



**Seine-Scheldt  
EEIG**

A sustainable European transport network  
for the benefit of the territories

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
**2021**

# THE KEY POINTS OF THE PROJECT

Seine-Scheldt:  
Europe's 1<sup>st</sup>  
high-capacity  
navigable waterway network

**The Seine-Scheldt network is the result of an unprecedented European cooperative project. It will link the Seine basin in France to the Scheldt basin in Belgium thanks to the construction of a new waterway link, the Seine-Nord Europe Canal, combined with the modernisation and regeneration of existing canals. Promoting intermodal transport and innovation, it is due to open in 2035.**

The network will then consolidate Europe's transport options thanks to 1,100km of waterways, suitable for large vessels. Modern and efficient, Seine-Scheldt tackles some major European, as well as local, challenges: it encourages carbon-free transport to suit future economic and commercial needs and boosts territorial continuity for an area with more than 40 million inhabitants.



1,100km

OF HIGH-CAPACITY  
NAVIGABLE WATERWAYS

175,000

DIRECT/INDIRECT JOBS  
created

2

COUNTRIES CROSSED  
France and Belgium

+25%

MORE TRAFFIC  
as soon as it is put into  
operation in 2035

-55%

FEWER GREENHOUSE GAS  
EMISSIONS  
estimated between 1990 and 2030



5

**SEAPORTS**  
60 inland ports and  
90 connected marinas

360

**TOWNS AND  
MUNICIPALITIES**  
near the network

150 MT

**OF GOODS**  
estimated to be transported  
by 2030

1,300 ha

**OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPROVEMENTS**

The future Seine-Scheldt network is the result of a collaborative project led by France and Belgium. It is co-financed by the European Commission, the AFITF (France's transport infrastructure financing agency), water agencies, 4 French regions (Grand Est, Hauts-de-France, Île-de-France, Normandy) and 2 Belgian regions (Flanders and Wallonia), as well as the departmental and intermunicipal authorities. Operational coordination is provided by the Seine-Scheldt European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG), which brings together 4 partners:



**SOCIÉTÉ  
DU CANAL  
SEINE-NORD  
EUROPE**



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# EDITORIAL BY

## MARIE-CÉLINE MASSON

Manager of the EEIG and VNF's Territorial Director  
for Nord-Pas-de-Calais

Facilitating and supporting the completion of the European Seine-Scheldt network has been our EEIG's mission since it was set up in 2010. I am proud to manage it on behalf of Voies Navigables de France, with the support of a very dedicated team.

### AN IMPRESSIVE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTED TO DIALOGUE

Firstly, because this river network is so wide-reaching and ambitious, laying the foundations for future mobility and tackling crucial challenges for the development of our territories and the European Green Deal. Secondly, because within the consortium - which brings together the Service public de Wallonie, De Vlaamse Waterweg, the Société du Canal Seine-Nord Europe and Voies navigables de France - we are developing an impressive partnership, committed to dialogue, consultation and high standards for the benefit of a joint project.

Over time, as the network becomes established, the EEIG is honing its expertise. In 2021, the issues raised by the implementation of the financing agreement with the European Union and the preparation of a new agreement for 2021-2027 have led us to work together on many areas. In particular, we have drafted an initial progress report on the rollout of our roadmap: the Implementing Act adopted in 2019 by the European Commission, which defines our mutual commitments, objectives and a timetable. The year has also given us the opportunity to look to the future by really analysing how we can standardise water management, user services and statistics data for the Seine-Scheldt network. It is true that on the ground, the network is

### ON THE GROUND, THE NETWORK IS TAKING SHAPE

taking shape and we now need to anticipate how it will be put into service so that we can maximise the benefits for all users.



# SEINE-SCHELDT, A FIT FOR THE FUTURE INVESTMENT FOR EUROPEAN TERRITORIES

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For this unique project, the Seine-Scheldt network has put the waterway right back at the heart of the cooperative relationship between European territories and highlighted the importance of waterway transport for EU countries. Born out of joint investments and shared ambitions, it is being led and implemented by a number of committed stakeholders, working together. Mobility of the future, economic development, ecological transition: it backs up all of the major changes facing Europe and responds to the key challenges it is facing between now and 2050.









# Interview with PÉTER BALÁZS,

## European Coordinator of the North Sea-Mediterranean Corridor



### What does the Seine-Scheldt network represent for the European Union, its main funder?

It is a symbolic project, the most significant of its kind for inland navigation in Europe. It is a very ambitious project that will create a network covering 1,100km of high capacity waterways linking major seaports and numerous multimodal platforms in two countries, France and Belgium, and six regions: Normandy, Île-de-France, Grand Est, Hauts-de-France, Flanders and Wallonia. Once up and running, this network will serve a territory that is home to 40 million people, with several large cities and some 200 towns with more than 2,000 inhabitants located near the waterway. The project includes the construction of the Seine-Nord Europe Canal, a missing link of more than 100km between the Seine basin and the Scheldt basin and, beyond that, other major European river basins. The Seine-Scheldt network has huge potential for increasing river traffic and boosting a modal shift. It also plays a key role in our North Sea-Mediterranean Corridor. This Corridor, one of the main priorities for the Trans-European Transport Network, is characterised by the dominance of water, with its network of waterways connected to two seas: the North Sea and the Mediterranean via the port of Marseille.



