



## PRESS RELEASE

# The President of the Pays de la Loire Regional Council, Christelle Morançais, lays the first stone of the biogas scrubber of the Pays de Château-Gontier anaerobic digestion unit

Château Gontier, 17 February 2021,

On Wednesday 17 February, Evergaz, one of France's leading biogas players, welcomed the President of the Regional Council, Mrs Christelle Morançais, Mrs Céline Broquin-Lacombe, Sub-Prefect in charge of economic recovery for the Prefect of the Mayenne department, and Mr Philippe Henry, President of the Pays de Château-Gontier Community of municipalities, to the Biogaz anaerobic digestion unit du Pays de Château-Gontier (Mayenne), to lay the first stone of its biogas scrubber. With this scrubber, the site will become the first of the Pays de la Loire Region to provide a comprehensive range of green energy sources: green electricity, green heat, bioNGV, and now biomethane. The Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier facility will therefore become one of the pioneering sites in France to offer four energy recovery methods.



Once the required approvals and planning permission were secured, Mrs Christelle Morançais, President of the Pays de la Loire Regional Council, Mrs Céline Broquin-Lacombe, Sub-Prefect in charge of economic recovery for the Prefect of the Mayenne department, and Mr Philippe Henry, President of the Pays de Château-Gontier Community of municipalities, visited the Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier site, operated by Evergaz, to lay the first stone of a scrubber with a nominal flow rate of 392Nm<sup>3</sup>/h of biomethane, aiming for initial biomethane injection into the network operated by GRDF by September 2021. On this occasion, Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier and AB Energy also signed the scrubber supply agreement, in the amount of over €1 million. This biomethane injection made possible by the scrubber will enrich the range of green energy sources already generated by the Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier site: green electricity, green heat, bioNGV.

**The facility prevents 4,965 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year and enables the spreading of natural fertiliser on the fields of 63 local farms, covering 4,500 ha.**

The development of the Château-Gontier sur Mayenne site perfectly illustrates the joint project of Evergaz and Meridiam, who joined together in 2018 in the form of an investment platform to finance and develop biogas projects in France. With this investment, Meridiam, an independent Benefit Corporation specialising in the development, financing, and long-term management of sustainable public infrastructure, confirms its clear commitment to the ecological transition of territories, as the Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier facility, commissioned by Evergaz in 2018, has been designed as a territorial project. A perfect example of circular economy, the facility recovers the organic matter produced locally by farmers, agri-food industries or the community. **It supplies the equivalent of 3,200 homes with green electricity, for a treatment capacity of 35,000 tonnes of waste per year.** The green heat generated by the site is used, via a heating network cofinanced by ADEME, by the production process of the Perreault cheese factory located near the unit. Initially generating electricity and heat from organic waste via cogeneration, Evergaz also built a bioNGV station open to the public in direct proximity to the unit, making it possible to supply the vehicles of the Pays de Château-Gontier community of municipalities and the lorries of the Breger transport company with green fuel.

By signing an agreement with GRDF for the injection of the biomethane produced by Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier into the natural gas network, Evergaz provides the region with the first anaerobic digestion unit of the Pays de la Loire Region to offer these 4 recovery methods.

**Christelle Rougebief, GRDF Centre Ouest's Clients-territories Director, says:** *"The Loire region is one of the most dynamic in the development of anaerobic digestion and green energy. The connection of the Evergaz site to the network operated by GRDF is a perfect illustration of biogas development. Regional green gas production is currently equal to the gas consumption of 37,000 homes heated with biomethane"* .

The anaerobic digestion unit visited by the President of the Regional Council enables the local production of green, circular and non- intermittent energy, while offering numerous positive externalities (reduction in CO2 emissions, preservation of agriculture, etc.). It also provides a solution for the recovery of organic waste and the production of a natural fertiliser substitutable for chemical fertilisers.

The Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier site and its development in biomethane are financed by a banking pool consisting of Arkéa Banque Entreprises et Institutionnels, Banque Populaire Grand Ouest, Caisse d'Epargne et de Prévoyance Loire-Centre and the "BRIDGE" infrastructure debt fund managed by Edmond de Rothschild Asset Management ("EDRAM").

*"We are pleased to see the President of the Regional Council laying the first stone. This visit allowed us to show her, in concrete terms, the vast energy potential of biogas for the region. In addition to generating 4 forms of green energy, the waste treatment function of anaerobic digestion, as well as its ability to produce natural fertiliser, should also be pointed out. Biogas provides the territories with a genuine environmental service"* says **Frédéric Flipo, Managing Director of Evergaz**

**According to Thierry Déau, CEO of Meridiam:** *"With this new investment, the Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier anaerobic digestion facility will provide the territory and its inhabitants with the most comprehensive range of green and renewable energy: green electricity and heat, bioNGV to supply vehicles with green fuel, and biomethane to be injected into the GrDF network for home heating purposes. A real circular economy project dedicated to the territories, their inhabitants and ecological transition"*.

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## **About Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier:**

Biogaz du Pays de Château-Gontier is the project company that holds the assets of the anaerobic digestion unit located in Château-Gontier sur Mayenne. Its shareholders are Evergaz and Meridiam (90%), as well as Suez Organique (10%).

## **About Evergaz:**

An integrated operator specialising in the production of biogas and the development of its uses, Evergaz develops, owns and operates a network of biogas production facilities. Created in 2008 as Holding Verte under the impetus of AQUA, investor-accelerator in the environment and energy sector, Evergaz supports and brings together territorial stakeholders - farmers, industrial companies and local authorities - to provide a sustainable organic waste management and treatment solution while producing green energy and a natural fertiliser.

With 15 biogas facilities in Europe, 10 of which in France, Evergaz and Meridiam treat 700,000 tonnes of waste per year, for a production capacity of 30 MWe, i.e. 7,250 Nm<sup>3</sup>/h of biomethane, avoiding 70,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and currently supplying the equivalent of more than 130,000 people with energy.

Committed to developing the French biogas industry, Evergaz is a founding member of Biogaz Vallée® and France Biométhane. Evergaz is headed by Alain Planchot, CEO, and Frédéric Flipo, Managing Director and co-founder. Evergaz is an independent company in which its management, AQUA, Meridiam and SWEN Capital Partners have a majority stake.

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## **About Meridiam:**

Meridiam was founded in 2005 by Thierry Déau, with the belief that the alignment of interests between the public and private sector can provide critical solutions to the collective needs of communities. Meridiam is an independent investment Benefit Corporation under French law and an asset manager. The firm specializes in the development, financing, and long-term management of sustainable public infrastructure in three core sectors: mobility, energy transition and environment, and social infrastructure. Meridiam currently manages US\$8 billion and more than 90 projects and assets to date. Meridiam is certified ISO 9001: 2015, Advanced Sustainability rating by VigeoEiris and applies a proprietary methodology in relation to ESG and impact based on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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## **About GRDF:**

The leading operator of natural gas distribution networks in France, GRDF supplies more than 11 million customers with natural gas every day, so that they can have gas whenever they need it. For their heating, cooking, transport needs, and to benefit from a practical, economical, comfortable and modern source of energy, irrespective of their provider. To do this, and in accordance with its public service remits, GRDF designs, builds, operates and maintains Europe's largest distribution network (198,886 km) and develops it in more than 9,500 municipalities, guaranteeing the safety of people and property and ensuring quality distribution.

Gas is a modern, available, economical and increasingly environmentally friendly source of energy. With the rise of green gas, renewable gas produced locally, the gas network is an essential link in the ecological transition chain. GRDF has become a key partner for local authorities, helping them achieve carbon neutrality via their energy and sustainable mobility policy choices. In the Mayenne department, Territoire d'énergie Mayenne is the authority in charge of organising public gas distribution and the owner of gas networks on behalf of the department's municipalities.