



## **Web-based climate change adaptation platforms in Europe: why should we use them?**

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Web-based climate change adaptation platforms in Europe are critical tools for addressing the challenges posed by climate change and, fortunately, the number of existing or planned national and transnational adaptation platforms in Europe is increasing (European Environment Agency, 2015). These platforms can offer a range of features and tools that can help, for example, citizens, organizations and regions – among others – adapt to changing weather patterns, extreme weather events, and other unavoidable climate-related impacts.

There are several reasons why we should use web-based climate change adaptation platforms in Europe, for example:

- **Enhance climate resilience:** by using web-based climate change adaptation platforms, citizens, communities, regions and many more can better understand and prepare for the impacts of climate change.

These platforms can provide information on climate projections, risks, and vulnerabilities, as well as tools for risk assessment and management, and can be updated more easily than books. By building climate resilience, we can minimize the negative impacts of climate change and better adapt to a changing environment;

- **Foster collaboration:** web-based climate change adaptation platforms can foster collaboration between different stakeholders, including government agencies, businesses, communities, and citizens. By sharing information, best practices, and experiences, these platforms can help build partnerships and networks that are essential for effective climate action;
- **Improve decision-making:** climate change adaptation platforms can provide decision-makers with the information they need to make informed decisions about climate-related risks and opportunities.

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By using data and analytics, these platforms can help identify and prioritize adaptation strategies that are most effective and cost-efficient, and, for example, support avoiding maladaptation with decision support tools;

- **Increase public awareness:** web-based climate change adaptation platforms can raise public awareness about the impacts of climate change and the importance of taking action. By providing accessible and engaging information, these platforms can help educate citizens, communities and regions about climate-related risks and inspire them to act;
- **Support innovation:** climate change adaptation platforms can support innovation and even promote replication by providing a place to showcase innovations, for experimentation and collaboration. By bringing together stakeholders from different sectors and disciplines, these platforms can foster the development of new technologies, solutions, and approaches to climate change adaptation.

Under the implementation of the REGILIENCE project, we mapped and analyzed 124 web-based climate change adaptation platforms in Europe. The project identified 16 platforms that have more potential to support regions with practical knowledge resources and tools to assist them in implementing resilience pathways, complementing the efforts of the European Climate Adaptation Platform (Climate-ADAPT). The review process confirmed that the

web-based climate change adaptation platform landscape is dynamic, and each platform provides unique features and tools for addressing climate change, being all essential for building a more resilient and sustainable future. The type of information most often offered by the platforms includes experiences from practice and implemented adaptation measures, decision-support tools, scientific research results, and policy actions at transnational, national and subnational levels. Most of the platforms are a result of temporarily funded projects and international/national/regional policy initiatives. Another important finding was that 25% of the platforms sampled were not available in English, which demonstrates their strong national and regional focus.

The most comprehensive web-based adaptation platform is Climate-ADAPT. Launched in 2012 by the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA), it aims to provide an extensive database of information on climate change adaptation in Europe, including information on climate impacts, vulnerability, and adaptation strategies and measures – allowing users to integrate their own information and results. The platform is designed to support decision-making at different levels, from national to local, and is intended for use by policymakers, researchers, and practitioners working on climate change adaptation.

While web-based climate change adaptation platforms in Europe offer a wealth of information and tools for



addressing climate change, there are also some factors to consider. Some of them are:

- **Data availability and quality:** climate change adaptation platforms rely on climate data and projections to inform decision-making. However, data availability and quality can vary across regions and time periods, which can limit the accuracy of climate models and projections;
- **Accessibility:** despite efforts to make web-based platforms accessible to all users, some citizens may face barriers in accessing the information and tools they need, particularly those with limited internet access, language and digital literacy barriers, or disabilities;
- **Local/regional context:** climate change impacts and adaptation strategies can vary significantly depending on the local/regional context, including geography, demographics, and socioeconomic factors. Web-based platforms may not always capture these nuances, which can limit their functionality for local/regional decision-making;
- **Policy implementation:** even with the most detailed/comprehensive information and the best tools available, the successful implementation of climate change adaptation measures often depends on political will, resources, and coordination across different

sectors and levels of government. Web-based platforms alone, unfortunately, cannot address these complex policy and governance challenges;

- **Funding:** climate change adaptation requires significant resources, including funding opportunities, capacity building, and technical expertise. While web-based platforms can provide information and guidance, they cannot always address the funding gaps and resource limitations that may hinder effective adaptation efforts.

Web-based climate change adaptation platforms in Europe are essential tools for addressing the challenges imposed by climate change. They can enhance climate resilience, foster collaboration, improve decision-making, increase public awareness, and support innovation. These platforms may indeed provide vital support when it comes to tackling climate change and implementing adaptation measures, building a more sustainable future for ourselves and future generations. Web-based adaptation platforms in Europe are an important resource for addressing climate change, and they should be seen as part of a broader suite of tools and approaches for building climate resilience and adaptive capacity.



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