



# Where local and regional Mission Signatories stand on climate adaptation in 2025

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# Key messages

This briefing presents a snapshot of how local and regional authorities participating in the [EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change](#) are moving along the iterative adaptation policy cycle: from enabling governance and understanding climate risks to strategic planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. It is based on 2024 and 2025 data reported by authorities to the CDP (formerly Carbon Disclosure Project) and supports the EU Adaptation Strategy and the Mission's objectives.

- Reported local and regional climate adaptation data is essential for tracking adaptation progress, strengthening accountability, informing effective decision-making, and managing risks associated with escalating climate impacts. However, climate adaptation reporting across Signatories to the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change remains limited and uneven, constraining understanding of local adaptation progress and comparison across countries and regions.
- In 2024 and 2025, reported climate risks, sectoral priorities, adaptation goals, and planned actions were broadly aligned, suggesting that local and regional authorities are increasingly translating identified hazards and vulnerabilities into concrete adaptation plans, governance structures, and targeted actions.
- In 2025, 90% of reporting local and regional authorities had a plan covering climate adaptation; however, limited implementation data and planning-implementation gaps point to continuing challenges in turning plans into effective action.
- Adaptation financing remains constrained and the burden for adaptation continues to fall primarily on local and regional authorities. While 77% of plans combine authorities' own resources with other funding streams, 38% of actions relying on internal funding do so without any other funding support.

# 1 Background and reporting context

Analysing reported climate adaptation data is an important component of tracking adaptation progress, improving accountability, guiding effective decision-making, and managing associated risks against the escalating impacts of climate change. Reporting through the CDP platform under the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change (see Box 1) contributes to a more consistent evidence base on climate risks and resilience action across Europe, supporting progress tracking, mutual learning and informed decision-making. Reported data also enables a better collective understanding of climate risks, challenges and opportunities. At the same time, incomplete and uneven reporting by local and regional authorities continues to limit the comparability and comprehensiveness of adaptation progress assessment across Europe.

Building on the [2024 assessment of EU Mission Signatories](#), this briefing draws on data reported through the CDP platform in 2024 and 2025 by cities and regions participating in the Mission. In 2024, 59 submissions were received, including 14 from regions, while in 2025 submissions increased to 70, of which 17 were from regions, out of a total of 326 Mission Signatories. Findings for both local and regional authorities should therefore be interpreted as indicative rather than statistically representative of all Mission Signatories. Data reported to CDP under the Mission provides a snapshot of how authorities are engaging with the different stages of the adaptation policy cycle: from risk assessment and planning to implementation and monitoring and evaluation (EEA EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change, 2025).

## Box 1

### The EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change and Signatory Reporting

The EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change aims to support regional and local authorities in building resilience to climate change impacts, with the objective of accompanying at least 150 European regions and communities towards climate resilience by 2030. To date, [333 regional and local authorities are signatories to the Mission Charter](#), thus committing toward the objective of the Mission.

As part of the Mission, the European Commission engaged the European Environment Agency (EEA) to support the [work monitoring of adaptation progress across participating authorities](#). To collect comparable information on climate risks, adaptation planning and action, the EEA works in partnership with the [global non-profit CDP](#), which provides a structured reporting platform for local and regional governments.

