



Logroño Technical Assessment

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1. Air Quality

Experts
Mr. Joan Marc Craviotto Arnau
Dr. César Asensio

The city of Logroño has a single monitoring point within the city limits. The network, as in many other places, belongs to and is managed by the Regional Government with a wider territorial scope. That fact may hinder the city's air quality assessment, which must be more precise and localized. However, cities have multiple options to undertake air quality measurements on their own and improve their assessments. In the specific case of Logroño, it has participated in a pilot study about air quality monitoring using biomonitors, which sounds very interesting but may not be sufficient to achieve a minimum supply of usable data.

In terms of past planning, the city only mentions the regional air quality planning. It is true that parameters measured in Logroño are within the legal limits and the planning is not compulsory. However, much more explanation about the regional document and the transposition of actions at local level is expected. No description or mention is given in the application regarding anything about activities oriented to raise public awareness, about which local authorities have a lot to say.

Finally, the future planning section is clearly underdeveloped as it includes no vision, nor a strategy.

2. Noise

Experts
Dr. César Asensio
Mr. Joan Marc Craviotto Arnau

Logroño approved its strategic noise map in 2014 and presented its action plan in 2017, which shows a limited degree of commitment to the strategy of the Environmental Noise Directive. This strategy focuses mainly on the noise produced by industry and transport. It is based on a systematic and regular diagnosis and action, in order to achieve a progressive reduction in noise levels, and thus an improvement in the health and well-being of citizens. Meeting the deadlines established for the preparation of strategic noise maps and the provision of action plans is the way to demonstrate a real commitment to the strategy set out by the directive.

It is from 2017 onwards that Logroño seems to have shown a change of attitude in the fight against noise, which has led to different actions :

- Approval of an action plan against noise;
- Implementation of acoustic zoning;
- Creation of a round table to encourage the collaboration of stakeholders;
- Preparation of a leisure noise map. In addition, the delimitation of special noise protection areas is a first step towards the elaboration of localized action plans.

All these steps point in the right direction, but as well as tackling the problem of noise generated by nightlife activities, they should also address the problem of noise pollution generated by traffic noise. Traffic noise, although it generally causes fewer complaints and conflicts, also has a great impact on people's health and well-being, more generally throughout cities.

3. Waste

Experts
Mr. Olivier Gaillot
Ms. Zita Dibácz

Logroño's application is very much focused on its waste collection system. However no information was provided in the application on waste prevention and reuse. It would have been useful to provide details on the initiatives developed to achieve the waste prevention targets set out in the regional waste management plan.

The city's collection system is well developed with separate collection starting in 2000. It includes door-to-door services for paper and cardboard from households and for organic waste from large producers. This is complemented by central collection points and recycling centres (one fixed and three mobile) for textiles, glass, light packaging and residual waste across the city. 80% of the waste collected is residual waste. After collection this is delivered to a waste treatment facility where the waste is processed through composting and anaerobic digestion with energy recovery. The combination of separate collections and residual waste treatment achieve a recycling rate of 67% for municipal waste with the remainder sent to landfill.

It would have been useful to provide more details on awareness measures and initiatives to target plastic waste.

The application includes some good future measures with prioritization of organic waste collection and introduction of pay as you throw.

4. Water

Experts
Mr. Christof Mainz
Ms. Birgit Georgi

Most data in Logroño's application are provided to describe the present situation. For drinking water, a big gap between domestic use (111 l/cap/d) and total use (235 l/cap/d) is not explained and half of the water used is not charged. The water loss in pipelines is not described in the application and the work on this is outsourced. The wastewater treatment plant seems to be over-dimensioned (capacity: 466.000 p.e., load received 243.000 p.e.), and this is mentioned in the application without further explanation. The water bodies are in moderate to good status and the groundwater is in good condition, but it is at risk from diffuse pollution. Despite this, no further (protective) measures are described for surface waters and groundwater. The application also includes nothing on rainwater or flood risk management, bathing waters or river restoration. The application is a very brief and general description and provides nothing of outstanding quality and mainly gives just basic information with numbers and questionable facts.

