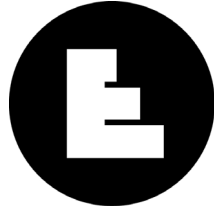


E U R
P A O
N

FR



E18 - Ressourcing

LA NIVE TERRITORY

SITE FOLDER

100m



FOREWORD

“What we need to do today is to demonstrate cultural creativity I believe in the poetic state. It is about developing a way of living that is so sensitive, attentive, contemplative and compassionate that we amplify our range of perception and maintain an awareness of everything that is around us.” P. Chamoiseau

The eighteenth edition of the European competition in France opens with the wonderful theme of ‘re-sourcing’.

Having explored themes of the adaptable city, the productive city and the living city, this theme marks a pause for breath. It invites us to consider what has been amassed, what is there to provide for places, for lives, and to repair more efficiently rather than demolishing.

‘Re-sourcing’, a theme that examines existing resources – material and non-material – in order to manage and develop them with respect and sensitivity.

These resources are very diverse in nature, specific to each area.

They form a powerful ecosystem that once formed a system that is now often forgotten; over the last century it has been dislocated, unravelled. The care given to exchange and to links woven between human and non-human life has evaporated, giving way to juxtapositions of fragmented territories. These isolated territories of landscape and habitat are just waiting to be set back into motion to meet the world of tomorrow. There is an urgent need to act, and to act together in a spirit of open dialogue.

All the sites in this 18th edition demonstrate the complexity of a world that is out of breath but that has vast potential for life. A momentum is already gathering; the power of water is evident. Human and non-human life is active, it doesn’t wait, and indeed is already sketching out new approaches and responses.

All the sites, from the most urban and developed (Greater Nancy, Caen, Clermont-Ferrand, Riez, Miramas, Brignoles, Blagnac, Romainville, Nailloux) to the most natural and derelict (the Nive valley, Mayotte, Fumel, Mantes-la-Jolie, Jullouville), contain a legacy to be brought back into the light, waiting to bring their hopes and inner strength to life by means of experimental projects for a promising future.

Residents of these territories of today and tomorrow, European teams – made up of architects, urban designers, landscape designers, anthropologists, philosophers, ecologists or any other thinkers relevant to the project – will embrace these places to define new narratives, new ways of interacting where, with the aim of re-sourcing, life resounds as a constant force.

EUROPAN FRANCE

Note: A book of contributions associated with the theme can be downloaded [here](#).

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RE-SOURCER
REPARER
REIMAGINER
REAGIR
REVITALISER
RECYCLER
RESSOURCER

THE THEME : RE-SOURCING

The fragility of the Earth's ecosystem and social crises lead to the imagination of alternative practices to harmful extraction of resources, overconsumption and pollution of living milieus.

Regenerating projects embracing nature and culture are to be thought and implemented. It is about weaving synergies between biogeophysical data with socio-spatial justice and health ones.

Three main directions for designing forms of resilience and resourcing of inhabited milieus make possible to reactivate other forms of dynamics and narratives around the ecologies of living and caring.

1 Re-sourcing in terms of Natural elements / Risks

The natural and vital elements of water, air, earth and fire are today linked to risks and disasters which affect places, and the entire ecosystem of milieus from the moment that are triggered cataclysms, resulting from deleterious developments.

In order to enable a new alliance with inhabited milieus, it is time to rethink these vital elements, by finding logics of adaptation with the built environment, and by combining them together in projects.

2 Re-sourcing in terms of ways of life and of Inclusivity

The reconsideration of living conditions also requires sustained attention to changes in lifestyles in a hyper-connected digital world. Arrangements capable of simultaneously preserving intimacy, commonality and solidarity are at stake, correlated with bioclimatic and permacultural strategies in which humans and non-humans can cooperate.

3 Re-sourcing in terms of materiality

The already built now constituting a phenomenal source of materials, it is important to design devices for transforming existing buildings driven by the strategy of the 3 R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle): Reduce new construction. Reuse in the sense of reusing already constructed spaces and materials. Recycle by using bio-geo sourced materials (earth, stone, fiber), anticipating deconstruction and becoming local again (mobilizing know-how and materials present on the sites). This is to promote the preservation of natural resources.

Recommendations for searching sites

The selection of sites will be based on their potential to find these three types of resources – “natural elements, uses, materiality”.

Each site will be presented at two scales:

- The territorial scale known as the “reflection site” (red limit) which will reveal the geographical and ecological elements (topography, geology, natural elements, etc.), the logic of mobility and large-scale lifestyles and which impact the project site today and, potentially, in the future.
- The proximity scale, known as the “project site” (yellow limit), where the existing situation (physical space, nature, lifestyles) and the city’s intentions for its development in the future will be presented in a clear and precise manner.

The complete site folder must both remain compact but provide elements of information with links to maps (geography) allowing to understand natural dynamics (water, land, sea, etc.), and to studies on ways of life allowing to understand current social dynamics and those desired in the future.

The brief must, based on the characteristics of the site, express the intentions of the site representatives at different scales and clearly formulate the questions they wish to ask the competitors regarding the future of their contexts. Some interesting briefs from previous sessions are made available.

Questions for competitors

The challenge for competitors, in their project-processes, will be to converge the three types of resources because it is their intersection which will generate a promising spectrum of resilient projects in the face of the scarcity of resources and the vulnerability of sites.

The questions asked are:

- What are the new ways of designing to adapt to climate change: rising water levels, air pollution, drought, etc.?
- How to introduce into projects the regeneration and sanitation of soils making them more porous and alive, increasing the biodiversity of built spaces, in order to make them more livable?
- How can we imagine new dynamic and productive use scenarios to revitalize communities of humans and non-humans?
- How can we invent a new materiality that can result from bio-materials originating mainly from local resources and falling within the logic of a circular economy?
- How can we hybridize in teams the different skills necessary for these projects which combine the consideration of natural elements, new lifestyles and the use of bio-materials?
- which scales should be crossed to make the proposed answers relevant? Can a project on a proximity site be combined with reflection on the larger scale of the territory? Should an urban project also be available on a proximity scale to illustrate its impact?

GENERAL INFORMATION

SITE REPRESENTATIVE: Paolo Lesbordes, Small Towns of Tomorrow Project Manager, Communauté d'Agglomération Pays Basque (Basque Country Combined Authority).

PARTICIPANTS: Communauté d'Agglomération Pays Basque, Commune d'Ustaritz, Commune de Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Commune de Villefranque.

SKILLS NEEDED TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES AND FEATURES OF THE SITE: Architecture, urban planning, landscape, development of natural aquatic environments in response to risks.

TEAM COMPOSITION: architect mandatory, urban and landscape architects

COMMUNICATION: Postcompetition promotion of projects, with publication of a catalogue of results and a national exhibition.

PRIZE SELECTION: A two-round prize allocation procedure culminating in the award of three prizes by a jury that is independent of the actors involved. Site representatives and site experts make submissions to the jury, but are not jury members. The prizes are as follows : Winner €12,000, Runner-up €6000 and Special Mention (no prize).

INTERMEDIATE POST-COMPETITION PROCEDURE: Meeting of the municipalities and teams organised by the European France secretariat in Paris at the beginning of 2026; on-site meeting of the municipalities and teams organised by the local authorities and their partners from January 2026; assistance and advice from European France to the local authorities and their partners in organising the postcompetition follow-up phase.

ASSIGNMENT GIVEN TO THE TEAM(S) SELECTED FOR THE FOLLOW-UP PHASE: Study and project assignment(s) to develop the strategic proposals, feasibility studies on the project site, architectural, urban or landscape project management assignment(s).



LA NIVE

RELATION TO THE THEME

SITE ISSUES RELATING TO THE THEME

The Nive catchment is a diverse space where water and people coexist in an ambivalent relationship, a mix of conflict and temporary equilibria. It is a protected natural site located in a developing economic area with a rapidly growing population, a geographical entity that instantiates the problems of managing the commons, and a territory in which governance faces the practical challenge of managing ecological transition and adapting to changing social conditions. The broader study site and the three micro-area project sites within it together provide an opportunity to tackle issues that bring into play the three dimensions of the theme of this 18th European session.

