



Acceleration programme for the roll-out of climate solutions in the Dunkirk area

Nearly 400,000 inhabitants
more than 100 municipalities

Background

- In 2024, the Institute for Climate Economics (I4CE) estimated that local authorities would need to invest €21 billion a year between 2024 and 2030 to meet carbon-neutrality targets — twice as much as in 2023. With local authority budgets under pressure, turning to the private sector and trialling bold projects is one response to the climate emergency.
- Backed financially by the Communauté urbaine de Dunkerque, the Grand Port Maritime de Dunkerque, the Communauté de Communes des Hauts de Flandre and the CCI Littoral Hauts-de-France, together with a network of more than 120 companies and partners, ÉcosystèmeD drives the sustainable transformation of the area and supports businesses with their setup, innovation or development projects.
- Winner of the Territoire d'Industrie Aa – Dunkerque – Flandre label, which also includes Cœur de Flandre Agglomération and the Communauté de Communes de la Région d'Audruicq, ÉcosystèmeD drives momentum across an area of close to 400,000 inhabitants spread over more than a hundred municipalities, united around the challenges of one of Europe's largest industrial and port-energy hubs and the farmland of the Houtland.
- Openness to innovative climate solutions ("Open Innovation") brought forward by French and European start-ups and SMEs is part of the environmental policy with international reach championed by the Dunkirk area.
- This initiative fits a context conducive to raising public awareness of the need to change our behaviour in order to protect our remarkable environment, as illustrated by the various publications of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), in particular its Sixth Assessment Report.
- The aim is to identify, support and trial, across our local areas, solutions with proven technology and established viability — corresponding to Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) above 8 — so that they can be scaled up to deliver a significant impact towards the ultimate goal of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, adapting to climate change, and preserving biodiversity and resources.
- While cities today cover only 2% of the planet's surface, they produce 80% of CO2 emissions and consume

75% of the world's energy. Their ecological footprint extends well beyond the strict geographical limits of their territories: their impact is felt both through the use of land for urban infrastructure (housing, networks, facilities, factories, transport corridors, etc.) and through the widespread environmental changes brought about by their production, transport and consumption activities.

- Against this backdrop, players in the Dunkirk ecosystem wanted to contribute to a wider effort to support the swift roll-out of directly effective solutions for tackling climate change, by setting up an accelerator dedicated to environmental solutions.
- In particular, solutions will be sought to address industry's challenges in preserving water resources, energy circularity and the electrification of uses, as well as decarbonisation. Indeed, the ecological and energy transition is a territorial issue: it calls for local authorities and industrial players to work together towards shared objectives.

Among the actions already under way in the Dunkirk area, the following can be noted in particular:

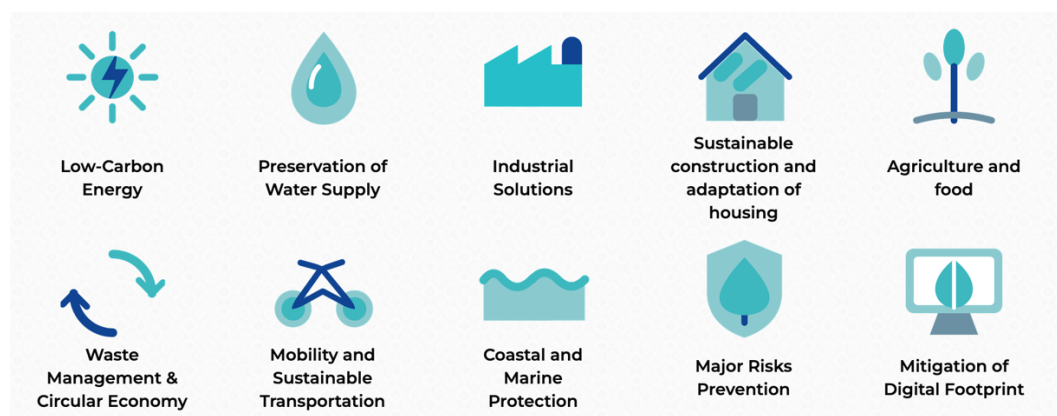
- Rolling out a bold prevention and action strategy for adapting to climate change across the industrial and port complex, involving the whole Dunkirk ecosystem;
- Urban and industrial energy recovery achievements and projects, notably the urban heating network (RCU) and the industrial heating network (RCI);
- A water circularity strategy for industry;
- The reuse of treated water from the wastewater treatment plant;
- Improving waste collection, sorting and treatment;
- The launch of a zero-plastic plan;
- The creation of a pilot green hydrogen production unit, aimed in particular at powering the bus fleet.