The Past performance is mainly described by wastewater and drinking water issues. Sustainable Urban Drainage measures are currently not in use in Logroño. A disinfection of wastewater for reuse is implemented, whereas 0% reuse is given in table 1. A Smart Rain system has been introduced that reduced the annual water consumption for irrigation by 25% due to its connection to the weather forecast. Public awareness campaigns and environmental education programmes are mentioned, but not described in detail. A Climate Change Action Plan is mentioned in the application but action on

this remains unclear. For the Water Framework Directive and the Flood Risk Management Plan, the city refers to national responsibility and a non-participation only. The whole section is a mix of past, current and future aspects.

For the future, the Hydrological Plan 2021-2027 for the river Ebro is described. It is carried out with technical assistance of Logroño and with the aim to reduce the drinking water consumption and energy use by 35% respectively 50%. The preparation of the 2020 Water Health Plan is mentioned, but not described at all (though it would have been an interesting issue and some goals would have been welcomed). The preparation of for the Emergency Plan for droughts is also mentioned. Other than this, some general further improvements for the drinking water and wastewater infrastructure are mentioned in the application. Due to missing details, this action cannot be assessed.

Altogether, regarding water the application is at a medium level with a focus on wastewater and drinking water. Most issues are described in a very general way and remain unexplained, they are just mentioned. The information in the context of EU water legislation is very basic (compliance with Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD)/Drinking Water Directive (DWD) is claimed) and there is no information on initiatives that go beyond legal requirements. There is no water project announced in connection with the European Green Capital year. Overall, a very brief and general description, nothing of outstanding quality and mostly basic information without detailed explanations. Some water issues are missing and some open questions are included in the application.

5. Nature & Biodiversity

Experts
Mr. David Jamieson
Dr. Henk Wolfert

The Green Shield Strategy seems to be having a positive impact on the biodiversity of the city's green spaces. Naturalization of parks and other green areas through integrated management, the use of phytosanitary rather than glyphosate-based products, the reduction of grass mowing frequency, and the planting of native trees will all support and benefit urban nature. Some details on the extent of the naturalization will pay dividends in any future application.

The application mentions that there are currently actions being implemented in Logroño which contribute to the knowledge and conservation of European wild pollinating insects. It would be advantageous to detail these in any future re-submission.

A catalogue of every tree and green area in Logroño is an impressive achievement, and it is encouraging that further tree planting and green area naturalization is planned.

Production of the Municipal Biodiversity Action Plan will be a big step forward in helping to protect, enhance and monitor nature in the city. Its policies and actions need to be based on extensive species and habitat data; identify opportunities to extend and protect the urban ecological network; and introduce ongoing monitoring of the condition of key habitats and species.

Logroño has a good range of educational activities to encourage residents to better understand and engage with nature. Perhaps citizen science could be added to the list of engagement opportunities? For example, the use of identification apps could help monitor local species populations and distribution at relatively low cost.

6. Sustainable Land Use & Soil

Experts
Dr. Henk Wolfert
Mr. David Jamieson

Logroño has an extensive network of parks, gardens and river areas, which provides citizens with a functional green and blue infrastructure that enhances opportunities for biodiversity as well as recreation. The new neighborhoods created over the last 30 years, include large green areas - at least 20% of the surface - within the urban fabric. As a result almost the entire population in this relatively small city lives less than 300 meter away from a public green area. Additionally, the municipality managed to substantially improve green areas and provided citizens with better educational, health and sports facilities. It seems the city has a very top-down planning approach, and citizen involvement and stakeholders are insufficiently mentioned in the application.

An excellent land use strategy has seen impressive results in the past 35 years, encouraging a dense, compact and mixed-use model of city development. Logroño has been very capable in anticipating change. Initially the focus was on realizing residential areas in the south to safeguard green areas along the river, later on the focus shifted to concentrating industry to the eastern part of the city to allow the dominant winds from the west to disperse possible pollution away from the residential areas. It is estimated the urban area still awaiting transformation or construction, is sufficient to absorb the demand for new housing. A nice example of the result of this policy is the Cascajos district, a former industrial area which has now been transformed into a mixed neighborhood, with a majority of residential use but still with the presence of warehouse and production buildings. Logroño has no data available on the permeability of soils and provides no information on measures to reduce soil sealing, but realizes soil sealing occasionally generates runoff problems in the built-up area.

It is an achievement that the municipality could prevent urban sprawl in the agricultural and natural land around the city. Therefore, the city's strong agricultural tradition has been maintained. It still has large areas of farming, especially vineyards, and smaller areas of irrigated orchards still exist. Logroño now can take advantage of this agricultural potential and could facilitate a true 'kilometer zero' regional food system. Encouraging is that the first private initiatives are already emerging.

