



## Press Release

Verbier, 8 December 2014

### **The first Verbier Mobility Investment Forum opens the way for sustainable mobility in mountain areas**

The first Verbier Mobility Investment Forum was held at a brisk pace on Friday 5 December in Verbier. The Forum was organised under the umbrella of the Verbier Institute and in partnership with the Commune de Bagnes. It gathered a group of fifty experts and practitioners engaged in mobility and more specifically sustainable mobility. Participation was by invitation only.

This expert group exuded optimism and positive energy and demonstrated great confidence in the ability of new technologies to make sustainable mobility happen, in particular with respect to electric vehicles, car sharing and ride sharing.

Keynote speakers, Eloi Rossier – President of the Commune de Bagnes – and Pascal Bovey – mobility delegate from the Valais Canton – both highlighted that enhanced public transport is the cornerstone of sustainable mobility. Shared mobility solutions and new interfaces with the users, most often via smart phone applications, will develop around this cornerstone. Pascal Bovey stated the need to ‘invent new synergies’ to improve the complementarity between public and private transport and to combine ‘creativity with pragmatism’.

«Google is now a key mobility player and is seen by the traditional mobility operators as their fiercest competitor. Beyond Google, many other players are entering the mobility space: Cisco, Intel, Microsoft, Orange, as well as Total, EDF, RWE and many others», analyses Fabienne Herlaut (founder of Ecomobilité Ventures). New disruptive technologies and the development of the shared economy continue to improve users’ experience across mobility markets.

Clean technologies and shared solutions can now easily be deployed commercially. The remaining challenge is to change mobility behaviours. This can be done through education (Eloi Rossier), bespoke marketing (Doctor Michael Themans, EPFL), the right balance between incentives and bans and limitations (Professor Giuseppe Pini, director of the Mobility Observatory at the University of Geneva) and first and foremost through positive individual experiences. Olivier Paturet from Nissan Europe states that ‘more than 90% of electric car users declare complete satisfaction. Once drivers have overcome the psychological barrier, they never go back’.

Beyond the creation of a European platform for sustainable mobility, the Verbier Institute seeks to use the Forum to generate local pilot projects. An interactive workshop was held to this effect and the first three projects selected were:

1. Launch a baseline quantitative mobility study to measure mobility flows and validate the user segmentation, in order to underpin the design of mobility projects and enable the measurement of their future impact against such base line;
2. Create a shared vision around sustainable mobility between public and private actors in Val de Bagnes and beyond, and educate and communicate around this vision;
3. Design a 'zero last mile' project to lift the last mile constraint which often dictates the use of private cars from origin to destination.

The Verbier Institute is delighted to announce that subsequent to this Forum it welcomes two new founding members: **Téléverbier SA** the operator of the skiing infrastructure in Verbier and **The W hotel in Verbier**. Pierre-Henri Bovsovers, managing director of the W Verbier, highlights: «Sustainability is very important at Starwood and it is part of our day to day business. W Verbier is very proud to be a founder partner of Verbier Institute as this fits perfectly with our long term strategy».

The Verbier Institute also announces that, further to the Forum, it will organise **an electric vehicle testing day in Verbier during the 2015 winter**.

So stay posted for the next steps!

The event programme is available on: <http://verbieri.com/launch-event/verbier-investment-forum-mobility/>

Find the key speakers on <http://verbieri.com/launch-event/verbier-investment-forum-mobility/speakers/>

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The Verbier Institute is a foundation in the making and is incubated by Botza (an organisation for the promotion of environmental activities and projects based in Verbier). The Verbier Institute focuses on performance, innovation and impact. The commune de Bagnes is a partner of the Verbier Institute. For further information, please visit [www.verbieri.com](http://www.verbieri.com)

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