

# Energy transition and public debate

## OHM territories as spaces for observation and comparison

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### "Energy transition" Session

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Inter-Disciplinary Research Facility on Human-Environment Interactions - ANR-11-LABX-0010  
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# Introduction

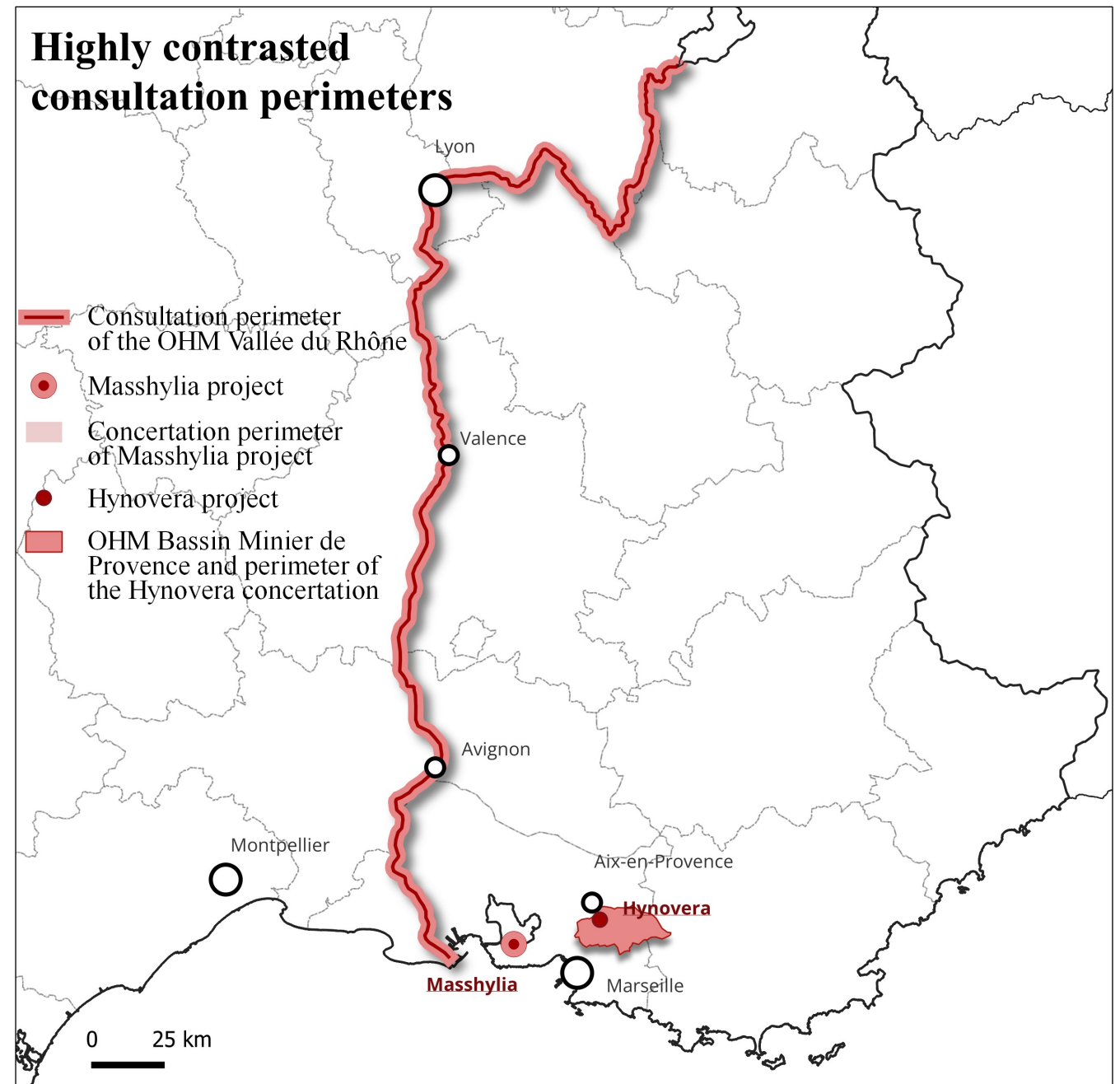
- Comparison of the public debates organized by the national commission for public debate on several OHM territories
- About which energy project? Which debates?
- Analysis of the debates according to previous mobilizations in the territories
- Links with the researchers and the “founding element” of the concerned OHMs

