

WATCH LETS CROWDS MONITOR AIR QUALITY IN PARIS

 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Air quality is a matter of urgent concern to residents of most large cities, and Paris is no exception. There are currently only 10 public sensors monitoring that important variable in the City of Lights, however, so a new initiative now aims to equip everyday citizens with a special device that can measure and report air-quality data regularly for collective use. The Green Watch, or **Montre Verte**, is a specially equipped device worn on the wrist that includes not just a time piece but also a GPS chip, a Bluetooth chip, and ozone and noise sensors. At scheduled times—or on request of the wearer—the watch measures and saves air-quality and noise data, describing them in qualitative terms such as “good” or “bad.” Those values are then returned to the user via the screen of his or her mobile phone in the image of an eye, where the colour of the eye’s pupil indicates air quality while that of the iris represents noise. Finally, via the mobile phone, the watch sends the data to an open platform called Citypulse, either in real time via the mobile carrier or by synchronization when the user hooks the watch up to his or her computer. All measures are time-stamped, geolocated and saved; from there, they become available to anyone who wants to use them—and who has committed to an ethical charter. Potential uses include public matters such as mapping and citizen warnings, as well as business applications, such as services for people who suffer from asthma. The Green Watch program is part of the Cities 2.0 program developed by **FING**, or the Fondation Internet Nouvelle Génération, as a way to increase the number of environmental sensors in Paris while also motivating citizens to take steps toward sustainability. Data from beta tests performed in May, with sponsorship from the Région Île-de-France and the Futur en Seine event, are currently available on the project’s website. One to emulate—or sponsor—in a less-than-entirely-sustainable city near you...? Spotted by: **PICNIC Amsterdam** (The Green Watch will be demo’d at next week’s **PICNIC conference: 23 — 25 September**.)

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