Promoting cycling in Europe : the legal approach

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to present an example of how environmental law can foster the development of cycling in Europe. This work deliberately takes the perspective of the "hands-on" experience of the French Federation of Bicycle Users (FUBicy) and has no pretence to be a scholarly work. It is hoped, however, that the specific case presented here and the associated legal developments can be inspiring for the future, in particular in European countries where public authorities insufficiently promote cycling as a means of urban transport.

European directive on ambient air quality assessment and management

The case presented here results from an article of the French law on air quality. This law itself results from the transposition of the EU framework directive on air quality into the French legal system. The EU directive, more precisely Council directive 96/62/EC on ambient air quality assessment and management, was published in November 1996 in the Official Journal of the European Communities. It defined and established objectives for ambient air quality in the European Union to reduce the harmful effects of pollution on human health and on the environment. The directive made mandatory that adequate information on air quality be provided to the public[1]. For that purpose, it required measurements of various pollutants, including those that mainly originate from motorized transport like micro particles, ozone, and nitrogen dioxide, in agglomerations[2] and in zones where levels were exceeding some precise limit values. Moreover, where pollution levels were higher than the limit values, member states of the European Union were to prepare a plan for lowering them down to the limit value within a specific time frame. In the event of alert thresholds being exceeded, measures had to be taken by the state to control and where necessary suspend activities, including motor-vehicle traffic, which were contributing to the threshold value being exceeded. Member states had to bring into force the laws, regulations, and administrative provisions necessary to comply with the directive not later than 18 months after its publication in the official journal of the European Communities. All countries that joined the EU after the publication of the directive also had to transpose it as part of the 'acquis communautaire'.

In France, the transposition of the directive on ambient air quality started well ahead of its publication since the transposed text was voted by the French Parliament in December 1996, only a few weeks after the publication of the directive. This illustrates the fact European legislation is often the result of long negotiations between member states of the Union and that it is a compromise agreed upon by member states rather than a unilateral ruling by "Brussels" as often portrayed in the Medias.

French law on air and the rational use of energy[3]

The European directive on air quality gave some flexibility to the member states on the way the legislation could be transposed into the national legal systems. In particular, member states of the European Union had the possibility to take more stringent measures than those imposed by the directive to improve air quality on their territory. In France, the transposition of the directive resulted in interesting provisions that clearly emphasized the contribution of clean means of transport like cycling to the improvement of air quality. In fact, since 1982, France had a law on transports that did recognize the necessity to preserve the environment and to use energy in a rational way[4]. The practical implications of the 1982 law were limited, however, because, somewhat in contradiction with the idea of using energy in a rational way, it recognized the existence of a "right to mobility and a freedom to choose one's means of transport". The emphasis on the right to mobility reflected the dominant paradigm of the time in France, where the growing number of private cars was seen as a societal progress that should not be hampered by legislation. As a result, the recognition of the importance of protecting the environment and of using energy in a rational way did not translate into any concrete provisions in favour of cycling or other non polluting modes of transport.

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[1] In compliance with the Aarhus convention, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/aarhus.

[2] The directive defined an agglomeration as a zone with a population concentration in excess of 250 000 inhabitants. This definition differs from the one used in the French highway code ("le code de la route") in which agglomerations comprise build-up areas down to small villages.

[3] Loi sur l'Air et l'Utilisation Rationnelle de l'Energie, commonly denominated "LAURE".

[4] Loi d'Orientation des Transports Intérieurs, commonly denominated "LOTI".

The law did, however, decide of the implementation of urban mobility plans in urban areas that had a public transport system. Urban mobility plans, among other things, were to define general principles for the organization of urban transports, aiming at a proper insertion of pedestrians and 2-wheel vehicles in cities, with the objective of using cars in a more rational way. These plans were slow in delivering concrete results, in particular with respect to the recognition that the presence of cars had to be limited in urban areas, but they did lay the foundation for a future shift of paradigm on urban mobility. As a result, when the need to transpose the European directive on air quality came up a decade later, the French legislator was able to build upon this foundation and used the concept of rational use of energy as a founding principle of the French law. Indeed, air quality (the word quality being implicit) was linked to the rational use of energy in the title of the law. This link was moreover recalled in the first article of the law. Finally, the loop was closed by amending the transport law of 1982 in order to include air quality concerns in urban mobility plans. More precisely, the transport law was amended to explicitly state that one of the objectives of urban mobility plans was to reduce motorized traffic in urban areas and that energy efficient and non polluting mobility modes like cycling and walking had to be developed.

