

Choose NC interviews Mr. Loïc Martin-Cocher, Synergie cluster manager of New Caledonia

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__The energy mix of New Caledonia is made up of 97.4% fossil fuels, of which 54.1% are petroleum products (mainly fuel oil and diesel); 44.9% coal and 2.6% renewable energy. This remains strongly constrained by the metallurgical industry, which consumes fossil fuels. What is the current situation of the energy sector in New Caledonia, challenges and opportunities?

The energy sector is undergoing rapid change in New Caledonia: the energy transition plan voted in 2016 provides for public distribution to be supplied by 100% renewable energy by 2030. Since then, the territory has experienced a very significant deployment of renewable energies driven by photovoltaics, which has become the cheapest energy to produce.

The current challenges the territory will face are:

1. Adaptation of the electricity network with stabilization to respond to the intermittence of renewable energies (which produce depending on the sun, wind or precipitation), storage to match energy supply-demand and strengthening of transport network between production and consumption areas.
2. Faster integration of metallurgists in the energy transition process with renewable energy production tools.
3. The evolution of the economic sector model which is currently in deficit.

4. The paradigm shift for the transport of people and goods

These challenges are also opportunities to make New Caledonia a territory of innovation and an example in the Pacific zone in terms of energy transition, and those with significant electro-intensive industries.

__Synergie is an association created in 2009 with the aim of bringing together the main New Caledonian companies involved in the region's energy transition. To learn more about the history of Synergie, what were the key stages in its development in NC and the factors of its success?

The association was created in 2009 on the initiative of several companies, following a shared observation: the lack of a regulatory framework and political will for the deployment of renewable energies. In 2014, the energy management sector joined the cluster and then in 2016, the solar thermal sector. 2016 is also an important year for Synergie with the adoption of STENC, which results partly from the work carried out for the realization of the White Book on energy produced by its members. In 2017, the cluster welcomes the ecomobility sector and carries out actions with all the structures involved in the energy transition.

__Synergie is a cluster of 55 Caledonian companies and represents more than 1300 indirect jobs. What are your goals for the next 3 years?

The challenges for Synergie for the coming years are as follows:

- Structure the air conditioning and cold production sector since it is one of the main consumption items for households, administrations and certain processing industries. The management of waste including refrigerant gases has emerged as the priority subject of the sector.
- Become an essential structure as soon as energy is addressed.
- Be a reference and expand on the Pacific region by relaying the know-how and knowledge of New Caledonian companies.



__Synergie's vision is to make New Caledonia energy independent by controlling energy consumption and developing renewable energies. What is your plan to accelerate the development of this sector?

The strength of a cluster is based on its ability to unite companies and speak out on behalf of all its members to various institutional or private partners. Synergie is a lobbying tool, in the noble sense of the term, since its commitment is in favor of the noble cause of energy transition. Indirectly, the actions carried out participate in the reduction of greenhouse gases and in the sustainable economic development of New Caledonia.

To accelerate this transition, the cluster relies on the collective intelligence of its members. Through working groups, workshops and meetings, the issues that professionals encounter are analyzed and solutions are identified before approaching decision-makers with viable and supported proposals.



__Your final message for potential investors interested in the energy sector in New Caledonia? What do you think are the main assets of this region?

New Caledonia is a pioneering land where entrepreneurship takes on its full meaning. The territory's energy ambitions offer interesting development prospects, particularly in the energy management sector.

