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Automn 2025

The Gaspé Peninsula of Tomorrow

Vision Presentation

Climate change resilience for the
Gaspé peninsula using the
Chemins de Transition approach



CIRAD
INNOVATION SOCIALE

Collectivités Zéro émission Nette Gaspésie (CZéN Gaspésie)

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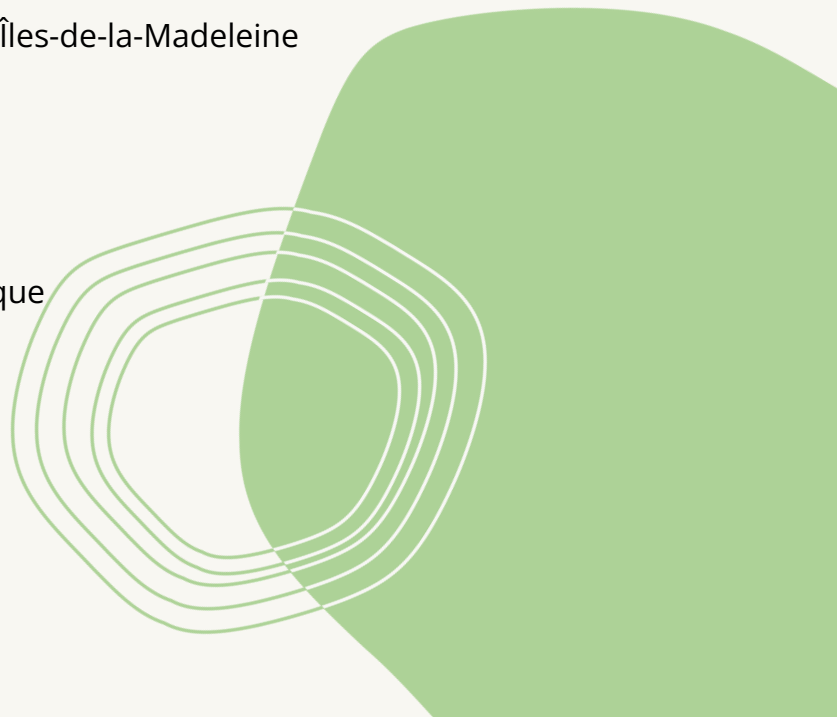
Financial Partners


Ressources naturelles Canada

Front commun pour la transition énergétique

Methodological Support

Chemins de Transition





CZÉN Gaspésie is an initiative from Québec ZÉN, a project of the Front commun pour la transition énergétique.



We acknowledge that the land on which we work is part of the traditional territory of the First Peoples, specifically the Mi'kmaw Nation. As many of our activities take place online, we also recognize the communities that experience the material consequences of those exchanges from power plants and extractive industries that support the technology we use.

CZéNG Mission

With the backdrop of climate, social, biodiversity, economic and political crises, Collectivités ZÉN Gaspésie will inform and encourage dialogue to co-construct and carry out a socio-ecological transition that seeks to break away from our dependence on fossil fuels while leveraging collective empowerment to increase resilience and social justice in the Gaspé peninsula, which is unceded Mi'kmaq territory related to the 1760 Treaty of Peace and Friendship.



The socio-ecological transition is happening. Now.

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Presentation

Collectivités ZÉN on the Gaspé peninsula

Quebec's network of Collectivités Zéro émission Nette/ZÉN [Net-zero emission associations] consists of regional initiatives from civil society organizations. Since 2022, CZÉN Gaspésie has brought together fourteen organizations and institutions on the Gaspé peninsula that seek to lay the foundations for the collective planning of the socio-ecological transition and breaking free of our dependence on fossil fuels.

The process is intended to bring about greater resilience and social justice. We hope to support communities on the Gaspé peninsula in their climate change adaptation efforts, which promise to be significant given the dramatic effects of climate change in this region.

In the coming years, this project will help the local population and various stakeholders embark on the process of transforming their lifestyles and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while helping to improve community resilience across the Gaspé peninsula.