Following the adoption of the law on air and the rational use of energy, French efforts to monitor air quality were given a boost, allowing France to catch-up on more advanced countries and to anticipate subsequent European legislation on air quality that derived from the mother directive. Among other things, France, which previously had concentrated on industrial pollutants, expanded monitoring to include automobile pollution. As a result, all cities of over 100,000 inhabitants and many smaller urban centres now have permanent monitoring systems, managed by 40 local associations, which act under the 1996 law.

Another provision of the law on air and the rational use of energy was the establishment of regional air quality plans in every region as well as plans for the protection of the atmosphere in agglomerations of more than 250 000 inhabitants. These plans aimed to coordinate the action of regional and local authorities in order to achieve the objectives of the law. The urban mobility plans discussed above had to be made consistent with the regional and the agglomeration air quality plans. Interestingly, the law imposed that all these plans needed to be revised every 5 years to take into account the evolution of air quality and of contributing factors such as the use of motorized vehicles. During these revisions, citizens have to be consulted, and therefore civil society has had the opportunity since 1996 to provide input on urban policies.

Thus, the transposition of the EU directive on air quality led to the acceptation in the French legal system of the idea that relying on cars for urban mobility was unlikely to be compatible with the rational use of energy and that on the contrary cycling was to be encouraged as a rational means of transport in cities. This idea meets the point often made by engineers that using a 2-ton vehicle to move a person of less than 100 kg at an average speed of 15.7 km/h[5] is not efficient from an energy point of view. The recognition in a legal text back in 1996 of the idea that efficiency in mobility is important maybe seen as a precursor of recent European legislation to impose targets on the CO_2 emissions of cars[6]. Moreover, substances that contribute to climate change were explicitly listed in article 2 of the 1996 law among the constituents of atmospheric pollution. This reference to climate change appears rather visionary in comparison with how long it took to other regions of the world, in particular the United States, to recognize the existence of global climate change.

Article 20 of the French law on air and the rational use of energy

Despite being a founding principle of the law, encouraging the rational use of energy, and as a result cycling, would have remained a theoretical view if not accompanied by specific provisions. Indeed, just as citizens generally recognize the need to protect the environment but tend to be slow in translating this recognition into actions, many legal texts have failed to deliver practical plans to fulfil their promises[7]. Fortunately, specific provisions in favour of cycling were not forgotten in the French law on air and the rational use of energy. Indeed, article 20 of the law recognized the importance of building a cycling infrastructure to encourage cycling as a mode of transport, which led to the requirement that a

[5] Average speed of cars circulating in Paris "intra-muros".
http://www.paris.fr/portail/deplacements/Portal.lut?page_id=381&document_type_id=5&document_id=4841&portlet_id=1199

[6] CO_2 emission is a good proxy for the gas mileage of a car and thus for its energy efficiency.

[7] Even the French constitution recognizes the importance of preserving the environment but doubts have been raised whether this recognition has any practical implications.

cycling infrastructure had to be put in place in urban areas whenever road works were carried out[8]. This requirement was astutely drafted. Indeed, requiring the construction of a new cycling infrastructure all at once and everywhere would not have been realistic. Instead, the article took advantage of the fact that cities evolve, streets need maintenance, and every renovation work is an opportunity to gradually establish a cycling infrastructure. Furthermore, when a cycling infrastructure is imposed during road renovation, it can lead to a complete rethinking of mobility in the area, which in turns facilitates the integration of the infrastructure in the local urbanism. Interestingly, article 20 was not present in the initial text proposed by the Environment Minister who prepared the law. It was instead introduced by an amendment proposed by the government during the second reading of the text in the French Senate [9]. Eventually, article 20 was voted with the rest of the law and came into force in 1998.

Just before the law came into force, the Centre of Studies on Networks, Transports, Urbanism, and Public Works (CERTU[10]) wrote a note on the interpretation of its article 20 (Wolf, 1996). Indeed, CERTU had noted some ambiguity in the way the text was formulated. Various terms did not have any legal values like for instance “renovated” which could equally be interpreted in a narrow sense to mean only major road works or in a broad sense to mean any works that provide the opportunity to insert a cycling infrastructure in the public space. Similarly, the concept of separate corridor[11] did not exist in the French Highway Code[12]. These ambiguities might have been caused by a hasty drafting of the article between the first and the second readings of the law, which left little time to the administration to polish the text. Despite the ambiguities in the text, the CERTU concluded in its note that the application of article 20 was mandatory, and that local authorities could not avoid creating a cycle itinerary by simply arguing that such an itinerary would be incompatible with the constraints of motorized traffic in the area. This interpretation unfortunately remained at an informal level and did not appear in CERTU’s reference documents. Because of the ambiguities that the CERTU had rightly pointed out, it was likely that the clarification of the exact implications of the law would require the establishment of a case-law.

