
PRO-SUD. Concept note for [LIFE-2023-CET-LOCAL \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

PROSUD is the syndicate of 11 municipalities of the southern region of Luxembourg and coordinator of the Minett UNESCO Biosphere (MUB). October 2020, the region has officially joined the World Network of Biosphere Reserves as part of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

To be internationally recognised as a biosphere reserve, territories must have features that demonstrate the impact humans have on nature. Biosphere's sites are used to test and develop methods that reduce the impact of socioeconomic activity on the environment and inspire collective action.

Geography

- A surface of 200 km²
- Over 180 000 citizens (almost a third of the country's population)
- An average density of 884 citizens/km²
- Almost 150 nationalities and 45,23 % foreign residents
- A changing urban region that is proud of its mining past
- Over 600 hectares of industrial wastelands being renovated in urban centres
- Almost 7.000 headquarters
- 51 % jobs are held by cross-border workers
- Natural spaces protected on a national and communal level since the 1990s
- A region bordering France and Belgium

Biodiversity

Minett UNESCO Biosphere features cuestas and a variety of landscapes and ecosystems; orchards, calcareous grasslands, lowland hay meadows, alluvial and ravine forests and wet Calthion meadows are home to fauna and flora that need to be preserved. When the mines were shut down, a special type of flora and fauna started to develop there, including orchids, butterflies, bats, amphibians, lizards, reptiles, and birds. This environment is surrounded by human activity which needs to be made more sustainable without expanding it to preserve these natural areas.

Working area:

- **Strengthen the regional collaboration between the 11 municipalities for a sustainable spatial planning development.**
- Set up a research programme together with scientific regional partners;
- To promote environmental education at school and citizens' active participation;
- Promote and protect industrial, natural, and cultural heritage;
- Boost sustainable tourism and local food production.

Minett UNESCO Biosphere Carbon Neutral by 2050: a regional concept and a shared vision

In joining the UNESCO'S Man and the Biosphere programme in 2020, PRO-SUD has shown leadership by recognising the importance of the relationship between the environment, nature, climate, and society. The next step is to become net carbon neutral by 2050. Such a move will have multi-scalar impacts at local, regional, and international levels. Creating green and airflow corridors, moving towards active and sustainable mobility, and implementing sustainable local energy solutions will engage and improve



the quality of life of citizens. This resilient energy independence will contribute to the EU's goal of being a climate neutral continent by 2050.

However, the energy transition from predominantly fossil fuelled to tomorrow's renewable energy driven world will require in-depth understanding of the complex socio-technical system. From a societal perspective, we will need to listen to stakeholders, and citizens to explore social acceptance and preferences, and co-create solutions. From an engineering and infrastructure perspective, we need to develop detailed power calculations to estimate current use and predict future demands of residential, commercial, local government, industry and transport sectors enabling the calculation of investment and running costs for new renewable energy infrastructure. Spatial planning will be required to understand where to develop new and adapt existing infrastructure with respect to its social and environmental impact. Additionally, education and behavioural change initiatives will be required to encourage support from citizens, public servants, and politicians. Finally, a priority-based action plan is required to drive forward the transition.

Partner: Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (LIST)

Potential additional partner: The University of Luxembourg has expertise in energy, geo-spatial planning, co-creation, energy education, traffic planning, and digital engineering amongst others. Contacts: [Prof Phil Dale](#), Prof. [Catherine Jones](#)

April 21st: PRO-SUD 20th anniversary. The 11 mayors, Minister Joëlle Welfring, Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development and Minister Claude Turmes, Energy and Spatial planning, gathered to sign a "[declaration of Intent](#)" Powering the "net-zero carbon: a road map towards a more sustainable region".

PRO-SUD's main Objective in the call: [to develop a regional Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan \(SECAP\)](#)

Step 1: Order of magnitude feasibility study.

Evaluate energy needs, available resources, and expertise of PRO-SUD through personal interviews with stakeholders (including sustainability officers) of each commune. Calculate the minimum likely amount of new renewable energy infrastructure required and indicate potential location preferences for its deployment. Interviews by local experts

Step 2: Present results and preliminary action plan.

Present initial findings at a conference attended by decision-makers and technical staff from PRO-SUD to help co-create the future Biosphere Net Zero journey.

Step 3: Co-creating The Minett UNESCO Biosphere Net Zero journey.

Develop 3 to 5 carbon neutral scenarios. Conduct a detailed study of the location-allocation of new infrastructure using co-creation methods prioritising preferences of the communes, action groups such as TMEnercoop, as well as providers such as CREOS, SUD Energie and SUD Stroum.

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<https://minett-biosphere.com/en/>