Steps in the Process

CZÉN Gaspésie follows a methodology used by Chemins de Transition.

The following list summarizes our past and upcoming activities:

- 2022: Work begins (step 1)¹
- 2023-2024: Review (start of step 2)
 - Review summarizing the current state of the socio-ecological transition in the Gaspé peninsula
- 2024-2025: Envisioning the future we want (second part of step 2)
 - 84 workshops exploring the future were held with a total of 749 participants
 - Compilation and analysis of the workshop results
 - Preparation of a summary document (Vision)

Upcoming:

- 2025-2026: Development of working groups for the pathways to transition (step 3)
- 2026-2027: Adoption of an operations plan to support the socio-ecological transition and collective climate change adaptations (step 4)

¹ <https://parcourscollectiviteszen.org/>



Development of the Vision

This report presents the vision developed collectively among participants in consultations held as part of CZÉN Gaspésie's project—an ambitious and unifying vision for the future.

From February to June 2025, we led a consultation and social dialogue to hear the voices of the Gaspé peninsula's residents in all their diversity. The objective of this process was to develop a vision of the future that the region's communities want in 2050: an audacious, yet realistic, coherent and unifying vision that is clear enough to guide our next steps.

The Gaspé peninsula's full population was invited to participate in workshops for envisioning the future, following a prospective methodology developed by Chemins de Transition. Careful attention was paid to including marginalized populations, as well as Indigenous and Anglophone communities in the region. A total of nearly 750 people between the ages of seven and 95 participated in the 84 workshops that were held.

