

Objectives and intended users

The objective of this report is to provide up-to-date, reliable and targeted information to support the development and implementation of adaptation policies and decision-making across all levels of governance in Europe ⁽¹⁾. European countries are eager to learn from each other in this context. The EEA used this opportunity to facilitate such learning and further strengthen the knowledge base by sharing experiences, lessons learned and good practices in adaptation. By expanding the knowledge base for policy development and implementation, it is intended that this report will inform decision-making processes across Europe and contribute to discussions on long-term transitions ⁽²⁾ and systemic change towards a more resilient Europe ⁽³⁾.

Thanks to the high response rate from European countries, this report is based on a unique collection of information, and it offers the largest and most comprehensive analysis of national adaptation policy processes in Europe, to date. It aims primarily to inform and support the work of policymakers and practitioners who are developing, coordinating or implementing adaptation policies across or within particular sectors. It is therefore of particular relevance to national, regional and local authorities, but is also of interest to utility providers (e.g. water, energy, transport) and to other private stakeholders involved in adaptation actions.

This overview of information complements the information on adaptation activities in European countries available on the European Climate Adaptation Platform (Climate-ADAPT; see <http://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/countries>) and web sites available at national level. It also builds on recently published EEA reports: *Adaptation in Europe* (EEA, 2013), *Urban adaptation to climate change in Europe* (EEA, 2012a) and *Climate change, impacts and vulnerability in Europe — An indicator-based report* (EEA, 2012b), which provided scientific and analytical background information on climate change risks across European regions, as well as policymaking and empirical perspectives on adaptation.

The EEA intends that the compact information collected and presented in this report, alongside member countries' efforts to provide coordinated responses and additional feedback through consultation on draft versions, can offer synergies for use for other purposes (e.g. forthcoming reporting on national adaptation policies under the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (due in March 2015), the requirements under international processes (UNFCCC and OECD), and the updating of country profiles on Climate-ADAPT). In addition, the experiences and lessons learned shared in this report may help define future EEA assessments on adaptation, and support Member States and the European Commission with the forthcoming adaptation preparedness scoreboard.

⁽¹⁾ This report includes a glossary providing definitions of key terms used.

⁽²⁾ There are several key goals of the EEA's Multiannual Work Programme 2014–2018:

(a) to be the prime source of knowledge at European level informing the implementation of European and national environment and climate policies;

(b) to be a leading knowledge centre on the knowledge needed to support long term transition challenges and objectives; and

(c) to be the lead organisation at European level facilitating knowledge-sharing and capacity-building in the field of environment and climate change.

⁽³⁾ The EU 7th Environment Action Programme's 2050 vision 'to live well within the planet's ecological limits' can be accessed at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/index.htm>.