Re-sourcing in terms of elements

Water plays an ambiguous role in this region. It is a source of life for biodiversity and for human uses, whether recreational or economic, but also now a source of risk in the form of increasingly regular and severe flooding. Water, its landscape and its history also play a dual symbolic and poetic role, as a vector of territorial cohesion between contrasting urban, rural and natural areas, and as the producer of the remarkable landscapes enjoyed by residents, users and tourists, such as the proposed cycle route along La Nive. Finally, despite the perception of the area as experiencing high rainfall, water has become an endangered resource as the combination of climate change and increased residential and agricultural consumption present a growing risk of drought.

Re-sourcing lifestyles

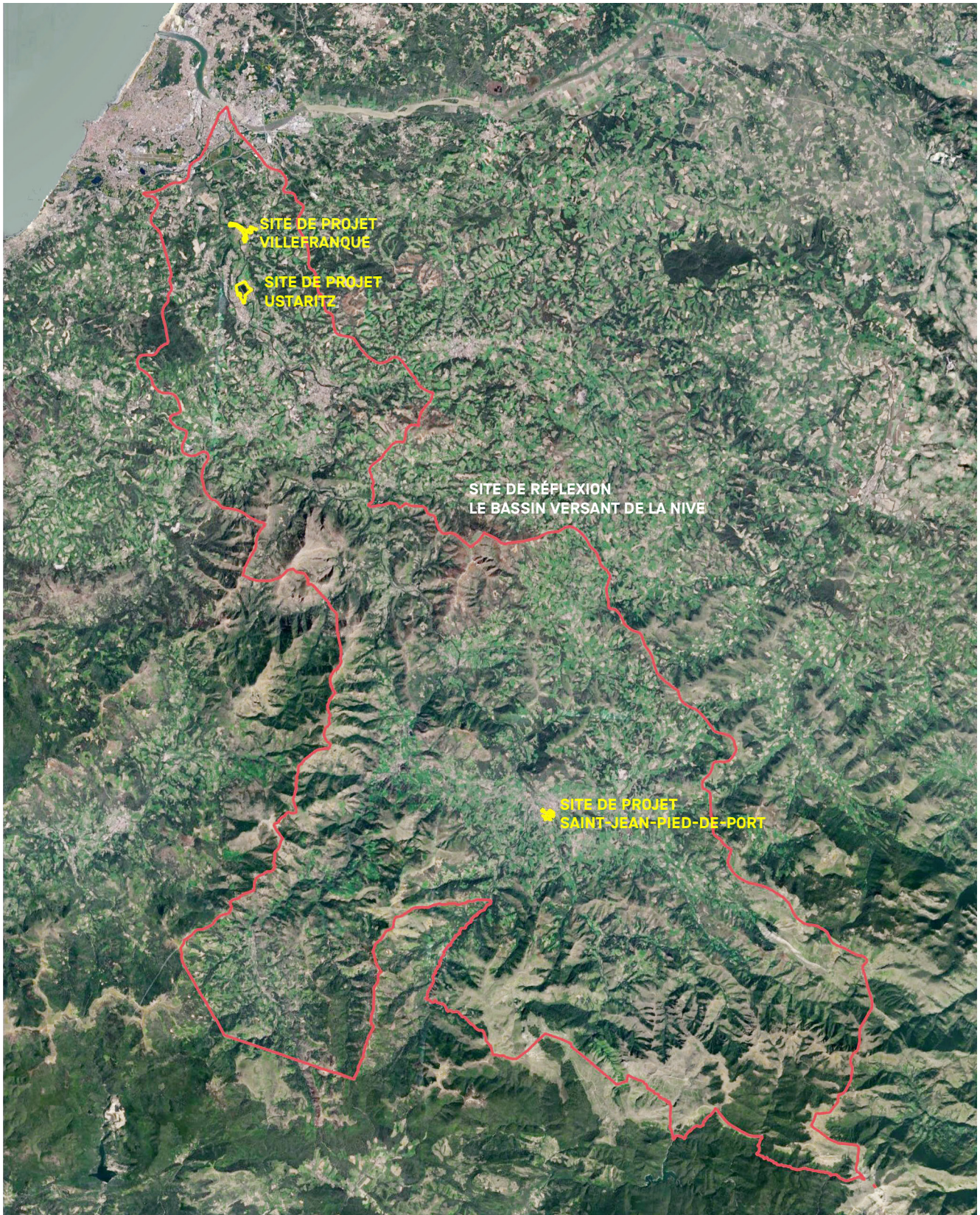
Living conditions for humans and non-humans in the Nive area face the risk of becoming unbalanced through residential, tourist and recreational pressures and changing lifestyles, with new practices arising in rural areas in particular. Increased awareness of the need for biodiversity protecting resources obliges us to rethink the way we live together and to imagine new balances for tomorrow. Against this background, tourism is an important and growing factor in the economic development of the Basque Country. It also brings the greatest risk of imbalance, with high tourist flows in the summer season concentrated on a few stretches of the Nive, endangering local biodiversity and creating conflict with residents.



THE ARKI FLOUR MILL

Re-sourcing in terms of materials

The landscapes transformed by man and the built-up areas along the Nive bear witness to a long history of connection with the river, whether in the form of historical heritage such as the Citadel of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port and the towpath, or more recent legacies such as the Arki flour mill or the lake at the Ustaritz gravel pit. These existing sites represent a wealth of materials and spaces that can be transformed to create tomorrow's programmes and living spaces for both humans and non-humans, a potential that needs to be reassessed in the light of the challenges facing this complex region.



TERRITORIAL CONTEXT AND STUDY SITE: THE NIVE CATCHMENT

TERRITORY, GEOGRAPHY AND LANDSCAPE

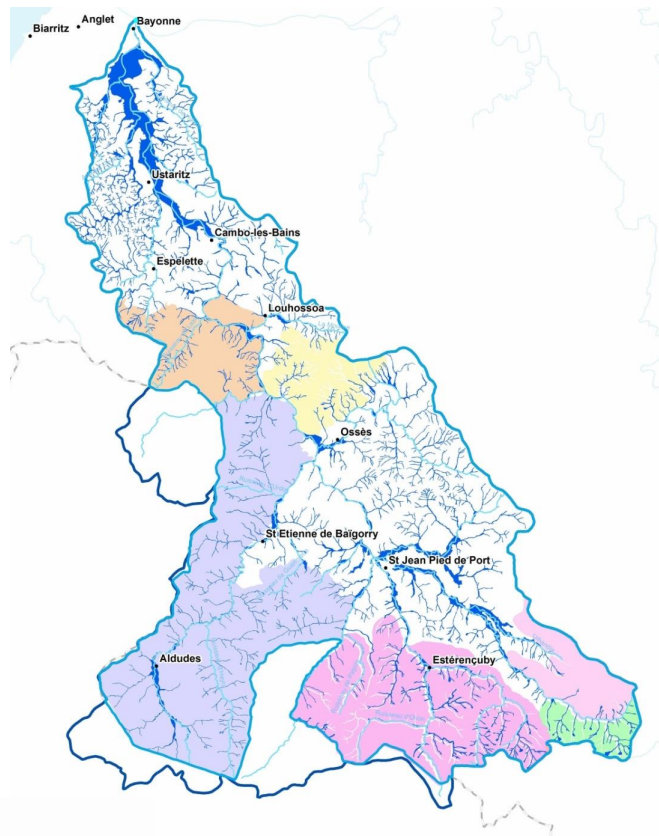
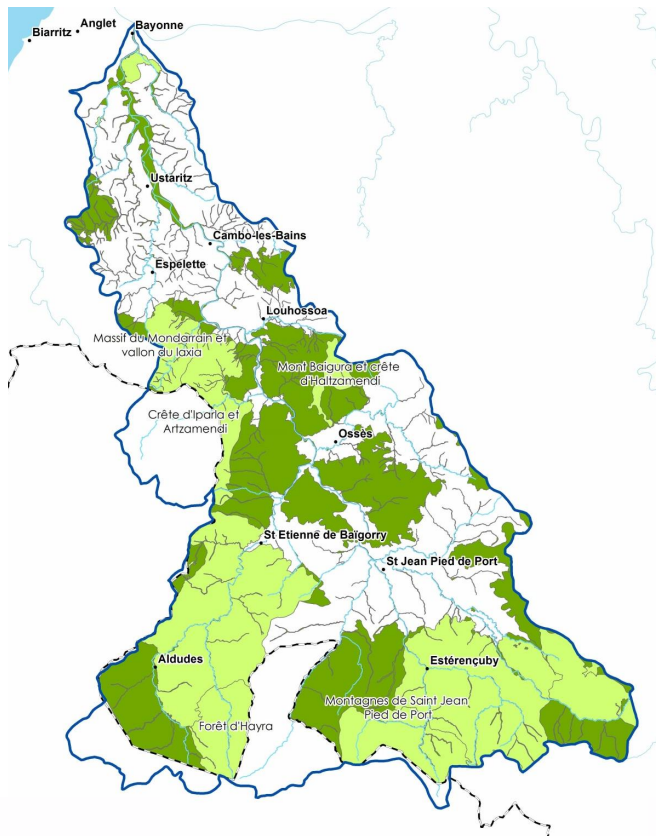
THE NIVE, A LINK BETWEEN CONTRASTING LANDSCAPES