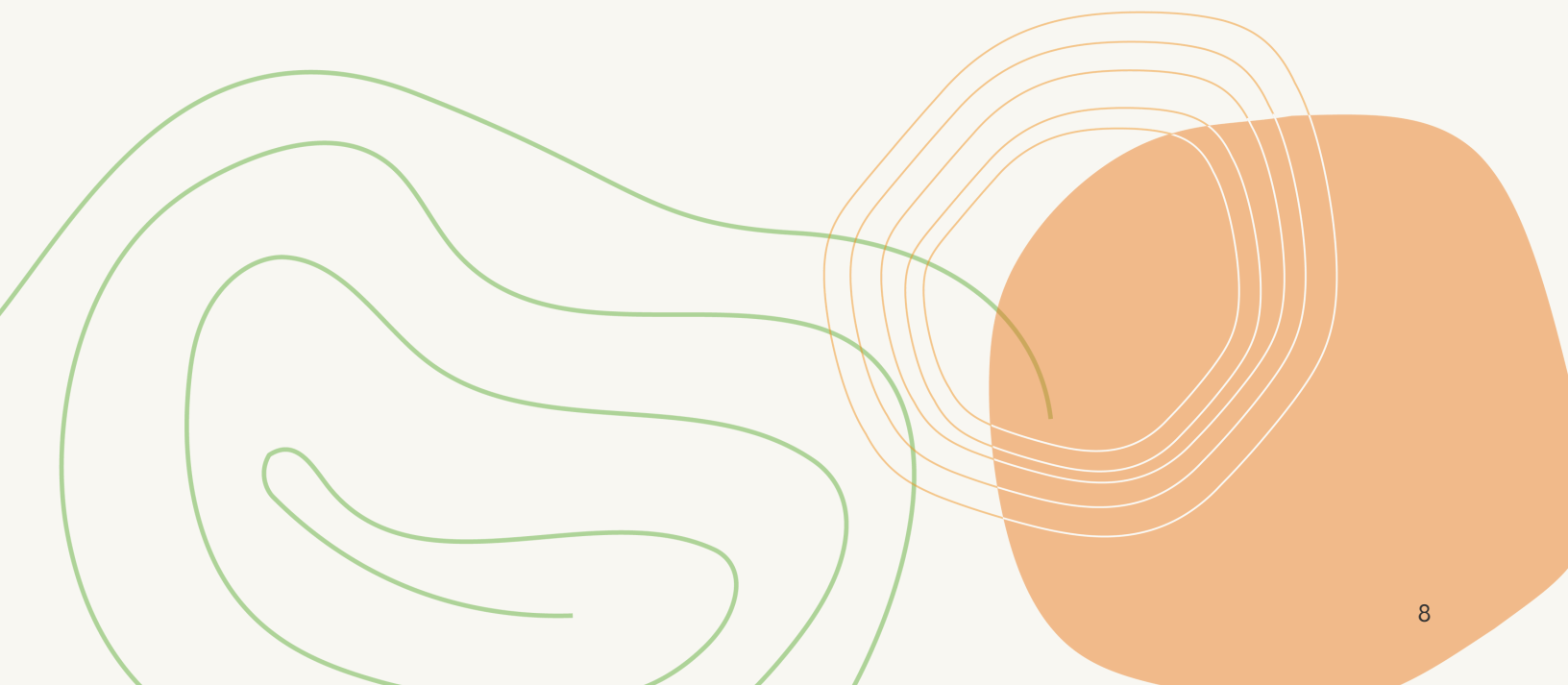


Our creative facilitation method helped people project themselves into the future using scenarios that imaged possible future worlds. Taking the form of short stories, these scenarios were inspired by documented scientific trends and served as a jumping-off point to discuss what is best for the Gaspé peninsula.

Four stories focusing on reducing GHG emissions and the socio-ecological transition were presented in the workshop, as well as four stories focusing on adapting to climate change. These stories made it possible to reflect on the future, regardless of participants' comfort level with topics related to ecology, transitions or climate change.

Each workshop welcomed groups of approximately ten people and lasted for 90 minutes. They were held virtually and in-person in each of the region's five RCMs.

Overview: 84 workshops conducted with 749 participants, in collaboration with 84 organizations, cities, municipalities and grassroots associations.



Highlights: the data collected

A total of 5,363 elements were identified by individuals during the workshops as characteristics that would either be good or bad for the region's future, as well as 292 responses that were developed collectively in response to thoughtful questions.

These data were processed and analyzed with MAXQDA. They were grouped into 192 sub-themes, and a cohesive summary was developed. Miro was then used to refine the themes and the content of the vision.

CZÉN Gaspésie's vision is presented in this document, after the glossary. It will serve as a foundation on which CZÉN Gaspésie will build its next steps.

An optional and anonymous evaluation form was sent to participants after the workshops and was returned by 357 people. Their responses helped gauge the level of confidence about the future and emotions felt by the people we had reached.

A majority of respondents felt confident and happy during the workshop and reported having confidence in the future, although young people (ages 18-35) expressed lower levels of confidence.

Here are some examples of the sub-themes that were identified

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Vision glossary

This glossary defines the words used in the report and their meanings in this context.

Carbon footprint: A measure of the greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere by a particular person, organization, product, or activity. A bigger carbon footprint means more emissions of carbon dioxide and methane, and therefore a bigger contribution to the climate crisis. Measuring a person's or an organization's carbon footprint entails looking at both the direct emissions resulting from the burning of fossil fuels for energy production, heating, and land and air travel, and indirect emissions resulting from the production and disposal of all food, manufactured goods, and services they consume. © UNDP Climate Dictionary

Climate change: Refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Such shifts can be natural [...]. But since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas. © United Nations

Densification: Strategy for developing more sustainable cities [...] It involves planning urban areas to optimize the use of resources and the physical environment. By utilizing underused spaces, such as former industrial land in inner cities, cities can grow while making the most out of available space. © Smart City Sweden

Energy sobriety: Refers to the notion of reducing [individual] energy consumption at the source. It's about questioning our energy needs and prioritizing the essential.
© Equiterre

15-minute city: An urban planning model where everything a resident needs in their daily life can be accessed within a 15-minute walk or bike ride. Rather than making an entire city traversable in 15-minutes, it instead means designing local areas to have everything civilians need within this distance. © University of the Built Environment

