

Communication & Influence

When reflection guides action

Oceans' future, decarbonization, sustainable fishing, naval engineering, industrial innovation and... influence strategy: the Le Quéré SAS case study

Why Comes?

In Latin, comes means travel companion, associate, mentor, or escort. Founded in 1999 and based in Paris, Toronto, and São Paulo, Comes publishes Communication & Influence each month. As a platform for reflection, this digital medium seeks to open innovative perspectives at the intersection of traditional communication challenges and the implementation of influence strategies. Such a tool is primarily intended for managers responsible for the overall strategy of their organization, as well as for communication professionals looking to explore new avenues of action.

To be credible, one must clearly state their direction, communicate it effectively, and provide clear reference points. The interests shaping today's economic rivalries are not based solely on commercial or financial factors. They must also incorporate cultural and societal variables, in short, ideas and representations of the world. It is at this crossroads, between the development of influence strategies and the consideration of the stakes of economic competition, that Comes' strategic approach unfolds.

International conferences on oceans' future and the river-maritime sphere are on the rise. Speeches abound, but technical proposals remain scarce. Yet French engineering holds hidden gems that are often overlooked. Le Quéré SAS has built a solid and agile business model, enabling the development of innovations that are both surprising and effective. A discreet organization with a presence in both Asia and the Gulf, familiar with Africa and the Arab-Muslim world, it offers solutions to challenges that have long remained unresolved in the river-maritime domain: logistics, sustainable fishing, maritime transport decarbonization, plastic waste recovery... Beyond the purely technical aspect, it applies the analytical framework of territorial economic intelligence, incorporating not only the dimension of influence but, more importantly, the concept of the geoeconomics of water.



In the interview he gave to Bruno Racouchot, Director of Comes Communication, its president Éric Le Quéré explains: "In every country where I've traveled and worked, I've sought to find concrete solutions to the challenges encountered. Hence the ability to think outside the box, far from siloed thinking and conventional approaches, combined with a taste for adventure and risk... not without consequence at times!"

There is growing concern among countries, major international organizations, numerous NGOs, and foundations about the future of oceans. In this domain, Le Quéré SAS offers radically innovative technological solutions that reflect the inventiveness of French naval engineering. Where did these ideas come from?

It has always started with a specific need identified in the course of my activities. In every case, there is a direct correlation between the solutions I have developed, some of which have been patented and built, and a clearly defined operational

requirement. For example, Boaxt - a Boat in a Box, in this case a 20-foot container - was conceived when I was building riverboats in Agadir (Morocco) for export to the United Kingdom, where they were used on the British waterways. It seemed essential to reduce the volume of the vessels in order to lower freight costs. That's how, a few years later, the idea of Boaxt emerged: a floating platform that could be containerized and would occupy no more than a standard ISO volume. From this foundation, Boaxt was adapted for a wide range of applications, notably for floating events and for the collection of plastics and microplastics,



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a major global issue. Boaxt could thus be defined as Multimodal, Unfoldable, Multiplex, Multipurpose. Another major innovation we developed is Netless, the bubble net that enables sustainable and selective fishing. Through my experience in both sport and commercial fishing, I observed a lack of selectivity in traditional fishing gear. The result on a global scale: tens of millions of tons of fish are wasted. As a diver, it was through observing the underwater world that I was inspired to develop this innovation, understanding how humpback whales, which hunt in groups by creating a curtain of bubbles from their blowholes, feed. By mimicry - biomimicry, to be precise - I adapted this model to technology and developed the bubble net.

A third major innovation: Wingfurl. How can we promote decarbonization, knowing that ships were historically propelled by sails? Mechanized propulsion is a very recent development in maritime history. As a pilot of light STOL

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(Short Takeoff and Landing) aircraft, I also have practical experience in aerodynamics, particularly lift at low speeds, comparable to the apparent wind on ships. This led me to adapt those principles to by ship propulsion designing a radically different wing system with aerodynamic unmatched

performance.

The innovations and inventions we offer range from the most basic to the most sophisticated, including Streamesh, Decarblue, and Blue Fishery (see summary p.3). Not to mention the integration of Al and data management into our processes.

To summarize, I would say that Le Quéré SAS is an entity that provides concrete solutions in the form of multimodal systems to address unresolved issues in the river-maritime sphere. In that sense, it operates within the realm of the geoeconomics of water (see p.5), designing, producing, and prototyping systems to initiate industrial processes within territories.

