
PRESS RELEASE

April 29th, 2025

AXENS and RTE initiate a preliminary consultation from May 5 to July 5, 2025

AXENS is carrying out a project for a battery cathode active materials (CAM) plant in Saint-Saulve (59). RTE (France's electricity transmission system operator) is acting as co-project manager for the connection to the national power grid. Named MACARON, this project will be the subject of a preliminary consultation, organized under the auspices of the National Commission for Public Debate (CNDP), from May 5 to July 5, 2025.

AXENS confirms its establishment in Saint-Saulve, Valenciennes region, northern France

At a press conference held on Tuesday April 29th, 2025 at the headquarters of the Valenciennes Métropole Urban Community (CAVM), AXENS formalized the acquisition of land for the MACARON project from the local authority. The Vallourec wasteland, an emblematic site of local industrial history, will host a new activity centered on electric mobility.



**Project for a battery cathode
active materials plant in
Saint-Saulve (59)**

By setting up in Saint-Saulve, AXENS aims to create up to 400 direct jobs, by building on a labor pool oriented toward industrial professions.

Ideally located near the Scheldt river and the port of Bruay-Saint-Saulve, the site offers logistical advantages that make it possible to consider a 100% river-based supply and thus, significantly reduce the use of road transport.

Satisfying 3% of the European market by 2030

With the MACARON project set to go into operation in 2028, AXENS aims to produce 28,000 tons of cathode active materials (CAMs) per year. The objective: to meet 3% of European demand by 2030 and contribute to the structuring of the European battery value chain, by developing a strategic link in the Hauts-de-France region.

To carry out this project, AXENS is partnering with the Chinese group Minmetals New Energy Materials, recognized for its expertise in the production of CAMs, essential components of batteries for electric vehicles.

As part of this project, RTE, which is responsible for the electrical connection, plans to connect the plant to the Valenciennes substation by combining part of the existing overhead line and an underground line, that will run over approximately 1 km, using an overhead-underground pylon.

A public consultation to share the project with the territory

Having been announced in the press in the autumn of 2023, the AXENS project can now be presented to the inhabitants and stakeholders of the Valenciennes region. In view of the project's estimated investment of around €500 million, AXENS and RTE have jointly referred the matter to the National Commission for Public Debate (CNDP) in order to benefit from its guidance on public outreach and community engagement.

The CNDP has appointed Mrs. Anne-Marie ROYAL and Mrs. Catherine JACQUART as guarantors of the preliminary consultation. Their mission is to ensure that the public has the opportunity to:

- Access all available information about the project;
- Ask questions to better understand the projects features and implications;
- Receive clear, relevant and well-contextualized answers;
- Provide feedback that will be considered in the consultation report.

The opening public meeting on Tuesday 13th May will be the first meeting of the consultation. All local residents and stakeholders interested in the MACARON project are invited to come and engage with the AXENS and RTE teams.

All the information and participation details are available on the website dedicated to the consultation: concertation-macaron.fr

Find the dates and locations of the discussions in the agenda below.

Quentin DEBUISSCHERT, Chairman and CEO of AXENS : *"The structuring of a European battery value chain is a strategic priority and a major industrial challenge, to which AXENS wishes to contribute, by providing its expertise. The public consultation that is beginning today with the residents and local stakeholders of Saint-Saulve and the Valenciennes region, is essential for the AXENS group. While our teams have been fully committed for months to the technical studies to meet this industrial challenge, the MACARON project cannot become a reality without being shared with those who will experience it on a daily basis. The discussion sessions that will shape this consultation, designed in collaboration with the guarantors from the National Commission for Public Debate, are intended to foster connections and enable serious, thoughtful dialogue about the project's challenges and its impacts for the Valenciennes people."*

Laurent DEGALLAIX, President of the Valenciennes Métropole Urban Community : *"Valenciennes Métropole was selected by AXENS in November, as the future site of a cathode active materials (CAM) production plant for electric vehicles, to be built on the former Vallourec site."*

With enthusiasm, determination, and pride, Valenciennes Métropole is fully mobilized to support AXENS in bringing project MACARON to life. A significant milestone has now been reached, with the signing of a preliminary sales agreement and the launch of a public consultation process led by the National Commission for Public Debate.

This is the first project of its kind and scale secured in the electromobility sector. On behalf of all the elected representatives of Valenciennes Métropole, I am honored by decision taken by AXENS to invest here. It confirms the relevance of our economic diversification strategy and reinforces our position as France's leading territory for mobility in all its forms.

AXENS joins a world-class ecosystem of manufacturing excellence already present in our region, including Toyota, Alstom, and Origine Cycles.

Yves DUSART, Mayor of Saint-Saulve: *"The designated site is truly exceptional. It is deeply connected to the history of our city, its inhabitants, and our industrial heritage. We are delighted that the arrival of AXENS and the MACARON project can breathe new life into it with a future full of energy!"*

THE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION SESSIONS

Monday 5 May 2025

Consultation opening

Tuesday 13 May 2025, 18:00

Public opening meeting

Salles des fêtes - Saint-Saulve

Wednesday 14 May 2025, morning

Local community meeting

Auchan Supermarket in Saint-Saulve

Saturday 17 May 2025, morning

Local community meeting

Market in Valenciennes

Tuesday 20 May 2025, 18:00

Roundtable

CAMs: A key link in the battery value chain

Espace Athena - Saint-Saulve

Wednesday 4 June 2025, 18:00

Workshop

Employment, industry development and regional attractiveness: what are the benefits of the MACARON project for the people of Valenciennes?

Salles des fêtes - Saint-Saulve

Thursday 5 June 2025, morning

Local community meeting

Market in Bruay-sur-l'Escaut

Tuesday 10 June 2025, 18:00

Workshop

Water, safety, environment and grid connection: what are the challenges for project MACARON?

Salle polyvalente haut - Bruay-sur-l'Escaut

Tuesday 1 July 2025, 18:00

Final public meeting
Espace Pierre Richard - Valenciennes

Saturday 5 July 2025
End of the consultation

ABOUT THE PROJECT DEVELOPERS

AXENS

The AXENS Group (www.axens.net) offers a full range of solutions for the conversion of oil and biomass into cleaner fuels, the production and purification of key petrochemical intermediates, the chemical recycling of plastics, natural gas processing and conversion options, water treatment and carbon capture.

The offer includes technologies, equipment, furnaces, modular units, catalysts, adsorbents and related services. AXENS is ideally positioned to cover the entire value chain, from feasibility studies to start-up and monitoring of units throughout their lifecycle. This unique position guarantees an optimal level of performance and a reduced environmental footprint. The AXENS international offering is based on highly qualified human resources, modern production facilities and an extensive global network for industrial, technical support and commercial services.

AXENS is a company of the IFP Energies Nouvelles group. To learn more, visit our [website](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#).

RTE

RTE, the French electricity transmission system operator, has a public service mission: to guarantee the supply of electricity at all times and with the same quality of service across the national territory thanks to the mobilization of its 10,025 employees. RTE manages electricity flows and the balance between production and consumption in real time.

RTE maintains and develops the high and very high voltage network (from 63,000 to 400,000 volts) which includes nearly 100,000 kilometers of overhead lines, 7,000 kilometers of underground lines, 2,900 substations in operation or co-operation and around fifty cross-border lines. The French network, which is the most extensive in Europe, has 37 interconnections with its neighboring countries.

As a neutral and independent industrial operator of the energy transition, RTE optimizes and transforms its network to connect new electricity consumers and low-carbon power generation facilities, regardless of future energy choices.

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