With Seine-Scheldt, we are seeking to improve mobility in Europe, both for citizens and for goods, while making it more sustainable.

Work on the dam  
at the Cave on the Seine





Tour of the Seine-Nord Europe  
Canal construction site



## What are Europe's objectives with Seine-Scheldt?

There are a number of objectives. By deploying a multimodal trans-European transport network that is coherent, accessible, modern, safe and efficient, EU countries are seeking to improve mobility in Europe, both for citizens and also for goods, while making it more sustainable. Taking concrete action to protect the climate and the environment, and in particular decarbonising transport, is one of the key goals. That is what the European Green Deal is all about. To achieve this, we need to create the right conditions to shift transportation by road to all transport modes, including waterways.

In addition, Seine-Scheldt is not just an infrastructure project: it will ensure better territorial continuity and strengthen social cohesion in the regions affected. Increasing the capacity of waterway transport encourages productive investments around the waterway. The network is therefore synonymous with economic development, jobs and quality of life for all those involved in the territories concerned. And beyond these territories, it creates value for the whole of Europe.

## What are your thoughts on how the network is being implemented?

It is a little behind schedule, in particular because of the sanitary crisis, but it is making good progress. It's inevitable that the schedule slips a little when dealing with a project of this magnitude. However, we must remain vigilant to make sure that the commissioning of the different parts of the infrastructure is coordinated between now and 2030. Over the last two years, we have adapted by developing ways of discussing things remotely, and we are now back to our usual working rhythm. All the stakeholders are totally committed. As for the working environment, it is peaceful and collaborative. At several cross-border sites, we are even seeing the emergence of an unprecedented form of cooperation, where Belgian and French stakeholders are working very closely together, over several years. It is true that Seine-Scheldt is an ideal backdrop for the emergence of new ways of handling projects. I am thinking in particular of the Implementing Act, which contains a joint action plan and a timetable for its implementation, thus establishing a detailed roadmap for the next ten years. I am also thinking of the financing agreements that mean that funds can be committed at a European level over several years. I should add that members of the public are learning more and more about Seine-Scheldt, and that the network is starting to have concrete benefits such as a canal being dug or a bridge being raised, as well as offering job opportunities in a range of professions, which is proving to be of some interest. This is another reason for satisfaction and a positive thing for the future of the network.



# A NETWORK PROMOTING FUTURE MOBILITY

Seine-Scheldt is meeting the major challenges of European transport by accelerating both the modal shift to waterways and the innovation at work within the waterway sector.

The Seine-Scheldt is the largest investment project on the European waterway network, with €10 billion committed to the works involved between now and the end of the decade. It is true that the stakes are high for the future of mobility in Europe: we need to put forward an attractive new transport solution to deal with the rise in traffic, against a backdrop marked by both growing road congestion and the climate change emergency.

Ambitious and formative, the project will link the Seine basin to the Scheldt basin as well as to other major European basins such as the Rhine and Meuse. It will thus create the first European waterway network: 1,100km of high-capacity waterways, which will connect a large number of seaports, inland ports and urban areas, and double the trade capacity in the areas covered. The network is being set up thanks to the construction of a new high-capacity waterway, the Seine-Nord Europe Canal, as well as the development and regeneration of existing links, some of which (such as the Condé-Pommerœul Canal) have been reopened to navigation. This work is backed up by the creation and modernisation of infrastructure and waterway structures. The project as a whole is being developed with a focus on intermodal solutions, with extremely strict requirements in terms of safety, performance, equipment and services provided to users of the waterway.

+25%

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

estimated for inland waterway goods transport from 2035 thanks to Seine-Scheldt



Urban logistics operations  
quai de la Bourdonnais, Paris





Loading at the port of Halluin  
on the Lys

### A new socio-economic report on the network



In 2021, working with researchers from SPW, DVW and the SCSNE, VNF's teams of experts produced an updated socio-economic report for the project on behalf of the Seine-Scheldt EEIG for two timescales: 2035 and 2070. This is the first comprehensive report covering the whole scope of the Seine-Scheldt project and taking into account all of the programmes launched as part of the network's implementation. All of the studies carried out and their results were validated by an international scientific committee made up of French, Belgian and Canadian academics specialising in transport economics. This report was the result of 18 months of work, and its findings have been used to bolster the application for a new financing agreement with the European Union.

Building on these strengths, Seine-Scheldt will make river transport more attractive and accelerate the modal shift to waterways. It will expand the possibilities for riverboat traffic, thus contributing to the development of tourism and leisure in the areas covered. But the impact will be most significant on the transport of goods. The new socio-economic report on the network (see box) shows that by 2035, its commissioning will result in an extra 9.8 billion tonne-km of traffic, representing a 25% increase. By 2070, the increase will reach 17.5 billion tonne-km. It will increase the waterway's market share to 17%.

# 17.5

**BILLION**  
tonne-km of  
additional traffic  
in 2070

Its scale and the wide range of expertise involved mean that Seine-Scheldt will also benefit the future of waterway transport by accelerating innovation. In particular, it will consolidate the sector's digitisation thanks to programmes dedicated to remote control solutions, automating equipment, sharing databases and creating digital tools to improve infrastructure maintenance, traffic management and waterway information.

