



EUROPEAN UNION



EU MISSIONS

ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE



July 2023

Online EU Mission Adaptation Community

Summary of the event: Adaptation Planning Cycle.

Monday 10th July 2023

1. Introduction

This report provides a summary of the discussions that took place on Monday 10th July 2023 as part of the EU Mission Adaptation Community event – *Adaptation Planning Cycle*. The recording of the event is available in this [link](#).

There were 174 registrations to attend the event: 120 Charter Signatories, 31 Friends of the Mission, two country representatives and 21 MIP4Adapt team, EEA and Mission Secretariat representatives.

A total of 95 participants attended the event (over 50% attendance), which included:

- 57 Charter Signatories (47,5% attendance compared to registration)
- 15 Friends of the Mission (48% attendance compared to registration)
- 2 Country representatives (Poland and Austria)
- 21 MIP4Adapt team, EEA, and Mission Secretariat representatives

In terms of Charter Signatory participants' country distribution, the majority were from Portugal (19%), followed by Spain (15%) and Poland (12%). Other participants were from Italy (7%), Türkiye (7%), Ireland (5%), Greece (5%), France (5%), Germany (3%) and Croatia (3%). We also had 1% participation of Charter Signatories from Austria, Estonia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Netherlands, Romania.

The event aimed to give participants on the same step of the adaptation planning cycle the opportunity to:

- Discuss common challenges.
- Share best practices and exchange knowledge.
- Network and link with other regions and local authorities.

The event also provided the space for regions and local authorities to learn about selected resources and tools available on Climate-ADAPT and the Mission Portal, including the Regional Adaptation

Support Tool ([RAST](#)) and the [adaptation options](#). The workshop segment of the event consisted of a breakout group session for each step of the RAST. The full agenda can be found in the Annex.

The main findings from the event are summarised in Box 1 below.

Box 1. Main findings from participants answers during the online event Adaptation Planning Cycle

- Having regions and local authorities present and share their experience on each step is perceived by members as useful and more of these types of events are needed.
- Proper desk research and data gathering, as well as stakeholder engagement, is key throughout all the steps of the RAST.
- Communicating well and engaging with the government is key to achieving the adaptation objectives. More training and guidance on how to do this properly would be appreciated by the regions. Lack of funding sources and resources was noted as a key limitation in Steps 1 and 6.
- There is a need for more explanation on the Adaptation process and each step and which technical assistance tools are available at which stage.
- It was also highlighted the importance of better understanding maladaptation and the Mitigation-Adaptation nexus (co-benefits, synergies, and trade-offs).
- There seems to be no clarity over the M&E reporting measures or indicators. Sharing best practices or putting together a list of relevant indicators to consider would add value and guidance for the regions.
- The Community of Practice can help discuss with other regions how to navigate the topic of communication with the national government.

2. Summary of the event

The event opened with the MIP4Adapt team and European Commission Secretariat's welcome words, followed by a presentation by the European Environment Agency (EEA) on Climate-Adapt: resources and tools – with a particular focus on the steps of the [RAST](#) and [adaptation options](#). The presentation used during the event is available within the online [EU Mission Adaptation Community site](#).

The key points presented by EEA are summarised below:

1. **Climate-Adapt key tasks:**

- Build and share EU adaptation knowledge database.
- Assist the uptake of knowledge.
- Support coordination and resilience among sector and across all governance levels.
- Support international action and exchange.

2. The Mission Portal now includes the **Regional Adaptation Support Tool (RAST)**. Its goal is to make accessible to regional and local policymakers and coordinators, to prepare for,

develop, implement, monitor and evaluate adaptation actions and plans. The **6 Steps** of the RAST:

- **Step 1: preparing the ground for adaptation.** This includes setting up your governance structure, adaptation coordination body and raising awareness amongst sectors and actors.
 - **Step 2: Assessing risks and vulnerabilities to climate change.** Support in the way to of how to compile the risk assessment (present and future) and their impact on different sectors.
 - **Step 3: Identifying adaptation options.** Gives an idea about the diversity of adaptation options with a description of each. Linked to adaptation options and good practices showcasing implementation of these in the Climate-Adapt.
 - **Step 4: Assessing adaptation options.** There are different methodologies (i.e., multicriteria analysis; cost benefit analysis) to assess which adaptation options are of relevance to your adaptation strategy or plan.
 - **Step 5: Implementation of adaptation.** This can include mainstreaming the adaptation options in other sectors, governance levels.
 - **Step 6: Monitoring and evaluation adaptation.** From Step 1 and 2, you want to know what your goals is and how to measure it. This can be quantitative or qualitative. You must look at this along the whole policy cycle.
3. RAST provides access to relevant knowledge for all steps of the adaptation policy cycle, both within the Mission Portal and on Climate-Adapt. For example, for:
- Step 2 has an [Adaptation Dashboard](#) available and the [European Climate and Data Explorer](#) with information on different sources of data on climate impacts and risk. .
 - Step 3 has a catalogue of [adaptation options](#) in Climate Adapt.
 - Step 5 within Climate Adapt the EEA gather the information reported by Member States on their climate action and present it by [country profile](#), e.g., people can see the main hazard the country is facing, how they plan the specific actions, etc.
4. [Adaptation Options](#) are presented on Climate Adapt. These are a series of [case studies](#) that can be filter by sectors, impacts and many other criteria.

After EEA's presentation, a Q&A session was conducted to give participants the opportunity to ask and comment on the technical presentation. A compilation of all the questions and their answers can be found in the Annex.

Finally, the workshop segment of the event started. It consisted of breakout groups, one for each of the six steps of the RAST. Steps three and four were grouped together, hence the total breakout groups were five:

- Step 1: Preparing the ground for adaptation.
- Step 2: Assessing climate change risks and vulnerabilities.
- Step 3 & 4: Identifying and Assessing adaptation options.

- Step 5: Implementing adaptation.
- Step 6: Monitoring and Evaluating Adaptation.

Participants were able to select the breakout group they wanted to join. Some rooms had a 10-minute presentation provided by a specific region about their experience in said step¹:

- Breakout room for Step 2 had a presentation by the City of Zagreb, Croatia.
- Breakout room for Steps 3 & 4 had a presentation by Viimsi Municipality, Estonia.
- And breakout room for Step 5 had a presentation by the Valencian Region, Spain.

All the presentations shown in each room are available for reading on the [online EU Mission Adaptation Community site](#). All breakout groups had an open discussion around a set of guiding questions including:

- What are the key factors for successful completion of this step?
- Which methods/tools approaches can be used?
- What are the current challenges under this step?
- What are you currently doing?
- How do you think the Community of Practice and the Technical Assistance can support you on this work?

The sub-sections below present a summary of the discussion and finding per each breakout room.

Step 1: Preparing the ground for adaptation

There were five participants in this breakout room, from which only two represented Charter Signatories.

A summary of exchanges and findings based on the guiding questions is presented below:

- The main problem identified by Poland was the adaptation strategy is not considered as a sectoral (relevant) national strategy, and potential synergies-interactions have not been explored.
- More than half of other public bodies consulted in a national survey were not familiar with adaptation national policies.
- Sharing information about risks and costs for adaptation are key elements.
- Lack of national funding sources.

¹ Due to the summer holiday period, the MIP4Adapt Team was no table to find regions available for providing presentations on the remaining steps of the RAST.

Step 2: Assessing climate change risks and vulnerabilities

Within the breakout room for Step 2 of the RAST, there were 12 participants in total (10 of them represented Charter Signatories).

The presentation made by the city of Zagreb, Croatia, is available within the [online EU Mission Adaptation Community site](#). The city of Zagreb focused on the key points for conducting Vulnerability and Risks Assessments (VRAs). The session is summarised below:

- Stakeholder mapping and engagement is very important but challenging.
- Capacity building at the beginning is needed to engage stakeholders on the process.
- Importance of engaging academia or knowledge holders.
- Identification and selection of sectors is key and should be based on vulnerability.
- Baseline research and expert support is crucial.
- Importance of reviewing process and making improvements.

A summary of exchanges and findings based on the key factors to consider for a successful completion of this step is detailed below:

- Data gathering and reviewing is very important.
- Information used for analysis of exposure can be difficult to work with due to lack of appropriate data (out of date, wrong scale, etc.).
- Decision making and implementation of solutions can be prevented or delayed by government structure.
- Importance of stakeholder engagement processes.

Step 3 & 4: Identifying and assessing adaptation options

There were five participants within the breakout room for Step 3 & 4 of the RAST, from which three represented Charter Signatories.

The presentation made by Viimsi Municipality, Estonia, is available within the [online EU Mission Adaptation Community site](#). The presentation focused on the following key points:

- It is essential to first identify the challenges by priority areas and target groups for adaptation planning. Secondly, identify overall and specific objectives with indicators of achievement. Thirdly, one can elaborate the main measures, risks and mitigation actions, management and monitoring arrangements.
- It is important to engage stakeholders.
- Crossover with adaptation and mitigation: consider whether adaptation measures were evaluated from an angle of increasing CO2 emissions (potential for maladaptation).