How does a small SAS like yours manage to operate internationally? Clearly, you've successfully paired genuine influence strategy with industrial creativity. Human networks, in particular, are a strong lever for you, integrated daily into your practice of territorial economic intelligence.

For me, nothing is impossible. That's why I adopted the motto of the regiment I chose to serve in after completing compulsory officer training at the Reserve Battalion of the Military Academy in 1984. That regiment, the 6th RPIMa (Marine Infantry Parachute Regiment), had the motto "Believe and Dare," a motto I've applied concretely throughout my life. I loved that time, and I cannot overstate what I gained from parachute officer training. But I had too much of a corsair spirit to remain in uniform and live within the institution. Still connected to the military world, I continue, more than 40

years later, to work in diverse business contexts with former commanders and comrades who have since become friends and partners. What's true is that in every country where I've traveled and worked, I've tried to find concrete solutions to the challenges encountered. Hence the ability to think "outside the box," far from siloed approaches and conventions, while embracing adventure and risk ... not without consequence at times! That's why I find it so natural to integrate the principles of economic intelligence especially territorial - into my entrepreneurial approach: mapping the terrain where we operate, protecting material and immaterial assets (notably through a legal strategy of patents and branding), and building an influence strategy (through targeted communication and, first and foremost, long-term network development). I've spent most of my professional life abroad. Our current presence at the Osaka 2025 World Expo is the result of an operation three years ago, when I brought an experimental ship from Japan to Dubai under difficult conditions - on behalf of the Japanese multinational Sarava, whose foundation Zeri is dedicated to ocean protection - to participate in the previous World Expo. From this shared maritime venture, we began a journey that led to partnerships with M. Saraya in operations across Africa, Europe, and the Gulf countries.

Thanks to these international gains, reinvested year after year into R&D and the French structure, Le Quéré SAS achieved financial independence. 80% of our technology investments come from our own capital. Since 2022, the EU has supported us with €200K (Upstream consortium), BPI France provided €100K in 2023, and Crédit Agricole has supported us with various facilities since 2021 - all reinforcing our competitive advantage. This freedom allowed us to fund prototypes, obtain certifications, file patents (extended internationally), and build a finely tuned, targeted communication strategy, developed along a France-Gulf-Asia axis. This has given rise to a solid, agile business model that enables us to independently develop innovations to concretely protect the future of the oceans. As for our presence in the Gulf, beyond the tremendous opportunities it opens, it also stems from my long-standing affinity with the Arab-Muslim world, which I have frequented since the late 1980s. From this perspective, and to conclude, I would like to emphasize the importance of human networks in implementing a long-term strategy. Technology and the world of ideas must remain in constant interaction, never underestimating the importance of the human factor. Indeed, the knowledge and relationships built over decades often become powerful levers of momentum. Today, our partnership with the Saraya Group offers us a global showcase at the Osaka 2025 World Expo, running through October. Our investments in the Emirates, in a pilot project developed with local partners using our patented technologies in the Gulf region, present a valuable opportunity to showcase French naval engineering in a transversal way, transforming it into a high-value industrial activity in France and Europe. But we are already looking ahead to the next World Expo, set to open in October 2030 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Now more than ever, we must "Believe and Dare"...

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EXCERPTS

Technological Innovations for the Blue Territories of Tomorrow

Four French technological innovations, six invention patents for the blue territories of tomorrow, a fund for the decarbonization of maritime transport, and a flagship sustainable fishing project integrating all these technologies: this is the offering of Le Quéré SAS.

I – Boaxt[™] – A Container that Becomes a Multifunctional Floating Platform

Boaxt (A Boat in a Box) is a modular and innovative concept of a floating platform housed in a 20-foot ISO container. Once deployed, the Boaxt provides a 57 m² floating surface for various uses: nautical events, temporary housing, mobile base for marine works, or collection of plastics and microplastics. Compact and quick to deploy, Boaxt is an ecological, mobile, and versatile solution for coastal, river, and port zones.

