



Community gardening in Wallonia and Brussels : proposals for research and actions

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INTRODUCTION



- In 2009-2011, a map of Brussel's community gardens was created.
- Inventory, protect and defend Brussels' gardens
- Created together with « Le début des Haricots ASBL » : Kari Stevenne and Gael Loicq (trainee) and « Réseau des Jardins Solidaires (Jérôme Rassart)
- Continued in Wallonia by « Le réseau des Consommateurs Responsables ASBL » (2011-2013)
- Citizen-based
- Out of academic context



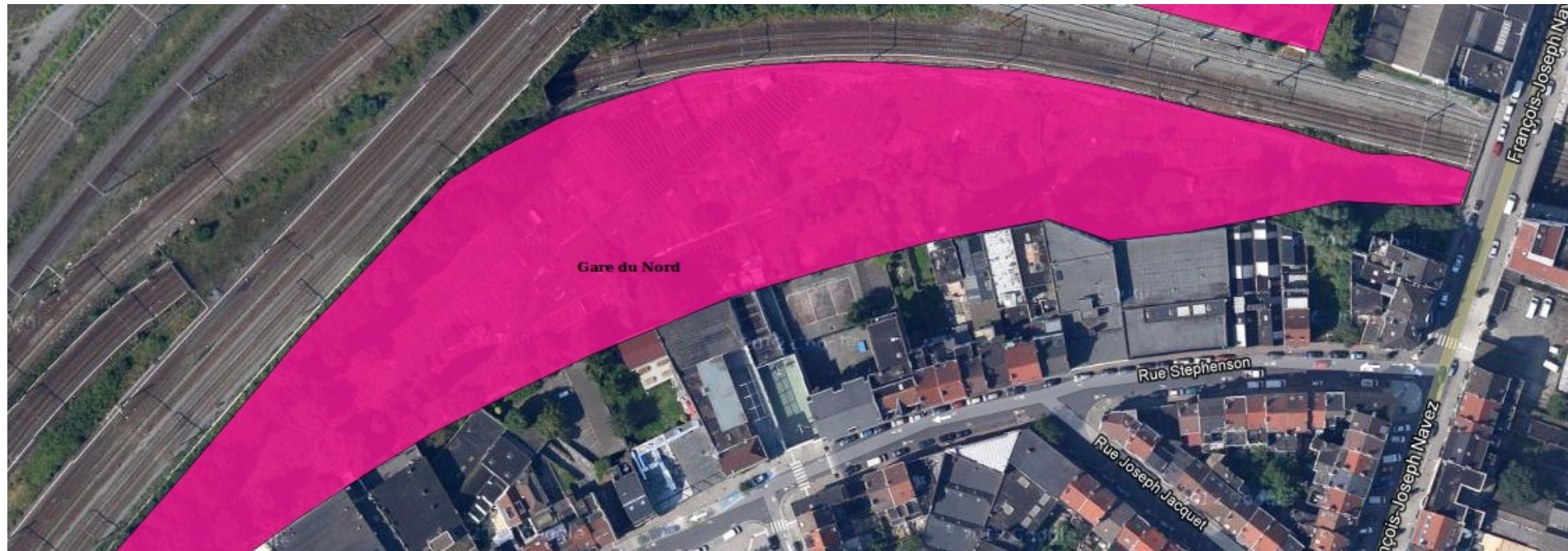
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METHODOLOGY

1) Using satellite imagery : find and draw gardens areas



METHODOLOGY



METHODOLOGY

2) Contact Brussel's communes, non-profit organisations, train public transport company (SNCB/NMBS), ...

