

Conference Programme

„Climate change and the European water dimension – Enhancing resilience”

4 - 5 November 2020, Online

Background

Adaptation to climate change and enhancing resilience is a key challenge for water management and economic sectors in the European Union that are depending on the use of water and/or the services water bodies are providing.

In the context of the European Green Deal, the European Commission has announced a new, more ambitious EU strategy on adaptation to climate change for the beginning of 2021. Sustainable and resilient water management and adapting to water-related impacts of climate change across sectors is expected to be a key component of the new strategy. It is therefore timely to explore ways in which EU policy and EU initiatives could contribute to enhancing climate resilience in EU Member States and beyond.

The main objectives of the conference are to:

- Discuss appropriate measures and policy instruments to achieve resilience towards climate change.
- Explore policy recommendations for EU activities to enhance adaptation efforts at EU, Member States' and transboundary level.
- Provide input to the development of the new EU adaptation strategy and other relevant EU policy processes and instruments.

Relevant Conference Documents

A '[Background Paper](#)' has been prepared, which provides a brief overview of the problem situation for the following topics:

- Cluster 1: "Too much water" – river floods, heavy rain events, and sea-level rise
- Cluster 2: "Too little water" – water scarcity and drought
- Cluster 3: Achieving and maintaining good status of water bodies under a changing climate
- Cluster 4: Cross-cutting topics for a revised EU Adaptation Strategy

The paper investigates current approaches in the Member States, at EU level and, where relevant, in transboundary basins and cross-border regions.

To prepare for the discussions at the conference, a [draft 'Policy Paper'](#) has been prepared, which includes draft key recommendations towards EU action to enhance water-related climate resilience. The aim is to further develop, fine-tune and validate these draft recommendations during discussions held in various virtual breakout groups on the second day of the conference. Ultimately, these recommendations shall inform the current political debate and discussions on the new EU Adaptation Strategy and its water-related aspects, in particular.

Day 1 – November 4

as of 4 November 2020

10.00-10.10 CET	Initiation of the virtual conference <i>Hanna Gersmann, Moderator</i>
10.10-10.50	Welcome and high-level opening of the conference <i>Minister Svenja Schulze, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany</i> <i>Minister João Pedro Matos Fernandes, Ministry of Environment and Climate Action, Portugal</i> <i>State Secretary Metka Gorišek, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Slovenia</i> <i>Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Virginijus Sinkevičius, European Commission</i>
10.50-11.10	Keynote speech: Adaptation challenges in the European Union at the regional and local level <i>Markku Markkula, President of the Helsinki Region, Finland and former President of the European Committee of the Regions</i> Followed by Q&A
11.10-11.25	Keynote speech: Sustainable water management in the changing climate <i>Veronica Manfredi, Director of the Quality of Life Directorate, European Commission – Directorate-General for Environment</i> Followed by Q&A
11.25-11.45	<i>Break</i>
11.45-12.30	Stakeholder perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Patrick Ten Brink, Policy Director, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)</i> • <i>Ivan Zavadsky, Executive Secretary, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)</i> • <i>Oliver Loebel, Secretary General, EurEau</i> • <i>Blaz Kurnik, Head of Adaptation and LULUCF, European Environment Agency (EEA)</i> • <i>Vasileios Latinos, Senior Officer, Urban Resilience and Climate Adaptation, ICLEI European Secretariat / Covenant of Mayors</i> • <i>Thomas Haselberger, Policy Assistant, IFOAM</i>
12.30-12.45	The upcoming new EU adaptation strategy and water – Preliminary insights <i>Elena Višnar Malinovská, Head Adaptation Unit, European Commission – Directorate-General for Climate Action</i> Followed by Q&A
12.45-13.40	<i>Break</i>
13.40-14.00	Water-related climate change impacts in Europe - Main results of the Peseta IV study <i>Ad de Roo, Projectleader WEFEE: Water - Energy - Food - Ecosystem Nexus, Joint Research Centre, European Commission</i> Followed by Q&A