# The national commission for public debate (CNDP)

- Created in 1995 (loi Barnier) / French Ministry of Environment
- Public participation in major projects with a significant impact on the environment or land use
- Designation of guarantors

# Research fields

- Hynovera project in the OHM Bassin Minier de Provence: 17 municipalities between Aix-en-Provence and Marseille
- Masshyla project at the La Mède oil plant, Chateauf-neuf-les-Martigues
- OHM Vallée du Rhône: 812 km from Lake Geneva to the Mediterranean



# Research materials

- Study of official documents accessible on the consultation sites :
  - presentation of projects and meetings,
  - reports of the guarantors,
  - stakeholder's booklets,
  - individual contributions
  - verbatims
- Attendance at public debate meetings
- video recording of meetings
- semi-directive interviews

**= a large amount of data  
available for qualitative  
processing**

# OHM BMP : a public debate on an industrial project

Closure of the coal-fired power plant of Provence in 2021 : discussions on industrial conversion projects.

Since 2018 : **Hynovera** project under study (hy2gen) □ To produce **synthetic biofuels** for aviation and marine applications, with intermediate production of hydrogen.

Large-scale project (25 000 t/y kerosene and 70 000 t/y methanol) □ justifies a public debate en the immediate surroundings of the plant (nov. 2022)





# Topic of the public debate at La Mède

- 31 january - 10 march 2022
- Content of the project for 2026:
  - 125 MW electrolyser for 50 tons of green hydrogen per day
  - 100,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year saved
- Phase 1 :
  - hydrogen production for the needs of the biofuel manufacturing process,
  - mobility purposes
  - Hydrogen storage
- Phase 2 :
  - developing a large-scale hydrogen "platform"
  - development of a "Hydrogen Valley" linking different hydrogen production basins.



# Topic of the public debate at the OHM VR

Rhône Concession established in 1933 ending December 31, 2023, extended for 18 years

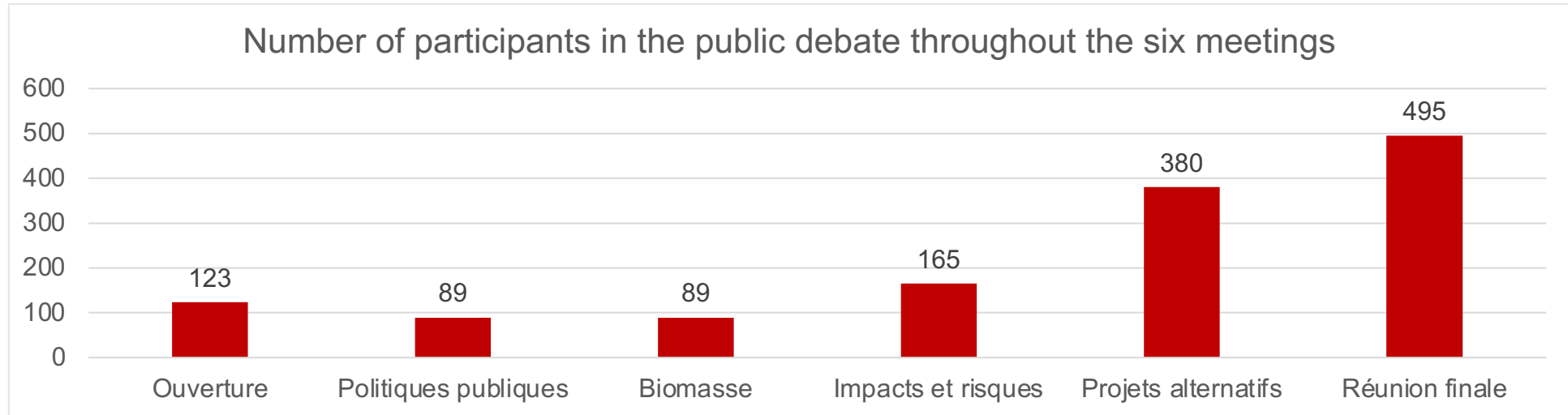
Commitments of €160 million per five-year period, for actions in favor of renewable electricity production, navigation, irrigation, the environment and the economic, local and tourist development of the regions (CNR website).







# The public debate in BMP, an arena for discussion ?



- Elected officials and local authorities
- Absence of the worker's unions
- Mainly local residents and environmental associations
- Many newcomers and long-time residents (mostly working people and retirees)
- Large mobilization in parallel with the debate (leaflets, discussion groups, posters, manifestations...)