7. Green Growth & Eco-innovation

Experts
Ms. Zita Dibácsi
Mr. Olivier Gaillot

Logroño is currently immersed in its green digital transformation, designing and implementing ICT tools to maximize the performance and sustainability of both public services and infrastructures which is promising.

Some interesting projects are ongoing, such as grants to non-profit organizations to implement projects aimed at the reduction of domestic waste and the FIESTA project to support families in reducing energy consumption in their households.

The active partnership with Ecoembes, the Spanish organization responsible for the recovery and recycling of packaging, to create The CircularLab is promising.

Efforts to promote green skills or green jobs are well implemented through a collaboration with the regional government. These have a special focus on unemployed people to develop their green skills.

Logroño started to include green clauses in public contracts and carried out training activities for public officials in relation to green public procurement which is commendable. A high share [80%] of contracts include Green Public Procurement, which is highly welcomed."

The planned strategic plan is promising to integrate the city's eco-innovative initiatives and bring together local companies working in the green sector by creating a specialized cluster, however, further information would have been beneficial. The application would have been stronger if it had included examples of how to reach the population promoting green economy thinking e.g., targeting the change of citizens consumption patterns.

8. Climate Change: Mitigation

Experts
Dr. Matthew Kennedy
Ms. Vesna Kolega

Logroño's application includes some reference to methodology and data capture to explain emissions per capita quantification. However the scope of data is old (2005-2014) and the city proposal has failed to present a sectoral breakdown of data that is required to describe any trends informing its current situation. No explanation of historical factors nor governance arrangements are given in the application. Positive signs are presented in the application include a sharing of data through the Spanish network of cities. Data from 2014-2020 would have been welcomed as it is hard to extrapolate performance and emerging sectors where measures and actions should be targeted.

A sustainable energy and climate action plan is in [lace and presents 44 actions across lighting, reducing consumption and building energy audits. However, the application would have been be stronger if it presented more detail on impact, cost allocation and savings resulting from identified actions. Some measures around municipal buildings and associated training is welcomed but it would be good if further reference was made to private actors and innovation systems.

The application refers to climate emergency action via policy makers with some new governance arrangements via office of urban regeneration. It also includes new plans for future focus on mobility. More detail on the open streets strategy would have been welcomed. While buildings are cited to use 30% of emissions there is no justifiable action and measurement of this impact. Some welcome nature solutions are included in the application as well.

9. Climate Change: Adaptation

Experts
Ms. Birgit Georgi
Mr. Christof Mainz

Logroño shows a general commitment to climate change adaptation by having signed the Covenant of Mayors; however, there are no further indications for a strong political support. The vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategy and action plan have been developed in 2019; although, these focuses on selected risks only. A hierarchy of and logic between vision, strategic objectives and five

goals is provided in the application. It is stated that the goals shall involve a list of actions with a general time planning and (as it seems) without a budget associated to each. However, the actions are neither named nor is this specific information provided, not even in examples.

Past action is comprised of structural flood defense, clearing riverbeds and the fact that the city collaborated with other municipalities in the implementation of the Ebro Strategy. This action only focusses on flood mitigation and its relation to climate change adaptation remains vague.

Logroño needs to catch up with adaptation action. So far, future steps are described rather as intentions than concrete plans. Furthermore, the city needs to broaden the scope of its activities, by also including other risks than flooding and by using the potential of stakeholder involvement and collaboration.

10. Sustainable Urban Mobility

Experts
Dr. George Angelou
Mr. Alex Minshull

Logroño has adopted a SUMP (Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan) since 2013. Its present activities are clearly set but target goals for 2030 and beyond along with associated performance indicators (i.e., % improvement of public transport, increase of green mobility, etc.) and an end date for implementation are not clearly defined.

The application would have been stronger if information on current infrastructure for public transport (in kilometers of rail, metro or tram lines) and pedestrianized paths were provided. Current modal share figures show a high percentage for walking (58%) but a very low percentage for public transport use (9%). A number of measures to increase the use of public transport are in place but all are related to bus service.