Food autonomy: A process of empowerment that enables people to exercise their [right to] food [...]. In a spirit of respect for humanity, nature and the environment, individuals and groups achieve food autonomy and self-sufficiency by becoming empowered to take control of their own lives and the food they eat, including their access to quality food. © Regroupement des Cuisines Collectives du Québec

Multimodal transportation: Multimodal transportation includes public transportation, rail and waterways, bicycle and pedestrian. Multimodal access supports the needs of all users whether they choose to walk, bike, use transit or drive. It means more connections and more choices. © Tennessee State Government

Population: Refers to all communities living on the Gaspé peninsula, including Indigenous, Francophone, Anglophone and immigrant communities.

Resilience: The capacity of a social-ecological system to absorb or withstand perturbations and other stressors such that the system remains within the same regime, essentially maintaining its structure and functions. When resilience is enhanced, a system is more likely to tolerate disturbance events without collapsing into a qualitatively different state that is controlled by a different set of processes. Furthermore, resilience in social-ecological systems has the added capacity of humans to anticipate change and influence future pathways. © Resilience Alliance

Self-sufficient: (of a person, nation, etc.) Able to supply one's needs for a commodity, esp. food, from one's own resources. © The Canadian Oxford Dictionary 2nd Ed.

Social economy: Economic activities carried out by cooperatives, associations (or non-profit organizations), mutuels and, more recently, foundations. Social economy organizations and enterprises operate according to a common set of principles: the finality of providing services to members or the community, the democratic governance by members, and the primacy of individuals and the social objective over capital in the allocation of revenues. © ENAP Encyclopedic Dictionary of Public Administration

Socio-ecological transition: Greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind. © International Labour Organization


Vision of CZéN Gaspésie

In 2050, the socio-ecological transition was successfully completed in the Gaspé peninsula. It is now a more just, sustainable and resilient region. Special attention was paid to population-level adaptations to climate change, as well as democratic governance and decision-making.

Orientation 1 - A healthy, engaged, welcoming and resilient community

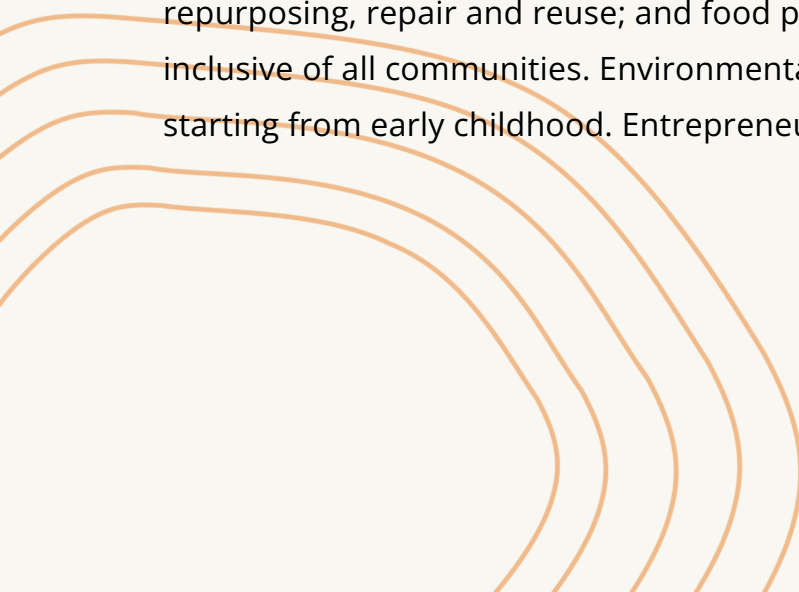
A community rich in inclusivity, health and solidarity: The population is healthy, primary care is effective and quality health care services are available to all. Everyone has access to affordable food and housing that responds to a wide range of familial, social and economic realities, which also contributes to better living conditions for all. These elements foster community development and the growth of a sustainable local economy. Knowledge and education are valued. Jobs are available and cities and villages have new infrastructure. Vulnerable populations have more security due to increased support for subsistence needs. Mutual aid and community spirit prevent social isolation and help immigrants feel welcome while respecting their rights. Communities work to ensure that the needs of current residents are met all while creating conditions to attract new populations and encourage their involvement in economic and community life. Gender equality has been reached both in law and in day-to-day life.