II - Netless™ - Sustainable, Net-Free Fishing via a Bubble Curtain

Netless is a patented technology that revolutionizes fishing by eliminating the need for nets. Its system uses a curtain of bubbles and targeted lighting to attract fish, which are then gently vacuumed onboard while still alive. This enables selective fishing, without harming marine ecosystems. The system is also suitable for retrieving plastic waste from coastal seabed and marinas. An innovation serving both biodiversity and ocean cleanup.

www.netless.com

III - Streamesh™ - Capturing Plastics and Microplastics

A fusion of the words Stream and Mesh, this device enables progressive screening of seawater or river inflows through successive mesh sizes to capture plastics and microplastics ranging from 5 millimeters to 500 microns. The system operates through the rotation of decreasing mesh sizes. Progressive narrowing of flow is offset by hydraulic forcing, channeling water to intermediate meshes while ensuring active unclogging. The captured particles are then expelled and collected via a water-spray system. www.streamesh.com

IV – Wingfurl™ – Inflatable, Furling Wings to Decarbonize Maritime Transport

Wingfurl is an auxiliary propulsion system based on inflatable, furling semi-rigid wings with asymmetric aerodynamic profiles. Installed without modification on container ships, it can reduce fuel consumption and CO_2 emissions by up to 30%, with no downtime or retrofit required. Plug-and-play, automated, and scalable, Wingfurl is suitable for both existing vessels and new builds, including yachts, and can deliver 100% propulsive power in zero-emission mode.

V – Decarblue[™] – A Carbon Fund to Finance Clean Marine Propulsion

Decarblue is a fund dedicated to the certification, monetization, and reinvestment of carbon credits generated by maritime propulsion technologies such as Wingfurl. Avoided emissions are converted into certified carbon credits, sold on markets, and reinvested into engineering, R&D, production, and industrial deployment. Decarblue thus creates a virtuous cycle supporting the maritime energy transition. Luxembourg is expected to host the fund.

www.decarblue.com

VI – Blue Fishery™

The project, in its current form, is the evolution of an initiative launched in Morocco in the early 2000s. Its concept of an integrated hybrid multimodal fishery has received multiple awards. It involves operating zero-emission catamarans, propelled by thick sails, to catch small pelagics (sardines, anchovies, mackerel, horse mackerel, etc.) using a purse seine, with onboard pre-processing of the catch.

More than 15 years after the first sketches, the project now integrates Netless technology - a selective fishing system using bubble curtains - as well as Wingfurl propulsion, combined with electric pods and batteries. This system enables completely decarbonized navigation. As a result, the Blue Fishery project has reached maturity in terms of research and development.

The vessels currently under development, equipped with these technologies, will also be able - during both fishing and transit phases - to activate the Streamesh system to collect plastics and microplastics, both on the surface and the seabed, in coastal, port, or nearshore areas.

The high selectivity of the system allows fish to be vacuumed onboard alive, trapped in a bubble cylinder. Juveniles can be released unharmed, and a precise sorting is performed by species (anchovies, sardines, squid, shrimp, etc.). Unlike traditional gear (trawls, nets, seines, longlines), which causes massive mortality, the catch here is kept alive and released intact if necessary. This method thus eliminates waste from bycatch and unnecessary discards.

Such a model ensures resource sustainability by allowing complete selectivity of targeted species. They will be stored onboard in refrigerated seawater tanks. Once unloaded, all products will be fully valorized: fillets and flesh on one side, co-products on the other, processed in land-based facilities into omega-3 for the cosmetics industry.

This project constitutes an economic and operational model for regenerating fishery resources, with strong social, economic, and human impact in the blue territories where it will be deployed.

https://le-quere.com

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Traveling the world, entrepreneuring, and innovating internationally

Éric Le Quéré's global approach to environmental issues - particularly those concerning the future of the oceans - is deeply rooted in his life journey. Over four decades, he has traveled widely and led an entrepreneurial life across countless locations, drawing lessons from each venture that feed into the solutions he promotes today. Here is a bief account of some of the operations he has led and which have left a lasting mark:

Algeria – "1988. A state of emergency was declared, and I was on site, immersed in trading, logistics, and shipping activities. We carried out operations to valorize the inventory of Algerian companies for re-export to other African countries. From 1988 to 1994, I witnessed firsthand the country's descent into what came to be known as the Black Decade..."