The Valence case-law

Because of the radical change of thinking it entailed in terms of urban planning, article 20 was ignored by local authorities. However, it did not take long before a cycling association in Valence, REVV[13], took the local city council to the administrative court. Indeed, the city of Valence decided to renovate a central avenue without making plans to build cycling facilities, despite having for many months promised that something would be done for cyclists during the renovation of the avenue. Thus, the association felt that they had been fooled by the council of Valence and that the only way to make their voice heard was to resort to legal action. In particular, the decision of Valence appeared to be incompatible with article 20 of the law on air and the rational use of energy. REVV did not have the financial means to pay for the services of a lawyer, thus they decided in June 1998, despite their lack of legal experience, to file on their own a claim in the administrative court. They were helped in their struggle by a member of the green party elected at the Valence council who also filed a claim in court. The two files were eventually merged, which, the case being supported both at the grass root level and at the political level, probably gave more weight to the claim. However, the case was rejected in June 1999 following a very restrictive interpretation of article 20 by the judge. Because in the absence of contestation this judgement would have led to a bad precedent for cycling associations, REVV courageously filed a notice of appeal. Meanwhile, a cyclist was badly injured on the avenue subject to the legal proceedings. Eventually, the court of appeal reversed the first judgement and enjoined the city of Valence to include a cycling infrastructure in the renovation plans. Interestingly, the city of Valence finally agreed to build cycling lanes before the judgement was pronounced, thereby

[8] Article 20 reads: « A compter du 1er janvier 1998, à l'occasion des réalisations ou des rénovations des voies urbaines, à l'exception des autoroutes et voies rapides, doivent être mis au point des itinéraires cyclables pourvus d'aménagements sous forme de pistes, marquages au sol ou couloirs indépendants, en fonction des besoins et contraintes de la circulation. » which can be translated by : From the 1st of January 1998, when urban roadways are constructed or renovated, with the exception of motorways and expressways, cycling routes must be created and equipped with paths, road markings or separate corridors, depending on the needs and constraints of traffic circulation.

[9] http://www.senat.fr/seances/s199610/s19961024/sc19961024043.html.

[10] Centre d’études sur les réseaux, les transports, l’urbanisme et les constructions publiques.

[11] « couloirs indépendants ».

[12] Code de la route.

[13] Roulons En Ville à Vélo.

demonstrating that building such an infrastructure was feasible. The bad publicity of the legal action had as much effect on the city council as the decision of the judge. It is unfortunate, however, that in the meantime a cyclist had been badly injured; his accident would have probably been avoided if cycling lanes had been put in place in time.

Photograph of the avenue in Valence after renovation to include a bicycle path

A second judgement followed a few months later in Lille and led to a similar victory for a cycling association. Following publicity of these 2 cases by FUBicy, a number of cities like Bordeaux and Grenoble changed their policies and complied with the law without further legal action. Unfortunately, other cities kept ignoring article 20. Several legal actions were lost by cycling associations in Dijon, Clermont-Ferrand and Belfort. However, all these actions were lost because of non compliance with the legal procedure rather than because of a new interpretation of article 20 in the case-law. The Clermont-Ferrand association was nonetheless condemned to pay €1000 to the local city council, which did significant damage to the representation of cyclists in the city.

The Brest case-law

A third case was won in October 2008 by a cycling association in Brest, Brittany. Brest is an interesting case because, following its near total destruction during the second world war, the city was rebuilt to respond to the needs of motorized traffic. The urban planning of Brest is often compared to that of an American city, although the reality is of course more complex. The result of this urban planning is that the centre of the city is deserted by families, which leads to urban sprawl, which in turn increases the need for more space for motorized traffic. Because of this vicious circle, the number of people walking has decreased and the number of people cycling is stagnating[14]. However, air quality remains relatively good because Brest is quite windy and the dominant winds blow from the ocean. Moreover, the station measuring traffic pollution has been located on top of a plateau exposed to the winds[15] so that the recorded levels of pollution are probably an underestimation of the actual pollution.

