My Cooler City [Plus Fraîche Ma Ville] platform

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Background and objectives

Urban overheating describes the set of processes that intensify heat within cities, particularly during extreme temperature events. This phenomenon is primarily driven by the urban heat island effect, the prevalence of heat-absorbing materials, limited air circulation, and high levels of solar radiation [1]. Under the Global Warming and Climate Change Adaptation (TRACC) pathway adopted by the French government in 2024, France could face an average temperature increase of **up to +4°C by 2100**. Such a rise would greatly amplify thermal discomfort in urban areas, making it crucial to identify vulnerable zones and implement adaptive strategies to safeguard public health and quality of life.

My Cooler City (*Plus Fraîche Ma Ville*) is a **digital platform** designed to **support French municipalities** in assessing and mitigating urban overheating. It provides a comprehensive toolkit to help cities better understand their thermal environments and plan effective cooling strategies. Key components include:

- The platform uses satellite imagery and climatic models—developed in collaboration with Cerema (Centre for Studies and Expertise on Risks, the Environment, Mobility and Urban Planning) [2]—to **identify heat concentratio**n in local climatic zones ("*Zones climatiques locales*") within urban areas.
- **Database of adaptation solutions**. It offers an extensive catalogue of nature-based, architectural, and infrastructural cooling measures, ranging from urban greening to reflective materials and shading systems.
- **Decision-support tools**. The platform guides users in prioritizing interventions based on local conditions, feasibility, and potential impact.
- **Knowledge sharing and resources**. Municipalities can access case studies, best practices, and technical documentation to support local planning decisions.
- **User-friendly digital interface**. Accessible online, the platform is designed for local governments and planners, with easily accessible visual outputs and customizable reports.

Key features

The platform My Cooler City provides local authorities with a digital public service to **understand, plan, and act** to anticipate and mitigate urban overheating. This combines practical tools, data resources, and collaborative spaces to support cities in developing sustainable cooling strategies.

At its core, the homepage presents **two main entry options** for users:

- **Create a project** ("*Créer un projet*") or
- **Find a solution** ("*Trouver une solution*")

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Create a project

The “Create a Project” (*Je crée un projet*) [3] function is the first main entry point of the platform. It is intended for local authorities that wish to develop and manage a real **renovation or cooling project** for their community. It aims to support project preparation, from diagnosis to financing, facilitate collaboration between elected officials, technicians, and external partners, and provide direct access to diagnostic tools, cost estimation, funding, and expert contacts — all in one place. This feature is accessible from the Project Space (‘*Espace Projet’*) via secure ProConnect login. The table below provides an overview of the practical tools and services to guide municipalities from initial diagnosis to project preparation and funding.

Function	Description
Simplified diagnostic	Users can carry out a simplified assessment of urban overheating and find services for more in-depth diagnostics.
Solution selection	The tool helps users find cooling solutions adapted to their specific space and access recommendations on how to combine different solution types.
Budget estimation	Users can select materials and estimate the cost of the proposed solutions.
Collaboration within the municipality	It is possible to invite members to collaborate on the same project and share its design within the local authority.
Funding identification	The platform helps users find funding for to their project and identify aids and contacts required to prepare financing applications.
Project directory	The *Annuaire des projets Plus Fraîche Ma Ville* provides useful contacts for project development — such as municipal agents, design offices, AMO (project management assistance), and companies.

Find a solution

The “Find a Solution” (*Trouver une solution*) [4] feature is the other main entry point. It is a decision-support interface designed for municipalities, elected officials, and technical agents who want to **identify effective and locally adapted measures** to reduce urban overheating. One of the key strengths of the platform is that it can easily guide users to find **real cases** similar to their situation, with a detailed documentation (including data about the cooling effect achieved, the duration of the project and its cost).