# A NETWORK PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Seine-Scheldt offers much more than a waterway infrastructure: it contributes to the economic development of the region around the waterway, bringing in business, growth and jobs.



Container transport  
in Paris

© Pascal Lemaître - VNF

Seine-Scheldt is designed to be a comprehensive transport system incorporating interfaces between the waterway network and the territories it serves. The project includes, for example, creating or extending multimodal logistics platforms. It is also a partnership that brings together governments, local authorities, manufacturers, logistics providers, transport operators, port authorities and infrastructure managers. These two characteristics mean that it creates value for the economy of all the territories concerned, both locally and regionally, as well as nationally and throughout Europe.



## HOURS

quicker to travel  
between Courtrai  
and Gennevilliers  
thanks to Seine-  
Scheldt

Thanks to the Seine-Scheldt network, located in the heart of a European area with 40 million inhabitants, businesses will have access to new areas in which to live, interact, produce and consume. Increased loading capacity, lower transport costs, reduced transport times

(between Kortrijk and Gennevilliers, for example, shipping time will be reduced by 9 hours), increased possibilities for cooperating and sharing resources, respect for the environment... there are so many benefits associated with the arrival of this new transport and logistics solution. They will help users boost their competitiveness, quality, safety, productivity and responsibility, contributing to the sustainability of their activities and promoting their growth, including via exports.



In the first instance, sectors historically associated with waterways, such as construction and public works, grain, chemicals and metallurgy will benefit from this development.

According to the latest socio-economic report (see page 11), in 2035, a quarter of the river traffic on the Seine-Scheldt will come from construction and 23% from agriculture. But the network will also benefit emerging waterway-related activities, for example in the circular economy and urban distribution sectors. In total, two thirds of the benefits of the project will go to the users of the Seine-Scheldt, and the added value has been calculated at 15 billion Euros\*.

15

**BILLION EUROS**  
in added value for  
network users

Businesses have already identified the network's development potential and are getting ready to take full advantage of the opportunities it offers. For several years, they have been working with waterway transport stakeholders

to think about how to encourage the establishment of a real "industrial corridor" along the Seine-Scheldt infrastructure, making real progress by coming up with solutions together to meet the needs of each sector. The network should thus go hand in hand with a phase of industrialisation in the regions

that it covers. As for seaports and inland ports, they are already investing in their hinterlands to absorb the future increase in traffic and preparing to conquer new markets.

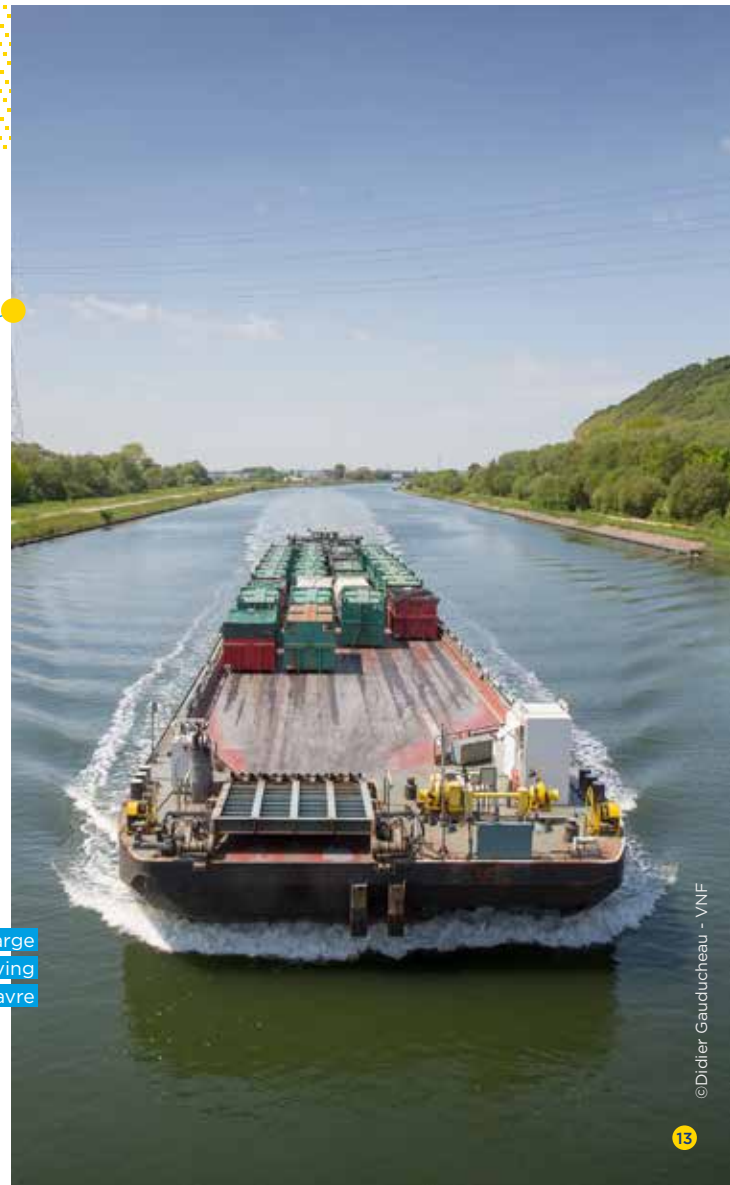
*\*in net present value*

### A decrease in the external costs of transport



Seine-Scheldt will reduce the external costs associated with the transport sector. By absorbing part of the increase in traffic in Northern Europe and encouraging a modal shift to waterways and railways, the network will limit the negative impact of road traffic on the local community: greenhouse effect due to carbon emissions, air pollution caused by fine particle emissions, noise pollution, road congestion, traffic accidents, etc. The latest socio-economic report values the savings at 10.4 billion Euros\*.

