

EN

IBA Alzette Belval  
Les fondements\*  
The foundations

*\* Fondement (Foundation): 1. The basis or essential element on which everything else is based; the principles on which a system is founded. 2. Sound reason that underpins the reality of something and justifies it.*



This document summarises the work carried out during the IBA Alzette Belval prefiguration mission launched in January 2020. This project was conducted with the support of and investment from the following partners:

- The Alzette Belval European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)
- Luxembourg University
- The French Ministry of Ecological Transition and Solidarity
- The Grand Est Region
- The Luxembourg Ministry of Energy and Spatial Planning
- The Luxembourg Ministry of Housing
- The Alzette Belval Public Development Agency (PDA)
- The Luxembourg Center for Architecture



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## Cross-border management in the interests of a common urban and architectural future



### Pierre-Marc KNAFF, President of the Alzette Belval EGTC

On 30 January 2020, the Alzette Belval EGTC together with the French Ministry for Ecological Transition, the Ministry of Energy and Spatial Planning along with the Ministry of Housing of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Grand Est Region, Luxembourg University, the Alzette Belval PDA and the Luxembourg Centre for Architecture announced their intention to promote the development and spatial planning of the French-Luxembourg region of Alzette Belval by undertaking an IBA prefiguration process. After more than 2 years of reflection, production, meetings and discussions, we can now publish the findings.

The prefiguration mission and its summary entitled, "The Alzette Belval IBA foundations", drawn up on the basis of all the work undertaken by the various partners involved, now allow us to target our reflection and consider the future of Alzette Belval as a more resilient, more citizen-focused and more integrated urban development. It is now up to us to put these ideas into practice in the form of definite projects and cross-border ventures! The challenge of joining forces to commit ourselves to a more sustainable and resilient future is no mean feat, but the Alzette Belval EGTC, with the support of its partners, remains mobilised on a daily basis for every project that will benefit the region and its residents.

Audun-le-Tiche, on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'A' followed by a series of loops and a final flourish.

### **\_Internationale Bauausstellung \_ IBA\_ (International Business Exhibition) - an innovative tool**

The IBA (Internationale Bauausstellung) (International Business Exhibition) concept first appeared in Germany in the early XXth century, more precisely in 1901, in Darmstadt, on the occasion of *"Ein Dokument Deutscher Kunst"* (A Document of German Art). The first architectural exhibition designed as part of the movement to reshape lifestyles by combining urban planning, building construction, interior design and the design of everyday items. It went from being a simple exhibition with international appeal to a real tool for architectural and urban experimentation geared towards a specific territorial context.

The aim is to instil a **"new way of doing things"**. The practices can focus just as much on spatial planning and development as on "governance".

Successful experiences confirm the relevance of the IBA as a method to devise projects tailored to the needs of a region. The landscape and architectural renewal of the deindustrialised Emscher region (IBA Emscher Park 1989-1999), the redesign of the Berlin district of Kreuzberg by and for the residents (IBA Berlin 1979-1984/1987) or the deepening of cross-border planning cooperation in Basel (IBA BASEL 2010-2020) are clear proof of this.

## A development in the France-Luxembourg region requested by the States and an IBA Alzette Belval prefiguration mission to sign the deal

### Laurent TOUVET, Prefect of Moselle



Growing economic interdependence between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the territories of Lorraine has placed cross-border public policies at the forefront of discussions for a decade. The primary objective of the proposals put forward by the France-Luxembourg Intergovernmental Commission is to rapidly improve the living conditions of border workers and residents.

The plethora of projects on either side of the border, and particularly around Esch-sur-Alzette, bears testimony to the desire to adapt to this new cross-border situation. However, the co-development model that we are calling for is demanding. It requires citizens to sign up to a new common narrative.

A region in full post-industrial and demographic transition, Alzette Belval is also fuelled by strong cross-border ambitions that single it out to host the boldest projects. Its development as a cross-border conurbation is actively supported by the State, a founding member and financial partner of the Alzette Belval EGTC. Furthermore, the urban metamorphosis of this former mining and steel-making area is feasible because of the many wastelands available on either side of the border. This region has now been labelled an Operation of National Interest. Finally, Esch2022 European Capital of Culture places Alzette Belval at the epicentre of a potentially sustainable and dynamic cultural revival.

The IBA and Atelier des Territoires (Territorial Workshop) strategies thus provide a source of inspiration for pursuing Alzette Belval's vocation as a cross-border think-tank. Above all, these reflections could herald a new culture in French-Luxembourg relations. The intuition of Moselle citizen, Robert Schuman, on the topic

of "de facto solidarity" arising from "concrete achievements" was basically no different.

### Claude TURMES, Minister for Energy and Spatial Planning, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg



The work carried out as part of the IBA Alzette Belval prefiguration mission has highlighted the key features of our cross-border conurbation. The objectives and avenues for exploration that have been identified with all stakeholders, are intrinsic elements of a resolutely sustainable regional approach. In a bid to achieve these objectives, political leaders are keen to incorporate the development of this region in an experimental urban process conducted in the spirit of open governance and involving our fellow citizens whose sense of belonging to this space will inevitably be more deeply rooted.

The development of the Alzette Belval EGTC must go hand in hand with the dynamic driving force behind ongoing quality projects in the Southern Region, namely UNESCO Man and Biosphere, the Metzschmelz revitalisation projects, ESCH2022, the concepts of Luxembourg in Transition and Territorial Vision, in order to lend additional impetus to existing joint ventures and reshape the future of our cross-border conurbation.

We are aiming to make this region with all of its human, economic, ecological, cultural and urban qualities coupled with its forestry and water resources, a cross-border conurbation par excellence, ever mindful of its environment and focused on enhancing the quality of life of its residents.

## Converging expectations...

### **Franck LEROY, President of the Grand Est Region**



The prefiguration mission of the Alzette Belval IBA is the witness of a multi-partner cooperation at the service of the planning and development of this cross-border area. Our Collectivity is therefore proud to support the IBA approach, which contributes to making this territory an innovative and ambitious border experimentation region. Our support is in line with our strategy of sustainable development and economic development of the territory, also supported by the OIN Alzette-Belval.

In a changing societal context precipitated by the climate emergency, it seems more than necessary to draw up urban development projects that are responsible, affordable and sustainable for the inhabitants. In this sense, the EGTC is an exemplary platform for dialogue between French and Luxembourg partners committed to meeting the challenge of land sobriety in a context of post-industrial and demographic transitions.

### **Henri KOX, Housing Minister, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg**

We are currently experiencing a housing crisis in the current context of rising interest rates and ever-increasing rents. The aim is to achieve the right to housing for all. Thus the massive increase in affordable and sustainable public housing is a matter of priority for the Ministry of Housing, and is in the interest of the greater region.

The stakes are high in the current growth context. The densification of urban centres in general, and of a cross-border conurbation in particular, must go hand in hand with urban quality, by erecting buildings suited to the urban context and promoting social cohesion. The mix of urban functions is vital in a bid to achieve the "quarter-hour city". Urban planning must also guarantee cross-border territorial and social cohesion.

Within the IBA Alzette Belval pre-configuration framework, an important foundation stone has been laid in the interests of cross-border co-operation with the involvement of Luxembourg University as scientific guarantor, in order to meet the challenge of strengthening cross-border links.



### **Patrick RISSER, President of the Community of Communes of the Pays Haut Val d'Alzette region**



The Pays Haut Val d'Alzette Community of Communes (CCPHVA) has been involved in promoting cooperation between France and Luxembourg through the EGTC since 2013.

We cannot envisage developing our region without in-depth and lasting collaboration with our Luxembourg neighbours. Our interdependencies are such that we cannot overlook them.

We can and must become an experimental zone which, subject to the priorities to be defined, allows the planning projects and collaboration discussed in various studies and analyses conducted during the IBA prefiguration phase to come to fruition.

The position of our territories within the Greater Region, in a functional zone defined by the Luxembourg State, at the heart of the Metropolitan Border hub, within the perimeter of a catchment area defined by the Grand Est Region, argues in favour of this experimental approach and subsequent spin-off.

The CCPHVA has initiated an approach to create a smart, connected region to serve an eco city (ECLOR platform). There are plenty of opportunities to pool ideas and take joint initiatives to make data serve the environment, biodiversity, the energy transition and the quality of life of our residents. "Esch 2022 European Capital of Culture" has clearly shown us that together we are better. We can and must corroborate this.

### **Damien NERKOWSKI, Director of the Alzette Belval EPA**

The Alzette Belval National Interest Operation focuses on a post-industrial and peri-urban border area undergoing major changes. By transforming industrial wastelands into eco-districts, the Public Development Agency is supporting its urban development plan by promoting sustainable development, taking up few natural spaces, and providing a quality living environment.

Led by the EGTC, the IBA prefiguration process provides an opportunity to focus even more clearly on the cross-border territory from a sustainable development perspective combining housing, services and economic activities within mixed districts.

In this respect, this document brings together concrete proposals in terms of the scope of potential projects and their correct implementation.



### **Professor Dr Stéphane PALLAGE, Rector of Luxembourg University**



The cross-border region of Alzette Belval faces numerous challenges: producing affordable, quality housing, bringing the most essential human functions closer together through urban proximity in order to reduce travel, enhancing public spaces and a shared cross-border geography, all without further soil sealing. Thus, an IBA could significantly contribute to meeting these challenges to combat global warming and offset the lack of resources. In order to do this, the IBA must be in a position to act as a relatively independent organisation whilst working closely with citizens and municipalities as well as local institutions. As a central scientific stakeholder in the region and a user of Belval, Luxembourg University will be able to apply its varied skill-set to assist in setting up and monitoring a high-quality IBA.

### **Maribel Casas, Scientific Director , luca – Luxembourg Center for Architecture**

The promotion of culture and quality architecture has driven luca's activities since its inception. From this perspective, an IBA appeared to be a tool particularly suited to the Luxembourg context, not only because of its extremely high standards, but also because it signals an approach that can be used to address local issues in an international context.

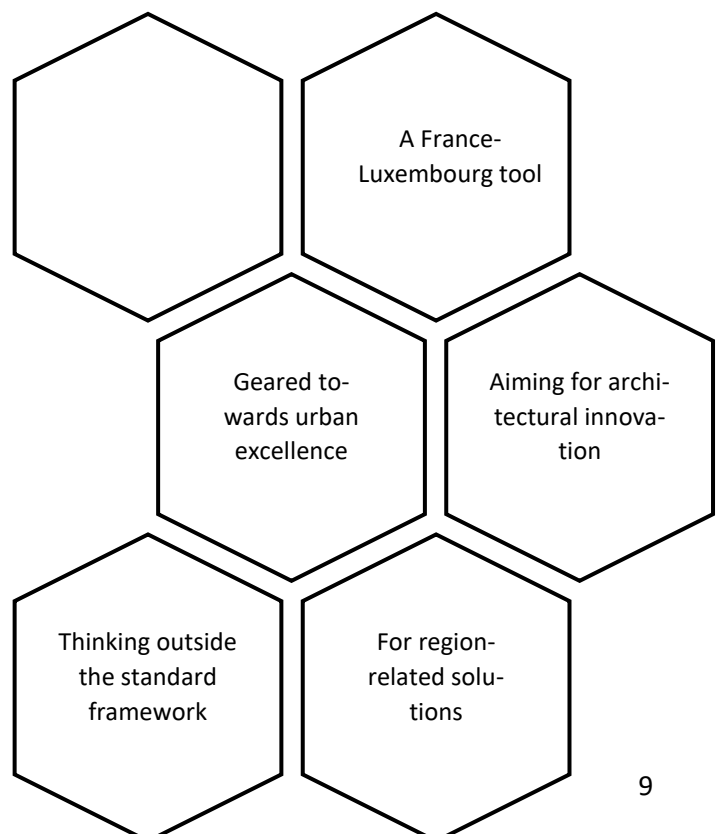
Historically, IBAs have provided remarkable testing grounds. Some campaigns such as Emscher Park (1989–1999) or even Berlin (1979–1987) have had a significant, sustainable impact on discussions surrounding architecture and urbanism, and have transformed the face of these cities forever.

Even if this prefiguration phase does not come to fruition today, it will at least have provided an insight into what an IBA actually represents in terms of due process, creating solid foundations for this tool to be put to good use at perhaps a more appropriate time.



## Towards a common goal: declaration of intent

- The IBA AB aims to respond to the urgent needs of the French-Luxembourg cross-border conurbation of Alzette Belval and the neighbouring territories, as well as to the major challenges posed by climate change, in particular, by introducing a new culture in terms of spatial planning/development and ecological transition.
- Focusing on the Alzette Belval EGTC, the IBA AB aims to enhance the cross-border green area of the Côtes du Dogger region - a unifying landscape providing common ground integrating ecological, productive and recreational spaces.
- The IBA AB seeks to incorporate in its processes a large number of individuals and stakeholders, both locally and outside the territory, in a bid to organise a qualitative cross-border way of life in a cooperative manner.
- The IBA AB aims to achieve the sustainable governance of its land, water, forestry, food and energy resources with the utmost respect for local biodiversity, and the measured development of the territory during and after the IBA momentum.
- Based on these foundations and because of the exemplary nature of its projects, the IBA AB aims to launch and consolidate an ambitious, innovative and experimental architectural and urban planning culture in the France-Luxembourg region.
- The IBA AB is a unique time capsule providing scope for real societal experiments





# Regards IBA sur un espace franco-luxembourgeois

## IBA Insights\* into a France-Luxembourg space

*\*Regard (Insight): Action of considering someone, way of learning something, attention paid to something.*



The IBA must focus on urgent challenges in terms of architecture, urban planning and spatial planning that arise from local and regional problems. IBA topics must therefore be driven by cause and location. Each prefiguration must therefore carefully define the territory concerned.

## **To the north of Lorraine, south of Luxembourg: a future region to be defined**

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The zone to be investigated in the IBA Alzette Belval prefiguration mission covered the western part of the French-Luxembourg border, from Longwy/Differdange in the west to Dudelange/Volmerange-les-Mines in the east. Indeed, given the development of the iron/steel and mining industries in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, this cross-border area witnessed unprecedented urbanisation, nestling amidst the valleys of a hillside landscape. This region has developed and gone from strength to strength over the years, culminating in the creation of several cross-border conurbations, the largest and most functional of which is Esch-sur-Alzette.

### **A shared past**

One of the common features of this border region is firmly entrenched in the past. In this particular border region, France and Luxembourg share a common history characterised by steel and mining activities (and the decline thereof), migratory phases and induced urban development, all of which have resulted in a rich, unifying terrain from a cultural and social perspective.

