

This has resulted in 58 concrete measures that each have an appointed leader, associated partners and means and performance indicators.

→ Some actual results of the first NEHAP

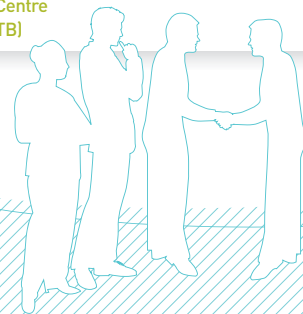
- industrial atmospheric emissions cut by 50 to 85%
- stronger measures taken against legionnaires' disease [respiratory illness]
- the introduction of protective procedures was either begun or completed at almost 75% of drinking water harnessing points
- large-scale surveys conducted on air quality in housing and schools

6 HOW WAS THIS ACTION PLAN CONCEIVED?

In line with the commitments of the Grenelle Environment round table talks, the action plan is based on a report submitted to the government on 14 April 2009 by a task force comprised of representatives of various associations, labour and management, experts and government stakeholders. The task force presented a set of proposals that then became the focus of a huge concerted effort at both the local and national levels.

→ Government agencies, a network of experts for NEHAP 2

- The French Agency for Environmental and Occupational Health Safety (Afsset)
- The Bureau of Geological and Mining Research (BRGM)
- The Scientific and Technical Centre for the Building Industry (CSTB)
- The National Institute for Industrial Environment and Risks (Ineris)
- The Institute for Public Health Surveillance (INVS)



7 IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEHAP 2 A GROUND-BREAKING INITIATIVE IN EUROPE?

France intends to establish itself as a true leader by being one of the first countries in the Europe zone to draw up a second action plan and by being the first to do so in partnership with associations, employers in industry, trade unions, local officials and health professionals.

→ The European environmental health policy

• SCALE, the European Environment and Health Strategy (2004-2010)

The objective is to set up a joint research programme among Member States to increase understanding of the effects of the environment on health and the causal links as well as to obtain the data needed to establish an integrated Community policy.

To apply this European strategy in a concrete manner, thirteen actions have been determined with three key objectives:

- improve the public's information on the interaction between the environment and health;
- increase knowledge and strengthen research efforts in Europe;

- put mechanisms into place that help improve risk assessment and programmes to develop better assessments of the population's exposure to environmental pollutants.

• REACH (registration, evaluation and authorisation of chemical substances)

This regulation aims to close the knowledge gap on the environmental and health risks of chemical substances. It promotes a gradual replacement of the most hazardous chemicals. The European Chemicals Agency was formed. All industries must register the chemicals they produce or import more than one ton of per year and prove that the risks relating to using each of these substances are being controlled for humans and the environment.



4 concrete examples

1 INDOOR AIR

What's the problem?

We spend an average of 22 hours a day in closed or semi-closed spaces in homes, workplaces, schools, leisure areas, stores or transport.

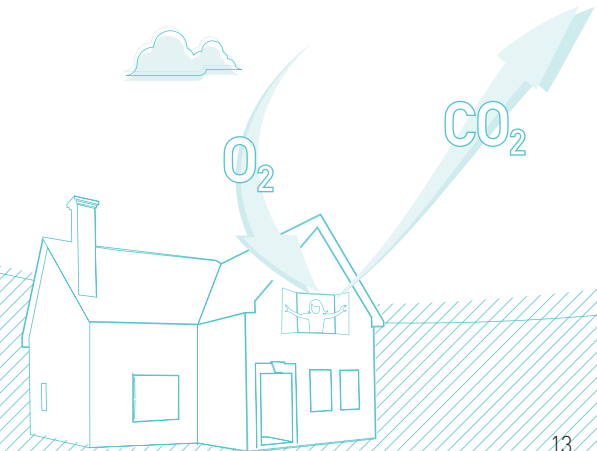
The air we breathe in these spaces can affect our comfort or our health. It could be anything from a mild irritation (smells, drowsiness, eye or skin irritations) to an aggravation or development of an illness (for example, respiratory allergies).

What solutions do the Grenelle Environment talks and the NEHAP 2 offer?

The NEHAP 1 helped raise awareness of the various types of pollution in our indoor environments by launching the first large-scale surveys on the air quality in homes and schools through the Observatory for Indoor Air Quality (OQAI). These data now have to be used to begin the real work on reducing pollutants. That is one of the priorities of the NEHAP 2.