Objectives

As the aim is to accelerate, trial and promote solutions with proven technology and established viability, successful candidates will take part in an acceleration programme focusing on presenting their solutions and business models, with a view to encouraging — where there is interest and wherever possible — deployment among member local authorities and industrial companies, using the most suitable arrangements.

Themes

The main themes selected are as follows:



And, more generally, any innovation that helps address the challenges of climate change. We are particularly interested in solutions for industry:

- on the industrial and port complex, historically an energy hub supplying steel and chemical sites, which in recent years has seen strong growth in the battery and logistics sectors,
- with a strong food and agriculture dimension in the Houtland.

Content and timetable

The programme comprises 3 phases:

1. Identifying climate solutions from 7 September to 15 October 2026

- The aim is to identify bold solutions developed by innovative start-ups and SMEs that can be implemented once stakeholders step outside their silos and rise to the challenges we face.
- Guided by local authorities, who express and confirm how well the solutions identified meet their needs, we draw on an ecosystem and a panel made up of recognised partners.

2. Acceleration from 4 November to 11 December 2026

The content of the acceleration programme covers the following elements:

November:

- Understanding the fundamentals of the solution (value proposition, key benefits, etc.);
- Analysis of the solution's benefit/cost ratio and its business model;
- Coaching in the oral presentation of solutions;
- Recording a pitch video.

December:

- Pitching solutions on 11 December 2026 to technical managers from local authorities and from large companies that are both partners and present in the area;
- One-to-one meetings on 11 December with technical managers from local authorities, public and private partners, and large local industrial companies, to discuss uses and technological solutions;
- Preparing potential trials.

3. Follow-up of interactions between stakeholders (December 2026 – March 2027)

We organise a three-month follow-up of interactions between, on one hand, innovative start-ups and SMEs, and on the other, local authorities and large companies. Without intruding on commercial confidentiality, this collaborative work helps ensure that the relationships formed are properly followed up.

Timetable at a glance:

- **From 7 September to 15 October 2026** : receipt of applications;
- **From 16 to 22 October 2026** : review of applications;
- **3 November 2026** : announcement of results;
- **From 4 November to 4 December 2026** : personalised preparation and support sessions — four remote working sessions with each successful start-up/SME;
- **11 December 2026** : 'Rencontres des solutions-climat' day in Dunkirk (morning: pitches; afternoon: pre-arranged one-to-one meetings) with all stakeholders;
- **D+10, D+30, M+3** : follow-up of the relationships initiated.

Eligible candidates

Any company incorporated within the European Union, Switzerland or the United Kingdom may take part in the Climate Solutions Acceleration Programme. The programme is aimed at start-ups, young companies and innovative SMEs with a TRL above 8 that are seeking greater exposure.

Responding to the call for expressions of interest

On <https://www.rsclimat.com/dunkerque-lenergie-creative/> or <https://www.rsclimat.com/dunkerquois>, simply fill in the online form and upload a document presenting your organisation. Expressions of interest are accepted on a rolling basis, no later than 15/10/2026.

For further information: contact@asclimat.com

Local institutional stakeholders



National institutional partner



Main industrial partners



Development partner



Ecosystem labels