Even today, although the plants and mines were closed several decades ago, the industrial past continues to define the spatial and socio-economic identity of this region. Earlier industrial development, housing projects and transport infrastructure,

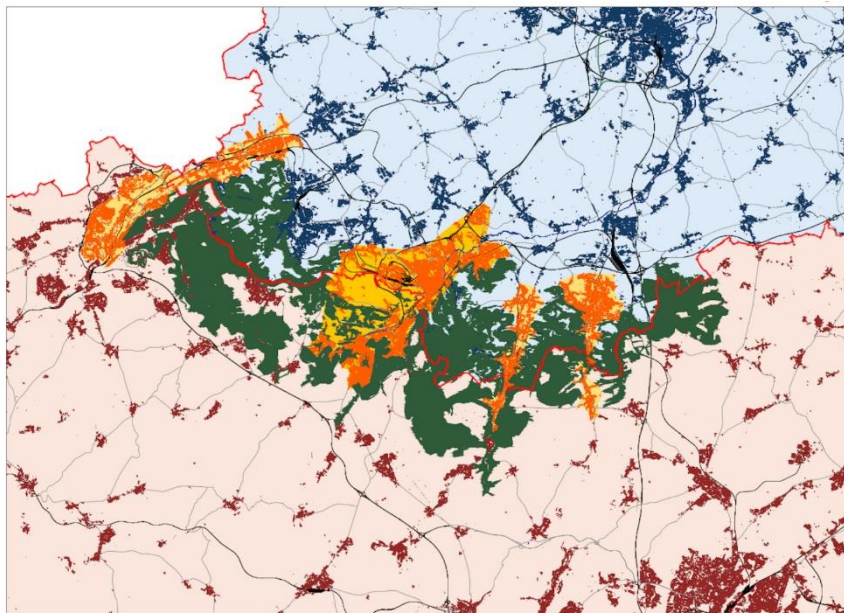
mining sites and layout of the slag heaps all now form part of the regional landscape but the dynamic is constantly changing. Former mining sites are now precious nature reserves and housing estates from a bygone industrial era now herald the start of future densification and urbanisation whilst former industrial buildings are part of a rich built cultural heritage.

These places of industrial origin now have their own characteristics and qualify as “memorable” places of ecological value, places of recreation, and places with development potential.

### **The consequences of the upturn**

Although these vestiges of the past and characteristics mark both sides of the border, the differences between France and Luxembourg are not difficult to spot.

Following the closure of most of the steel and mining sites, the outcome of the socio-economic crisis differed substantially in the two countries, resulting in different spatial dynamics.



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Since the 1970s, Luxembourg has made significant efforts to diversify its economy, making the country an attractive environment for the global service economy. This has led to an unprecedented dynamic in terms of (international) capital investment and job opportunities, resulting in a huge increase in the population, employment, GDP and consequently urban spread. Luxembourg's economic revival has had a huge impact on the Grand Duchy region with the considerable expansion of the City of Luxembourg *per se* as well as the border territories. Due to surplus employment opportunities with the number of jobs exceeding the available workforce, a strong daily commuting culture has developed in Luxembourg's border regions.

This forward momentum has led to a real metropolisation phenomenon in Luxembourg that directly impacts its German, Belgian and French border regions where 'residents' actually have a special relationship with their places of residence because they live in one State and work in another.

The peripheral territories, both in Luxembourg (i.e. the Luxembourg capital) and on the border, are sometimes "coerced" to participate in the metropolisation movement, but without necessarily having the capacity to act or take a stance that would enable them to absorb the 'overall impact'.

Each government has taken action to offset this phenomenon by supporting the reorganisation of central functions at national level, specifically for

Luxembourg, and aiming high to secure the future development of former industrial sites, such as Belval, Micheville, Metzschmelz (Esch/Schifflange), etc., in a bid to trigger an economic revival that is more difficult to implement because of the past.

The urban renewal of "Belval, Science City", since 2001 (based on a master plan by Jo Coenen), on the site of a former steel factory, is a key project. Its ongoing aim is to provide housing for 7,000 residents and to create 20,000 places to work and study. Universities, companies and administrations are the main stakeholders in this project.

Over the next 20 to 30 years, the planned redevelopment of the "Metzschmelz Site" on the municipal catchments of Esch-sur-Alzette and Schifflange will aim to accommodate 10,000 new residents.

The PSO arm of the Alzette Belval Operation of National Interest, created in 2014 by the French authorities, has singled out the CCPHVA region as one of the key urban development locations in France. The aim is to house 20,000 new residents over 27 zones of intervention (including 158 hectares of industrial wastelands) over a 20-year period.

### **A silent opportunity**

Unfortunately, history, communities, wastelands and both visible/invisible territorial markers often make us forget a common, yet very positive, goal: the cross-border green area that makes up the Côtes du Dogger. This cross-border forest mass has never been named or even identified as a coherent whole. However, this continuous stretch of land marks the western part of the France-Luxembourg border and the surrounding area, where construction projects have finally been implemented and supported throughout the development phase. This continuous landscape restores a missing link in a territory that currently seems fragmented.

In this respect, the Côtes du Dogger, which presents as an undulating landscape marked by forests, protected areas or sites earmarked for renaturalisation/restoration, agricultural land, industrial features and a residential area grouped around clearly defined central services dotted throughout the valleys, can become a unifying setting for this approach.

### **A chosen common future**

The identification of a coherent area presenting spatial and demographic characteristics to promote territorial identity and support a project is the pre-requisite to launching an IBA approach. In this sense, the Côtes du Dogger forest region has a key role to play in understanding the IBA in this area. It should, however, be noted that an IBA relies on established governance and concrete action plans to launch projects and support the territory as much as it does on territorial coherence. IBA governance must allow for specific *empowerment* to go beyond standard frameworks.

The IBA Alzette Belval initiative arose through a shared ambition by France and Luxembourg to grasp the opportunity to initiate the post-industrial renewal of a common area and transform it into a model European cross-border region in terms of project management and development of shared land.

The pre-existence of France-Luxembourg governance through the Alzette Belval EGTC is an undeniable asset for implementing the IBA initiative. Indeed, while State-led initiatives are vital to encourage regional development alongside national or municipal programmes committed to changing the territories *per se*, the daily impact of the border strategy and good international relations are tested at local level and links can be further strengthened to promote the common goal of achieving a cross-border conurbation in the future.

The desire for French-Luxembourg collaboration has been clearly felt in Alzette Belval since the 1990s, and the (temporary) existence of cross-border municipal councils bears testimony to this. However, the fact that one or other of the administrations was in charge and the lack of legitimate actions soon highlighted their limitations. Only an entity with its own legal personality seemed capable of sustaining cross-border co-ordination in the long term. The opportunity to create an EGTC was seized by elected regional representatives in order to stabilise relations, implement joint projects on a long-term basis and to genuinely encourage the emergence of services beneficial to all cross-border conurbation citizens around Esch-sur-Alzette. Structured cross-border co-operation, recognised at European level, involves liaising with existing bodies and municipalities to secure a resilient conurbation, in particular by working on the post-industrial transformation already in the pipeline.

EGTCs promote a partnership to implement joint projects, exchange skill-sets and boost subsidiarity. They can legitimately form a particularly relevant think-tank in Alzette Belval to launch an ambitious programme leaving considerable room for experimentation in terms of urban development and architecture. The Alzette Belval EGTC focused on the IBA prefiguration mission. This reflection phase demonstrated the relevance of the IBA Alzette Belval initiative with scope for replication. The Grouping naturally appeared to provide the basis for the progressive launch of the IBA Alzette Belval initiative.

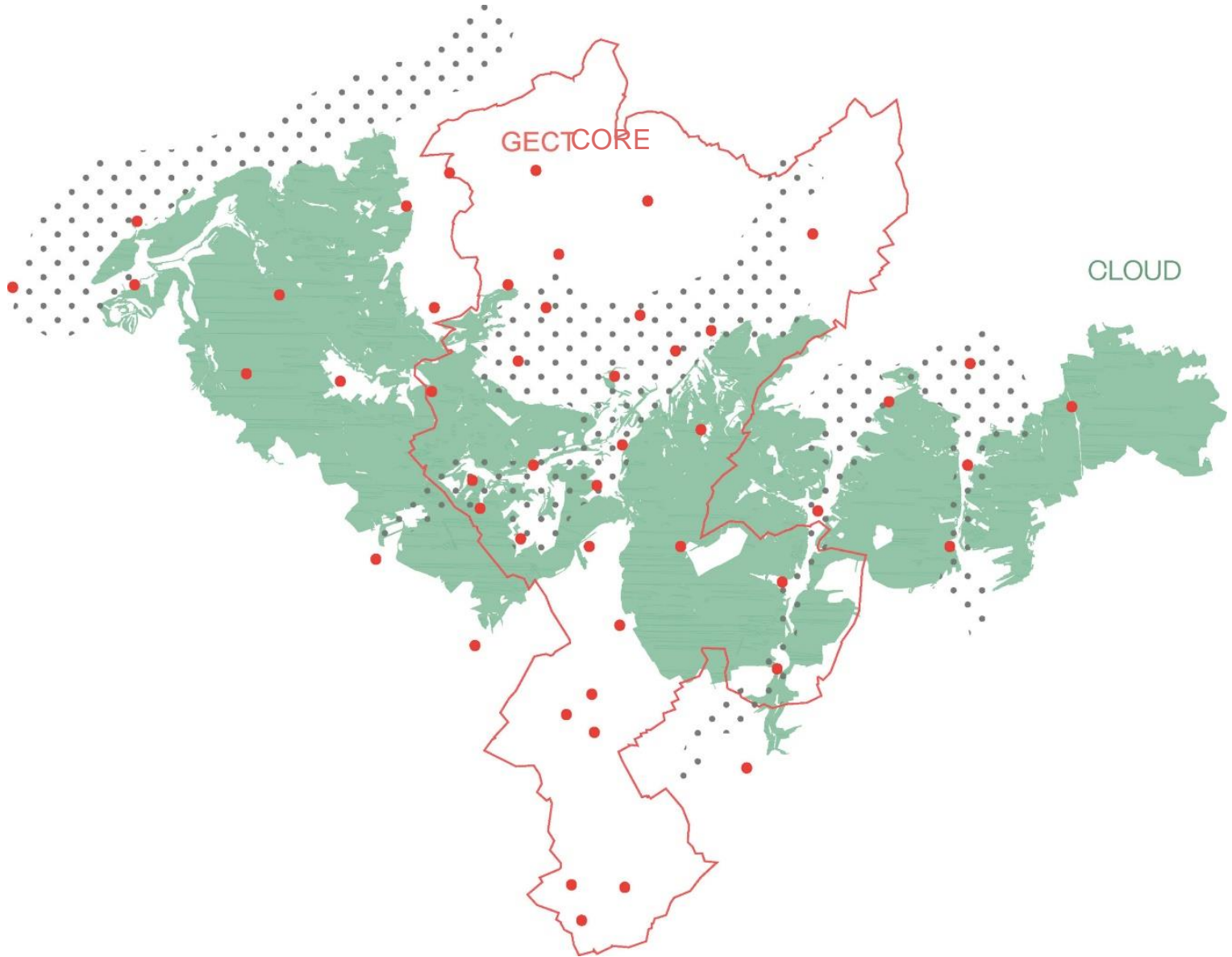
### **An open door for a progressive IBA initiative**

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Mindful of the strength of the Esch-sur-Alzette cross-border conurbation and the potential of the Côtes du Dogger, it is proposed that the IBA perimeter should comprise two aspects: a **“core”** corresponding to the Alzette Belval agglomeration and a **“cloud”** to place and embed this region in the wider Côtes du Dogger landscape context.

- **IBA CORE = the perimeter of the Alzette Belval EGTC.** This area could include most of the IBA projects aimed at strengthening the development of this cross-border conurbation in a manner consistent with pre-existing initiatives.

- **IBA CLOUD = the Côtes du Dogger area** includes two other cross-border conurbations: Diferdange-Longwy and Dudelange-Volmerange-lès-Mines. This landscape concept formed by the region's slopes and cross-border forest masses offers a landscape potential that could accommodate various projects (urban, architectural or productive).



# urgent issues

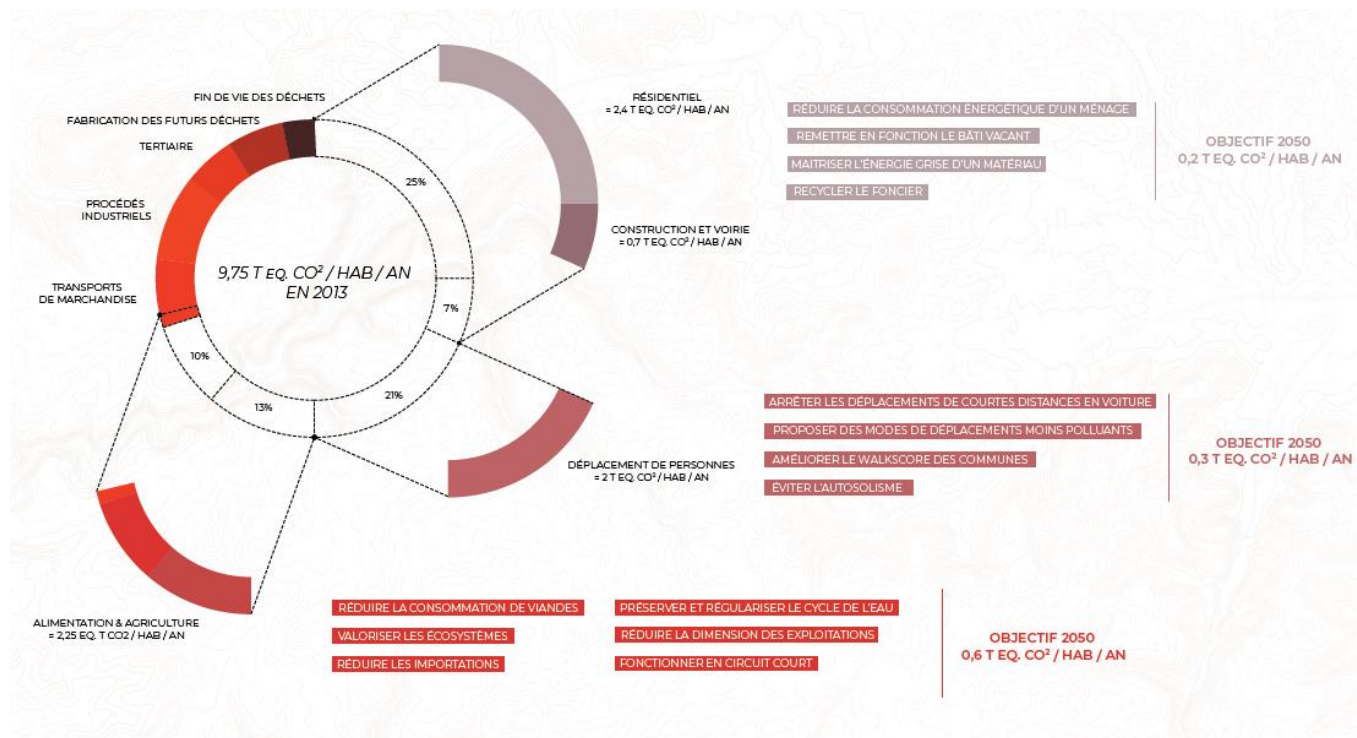
In keeping with IBA traditions, each prefiguration must carefully "diagnose" the urgent issues facing the region in question. Five territorial problems have therefore been identified for Alzette Belval.