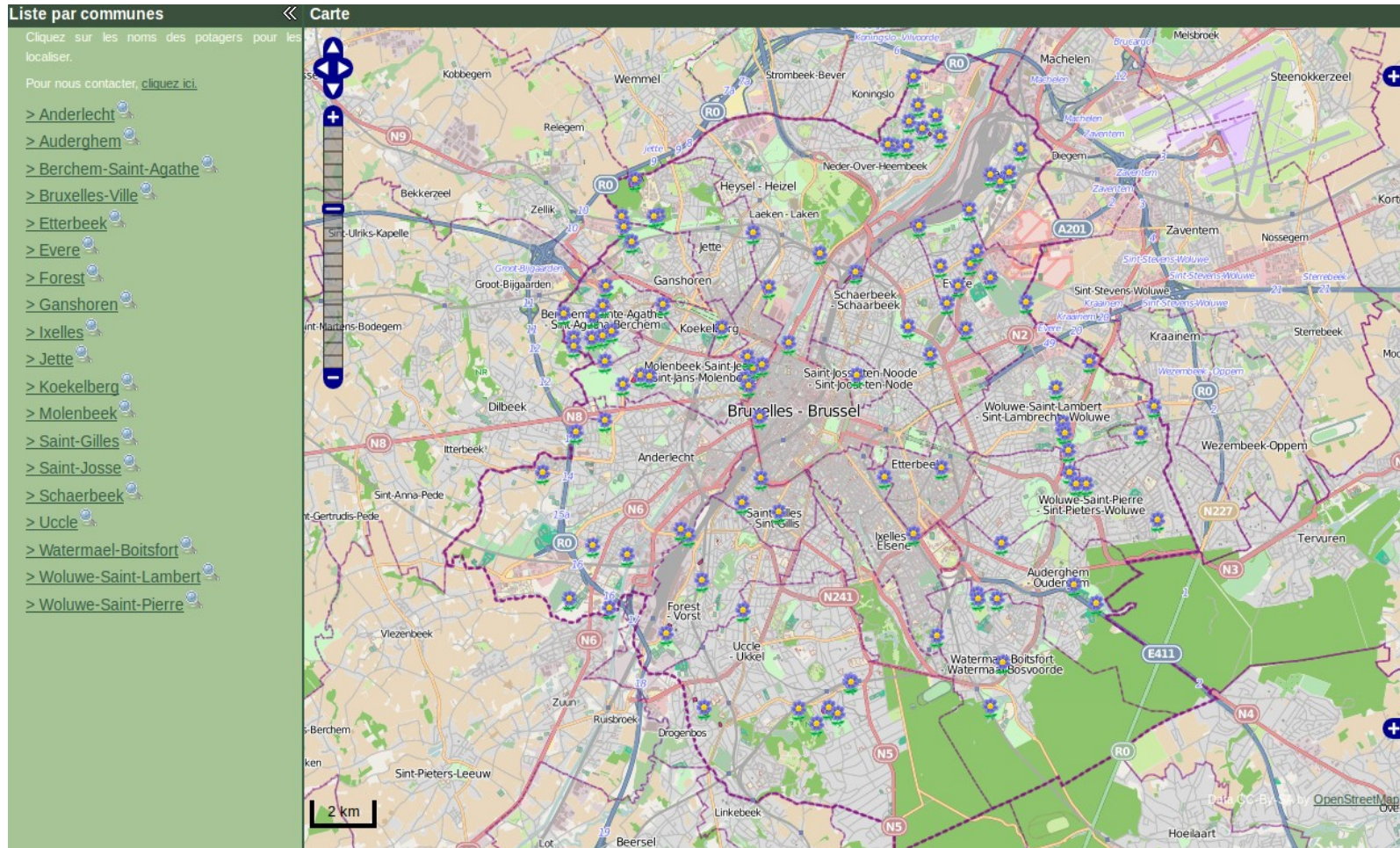
3) Field surveys

4) Local & people knowledge...