[14] http://www.cub-brest.fr/tram/documents/pdu.pdf

[15] Intentionally or unintentionally? The location of air monitoring stations in Brittany can be found on www.airbreizh.asso.fr. The location of monitoring stations, in particular traffic stations, can radically change the

Brest was thus not the most obvious city where to sue on the basis of an article that came about because of a European directive on air quality.

However, just like in Valence, a decision by the city council to renovate a major avenue in the centre of the city without taking account of cyclists needs was felt as a provocation by the members of a local association, BAPAV[16]. Indeed, the association had been trying to fight against the trend of increasing motorized traffic in Brest since the early 2000s. The association had first tried to collaborate with the local city council, in particular with the representative in charge of transport who happened to be a member of the green party. However, because of the difficulty of convincing people to change their behaviour and because of the overwhelming presence of cars, it quickly became clear that the city council was not going to take electoral risks by taking measures to limit the presence of cars in the city.

In 2006, the city council voted a decision to build a series of large roundabouts at the entrance of the university. This vote took no account of the remarks expressed a few months earlier by BAPAV, which had made it clear that it considered large roundabouts to be dangerous for cyclists. In this context, and because of the small number of members of the association at the time, the association was left with few possibilities but to resort to legal action. Article 20 of the law on air and the rational use of energy appeared as the way to make the voice of cyclists heard. The author of this article, who was then president of the association, was aware of the case-law from Valence. He had also been involved in the work of a committee at regional level[17] on the dangers of large roundabouts. Indeed, large roundabouts have come to appear as a rather good solution for road planners. They allow for an increase in the traffic that can transit through a cross-road, require little maintenance, and reduce the number of serious accidents among car drivers. Unfortunately, their impact on pedestrian safety is not clear, and evidence suggests that roundabouts tend to increase the frequency of severe cyclists accidents compared to signal controlled intersections (Daniels et al, 2008). Although its culture of urban cycling is rather recent, Brittany has a long tradition of sportive and recreational cycling, with tens of thousands of cyclists taking the roads every week-end. Because many cyclists now live in urban areas, the massive growth of roundabouts on the outskirts of cities, is putting them at risk. In the context of the peculiar urbanism of Brest, with a centre more akin to the peripheral areas of other cities, it is not surprising that its council decided to build large roundabouts at the heart of the city, without showing any more consideration for their urban cyclists than that other cities in Brittany had shown for their recreational cyclists.

The Brest association thus decided to follow the path of the Valence association and filed a suit in the administrative court. Two legal procedures were actually filed in parallel. One procedure on the legality of the decision of the city of Brest to build large roundabouts in the centre of the city and one procedure to try to stop the road works before they actually started. Unfortunately, the latter procedure did not succeed and the city built the roundabouts almost as initially scheduled. The suit on the legality of the decision continued, however, and led to a judgement in favour of the position of the cycling association. The judge not only cancelled the administrative decision of the local authorities to build the roundabouts because it did not mention any specific cyclist infrastructure, but he also enjoined the city to put in place this infrastructure within 6 months. The city of Brest has since filed a notice of appeal, but this appeal does not seem to introduce significantly new elements. A final decision on the appeal is expected by the end of 2009.

A recent case has also been launched in Brignais, a town in the suburbs of Lyon, this time by an individual cyclist. Unlike the Brest association, the individual did win the procedure to stop the road works. The local city council, however, simply ignored the decision of the judge and the road works are now completed. Attempts to obtain a new decision from the judge to revert to the previous road design have failed.

The recent developments in Brest and in Brignais suggest that the cyclist movement is winning the legal battle it started 10 years ago. As mentioned above, in Brest the appeal appears unlikely to change the first judgement. The elements presented by the lawyer of Brest are simply a copy and paste of previous arguments and do not appear to shed any new light on the existing case-law. Instead, the appeal appears as a manoeuvre by the city to gain time, as well as an attempt to

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statistics. For instance, the only traffic station in the European district in Brussels was removed in August 2008. Since then, air quality is recorded as correct in the area (www.irceline.be), but anybody taking a walk down rue de la Loi at rush hour would probably think otherwise.

[16] Brest à Pied à Vélo, http://brestapiedetavelo.infini.fr/.