## # Issue 1: urban and architectural development as a tool for ecological transition

The Alzette Belval region is experiencing exceptional development (demographic, economic, urban, etc.), and this trend will increasingly make its presence felt over time. It is vital for this development to become more and more resilient and therefore in line with objectives in terms of ecological transition and support for climate change. Given its cross-border characteristics and European heritage, Alzette Belval is at the heart of several ambitious dynamic strategies, the cross-border challenges of which must be met if successful ecological transition is to be achieved:

- At European level, the *European Green Deal* was set up in 2020, with the aim of making the European Union climate neutral by 2050. This pact has been translated into a wide range of investment programmes and calls for projects including the *New European Bauhaus*, which records and transmits solutions on all fronts (architecture, design, etc.) in response to the questions raised by ecological transition. The New European Bauhaus is keen to show that creativity in architecture and urban planning is about finding affordable, inclusive and attractive solutions to climate challenges. At the same time, the EU soil strategy for 2030 calls for the protection, sustainable use and restoration of soil to be considered as the new norm.
- In Luxembourg and in response to these challenges, the public authorities have launched the *Luxembourg In Transition* initiative. This is a consultation conducted at citizen and international level in a bid to come together to define the pathway to securing a resilient and low-carbon region for the Grand Duchy by 2050. This work is part of the new master plan preparatory phase for spatial planning (MPSP).
- In France, the 2050 Zero Net Artificialisation objective coupled with the recommendations of the Citizens' Climate Convention are tangible objectives that will drive French spatial planning for decades to come.

All of these recommendations and visionary concepts on which both countries are focused are dynamic strategies to be embedded in the territorial landscape. The IBA process will allow them to achieve their objectives and thus accelerate ecological transition in the French-Luxembourg cross-border territory.



Greenhouse gas emission indicator for Northern Meurthe and Moselle, ENSA

[The IBA initiative could therefore provide an innovative and experimental solution for all these objectives and make Alzette Belval an innovative and resilient development model, taking up the challenge presented by a region located at the crossroads of ambition and obligation in a bid to map-out a joint future.]

## # Issue 2: Cross-border management of co-operative, open projects

The France-Luxembourg cross-border region of Alzette Belval is subject to significant development pressures which are the direct consequence, among other things, of the international influence and economic dynamism of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and its capital city in particular.

In light of ongoing developments, the current and future needs and expectations of the residents and users (housing, transport, services), both domestic and cross-border, are growing and diversifying. They are consequently being reworked as part of an ever-changing territorial structure: On the one hand, with the desire to guarantee front-line functions in the Southern Region of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg/North Lorraine and, on the other hand, with the need to comply with the Luxembourg capital as the main driving force behind the economy and job creation both nationally and at cross-border level.

The local authorities in Alzette Belval are pinning their hopes on a France-Luxembourg response. Joint and shared, it is a case of giving this territory, with its shared past, present and future, its place on the territorial chessboard on either side of the border. It is also a case of responding to the crucial need to develop, maintain and strengthen "city life" while linking up easily and positively with neighbouring dynamic driving forces to promote development (Luxembourg, France and even Belgium). By combining open cooperation, political openness and courageous politics, a coherent approach in line with the legitimate expectations and needs of the residents and the local driving forces can be initiated in a bid to provide sound, sustainable responses.

Changes in the regional landscape first appeared in the 2000s, primarily through the conversion of industrial wasteland. Despite the progress and successes of the France-Luxembourg cooperation, particularly since the inception of the France-Luxembourg Intergovernmental Commission, it must be said that the various development projects under way and planned on either side of the border follow their own logic, remain poorly coordinated and do not present a truly common "DNA".

Set up in 2013, the Alzette Belval EGTC confines itself to the roles to which it has been assigned, namely facilitator and coordinator. It has no means of engaging or obliging stakeholders. By its very essence, the IBA instrument is designed with an empirical approach. By analogy, the IBA Alzette Belval is therefore envisaged as a long-term experimental approach to developing joint urban projects in the cross-border area. Any urban project to be developed in this context will therefore have to satisfy the qualifications, criteria and instructions agreed between the French and Luxembourg partners.

The residents' role is yet another key issue in strategic reflections concerning urban projects for development. The IBA must devise new ways to encourage citizen participation and action on a cross-border basis, if necessary. Indeed, residents are often consulted during the project development phase but, at present, no project in this region is being or has been directly supported by current residents or future users.

**[Although it cannot resolve all of the cross-border issues highlighted, the IBA will nevertheless be in a position to encourage developers, urban designers, planners and architects to work together to deploy strategies and projects that meet the expectations of both the "district" and the residents as well as the future expectations of the cross-border region as a whole. The IBA could therefore set itself the task of nurturing this region with a citizen urban planning model arising from**

**large-scale projects with alternative structures as well as smaller local projects to be supported qualitatively by adopting a sustainable and resilient approach].**

### # Issue 3: Creation of more varied, affordable housing meeting the requirements of an ever-changing environment

The demographic and economic growth of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and speculation in land and property have caused housing prices in Luxembourg (both rented and purchased) to soar over the last 15 years. This situation poses an ever greater problem for the poorest populations and an ever-increasing problem for the middle classes (between 2010 and 2018, "housing" rent for households in the 1st quintile in Luxembourg rose from 40% to 51.8% compared to a stable 16% for households in quintile 5 and stability in other quintiles). Furthermore, prices have increased for all types of property: new purchases, purchases under the VEFA (off-plan) scheme, purchases through work, rental properties, etc. with major disparities across the country but with exit prices for a flat in the EGTC districts of Luxembourg ranging from 4,500 to 6,500 €/m<sup>2</sup> in 2020 (price equivalent to the heart of the urban district in Lyon<sup>1</sup>). Finally, Luxembourg continues to have a fairly monotypical supply that has difficulty in coping with ever-changing demands (single-family homes make up 83% of the accommodation whereas 60% of households comprise 1 or 2 individuals).

At the same time, the effects of this inflation in Luxembourg as a result of economic growth are being transferred to the neighbouring territories. On the French side, the region is experiencing an increase in property prices (in 2020 between €1430 and €2340/m<sup>2</sup> <sup>2</sup>compared to an average price for the Grand Est region ranging from €1480 to €2260/m<sup>2</sup> and prices in Metz from €1550/m<sup>2</sup> to €2370/m<sup>2</sup>), coupled with a mismatch in terms of supply and demand. Some homes are too small with no outdoor area - hence the location and layout are no longer appealing. This applies in particular to working-class housing estates with houses that are too small or dilapidated buildings in the city centre that are sometimes aesthetically unappealing due to parasitic architecture. This neglect by a broad fringe of the population actually leads to a concentration in this product range of a population excluded from other forms of housing (and sometimes in difficult situations). At the same time, the dominant influence of the cross-border worker's lifestyle is impacting other districts with greater demands for public services, such as extended childcare facilities and increased public transport services<sup>3</sup>.

Therefore, real estate does not respond satisfactorily - either in terms of quality or quantity - to the demands of a growing population with various needs. The challenge is to support transition of the existing and new housing supply towards a system that better meets residents' aspirations and addresses urgent climate issues.

However, in addition to the "housing product", it is especially important to inquire about "living" in a region that aims to welcome 35,000 new residents (+35%) by 2030. Indeed, all of the pieces in the living environment jigsaw must be considered in order to devise a unifying, systemic and transversal territorial project. Living is no longer just about housing or being housed, but about sharing common values of solidarity, cooperation and inclusion.

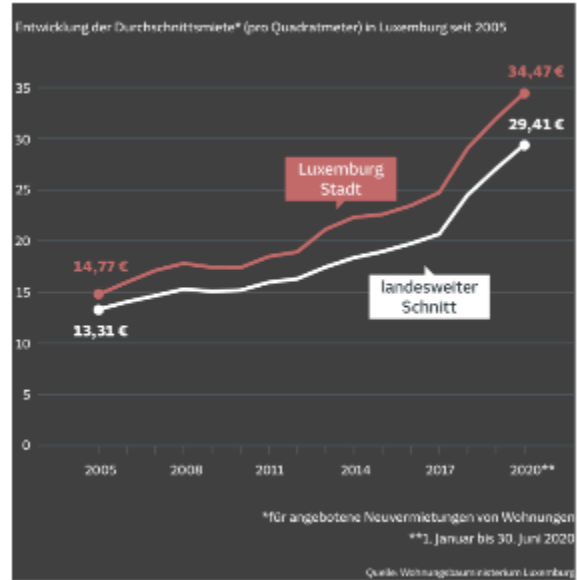
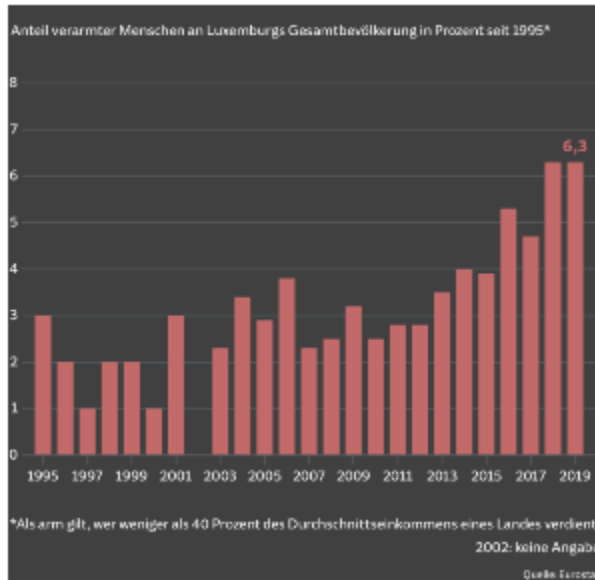
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.immobilier.notaires.fr/>

<sup>2</sup> Moyenne entre les prix Audun-le-Tiche, Villerupt et Ottange (Average prices in Audun-le-Tiche, Villerupt and Ottange)

<sup>3</sup> "Agglomération transfrontalière Alzette Belval : du bilan territorial à la vision stratégique" (Alzette Belval cross-border conurbation: from territorial assessment to strategic vision", AGAPE, 2019

In response, the citizen expects, for example, the actual implementation of concepts such as the "quarter-hour city" or the "short distance city" which encourage research and the implementation of urban planning concepts on a multifunctional, human scale (housing, work, leisure, culture, education), with low energy consumption and uniting districts over short distances (15 minutes on foot or by soft mobility). Concepts, the validity of which have been widely recognised in response to climate change and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic (see Moreno 2020).



Graph 1: percentage of individuals living in poverty in Luxembourg (<40% of average income), source: Eurostat

Graph 2: Changes in the average rent in Luxembourg (€/m<sup>2</sup>), source: MINLOG

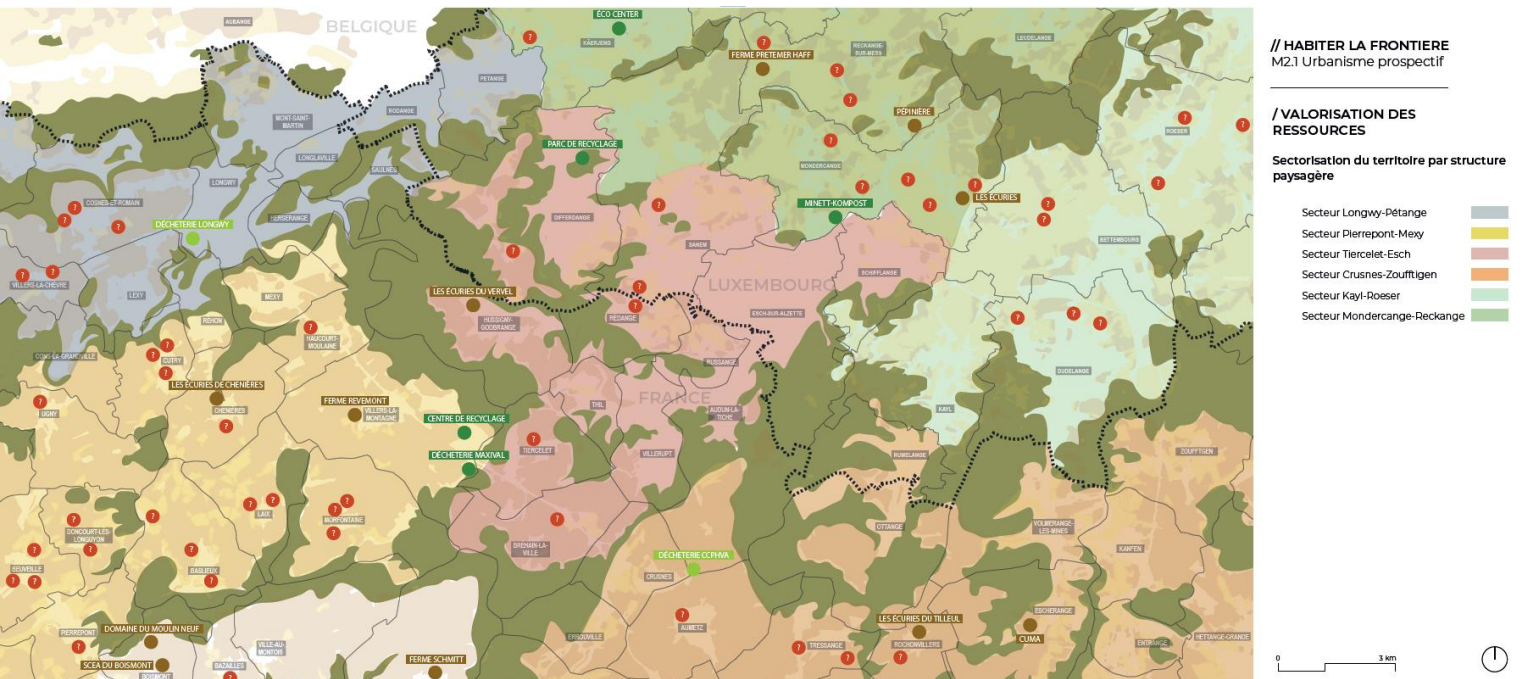
**[The IBA dynamic would create a tangible urban think-tank (financially, spatially and typologically) to investigate, reinvent and create new types of housing not only by adopting a scientific/professional research approach to sustainable urban planning and innovative architecture but also by incorporating an approach fundamentally geared towards sound experimentation].**

## # Issue 4: Common, sustainable management of local resources

The France-Luxembourg region of Alzette Belval has a wide-ranging development potential in terms of local natural resources. And while certain deposits have shaped local history, this "on-site" resource is hardly considered an asset or added value. Nature is largely protected and, as such, its wealth is hardly exploited, if at all. The region's mining and steel-making past, which was extremely detrimental to both environment and biotope, has culminated in a desire for preservation. Consequently, forests, water, geothermal energy, soils and wind or sun exposure are now considered marginally as development potential. These resources and the need to take into consideration the environmental impact in a value chain where the cost/benefit ratio remains the norm do not make these outstanding assets. However, the climate situation and the recent health crisis are forcing us to re-view these inputs and their potential.

