

# EUROVILLAGES: Towards European Ecovillages

## WHAT IS AN ECOVILLAGE?

An ecovillage is a community (either rural or urban) whose main aim is to build a shared culture of living based on all 4 dimensions of sustainability (social, culture, economy and ecology) and local participatory processes. The Global Ecovillage Network lists around 10,000 communities in the world.

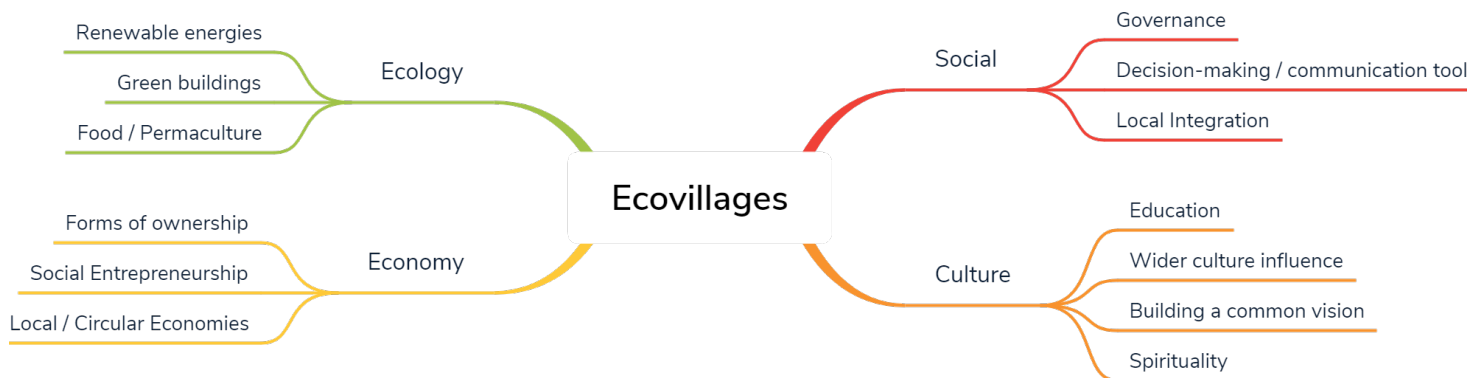
Few people know about the existence of ecovillages and when they do it's hard for them to imagine how these communities work. Even worse, they often picture ecovillages as groups of « dropouts from society ».

However, the communal living of ecovillages definitely arouse people's curiosity. Indeed, in an over-consumerist society based on private ownership and lifestyles, there are clear benefits in living cooperatively and closer to nature. Ecovillages raise growing interest. They are seen as a possible answer to today's most pressing society issues and many people would like to gain a better understanding of these places but have no time to discover them or do not know how to get in contact with these communities.

Therefore, I decided to embark upon a 1 year-journey to meet several European ecovillages: by spending time in identified ecovillage communities and participating in their day to day activities, I intend to gain a deeper insight into their functioning.

This journey will also be an opportunity to share my experience through a website (<http://www.theecovillageexperience.net>) and show that other lifestyles are possible, based on a further connection to nature, respect of local ecosystems and development of new social systems.

I will specifically focus on several topics developed in the scheme below. These topics, which are common practises that we can find in a majority of ecovillages, can be divided into 4 core values of sustainability:



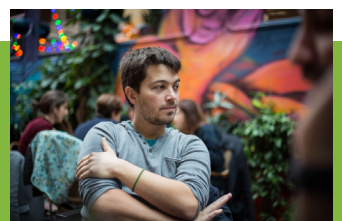
As I visit different areas of Europe, I also want to show that all ecovillages share the same integral values, irrespective of their nationality, culture, or climate. However, the specialities of each ecovillage will be described in order to present the great variety of ecovillages to be found in Europe.

## ABOUT ME

My name is Florian Dereix, I'm 31.

I'm currently living in Paris, working for a wind turbine manufacturer as an engineer. My work consists in supporting, on all technical topics, the installation of wind turbines in Europe and more particularly in France and Belgium.

For the past two years, I have been a member of a team in charge of building a 550 m2 collective garden in the centre of Paris (<http://jardinlouisblanc.fr>). I've spent a lot of my free time to design a place based on permaculture and togetherness, making it real and building a large and sustainable neighbour community to manage the place in the long term. Over my encounters with the neighbours, I have witnessed everybody's will and need for such a place: they are indeed eager to enjoy more nature and spend time with neighbours. This had completely disappeared from their current environment. From my past and current experiences, communal living in a more sustainable way has taken on its full meaning and ecovillages definitely awoken my interest.



### To contact me

florian.dereix@gmail.com  
+33 6 44 98 41 37