The Nive forms a link between contrasting geographies, from sparsely populated mountains to dense, urbanised plains. From its source at Estérençuby to its mouth in the Adour at Bayonne, the Nive forms a 1300 km network of waterways. What marks this catchment out is the multitude of watercourses flowing from its springs, forming an entire hydrographic network across the area. The Grand Nive is around 56 km long from upstream to downstream, giving the catchment a rapid succession of morphological styles: mountain torrent, lowland river, estuary. The area is characterised by two sets of sub-catchments: the upstream section, consisting of deep mountain valleys, and the downstream section, marked by hillsides. While the frontier ridges in the upstream part of the catchment are close to 1400 m high, the average altitude in the catchment is relatively low, mostly below 500m. The catchment consists of four main types of landscape:

- The pastoral and wooded mountains: large expanses of fern and touya woodland at an altitude of between 400 and 800m, and beyond that, mountain pastures alternating with forests.
- The Basque hill country and the Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port basin: predominantly farmland, with a mix of arable and livestock agriculture.
- The agricultural and wooded valley floor: floodplains mainly occupied by crops or woodland.
- The Nive valley: low relief and proximity to the Bayonne area, with more urbanisation.

In addition, around twenty listed natural sites or historic monuments are located close to the river course, illustrating the rich history of the Nive. The best known of these are the Maison Arnaga in Cambo-les-Bains and the medieval town of Saint-

SITE FOLDER



ZNIEFF NATURA 2000 SITES

Sources : IGN-BD Topo, DREAL
Nouvelle Aquitaine

Jean-Pied-de-Port, part of which is listed by UNESCO as an intangible heritage site for its importance on the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela. As far as the ordinary built fabric is concerned, there are two specific types of structure in the catchment area: the Labourdine house, characterised by whitewashed masonry walls with contrasting red or green painted joinery and a double-pitched red-tiled roof; and the Bas-Navarra house, marked by ashlar frames and windows.

THE CAPB AND GEMAPI (WATER MANAGEMENT AND FLOOD PREVENTION)

The Nive basin is located in the heart of the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, in the Pyrénées-Atlantiques département and within the territory of the Communauté d'Agglomération Pays Basque (CAPB - Basque Country District Authority). In total, there are 56 communes (municipalities) located wholly or partly within the Nive basin, all included within the perimeter of the CAPB. Created on 1 January 2017, the CAPB has 10 territorial hubs, 8 of which are located wholly or partly within the Nive catchment area. From 1996 to 2017, the Syndicat Mixte du Bassin Versant de la Nive (SMBVN - Nive River Basin Combined Association) was a specific institutional entity in matters relating to the Nive and its catchment. The Nive valley's elected representatives, aware of the issues associated with the quality of water resources, created this joint structure in order to develop a coherent policy and priorities encompassing the catchment as a whole. The Syndicat Mixte du Bassin Versant de la Nive brought together 46 communes and the Communauté d'Agglomération de Bayonne, Anglet et Biarritz. Since the dissolution of the SMBVN on 31 December 2017, the Communauté d'Agglomération Pays Basque (CAPB), which has been responsible for aquatic environment management and flood prevention (GEMAPI) since 1 January 2018, has continued to lead the Programme d'Études Préalables (PEP - preliminary studies programme) for the PAPI (Flood Prevention Action Programme) for the Nive.

A NATURA 2000 SITE COVERING THE ENTIRE CATCHMENT AREA

The catchment's entire hydrographic network is located in a Natura 2000 zone. With a document of objectives (DOCOB) covering all the waterways and wetlands in the Nive catchment area, this is one of the largest Natura 2000 waterway sites in France, encompassing 1300 km of water, 19 habitats and 18 species of community interest.

PRIORITISING FLOODING AND RIVERBANK EROSION ISSUES

The severe floods of 4 July 2014 highlighted the vulnerability of the Nive catchment and its tributaries to flooding. As a result of the floods, local authorities in the catchment had to commit to spending more than €3.5 million on mitigation and



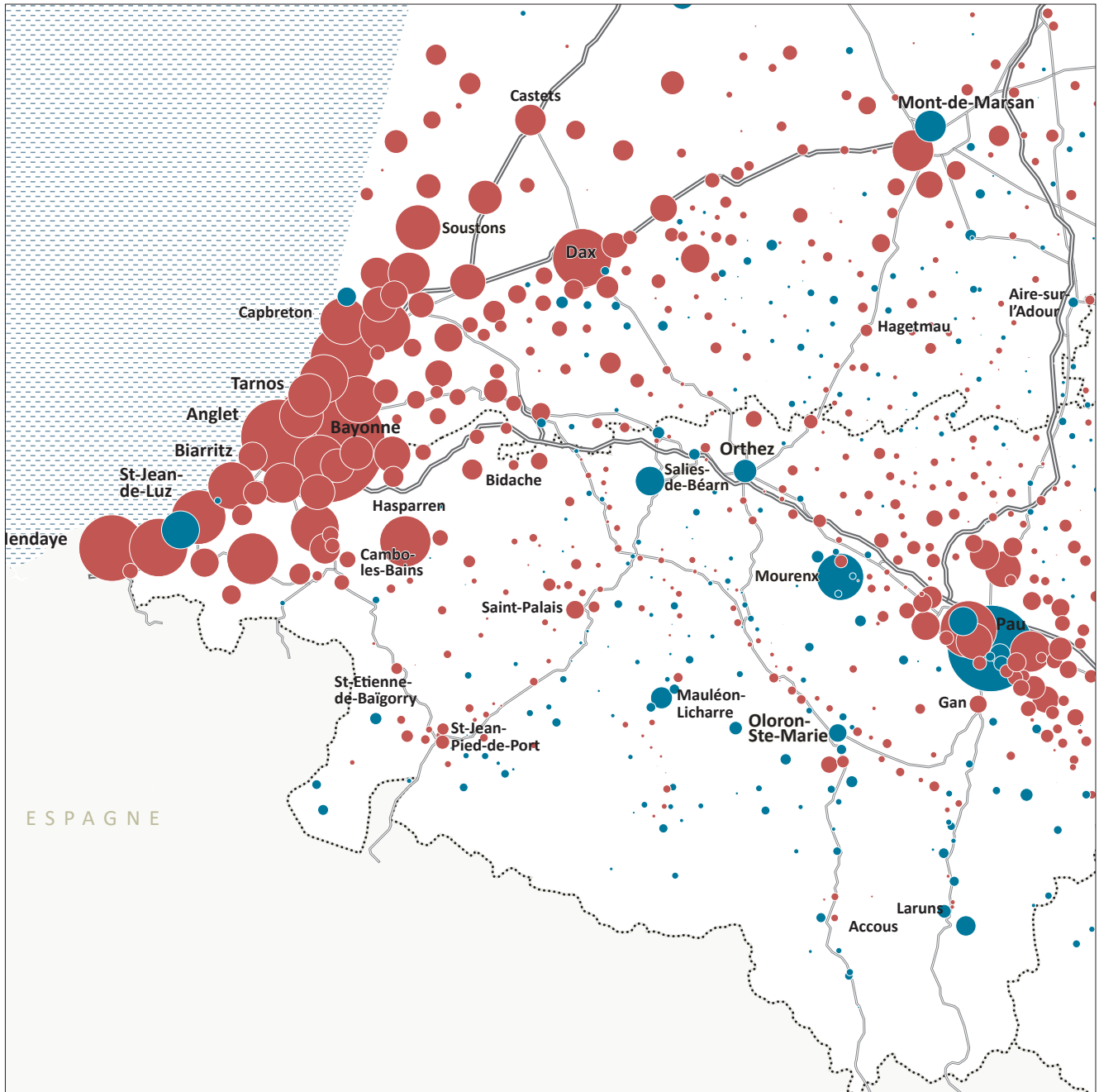
prevention work. The economic and farming sectors and, more broadly, private property, also suffered heavy damage, putting the issue of risk on the agenda. More recently, the flood of December 2021 confirmed the need for a coherent public risk management policy for the whole catchment in order to mitigate the risk of flooding. These significant events encouraged the elected representatives of the Nive and Basque Country areas to take action to reduce the area's vulnerability to flooding by focusing on a number of issues, in particular improving crisis management and inter-municipal support, acquiring expertise on flooding and developing a culture of risk. In September 2016, the Syndicat mixte du bassin versant de la Nive (SMBVN) launched an initiative to set up a Flood Prevention Action Programme (PAPI) for the whole of the Nive catchment, a programme that is now in the hands of the CAPB. In addition, to deal with riverbank erosion, numerous studies have been carried out at different levels to diagnose the reasons for this erosion, to identify the areas most at risk and to propose restoration and reinforcement solutions that are still too costly to be systematically applied. These studies have also highlighted the ambivalent impact of river vegetation on riverbanks. On the one hand, this vegetation stabilises and maintains the banks through the root system, particularly during periods of flooding, while on the other it increases the risk of erosion if these plant masses become too large due to lack of management. When this happens, the vegetation increases the weight of the banks, causing logjams and tree falls that obstruct the minor bed.

