

Nature-based solutions for integrated wildfire risk management

An EU climate adaptation policy perspective



Firelogue Project Webinar, 29 May 2024, 10-12h
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Climate change: Transforming forests and forestry



EU adaptation policy: main framework & initiatives

Wildfires & NBS



- **European Climate Law**
Establishing the 'duty to adapt'.



- **EU Adaptation Strategy**
Making adaptation smarter, faster, more systemic.



- **Climate-ADAPT**
Sharing knowledge for a climate-resilient Europe.



- **EU Climate Risk Assessment**
Identifying key risks.



- **Communication 'Managing climate risks'**
Policy responses equipping society for action.

EU Climate Risk Assessment

An assessment of major current and future climate risks for Europe

Fast-track assessment (less than 1.5 years)

Expert-driven, evidence-based

Identified big risks per system & across systems

Identifying priorities for action

eea.europa.eu/publications/european-climate-risk-assessment

EUCRA products

EUCRA executive summary
(published on 11 March 2024)

EUCRA main report
(final version on 29 May 2024)

EUCRA online viewer
(launch on 29 May 2024)



Climate risks

The first-ever European Climate Risk Assessment has identified 36 key climate risks for Europe at different degrees of urgency.

Urgency to act: ● Urgent action needed ● More action needed ● Further investigation ● Sustain current action ● Watching brief

Climate risks by cluster

Ecosystems

- Coastal ecosystems
- Marine ecosystems
- Biodiversity/carbon sinks due to wildfires*
- Biodiversity/carbon sinks due to wildfires
- Species distribution shifts
- Ecosystems/society due to invasive species
- Soil health
- Aquatic and wetland ecosystems
- Biodiversity/carbon sinks due to droughts and pests
- Cascading impacts from forest disturbances

Food

- Crop production*
- Crop production
- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Food security due to higher food prices
- Food security due to climate impacts outside Europe
- Livestock production

Health

- Heat stress — general population
- Population/built environment due to wildfires*
- Population/built environment due to wildfires
- Well-being due to non-adapted buildings
- Heat stress — outdoor workers*
- Pathogens in coastal waters
- Health systems and infrastructure
- Infectious diseases
- Heat stress — outdoor workers

Infrastructure

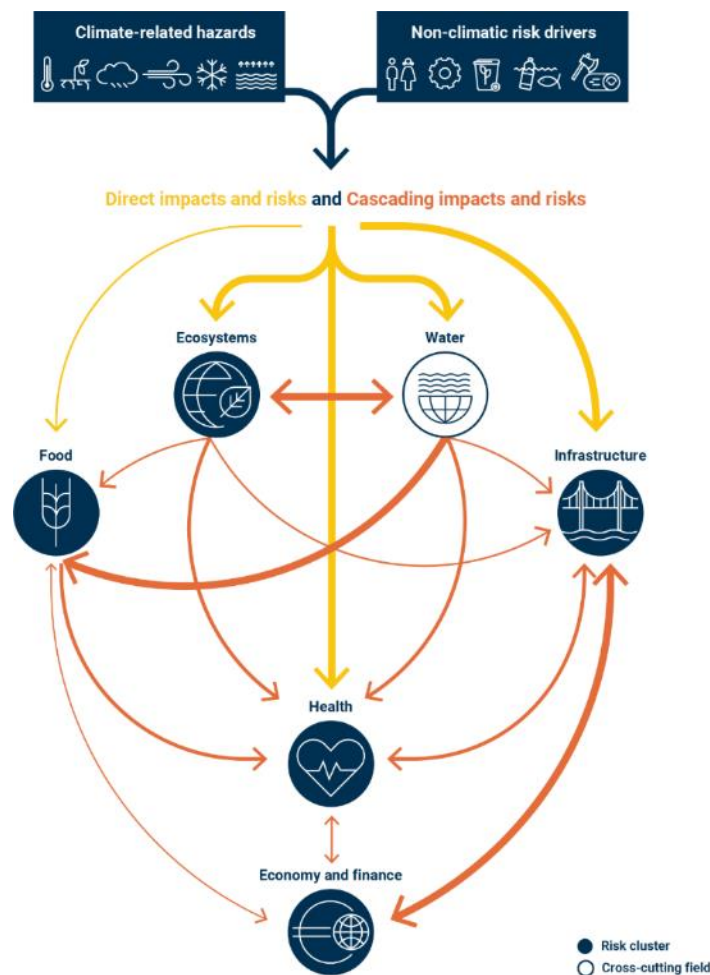
- Pluvial and fluvial flooding
- Coastal flooding
- Damage to infrastructure and buildings
- Energy disruption due to heat and drought*
- Energy disruption due to heat and drought
- Energy disruption due to flooding
- Marine transport
- Land-based transport

Economy and finance

- European solidarity mechanisms
- Public finances
- Property and insurance markets
- Population/economy due to water scarcity*
- Population/economy due to water scarcity
- Pharmaceutical supply chains
- Supply chains for raw materials and components
- Financial markets
- Winter tourism

*Hotspot region: southern Europe

Climate risks can cascade from one system to another



- They are determined by **climate-related** and **non-climatic risk drivers**
- Climate change is a **risk multiplier**. It can exacerbate existing risks and crises.
- **Cascading climate risks** can lead to system-wide challenges affecting entire societies, with vulnerable social groups most affected.

Climate change: Europe is not prepared



- Europe the fastest warming continent
- Several climate risks already critical, others growing
- They threaten energy and food security, ecosystems, infrastructure, financial stability, and people's health
- Adaptation makes progress, but impacts outpace it
- Needed to manage key risks:
 - faster, smarter, more systemic action
 - an all-of-society, all-of-government effort

Commission Communication

‘Managing climate risks – protecting people and prosperity’



- Shows EU readiness to respond to the evolving reality
- Focused on good decision-making and tools (governance, tools, structural policies, financial resilience)
- Risk ownership a central concept
- Calls for better forest disturbance prevention and preparedness ('Commission will use the UCPM actions to promote wildfire risk prevention')
- Nature-based solutions should be first adaptation choice, whenever possible



EU policies supporting NBS for wildfire risk management

Policy-setting

- EU Adaptation Strategy
- EU Forest Strategy
- EU Biodiversity Strategy
- EU Soil Strategy

Legislation

- European Climate Law (adopted)
- Nature Restoration Law (to be adopted)
- Forest Monitoring (proposed)
- Forest reproductive material (proposed)
- LULUCF framework (adopted)
- Carbon Removals (proposed)
- Soil Monitoring and Resilience (proposed)

EU policies supporting NBS for wildfire risk management



Guidance

- Afforestation, reforestation, tree planting
- Closer-to-nature forestry
- Land-based wildfire prevention
- National adaptation strategies



Funding, financing

- Structural and Investment Funds, including the CAP
- Recovery and Resilience Facility
- LIFE Programme
- Horizon Europe
- Climate Resilience Dialogue

EU policies supporting NBS for wildfire risk management

Research, knowledge, capacity

- Union Civil Protection Mechanism
- Wildfire Prevention Action Plan
- Technical Support Instrument
- Horizon Europe, LIFE
- Climate-ADAPT
- Expert Group on Forest Fires
- Forest Information systems (EFFIS, FISE)



A few reflections and questions

- What happens at the level of the EU Member States is crucial
- Wildfires are beyond forests and forestry
- Risks are underestimated and (parts of Europe) are not prepared enough
- How can we better quantify and communicate the (financial) risks, and the benefits of NBS-based wildfire risk management?
- How can we translate this into investment opportunities?

Thank you for your attention



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