Measures to increase cycling and walking are fully in line and well described. Measures to increase use of alternative fuel vehicles are limited to the purchase of more efficient municipal vehicles and the installation of a charging point for electric vehicles. Plans on hydrogen and LNG are less clear.

The short and long-term objectives include the development of a new mobility strategy, the improvement of city's cycle network and the construction of a new bus station. However no specific target indicators are presented in the application (e.g., % increase of public transport or amount of new kilometers of walking paths, etc.). Also, no sufficient information is provided on specific plans to increase use of public transport, cycling and walking.

To improve environmental performance of freight work is underway on a new Mobility Ordinance for Logroño. The new ordinance will regulate the maximum speed allowed within the city, loading and unloading times, parking, the management of abandoned cars, etc. However, it is not clear how this new Mobility Ordinance differentiates from the one that is currently in place for the same purpose.

Additionally, plans to increase use of alternative fuel vehicles and promote shared mobility are less clear.

11. Energy Performance

Experts
Ms. Vesna Kolega
Dr. Matthew Kennedy

Regarding benchmarking data, an energy consumption of municipal buildings equal to 71,63 kWh/m² seems correct, particularly taking into account that since 2012 Logroño's municipal energy consumption has been monitored on a monthly basis. The share of locally produced renewable energy sources (RES) of 0,59% is considered extremely low and the data on total RES production is missing from the application.

The energy consumption of municipal buildings trend during the period from 2011 to 2018 shows electricity decrease of 7% and natural gas decrease of 31%. The total fuel consumption has been reduced by 17%. The total number of municipal buildings as well as the number of municipal buildings that has been EE improved would be welcomed.

The introduction of the Smart Grid system allows real time measurement and monitoring. It also continuously informs citizens of the PV generation in 8 municipal buildings equipped with PV installations through screens at the Town Hall building. This action is highly commendable and one of the best ways to both improve RES utilization and increase the visibility on RES utilization.

The La Rioja Strategy for Climate Change 2008-2012 has been accepted but it remains unclear why a foreseen La Rioja Energy Plan 2015-2020 has not been developed. Due to the lack of financial and human resources, the implementation of the Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) from 2014 has been slower than anticipated. Additionally the Master Plan for public lighting from 2016 has not been implemented. According to the results of an energy audit approximately 90% out of 27 000 lighting points are inefficient high-pressure sodium vapor lights (VSAP). It is therefore very important to find the best financial mechanisms for systematic energy efficient improvement of the public lighting network (e.g., public-private partnerships (PPPs), ESCO contract, Energy Performance Contracting (EPC), etc.).

According to numerous case studies and cost-benefit analyses, energy efficiency measures in the public lighting sector has the shortest payback period (approximately between 1 and 2 years) of any other energy efficiency measures (e.g., heating and cooling systems, retrofitting, etc.).

Regarding the future energy plans and strategies, the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan (2021-2030) will be the framework for the development of the municipal energy plan and strategies. There are no energy plans or strategies for 2030 or 2050 at the moment but the city intends to prepare a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) by 2030.

12. Governance

Experts
Mr. Alex Minshull
Dr. George Angelou

The Logroño Municipal Strategic Plan has the vision "To be an excellent Town Hall in the continuous improvement of the service to the citizens, focused on a close, useful and trust-generating attention, which makes Logroño a modern city and a better place to live".

One of the Plan's five strategic axes is: "Green city" and relates to active mobility policies, sustainable economic development, pollution, noise, waste and resource efficiency.

The city clearly places a lot of importance on open government and trust from its citizens and has ISO9001 accreditation for quality management.

The application would have been stronger if in Part A it had focused on providing details of the plans and projects which implement the Municipal Strategic Plan rather than providing the details on less relevant aspects. For example, the level of detail provided on the other Strategic Axes and the narrative on the council's general approach.

Until 2020 the city council had ISO9000 certification for quality management and will maintain these processes. A robust management system is important. The application would have been stronger if it had been able to show how the focus on quality management had led to better environmental outcomes for the city. For example, do the 800 indicators reported include environmental ones? Are environmental risks part of the annual review by management?

The application did not address approximately 50% of the specific questions set out in the application form and so the city was unable to be given credit for work it may have done in those areas. For example no information was included on how stakeholders and citizens are involved in the development or delivery of the city's environmental plans. This is surprising as the municipality is clearly committed to "principles of open government (collaboration, participation, accountability and transparency)".