A GROWING PROBLEM WITH WATER CONSUMPTION IN THE REGION AND THE RISK OF DROUGHT

The Nive catchment receives significant annual rainfall, with between 130 and 150 rainy days per year. Inhabitants of the Basque Country rarely worry about water shortages. However, the drought of 2022 was a reminder that the effects of climate change are already making themselves felt and beginning to affect activities. In the case of farming, for example, which is predominantly pastoral, lack of water affected the summer pastures, forcing the cattle back down into the valley. The concentration of livestock during the summer season exacerbated the problems of water quality and quantity. In the future, chilli growing could become an additional factor in water consumption. The Espelette chilli PDO currently prohibits irrigation, but this could change if producers are faced with regular droughts similar to that of 2022. The CAPB is working on quality and resource preservation plans to protect against the hazards of a less predictable climate.

THE TOWPATH: USES AND RISKS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED

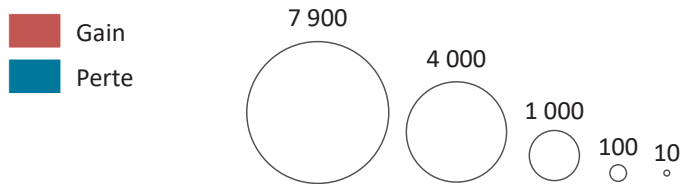
Historically, the "towpath" was a right of way imposed on owners of riverside land in the 17th century to leave a free space for towing, a method of moving river boats using a rope pulled by people or horses on the riverbank. At the time, public traffic was forbidden on these waterways, and landowners were obliged to maintain the banks and keep the towpath in good condition. In return for this



**EVOLUTION OF INHABITANTS
NUMBER FROM 2010 TO 2021**

Sources : IGN-BD Topo, Admin
Express ; INSEE-RP 2021.

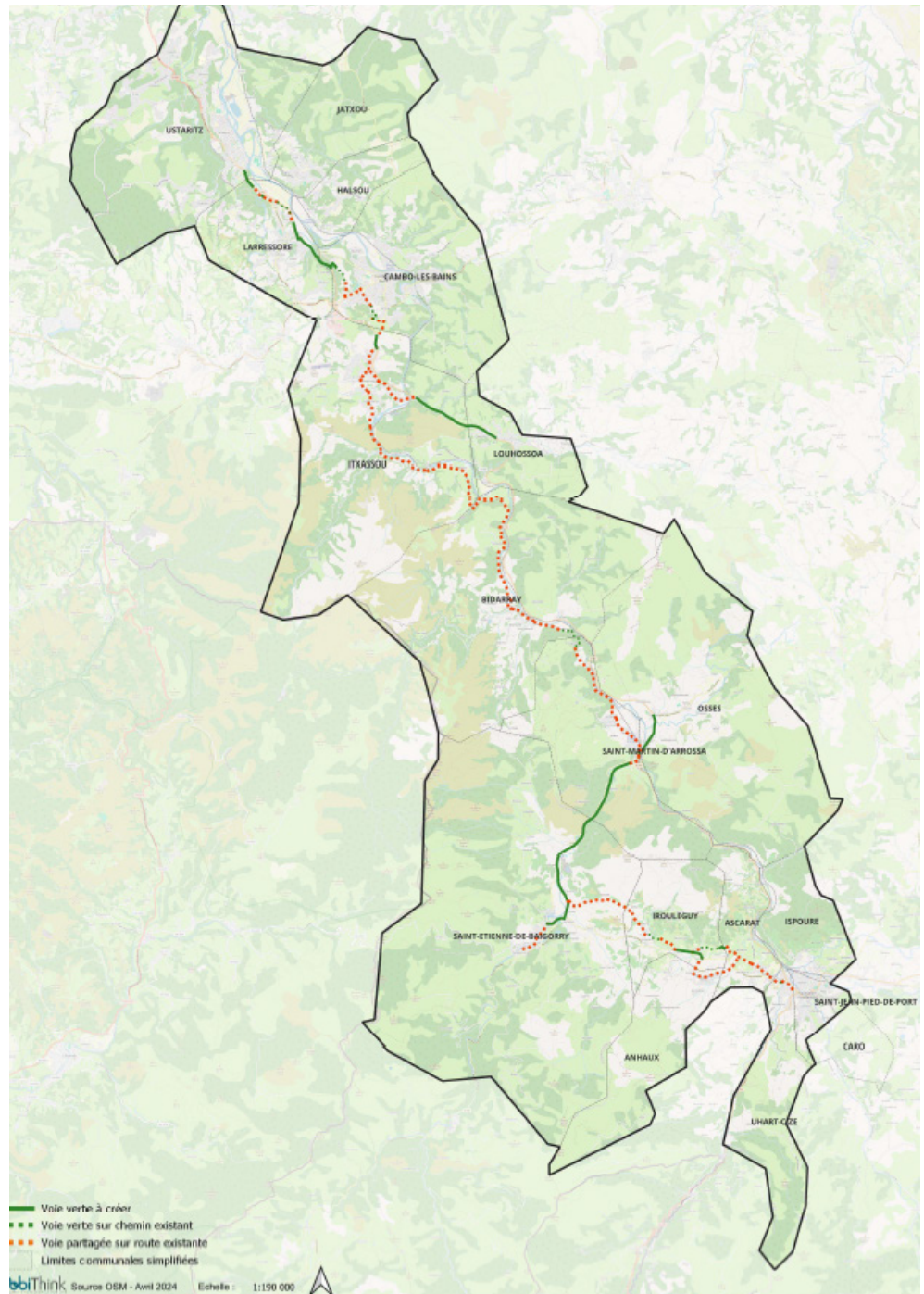
Carte produite par l'Agence
d'urbanisme Atlantique &
Pyrénées



chore, they were allowed to use the path to access their farm plots. At the end of the First World War, the lack of manpower forced the state to exempt owners from this duty of maintenance, transferring it to local authorities. Since then, practices have changed, animal towing has disappeared and free public access has led to the development of recreational and sports activities. In the 1980s, an asphalt track was laid and the structure was classified as a greenway. Today, the greenway links Bayonne to Ustaritz via Bassussarry, following the River Nive for 12.3 km. The route has been a great success, mainly with local residents, particularly for leisure use (walking, cycling, rollerblading, etc.). In recent years, local public policies have also supported the development of cycle commuting. The road is also open to motorised traffic for local residents only, and is used by farm machinery on certain sections. As part of this process, in 2024 the département submitted a proposal to build a route for the “Vallée de la Nive” Eurovélo cycle route. Despite these developments, the dyke structure and the structural capacity of the bank supporting the towpath have not yet been upgraded. Faced with increasing use of the river and its deterioration with each flood, the assessments and proposals for technical solutions now face problems of financial viability, and the local authorities are looking for new options.