Below is a summary of exchanges and findings based on the key factors to consider for a successful completion of this step:

- Important to have a list of criteria for selecting measure, this ensures having long term priorities.
- Engaging with stakeholders via a public consultation can be challenging. Need to increase awareness of the activity, have individual consultations, promote via newspaper, social media, and others.
- The analysis of maladaptation and the mitigation-adaptation nexus is a key gap of knowledge for many regions, hence sometimes it is not properly addressed.
- On Climate-Adapt there is a [tool on maladaptation](#).

Step 5: Implementing adaptation

Within breakout room for Step 5 of the RAST, 24 people participated in total, from which 21 were Charter Signatories.

The presentation made by Valencian Region, Spain, is available within the [online EU Mission Adaptation Community site](#). It focused on fostering the local climate policy at regional level. The main points made are summarised below:

- Work with other municipalities from the regional level.
- Regulation: regional law for climate change, all municipalities must develop their own climate action plans and must reduce their carbon footprint.
- Cities must also adapt to climate change. Provide cities with guidelines, templates, and financial resources for elaborating the climate action plans and provide methodologies to understand how climate change perspectives impact urban planning.
- Work on capacity building: many municipalities don't have enough civil servants and resources relating to the different aspects of adaptation.

A summary of exchanges and findings based on the different experiences shared as well by other regions in the room is detailed below:

- In Spain some regions (i.e., Basque region) have a similar framework to Valencia.
- It is important to have a plan with clear objectives and then to develop projects to meet them. Hence, it is key to follow the adaptation process and not jump to Step 5 directly before going through the previous steps. Only by doing this, one can have a proper and clear framework for the work under climate adaptation and develop projects to address the priorities identified.
- Stakeholder engagement is key (both for citizens and institutions).
- Providing regions and municipalities with tools and linking them with research institutions to work on solutions is very important.

Step 6: Monitoring and evaluating adaptation

Within the breakout room for Step 6 of the RAST, there were five participants in total, of which two represented Charter Signatories.

This group did not have a presentation made by a region or local authority. The group had a discussion based on the guiding questions shared earlier. A summary of the exchanges and findings is shown below:

- There is no clarity over the Monitor and Evaluation (M&E) reporting measures or indicators. There seems to be challenges elsewhere: money and attention to adaptation issues from national government.
- There seems to be gap between the national level and the local level. The national level must take more seriously the local level.
- Difference in data collection across municipalities.
- There is a mix of mitigation and adaptation concepts. Adaptation is not really acknowledged and therefore the M&E in place is not there to check on progress in that respect.
- The Community of Practice can help discuss with other regions how to navigate the topic of communication with the national government. It would be useful to know how other cities or regions are defining indicators for adaptation and how useful they are.

3. Lessons learnt and outputs

After the breakout groups, a closing exercise was conducted. Here, participants were asked to briefly provide their key takeaways from the groups' discussions. Figure 1 provides a snapshot of some of the answers. Overall, participants highlighted:

- The importance of having these types of open discussions to exchange views and identify common issues, share practices and examples and learn from colleagues experiencing similar challenges.
- Understanding and learning about the common issues that seem to happen among many EU member states.
- The relevance of mapping, coordinating with and involving key stakeholders – throughout the whole climate adaptation plan but particularly during implementation.
- Making stakeholders aware of vulnerability and exposure risks.
- The importance of gathering and working with sufficient background data to implement good adaptation plans.
- Highlighting and putting forward cross-cutting mitigation and adaptation actions.
- The need for further guidance and support throughout the whole climate adaptation planning process, specifically a better understanding on what each step of the RAST entails.

Figure 1. Takeaways from the breakout rooms' discussions.

What are your main takeaways from these discussions?

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- We need more support and guidelines, in order to start do things in a similar way so they can be disseminated and replicated
- Important things discussed and more to discuss
- Need for cross-cutting mitigation and adaptation actions
- very nice people in the call
- We need more such meetings/ workshops
- some common issues across member states (e.g. low political subsidiarity at region/local authority)
- Importance to involve stakeholders and other actors, particularly when considering also implementation
- Necessary to have a huge background of data.
- Stakeholder mapping and engagement is critical to generating accurate understanding of vulnerability and exposure.
- Coordination among different actors.