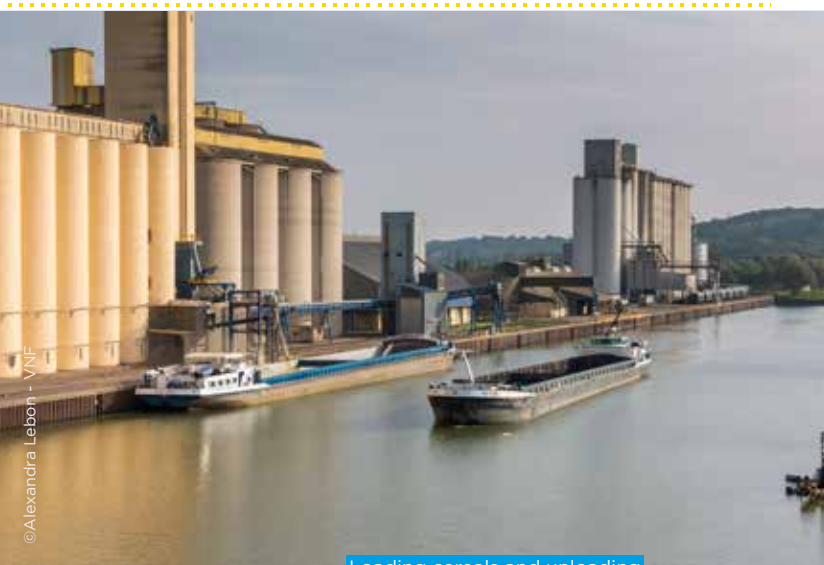
*\*in net present value*



Barge  
leaving  
Le Havre

# A NETWORK PROMOTING THE ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

Seine-Scheldt fits in with the ecological policy pursued by European Union countries, including in particular their strategy to combat climate change as set out in the European Green Deal.



Loading cereals and unloading containers, France

## A network that respects the environment

A driving force to achieve carbon neutrality, Seine-Scheldt is also a project driven from the outset by ecological ambitions. There is a permanent commitment to limiting and compensating as much as possible for the impact on natural areas and biodiversity, and the project incorporates environmental performance objectives throughout the value chain: how programmes are designed, preliminary studies and completion of the work, as well as how the network is managed once it is open to navigation. This is achieved through a whole host of initiatives, including installing fish passes on river structures, greening riverbanks, tree planting campaigns and the creating wetlands.



European countries understand that climate change and environmental damage have become an “existential threat” to humanity, and so they reinforced their ecological policy by adopting a Green Deal in 2020. This set of proposals aims to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions in the EU by 55% between 1990 and 2030, and then to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. Seine-Scheldt will help them achieve these targets, as the latest economic report shows (see page 11).

5.8

MILLION

fewer trucks on the road every year thanks to Seine-Scheldt

This is because the network will increase the inland waterway sector's market share in medium- and long-distance freight transport in Northern Europe. The new waterway traffic generated by the commissioning of the network will come mainly from the shift from road to waterway travel. By 2035, road traffic will be reduced by 4.6 billion tonne-km and will lose three per cent in terms of market share. This will result in 2.3 million fewer heavy goods vehicles on the road every year. By 2070, this number is expected to reach 5.8 million.



The significant potential for a modal shift associated with Seine-Scheldt contributes even more to Europe's ambition to make transport carbon neutral because, thanks to the large volume of traffic, waterways are the most environmentally friendly means of transport: a waterway convoy emits five times less CO<sub>2</sub> per tonne transported than a heavy goods vehicle. Its environmental performance is expected to increase further, as the sector is committed to a policy of ecological transition. In France as in Belgium, work is underway to make boat engines greener and develop the use of renewable energy.



**5 TIMES LESS CO<sub>2</sub>**  
emitted per tonne  
transported when  
a HGV is replaced  
with a waterway  
river convoy

For now, the benefits associated with implementing Seine-Scheldt in the fight against carbon emissions are estimated at 521 million Euros\*. The intermodal nature of the network adds to its benefits for the climate. Projections show that the market share of mass transport solutions will increase by three percent in 2035 within the scope of the project, going up to 37%. In 2070, waterway and rail transport should account for almost half (46%) of the market, consolidating the move towards carbon neutrality.

Seine-Scheldt will also be an asset in the face of the risks posed by rising global temperatures and the increasing number of climate hazards on an essential resource: water. That's because the project has a sustainable approach to water management. The network is being developed so that it can be incorporated into the large water cycle of the six regions served, maintain a sufficient flow to preserve the local flora and fauna, ensure ecological continuity and guarantee water quality. Its benefits in terms of managing rising water levels are estimated at 144 million Euros\*.