Thus, exploiting (in the proper sense of the word) these available resources should be one of the missions of a future IBA by encouraging the promotion and development of a more productive, more sustainable, more viable, more resilient and, ultimately, more environmentally friendly region. This would also involve considering the resources available upstream in order for these to "support" the anticipated "extraordinary" urban development from conception through to completion.

Although the environment knows no borders, the numerous overlapping, superimposed, administrative realities sometimes hamper the development of a certain regional coherence and prevent the mutual and more sustainable management of the region's own resources (forest, water, energy, soil) according to a resilient, dynamic strategy. In light of the large-scale projects planned for Alzette Belval, a combined resources/development action plan makes sense.



Valorisation des ressources paysagères (Upgrading of landscape resources), ENSA 2021

Finally, global warming and, more recently, the Covid-19 crisis highlight the crucial need for any region to implement an in-depth ecological transition programme and to develop its resilience when faced with current and future changes.

**[The IBA will have to promote a culture of mutual anticipation to better welcome, absorb, resist and correct the effects of these risks. In the architecture and urban planning domains and through regional initiatives, the IBA could thus encourage and implement projects that promote the respectful deployment of resources and the use of the region's under-exploited wealth (food, energy, production) to benefit the region and citizens and users alike].**

## # Issue 5: a quest to *connect*: seamlessly connected spaces, functional hybrids plus the historical link

The landscape of Alzette Belval is marked by strong human intervention and radical transformation from the industrial age to the present day. In a fragmented border context, this development has created spatial situations deemed unfavourable, namely the disconnection and isolation of certain districts, the fracturing of ecological spaces, the virtual single functionality of certain urban areas and the construction of barriers to active transport methods. Thus “City damage [to be repaired]”<sup>4</sup>, duly recognised by planning departments, is typically attributed to industrial exploitation without urban thinking, the dismantling consequences of which also resonate in the appearance of 'gaps' where factory and mine, etc. once interlinked or connected.

First and foremost, the woodland and nature link needs to be re-invented across the entire area, particularly for recreational purposes. While playgrounds and recreation areas are always in high demand, access to nature sometimes appears to be closed, condemned or even prohibited for residents or sometimes monopolised by certain users. If the IBA intends to make the region's cross-

border forest mass (along with Alzette, its tributaries and mines, etc.) the focal point for architecture, urban planning and, above all, residents, then an element of choice must be introduced at the developmental stage with the option for it to penetrate the city and surrounding districts. This link with the urban environment can also forge historical links as many natural areas are the legacy of exploitation.

At the same time, while recent urban projects in small towns reinforce the previous idea by endeavouring to forge links with their surroundings and hinterland (the strong landscape, aesthetic, productive and recreational assets now merely provide a decorative backdrop), the discrepancies between the 'totems of current urbanism' and the realities of an inherited, trivialised and even abused fabric are indeed striking given the ongoing juxtaposition of urban facts

Alzette Belval presents, in turn, steel or mining towns long since neglected and modified without due care and attention (either because their history was too painful or their appearance did not appear interesting), housing estates or stereotyped buildings from the 1980s and 1990s, and, finally, districts of tomorrow that will, at all costs, lead to a better future. The IBA could encourage developments based on earlier solutions in a bid to improve links and the transition process. Small industrial towns, with fully pedestrianised areas or centred around a major public transport route, for instance, are examples of inspiring urban organisation. Brief dialogue and mutual support in the region, subsistence farming, small-scale arts and crafts and workers' vegetable gardens could inspire and fashion a territory-specific living culture ranging from historical roots to contemporary forms of so-called sustainable urban planning.



*Lentille de Ville d'Esch/ Crassier and Lentille de Terres Rouges / Quartier Grenz (Zoom in on the town of Esch/Crassier and zoom in on the Terres Rouges/Grenz district)*

<sup>4</sup> Ville d'Esch-sur-Alzette, 2017 (Town of Esch-sur-Alzette, 2017)

Ultimately, the urban fabric impacts the quality of the social link. In this case, as in other places, the industrial history of Alzette Belval has had a strong impact in this respect. Most of the old buildings

were designed for a working-class, multicultural population living close to their workplace. Housing, public facilities, leisure facilities: these living spaces geared towards a neighbourhood society have helped to forge a community with a strong cultural identity.

However, the shock of deindustrialisation and the emergence of a service economy changed this paradigm. The logic behind functional urban development has indeed dominated the region with the juxtaposition of neighbourhoods with a primary function (individual housing, collective housing, offices, shopping centres, arts and crafts, etc.) and without the general provision to facilitate meetings, interaction and dialogue. These fragmented spaces thus exacerbate the problem of "creating a society" and, unintentionally, these new planning measures have highlighted social fractures,

making them spatial.

*Val de Belair: areas of ecological and landscape value cut off by the bypass*

**[The IBA will need to support each project by reflecting on integration, insertion, and overall coherence so that Alzette Belval can be thought of and constructed as a whole rather than as a sum of parts].**

**Ambition\***  
**IBA Alzette Belval**  
**The IBA Alzette Belval**  
**ambition**

*\*Ambition (ambition): a strong desire to achieve one's full potential*



Once the regional diagnosis has advanced, the IBA must take up its regional stance and adopt concrete action plans, pursuing as many avenues as it takes, to make Alzette Belval a resilient, inclusive and demonstrative region.

## # Avenue 1: acceleration, emulation, variation

Because of its cross-border position, Alzette Belval is at the crossroads of several initiatives and approaches aimed at achieving ecological and social transition. These dynamics develop at different levels and cover a wide variety of topics (both broad-based and highly specific). The different tools and corresponding levels of ambition, albeit travelling in the same direction, overlap, particularly in a cross-border area keen to take the individual frameworks of both States into consideration in each project.

The IBA AB initiative will be able to take these dynamics into account in order to generate projects consistent with the various ambitions and objectives outlined above. This separation will be carried out for the benefit of the cross-border conurbation using an approach based on the best possible outcome and not on all of the constraints.

An IBA provides an opportunity to see the bigger picture. These national and European dynamics, albeit ambitious, will be embedded locally by combining architectural innovation, territorial relevance and ecological transition.

### A tool: the IBA Büro

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As the technical element in the process, the IBA Büro, comprising architects, urban planners and landscape architects, will have to monitor and integrate the various ambitions and guidelines, remove obstacles, provide complementary assistance to pre-existing processes, predict solutions and, above all, support the key stakeholders in order to achieve IBA objectives. This Büro will have to adapt its action in line with the various ongoing projects across the territory in order to ensure the global coherence of the territorial initiatives in place.

It will lead to two main missions to boost the IBA dynamic across the region: **stimulation** and **support** for IBA projects.

### Project stimulation

Although an IBA is manifested mainly through concrete projects, the most important exercise for its Büro is to stimulate ambitious projects in response to urgent territorial issues and challenges. This is where the IBA Büro comes into its own.

The traditional way of stimulating IBAs has been to open '*IBA Calls*'. Their main objective is to motivate renowned architects and urban planners to propose various project-solutions by seeking a response to a clearly defined issue or theme. During the course of the IBA initiative, the Büro will have to launch several calls for projects or expressions of interest. These mechanisms have allowed a large number of cities and territories to develop innovative but nevertheless customised projects on topics hitherto barely explored. They have therefore become essential for Alzette Belval.

However, not to content itself with a passive approach, the Büro will also have to be proactive by stimulating projects, for example, and encouraging the duplication of approaches, methods or prac-

tices that have already proved their worth while adapting them to meet a specific need. In fact, the examples can find particular resonance in a region employing a wide range of practices, such as Alzette Belval. By its very nature, the example of a region or project simultaneously offers each partner common features to which they can relate their situation and outline their differences in the call for projects.

On specific and identified themes, the IBA Büro can also generate framework documents for project initiators or managers, setting out details of IBA's ambition.



### **Supporting IBA projects**

IBA projects must also be supported long term by appropriate, local engineering to complement the engineering services already in place. This is done mainly by facilitating constant dialogue and outlining IBA criteria and objectives. Project quality and innovation must be supported. Allocation of a project label is not enough to satisfy the expectations of the approach. To this end, the IBA Büro must help projects to meet IBA ambitions, inte-

grate and take part in the cooperation network, resolve various obstacles (technical, legal and budgetary) and above all satisfy IBA criteria.

## # Avenue 2: Horizontal and vertical cross-border governance

For 10 years the Alzette Belval EGTC has successfully led the cross-border life of the territory. Many regional stakeholders have joined forces to promote a cross-border "lifestyle" through the various projects (mobility, living together, environment, etc.) implemented thus far. It is now time to take a further step and to initiate, on the occasion of the IBA, a more in-depth, joint construction of the cross-border conurbation, particularly through urban projects.

The IBA can respond to this desire because it is a long-term process that resonates throughout public territorial action and must mobilise all stakeholders involved. It is increasingly apparent that the success of an IBA or any other large-scale urban project no longer depends simply on recognising the

need to build or renovate 10,000 homes, create 100 hectares of additional green space or offer 2,000 jobs or teaching posts and adhering to this strategy, but rather on tackling the most appropriate and sustainable way to achieve these goals. The IBA can therefore be seen as an opportunity for Alzette Belval to participate in sustained dialogue with the different stakeholders and existing partners but, above all, to engage with those yet to be mobilised in a bid to combine quantified and qualified responses that go beyond the usual framework.



Third session ADT pre-IBA, 16.11.21 ©Emile Hengen

### The EGTC, shared cross-border governance for a mutual local objective

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Through its three successive strategies and various achievements in many areas, the grouping has demonstrated its efficiency in handling day-to-day cooperation between France and Luxembourg. It is also recognised by a wide range of stakeholders as a local partner for cross-border cooperation. From now on, even if the EGTC still has many objectives to achieve in the interest of Alzette Belval residents, it can nevertheless fully play out its role as facilitator, leader and initiator in this IBA process thanks in particular to close collaboration with its members, partners and specific engineering networks.

All of its actions and interventions are currently helping to create a genuine cross-border eco-conurbation. From this perspective, the integration of IBA Büro into the grouping would be a winning move for the territory by committing Alzette Belval to a stronger co-constructed urban development process by relying on the network but also on the experience and expertise of the grouping, which is vital for this France-Luxembourg approach.

Finally, through the Alzette Belval EGTC and its know-how in terms of managing cross-border events, the IBA initiative will become an integral part of the lifestyle of the Alzette Belval region. In order to be able to create a dynamic that is supported and identified by the entire region and its residents, the IBA will have to be a celebration where Alzette Belval residents will be able to experience a tangible cross-

*"In order to ensure successful IBA implementation, it is crucial to link it to formal structures, instruments and actors as well as to other stakeholders involved in one way or another in the various IBA phases. GUERRA, M.W. and U. SCHAUBER (2004)*

border lifestyle (cultural events, district festivals, etc.) while taking part in the design of the cross-border conurbation.

### **The IBA Forum, an open forum for broad-based cross-border dialogue**

The IBA Forum, the first entity to represent cross-border civil society in Alzette Belval and the France-Luxembourg's initial territorial intelligence platform, will be a cornerstone of the IBA Alzette Belval dynamic strategy.

The IBA Forum will create spaces for work and dialogue between all stakeholders for the latter to come together to design, assess and redress IBA actions. Inspired by the *Atelier des Territoires (Territorial Workshop) tool* and the Euralens "Grand Regional Forum", the IBA Forum will promote discussions and provide a platform where all regional stakeholders (academia, administrations, local elected representatives, civil society, developers and professionals, etc.) can meet on a regular basis. In this forum, each participant will provide their expertise, give their opinion and share their experiences without passing judgement or rating values. These ongoing synergies, the sharing of knowledge and constant dialogue will enable local stakeholders to become involved in the "IBA adventure" and to even lead and present certain projects. The IBA will be part of a "mobile" initiative where nothing is set in stone and everything can evolve and adapt.

### **The IBA Forum at the service of residents, a platform for citizen projects**

Moreover, in a bid to move from "building and developing for" to "building and developing with", the IBA Forum will also support Alzette Belval residents with their projects.

Residents will be encouraged, equipped and supported to personally tackle various difficult issues affecting their daily life, which often reappear in or spread to neighbouring communities. Mutual solutions can be found by sharing and discussing problems. The Alzette Belval residents will become firm stakeholders in developing their own territory.

#### ZOOM IN ON: Participatory budget: *empowering residents to shape their territory*

With this participatory democracy tool, a fraction of a community's investment budget (generally 5%) is made available to residents. Individuals or organised groups come up with ideas or devise projects, which are put to a citizen vote. Once a project has been designated, project managers are supported in the long term by a team of engineers, urban planners, landscape architects or other professionals to help them carry it out. Participatory budgets thus allow residents to democratically re-appropriate public space, to consider their concrete action in the public space and to resolve issues encountered in their daily lives.



*Alzette Belval pre-IBA awareness walk with local young people 07.10.20*

### **The Scientific Council as a guide to the IBA philosophy**

Finally, to complete horizontal governance, a Scientific Council seems indispensable in order to assess the suitability of the projects in line with IBA global philosophy and the project devised for France-Luxembourg. Composed of scientific experts, seasoned professionals and members of the IBA network, the primary objective of the SC will be to issue opinions on any project covered by the IBA approach. More globally, this body will also aim to place IBA Alzette Belval in the dynamic historical and current IBA context by leading a scientific architectural and urban planning debate specific to the approach undertaken.

## # Avenue 3: IBA as an opportunity to change lifestyles: diversify, multiply, modulate

The real estate situation described in the Alzette Belval region is clear: current housing provision is insufficient and unsuitable on several counts. The IBA must therefore request a review of current market dynamics relating to limited and traditional housing provision which offers few alternatives (albeit entirely feasible) to a poorly informed population.

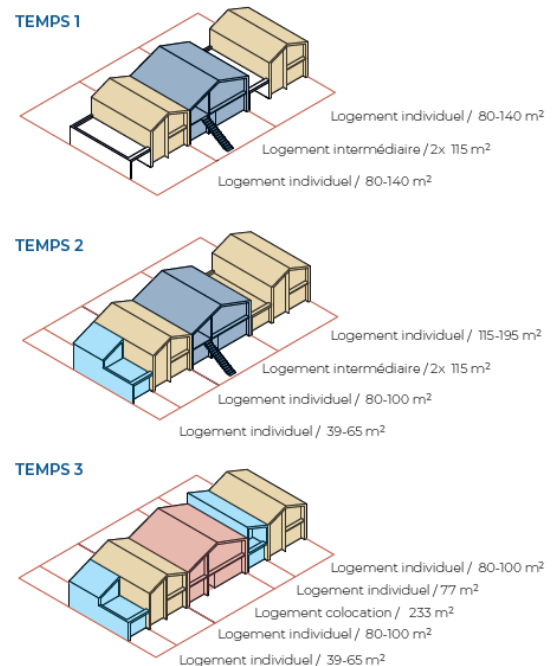
Numerous entries can be accepted but, ultimately, the IBA must propose diversified housing ideas and concepts to create housing suitable for the configurations and needs of present and future households, both in terms of their interior and location *in situ*.