STATE-OWNERSHIP OF THE RIVER AND MANAGEMENT OF ITS BANKS

There are a number forms of ownership that may apply to a river and its banks. The minor riverbed may be either “state-owned”, i.e. belonging to the state, or “non-state-owned”, belonging to the owner of the riverside land. If the two banks belong to different owners, each of them owns half of the riverbed, unless otherwise stipulated. In the catchment area, only the Grande Nive is state-owned from the confluence of the Laurhibar and Nive de Béhérobie rivers to its outlet at the confluence with the Adour. All the other rivers in the catchment area are not state-owned. On the other hand, the purpose of the “footpath right-of-way” is to allow low level traffic for public service purposes on the banks of the waterways, particularly the Nive. Pedestrians are allowed by decree to walk along the banks without a permit. Today, because the former towpath was developed and opened to public traffic in the 1980s, its management is the responsibility of the public authorities.



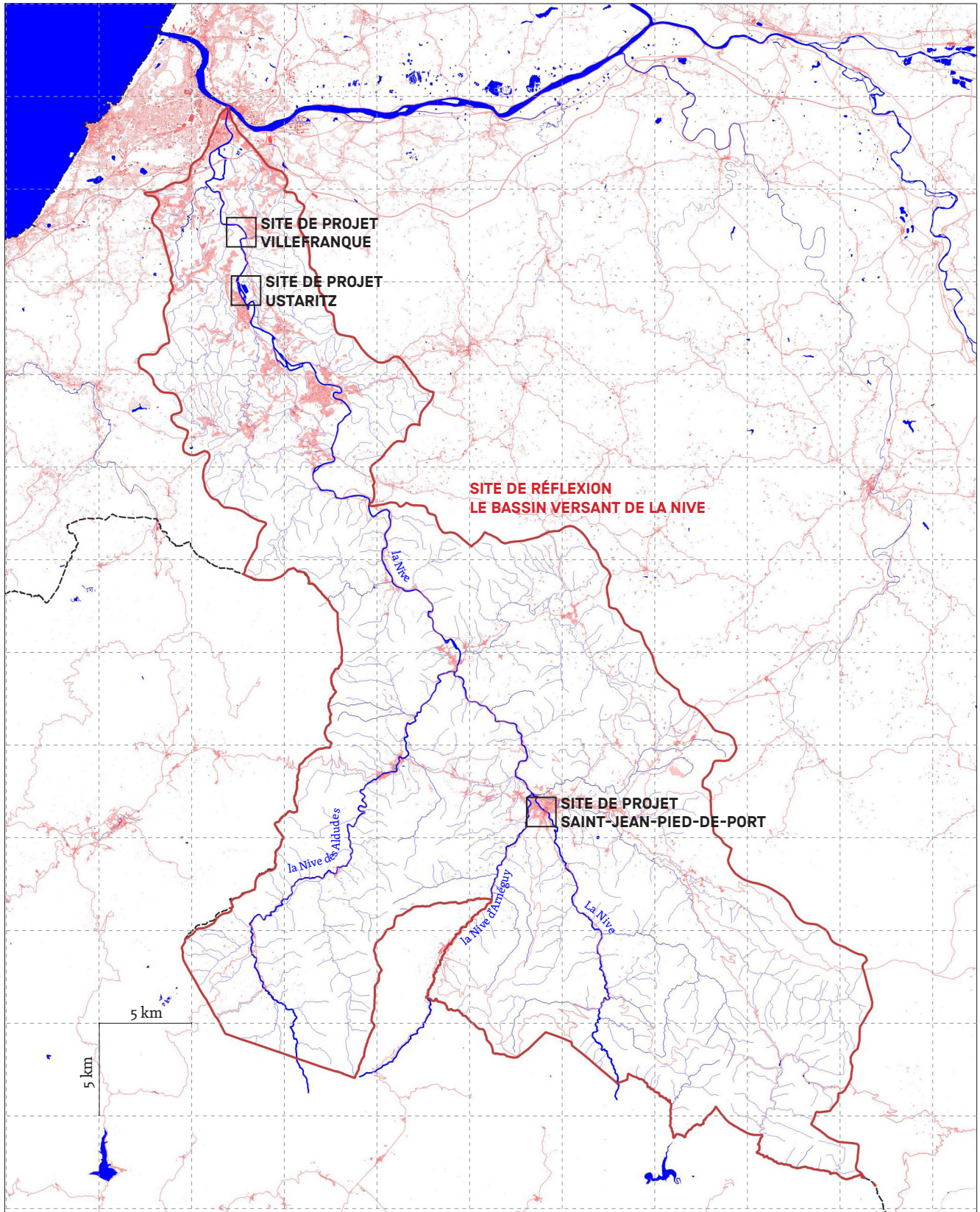
SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

CONTRASTING DEMOGRAPHIC PRESSURES AND PROPERTY TENSIONS BETWEEN THE MARITIME BASQUE COUNTRY AND THE INLAND BASQUE COUNTRY

The Nive basin has over 100,000 inhabitants, a population that can double during the summer season. This uneven population distribution is also characterised by contrasting dynamics, with very significant demographic growth downstream and little change in the mountains. Bayonne is the largest town in the CAPB, with 52,000 inhabitants. Ustaritz and Cambo-les-Bains, two main centres of activity, stand on the riverbanks further upstream. Yet further upstream, the towns give way to villages before arriving at the Garazi hub with its 6 villages and 4300 inhabitants. The strong appeal of the towns near to the coast has generated a high level of property pressure in the area, with knock-on effects for the towns further inland. As a result, in response to the sharp rise in property prices in the communes closest to the coast, younger and less affluent residents are moving inland, as illustrated by the development of Ustaritz.

AN INFRASTRUCTURAL AXIS AND SOME ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES ON THE NIVE

The Nive valley is a rail and road link connecting the mountains to Bayonne and the rest of the coast. The Nive is also a navigable waterway from Ustaritz to the Adour. Six economic activities take place on the river: hydroelectric power generation, fish farming, fishing, agriculture, drinking water production and tourism, with sometimes divergent approaches to the use of the environment. As far as hydroelectric power is concerned, the energy of the Nive and its tributaries has long been exploited by the people living along its banks. The many dams and mills along the rivers are the main evidence of this. Today, the old mills have almost entirely ceased operations and have been replaced by micro-power stations built on existing dams. These installations have made it possible to rehabilitate the mill buildings. Like any other activity, micropower stations can cause changes in the watercourse (presence of the dams needed for the water intake, changes to the hydraulic regime) that can have an impact on the aquatic ecosystem.



EXPECTATIONS FOR THE STUDY SITE

1. CREATING A NEW EQUILIBRIUM FOR COEXISTENCE

A multitude of users live side-by-side and intersect around the Nive, a living environment for human beings, fauna and flora. All along the river, certain uses have taken precedence over others, causing imbalances or undermining the ecological qualities of the zone by reducing the area and quality of the natural environments. With the development of everyday uses along the river and demographic and tourist pressure inland, these imbalances are likely to increase. The challenge will be to devise spaces and programmes that will facilitate coexistence in a new equilibrium, while avoiding the pitfalls of making natural areas sacrosanct or, conversely, over-exploiting the Nive for recreational purposes.

2. INCREASING THE DENSITY OF USES ON THE NIVE WHILE MITIGATING RISK

Today, there is a dual dynamic around the Nive, with a greater density of everyday uses along the river encouraged by numerous local and regional projects, and at the same time an increase in the risks associated with flooding and riverbank erosion. While some inhabited areas, such as the town centre of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, already overlook the Nive, other central zones and hamlets could find new interfaces with the river. New plans and programmes will need to be devised between the river and residential areas, in order to maintain the momentum of the project while adapting to the increasing risks of flooding and bank erosion.

3. MAKING THE NIVE AND ITS TOWPATH A VECTOR OF COHESION

Within an area characterised by diversity of landscapes, catchments and economic and social fabric from Bayonne to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, the Nive's role as a vector of territorial cohesion could be reinforced. To achieve this, it will be necessary to build on the existing assets, the ongoing dynamics and current project initiatives. In this respect, increasing use of the towpath and the cycle route project have activated this dynamic of cohesion by making it a reality for local residents and users.

PROJECT SITE
USTARITZ



PROJECT SITE
SAINT-JEAN-PIED-DE-PORT



PROJECT SITE
VILLEFRANQUE



PROJECT SITES

THREE PILOT PROJECTS IN CONTRASTING SITUATIONS REPRESENTING THE CHALLENGES AROUND THE NIVE

Within the greater Nive catchment area, three project sites along the river are proposed for the European competition. From upstream to downstream, these sites are located in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Ustaritz and Villefranque.