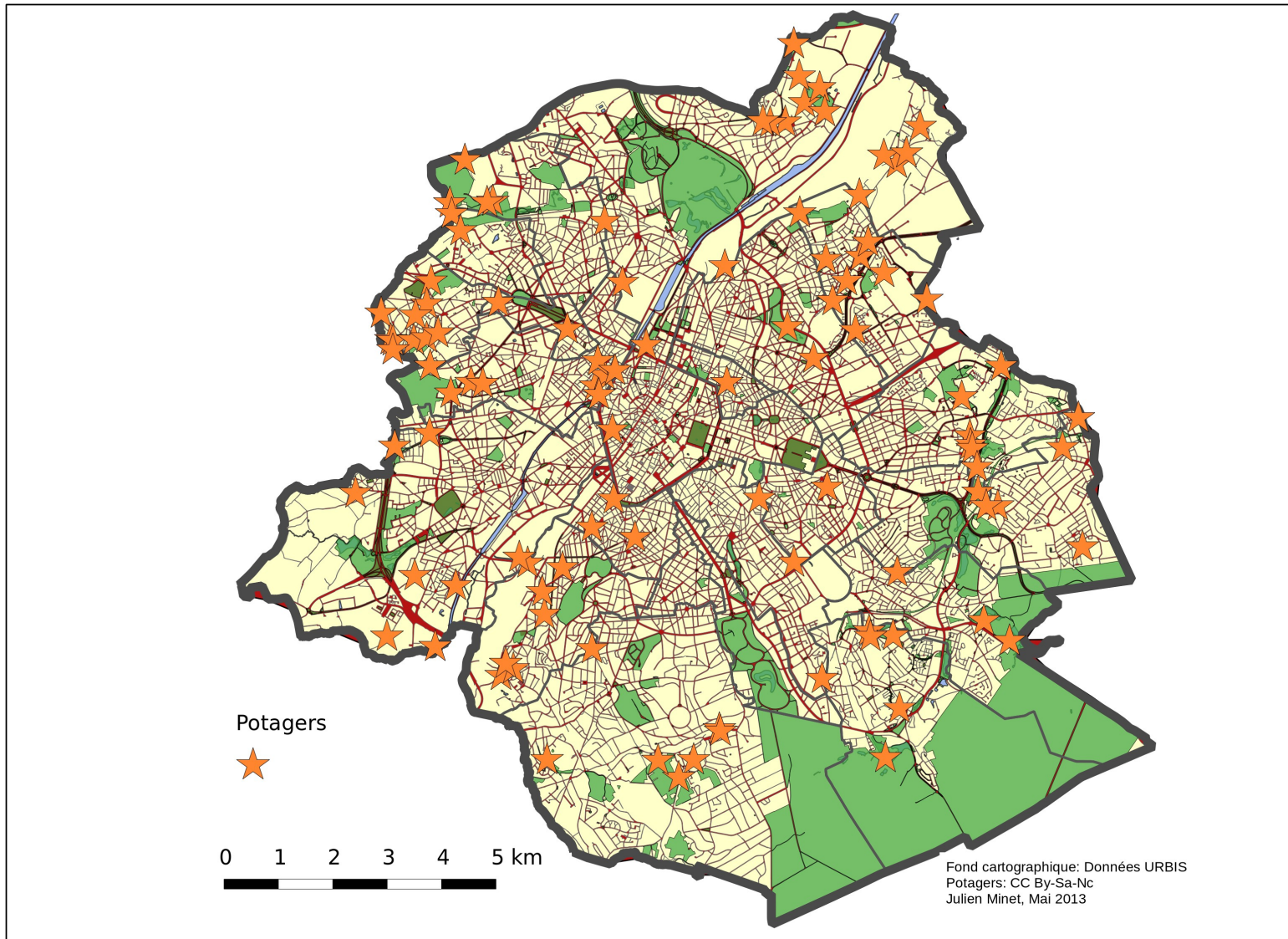
1. BRUSSELS' WEBMAP OF GARDENS

(www.nobohan.be/webmaps/potagers/map.html)



Made using OpenLayers + GeoExt (Open-source geospatial libraries)

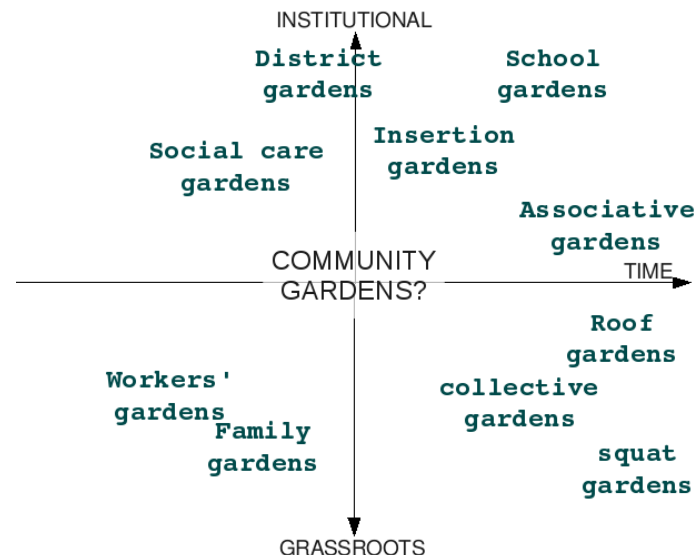
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Some facts about Brussels' gardens :

- About 110 community gardens were mapped in Brussels-Capital region
- 566,660 m² ≈ 56 ha (0,35 % Brussels region area)
- « New » community gardens receive a large part of the attention in media, although that they cover the smallest part of the total garden area
- « Old » gardeners sometimes fear to be took over by « new » gardeners (e.g., Carré Tillens in Uccle)
- There are many kinds of community gardens :