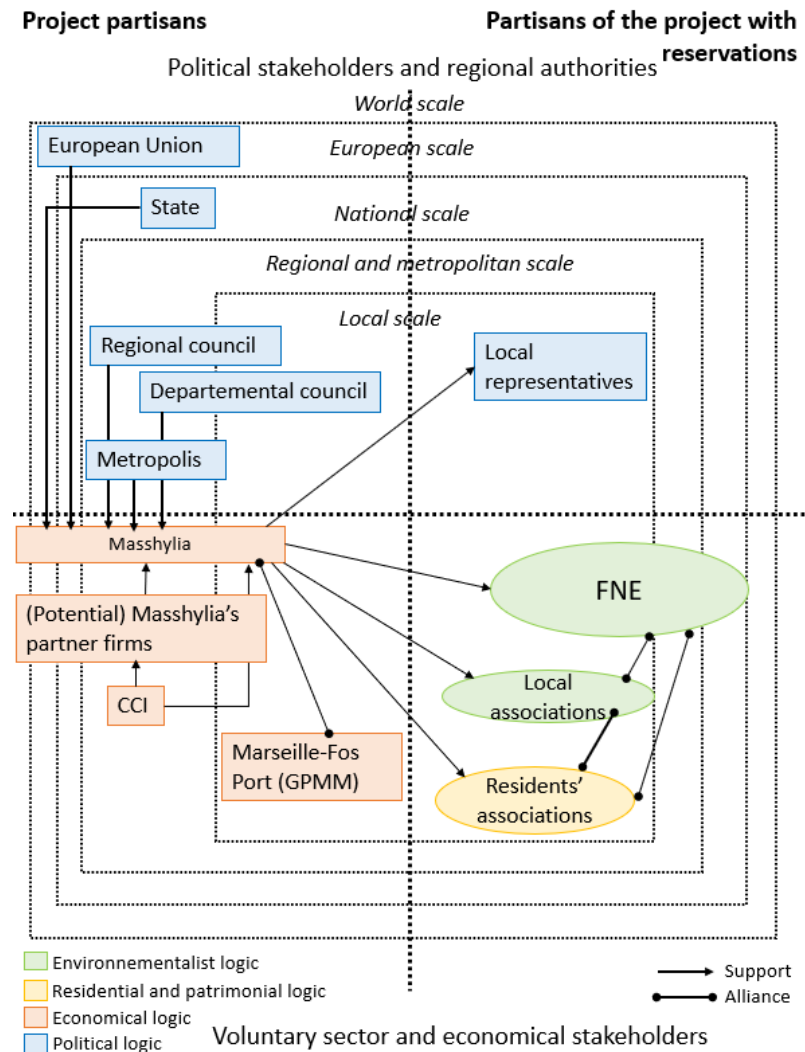


# The public debate, an arena for discussion ?

Particularities of the debates :

- Poor representation of local residents
- Absence of the TotalEnergies biorefinery unions

The debates do not seem to have raised strong opposition to the project.





# The public debate, an arena for discussion ?

## Actors' booklets (n=67)

20 territorial development players: local collectivities, land management syndicates, PNR