The specific challenge of acceptable density must be taken up whilst listening to residents' wishes at the same time. The IBA could encourage experimentation with moderate densities capable of promoting dialogue while guarantee-

ing privacy, or with smart landscape installations to offer various perspectives and quality outdoor spaces for sharing, as required.

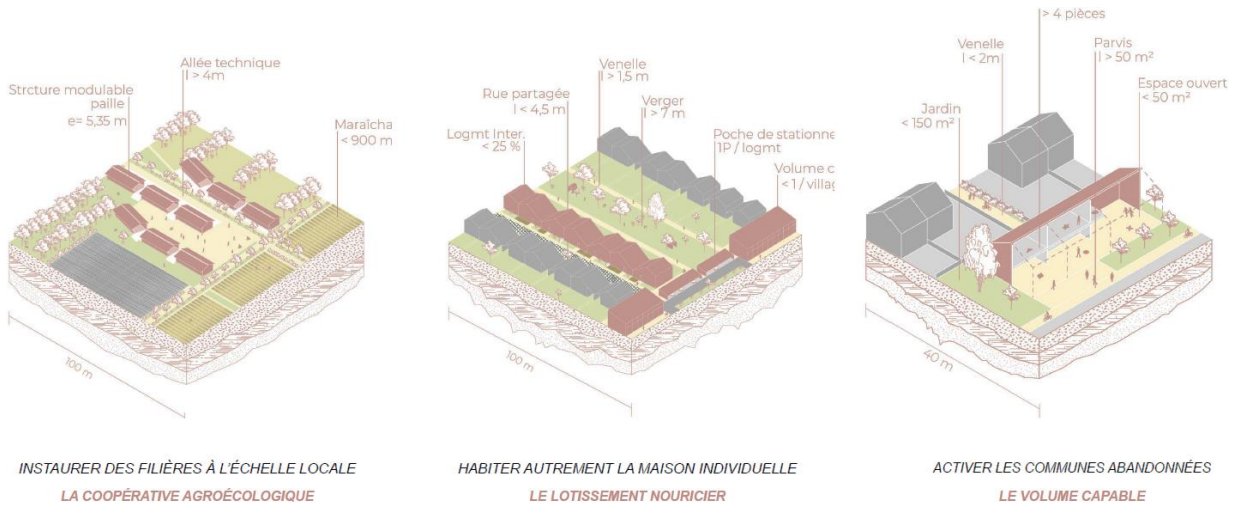
Different wagers are therefore being placed,

- including sharing to increase quality for all (with reference to cooperative architecture). Thus, the surface areas would be reduced without "removing anything socially desirable" (traditionally, the "shared" gardens, cellars but also reception areas, "guest rooms", freezers, orchards, chicken coops, etc.).
- Alternative installations such as self-build and community construction with new financing alternatives that heighten population awareness and also prove that "agreement can be reached" between the public objectives to be achieved and individual expectations.
- Scalable and modular housing on new developments, but also in the format inherited from the iron/steel and mining past, which combine heritage interest and inadequacy with current expectations. Housing projects must be anchored in time, capable of coping with the various changes and evolving to meet future unforeseen demands.
- Bioclimatic urban planning and architecture for all housing units and more globally for the districts (access to natural lighting; ventilation, heating and comfortable buildings but also limited overheating, waterproofing, etc.). Solutions and agreements are to be considered to make urban planning a more resilient process.
- Price because the exit cost of housing operations is often the criterion determining certain choices which can sometimes lead to a reduction in final quality.. Generating a real culture of affordable and generously sized housing is therefore to be promoted. IBA has several tools at



*Housing developments for the Chaviotte housing estate, Villers-la-Chèvre, ENSA 2021*

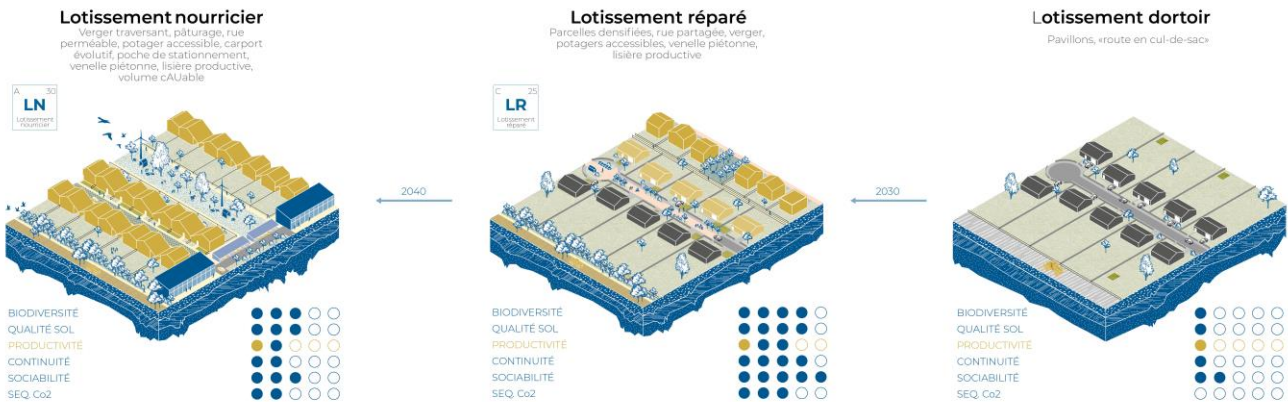
its disposal, the most interesting of which seems to be dissociation from the cost of the building and the land through the Real Social Leases or the (*Community Land Trusts*).



*Axonometric demonstration of landscape, agronomic and urban principles, ENSA 2021*

This new housing culture will propose solutions ranging from the detached single-family house, which continues to give a strong social signal despite its largely negative environmental impact, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, buildings with the best energy rating (density, compactness, etc.), which are always less appealing and which unfortunately invest all too rarely in convivial spaces inevitably needed for the social sustainability of higher density projects.

In the long term, the projects arising from the IBA initiative will aim to set an example and be an international reference in terms of housing.



*Considering soil resource capital differently, ENSA 2021*

## # Avenue 4: Reinvent the use of local and sustainable resources

The cross-border conurbation of Alzette Belval is in the midst of an economic, demographic and real estate boom. These challenges are pushing the region to think differently in terms of the consumption of any type of resource, e.g. energy, water, soil, materials, food. The region is not devoid of assets in this respect. The territorial markers of Alzette and the Côtes du Dogger have not been identified at the centre of the IBA initiative solely for their cultural, territorial or even "ornamental" relevance, but also for their productive potential.

### ZOOM IN ON : MUB (Man and Biosphere):

On 28 October 2020, the Minette region joined the world network of biosphere reserves in the UNESCO MAB programme. This label recognises the specificity of this south-western Luxembourg region due to the activity of humans vis-à-vis nature. Following this recognition, the MUB project, led by the PROSUD syndicate, is now working to introduce new regional management models in the territory in a bid to nurture a more balanced relationship between humans and nature.



*Lallanger Bierg, Minette Region*

### **Encourage reflection on the use of water resources and cross-border sharing of said resources:**

The EGTC districts share a cross-border water resource which comes mainly from the subsoil (with a non-negligible geothermal potential) but also from the watercourses which have their source in the Côtes du Dogger. The increase in population in this limited area and the multiplier effect of buildings lead to a mechanical increase in water consumption, a resource that is, however, becoming increasingly scarce. In addition, the ongoing change in landforms over many years is contributing to an increase in the artificialisation and sealing of the soil. Recent meteorological phenomena have confirmed potentially disastrous consequences. The IBA is a window of opportunity to promote dialogue on this shared resource: how can we combine a resource that is becoming scarcer and needs to be preserved with developments that have yet to be achieved? How can reasoned usage be incorporated? And how to "repair" places that are now completely waterproof. Whilst initial partnerships have already been set up (INTER-

REG ALQUA project), IBA will be able to invite reflection and initiate projects suggesting appropriate and resilient alternatives for water use.

**Sound reflection on the reuse of building materials:** The current urbanisation of the Grand Duchy is paradoxically offset by considerable demolition activity with renovation costs often exceeding demolition costs. The IBA could therefore encourage numerous practices across the region (material library; recycled concrete construction, etc.) resulting in buildings having a considerably reduced impact and in line with the circular economy. The aim to reuse construction materials coupled with the benefits to be gained from the reasonable use of resources also brings beneficial economic spin-offs through the creation of local jobs (French Recovery Plan 2020).

## ZOOM IN ON :BENU

BENU is a non-profit-making association in Esch which aims to create the first ever *eco village* in the Grand Region, using as many recycled resources as possible. A wide range of services (clothing, food, etc.) are devised and sold alongside ecological and social transition. BENU achievements and methods are examples to be distributed or increased tenfold in the Alzette Belval region.



*BENU Village, Esch-sur-Alzette ©BENU asbl: building constructed entirely from recycled materials*

**Côtes du Dogger, a place of recreation and a food matrix:** the COVID-19 health crisis and its various “stop & go” lockdown periods have heightened our awareness of the challenges of “food sovereignty” and of the opportunities, not only utopian, of taking short cuts and close proximity channels, either through the creation of the Associations de Maintien de l’Agriculture Paysanne (AMAP) (associations for the preservation of local farming methods) creating a direct producer-consumer link, or the impetus of a Projet Alimentaire Territorial (Territorial Food Project) which unites the various territorial stakeholders in the field. The aim will be to reconcile development and protection in a cross-border dimension. Mutual reflection on the rational use of land and the progressive reduction of artificialisation should also be carried out within the IBA.

The various solutions that may emerge will consolidate the region's position in a more productive and therefore more resilient dynamic in all economic, social and health dimensions.

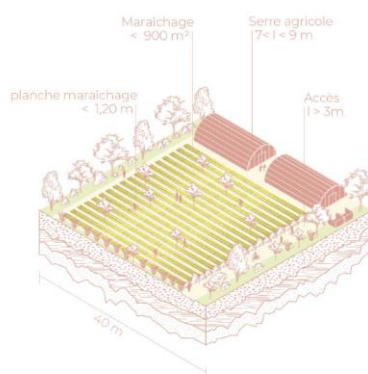
## # Avenue 5: link the region, link its residents

Given the many changes made to the France-Luxembourg area thus far, the timing of the IBA is conducive to a discussion on the territory, its morphology and the way to achieve spatial coherence objectives. An IBA project should never be satisfied with limiting its reflection to construction boundaries. On the contrary, it must find a way to sow the seeds of change right across Alzette Belval and also more widely in the cross-border territory.

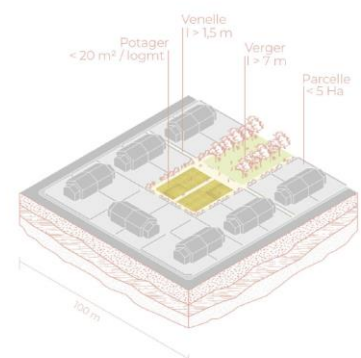
**Reconstructing the fabric of Alzette Belval:** real reflection must be given to recreating spatial links, particularly between the different districts, that are being juxtaposed, or to recreating missing links following the disappearance of the steel and mining activities. This period of reflection will promote interconnection across the entire region and an understanding of its central features, spaces and heritage, which are sometimes overlooked in favour of new developments. The goal is to regain coherence and unity with, in the long term, a revitalised urban fabric and public spaces in Alzette Belval that better meet the new needs of its residents.

**Densify calmly:** This dynamic could also be accompanied by reinvesting in vacant locations with a high potential. Listing the spaces and venues to be revitalised could provide the basis for reflection before "proposing" them as first-line options for temporary projects potentially giving rise to permanent dynamic strategies adopted by voluntary, cultural or entrepreneurial stakeholders essential for the territory. Areas that are still undeveloped, vacant ground floors and abandoned buildings in town centres, etc. are all opportunities for achieving the calm and peaceful densification of the urban fabric.

*Axonometric demonstration of landscape, agronomic and urban principles, ENSA 2021*



ADOPTER DES MODES DE VIE DURABLES  
LE MARAICHAGE



INTÉGRER L'ESPACE PRODUCTIF DANS L'ACTIVITÉ HUMAINE  
L'ÎLOT PRODUCTIF

## RÉFÉRENCES

### LES VILLAGES DU FUTURS DU PAYS NIVERNAIS LA RECONQUÊTE DES COEURS DE BOURG



#### Description

Inédite à cette échelle en France, la démarche concerne 14 villages et petites villes. La mobilisation se traduit par des temps de concertation (ateliers, réunions publiques...) et l'organisation de chantiers collectifs.

Chaque opération permet de produire un plan d'aménagement, d'usages et de services, conjuguant vision d'avenir, projets concrets et jalons de court, moyen et long terme - cette programmation pouvant être mise en œuvre sur 5 à 10 ans. Des résultats concrets sont visibles dès aujourd'hui : ouverture de boutiques, façades ravivées, aménagements et usages de place testés avant les installations ou travaux définitifs, création de logement sénior, chantiers collectifs de peinture de volets...

### BASE COMMUNE FONCIÈRE SOLIDAIRE

#### Description

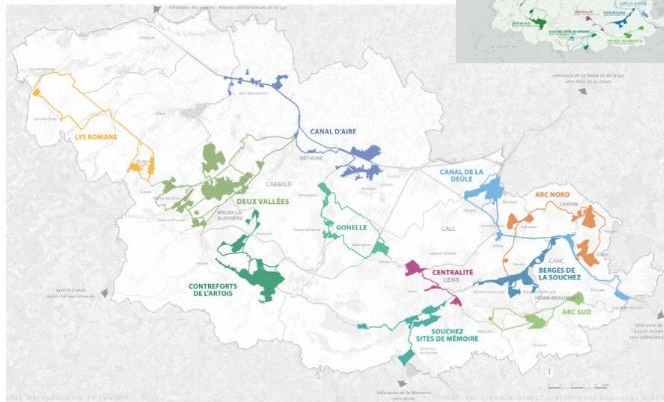
Base Commune, c'est une structure foncière et immobilière associée à trois offres de services :

1. l'acquisition de rez-de-chaussée
2. le conseil en stratégie de rez-de-chaussée
3. la commercialisation-gestion-animation de rez-de-chaussée

Base Commune est une foncière qui fabrique des rez-de-chaussée plus divers et plus ouverts sur l'espace public, à loyers modérés. Elle regroupe trois organisations : Plateau urbain, le Sens de la ville et Villages vivants et opère partout en France.

**Position Alzette Belval within the Côtes du Dogger:** as per the Euralens initiative, the IBA Alzette Belval could ultimately use the Côtes du Dogger scenario to spread the idea of a common, cross-border territorial landscape. A *park* concept would involve working on more remote, flexible links.