Madagascar – "As the situation worsened in Algeria, we partnered with local actors to create the first production unit for EUR pallet kits made from silviculture softwoods. We loaded containers in Toamasina that were shipped to Rotterdam. It was an extremely turbulent time—there was a curfew in place across the country. But I still managed to get several ships loaded."

Mozambique – "A natural extension of our work in Madagascar, but this time focused on fishing. I organized fishing expeditions in the Mozambique Channel and cabotage operations to collect cultivated timber. Mozambique was still at war..."

Baltic Sea – "A Luxembourg shipowner commissioned us to convert two decommissioned East German tugboats. Purchased and sailed from Kalmar, Sweden to Cherbourg, France, they were transformed into luxury charter yachts by CMN (Constructions Mécaniques de Normandie), then the global leader in fast patrol boats. This marked the beginning of the diversification that would lead the shipyard to produce superyachts. I managed the project and was CMN's partner from 1995 to 2000."

Morocco – "I oversaw the reconstruction of a 44-meter vessel originally built by Krupp in 1927, with a riveted steel hull. For cost reasons, the operation was carried out in Morocco. We sailed the vessel to Agadir. That's how I came to set up my own shipyard. Twenty-five years later, the boat is a three-masted schooner offering luxury cruises in the Mediterranean."

Libya – "In 2005–2006, in Ras Lanouf, we operated barges and tugboats for petrochemical complexes. We also engaged in trading, particularly of bluefin tuna, which was still abundant in those waters at the time."

Angola – "At my Moroccan shipyard, we salvaged and refitted a tugboat in 2007 for a Hong Kong company. We handled the engineering, upgraded the superstructure, repowered the vessel, and delivered it to Angola in 2009. The ship is still in service in the offshore sector."

Japan – "In 2020, a unique challenge! Preparing the recommissioning of an experimental vessel (kite sail, solar panels, hydrogen propulsion) that had been stranded in Japan - docked, decommissioned, and without crew - to deliver it to the Gulf. We covered 7,000 nautical miles between December 2021 and March 2022, right in the middle of the COVID crisis. The ship was delivered on time to Dubai before the close of the World Expo. This 'mission impossible' left a lasting mark on my career and helped build the network I continue to work with today."

Dubai Today – "Thanks to networks developed over the long term, we are now producing - based on our French technologies and patents extended to the Emirates, the Gulf countries, Japan, Brazil, across Europe, and beyond - the Boaxt, Netless and Streamesh systems. They will be showcased locally this September, where we have access to significant capital, especially for the Blue Fishery. This is how we operate in an environment that may be challenging but is incredibly dynamic and high performing."

Europe - Now and Tomorrow – "As a rebound effect, we will be able to reposition breakthrough industrial activities with high added value in Europe. We are building close ties with European maritime clusters, which could serve as growth relays to absorb productive operations in France, Italy, Spain, Poland. The Emirati environment has enabled us to initiate this process under optimal conditions."

Bridging local specificities with the global common good

Éric Le Quéré's approach to territorial economic intelligence with an environmental focus begins at the local level and scales up to the global, offering efficient, coherent, and complementary solutions. This is done by integrating the communication dimension - to ensure that all spheres (media, political, economic, industrial, etc.) understand that the objective is to create synergies that win the support of both the public and decision-makers in order to achieve global impact. Here's how.

"The case of Wingfurl and the Decarblue fund is emblematic in this regard. The economic model aims to finance and deploy them by implementation across all major ports of the world. The goal? To decarbonize maritime transport in a transversal way. This decarbonization cannot be tied to the interests of a single company or state. Otherwise, it makes no sense. On the contrary, operators around the world must be empowered to decarbonize. The same applies to combating plastic and microplastic pollution, overfishing, and protecting the seabed. Environmental impact must be global, or it won't exist at all. If the concern is limited to specific geographic zones or private interests, the problem will persist elsewhere. Beyond the inherent profitability of any entrepreneurial venture, one must never lose sight of the key parameters of the issue, however complex it may be. Hence an imperative: to generate real momentum, the initiative must resonate on a global scale."

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Blue Territory and the Geoeconomics of Water:

A Powerful Lever of Influence and Strategic Strength

As a maritime professional, Éric Le Quéré is not merely passionate about innovation, he integrates his work into a much broader framework, one that takes into account geopolitical and geoeconomic dimensions. The following example illustrates the territorial development potential of the Boaxt system, based on an analytical and operational framework inspired by economic intelligence and strategic planning expertise.

