

## **Strengthening recognition of the potential roles of climate knowledge platforms within the EU Adaptation Strategy**

*This position paper expresses the views of the ‘Stepping Up Knowledge Exchange for Climate Adaptation Platforms’ (KE4CAP) project research team.*

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### **Summary**

An ambitious EU Adaptation Strategy (AS) should reflect the increasingly important role that climate knowledge platforms can play in supporting adaptation action at all levels. Priorities include:

- **Tracking action.** Platforms can support inventory activities to monitor progress on adaptation, to identify emerging risks and to accelerate action through the provision of customised products and guidance. These efforts can inform the proposed stocktake and progress towards achieving national and EU targets.
- **Facilitating action.** Facilitated cross-border knowledge exchange (KE) between platforms can help improve the consistency, complementarity and therefore use of the information provided. KE with platforms beyond Europe can support international adaptation efforts.
- **Supporting action in the private sector.** There is an expanding role for platforms to engage with and support the private sector. This includes provision of decision-relevant information for corporate planning and risk management.

### **Abstract**

Climate knowledge platforms, such as Climate-ADAPT and those at the member state level, can play a significant role in stimulating and informing adaptation and resilience actions. We suggest further strengthening and focusing this role to ensure platforms continue to support coherent and well-informed action across Europe and contribute to realising the enhanced EU Adaptation Strategy ambitions.

There are at least 17 national and trans-national climate knowledge platforms already established in Europe, with others being developed or under discussion. They provide an effective means of collating and sharing information, data, tools and guidance to support and stimulate decision-making for adaptation action at the local, national, and transnational scale.

Developing and strengthening this ecosystem of platforms will ensure they can facilitate national and cross-border knowledge exchange to address emerging adaptation requirements, including those identified in the Blueprint.

## Position Paper

Climate knowledge platforms, such as Climate-ADAPT and those at the member state level, can play a significant role in stimulating and informing adaptation and resilience actions as foreseen within the existing [EU Adaptation Strategy](#) and as proposed in the [Blueprint](#) document. We suggest further strengthening and focusing the roles of these platforms to ensure they continue to support coherent and well-informed action across Europe and contribute to realising the enhanced EU Adaptation Strategy ambitions.

Climate knowledge platforms provide a well-established and very effective means of developing and sharing information, data and guidance to support and stimulate decision-making for adaptation action at the local, national, and transnational scale. They can be used as a portal to collate information from the increasingly diverse range of sources and to increase the accessibility, visibility and coverage of that information (2.3.2). Platforms have the potential to inform the enhanced EU strategy ambitions and, we suggest, should be encouraged to further develop their capacities to address emerging requirements, including those identified in the Blueprint. For example:

- making available knowledge, evidence and resources to support the systematic assessment of risks and solutions. There are growing demands for such systemic capabilities considering that both risks and actions taken have positive and negative implications that can go beyond the scale (spatial and temporal) of any specific interest.
- supporting transformational adaptation, including through the provision of data, information, tools and other resources that can inform and support the associated transitions.
- targeting awareness raising, capacity building, and education and skill development, particularly in using information and data from research and innovation to support the delivery of a climate resilient and low carbon future for Europe.
- developing, synthesising and providing knowledge and information that addresses existing adaptation and resilience deficits, and promotes well-adapted, resilient societies through supporting actions that build better, retrofit and build-back-better.
- producing customised tools and products that enable identification, assessment, and tailoring and innovation of solutions. Meeting the needs of those required to act is more than just providing access to actionable solutions (2.3.2), particularly as the solutions needed are not all known (need for innovation) and will need to be adapted to be context specific. Customised tools and products can support innovation and expedite progress.

To achieve the benefits from a new, more ambitious EU strategy there is an overarching need to improve and accelerate the generation and accessibility of knowledge and capacities to support adaptation planning and implementation. This goes beyond just the knowledge of impacts as suggested in the Blueprint (2.1) and includes knowledge and capacities related to identifying and assessing climate vulnerabilities, resilience and climate action more broadly, and those that support the implementation and evaluation of adaptation and resilience actions.

There are at least 17 national and trans-national climate knowledge platforms already established in Europe, with others being developed or under discussion. Within this ecosystem of platforms, Climate-ADAPT plays an important central role but it should not be seen as the sole source of information. Europeans, for a number of reasons (including a need for deeper knowledge and evidence that exists at the country level, language, trust, perceived relevance and credibility, etc.) tend to look to their national platforms. Likewise, individual sectors will continue to look to their professional association and community platforms for trusted and relevant information and data. As such, realising the ambitions of the EU Adaptation Strategy would benefit from working across the

evolving ecosystem of platforms in Europe, including Climate-ADAPT, to establish and sustain a means of facilitating consistency and complementarity of data and information.

Such a concerted effort would also reflect the strong pan-European and cross-border dimensions to climate change (2.1) and provide a template for strengthening knowledge exchange with platforms beyond Europe as a means of promoting international adaptation efforts (2.1).

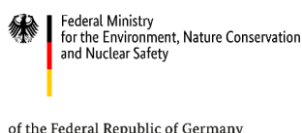
An ambitious EU strategy will also need to tackle the integration of adaptation, resilience and mitigation within climate action, including synergistically with other initiatives in the European Green Deal. Doing so will require the design, development, translation and dissemination of resources that are consistent with this integration and with the systemic nature of the risks, vulnerabilities and required actions. Platforms can and should play this role. There is also a need for targeted research and innovation to enable the platforms to deliver that required, and also to inform the evolving needs and capacities required to tackle this integration.

In terms of specific elements listed in the Blueprint, we believe platforms have particular value in:

- providing a more ambitious inventory system to underpin the evaluation and monitoring of actions being implemented (2.2). Such an inventory would have multiple benefits, including facilitating complementary and synergistic actions and identifying progress on adaptation and resilience, emerging risks and shortfalls. The inventory and monitoring system could be used as a (comparable) basis for regular reports for the proposed stocktake and in communicating progress at national and EU levels.
- In addition to providing an inventory and a system for monitoring actions, platforms can better provide a means of accelerating action through the provision of customised products and tools that combine climate and non-climate data within specific decision-making contexts (2.3.2). Platforms can also accelerate the take up of guidance on climate proofing (2.3.4).
- The Blueprint recognises the need to better engage the private sector (2.1). With respect to platforms, this engagement needs to go beyond the provision of customised knowledge and tools, to working more closely with associated private sector platforms as a means of achieving complementarity in action.
- Realising the ambitions as reflected in the Blueprint document will require action by governments at all levels, business and industry, communities and individuals. Current efforts by platforms focusing on informing and supporting adaptation by cities are a useful start and will need to be strengthened (2.3.1). Finding an appropriate role between Climate-ADAPT and member state platforms in such an endeavour will be challenging but essential.

Finally, climate knowledge platforms provide a recognised means of connecting results from on-going research and innovation activities from Horizon 2020/Europe and programmes with users at all levels (2.3). Efforts are already being made to integrate local and indigenous knowledge with this scientific information (2.3.7) in the translation of knowledge and the development of customised tools and guidance.

Supported by:



This report has been written with the financial support of the European Union's Partnership Instrument and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU) in the context of the International Climate Initiative (IKI). The opinions expressed are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.