

Qualitative Survey on Heatwave Perception and Private and Public Heatwave Management Strategies in France - A preliminary study in Bordeaux, France -

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Extreme heat events, or heatwaves, are generally characterized by several consecutive days of higher than average temperatures, often accompanied with high minimum temperatures at night.

These extreme temperature events can have a significant impact on society, with wide-ranging consequences such as agricultural losses, added strain to infrastructures and resources (for instance, in the form of power or water shortage), and socio-economic impact (for instance, on retail and tourism). Known to cause a surge in mortality and morbidity, heatwaves also have a significant health-related impact. When in conjuncture with other atmospheric factors such as pollution and high-humidity, or social factors such as aging population, heat-related health risks can increase further.

The possible extent of extreme heat events has been brought to public attention in recent years by the large number of heat-related deaths during the 2003 heatwave throughout Europe and the 2010 heatwave in Russia.

With predictions of extreme temperature events, including heatwaves, increasing in frequency and length in the future, the impact on health in particular and society at large is likely to increase as well. Taking into consideration these predictions and the potential impacts of extreme heat events, the

appropriateness and effectiveness of heat management measures, both at the private and public levels, need to be considered and assessed.

This paper presents the first step of a preliminary study regarding extreme heat event management, in private homes and at the public policy level, as well as heat perception. This study focuses on the case of Bordeaux Metropole, an intercommunal structure centered around the city of Bordeaux, France.

This preliminary study, notably through an ethnographic approach and long interviews, explores 1) public policies related to heat and heatwave events management, 2) individual perception of the heat and heatwave events, 3) individual measures taken to respond to the heat and heatwave events.

The main results of this preliminary study highlight 1) the French national heatwave management plan ("Plan Canicule") and the way it is implemented at the regional and municipal levels, 2) as the result of long interviews, a generally poor awareness of heatwave measures implemented in the town of residence despite mild to pronounced concerns regarding extreme heat events.