[17] Collectif Cyclisme et Prévention, http://membres.lycos.fr/ccp56.

financially hurt the association. Indeed, in the administrative court of appeal, unlike in the court of first instance, representation by a professional lawyer is mandatory in France. Forcing an association that lives on the fees of its members to finance the services of a lawyer appears as a way to punish it for its activism. However, the financial difficulties that the city of Brest is causing to the cyclist association come at a high political price, in particular to the council representative in charge of transport who is a member of the green party. That a green politician has to resort to this kind of action against a cyclist association suggests that he is actually loosing control of the situation. Similarly, that the city of Brignais simply chooses to ignore a decision of the judge shows how difficult their situation is. The tactics used by reluctant local authorities in the legal battle with the cyclist movement are therefore increasingly looking like a last ditch fight against the application of article 20 of the law on air and the rational use of energy.

Photograph of one of the large roundabouts built in the centre of Brest.

Conclusions

Two conclusions can be drawn from the French case:

- In countries where laws dedicated to the promotion of cycling are out of reach, legislation in favour of cycling can still be passed as a by-product of other legal packages, in particular environmental packages. Indeed, the European directive on air quality was not intended to promote cycling but its transposition into the French legal system did provide an opportunity to impose the building of a cycling infrastructure, however far-fetched such an outcome may have seemed at first sight. Even more surprisingly, the law was invoked successfully in a city where air quality is officially not an issue. Because most of the environmental legislation now originates from the European level, a particular attention must be paid to the legislative process in the European institutions. However, as demonstrated by the recent drawbacks in the adoption of a European action plan on sustainable urban mobility[18], reaching a consensus at European level is difficult because the various member states

[18] An ambitious plan was drafted by the European Commission at the end of 2008 that would have led to very concrete actions in favour of cycling, but at the time when this article was written the plan had been dropped from the list of priorities. This drawback could have been related to the severe economic downturn of the second

have reached very different levels in the development of a cycling policy. In countries which are far more advanced than what could realistically be proposed at the EU level, the EU legislation brings little added-value. For much less advanced countries, it entails such radical changes in mobility patterns that acceptance is difficult to achieve. In this context, the transposition of EU environmental laws into national legal systems provides an opportunity to develop a legal framework that can be tailored to the particular needs of individual countries. Thus, every time European legislation foresees a transposition phase, this phase can be used to lobby for legislation in favour of cycling.

- Cycling associations should not hesitate to take legal action to achieve their objectives when they think that legislation in support of cycling exists but has not been taken into account by decision makers. If local associations had not taken the initiative to sue their local city councils to impose the application of article 20 of the French law on air and the rational use of energy, local decision makers would have probably ignored it. Moreover, legal texts are often not as clear as one would expect because of a hasty drafting as mentioned above or because of attempts by interest groups to water them down. The automotive industry not being the least proactive when its interests are at stake, it is likely that the more powerful a legal text is, the less clear its drafting will be after intense lobbying has taken place. In this context, the only way to remove ambiguities in legal texts is to resort to legal action to build a case-law. To that end, the legal capability of cycling associations probably needs to be strengthened.

A point that should not be overlooked is that legislation can also be detrimental to cycling. The latest example is the European Commission Directive of September 2008 that imposes daytime running lights on passenger cars from 2011 despite vehement protests by the European Cyclist Federation which fears that this directive will negatively impact the visibility of cyclists in traffic.

The legal approach is a standard practice in environmental activism that completes the democratic approach. From the legal developments presented above, it is interesting to make a parallel between the cyclist movement and the broader environmental movement. Indeed, just like environmental activists try to convince people that the environment should be protected, the cyclist movement tries to convince citizens that cycling is a rational solution to transport problems. However, in many areas, cycling is unlikely to win the favours of the people who have made the choice to live in areas with low population density (either rural or low density suburbs) where cycling will be at pains to compete against motorized transport. Moreover, users of motorized transport are likely to argue that they have a right to mobility and a right to choose their means of transports. Because of this, cycling may be unable to win against driving in the democratic debate. Brest is a good illustration of this situation. In these circumstances, a more radical approach is needed. Just like a local community or a group of people is entitled to defend its environmental rights against a company that pollutes its surroundings, possibly against the will of the majority that benefits from services and jobs provided by the company, cyclists are entitled to defend their right to cycle in good and safe conditions. Along the same line, inhabitants of city centres are entitled to defend their right to breathe a clean air, even if it comes at the expense of the mobility of motorized commuters.