Examples:

- 2009-2011: the legislative bill containing the national environment commitment (Grenelle 2) makes it compulsory to conduct regular air quality monitoring in certain public buildings. In preparation for implementing this measure, a test campaign to measure air quality has been launched in 300 schools and day-care centres;
- starting in 2012: a compulsory emissions labelling system (for VOC and formaldehyde) for building and decoration materials will gradually be introduced. It will then be expanded to the other most significant indoor sources of pollution (furniture, cleaning products, etc.). There will also be efforts to raise awareness among building professionals.



→ Key Figures of Environmental Health

24%

of illness worldwide are attributed to environmental factors.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO)

23%

of all deaths are attributed to environmental factors.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO)

2 ENDOCRINE DISRUPTERS

What's the problem?

Over the last forty years, epidemiological studies conducted in the industrialized world have revealed a lower rate of male fertility, partly associated with a lower sperm count and an increase in certain birth defects. There has also been evidence of a new outbreak of testicular and breast cancer. These disconcerting changes are usually attributed to chemical pollutants in our environment caused by the global increase of the production and use of chemical substances or preparations.

What solutions does the NEHAP 2 offer?

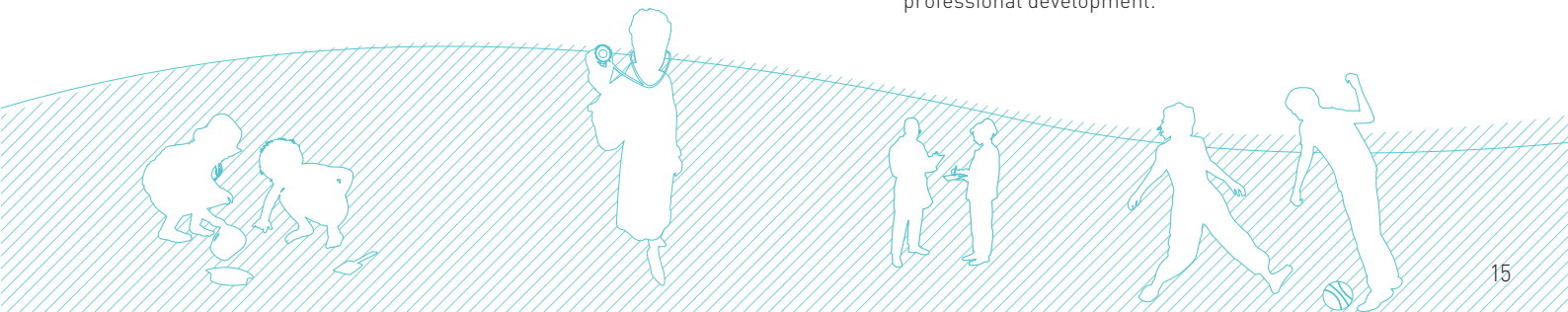
Several types of actions are being taken:

- The French National Institute for Health and Medical Research (INSERM) was commissioned to conduct a joint study on this issue and analyse the modes of reprotoxic substances and endocrine disrupters. In association with the various health safety agencies involved, the INSERM also evaluated the risk these substances pose to the people who use them, according to their uses and the potential exposure through these uses;

- information will be available online for the general public on the ministries' websites. A label indicating the presence of suspect substances in consumer products is under study;
- a monitoring system will be introduced for fertility in France.

The NEHAP 2 also provides for:

- expanded chemical testing campaigns by the government testing bodies, particularly for products designed for children;
- two new studies to increase understanding of the impact certain substances have on children:
 - a so-called biomonitoring programme will be introduced in 2011. It will determine whether the population is being exposed to specific substances through a variety of channels (food, skin, respiratory),
 - a study called "Elfe: growing up in France" conducted on a group of 20,000 children will be launched in 2011. It will monitor them from birth through to adulthood and account for a variety of factors (family-related, social, educational, behavioural, environmental, health, nutritional, etc.) to gain a better understanding of the impact that the situations children are exposed to have on their health and physical, psychological, social and professional development.



3 ELECTROMAGNETIC WAVES

What's the problem?

There are different sources of radio electromagnetic waves in our environment that have varying frequencies. The waves that are used close to our bodies (mobile telephones, Wi-Fi or Bluetooth headsets) have low frequencies and sources far from us (radars, radio or TV antennas, etc.) can have very high frequencies because they cover a wide area.

Frequency is not the only factor that affects exposure. It is also largely determined by how close you are to the source. For example, even though the frequency of a mobile telephone relay tower is much higher than for a mobile telephone, your exposure to a mobile telephone relay tower is actually much lower because you are far away.

What solutions do the Grenelle Environment talks and the NEHAP 2 offer?