The Value of the Blue Territory Concept

"In the multipolar world we live in, threats abound, but so do opportunities. On a global scale, France holds a major card: the world's largest maritime domain. While the potential of the high seas is well recognized, that of coastal zones remains less understood. And yet, they are an extraordinary reservoir of wealth - still largely underexploited - that could be enhanced through the Blue Territory concept: Rethinking the development of these hybrid lands by combining advanced technology, industrial expertise, and natural resources.

Managing complex maritime projects in these areas, aligning the resources of French engineering with humanity's needs to foster synergies in knowledge, innovation, and wealth creation, that is the mission of Le Quéré SAS. This respectful reterritorialization of human communities and their living environments is not limited to France's overseas territories. It encompasses the entire sphere of international cooperation, blending economic efficiency with environmental protection. Using the analytical and strategic tools of territorial economic intelligence within a renewed framework of water geoeconomics, Blue Territory emerges as a concept which, when concretely implemented, becomes a remarkable lever of power and influence for our country."

Integrating Our Approach into the Geoeconomics of Water

"Beyond the technical parameters that shaped the Boaxt project, the idea is to reflect on the future of our world through the lens of the geoeconomics of water, both globally and locally. The term geoeconomics is not chosen at random. It expresses Boaxt's ambition to connect reality with thought, and technology with nature.

Pascal Lorot, President of the Choiseul Institute, has championed the concept of geoeconomics in France and Europe since 1997, just as Edward Luttwak did in the United States. To view the emergence of Boaxt through the geoeconomic paradigm is to accept the integration of all parameters of both material and immaterial economies into our framework of analysis. From this angle, Le Quéré SAS clearly positions itself as a technological vector firmly embedded in the knowledge economy.

The core idea of this positioning is to situate our approach at the intersection of multiple fields of thought and expertise. Far from being limited to a purely technical outlook, we aim to foster cross-disciplinary dialogue. As the founding figures of the French school of economic intelligence have long identified - Christian Harbulot, Philippe Clerc, Henri Dou, Alain Juillet, the late prefect Rémy Pautrat, and others - France suffers from a deep-rooted tendency to work in silos, when it should instead embrace transversal thinking and cooperation. This is a major shortcoming in an era of globalization that requires adaptability, open-mindedness, and agility.

Optimizing aquatic or marine areas using mobile floating platforms is not solely the domain of engineers. By asserting a geoeconomic vision of water alongside our collaborators, we aim to bring together experts from diverse disciplines: human and social sciences, cognitive sciences and neuroscience, management sciences and natural sciences, artificial intelligence and economic intelligence. This is how we fully integrate data optimization and the extraordinary capabilities of Al into our development model. Addressing the future challenges of territorial development in a forward-looking way requires a synoptic view of our world and its evolution.

This is why, as Le Quéré SAS continues to grow, we intend to propose a communication and information strategy designed to explore new frontiers. The knowledge economy is no hollow phrase. It must unite material and immaterial economics within a planetary dimension, while remaining respectful of environments, people, and communities that thrive within it. With our partners from around the world, we will work closely together so that - by interconnecting sky, land, and sea - we can shape, to the best of our ability and for the benefit of all, the world of tomorrow."

* In 2010, during his conversations with the great French "reinventor" of geopolitics Yves Lacoste, Pascal Lorot defined the sphere of geoeconomics as "A space where each confrontation no longer takes place over physical territory, but increasingly over virtual territory, where the goal is no longer the conquest of land, resources, or people, but the control of key technologies, strategic energy sources (such as rare metals), or unique know-how that grants a competitive advantage in the ongoing historical struggle for global hegemony." [in La géopolitique et le géographe – Conversations between Yves Lacoste and Pascal Lorot, Choiseul, 2010]

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BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1964, Éric Le Quéré, Breton by name and by heritage, grew up in Brittany and felt the call of the sea deeply from an early age. A passion that would never leave him. As a child, he took his first steps as a sailor aboard an Optimist dinghy and, as a teenager, trained at the renowned École des Glénans sailing school.