These three very different situations along the Nive in their own way illustrate the challenges facing this extensive area:

- The issues of coexistence between residents, users, tourists and flora and fauna, and the balance between creating amenities suited to human use and protecting existing biodiversity.
- The challenges of renewing the interfaces between inhabited areas and the river. Between the quest to reinforce the interface and proximity between towns and the Nive and the need to manage the risks associated with the flooding of the river.
- The challenges of large-scale territorial cohesion around the river, particularly with respect to the towpath.

These three sites should be approached as pilot projects, demonstrating the possibilities for development in the Nive area, specific to particular situations, landscapes and buildings, and instantiating the challenges facing the catchment area.

ANSWERS ON ONE OR MORE PROJECT SITES

Candidate teams are free to develop their own projects:

- On a single site
- On two sites of their choice
- Or on all the sites

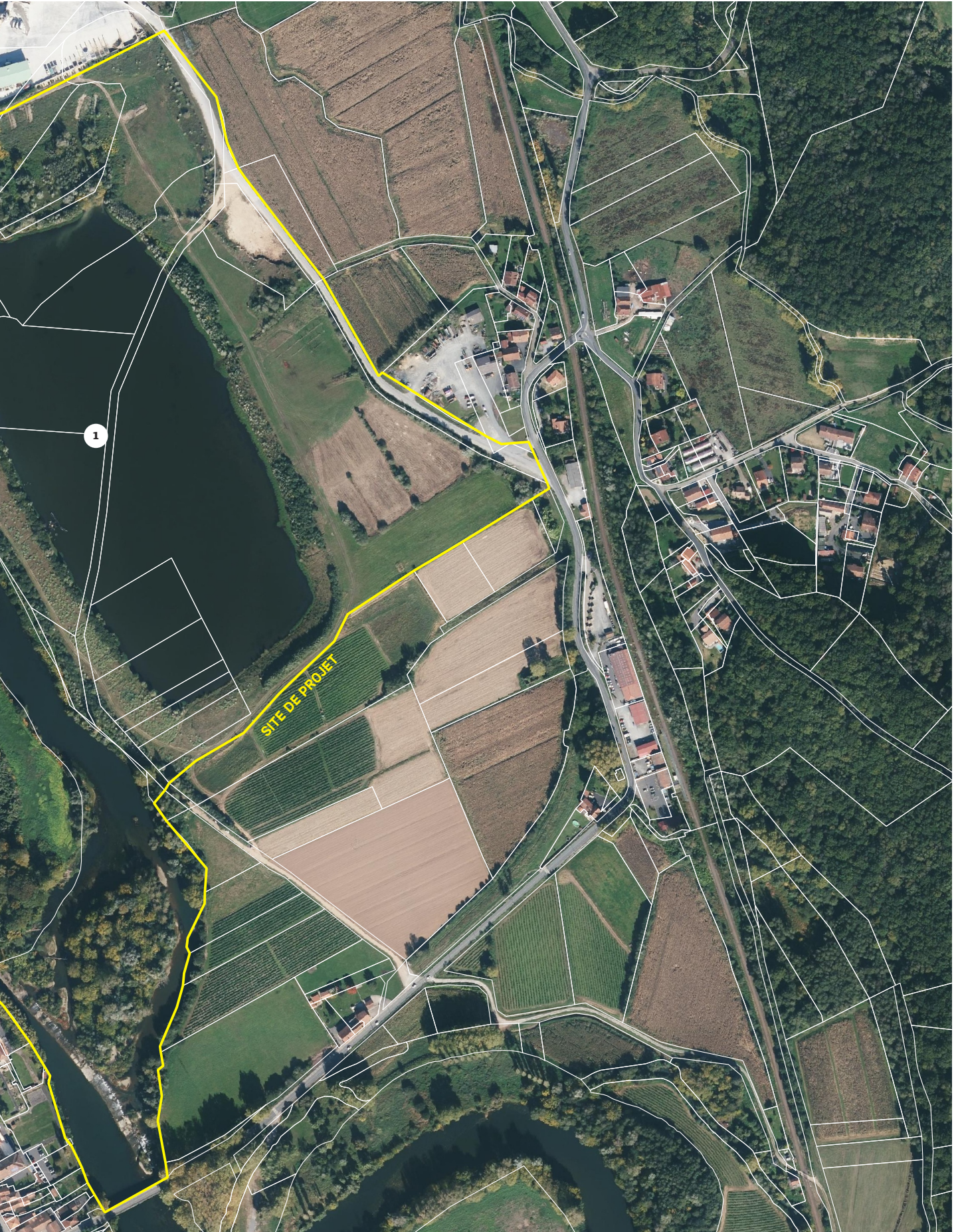
If the teams choose to work on two or all three of the sites, they will be asked to develop proposals for a coherent overarching project rather than projects conceived as separate responses. Candidates may also develop proposals involving other sites that they feel are relevant to the area under consideration.

**PROJECT SITE
USTARITZ - THE
FLOUR MILL AND
GRAVEL PIT**

1. La gravière
2. La Minoterie
3. Voie piétonne
et cyclable en
continuité du chemin
de halage
4. Tanneries Remy
Carriat (hors site)



1:50000



**SAINT-JEAN-PIED-
DE-PORT - PONT
D'EYHERABERRY
PROJECT SITE**

1. Pont d'Eyheraberry
2. Allée d'Eyheraberry
3. Citadelle de Mendiguren (hors site)
4. Fronton
5. Camping municipal
6. Stationnement public
7. Immeuble vacant du 2 rue d'Espagne
8. Secteur Sainte Eulalie



1: 5000e



**PROJECT SITE
VILLEFRANQUE -
TOWPATH**

1. Le chemin de halage
2. Passerelle
«Portuberriko
Zubixka»
3. Guinguette
«Passarella»
4. Gare et parking de
la gare (en cours de
transormation)
5. Bar Restaurant
Eskularia
6. Ecole publique
7. Fronton
8. Commerces et poste
9. Mairie
10. Eglise



1: 5000e





THE ARKI FLOUR MILL

PROJECT SITE

USTARITZ - THE FLOUR MILL AND GRAVEL PIT

PLANNING A NEW PROGRAMME FOR THE FLOUR MILL AND CREATING A NEW INTERFACE BETWEEN THE TOWN AND THE NIVE

Situation and status of the Arki flour mill

On the west bank of the River Nive, on the edge of the centre of Ustaritz, the so-called “Larroulet” Arki flour mill was functional until 2022. It processed up to 2500 tonnes of wheat a year into flour, serving 120 small-scale bakeries in the area. Evidence of a mill on the site dates back to the 11th century, and the site was acquired by the Larroulet family in 1849. The mill was rebuilt at the beginning of the 20th century following a fire. In 1999, a large storage warehouse was added to the site. The mill ceased trading in 2022 when the company went into receivership, a victim of the doubling of wheat prices caused by the war in Ukraine. The site, still owned by Établissements Émile Larroulet SA, is now occupied by squatters. Legal proceedings are underway.

An interface site between the market town and the Nive river

Although the municipality of Ustaritz covers an area of almost 33 km² on either side of the river, the town borders the river on its western bank. While the two bridges over the river bring the waterway into the daily lives of the townsfolk, there are now very few urban spaces open to all with a link to the Nive, and Ustaritz has turned its back on the river. The Arki flour mill site, which spans an arm of the river, represents an opportunity for the municipality to create a new urban interface between the town and the Nive. The teams will be asked to design the spaces and programmes that will create perspectives and uses facing onto the river and as far as its opposite bank and the Lac de la Gravière.

A heritage site and possibilities for improvement

The site is representative of the area’s long history, from the establishment of the first mill in the 11th century to recent years, when activity linked to the river and the area’s resources continued. Although the oldest traces are no longer visible, the



THE WASTELAND OF THE ARKI
FLOUR MILL IN USTARITZ

complex of buildings that make up the Arki Flour Mill is a heterogeneous cluster of buildings dating from the early 20th century to the latest constructions at the end of the 1990s. Each space and structure in this complex was designed with a functional purpose, to meet the technical and logistical needs of a link in the flour processing and storage chain. Today, these spaces, stripped of a large part of their machinery, form a complex succession of spaces with multiple qualities and potentials depending on their dimensions, their structural layout and their openings onto their environment and the landscape.

