

# E<sup>18</sup> The Nive's territory (FR)

Envision pilot projects that create new cohabitation balances around the river.

Echelle XL/S

**Site composition:** Architect non mandatory

**Actors involved:** Pays Basque Agglomeration Community, Municipality of Ustaritz, Municipality of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Municipality of Villefranque.

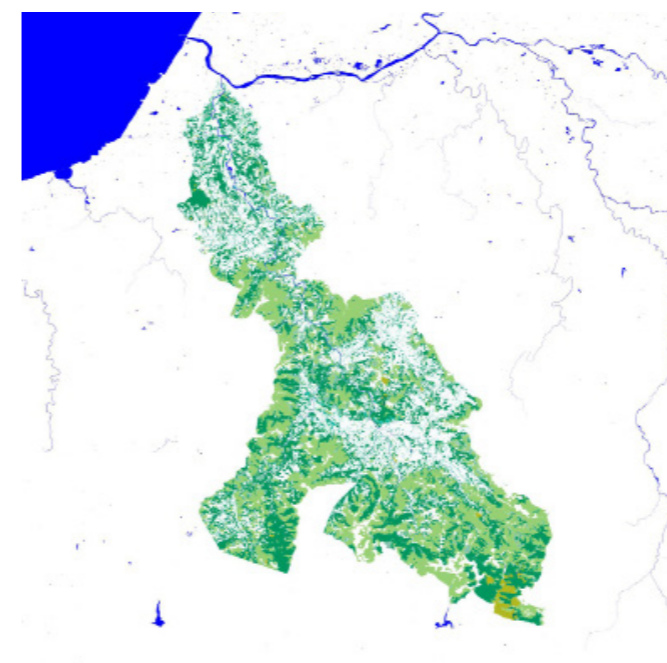
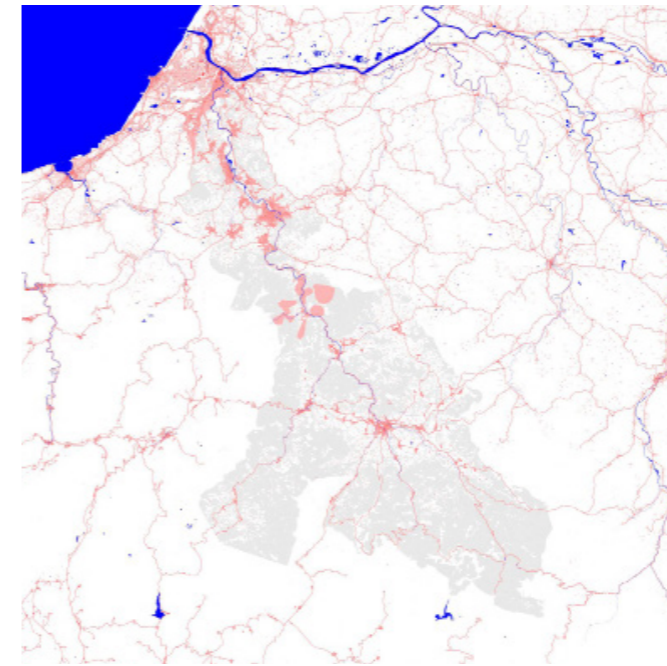
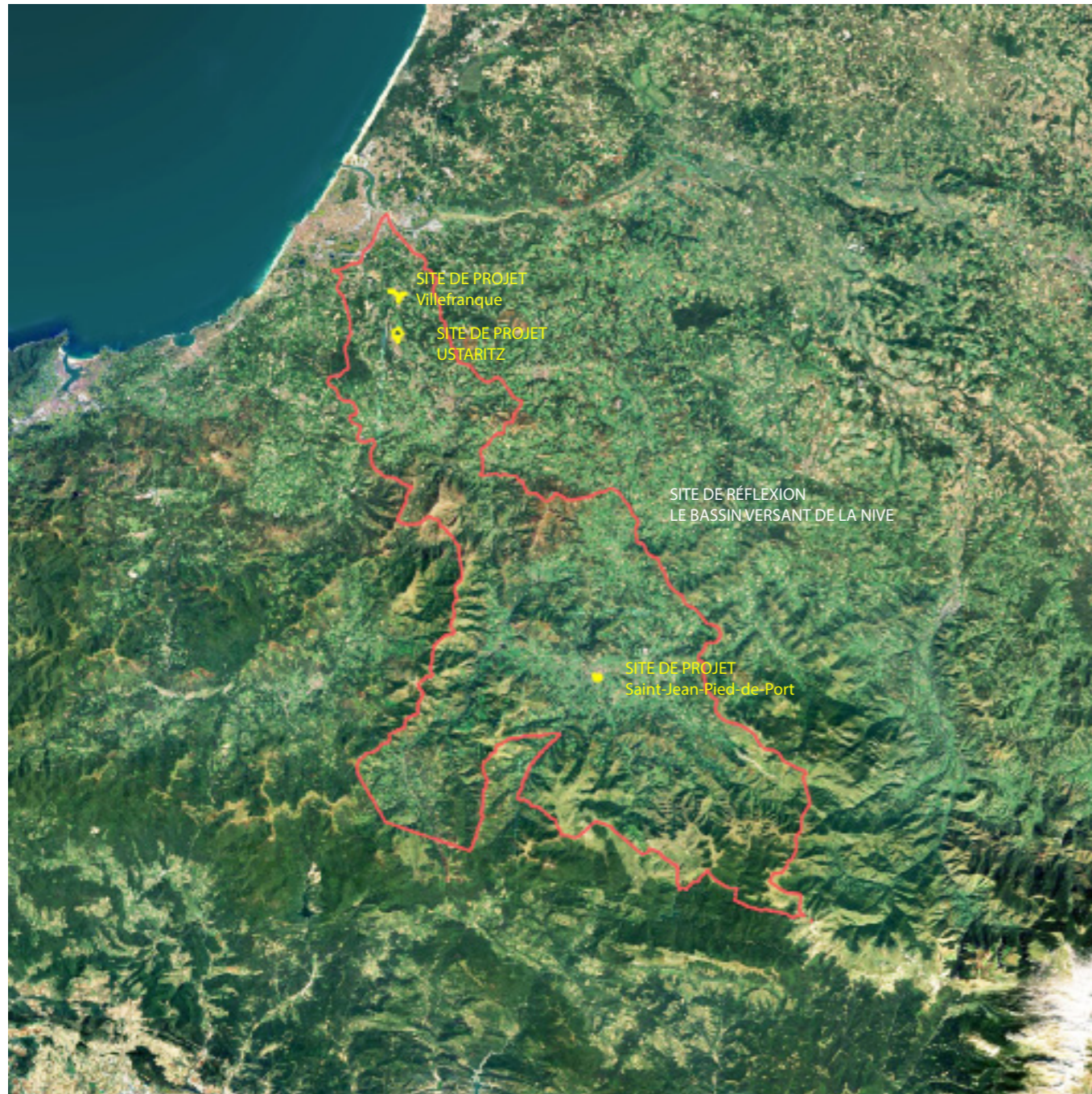
**Required skills based on the site's challenges and characteristics:** Architecture, urban planning, landscape design, management of aquatic natural environments in relation to risks.