Changing lifestyles and values: Regional actors work together to mutualize services and infrastructure, improving access to collective resources and making solidarity possible in times of crisis. Every member of the population has a good understanding of climate change and the need for the socio-ecological transition and adaptation. The community is skilled at problem solving and is alert to each member's needs.



Living slower and reducing consumption: In terms of GHG emissions, the population has access to information to make informed choices, with an emphasis on education and prevention. Some individual behaviours are restricted, but multiple different choices are available to ensure efficiency and reduce overconsumption. People have access to aid programs to support energy- and water-saving habits and sustainable consumption. Solidarity initiatives exist to meet peoples' basic needs. Sharing networks and possibilities for reduced consumption ensure that people are less dependent on employment income to meet their needs, making it possible for them to get involved in their communities.

Thriving culture and education with strong civic involvement: The population has learned how to live together. Spaces for facilitated dialogue have increased dramatically and disagreements are seen as opportunities for improvement. Civic involvement has been made easier, the population is organized and has decision-making power thanks to diversified participation processes. Knowledge has been reappropriated and popular education encourages an outpouring of social, artistic and cultural initiatives, increasing collective empowerment. Community organizations have secure futures and volunteering is encouraged across generations.



Robustly supported education: Increased funding ensures that educational institutions offer a variety of educational programs for youth, adults and continuing education students. This makes it possible for people to acquire new skills and build their autonomy. Programs will train students for innovative new career paths as well as traditional careers that support the transition and the social economy: agriculture; repurposing, repair and reuse; and food processing. Education is accessible and inclusive of all communities. Environmental awareness plays a key role in education starting from early childhood. Entrepreneurship is also encouraged.

Orientation 2 - Equitable, democratic and climate-adapted communities

New ways of living in community: The population of the Gaspé peninsula lives and grows in sustainable, eco-responsible communities that are designed to encourage connections between neighbours, including through shared common spaces. Several village centres have been revitalized and cities have been thoughtfully densified, creating 15-minute cities where essential services are accessible and guaranteed. Housing models have evolved; buildings have been renovated, retrofitted or constructed to be more energy-efficient and adapted to new, more collectively oriented lifestyles. Sustainable neighbourhoods and shared housing have been developed with the goal of encroaching as little as possible on green spaces, which are important and protected.

A climate-change-adapted Gaspé peninsula: To confront changes to the land caused by climate change, such as coastal and shoreline erosion, coastal flooding, salinization of wells or increasing extreme weather events, long-term strategic planning based on rigorous and prospective scientific studies has been implemented. Climate change adaptations and subsequent relocations are seen as a shared responsibility with a focus on equity. Flood zones, whether they are inhabited or not, are identified with precision. Strategic planning is conducted in parallel with a population-wide awareness-building initiative so that people have a better understanding of the issues related to changes like coastal and shoreline erosion. These adaptive mechanisms are designed proactively. Decisions are made within inter-sectoral bodies that are representative of the population. These bodies identify needs on the ground and act to protect the population, especially its most vulnerable members, ensuring that the risks and benefits of these transformations are fairly distributed.

Multimodal transportation planning: Roads in village and city centres have been modified to be shared by pedestrians, cyclists, cars and public transportation with the goal of reducing dependence on personal vehicles. Public transportation, mutualization and car-sharing are planned to meet the needs of the population as a whole, including seniors, people with reduced mobility or isolated individuals. Incentives are put in place to develop these new models. Transportation of goods is also optimized to limit impacts on communities.

Centering environmental protecting in decision-making: To improve climate change resilience, planning of inhabited and uninhabited land is designed to maintain ecological processes that ensures that ecosystems can operate as they should and are resistant and resilient. Natural spaces are restored, rewilded and valued, including in their role in protecting threatened species. In decision-making, nature is understood as an actor at the same level of importance as human needs. A true equilibrium exists between the exploitation, economic value and protection of natural resources.