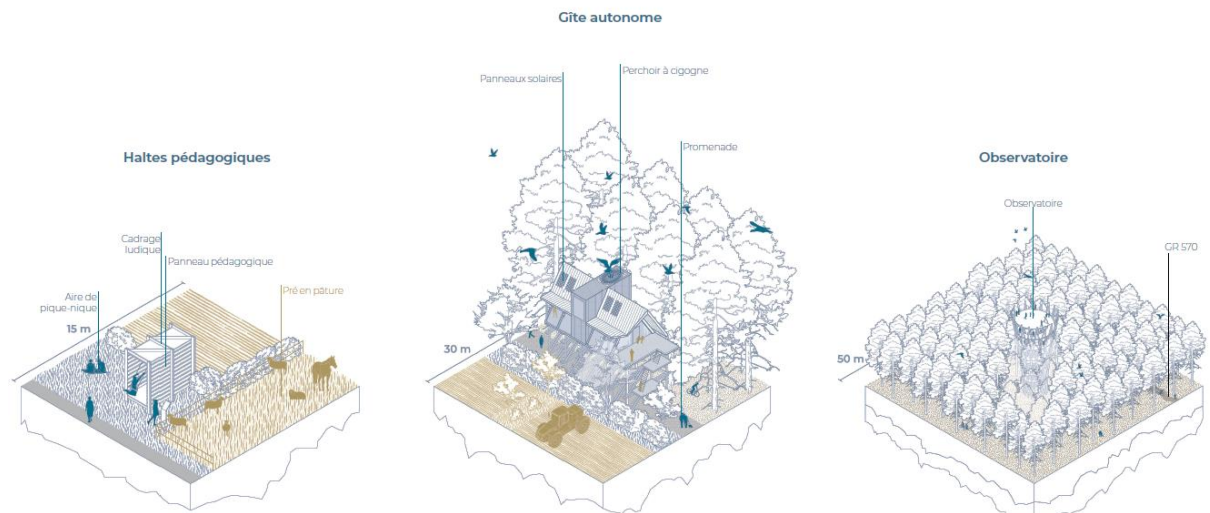
**LA CHAÎNE DES PARCS EN 2018**  
11 GRANDES UNITÉS OPÉRATIONNELLES



**ZOOM IN ON : EURALENS**

Euralens was a success story for the Nord-Pas-de-Calais mining region. The regional identity approach through the landscape prism - the switch from a "black archipelago" to a "green archipelago" devised by Michel Desvignes - was the pre-requisite for a genuine cooperation boost between the various territorial stakeholders, who now represent their region in a mutually positive manner.

*Chaîne des Parcs Euralens 2018 (Euralens Park Chain)– De l'Archipel Noir à l'Archipel Vert (from the Black Archipelago to the Green Archipelago)*



*Structures needed to create a park , ENSA 2021*

# criteria

The avenues outlined are a way of classifying IBA projects in order to consider the various ways in which IBA can intervene in the territory. However, all these projects should share several common characteristics, which will demonstrate their IBA quality in relation to other projects: the IBA criteria.

## The IBA approach

Differentiating between an IBA project and a conventional project is not straightforward because "IBA quality" depends on a number of aspects. These aspects can be linked to the process *per se* as well as the problems encountered, the ambitions set, the exemplary nature of the project and its demonstrative value.

The assessment range for an IBA project is, quite simply, wider, covering the initial idea, project management and the target audience as well as integral environmental or societal components. However, it is precisely through input analysis and combinations that IBA will shed light on the experimental and innovative responses to its regional challenges in the Alzette Belval territory.

A dynamic IBA approach not only consists in the straightforward labelling of "good" projects, in a bid to showcase the good and the best, but seeks to implement a strategy of slow but persistent transition heading towards a resilient, fair and sustainable future.

To this end, the IBAs establish a framework of reference that facilitates implementation of this strategy on a project scale. This framework informs the relevant stakeholders of the qualities expected and the degree of ambition desired. It also serves as a reference point for assessing the various projects for inclusion in the IBA dynamic.

This reference framework is manifested through **the IBA criteria**.

## Baseline evidence for Alzette Belval

### IBA STUTTGART: CRITERIA FOR A DISTRICT

- *The IBA'27 district is versatile and global. It is a place to live, work, enjoy leisure activities and train. It combines the qualities of the IBA'27 network in an exemplary manner.*
- *It is a model for the future and an inspiration for the city of tomorrow.*
- *An IBA'27 district is innovative, open and encourages PARTICIPATION. It is developed through a PARTICIPATION PROCESS and INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS.*
- *An IBA'27 district is BIG, COMPLEX and DENSE.*
- *An IBA'27 district touches and moves: as an exhibition site in true Weisenhof tradition, it inspires audiences from all over the world post-2027.*

criteria.

The definition of IBA criteria is a task that often extends beyond the prefiguration period. These criteria must succinctly and clearly portray the spirit of the IBA - a complex dynamic. For instance, the IBA BASEL criteria were only included in the second memorandum (2013) after an initial pre-selection of 44 projects. The IBA Stuttgart criteria were published after setting up the IBA Büro which actually devised the said

An initial chain of criteria summarising the dynamics that emerged from the prefiguration phase has been identified for the IBA AB:

#### **INNOVATIVE**

*"Introducing something new to replace something old"* to break free of standard frameworks and set-ups.

#### **EXPERIMENTAL**

*"Made, produced, manufactured as an experiment to test qualities"* in the IBA time capsule, to endeavour, try and perhaps allow oneself to fail.

#### **ECONOMY**

*"Be economical with your time"* - apply this to cost, resources or space.

#### **EVOLUTIONARY**

*"Likely to undergo progressive transformations"* in projects, processes or for the IBA.

#### **INTEGRATED**

*"Which unites various elements"*, the urban fabric, landscape, surrounding territories, residents, various current reflections, history and the present day.

#### **IBA HEIDELBERG 5 criteria for an IBA project**

**Social relevance:** *The project must be committed to promoting the common good and based on the concept of a city where different lifestyles coexist.*

**Above-average competence:** *In order to achieve recognition for outstanding architectural and structural qualities, the project must endeavour to find the best possible solution. Outstanding expertise is an integral part of the development process through international architectural competitions, for instance.*

**Exemplary characteristic:** *each IBA project should be displayed as a prototype with an innovative approach that gains international recognition. Despite changes in architectural styles over the years, each IBA project should remain a model for other projects around the world.*

**Structural efficacy:** *the IBA project should make a significant contribution to the structural improvement of its environment. It should have the potential to create an identity for the district or urban area in question.*

**Versatility:** *in addition to its original function, it should be possible to adapt the project for other purposes. It must provide for a wide range of uses in order to meet the challenges of a heterogeneous society in the knowledge society.*

These initial guidelines can be developed further depending on the ambitions specified above but also according to project families.

#### **The quality foundation of the Alzette Belval PDA: an initial sound and operational basis**

Since its inception, the Alzette Belval PDA has been developing the French side of Alzette Belval in line with the "Eco-district" approach - a genuine quality standard for planning operations in France. In 2020, the establishment decided to take a further step towards excellence and imposed a "quality base", which sets out sustainable development objectives at local level for building operations. Ambitious, operational and tailored to the territory, this base will initiate reflection in terms of the criteria applied to IBA Alzette Belval projects.



*L'ARCHE, Pôle Culturel de Micheville [Micheville Cultural Cluster],*



# **Milieu\* d'Alzette Belval**

## **The Alzette Belval Setting**

\*Milieu (Setting): *Material and moral environment*



# synergies

The IBA initiative alone cannot provide all of the input required for the successful territorial transition of Alzette Belval, particularly since many ambitious projects, past, present and future, have already set this dynamic approach in motion. Furthermore, other approaches may also be embedded in this space with important issues both in terms of (urban) development and cross-border cooperation.

Any project consolidated in Alzette Belval must fit into a complex environment of pre-existing initiatives and public, semi-public and private stakeholders. As evidenced above, one of the challenges facing the IBA approach is not only to make Alzette Belval an experimental site to showcase future urban planning, but also to demonstrate what to expect when the relevant dynamic strategies employed by France, Luxembourg and Europe actually converge.

This section aims to provide an initial overview of the current initiatives and projects put together to develop Alzette Belval. These zoom-ins allow us to highlight the actions, objectives and, where applicable, potential synergies with the IBA Alzette Belval initiative.

## **Luxembourg in Transition, thinking outside the transition box**

Launched in June 2020, the Luxembourg in Transition international consultation brought together strategic proposals for spatial planning and produced ecological/zero-carbon transition scenarios up to 2050 for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and its cross-border area. All of these proposals are fully in line with the IBA experimental approach and philosophy due to their “thinking outside the box” characteristics.

The work was completed in January 2022, opening up a number of avenues to explore in relation to ecological transition and proposals for a new spatial planning culture. It constitutes a real think-tank of ideas, strategies and both innovative and experimental concepts proposed by experts and citizens alike. Freedom of expression and independent reflection allowed the various stakeholders to demonstrate their intellectual and creative abilities. The outcome is a set of concepts and proposals providing a source of inspiration for spatial planning of a different kind.

Faced with numerous climate and societal challenges, the consultation sought to encourage “thinking outside the box” in order to adopt a new approach to spatial planning in support of ecological transition by 2050. Seven avenues set out the pathway to achieving a decarbonised, resilient and sustainable region:

- Zero net greenhouse gas emissions,
- Zero net land artificialisation,
- Protection and strengthening of biodiversity and landscapes,
- Fair and inclusive economic development,
- Regional and social cohesion,
- Preservation of natural resources,
- Balanced distribution of infrastructures.

International consultation is the trigger factor for the collective process, *Luxembourg in Transition*. The aim is to embed the scenarios, strategies and concepts developed in the territorial reality of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and with major regional partners in order to kickstart a dynamic approach that is both feasible and sound. The first steps will involve initiating pilot projects intended to

demonstrate the ability of the Luxembourg society to genuinely commit to territorial transition. The IBA initiative certainly constitutes a sound experimental approach in this respect.

### **The SRADDET, a regional ambition for the transition of territories**

The SRADDET is the regional strategy up to 2050 for the sustainable planning and development of the territories. The course it sets, which has been developed in a spirit of co-construction, constitutes a shared reference framework within which the territories can in turn develop their own strategy according to their potential and particularities. The SRADDET Grand Est has no other ambition than to make the Grand Est an exemplary region. As the SRADDET is enforceable against SCoTs, and in the absence of SCoTs, against PLUs, territorial climate and energy plans, mobility plans and Regional Nature Park charters, the territories will gradually implement the main guidelines of this plan: combating global warming and adapting to climate change, preserving soil and biodiversity, respecting and preserving water resources, balancing territories and integrating citizens into the various land-use planning discussions, and in particular revitalizing rural and urban centralities and converting wasteland.

This document is currently being modified until 2024 to integrate the national objectives for reducing the artificialization of land and to increase the guidelines for better adaptation of territories to climate change.

The Region is also responsible for economic development. This is the role of the SRDEII (regional plan for economic development, innovation and internationalization) which determines the main guidelines in terms of aid to businesses, support for internationalization, aid for real estate investment and business innovation, guidelines relating to the attractiveness of the territory, in terms of developing the social and solidarity economy (particularly in terms of industrial and territorial ecology). In addition, the plan must organize the complementarity of the actions carried out by the region in terms of aid to businesses with the actions carried out by the other territorial authorities and their groupings.

The Region supports the territories through various policies that reflect these challenges. The Alzette Belval IBA project is in line with the Region's orientations by being a laboratory for regional development and the reconversion of industrial areas.

### **Minett UNESCO Biosphere, collective action in support of the biosphere reserve**

PRO-SUD is a regional association of municipalities aimed at promoting and developing the southern region. Since October 2020, the eleven member municipalities have formed a biosphere reserve comprising 180,000 residents over 200 km<sup>2</sup>, namely the Minett UNESCO Biosphere (Bettembourg, Differdange, Dudelange, Esch-sur-Alzette, Käerjeng, Kayl, Mondercange, Pétange, Rumelange, Sanem and Schifflange).

In general, its mission is to support the regional spatial planning policy aimed at facing the challenges of sustainable development to create optimum conditions for co-existence in the southern region. PRO-SUD currently focuses its activity in four areas: **regional development policy, enhancement of natural and industrial heritage, local food and environmental education..** To do this, the syndicate relies on the Minett UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (MUB), which it manages, to take action with its partners who have joined forces under the "biosphere reserve" label.

Indeed, the Minett UNESCO Biosphere reserve provides a platform to unite a wide range of stakeholders from research institutions, the public sector and associations. The biosphere reserve promotes the appeal of the southern region at regional, national and international level via the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Network. The ultimate goal is to improve the interaction between human beings and their environment.

The MINETT UNESCO BIOSPHERE Reserve promotes natural sciences among the general public, but also raises the awareness of politicians and professionals via a communication strategy and field projects. Last, but not least, the MUB encourages the preservation of cultural and industrial heritage, as sustainable development requires society to foster social ties, pass on tangible or intangible heritage to future generations and to create a sense of belonging.

The "Internationale Bauausstellung" Alzette Belval (IBA) project is an interesting tool for consolidating the ambitions of the Minett UNESCO Biosphere



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Reserve. Indeed, IBA provides the opportunity to adopt an innovative approach to urban agriculture in terms of building, planning and using spaces to increase local resilience, or to commit to the networking and interlinking of natural spaces in the city and on the outskirts.

### **RECOTTE, for the RECOVersion of Territories through Ecological Transition**

RECOTTE is a research-action project that focuses on ecological transition issues at the local cross-border level. It will take two years and is co-financed by the Interreg VA Grande Région programme.

Ecological transition cannot be achieved without involving citizens and support from institutions to stimulate the changes needed to adapt our lifestyles. Thus, it must be achieved gradually and should be led and supported by a wide range of stakeholders. But this crucial step is open to many uncertainties. Although the EU has set out guidelines for dealing with climate change, such as the *European Green Deal*, and although each Member State has devised its own *National Energy and Climate Plan*, difficulties and obstacles regarding the implementation of these policies and steering changes in the behaviour and practices of citizens and economic stakeholders are emerging within the regions. Moreover, the municipalities seem inadequately organised and equipped to turn the corner vis-à-vis ecological transition and respond to these challenges.

The RECOTTE project proposes a methodology to support local stakeholders, i.e. elected officials, technicians, economic and social actors as well as citizens, in their approach to transition. It seeks to enhance potential cross-border synergies in mutual response to future climate and energy challenges by inviting local stakeholders and citizens to identify levers for action and to jointly devise cross-border projects.