4. Feedback on the event

Figure 2 displays the responses from participants when asked at the beginning of the event whether they had joined the online EU Mission Adaptation Community site already. Although most participants (almost 70%) had already joined the Community of Practice online site, around 30% had yet to complete this registration. The relevant links and steps for registration were explained and participants were encouraged to join. In that moment, the Community of Practice received 15 new registrations to the online site.

The satisfaction survey showed that those who have already joined the EU Mission Adaptation Community site are having a positive experience with the site and found it useful, although suggestions were made on making clearer for members the goals and objective the Community of Practice and their events have besides networking. The MIP4Adapt team will, therefore, work on a clearer communication strategy and make it available for members after the summer period.

Figure 2. Responses to the question "Have you joined the online EU Mission Adaptation Community site?"

Have you joined the online EU Mission Adaptation Community site?

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Yes



No



Figure 3 and Figure 4 provide an overview of the participants' opinion on how helpful these types of events and exchanges were. Considering the percentages below, the majority of participants seem to believe that breakout room discussion provides the opportunity to link with others and exchange knowledge and experiences (Figure 3), which is reflected in the satisfaction survey results summarised at the end of this section.

Based on these responses, there is still room for improvements, for instance, increasing the time of the breakout rooms, adding other ways in which the participants can engage with one another (e.g., via the forums on the EU Mission Adaptation Community site), among others. Meanwhile, Figure 4 shows that most participants see these types of events as helpful towards building a sense of community, which is also reflected in the satisfaction survey results.

Moreover, the majority of participants seemed interested in Step 5: Adaptation Implementation (over 20 participants in the breakout room) and Step 2: Assessing climate change risks and vulnerabilities (over 10 participants in the breakout room), followed by Steps 3 & 4: Identifying and Assessing adaptation options. Less participation was registered in the remaining rooms. This could be because there was no region presenting on those steps – practical examples tend to prompt people to join and listen in as they can learn from first hand experiences and best practices.

On the other hand, the low number of participants in the breakout rooms on Step 1 and 6 could also be attributed to participants having either surpassed that Step 1 of the RAST or the interest in the financing adaptation measures, which was already highlighted by regions and local authorities during the event "*A Vision for the Community of Practice*". Because of this interest mentioned by Charter Signatories, the first event after the summer will be "*Introduction to Finance*".

Some lessons learnt for future events:

- Have more regions sharing their experience and generate a longer space for discussions on the Breakout rooms.
- July is a challenging month to have events. We saw a reduction in Charter Signatories attending the meeting (only 54% attendance compared to registration). Going forward might be best to do events until the end of June.
- There is a need for better of explaining and understanding what each step is about and why the whole RAST process is important. Proposal of ways to work under this:
 - Have a clear communication of each step and the importance of going through the process.
 - Develop short videos with clear messages.
 - Generate more technical/expert events with more time for explanation and making it easier/clearer to understand.
- Other technical aspects were highlighted as needed during the event (e.g., Mitigation-Adaptation nexus, maladaptation, adaptation indicators and reporting, etc.)

Figure 3. Response to the question "To what extent do you feel the breakout rooms provide participants with the opportunity to link with others and exchange knowledge and experiences".

To what extent do you feel these breakouts give you opportunity to link with others and exchange knowledge and experience? 0 1 7

