PRESS RELEASE

30 October 2026

In western France, NaTran and HyLight trial an innovative solution to decarbonise environmental monitoring of the network

NaTran, the national gas transport operator, and French start-up HyLight are launching a series of trials of a hydrogen-powered airship designed to monitor fugitive emissions from the pipeline network. Conducted between Nantes and Quimper in autumn 2026, the trials will test the technology in real-world conditions and assess its potential to decarbonise some of NaTran's network monitoring operations.

A full-scale trial in western France

From 28 October to 13 November 2026, NaTran and HyLight will be testing an innovative airship-based solution for monitoring pipeline networks, with a particular focus on detecting methane emissions. Approved by the local prefectures, the trials will take place between Nantes and Quimper and cover up to 1.6 kilometres of pipeline. Initial tests in the Nantes area have shown promising results.

The HyLighter airship is around 12 metres long and flies almost silently at an altitude of 20 to 30 metres. Powered by two hydrogen-electric motors, it travels at 10 to 15 kmph and can monitor 100 to 150 kilometres of pipeline a day. It is piloted remotely from the ground.

NaTran currently monitors its pipeline network by helicopter. As HyLight's airship is authorised to cover a wider area, the new technology will enable NaTran to expand its aerial monitoring operations. Equipped with a methane detection laser similar to the one currently in use, the HyLighter provides a comparable level of surveillance.

Monitoring teams will specifically assess the airship's ability to detect methane emissions in real-world conditions, follow pipeline routes over long distances and operate reliably in varying weather conditions.

Supporting NaTran's decarbonisation ambitions

To meet European regulatory requirements, NaTran is ramping up its detection capabilities to identify and address fugitive emissions across its network as quickly as possible. Each year, the company surveys a third of its network, representing just under 10,000 kilometres of pipeline.

HyLight's airship will enable NaTran to conduct monitoring while significantly reducing the carbon footprint of its aerial operations. The HyLight solution has a carbon footprint of just 3 g of CO2 per kilometre, compared to more than 13 kg of CO_2 per kilometre for helicopter-based monitoring.

If the trials deliver the expected results, this solution will directly support NaTran's corporate plan, particularly its strategic objective to reduce the company's carbon footprint by 40% by 2030.



HyLight's HyLighter in the air near Nantes, October 2026 (credit: HyLight)

HyLight airships: an example of NaTran's commitment to innovation

NaTran and HyLight have been working together for several years. Founded in Brétigny-sur-Orge, south of Paris, HyLight has developed a hydrogen-powered airship solution that is unique in Europe. Since 2024, HyLight and NaTran have carried out joint trials in Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes to assess the potential of the start-up's HyLighter airships for monitoring NaTran's network.

> "Our teams have been working with HyLight for several years to develop the HyLighter for use in our operations. This collaboration demonstrates NaTran's commitment to continuous innovation and to working closely with start-ups. We are proud to launch this new phase of testing, which will allow us to assess the solution's performance in real operating conditions and, we hope, inform future decisions about its deployment," said Pierre Blouet, Director of NaTran R&I.
>
> "This latest trial phase marks a turning point in our collaboration with NaTran. After several years of trials together, we are now demonstrating the solution in real operating conditions across hundreds of kilometres of pipeline. Our ambition is clear: to show that high-precision aerial monitoring is possible with very low CO_2 emissions. This is a significant milestone towards deploying our solution at industrial scale," said Thomas Laporte, co-founder of HyLight.

This trial reflects NaTran's ambition to support innovative solutions to meet the challenges of the energy transition. Through its NaTran R&I research centre and Nova incubator, the company works with researchers and start-ups to identify and test the technologies of tomorrow, and to contribute to their development.

About NaTran

NaTran embarked on a new chapter in its history in 2025, rebranding from GRTgaz and updating its corporate project NaTran2030, focused on the energy transition and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. The company has committed to allocating more than 50% of its annual investments to the energy transition by 2030. To achieve its strategic goals, the company is adapting its networks and

practices to address ecological, economic, and digital challenges. It provides infrastructure and logistics solutions tailored to gases that contribute to the energy transition (biomethane, hydrogen and CO_2). NaTran is Europe's second-largest gas transport network. The Group has two subsidiaries: Elengy – the European leader in LNG terminals, and NaTran Deutschland, which operates the MEGAL network. NaTran fulfils a public service mission, ensuring the safety of gas transport for all its customers. Its research centre NaTran R&I (previously RICE) has become an international standard in the field of research and innovation applied to the energy transition. NaTran Group key figures: 33,791 km of pipelines, 623 TWh of gas transported, 3,671 employees and €2.5 billion in revenue e in 2025. To find out more about NaTran and its initiatives, visit NaTrangroupe.com, X, LinkedIn and Instagram.

PRESS CONTACTS

Isabelle Poulit
Communications Lead, Centre Atlantique
Tel: +33 (0)2 4038 8776
isabelle.poulit@natrangroupe.com

Denis Peyrat
NaTran R&I Communications Manager
Tel: +33 (0)6 5024 1462
denis.peyrat@natrangroupe.com

Joséphine Reneaume
Communications Manager
Tel: +33 (0)7 6394 1239
josephine.reneaume@natrangroupe.com