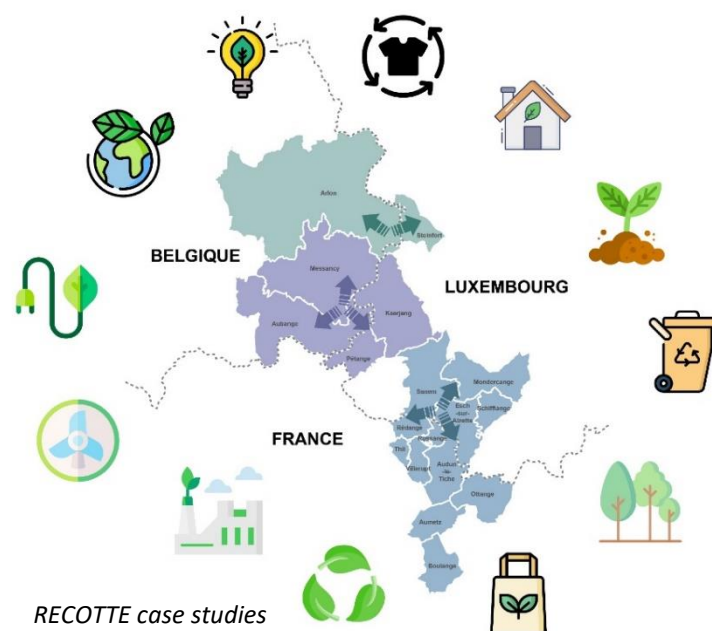
This method comprises two key stages:

- Conducting interviews with stakeholders involved in the border territories in a bid to recognise and identify the needs, priorities, focal points and potential synergies in terms of ecological transition between border territories.

- Organising meetings and co-creation events to make things emerge or to respond to requirements. These smart, collective workshops are organised to advance existing initiatives or to initiate new projects and to support/guide you in your approaches and discussions.

This methodology is being tested in three Walloon, French and Luxembourg cross-border urban areas of the former industrial basin which have different configurations and cross-border cooperation to varying degree (see Figure 2): the cross-border conurbation of Alzette Belval; Messancy-Aubange/Pétange-Käerjeng; Arlon/Steinfort.

Over the last two years, the RECOTTE project and Alzette Belval EGTC teams have cooperated in an attempt to motivate stakeholders and citizens to focus on the resilience of the cross-border territorial system. *This collaboration was rather a one-way process during phase 1 of the RECOTTE project with the EGTC facilitating the identification process and contacting stakeholders to conduct interviews.* Phase 2 was characterised by a desire to avoid any overlap with the work carried as part of the IBA prefiguration mission workshops and to investigate synergy between the two projects. The RECOTTE workshops thus placed more emphasis on cross-border initiatives led by citizens, who had not joined forces through the EGTC.



One of RECOTTE's contributions to the Alzette Belval region will be to issue project sheets outlining the content and ideas of these initiatives and identifying the partners and resources necessary for their sound implementation.

### **The IBA-Sarraine "(But) we must make our garden grow".**

The "Internationale Bauausstellung-IBA" format is steeped in a 120-year tradition in Germany. IBAs have never focused solely on architecture or art. An IBA has always responded to political and social problems and has been able to operate freely in a state of exception duly created for it, in order to ask relevant questions and generate projects in response to the latter.

Relevant IBA topics include new housing, city lifestyle, the post-industrial landscape, national and international migration movements, urban renewal and cross-border cooperation between European neighbours.

However, it is impossible to create a single IBA for the Greater Region covering an area of 65,000 km<sup>2</sup> and involving the five partners, namely Lorraine, Luxembourg, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland and Wallonia. The htw saar pre-IBA think-tank has therefore proposed an "IBA-Great Region platform", to encourage networking between the various IBA areas developed at local level in order to benefit jointly from the IBA as a driving force for transformation.

Two IBA initiatives are currently in the pipeline in the Grand Region: IBA Alzette Belval, which focuses on the border area between Luxembourg and France, and IBA-Sarraine, concentrating on the border between the Saarland and Lorraine.

The IBA-Sarraine sees the border as an exceptional opportunity to review all potential climate change projects through either a functional or thematic approach. The improvement of infrastructure (mobility, energy and water management), the experience of urban, rural and landscape space as well as discussions on new forms and architectural requirements dominate discussions. All project sites are to be connected by three walks which can be used as hiking or cycling trails, and by a climate-neutral personal mobility system. IBA-Sarraine also offers considerable potential for tourism. In the Saarland, the focus extends far beyond the exceptional ten-year IBA period. Thanks to the Aachen Treaty, projects that would not be feasible elsewhere can be implemented with European funding. Thus, the Alzette Belval and Sarraine cross-border IBAs could become examples of good European practice, the exemplary nature of which will have repercussions beyond Europe and in particular on the border regions which are home to 30% of the European population.

### **The Alzette Belval PDA, the accelerator for measured, sustainable development on the French side**

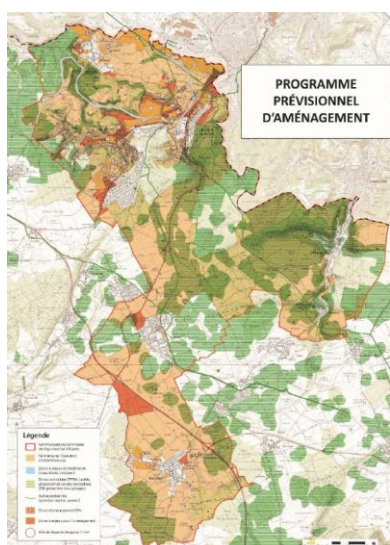
Post-industrial, border and peri-urban, the region of the Pays-Haut Val d'Alzette Community of Communes (CCPHVA) is faced with development challenges that have justified the creation of an Operation of National Interest (ONI) and a Public Development Agency (PDA), the borders of which extend over the 8 communes of the CCPHVA: Rédange, Audun-le-Tiche, Villerupt, Ottange, Aumetz, Thil, Boulange and Russange.

The PDA brings together the State and local authorities (Grand-Est Region, Department of Meurthe-and-Moselle, Department of Moselle, CCPHVA) within its Board of Directors to draw up and implement development projects in this region.

Its missions are organised around the following main functions:

- design of development projects as part of an overall strategy,
- acquisition and servicing of land,
- constructability negotiation with the community, and transfer of the management of public spaces to the latter,
- marketing of land to developers.

The PDA's development projects take into account the cross-border dimension and are in line with an **ambition for sustainable development and measured land reform**.



### Le Programme Prévisionnel d'Aménagement (PPA)

- **27 zones d'aménagement :**
  - **248 ha** dont **158 ha** de friches industrielles.
  - **3,4%** de la superficie de la CCPHVA.
- **Objectifs prévisionnels :**
  - **8300** logements neufs et **300** issus de réhabilitations.
  - Des activités économiques.
  - Des équipements publics.



The IBA approach seeks to **lead and coordinate complementary projects** carried out by various stakeholders on either side of the border. For example, various projects contribute to the enhancement of the Alzette Valley and improvement of its water quality. These projects mobilise many stakeholders, including the PDA.

As envisaged, **the IBA Forum and the Scientific Council** could contribute to the quality of the project development phase by widely involving the public and regional stakeholders and by mobilising qualified experts. This is what could be expected for the development project with a high cross-border impact, such as the Crassier des Terres Rouges project.

### **AGORA, the Luxembourg model for upgrading the industrial wasteland**

On 2 October 2000, three years after the last symbolic pouring of blast furnace B, and a few months after the Minister for Territorial Spatial Planning presented a report based on the conclusions of the Tripartite Steel Conference and the agreement on industrial wasteland, the Luxembourg State and the Arbed Group (ArcelorMittal) decided to join forces within the AGORA development company. This was an unprecedented partnership with a mission to “ *develop brownfield sites in the general interest - economic, social, ecological, spatial planning and cultural - whilst respecting private sector principles*”.

The Belval site was designated a priority project in this new strategy for reclaiming the former industrial areas of southern Luxembourg.

The idea of using the potential offered by brownfield sites to develop an urban planning programme in Luxembourg at the end of the 1990s was a significant development. It is closely linked to the concepts of sustainable development, regeneration and space-saving. AGORA was a pioneering initiative in this respect. A movement that, nowadays, is no longer subject to debate and is being deployed on many sites.

More than 20 years later, the partnership developed within AGORA on the Belval site has come to fruition. Over 1.1 million m<sup>2</sup> have been commercialised and almost 10,000 jobs created. The University of Luxembourg has 6,700 students, and its research laboratories enjoy international acclaim.

Belval is also a new residential area where 3,300 people currently live. The area will accommodate up to 7,000 residents in less than ten years.

The decision to launch the new Metzschmelz urban project on the Esch-Schifflange former industrial site heralds a new chapter covering the next 20 years. This will be an opportunity to give full scope to innovative solutions in the fields of active mobility, environment, energy supply, management of non-carbon solutions and the use of recycled and recyclable materials such as steel and wood. Devised in close collaboration with the population based on an ambitious programme of citizen participation designed to allow both current and future populations to help shape this new district from the outset and incorporate their wishes and ideas, it must deliver a sound response to the current challenges of urban development: affordable housing, mobility, environment, circular economy, energy, ecological transition and culture.

The business developed by AGORA involves rehabilitating industrial wastelands into measured, sustainable urban fabrics in the knowledge era by managing the handling of derelict spaces, urban planning, infrastructures and energy.

This sustainable perspective is in line with the cross-border objectives framework approved by the IBA Alzette Belval prefiguration mission.

**2023-2026**

**Essai\* IBA**

**IBA Test**

Essai (Test): *operation by which one checks the qualities, properties (of sth.) or the way in which sth. is used.*



# outline of an organisation

Any IBA initiative is, first and foremost, the path towards fostering a culture of innovative, shared planning that can provide a response to the issues facing a region. Even if several traditions underpin this format, nothing is set in stone and freedom is paramount. Each initiative must find the best way to achieve IBA objectives.

## **A complex region that calls for a patient approach**

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Alzette Belval is a region experiencing numerous realities within a limited geographical area. The most obvious relate to the border and various regional organisations. However, others quickly emerged during the IBA reflection process depicting a region that is rural, urban and peri-urban, included in the globalisation process but also overlooked, in the shadow of the metropolisation phenomenon or with endogenous potential, etc. These various territorial facets have shaped an extraordinary institutional and political landscape that is far removed from the usual "restricted" partnerships of an IBA, in which generally one city and/or one *Länder* brings it to a conclusion.

Given this situation, launching an IBA in the wake of a prefiguration period, the duration of which (2 years) was tailored to a reduced number of partners, would deny the specificity and multi-faceted nature of this region. Alzette Belval probably needs more time and more steps to use the IBA tool appropriately.

At the same time, Alzette Belval, and the wider acceptance of the border region, has clearly displayed its potential for an IBA initiative during the two-year prefiguration period. The Atelier des Territoires (Regional Workshop) as well as the numerous discussions and events organised to coincide with this occasion, triggered a real IBA-related dynamic resulting in the definition of objectives and ambitions by an extended partnership of territorial stakeholders.

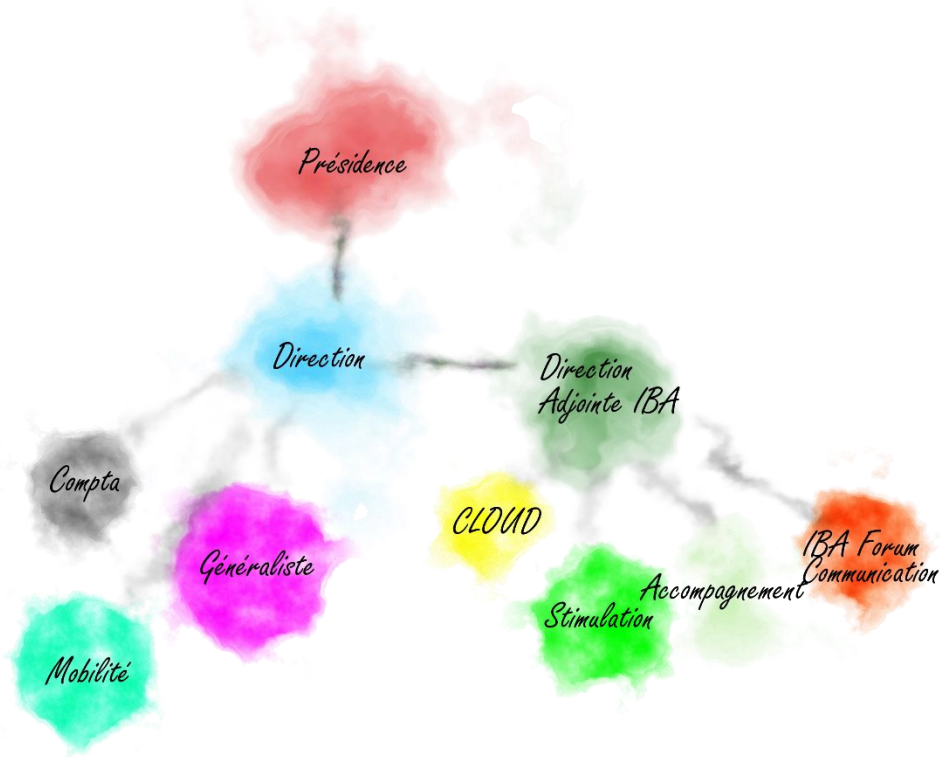
This has generated strong interest in the IBA approach and a need for this dynamic to mature in Alzette Belval. The solution envisaged in a bid to continue advancing towards the IBA objective is to initiate an in-depth phase. This should take the form of strengthened, operational cross-border co-operation in the fields of development, architecture and urban planning, in line with the precepts defined for the IBA and aimed at the "full-scale" testing of the envisaged approach. This increase in operational power could also facilitate the precision of common excellence criteria and the deepening and realisation of potential projects and demonstrators. Indeed, initial identification is outlined at this stage of the approach, but the potential exemplary nature of the latter in terms of architectural and urban planning experimentation, cross-border utility or governance must be guaranteed. Moreover, this stage of initiating change should be part of a participatory and open project scheme. If the IBA TEST is carried out, it should remain flexible in terms of direction and attentive to new requirements. Without a precise time frame (an initial time frame of 2023/26 has been drawn up but is not fixed), this new phase could broach the decision of whether or not to launch a France-Luxembourg IBA in a more serene manner.

**The Alzette Belval EGTC, potentially in charge but with changes**

In charge of the prefiguration mission from 2020 to 2022, the Alzette Belval EGTC is deemed to be the most appropriate entity to implement the IBA’s more in-depth phase. Reorganisation must, if necessary, be envisaged to initiate this new phase.

**Engineering dedicated to the IBA to promote the Alzette Belval strategy**

Analysis of previous IBA initiatives shows a strong tradition of innovative governance, subtle and tailored to the region in which the IBA operates. Day-to-day management is orchestrated by the IBA Büro, the main technical body of an IBA that conducts and leads the process in the designated region. During the in-depth phase under consideration, this organisation would be functionally integrated within the Alzette Belval EGTC. To this end, a new department covering several disciplines relevant to the IBA (landscape architects, architects, urban planners, communication, etc.) would be created. Indeed, without engineering back-up, the grouping would not be able to carry out the new missions intrinsic to the IBA dynamic.



*Proposed team organisation*

**More open and integrative governance**

The interest in directly securing this trial in the grouping would offer several advantages, the main one being to benefit from the expertise of the EGTC

In addition, the initiative would thus be managed directly by a legitimate cross-border executive established in the region for about ten years. Partial revision of the EGTC governance appears to be required in this case. For instance, it seems important to combine the participatory bodies (guaranteeing a territory-related project) and scientific bodies (making the approach part of an international dynamic) with the current EGTC governance scheme.