*\*in net present value*

Condé-Pommerœul  
Canal





# 2 ON THE GROUND, THE NETWORK IS BECOMING A REALITY

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The implementation of the Seine-Scheldt network continues to progress in all the territories concerned, hardly affected by the restrictions connected to the health crisis. We hear updates from Frank Serpentier, Seine-Scheldt investment project manager at De Vlaamse Waterweg (DVW), Pascal Moëns, Director of Transport and Intermodal Freight Solutions at the Service Public de Wallonie (SPW), Marie-Céline Masson, Manager of the Seine-Scheldt EEIG and Territorial Director for Nord-Pas-de-Calais for Voies Navigables de France (VNF) and Jérôme Dezobry, Chairman of the Société du Canal Seine-Nord Europe's (SCSNE) Board of Directors.





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# WHAT'S HAPPENED THIS YEAR

## De Vlaamse Waterweg (DVW)



### HOW THE PROJECT IS PROGRESSING ACCORDING TO...

**Frank SERPENTIER**  
Seine-Scheldt investment project manager  
at DVW

#### What were the milestones for Flanders in 2021 in terms of setting up the Seine-Scheldt network?

Last year, we were able to make progress with two important projects for the future network. In April, our Board of Directors approved the plans to upgrade the Rollers-Lys Canal to Class Va, suitable for vessels weighing 3,000 tonnes. This is an investment programme worth approximately 270 million Euros between now and 2032, which includes making the canal deeper, developing the banks and the related infrastructure, raising the bridges and increasing the capacity of the lock complex at Ooigem. In September, we were awarded the single environmental permit to upgrade the first half of section 140 from the Lys to Class Vb, running for 5km between Deinze and Vive-Saint-Bavon, which will thus be able to handle waterway convoys weighing 4,500 tonnes. We plan to widen the navigation channel and develop the banks to respect the environment. The work, which has already started, will take four and a half years. In 2021, Flanders also welcomed the formal ratification of the framework agreement on the Lys Mitoyenne (see page 23), which has thus come into force.

#### What new milestones are you expecting to achieve in 2022?

We will be launching new projects, such as the first phase of work to update the Lys crossing in Menin in the spring. As well as this, in order to extend the infrastructure work undertaken as part of the Seine-Scheldt network, in the first half of 2022 we will be signing a partnership agreement between Flemish economic stakeholders based on a new information and discussion platform: eNES (Economisch Netwerk Seine-Schelde or Seine-Scheldt Economic Network). We are doing this to promote inland navigation and raise Seine-Scheldt's profile in Flanders. The challenge is to encourage as big a modal shift as possible to river transport once the network is up and running "



DVW  
in a nutshell

#### De Vlaamse Waterweg (DVW)

manages and operates waterways as a powerful network that contributes to Flanders' economy, prosperity and quality of life.

2021  
2022

#### KEY DATES

#### December 2021

The new road bridge at Merelbeke opens to the public

#### March 2021

Work begins on the Noorderwal quay wall in Deinze

#### April 2022

Completion of the new road bridge over the Lys in Ooigem

#### March 2022

Completion of the new River Terminal Roeselare transshipment terminal on the Roeselare-Leie Canal



# Service public de Wallonie (SPW)



## HOW THE PROJECT IS PROGRESSING ACCORDING TO...

**Pascal MOENS**  
Director of Transport and Intermodal Freight  
Solutions at SPW

### What were the milestones for Wallonia in 2021 in terms of setting up the Seine-Scheldt network?

We have completed or almost completed a number of projects. Completing the work to remove mines from the Lys, after First World War shells were discovered there two years ago, has meant that we have been able to finish digging the new channel on the Walloon side. We have made good progress on the Charleroi-Brussels Canal in terms of modernising the three locks at Gosselies, Marchiennes and Viesvilles, which were put into operation in 2021. Finishing work was carried out in February 2022. On the Scheldt, we commissioned the new Hérinnes dam in October. This project was remarkable in many ways. In particular, what really stood out was how much attention was paid to the environment, including in particular by incorporating clauses dedicated to CO2 emissions in its contracts. That was why in it was awarded the Walloon Prize for the most responsible public contract 2021. This dam also illustrates the complexity and diversity of the

different professions involved in the waterway sector. The site requires a wide range of different areas of expertise, including managing water levels, producing hydroelectricity and soft mobility. The year also saw the launch of new projects, such as the construction of the building that will house the control equipment for the Hensies and Pommerœul locks, and the work to deepen the Auvélais lock on the Sambre. This lock is not suitable for barges that need to go down more than 2.2 meters, which creates a bottleneck. Our goal is to get down to 2.8 meters by the end of 2022.