1. BRUSSELS' WEBMAP OF GARDENS

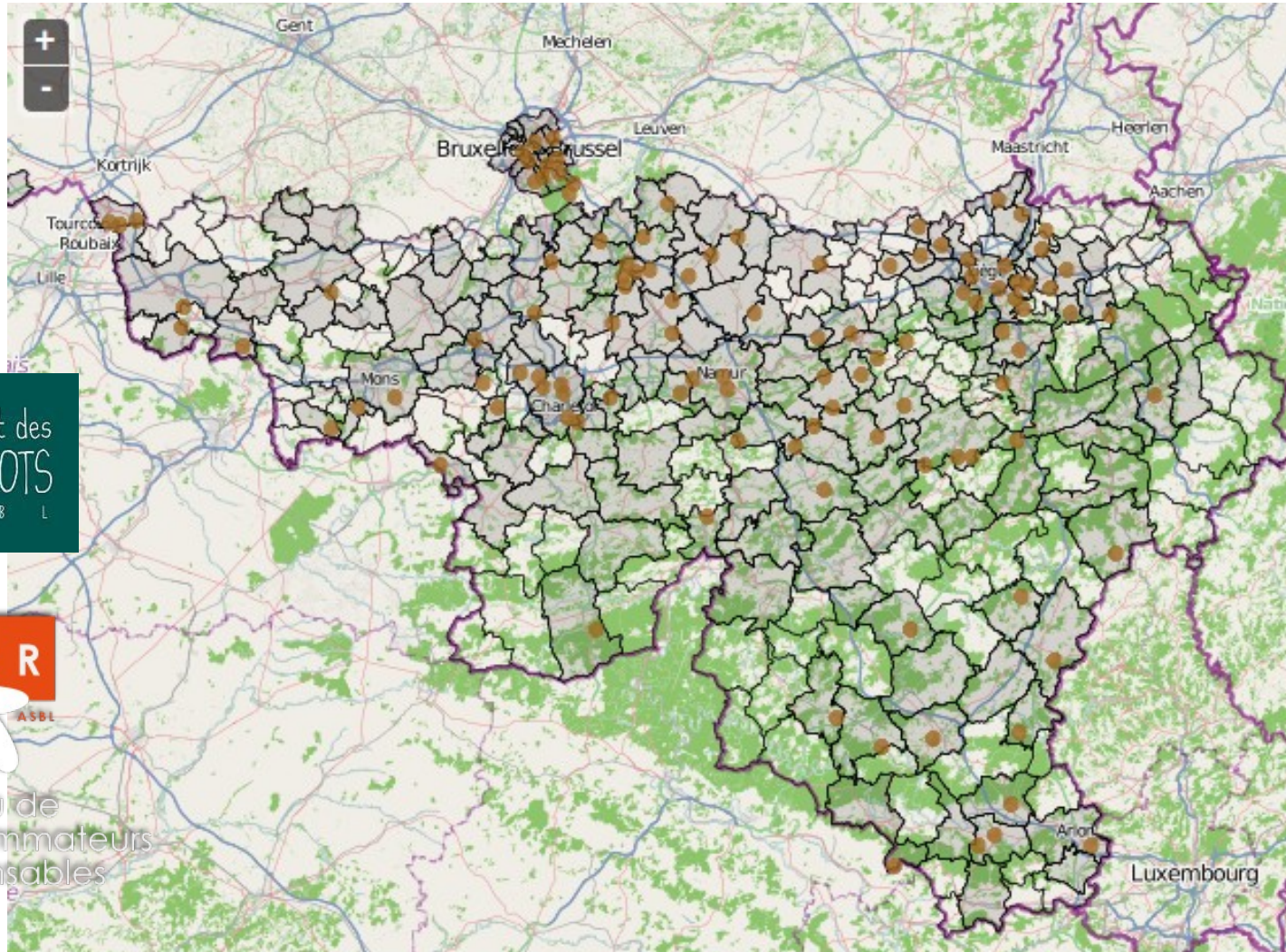
Other initiatives in Brussels :

- www.potagersurbains.be, 54 gardens referenced, by Bruxelles-Environnement & Le début des Haricots, up-to-date.
- www.potage-toit.be, by Le début des Haricots
- www.pretersonjardin.be
- ...



2. WALLONIA WEBMAP OF GARDENS

(www.asblrcr.be)



Le début des
HARICOTS
A S B L



Réseau de
Consummateurs
Responsables

2. WALLONIA WEBMAP OF GARDENS

- About 205 community gardens were mapped in Wallonia
- Only institutional (not-profit organisations, CPAS, school, etc.) gardens were mapped
- But there is still a lot unmapped !

- Could be linked with local initiatives (e.g., Réseau Pot'col des potagers collectifs en province de Liège --> <http://reseaupotcol.jimdo.com>)



Community gardens in Belgium : Where are we ?

- Strong societal demand for community gardening in Belgium & it is a hot topic that is often covered by media
- Part of a global movement (New York, Toronto, London, ...)
- Linked to urban agriculture issues (e.g., VERDIR in Liège)
- « New » and « old » gardeners issue : How to transfer the knowledge ?



Community gardens in Belgium : Where are we ?

Need for an interdisciplinary research :

- Update and feed the **mapping** of gardens
- About **soil quality/pollution** in the gardens
- About **land potential/management** in urban areas but also in rural areas
- About **knowledge and technology dissemination** for gardeners
- About plant **breeds and seeds** that are used in gardens
- About plant **protection/pest control** in a gardening context
- About **agrometeorology & decision-making tools** for gardeners
- ...

This is not only about sunday morning gardening, it could be a piece of our future food security !

Thanks !

- People @ Le Début des Haricots ASBL
- Jérôme Rassart @ Réseau des Jardins-Solidaires
- People @ Réseau des Consommateurs Responsables (RCR) ASBL
- And to the gardeners...



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