*Proposed organisation of governance*

Continuous discussion and links must be maintained between the various entities in order to work through a common dynamic (and multi-tiered approach), which is the only guarantee of real added value for all of the mechanisms undertaken.

### **Resources to support projects**

Within the IBA Forum framework and, more specifically, for the management and support of participatory projects, a "support fund" could be used to pay experts (self-construction, greening, support for climate change) and to cover the purchase of equipment and services, in particular within the framework of the INTERREG programme *"Europe closer to the citizens"*.

With regard to the financing of larger-scale projects, the IBA Büro could deploy support engineering to seek financing from public funds (European, national, regional, etc.) or private funds (sponsorship). The idea would be to attract subsidies for projects in the region that are part of the IBA dynamic.

### **Essential support to initiate change**

This being the case, in order for the TEST to have a real impact on the region, increased participation of the various regional stakeholders and the incorporation of their projects within the IBA dynamic seem indispensable. Several solutions could be deployed, such as financial incentives by granting specific, label-linked funding or the targeting of certain territorial investments towards IBA projects.

Regulatory incentives can also be envisaged (transcription of IBA criteria in urban planning documents) or contractual incentives (ratification of a commitment charter by local actors).

# project ideas arising from the ADT approach

The *Atelier des Territoires* (Regional Workshop) sessions united a large number of stakeholders from right across the region throughout 2021. Together, they were able to discuss and unanimously define priority actions in relation to the IBA Alzette Belval initiative. Relevant findings are documented in the "ADT Roadmap". At the centre of the roadmap are three "sound, ambitious" projects that could be implemented during the IBA in-depth phase.

## # A demonstrator project: the Crassier Terres Rouges project

The steel industry was established in the Alzette Belval region without any consideration for borders, and has left behind many vestiges of its activity that prove this. The most striking example is a fully cross-border industrial wasteland between Esch-sur-Alzette and Audun-le-Tiche, namely the Crassier des Terres Rouges.



*Crassier des Terres Rouges, 2020*

This slag heap could become the heart of the exceptional revitalisation dynamic that has been underway in the region over the last decade thanks to development projects such as Belval (or more recently the Alzette District) in Luxembourg and Micheville in France. This industrial wasteland provides an opportunity to meet any large-scale project requirements. It is a genuine blank canvass on which to try out, experiment and attempt operational cooperation in the urban project, ignoring any obstacles along the way by

committing to the cross-border experiment. Discussions regarding this slag heap are already under way between the French and Luxembourg parties on the best way to develop this cross-border district by offering housing, leisure spaces and links with nature, with total disregard for any borders.



### ZOOM IN ON DREILAND IBA BASEL:

The IBA Basel is the first and only cross-border IBA to date. It was faced with the same challenge as the IBA AB, namely the coherent development of a perfectly cross-border district, DREILAND. Germany, Switzerland and France have jointly developed this district into a model of cross-border urban cooperation.

In this case, the in-depth phase showcased this project on the international stage by stabilising and strengthening forums for dialogue, which were used to organise the sharing of good practices and perpetuate cross-border planning co-operation.

In the long term, the projects emerging from this cooperation would resonate internationally, especially in the border spaces, because of the IBA "method". These results could then be fed into other

cross-border situations, particularly in terms of the management of materials and waste, forest management and the pooling of information on mobility, water, air and the environment, etc., in a district where the border is ever-present and has to be dealt with on a daily basis.

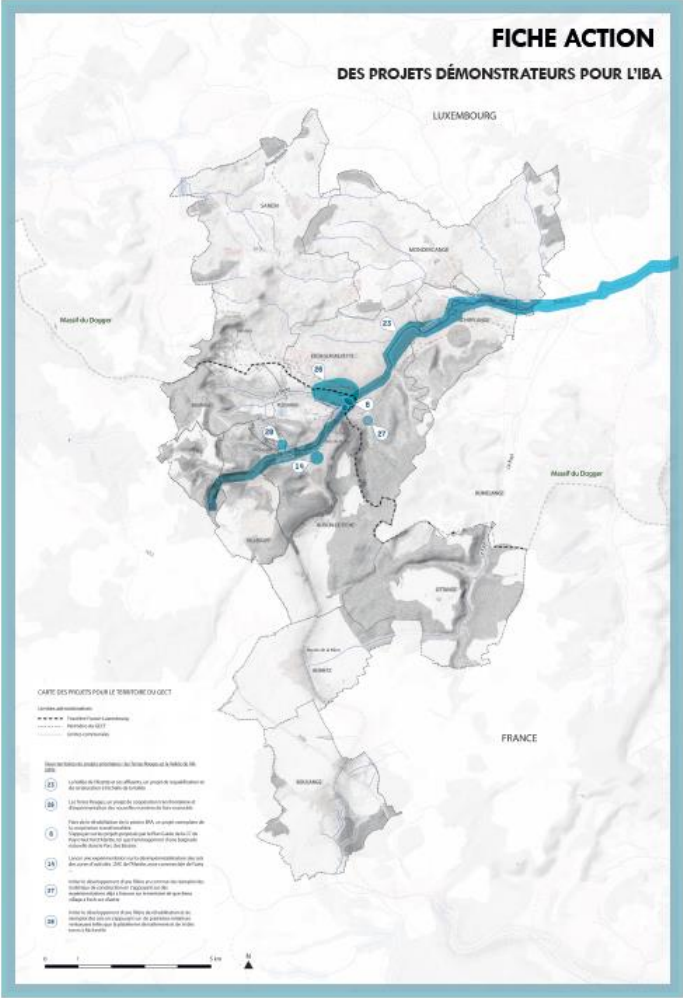
**# Nature on the residents’ doorstep: regeneration of the Alzette Valley**

The river Alzette crosses the cross-border conurbation from north to south and shapes its landscape and urban morphology. A regional beacon, even a cultural beacon on the Luxembourg side (the river Alzette is mentioned in the second line of the Luxembourg anthem), the Alzette is an integral part of the territory’s identity and unifies the entire region.

As part of the Territories’ Workshop, the dialogue between local stakeholders revealed that projects for the regeneration, revalidation and depollution of the Alzette river should be a key objective in the territorial development of Alzette Belval in the years to come.

The IBA TEST phase could be used to enhance the heritage associated with the aquatic environment of Alzette Belval in a bid to integrate it more effectively into the habitat and living environment of its residents. This enhancement programme could involve, among other things, the complete renaturation of the Alzette and its tributaries as well as renovation of the public spaces in the area, making the location more user-friendly.

Projects for the renaturation of the "Parc des étangs" and renovation of the ERA swimming pool could provide the starting point for the large-scale redevelopment of the Alzette for the benefit of the citizens of the cross-border conurbation. This project, with a high symbolic value, could be rapidly achieved. .



**ZOOM IN ON: ERA zone and former swimming pool**

A former facility developed by Arcelor Mittal in 1925, abandoned since 1995, the ERA swimming pool was once a leisure facility that virtually spanned the border. Previously frequented by the residents of Alzette Belval on either side of the border, a project to renovate this space in a sustainable, resilient and water-friendly manner could have a strong symbolic impact on revitalising the cross-border life of Alzette Belval.

## # Reclaiming the existing heritage: the IBA CALL TEST

The trigger factor for the entire IBA is its initial call for projects or *IBA CALL*. This call is aimed at architects, urban planners and landscape architects from Europe and around the world inviting them to put forward projects on the themes, spaces or issues identified by the IBA. These projects then enter the "IBA qualification" process. The relevance of these proposals is then assessed against initial IBA ambitions. The first *IBA AB Call* could be launched during the IBA TEST phase to focus on regenerating the existing heritage of the Alzette Belval region. Indeed, the observations documented during this two-year prefiguration phase tell the same story. The region has many spaces with high potential that are nevertheless unused due to various reasons (complexity of the renovation work, lack of funds, shortage of project managers or ideas, etc.).

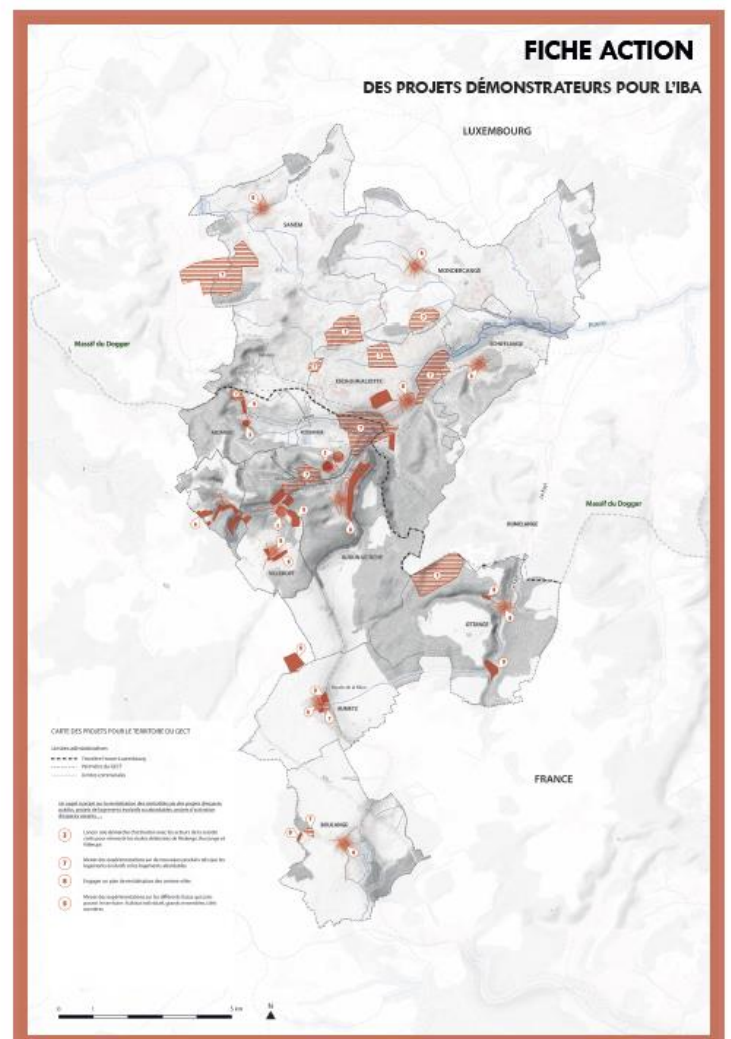
The first step would be to identify all of the spaces offering such potential in the Alzette Belval region (public spaces, empty spaces, unused commercial ground floors, vacant public facilities, etc.) in order to include them in the call for projects. The idea is to incorporate them in a revitalisation strategy and thus redefine an agglomeration strategy by simultaneously processing a myriad of projects. There is strength in numbers.

### Action everywhere, commitment to all avenues

The IBA CALL would encourage in-depth reflection on the entire region and provide coherent responses to target the various challenges outlined above.

Through this call for projects, the IBA could obtain, receive and nurture a plethora of innovative, ambitious projects that would meet the challenges of Alzette Belval whilst breathing new life into those unused spaces and reinjecting them into "city life". This is the point at which the *avenues* considered during the IBA prefiguration phase could really come into their own by providing scalable and affordable housing, new open spaces offering a new way of living together, a location for multi-site agricultural production or hybrid functions and innovative governance involving citizens and civil society, etc.

**Call for projects :** The Call for Projects is a flexible, competitive procedure for operators. This procedure is based primarily on a document setting out the objectives to be achieved but providing scope for operators to take the initiative regarding content and implementation. It promotes less restrictive competition in terms of criteria and deadlines, and genuinely stimulates private initiative. In the long term, the successful candidate could develop an area of land or be awarded a grant to carry out the project, etc.





### ZOOM IN ON: REINVENT PARIS

In 2014, the city of Paris lunched a major call for projects in several Parisian districts called **Réinventer Paris (Reinvent Paris)**.

The competition attracted **architects, urban planners and landscape architects from across the globe** and the first projects are expected in 2022.

This call for projects **has led to the emergence of dozens of projects proposing innovative urban and architectural projects**(aquaponics, co-working and nudging, etc.)



# Credits and Illustrations

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## ***Memorandum on the Future of International Building Exhibitions IBA expertenrat, 2017***

**1**

Every IBA focuses on pressing challenges in architecture, urban and regional planning that arise from local and regional problems. IBA are characterised by concentrating future questions of social change on aspects that trigger regional developments and can be influenced by the design of spaces in urban and rural contexts.

**2**

IBA are more than just architecture exhibitions. They propose social blueprints for future ways of living and provide answers to social problems, not just through the design of buildings, but also through new ways of appropriating urban and rural spaces. It is through the experience of memorable places that the messages of an IBA are made manifest.

**3**

IBA arise from specific challenges facing urban society: While the central themes of an IBA necessarily are based on occasion and location, their relevance extends far beyond the local context. Every IBA originates from locally or regionally focused initiatives and events that served as stimuli for further programmes, which the IBA in turn refines and formulates as courses of action. Preparatory formal and informal discussions among experts and with the public serve as important tools to help identify and define the topics.

**4**

IBA strive to develop model solutions for current or future problems in building culture, economy, ecology and society. By demonstrating the relevance of their topics, challenges and concepts at an international scale, they influence the ongoing debate on the future of our cities and regions in the context of wider social developments.

**5**

All IBA are first and foremost known for their buildings and projects. However, IBA draw attention not only to the buildings, but also to the conditions in which they were created and the quality of the processes that contributed to them. Through the development of instruments and formats, every IBA aims to contribute to a new culture of planning and building that manifests itself in a spirit of cooperation and in the interplay of the quality of the process and its result.

**6**

IBA must be created in an international dimension from the outset. A building exhibition is made international by the international relevance of its central topics and the resulting model projects, by the involvement of external experts and outstanding contributions from abroad, as well as through international public relations and networking.

**7**

The concentration of intellectual, artistic and financial resources over a limited period of time makes IBA a unique temporary microcosm. They are experimental research and development laboratories in which intense collaboration between experts and those affected as well as with their experiences and successes can encourage projects elsewhere, have a lasting impact on local planning practices and stimulate personal involvement.

**8**

IBA require the courage to take risks. They are experiments with open outcomes and, at times, generate new ideas through the means of provocation which may cause contradiction. Contentious issues and productive controversies are important aspects of planning culture. All stakeholders – especially administration and politics as well as the public – must be made aware of this from the outset to enable initiatives to step outside the realms of standard practice and to generate widespread interest in their projects.

**9**

Every IBA needs sufficient autonomy and appropriate organisational forms to bring about exemplary and generalisable solutions that have the potential to be compelling models. In place of established processes and proven courses of action, IBA need imaginative programmes, designs and organisational approaches coupled with a degree of improvisation and the agility to respond quickly to unforeseen events.

**10**

IBA need to share their themes, ideas, projects and images of their built results. They are a forum and a stage for their participants to present their contributions and commitment to a national and international audience. Modern communication and presentation strategies are essential for their success. Each IBA must use and develop the latest, most effective communication forms, formats and channels





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