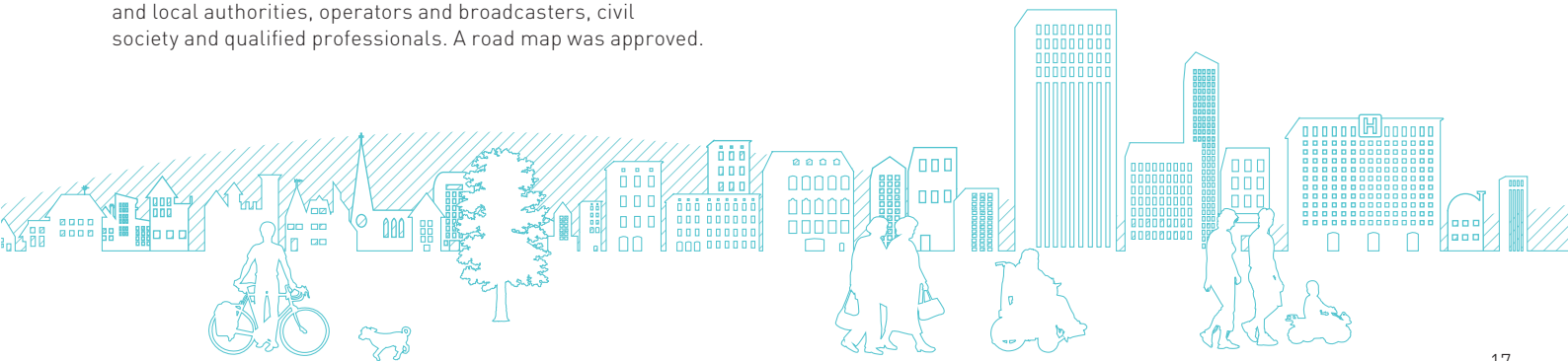
On 23 to 25 April 2009, the French government held a "Radiofrequency, Health, Environment" round table where the government met with public agencies, elected officials and local authorities, operators and broadcasters, civil society and qualified professionals. A road map was approved.

It will be implemented by the end of April 2010 and provides for:

- information available to the general public;
- targeted information for local officials and health professionals;
- adequate care for people who are hypersensitive;
- a precautionary measure for the public;
- careful monitoring of exposure thresholds;
- a testing measure for renewed exposure;
- an option for personal exposure testing.

Therefore, the Grenelle Environment talks and the NEHAP 2 set forth:

- compulsory supply of a device that limits exposure of the head (hands-free kit) when purchasing a mobile phone;
- a ban on children using mobile telephones in primary schools, elementary schools and middle schools;
- experiments to see whether the average emissions levels of telephone relay towers can be lowered.



4 TRANSPORT

What's the problem?

Transport plays a vital role in modern-day society. Its consequences on health and the environment must be limited by introducing effective transport systems that can meet the demands of sustainable development at the economic, social and environmental levels.

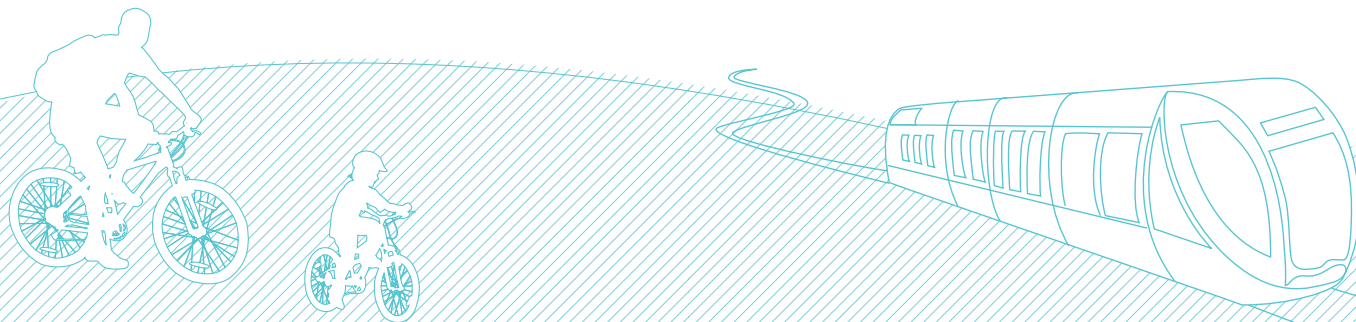
What solutions do the Grenelle Environment talks and the NEHAP 2 offer?