15 Associations, environmental (9) and fishing (6)

10 chambers of agriculture, irrigation associations

10 Energy, syndicate, other operator

## Individual contributions (n=75)

74% men, 15% women , 11% na

38% : local elected officials

30% : individuals

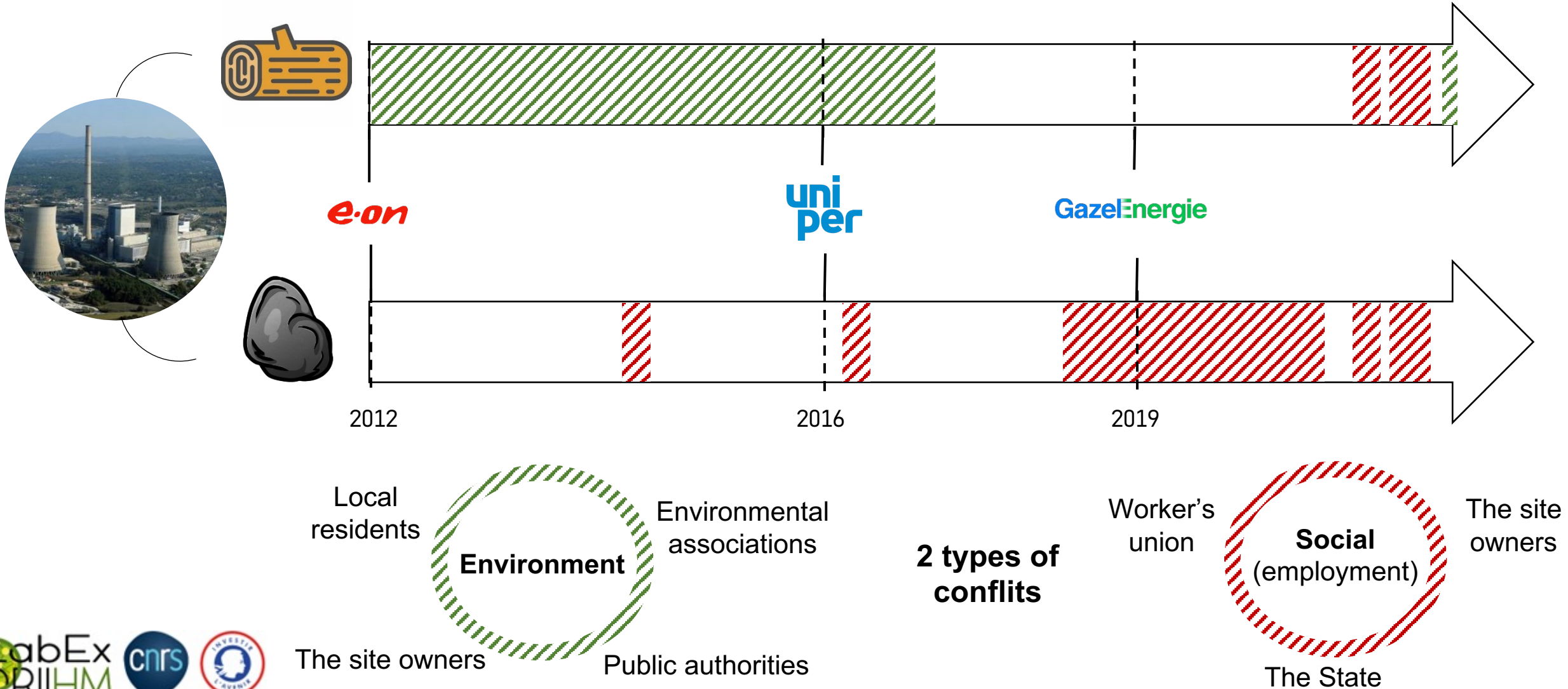
15% : organizations

10% : associations

A system used by **certain "mature" male social groups in the Rhône region, organized and structured.**

A democracy **more representative than participatory** (no parity, expertise...)

# BMP : An industrial site that has been the focus of conflict for over ten years





## La Mède : Integration into older territorial mobilizations

- Refinery since 1935
- Two major recent conflicts:
  - **2010** : mobilisation of residents against the terms of the Technological risk prevention plan (PPRT) of the Total refinery → **financial and security reasons**
  - **2020**: mobilisation of residents and local and national associations against the use of palm oil by the Total biorefinery → **environmental reasons**
- With Masshyla :
  - reduction of the PPRT
  - reduction in environmental risks





## VR : Integration into older territorial mobilizations

- Weak mobilization compared with the 1970s (anti-nuclear) and 1980s (anti-dam)
- Expression of opposition to the Saint-Romain en Jalionas hydroelectric dam project

17 « Actors' booklets » (out of 67)

Local elected representatives and environmental associations



## Link with the work of the OHM BMP

- Recognition of OHM's skills and legitimacy in dealing with these issues
- The consultation sheds light on the obstacles and challenges of the energy transition in the BMP region, a fact that has been a cornerstone of the OHM for 20 years



## Link with the work of the OHM Rhône Valley

- Dam project under appraisal / collective positioning under discussion
- Founding event: the advent of sustainable river management / energy transition versus ecological transition in a context of climate change



# Conclusion

- The territories of the OHM are subject to major projects, indicative of energy and environmental policies
- Strong reactivity to set up a study on localized public debates : better understanding of the debate with knowledge of the territory
- Interest of a comparative approach to compare public consultation processes : gradient of local involvement *versus* industrial integration