### What new milestones are you expecting to achieve in 2022?

Some projects are due to be completed, including the work that began in 2020 to develop the Manage quay at the Port Autonome du Centre et de l'Ouest and the Auvélais lock project. We also hope to complete a number of studies, such as the plans to modernise the Nimy-Blaton-Peronnes Canal or the technical studies for the construction of four new Class Va locks. ”

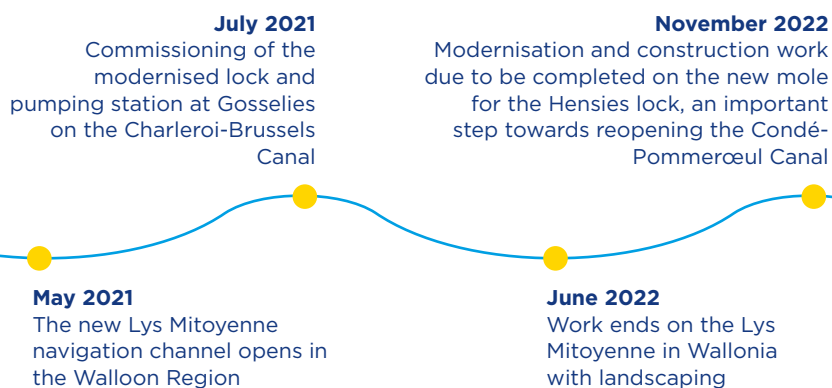
The SPW  
in a nutshell

#### The Service public de Wallonie (SPW)

In particular, the Mobility and Infrastructures department initiates and coordinates the policies pursued by Wallonia in terms of personal mobility and freight transport.

2021  
2022

KEY DATES



# Voies navigables de France (VNF)



## HOW THE PROJECT IS PROGRESSING ACCORDING TO...

**Marie-Céline MASSON**  
Manager of the Seine-Scheldt EEIG and VNF's  
Territorial Director for Nord-Pas-de-Calais

### What were the milestones defined by VNF in 2021 for the Nord Pas-de-Calais basin in terms of setting up the Seine-Scheldt network?

Thanks to the valuable support of the Hauts-de-France Region, a major financial partner for the Seine-Scheldt link in France, we have started on the work involved in finalising the recalibration of the Deûle and have made progress reopening the Condé-Pommerœul Canal to navigation, which is based on establishing sediment management sites and dredging campaigns. This project benefits from first-rate environmental support, with 15% of the budget invested in safeguarding biodiversity and creating 30 hectares of wetlands. The attention paid to these issues meant that we partially suspended the work when the government departments alerted us to the presence of beavers on the construction site in April. An application for a "protected species" exemption was then submitted, and it was validated in August by a prefectural decree.

During the year, we also began work to update the Denain lock and submitted the design studies for the creation of the remote control centre for all the locks in the high capacity Nord-Pas de Calais network. This work is important because by optimising the handling of hydraulic structures, VNF will be able to improve the services it offers by increasing the opening widths.

We also continued with the first phase of recalibrating section 1 of the Lys Mitoyenne

(see page 23), which includes environmental mitigation, protecting banks and landscaping, as well as improving the service track and the Wambrechies transit site.



### What new milestones are you expecting to achieve in 2022?

We are going to finish the work involved in protecting the banks at the Quesnoy-sur-Deûle lock. We will then be able to move on to the next step, which is draw up the contracts for the extension work. We will also finish work on the Denain lock, after we have completed the Don and Grand Carré locks.

The third quarter will be marked in particular by the awarding of the contracts for the widening and deepening of the Lys Mitoyenne, and in December we will have completed the dredging of the Deûle.

2021  
2022

KEY DATES  
IN THE  
NORD-PAS-  
DE-CALAIS

**October 2021**  
Consultation process launched  
for the main work involved in  
extending the lock at Quesnoy-  
sur-Deûle

**March 2021**  
Fish ladder commissioned at the Comines  
lock and dam and completion of the  
work on the banks of section 1 of the Lys  
Mitoyenne

**September/October 2022**  
Preliminary studies to double up  
the Fontinettes lock

**June 2022**  
Maintenance and operating  
agreement signed for section 1 of  
the Lys Mitoyenne



## And in VNF's Seine Basin Territorial department, what were the highlights of the year for Seine-Scheldt?

Among the highlights in the Oise region was the submission of the final design studies for the construction of the Mours Railway Bridge in March. On the Seine Aval, progress has been made modernising the Poses dam, with the completion of 80% of the riprap in the trench downstream of the dam. The complete renovation of the two locks at Méricourt continues but work was slowed down by the discovery of buried structures, which meant that further investigations were required and the construction processes had to be modified. At Seine Amont, the secondary lock at Le Coudray is now back in service and work has begun on the Vives-Eaux lock. The Evry and La Cave automatic dams have also been updated. 2021 also saw the construction of the Coudray, Champagne and Ablon boathouses and the reinforcement of the bank at the Jaulnes lock. Another major project involved extending the high capacity navigable network in the Seine basin by developing a 28.5km section between Bray and Nogent. The work was unreservedly accepted by the Committee of Inquiry prior to the DUP<sup>1</sup>.

1- Déclaration d'utilité publique, Declaration of public utility

## What will be the new milestones defined for 2022?

In the Oise region, the Magéo project (see page 24) is about to take an important step forward with the submission of the application for a single environmental permit. VNF is planning to start other projects, such as work to update the Port-Mort and Suresnes dams. Within the framework of the Water Law, new regulatory studies will also be launched for the project to build a landing stage, designed to improve access to the Venette lock. The second half of the year will see work begin to make it possible to control the high capacity locks on the Seine and the Oise remotely, including in particular the roll-out of fibre optics as well as the lock equipment and three centralised control stations at Vives-Eaux, Compiègne and Notre-Dame-de-la-Garenne."