The Grenelle Environment round table talks generated a number of commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and particles. In an effort to help meet the global objective to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020, there must specifically be a 25% increase in non-road and non-air freight transport by 2012. The programming law to implement the Grenelle Environment talks (Grenelle 1) instituted these measures through the NEHAP 2, which will make it possible to broadly address the impact of transport on human health.

They will account for the health advantages of behaviour modifications and improved performance for vehicles, the expansion of modes of public transport (including urban and suburban buses), balancing the share of freight transport towards non-road modes and technological improvements for vehicles.

The NEHAP 2 will also focus on:

- prioritizing soft and active modes of transport and alternative modes to the private car;
- reducing noise pollution generated by transport and, more specifically, cutting noise blackspots in five years through a 120 million euro funding scheme over three years managed by the Ademe;
- improve the health and comfort of passengers and transport workers;
- expand research and evaluation of the health impacts of transport systems.





10 good
habits
to start

- 1 Air out your home** for at least 10 minutes every day and longer when you are doing a DIY project, cooking, cleaning, hanging the laundry to dry indoors or taking a shower or bath.
- 2 Do not obstruct ventilation systems** and maintain them regularly.
- 3 Do not smoke indoors** in the presence of children, even with the windows open.
- 4 Have your fuel-burning appliances and equipment inspected** by a professional every year before the start of winter.
- 5 Avoid using fuel-burning space heaters** continuously and electric generators indoors.
- 6 Use the correct amount and follow the instructions for cleaning products,** beauty products and DIY products as recommended on the label.

WHICH PRODUCTS SHOULD I BE ESPECIALLY CAREFUL WITH?

- 7 Construction**
DIY products (paints, glues, solvents, polishes, varnishes, waxes, stripping agents, thinners, lacquers, etc.), some construction materials (glass wool, rock wool, slag wool used for heating insulation) can emit toxins during and after construction. For example, a redecorated room can give off noxious fumes for a long time after the work is completed. Air out the

room, even months after the work is finished. Be even more vigilant if you are pregnant or if a child is using the room.

8 Lead and asbestos detection

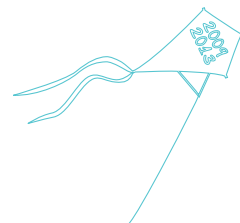
Doing DIY projects with materials containing asbestos (floor and ceiling panelling, etc.) or lead (primarily found in paints) is likely to release them into the air. It is compulsory to inspect for lead and asbestos when purchasing a home (at the seller's expense) to see whether there is asbestos in the building materials or lead in the paint. Call a professional to conduct the inspection.

9 New furniture

Some furniture (especially furniture made of chipboard) releases chemical substances for several days or even weeks after the packaging has been opened. Air out the area well by opening the windows for the first few days after bringing home a new piece of furniture.

10 Housework

Every day we use a variety of products in our homes containing chemicals that can pose health risks: poisoning, burns, allergies or respiratory problems. Be very careful with cleaning products, scented candles, incense, gardening and maintenance products for indoor plants, cosmetics and beauty products. During and after cleaning, air out your home very well, only use products you feel are essential and reduce the amounts you use.



LEARN MORE

MINISTRIES

- www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr
- www.sante-jeunesse-sports.gouv.fr
- www.travail-solidarite.gouv.fr
- www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- www.afsset.fr
- www.brgm.fr
- www.cstb.fr
- www.ineris.fr
- www.invs.sante.fr

EUROPE

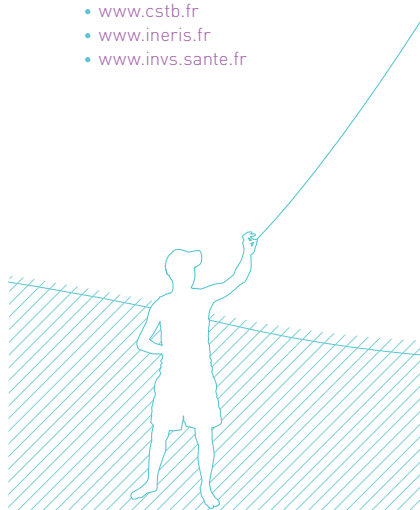
- European Plan for the Environment and Health:
REACH (registration, evaluation and authorisation of chemical substances)
www.europa.eu

INTERNATIONAL

- World Health Organization (WHO)
www.who.int/fr

10 GOOD HABITS

- www.prevention-maison.fr/
- www.inpes.sante.fr
 - Guide to indoor air pollution
 - Household products: usage precautions
 - DIY projects: precautions to take



**Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and the Sea,
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The full report on the plan is accessible via the Internet sites of the
Ministries of Sustainable Development, Health, Research and Labour
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