14.00-15.00

Thought starters on cross-cutting themes

- Transformational adaptation
Lykke Leonardsen, Head of Program for Resilient and Sustainable City Solutions, City of Copenhagen, Denmark
- Climate action as an innovation driver
Prof. Dr Georg Teutsch, Scientific Managing Director, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, Germany
- Water and climate change mitigation
John Matthews, Executive Director, Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA)

Each presentation will be followed by Q&A

15.00

Formal end of day one

Please note that the following session is of informative nature, it allows for the presentation of best practice examples of future-oriented projects and approaches in water-related adaptation. It will not influence the policy conclusions.

15.00-16.00

Addressing too much, too little water, and climate-proofing of measures - case studies and lessons learned from EU Member States

Three parallel sessions, each presentation will be followed by Q&A.

Too much water

- Houselifting in flooded areas using the example of the Elbe village Brockwitz, *Prof. Dr Dirk Carstensen, Institute of Hydraulic Engineering and Water Resources Management, Nuremberg Institute of Technology, Germany*
- Flood risk assessment, impact of urbanization and evaluation of water management measures: A case study in Helsingborg, Sweden, *Christofer Karlsson, M.Sc. Environmental and Water Resources Engineering, DHI, Sweden*
- Climate change impacts on hydro-climatic extremes in the Danube basin - How robust are projections? *Fred Hattermann, Deputy Head of Department, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), Germany*

Too little water

- Better prepared for drought - Experiences from Danube region, *Andreja Sušnik, Head of Department for Agrometeorological Analysis, Slovenian Environment Agency, Slovenia*
- Zaragoza, 25 years working on water efficiency: Lessons learnt in the climate change context, *Marisa Fernández Soler, Cluster manager, ZINNAE- Cluster para el Uso Eficiente del Agua, Spain*

Climate proofing

- The Dutch Delta Program, it's underlying adaptive/dynamic pathways and the role of the Delta Commissioner, *Peter Glas, Delta Commissioner, Dutch Delta Programme, Netherlands*
- WeatherWise Rotterdam - The road towards a climate-resilient delta city, *Johan Verlinde, Program Manager, Rotterdam Climate Adaptation Plan, Netherlands*

Day 2 – November 5

9.00-9.05 CET	Opening of the second day <i>Hanna Gersmann, Moderator</i> <i>Thomas Stratenwerth, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany</i>
9.05-9.30	Shaping adaptation policies from a water perspective - Introduction to the draft 'Policy Paper' <i>Thomas Stratenwerth, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany</i> <i>Nuno Lacasta, Ministry of Environment and Climate Action, Portugal</i> <i>Aleš Bizjak, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Slovenia</i> Followed by Q&A
9.30-9.35	<i>Break to split into parallel breakout groups to discuss different sections of the draft 'Policy Paper'. Outcomes of discussions will be taken up during the Final Reflections on the conference.</i>
9.35-10.25	Mainstreaming water-related climate resilience in EU policy and international frameworks Breakout group discussion of the respective 'Policy Paper' section
10.25-10.50	<i>Break and move to the next discussion</i>
10.50-11.45	Highlighting the water dimension in crosscutting topics of the new EU Adaptation Strategy Breakout group discussion of the respective 'Policy Paper' section
11.45-12.15	<i>Break and move to the next discussion</i>
12.15-13.05	Supporting sustainable water management as a key building block for climate resilience in the EU Member States Breakout group discussion of the respective 'Policy Paper' section
13.05-14.00	<i>Break</i>
14.00-14.15	Excursus: Health, water and climate change <i>Francesca Racioppi, Head, WHO European Centre for Environment and Health</i> Followed by Q&A
14.15	Final reflections and high-level closing <i>State Secretary Jochen Flasbarth, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany</i> <i>State Secretary Inês dos Santos Costa, Ministry of Environment and Climate Action, Portugal</i> <i>Deputy Director-General Clara de la Torre, European Commission – Directorate-General for Climate Action</i>
afterwards	Optional online networking opportunity among participants