A pre-programme to be examined, redefined or renewed

The site has recently been the subject of a preliminary programming study commissioned by a private operator, which suggests the possibility of transforming the site into a place dedicated to education, a third place and housing. The European teams are free to challenge, reinterpret or partially or totally remodel this preliminary programme.

FINDING THE BALANCE BETWEEN HUMANS AND NON-HUMANS ON THE LA GRAVIÈRE ERREPIRAGARAIA SITE

Situation and status of the Errepiragaraia gravel pit

On the east bank of the Nive, opposite the Arki Flour Mill and located on a former loop of the river, the Gravière, or Lake Errepiragaraia, is an 11-hectare body of water. The site was mined for alluvial materials by the Duhalde company from 1980 to 2012. In 1997, the company undertook to transfer the land to the municipality free of charge at the end of this period, once the site had been redeveloped. The gravel pit is currently used as a nature reserve (classified Natura2000) and floodplain, and is frequented by walkers and fishing enthusiasts. The site is currently managed by the Association Agréée pour la Pêche et la Protection des Milieux Aquatiques de la Nive (AAPPMA - fishing and aquatic environment protection association).

Accessibility and use of the site to be reviewed

The Errepiragaraia gravel pit, with its poorly-developed and concealed access, is not very popular today. However, the municipality has received requests from private operators to use the lake for tourist and recreational activities. Fearing that the site would be transformed and attract too many visitors, threatening its landscape and ecological qualities in the same way as the Lac de Saint-Pée-Sur-Nivelle, the municipality has not yet pursued these projects. However, between the current status quo and these unwanted proposals, the local authority would like to find a third way that would generate new visibility, accessibility and practicality for the site while protecting its landscape and biodiversity. This potential is particularly important given the increasing number of people visiting the coast and the need



THE GRAVEL PIT IN USTARITZ

for residents to find other inland places to cool off during the hot summer months.

A site with ecological qualities to protect and a population to educate

The landscape of the Errepiragaraia gravel pit has developed over the years, and nature has reclaimed its rights, particularly since the site was handed over to the municipality in 1997 and mining ceased. The site now represents a major ecological challenge, as it is a biodiversity reservoir within a network of ecological continuities. The site also reflects the problems associated with the spread of invasive exotic species such as pampas grass, Japanese knotweed and buddleia. Moreover, it has also suffered accidental pollution, notably in 2021 when a diesel tank leaked near the lake. Today, the municipality and the institutional actors are committed to protecting the ecological qualities of the site, and to avoiding large-scale development and an excessive human presence. In this respect, there is also a need to raise awareness among the residents of Ustaritz, who frequent these areas and landscapes on an occasional or regular basis, but who are not necessarily aware of the environmental issues specific to the site.

Responding to flood risk on the Nive

The Errepiragaraia gravel pit is located on an old branch of the Nive. Every year, the land to the south of the lake is flooded when the river rises. As climate change proceeds and rainfall becomes more intense and irregular, the site will have to deal with the growing risks associated with the flooding of land and residential areas and with bank erosion.

EXPECTATIONS AND PROGRAMME GUIDELINES

With respect to the Minoterie d'Arki site, the teams will be asked to explore, redefine or devise a new programme for the site, linking it to the town and the Nive, and improving the spaces and legacy features of the site. As a reminder, plans are currently being considered to transform the site with a mixed programme of higher education, third-party premises and housing. The teams are invited to revise this programme in whole or in part.

At the Gravière Errepiragaraia site, the priority will be to rethink the way the site sits into its environment, its accessibility and its use (particularly for recreational purposes), with a view to protecting its ecological qualities. All in all, the aim is to arrive at a coherent plan for a unique and accessible site in terms of the pathways along the Nive and access both from the market town of Ustaritz and from the wider area.



THE BANKS OF THE EYHERABERRY ALLEY

SAINT-JEAN-PIED-DE-PORT - PONT D'EYHERABERRY PROJECT SITE

RE-IMAGINING COEXISTENCE WITH FLORA AND FAUNA WITH A VIEW TO FUTURE USES OF THE SITE

Eyheraberry bridge and the banks of the Nive, a popular spot with growing visitor numbers

Spanning the River Nive above the town centre of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Eyheraberry bridge and the tree-lined riverbanks are an increasingly popular spot for the town's residents. Frequented all year round by locals and pilgrims on the Pilgrim's Way to Santiago de Compostela (the "Camino"), in summer it becomes a place to cool off under the trees and near the water, close to the town centre. As a place for walks, picnics and wild swimming, it is becoming increasingly popular, particularly since the lockdowns of 2020. Today, the municipality receives applications from voluntary groups to host events on the site. Aware of the site's qualities, the local authority would like to adapt these areas to the growing number of visitors, so as to be able to better accommodate these multiple uses and provide venues for cultural events and associations.

Highly artificial riverbanks with diminished ecological qualities

Although the areas adjacent to the Eyheraberry bridge and the riverbanks are appreciated by local residents for their accessibility and park-like landscapes, they offer little room for real biodiversity. The artificialization of the site and the control of tree growth on the banks in favour of lawns more suited to human use, rather than alluvial woodland, reduce the site's potential ecological value. In addition, the bathing that takes place on the site in summer, despite the fact that bathing is forbidden on the whole waterway, results in the trampling of vegetation and disturbance to fauna in the water and on the banks, and undermines the quality of the water. Finally, although the waterway presents a particular ecological challenge for fish with the return of Atlantic salmon, its stocking with brown trout for recreational purposes for anglers has no impact on the ecological quality of the site.

Re-imagining coexistence

The site therefore stands at the crossroads of the town centre and the Nive ecological network. However, its current situation, the growing number of visitors and its future as a host location for cultural and voluntary group events raise the question of how these spaces can be shared between humans and flora and fauna. With changes to the site and increasing numbers of visitors, there is a risk of further



EYHERABERRY BRIDGE

decline in its ecological qualities. This raises the question of how to design spaces that will facilitate future coexistence between more intensive human use and greater and more sustained biodiversity. The aim is to develop and manage the site in such a way as to preserve its natural habitats, while at the same time offering a space that can be used by the town and its residents as a future venue for events and festivals. This issue of coexistence also has an educational dimension, to make users aware of the ecological values of the site and to involve them in protecting its flora and fauna.

A COHERENT APPROACH TO A SITE WITH MULTIPLE USES, FROM TOURISM TO LOCAL EVENTS

A site with a variety of uses and many recent, ongoing and planned transformations

The project site brings together multiple uses and programmes, including different types of facilities and public spaces: the municipal campsite, the fronton, the Mendiguren Citadel and its landscaped surround, the car parks below the ramparts and the tree-lined banks of the River Nive. As a beneficiary of the Small Towns of Tomorrow programme, Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port municipality is engaged in a number of projects to transform public spaces in order to adapt the town centre to the growing numbers of tourists and to rethink the role of the car. The conversion of the covered market and work on the Place Charles de Gaulle to form a more tree-lined square with traffic calming measures are one example of the dynamic action being undertaken by the municipality and its desire to reduce the impact of cars on public spaces. Discussions are also underway on the transformation of Place Jean de Huarte. A development project for the Sainte Eulalie sector, located to the west of the historic Ugange district, aims to transform the area, which is currently used for agricultural purposes, into a mixed-use sector comprising mainly housing, communities and public spaces, with a view to developing the walking and cycling network. Finally, the municipality is considering the creation of a municipal museum on the history of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, which could be housed in one of the buildings in Rue de la Citadelle and possibly also in the Porte d'Espagne building.

The need for overall coherence

In this context of multiple uses and projects, no global study has been conducted on the site. Although the concentration of programmes now seems to have reached a balance in the sense of functioning without any major conflicts of use, there is still a need to tackle the growth in tourism and the number of people using the riverbanks. On the other hand, the desire to develop the walking and cycling network, from the large scale of the Nive to the smaller scale of the town centre and the historic site, leads us to question the existing roads and the priority currently

SITE FOLDER



THE DIFFERENT PROGRAMS
AND SPACE OF THE PROJECT
SITE IN SAINT-JEAN-PIED-
DE-PORT

assigned to the different modes of transport. On this question, certain areas, such as the car parks below the ramparts, have not yet been considered, despite their potential landscape qualities.

