

ThermEcoWat

ThermEcoWat: where does the project stand in 2026?

Launched on 1 January 2024 for a three-year period and led by Thermauvergne, ThermEcoWat brings together French, Spanish and Portuguese partners around a shared challenge: preserving thermal water resources while enabling the territories that depend on them to adapt to climate change. The project starts from a simple observation: in many thermal spa towns, mineral and thermal water is much more than a natural resource. It underpins health, well-being and tourism activities, contributes to the identity of the territory and can also represent a local energy resource. Any change in its availability, quality or operating conditions can therefore have consequences extending well beyond the thermal spa itself.

Three pilot territories to test the approach in different contexts

Chaudes-Aigues in France, Caldes de Montbui in Spain and São Pedro do Sul in Portugal are the project's main pilot sites. The value of this comparative approach lies precisely in avoiding a one-size-fits-all solution. The three sites have different hydrogeological, climatic, economic, regulatory, energy and governance contexts. They provide an opportunity to test the same methodology in contrasting situations and identify which elements can subsequently be transferred to other thermal spa towns.

From assessment to adaptation strategy

Following the initial phases dedicated to understanding the resources, identifying stakeholders and assessing vulnerabilities, ThermEcoWat is entering a phase in 2026 that is increasingly focused on decision-making. Hydrogeological and climate data are being combined with socio-economic, energy, regulatory and territorial information. This shared knowledge should make it possible to identify the main challenges, prioritise adaptation measures, assess their feasibility and test their relevance against different climate scenarios and time horizons. The objective is therefore not simply to provide a snapshot of the current situation, but to facilitate the transition from diagnosis to an actionable plan.

Preparing results that can be used beyond the project

The final year will also focus on consolidating and capitalising on the work carried out: a shared knowledge base, a decision-support tool, a White Paper, adaptation plans for the pilot territories and a transnational strategy. ThermEcoWat aims to ensure that the methods developed can benefit other territories facing similar challenges: how to better understand their water resources, anticipate pressures, balance competing uses and secure investment decisions in an increasingly uncertain climate context. The project is due to conclude on 31 December 2026, with the final phase largely dedicated to transferring and disseminating the knowledge and lessons generated.



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