**Prize selection process:** The prize selection follows a two-round procedure leading to the awarding of three prizes

by an independent jury, separate from the involved actors. Site representatives and site experts are heard by the jury but are not part of it. The prizes are as follows:

Winner: €12,000 prize / Mentioned: €6,000 prize / Special mentions (no prize).

**Mission given to the selected team(s) for follow-up:** Study and project mission(s) to further develop strategic proposals, feasibility studies on the project site, architectural, urban, or landscape project management mission(s).



## SITE / CONTEXT

The Nive catchment area is a multifaceted space where water and humans maintain an ambivalent relationship characterized by conflicts and temporary balances. It is a protected natural site located within a developing economic zone and a rapidly growing population, an entity that illustrates the issues surrounding the management of commons, and a governance territory tested by the practical challenges of ecological transition and adaptation of modern societies. With this large territorial reflection site and its three micro-territory project sites, they provide a platform to address issues covering the three dimensions of the theme of this 18th European session.

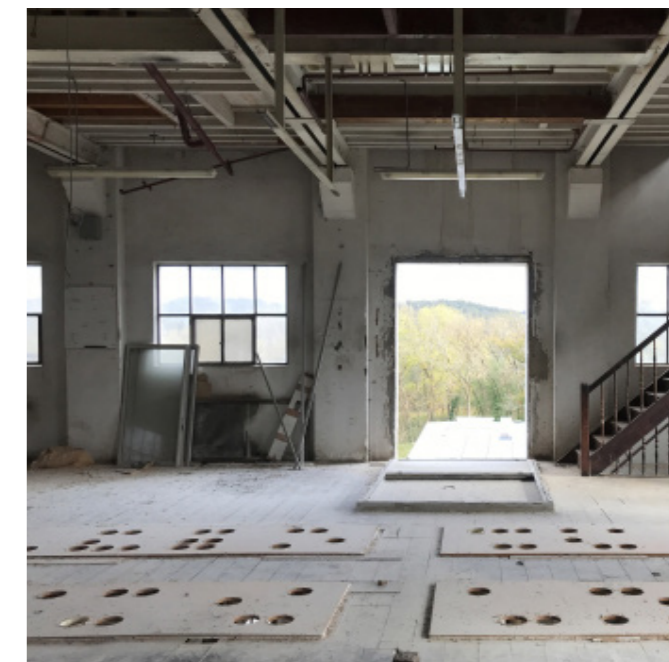
Water plays an ambivalent role in this territory. It is both a life's source for biodiversity and human uses, whether recreational or economic, but it is also a source of risk due to increasingly frequent and severe floods. Water, its landscape, and its history also have a dual symbolic and poetic role, serving as a vehicle for sought-after territorial cohesion between contrasting urban, rural, and natural spaces, while also creating remarkable landscapes for residents, users, and tourists, as seen in the cycling route project along the Nive. Lastly, despite the perception of a region with heavy rainfall, water is a threatened resource due to the growing risks of drought caused by climate change and increased consumption driven by residential and agricultural factors.

The livability conditions for both humans and non-humans in the Nive territory face the risk of losing balance due to residential, tourist, and recreational pressures, as well as changing lifestyles, particularly new uses of rural spaces. The heightened awareness and means of protecting biodiversity require us to reconsider our coexistence practices and imagine future balances. In this context, tourism plays an important and growing role in the economic development of the Basque Country. It represents the greatest risk of imbalance with seasonal flows and concentrations in certain sections of the Nive that endanger local biodiversity and create conflicts with residents.

The human transformed landscapes and the built spaces along the Nive bear witness a long history with the river, from ancient heritage such as the Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port Citadel and the towpath, to more recent structures like the Arki Mill and the Ustaritz gravel pit lake. This existing fabric constitutes a valuable source of material and space to transform, to imagine future programs and places of life for both humans and non-humans, with potential to be reevaluated in light of the challenges posed by this complex territory.



**What uses for the former Arki mill and the Errepiragaraia gravel pit lake in the future? What new interfaces between inhabited spaces and the river?**



## QUESTIONS TO THE COMPETITORS

Within the larger territory of the Nive catchment area, three project sites along the river become territories for development. From upstream to downstream, these sites are located in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Ustaritz, and Villefranque.

Three contrasting situations along the Nive witch illustrate this large territory's challenges in their own way:

- The challenges of coexistence between residents, users, tourists, and wildlife; and the balance between creating landscapes suited to human uses and protecting the biodiversity present.
- The challenges of renewing the interfaces between inhabited spaces and the river, balancing the desire for proximity and orientation of towns and centers towards the Nive with the management of flood risks.
- The challenges of large-scale territorial cohesion around the river, notably through the towpath.

The task will be to question these sites and for the candidates, to imagine pilot projects that demonstrate the possibilities for an evolution of the Nive territory, specific to the particular situations, landscapes, and built environments, while being a representation of the challenges faced by the catchment area.



**What are the solutions for the risks of flooding and riverbank erosion of the Nive? What coherence for a historical centrality with multiple uses between tourism and local life?**