Users start by selecting the type of space they want to improve — such as a street, parking lot, square, school courtyard, or residential block — and the tool then presents a tailored bundle of cooling solutions for that context. Each *bundle* (or “package of solutions”) gathers several complementary interventions suitable for a specific space type. For example:

Space type	Example cooling actions (within the bundle)
Street	Planting trees along sidewalks; replacing asphalt with light or permeable pavements; installing shading structures over pedestrian zones.
Parking area	Permeable paving; tree planting between parking rows; solar or vegetated canopies; rainwater infiltration zones.
Public square	Partial depaving; addition of shade sails or pergolas; creation of water features or green islands.
School courtyard	Removal of asphalt; planting trees and shrubs; installing shaded play zones; creating rain gardens.
Residential block	Green roofs and façades; shaded courtyards; permeable pathways; reflective coatings on façades.

Each of these solutions is categorized as green, blue, grey, and soft, designed to act in a synergic way:

- *Green*: vegetation and nature-based interventions.
- *Blue*: water-based or moisture-enhancing elements.
- *Grey*: material and structural improvements.
- *Soft*: behavioral, educational, or operational actions.

Solutions are also categorized according to their efficacy at decreasing heat:

- *Low*: < 1°
- *Average*: Between 1° and < 13°
- *High*: >= 3°

Finally, by clicking on individual solution sheets (*fiches solutions*), users can get detailed technical and practical information categorized according to visual indicators and icons, that enable to make comparison across other solutions. In particular, solutions are described according to:

Category	Description
Description	Overview of how the measure works and its main objectives.

Cooling potential	Estimated local temperature reduction (e.g. −1 °C to −4 °C depending on surface and context).
Implementation duration	Typical time needed (short: weeks, medium: months, long: over a year).
Indicative cost	Average cost range or cost per surface unit (€ / m²).
Co-benefits	Benefits beyond cooling: biodiversity, water management, social comfort, air quality.
Potential constraints	Challenges or limitations (e.g., water availability, underground networks, space).
Complementary solutions	Other measures that can be combined for greater impact.
Examples and references	Links to implemented projects or case studies across France.

In the part about financing, the platform redirects users to existing aid programmes, through a linkage with the dedicated online platform about financial aids for local authorities (https://aides-territoires.beta.gouv.fr/).

My Cooler City also organizes webinars to showcase the platform, disseminate good practices, discuss key issues and share information from complementary studies or initiatives. The recordings of 11 webinars were already available by March 2025.

Implementation

The initiative is coordinated by **ADEME** (French Agency for Ecological Transition) with the support of the **Association of Mayors of France** (AMF) and the **National Agency for Urban Renewal** (ANRU). It forms part of France's national heatwave management plan, providing a digital, data-driven service to local authorities. It was developed as part of the 'Accelerator for Ecological Transition', an incubator for **State-owned start-up** [5, 6].

The platform primarily targets **small and medium-sized local authorities**, particularly those with fewer resources to identify and compare solutions. It is however used as well by more experienced metropolitan areas [6].

The initiative started with an investigation phase, from June to September 2022, include a series of 40 interviews with elected officials and project officers of local authorities, complemented with a dozen of interviews with other stakeholders. This was followed by an online survey answered by 567 local authorities [7].

The development of the online platform then started in autumn 2022, with a first version ready in March 2023. 20 local authorities were selected through a Call for Expressions of Interest to test the platform and develop projects. This provided a group of 30 active users, developing about 50 projects, who took part directly in the **co-design** of the platform. Further users' interviews, webinars with local authorities, online surveys and a feedback module in the platform also contributed to this co-design process.

A first exploitation phase during summer 2023 showed a high interest in the contents and decision-aid tools provided by the platform. The need to go further in guiding users in specifying their project was also identified. Further developments then started in September 2023, to use an enhanced and open-source IT platform, enabling the integration of complementary tools, notably to assess more specifically the coherence of a solution according to the local conditions, or financing criteria. This new design of the platform has been available since February 2024.

Budget (or other cost data)

The budget for the first phase (investigation) in 2022 was about 51 000 euros. Then the whole budget for 2023 (development) was about 370 000 euros, and then for 2024 (first year of full exploitation) about 870 000 euros [8].