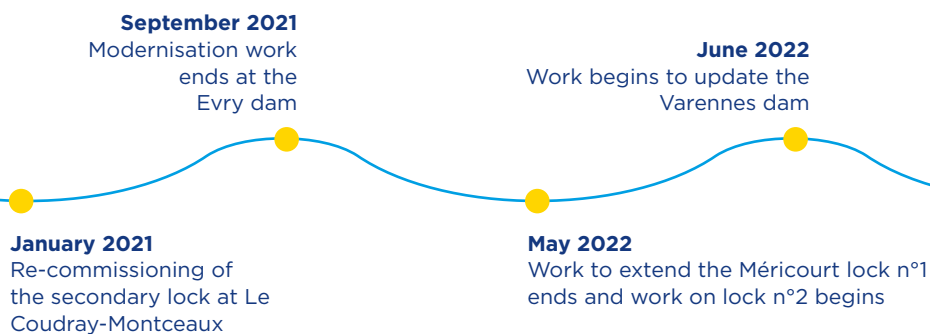
VNF  
in a nutshell

### Voies navigables de France (VNF)

is a public body that works tirelessly to maintain waterways focusing on three areas: promoting sustainable waterway logistics, contributing to regional development and ensuring overall water management.

2021  
2022

KEY DATES  
IN THE  
SEINE  
BASIN



Building site  
for the  
Hérinnes dam



# Société du Canal Seine-Nord Europe (SCSNE)



## HOW THE PROJECT IS PROGRESSING ACCORDING TO...

Jérôme DEZOBRY

Chairman of the SCSNE's Board of Directors

### What were the main milestones defined in 2021 as far as the construction of the Seine-Nord Europe Canal was concerned?

As far as section 1 is concerned, which covers 18km of canal between Compiègne and Passel in the Oise department, we entered a truly operational phase when we secured the environmental permit in April. This meant that we could start the preparatory work involved in building platforms and roundabouts that will ensure better access to the site. Alongside this, we are preparing the land to minimise the impact the project will have on the environment. For example, some 10 hectares of trees were replanted in partnership with a local secondary school, which took on the role of nursery. On sections 2, 3 and 4 between Passel and Aubencheul-au-Bac in the North, all the design studies have now been completed. This means we can move on to the next step, which involves land acquisition and environmental schemes. During the year, the project has continued to assert itself as a driving force for innovation. The implementation of BIM<sup>1</sup> management for sections 2 and 4 earned one of our prime contractors, the ONE group, the Moniteur's silver BIM award in October. This is a first for a linear infrastructure engineering project of this magnitude. Another example: working in collaboration with DVW and SPW's hydraulic laboratories, we launched a project in 2021 to create models to optimise the design of the

Canal's future locks (which will have some of the highest drops in Europe) and to test the safety of the planned systems.

### What new milestones are you expecting to achieve in 2022?

In the second half of the year, we are launching two very significant contracts for section 1. The aim is to start work on moving the Oise River to make way for a lock and four bridges that will cross the canal, which is the start of the canal itself. For the other sections, the year will be marked by the submission of the environmental permit application. We are also going to be launching the process involved in awarding a contract to a design firm and builder who will be in charge of building a one-of-a-kind 1,300m long canal bridge over the Somme. "

1- Building information modelling



The SCSNE  
in a nutshell

### The Société du Canal Seine-Nord Europe

is a local public institution specifically set up to lead the establishment of the Seine-Nord Europe Canal between Compiègne and Aubencheul-au-Bac.

2021  
2022

#### KEY DATES

#### April 2021

Canal Emploi, Canal Entreprises and Canal Formation agreements signed for the Grand Chantier du Canal Seine-Nord Europe



#### June 2021

Work begins to build roundabouts as part of the preparatory work for Section 1



#### September 2021

Construction work begins for two docks as part of the preparatory work for Section 1



#### 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2022

Submission of the environmental permit application for sections 2, 3 and 4 (northern part of the Seine-Nord Europe Canal, 90km long)



#### 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2022

Launch of the work to correct the course of the Oise river





# POSITIVE RESULTS ALREADY

Collaboration, consultation, transformations... The Seine-Scheldt network is not yet in service, but its implementation is already having positive consequences for all stakeholders. Illustrations in the different territories affected.

## New forms of collaboration

### A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP AROUND THE LYS MITOYENNE

The upgrading of the 16 kms long Lys Mitoyenne between Deûlémont in France and Ménin in Belgium, to a high capacity waterway suitable for convoys weighing 4,500 tonnes, is a key component of the Seine-Scheldt network. This ambitious project also epitomises the partnership between VNF, SPW and DVW, who are all involved in its implementation. The Lys Mitoyenne is so symbolic in terms of cross-border relations that the approach taken has repeatedly attracted the attention of experts from the European Commission and senior representatives of the French and Belgian Ministries of Foreign Affairs. The three project owners were

able to agree on a way to distribute the work that was not restricted by territorial boundaries. In order to ensure consistency and efficiency,

the 16 kms strip was divided into three sections and each project owner was given responsibility for one section on the French and Belgian sides. This is a first in terms of international cooperation. It was made possible by the ratification of a new tripartite Framework Agreement between France and the Flemish and Walloon regions. The agreement came into effect in the summer

of 2021 and was extended in December when an implementation agreement was signed. The collaborative work on the Lys Mitoyenne involved administrative, operational and financial elements, as the distribution of tasks gives rise to the payment of subsidies in accordance with a specific arrangement.