In densely populated urban areas, cyclists are in a position to win, and often have already won, the support of the local population because cycling does not produce all the nuisance of motorized transport. Despite this success, cyclist organizations are often painstakingly still trying to secure the support of the population at large, probably because they unintentionally replicate the political context in which a successful politician has the ambition to win an ever larger constituency. Instead, they could focus on securing advances in densely populated city centres. Because it is hard to imagine how such advances could be achieved without seriously limiting the rights of motorized vehicles to circulate in cities, the promotion of cycling and the fight against motorized traffic should go hand in hand. In view of the importance of urban areas in modern society[19], strongly limiting the access of motorized traffic to cities will probably in turn discourage the use of private cars outside of cities because trips to city centres represent a significant fraction of the total number of trips[20]. Improving the situation of cyclists in densely populated cities through the limitation of motorized traffic can thus result in improvements in the situation of cyclists outside of cities too.

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semester of 2008 that led some member states to oppose any decisions that could potentially have a negative impact on the already dwindling sales of cars in Europe**.**

[19] In 2008, for the first time in history, the number of people living in urban areas has exceeded the number of people living in rural areas globally and this trend will continue in the foreseeable future (Damon, 2008).

[20] In 2001, 37% of all trips to Brussels were originating from outside the Brussels administrative region, http://www.iris2.irisnet.be/Files/media/mobil2015_etatdeslieux.pdf.

It is urgent to reduce motorized transports in urban areas and replace it as much as possible by cycling and other clean transport modes. Climate is changing (IPCC, 2007), road traffic in Europe is the most significant source of NOx (EEA, 2008), a family of gases that cause serious health problems, and one in three fatal road accidents now occurs in urban areas, non motorized road users being the main victims (European Commission, 2007).

New legislation is coming up. The air quality directive has been revised and imposes new limits on small micro-particles (PM 2.5). The details of the climate change legislation deriving from the energy-climate package are also in preparation. This new environmental legislation will provide the opportunity to promote cycling. In recent years, the European Parliament has played an increasingly important role in the drafting of environmental legislation with the advent of the codecision procedure. This procedure brings together, through the partnership of Council, Parliament and Commission, the interests of the European Union, its Member States and its citizens to create common legislative acts. The Parliament often plays a positive role and pushes Member States to be more audacious. A recent example of legislation derived through this procedure is the Decision of the European Parliament and of the European Council on the effort of Member States to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions[21]. This Decision states that "in addition to individual Member States, central governments and local and regional organisations and authorities, market actors – together with households and individual consumers – should be involved in contributing to the implementation of the Community's commitment". This statement should be seen as a call for active lobbying from cycling associations and other environmental associations, at both EU and national levels, for more legislation in favour of cycling. The French case presented here indicates that a pragmatic approach might be to push for the inclusion of specific articles on cycling infrastructure. When such legislation can be obtained, legal action will probably be needed to clarify the implications of legal texts and to ensure that concrete action is taken by public authorities.

Cycling organizations alone may not have the resources to lobby for more legislation in favour of cycling and to legally follow-up on the implementation of the legislation. However, they can join forces with environmental organizations that have more resources and a longer experience. In this respect, although most environmentalists are aware that cycling provides answers to many of the current environmental problems, one may wonder whether this awareness is sufficiently reflected in the policy advice and the lobbying activities of large international environmental groups. Various networks of environmental organizations already exist, for instance the Green 10[22]. Cyclist groups are sometimes already members of these networks. The European Cyclists Federation, for instance is member of the European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E)[23], which is itself member of Green 10. Maybe this membership could be used to foster more active lobbying in favour of cycling. Recognition of the positive impact that cycling has on the environment is one of the objectives of the velocity 2009 conference. Let us hope that the fact that this year the conference takes place in Brussels, where all the leading environmental groups are represented because of the presence of the European Institutions, will lead to enhanced collaboration between the cyclist movement and some of the most visible environmental groups that work in the European capital city.

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[22] http://www.green10.org/

[23] T&E is the principal environmental organisation campaigning on sustainable transport at the EU level in Brussels. Their website states that their main work areas at the moment are cars and CO_2, low carbon fuels, transport noise, road charging for lorries, aviation and shipping.

[24] http://www.fubicy.org/ancien_site/droit/amenagements/loi-air/index.html

[25] Any possible inaccuracies in this paper, however, are the sole responsibility of the author.

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