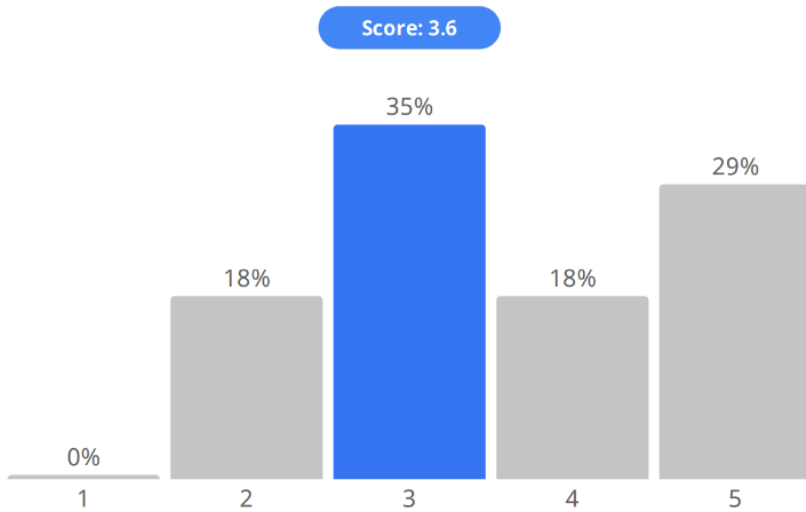
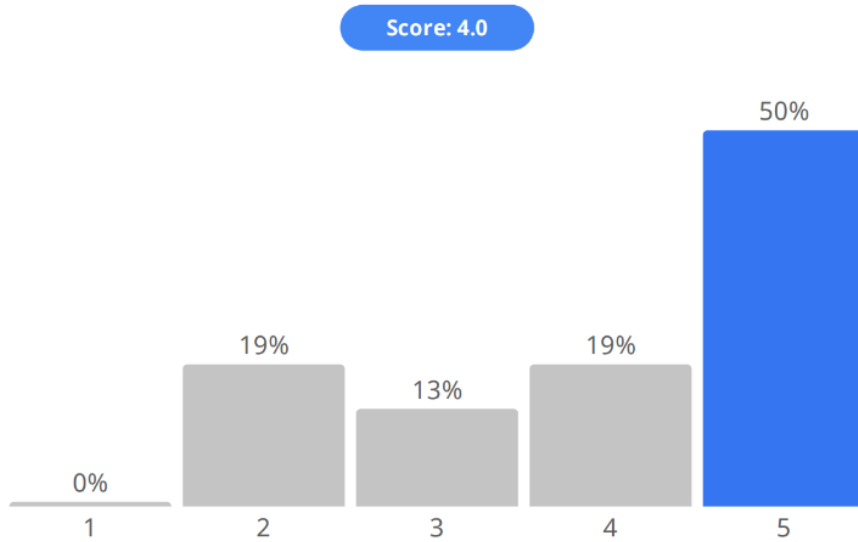


Figure 4. Response to the question "To what extent do you feel these events help build a sense of Community?".

To what extent do you feel these events help to build a sense of Community? 0 1 6



A satisfaction survey was issued following the event via email and the online EU Mission Adaptation Community site. The feedback was overall positive, with the majority indicating the event met or exceeded their expectations (average score of 3.5/5) and were satisfied with the exchanges and facilitation made throughout (average score of 4/5).

With regards to improvements, the majority suggested that time allocated to discussions in breakout rooms should be increased to allow for more discussions amongst participants. Tied to this, there was also a suggestion that a “sufficient” number of participants is present in each breakout room, to avoid some of them having too many attendees while others not enough.

However, only four responses were received, which is too small a sample to make meaningful conclusions. The potential for a lack of responses to the survey, due to past experiences, was something already envisioned by the MIP4Adapt team. Therefore, key questions with regards to the monitoring and evaluation of the event were included during the closing of the event as Slido’s questions (see Figure 3 and Figure 4) to gather sufficient responses while participants are more engaged. We will continue to carry out this type of Slido to gather opinions and perceptions of key aspects of the Community of Practice in the upcoming events to feed into the feedbacks via the surveys.

5. Next steps

The recording, presentations, and a compilation of the questions received during the event with their specific answers were shared after the event via the online EU Mission Adaptation Community site by using the forum discussion: [Adaptation Planning Cycle](#). Moreover, following the event, [six new forum discussions](#) have been opened within the EU Mission Adaptation Community site, one for each step of the RAST. Charter Signatories and Friends of the Mission were invited to continue engaging via those forms to exchange experiences and practice within each step of the adaptation process.

The next planned event, *Introduction to Finance*, is scheduled for September 21st with more information to come in due course via the calendar functionality and the forums of the online EU Mission Adaptation Community site. MIP4Adapt team is preparing the calendar of events for the upcoming months and will be sharing the agenda during August 2023 via the [EU Mission Adaptation Community site](#).

For any queries from members of the Community of Practice on associated activities and events, specific concerns about your climate adaptation planning process, communications and press releases, and IT technical issues with the website, contact us via the [Helpdesk form](#).

Annex

1. Agenda

Event Agenda

Welcoming and opening remarks

Climate-Adapt: Resources and Tools

Q&A Session

Workshop: Bring and share:

- Introduction to the activity
- Breakout groups
- Closing exercise in plenary

Closing remarks

2. Questions asked during the workshop

Is it possible for the breakout groups to be grouped by countries so we can share common issues?

We will consider this recommendation for future events and breakout rooms sessions. We can also create Forum discussions on the online EU Mission Adaptation Community site for each country or geographic regions to join and interact with each other. Would this be of interest?