A democratic transition: Community transformation across the region takes place in a coordinated manner. Power-sharing is reimagined to encourage reflection, decision and action at the local level. RCMs and municipalities work hand-in-hand with the population. There is support for lifestyle changes and innovative initiatives. Municipal government has diversified funding sources, allowing it to be more autonomous and develop more resilient local policy. The population is informed about transition-related issues and involved in its communities. This involvement is recognized and encouraged with various incentives and democratic institutions. Community members actively participate in decision-making and their voices have a meaningful impact on the directions taken.

Orientation 3 - A more diversified, restrained and autonomous economy that serves people and nature

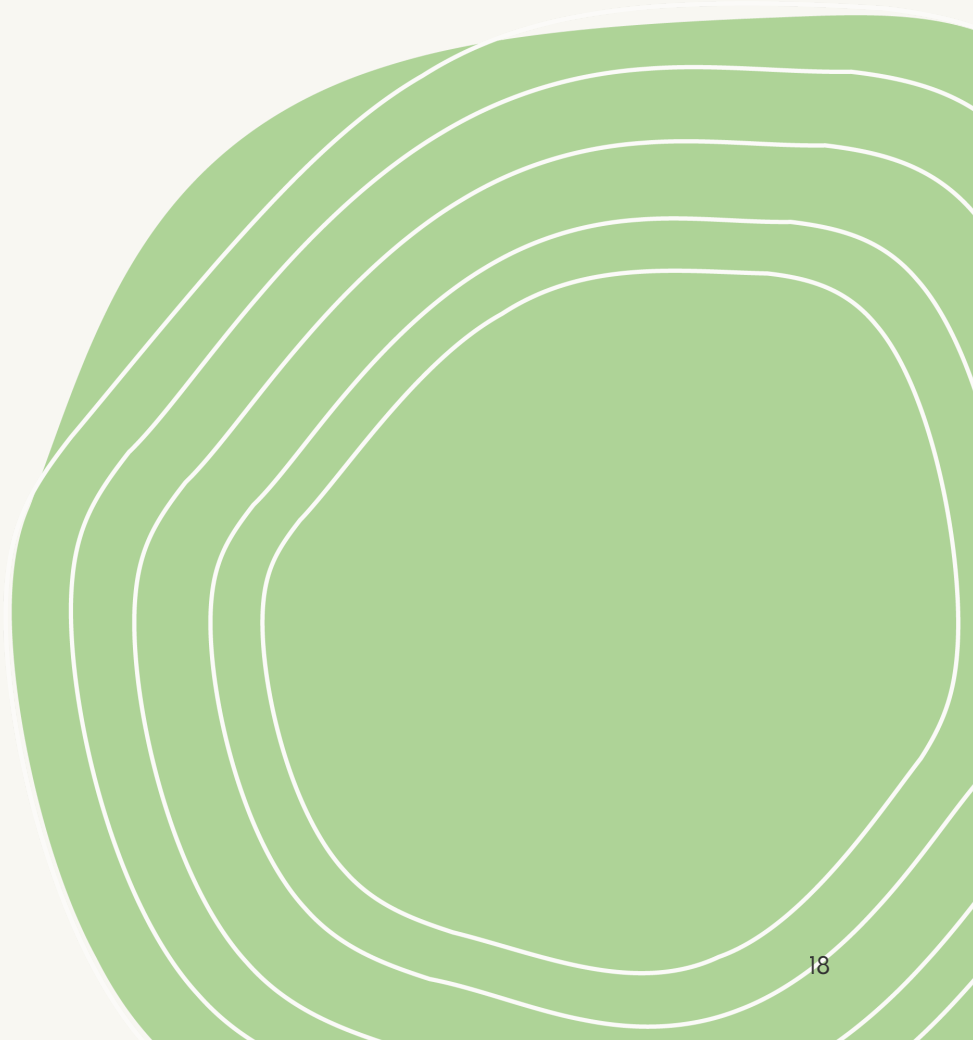
A local, diversified and innovative economy that benefits the region: A gradual socio-economic transition made it possible to diversify local economic activity. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs), co-operatives, small factories and social economy enterprises that benefit local communities are prioritized and supported in their transition processes. Industrialization is regulated to ensure that it meets local needs in priority and that inter-regional and international trade is equitable. An increase in local production allows for greater economic autonomy and financial resources are reinvested in the region. Innovative jobs are created within communities. Trade work involving repairing goods, reconditioning objects and creating new ones is valued. Repetitive tasks are partially automated to improve working conditions. To do so, policy is created that is adapted to the new realities of the labour market.