At 17, he earned a Baccalauréat F1 (Mechanical Construction Technician). The rest of his education would be acquired through

continuous professional development: in 1990 Captain Master Unlimited (Certificate of Competency – COC), in 1996 Naval Engineering (certificate), in 1999 Cost Engineering (certificate), in 2002 International Trade (certificate), in 2013 Maritime Operation and Management (MSc - Validation of Acquired Experience).

In 1984, after completing a reserve officer training at the French Military Academy of Saint Cyr, a strong athlete and among the top of his class, Éric Le Quéré served with the 6th RPIMa (Marine Infantry Parachute Regiment), whose motto is "Believe and Dare." It would become his lifelong creed. However, he chose not to pursue a military career. As he candidly acknowledges: "I had to much of a corsair spirit to remain in uniform and live within the institution." Still, as a

man of strong networks, he has maintained lasting friendships formed in that environment. Proud and fiercely independent, he has remained deeply grateful to the military for the training and values he received. A sailor, parachutist, diver, light aircraft pilot, and practitioner of martial arts, Éric Le Quéré also began fishing and underwater exploration at an early age. Through this, year after year, he witnessed the heartbreaking degradation of the oceans: Plastic invasion, fish stock depletion, failure to address logistical and environmental challenges, the distress of human communities. In parallel with his sea-focused career, Éric Le Quéré has consistently strived to find practical solutions to the problems he observes. He has learned in the field.

Beyond his work in shipping and trading, he spent many years running

a shipyard in Morocco, where he relentlessly explored new avenues to optimize the projects he was involved in. Over the course of forty years, Éric Le Quéré has traveled the globe - Senegal, Scandinavia, the Baltic, Algeria, Madagascar, Mozambique, Angola, Libya, Morocco, Japan, Singapore, the Emirates, Mauritania, and more (see examples on p.4) - regularly engaging with high-level political and economic decisionmakers. At the same time, this man of action, a keen connoisseur of the Arab-Muslim world, has proven to be a gifted communicator, earning recognition as a key-note speaker at top international institutions.

Equally at ease with the fishermen of Agadir as he is with royalty, he speaks confidently at major institutions, most recently at the United Nations Conference on the Future of the Oceans in Nice

(June 2025) and, just before that, at the opening of the Blue Ocean Dome in April 2025, the largest private pavilion at the Osaka World Expo. whose president. Yusuke Sarava, is one of his partners. Through it all, his focus remains steadfast: protecting the oceans, by relying on concrete solutions and his extensive field experience.



INFLUENCE: A NEW WAY TO THINK ABOUT COMMUNICATION IN ECONOMIC WARFARE

"What does it mean to be influential, if not having the ability to shape the course of events? Influence is not illusion, it is, in fact, its antithesis. Influence is an expression of power. It is rooted in a particular understanding of reality; it is lived through a way of being in the world. The core of any meaningful influence strategy lies in a finely honed identity, one that is then clearly and confidently embraced. A string of 'media coups', a cleverly managed network, or bold communication channels are only effective if they are underpinned by a clear strategic vision, the result of deliberate reflection on identity. In other words, an influence strategy demands rigorous upstream clarification within the decision-making process, particularly at the level of general management or strategic leadership. Such an undertaking requires both lucidity and courage. Because claiming a distinct identity means accepting to be different, to choose one's own values, and to articulate one's ideas according to a logic that is both intimate and authentic. After decades of superficiality, we are returning to what is structured and profound. In times of crisis, people seek solidity. And today, we are witnessing the early signs of that shift.

"Influence should be thought of as a tree. Seeing its branches stretch toward the sky must not overshadow the work done by its roots deep in the soil. To be strong and coherent, a strategy of influence must grow from a deep reflection on the identity of the organization and be supported by a high-quality discourse. Influence can only bear real fruit if it is conveyed through structured, logical, and harmonious messages, demonstrating leadership's capacity to think long-term. Top executives, communicators, civilian and military strategists, experts, and academics must combine their skills. In a networked world, the sharing of knowledge, the ability to adapt to new configurations, and the will to assert a unique identity are key ingredients of success."

This text was written at the launch of Communication & Influence in July 2008. It now serves as a guiding reference, offering a definition of influence that extends far beyond its often-reductive negative connotations. The interview granted by Éric Le Quéré clearly aligns with this vision. We extend our sincere thanks to him for his valuable contribution to the debates hosted each month on our reflection platform.

> Bruno Racouchot Director of Comes



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