A cross-fertilisation of uses on the historic site of the Citadelle and its surroundings

The main tourist attractions in St-Jean-Pied-de-Port are the old town and its cobbled streets, Porte Saint-Jacques, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, its position as a major stopover on the pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela, and the fortified citadel on Mendiguren hill overlooking the River Nive. The latter, built around 1625 on the site of the former stronghold of the Kings of Navarre and modified by Vauban, has been occupied by a state secondary school since the 1960s. While the site and its underground passages, which can be visited, are part of the tourist itinerary, the citadel and its surroundings are the daily haunt of schoolchildren and town centre residents. The landscape surrounding the Citadel has undergone some development, in particular to provide sports grounds, but most of the site is woodland between the fortified enclosure and the banks of the Nive. Under these conditions, and in view of the development of tourism, the municipality is keen to strike a balance between enhancing the site for tourism, making it practical and comfortable for everyday use by residents and users, and protecting the biodiversity of the surrounding area.

EXPECTATIONS AND PROGRAMME GUIDELINES

On the Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port site, the teams will be asked to maintain the existing programmes and to explore their spatial and functional potential, to arrive at a coherent global vision and to consider the public spaces that structure and characterise this sector in the context of its development and overcrowding challenges. They are also free to propose new uses and programmes for the site, provided that these do not replace the ones already in place. The development project for the Sainte Eulalie sector should be considered by the candidates as a one-off project. The teams will also be able to include proposals for a municipal museum on the history of Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, which is currently under consideration. Finally, if it makes sense as part of a coherent global project, they are free to propose a new programme for the vacant house at 2 rue d'Espagne, which is owned by the municipality.



THE YOANAHERRENIA PATH

PROJECT SITE

VILLEFRANQUE - TOW-PATH

CREATING LINKS BETWEEN THE TOWN CENTRE AND THE NIVE

A town centre structured around 3 developing hubs

Villefranque currently has around 3000 inhabitants, but its population is steadily growing. Its rural character, despite its proximity to Bayonne and the coast, has long made it an attractive place to live. The challenge for local councillors is to keep population growth under control so as not to damage the landscape and the town's quality of life. The town's position offers a view of the valley from the hilltop neighbourhoods as well as from the elevated town centre. This forms 3 main hubs:

- First, the town hall-fronton hub, which is currently being redeveloped, which is home to a concentration of shops on the D137.
- Second, a number of amenities include two elementary schools (public and private), a school canteen, a "community centre" for voluntary groups and a bar-restaurant, a health centre (Osasuna centre) and a senior living facility (Oihanbaster) comprising 20 social housing units. These amenities are grouped around a landscaped public area.
- Third, the church and its surroundings.

A fourth hub, below the town on the banks of the Nive, accessible from the town centre via a small, winding road with a steep gradient, is home to the railway station and the dance hall.

Current projects to develop the town centre

A number of projects have recently been completed or are underway, evidence of the municipality's dynamic momentum:

- Renovation and refurbishment of the town hall and the adjoining Labia centre: work is currently underway on this project, which entails renovating and extending the existing town hall on the first floor of the Maison Labia, creating shops on the ground floor and a Maison d'assistantes maternelles (childminder



THE TOWPATH

unit), as well as creating a forecourt in front of the town hall.

- Landscaping and planting of the station car park.
- Setting up a crèche: a feasibility study is currently underway to look at the possibility of setting up a crèche in the existing amenities cluster, in order to expand the existing range of municipal facilities.
- Creation of “BRS” housing: the former Mendiburua farmhouse has been converted into 10 apartments, a home ownership solution based on a bail réel solidaire (BRS) to provide affordable housing for young people.

Lastly, the councillors are considering the future of the abandoned and dilapidated building opposite the church, at the foot of the staircase. One option would be to demolish it in order to create a wider forecourt in front of the church, but this solution does not seem to be acceptable to the ABF (architects responsible for heritage protection). Further consideration could be given to this point.

Topography offering views over the Nive but complicating access between the market town and the banks of the Nive

A major issue on this site concerns the access routes and paths between the hubs, as well as between the town centre and the banks of the Nive. While Villefranque’s lower neighbourhoods developed close to the river, the town centre is completely cut off from it. The lack of specific facilities and the topography accentuate this divide.

IMAGINING THE RIVERBANKS AS A SPACE THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE TOWN AND SURROUNDING AREAS

The towpath

The Chemin de Halage is a 12.3km path on the left bank of the River Nive, linking Bayonne to Ustaritz, running through a natural landscape punctuated by fields, woodland and a few buildings in flood-prone areas. This historic path has gradually become a leisure destination for locals and tourists alike, offering opportunities for walking, cycling and other forms of green transport. Used on a daily basis, by bike for commuting to work, or in the evenings and at weekends by walkers and sports enthusiasts, it is now very popular and has become a major public space in the area. Regularly swamped by increasingly frequent flooding, it is gradually deteriorating, particularly as a result of erosion. The European teams will therefore be expected to review the nature and future of this key pathway within their projects.



USES ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVER AND THE POLARITIES OF THE TOWN CENTER OF USTARITZ

A potential loop to consider

Opposite, on the other bank, there are occasional and discontinuous roads or paths, notably between Bayonne and Villefranque. The municipal team has considered the possibility of creating a loop on either side of the Nive between Bayonne and Villefranque, although no concrete plans have yet been defined. The councillors are exploring the feasibility of this approximately 14 km loop, as well as the nature of this area, the associated uses and the possibilities offered by this potential new route. While several sections of the route appear to be easy to establish (small roads or existing paths or along the edges of fields), there is a stretch on the section between the Pasarela dance hall and the Mendiberria path, running for around 300 m, which is problematic because of the proximity of the railway line and the Nive.

First uses on the Nive

The Pasarela dance hall is located on the right bank of the River Nive, in the town of Villefranque. It is in the immediate vicinity of Villefranque station and accessible from the Chemin de Halage via a footbridge. It was built in 2021 and has been open every year since then, during the summer season. It is the only guinguette (open-air dancefloor) of its type on the banks of the Nive and is very popular. Located in a flood zone and within the Naturaz000 perimeter, it has been designed as a light, removable facility: a wooden floor and awning where tables and chairs are laid out every year, and two mobile homes, which are only present during the opening period, ensure that the site can be used for catering.

EXPECTATIONS AND PROGRAMME GUIDELINES

On the Villefranque site, the teams will need to think about the development of the sector comprising the town centre, the Nive and the towpath on the opposite bank, notably asking questions about:

The links between the town centre and the Nive, taking into account the challenges of topography and access to the banks of the Nive despite the presence of the railway, and incorporating the projects already engaged by the municipality.

The development and future of the towpath, assuming the creation of a cycling loop and using the site as a pilot project to devise sustainable solutions to riverbank erosion.

Complementarities and spatial aspects of the four existing hubs in the town centre.



LISTS OF DOCUMENTS TO DOWNLOAD

Reflection site - background plan (ai + pdf)

FR-LA_NIVE-SS-M1

Project sites - base of plans (dwg + dxf)

FR-LA_NIVE_SAINTE_JEAN_PIED_DE_PORT-PS-M1

FR-LA_NIVE_USTARITZ-PS-M1

FR-LA_NIVE_VILLEFRANQUE-PS-M1

Sainte-Jean-Pied-de-Port project site - terrestrial and drone photos (jpg)

De FR-LA_NIVE_SAINTE_JEAN_PIED_DE_PORT-PS-P1

à FR-LA_NIVE_SAINTE_JEAN_PIED_DE_PORT-PS-P30

De FR-LA_NIVE_SAINTE_JEAN_PIED_DE_PORT-AP-P1

à FR-LA_NIVE_SAINTE_JEAN_PIED_DE_PORT-AP-P18

Ustaritz project site - terrestrial and drone photos (jpg)

De FR-LA_NIVE_USTARITZ-PS-P1

à FR-LA_NIVE_USTARITZ-PS-P34

De FR-LA_NIVE_USTARITZ-AP-P1

à FR-LA_NIVE_USTARITZ-AP-P28

Villefranque project site - terrestrial and drone photos (jpg)

De FR-LA_NIVE_VILLEFRANQUE-PS-P1

à FR-LA_NIVE_VILLEFRANQUE-PS-P21

De FR-LA_NIVE_VILLEFRANQUE-AP-P1

à FR-LA_NIVE_VILLEFRANQUE-AP-P19

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