A viable economy that respects the environment: Economic diversification is adjusted based on how the world has been impacted by climate change. Natural resources are protected to ensure equitable access within the population and to reduce shortages. Natural resource extraction is heavily regulated to maintain meaningful resource potential for future generations. Businesses have adapted their practices to avoid energy-intensive or polluting technologies. The circular economy encourages the efficient reuse of materials. Regulations incentivize the consumption, repair and reuse of locally produced sustainable goods. Tourism, a crucial sector on the Gaspé peninsula, is also regulated to prevent overtourism and real estate speculation. Sustainable tourism practices are encouraged. The Gaspé peninsula attracts tourists through its distinct culture, slower pace of daily life, access to nature, landscapes and more sustainable tourism offer that is respectful of ecosystems.

Food autonomy to increase our self-sufficiency: An increase in regional food production means that the population can significantly increase its access to a healthy diet and local products. Short food supply chains are encouraged and the growth in agriculture is supported by the emergence of new crops that are better adapted to climate change (increase in rainfall, heat, etc.). Shared-use systems, like community gardens and communal cold storage, help the population collectively produce and preserve fruits and vegetables. Subsistence activities like foraging, fishing and hunting remain accessible and are transmitted intergenerationally, all while maintaining ecosystems' regenerative capacity. Private enterprises' access to natural resources is heavily regulated to ensure that local communities have priority access. Freshwater and saltwater ecosystems are protected, diversifying the species to be fished, and local fish markets are developed and implemented.

Funding to serve communities: RCMs, municipalities, Mi'kmaq communities and the provincial and federal governments work together. Regional and local governments have access to a wide range of skills and a better understanding of the realities on the ground in their areas, especially in terms of the socio-economic transition and natural resource preservation. Funding programs align with communities' actual needs, making it easier to receive grants. Projects and investments that will result in structural changes and lead to system-wide effects are prioritized. Financial resources are managed in a just, reasonable and equitable manner, and the responsibility for this management is shared between the different levels of government. Mi'kmaq community knowledge is valued and respected, as well as their ancestral rights and territories. Regional governance is democratic and draws on solidarity, mutual responsibility and a collective desire to make sustainable and equitable choices.

Digital sobriety and energy autonomy: The Gaspé peninsula actively participates in regional and international initiatives to reduce GHGs. Collective energy consumption is reduced and incentives are put in place to encourage more energy-saving. Local communities weigh in on the creation of energy-exportation projects. Innovation facilitates local energy production through small-scale autonomous infrastructure that meets local needs. Technology, including artificial intelligence, is seen as tools to help adapt to climate change and manage large-scale data sets. It is used wisely in order to reduce energy consumption. Artificial intelligence supports planning, but decisions are made collectively while centering social issues and the protection of vulnerable populations.



Gratitude

CZÉN Gaspésie would like to express our gratitude to our members, financial partners and those who worked to support the methodological aspect of the project for all of their support in this first phase of our project.

We would also like to thank the organizations, cities, municipalities and grassroots associations that helped organize workshops across the Gaspé peninsula.

CZÉN Gaspésie also thanks the 749 people who generously participated in these workshops. This collaboration made it possible to define working orientations and the future we would like to see for the Gaspé peninsula.

For more information about the project, sign up for our [newsletter](#)!

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