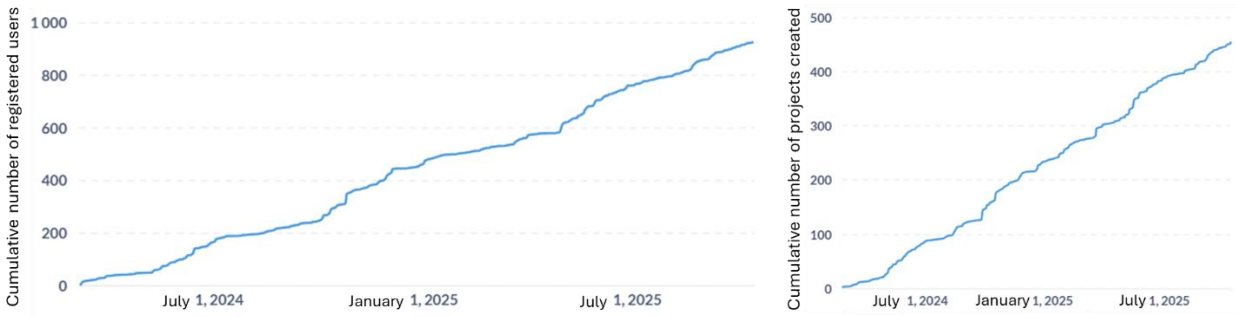
	S2-2022	S1-2023	S2-2023	S3-2024	S4-2024
Design	17 241 €	67 323 €	55 818 €	67 423 €	88 179 €
Deployment	-	-	-	87 969 €	169 507 €
Development	-	-	60 279 €	155 153 €	155 209 €
Contents	17 683 €	65 872 €	37 745 €	43 786 €	33 189 €
Coaching	16 128 €	46 080 €	40 320 €	34 560 €	33 189 €
Total	**51 052 €**	**179 275 €**	**194 162 €**	**388 891 €**	**478 647 €**

Source: [8]

This budget includes the costs fully related to the platform and its team. In addition, one ADEME expert is coordinating the initiative.

Results and impacts

From February 2024 to October 2025, 925 users from 553 local authorities have registered to the ‘Project Space’. They have created a total of 455 projects in the platform [9]. The statistics about the use of the platform show a constant growth of the community of practice (left figure) and the collection of projects (right figure).



Source for both figures: [9]

Lessons learnt

The My Cooler City initiative shows how digital tools can empower local authorities to understand, act, connect, and get inspired in their response to urban overheating. By combining scientific data with local knowledge and experience from real cases, the platform helps municipalities identify vulnerable areas, design targeted cooling measures, and learn from the experiences of other cities.

It empowers collaborative governance—linking national agencies, municipalities, and research partners—and helps ensure that proposed solutions are both technically robust and locally relevant. The project illustrates how accessible data and shared expertise can strengthen cities' ability to plan and adapt effectively to climate change.

According to Elodie Briche, coordinator of My Cooler City, this digital public service was not mean to substitute the tailored expertise of a consultancy. The platform provides a first level of decision support, notably helping to rule out solutions that are unlikely to work under the local conditions considered. It prepares the ground for further specifications.

Sources

[1] Ulpiani, Giulia, et al. "Are cities taking action against urban overheating? Insights from over 7,500 local climate actions." *One Earth* 7.5 (2024): 848-866.

[2] https://www.cerema.fr/fr/actualites/cerema-publie-nouvelles-donnees-surchauffe-urbaine

[3] https://plusfraichemaville.fr/connexion?callbackUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fplusfraichemaville.fr%2Fespace-projet%2Fcreation-projet

[4] https://plusfraichemaville.fr/fiche-solution

[5] https://infos.ademe.fr/changement-climatique/2024/un-service-en-ligne-pour-des-villes-toujours-plus-fraiches/

[6] https://www.smartcitymag.fr/article/1267/canicules-estivales-l-ademe-lance-son-dispositif-plus-fraiche-ma-ville

[7] https://beta.gouv.fr/startups/plusfraichemaville.html

[8] https://plusfraichemaville.fr/budget

[9] https://plusfraichemaville.fr/stats