Anyone can send ideas about the organization of events, topics, forums, etc. via the [helpdesk](#). We can then discuss with you how to make it possible.

There is a temporary problem with the platform as I cannot access adaptation options - error varnish test.

The error has been addressed. The adaptation options can be accessed via this link: [Adaptation options — English \(europa.eu\)](#)

Is the RAST available to everyone or only to Signatories?

The RAST is publicly accessible and available for everyone to use via the following link: [Regional Adaptation Support Tool \(europa.eu\)](#)

Is the ISO Standard (Adaptation to Climate Change - Guidelines on Vulnerability, Impacts and Risk Assessment (ISO 14091:2021) in line with RAST Step 2?

The International Standard [ISO 14091](#) and [ISO 14092](#) set the standards of the various methods and outputs of climate risk assessments at regional and local levels. The ISO Standards detail a range of methods that may be used by local governments and communities to assess climate change impacts. The concepts used within the ISO standard methodologies for assessing risk are mostly in line with RAST Step 2, following the [AR5](#) and IPCC definition of terms. The **exception** to this is the ISO standard conceptual framework avoids using a vulnerability-based approach and focuses solely on assessing risk as the end factor. Under the latest ISO 14091 standard methodology, the main components of a risk assessment are

a) the *hazard*; b) the *exposure* of a given system to the hazard; c) the *sensitivity* of a system to a given hazard; d) the potential climate change *impacts*; e) the *risk* with adaptation.

Within RAST Step 2, you will be guided in how to assess how climate change will affect people, sectors or systems.

Climate risks depend on three different factors (see figure):

- **Climate-related hazards** - The current climate conditions and how they will change in the future. These conditions will determine the likelihood of an area being affected by either extreme events, such as heatwaves, or slow onset events such as sea-level rise.
- **Vulnerability** - The tendency of the exposed system and its components to be adversely affected. Vulnerability is a product of:
 - **Sensitivity** - The degree of which a system or species is affected, either adversely or beneficially, by climate variability or change. The effect may be direct (e.g., a change in crop yield in response to a change in the mean, range, or variability of temperature) or indirect (e.g., damages caused by an increase in the frequency of coastal flooding due to sea level rise).
 - **Adaptive Capacity** - the ability of people, sectors, or systems to adjust to potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities, or to respond to consequences. Adaptive capacity will differ between risks and sectors, for example, a region that is well prepared to cope with floods may be taken aback by a heat wave.
- **Exposure** – The presence of people; livelihoods; infrastructure; assets; or species and ecosystems in places and settings that could be adversely affected. For example, the exposure of vulnerable populations to heat or expansion of residential and economic areas in floodplains.



Source: Derived from [IPCC, 2018](#).

More information about the RAST Step 2 can be found [here](#).

In some countries, e.g., Spain, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Step is in the middle as a process that happens from the beginning, why is that?

Thank you for sharing, and it is a very useful aspect to point out.

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) does not start at the very end of the adaptation cycle but is included in every step: by setting goals and well-defined objectives that are as specific as possible in planning documents (step 2 and 5), and when identifying and assessing adaptation options (Step 3 and 4), as well as monitoring the baseline conditions and progress over time (Source: [RAST](#)).

How do I submit adaptation case studies?

For enriching the catalogue of [adaptation options](#), EEA is developing case studies with regions and local authorities that are part of the Mission Adaptation to showcase experiences. For submitting an example for a case study, please write to lucy.gregersen@eea.europa.eu.

There is also a possibility of [submitting Mission Stories](#) via the online [EU Mission Adaptation Community site](#). Mission Stories showcase real-life examples of regional or local climate adaptation actions. The stories will come from the Community of Practice and are meant to inspire a broader audience. The Mission Stories will be publicly available on the Mission Portal and will be promoted through various channels, including our MIP4Adapt newsletter. More information can be found [here](#).

How long is the support of the Regional Adaptation Support Tool (RAST)?

The Regional Adaptation Support Tool (RAST) is an online tool available on the [Mission Portal](#) for everyone to access.

The RAST provides guidance on each of the six main steps that need to be considered during the adaptation planning process. For each step, the RAST introduces the relevant data sources, further guidance, and tools that you may find useful. It will be updated periodically in response to new research findings and feedback from regional and local authorities, and to take account of the latest developments and information available.

For sending feedback on the RAST, please write to lucy.gregersen@eea.europa.eu.



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