MORE THAN

150

MILLION EUROS will be invested in the work to make the Lys Mitoyenne deeper and wider

### Sharing roles

- VNF is the project owner for section 1 of the Lys Mitoyenne (from the Deûle-Lys confluence to upstream of the Comines lock).
- SPW is the project owner for section 2 (from downstream of the Comines lock to the boundary between the municipalities of Comines and Wervicq).
- DVW is the project owner for section 3 (from the municipal boundary of Wervicq/Comines to the bridge in the rue de Lille in Menin).



Developments on the  
Lys Mitoyenne



# Consultation processes

## CONSULTATION IS MOVING FORWARD FOR THE SEINE-NORD EUROPE CANAL

For two years, despite the health crisis, the construction of the Seine-Northern Europe Canal has given rise to the equivalent of one consultation meeting per working day. The objective is not only to keep everyone up-to-date with the progress of the project, but also to give stakeholders the opportunity to express themselves and to answer their expectations and concerns. In 2021 for example, the SCSNE met with the inhabitants of the municipalities crossed by the future Canal in the Somme thanks to webinars and field visits. During the course of the year, the consultation process became more operational. The elected officials of the Compiégnois-Noyonnais area were invited to visit the site. Members of the public were invited to co-construction workshops on topics such as landscaping and future paths along the Canal. A mobile unit travelled around the area to discuss the issues with residents, including for example, the specific subject of disposing of soil. Lastly, after the Canal Entreprises, Canal Emploi and Canal Formation agreements for the Grand Chantier were signed in April, the collaborative work continued with themed

 **CONSULTATION**  
MEETING PER  
WORKING DAY

workshops dedicated to the development of the canal's surroundings, jobs, training and vocational integration, economic development and how the site is received and organised.

## MAGEO, A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT SINCE 2011

When the Seine-Scheldt network is in service, the Oise River at the southern end of the future Seine-Nord Europe Canal will have to accommodate convoys carrying up to 4,400 tonnes of goods. The MAGEO project was therefore launched to upgrade the 42km of waterway between the SNCF bridge at Compiègne and the Creil lock, crossing 22 municipalities in the department, so that it meets European classification standards. Since the very first conversations, the project has been carried out in consultation with all the regional stakeholders, driven by VNF, which referred the matter to the Commission nationale du

débat public in 2011. The approach takes various forms. There are meetings with elected officials, themed workshops with waterway users, professional organisations and local associations to discuss water management, environment, water uses and agriculture, and public meetings open to members of the public... Those held at the end of 2020 made it possible to gather the latest observations before the public inquiry prior to the DUP<sup>1</sup>. During this inquiry, which took place in March and April 2021, 12 information sessions were organised to give everyone the opportunity to express their opinion and 105 contributions were submitted. The inquiry committee approved the project with two reservations, and the studies continue to take these remarks into account.

*1- Déclaration d'utilité publique, Declaration of public utility*



Consultation stand  
in Longueil-Annel

# Changes with impressive added value

## A NEW LOCK AT VIVE-SAINT-BAVON

Due to the health crisis, the official opening of the Flemish lock at Vive-Saint-Bavon, on the Lys, has been postponed to summer 2022. However, it has been in operation since August 2020. The project involved replacing an existing Class Va lock with a Class Vb lock so that larger barges can pass. While the width has remained the same (16 meters), the usable length has increased from 136 to 205 meters and the depth from 3.5 to 4.5 meters. Unlike its predecessor, the new lock is equipped with intermediate gates that divide the lock chamber in two, saving water and time during manoeuvres. It is bigger and more efficient, as well as being located near a dock built in the same place as the old lock to allow transshipment operations. Another advantage is that the area in which it is built is one of the few along the Lys where new industrial activities can still be developed. The Vive-Saint-Bavon lock is already one of the busiest locks in Flanders and will play a major role in the Seine-Scheldt network: once the Seine-Nord Europe Canal is in operation, the annual freight traffic on the site, which currently stands at 10 million tonnes, is expected to double.



New lock  
at Vive-Saint-Bavon

## A NEW LOOK FOR THE TOURNAI CROSSING

In Wallonia, the commissioning of the Seine-Scheldt network implies, in particular, the development of the point at which the Scheldt passes through Tournai. That's because at this point, the waterway was too narrow to allow Class Va convoys to pass safely. In order to widen the navigable channel, initial work was carried out in June 2018, replacing the old Pont-à-Ponts with a new one. Nearly 4km of quays in the centre of Tournai have also been redeveloped, including

**4 km**  
OF DOCKS  
REDEVELOPED

in particular the creation of a waterway stop-off point, officially opened in 2021. The final phase of the project will continue until spring 2023. It involves deconstructing (which began in 2019) and then rebuilding (work is currently underway) the widened arches of Pont des Troues, a military water gate, which dates back to the Middle Ages. Throughout the whole project, considerable efforts were made to preserve the general medieval look of the building and reuse as much stone as possible from the deconstruction process. The area around the Pont des Troues is also being redeveloped on both sides to make it more user-friendly for people to wander around and use "soft" modes of transport. In addition to its positive impact on waterway navigation and the associated services, the development of the Tournai crossing will thus enhance the area's historical heritage and improve quality of life for locals.



Building site for the  
Pont des Troues  
in Tournai,  
June 2021











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