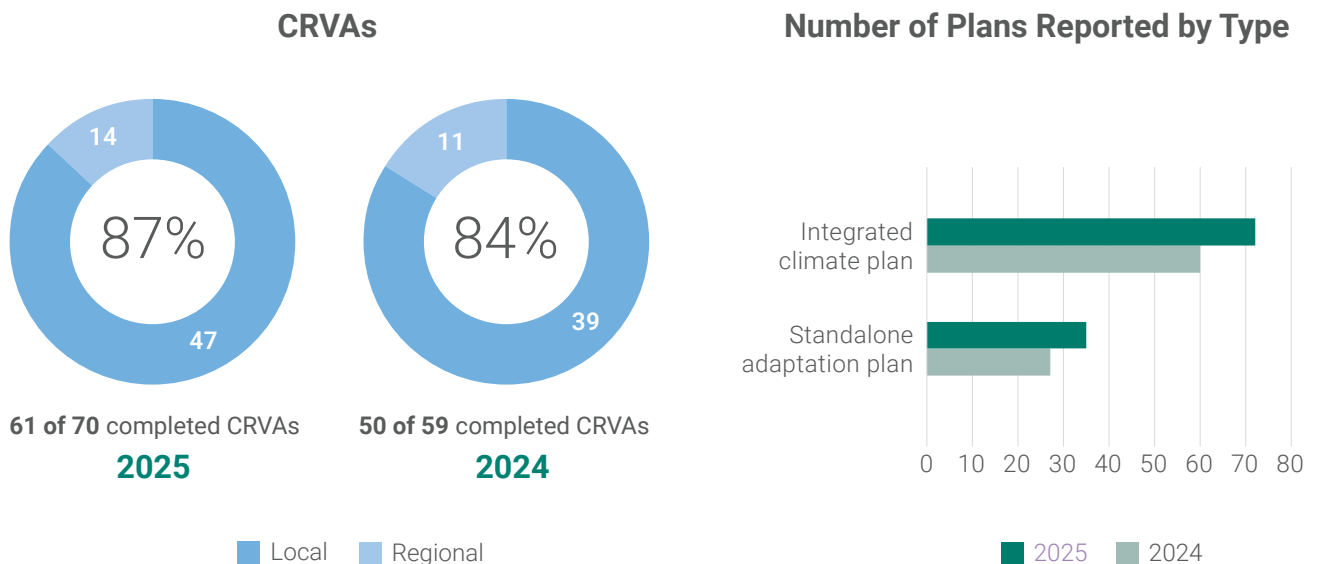
This briefing aims to build a shared understanding of adaptation progress across all levels of government, illustrating how reported data can be used to identify challenges and to better understand how adaptation planning is translated into action. Evidence from the EU Covenant of Mayors (EC, 2024) and the Global Covenant of Mayors (JRC, 2025) suggests that European municipalities are broadly engaged in formalised adaptation planning, often supported by enabling national and regional policy frameworks (EEA, 2026a). However, the data also points to ongoing difficulties in aligning identified climate risks with the consistent and systematic development of actionable adaptation measures at the subnational level, a challenge further evidenced by recent large-scale analysis of nearly 20,000 adaptation actions reported by Global Covenant of Mayors European signatories, which identifies a persistent planning-implementation gap shaped by social, institutional and economic contextual factors (Martínez Görbig et al., 2026). These findings point to ongoing challenges in translating identified climate risks into coherent adaptation action at the subnational level.



## 2 From risk to response: Translating climate risks into resilience outcomes

Climate risk and vulnerability assessments (CRVA) form the foundation for adaptation planning (EEA EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change, 2023). In 2025, 87% of reporting Signatories had a CRVA in place. Of these assessments, 61% were published or approved in the last five years. In 2024 and 2025 extreme heat, heavy precipitation, drought, urban flooding, and coastal flooding were the most reported hazards.

**Figure 2.1 Risk to planning**



**Note:** Integrated climate plan refers to plans that address adaptation alongside mitigation and/or energy.

**Source:** CDP, 2026a, and 2026b

Building on these assessments, local and regional authorities have translated identified risks into concrete adaptation plans and governance structures, turning knowledge of hazards and sectoral vulnerabilities into targeted actions. Among reporting Signatories, adaptation governance is now widely established, with most authorities having climate plans in place. However, gaps in oversight, coordination, and implementation tracking persist, limiting the extent to which this progress is delivering effective adaptation outcomes. While most EU Mission Signatories show progress in adopting plans, challenges remain in ensuring coherent governance across levels of administration and in systematically tracking progress. Ongoing initiatives, like the [National Adaptation Hubs](#) supported through the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change, act as practical implementation platforms and may help address coordination challenges.

Climate adaptation governance among reporting Signatories is strong, with most city and regional authorities reporting the presence of a stand-alone or integrated climate adaptation plan (Figure 2.1). By 2025, 90% of reporting authorities had at least one climate plan that incorporates adaptation considerations (up from 83% in 2024) (EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change, 2025). Adaptation is addressed through both standalone plans (35 in 2025) and integrated climate plans (72 combining mitigation, energy and adaptation objectives). Fourteen authorities report having both plan types in place, which could suggest an effort to mainstream adaptation actions into other policy areas.

The higher number of integrated plans among local authorities likely reflects the need to manage interconnected urban systems, such as transport, environment, water, waste, and energy, as well as capacity constraints that concentrate multiple climate and planning responsibilities within a single department. This institutional setup can also incentivise more holistic planning approaches, with several functions responsible for plan implementation. Initiatives such as the EU Covenant of Mayors and the EU Mission: Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities further reinforce this trend by encouraging local authorities to develop integrated plans (e.g. Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans, or SECAPs) that address both mitigation and adaptation (Davide, Marinella et al., 2025). However, the prevalence of integrated climate plans should not necessarily be interpreted as a preferred or more effective governance model. Whether authorities adopt standalone or integrated approaches likely depends on their institutional context, governance structures, resources, administrative capacity, and the legal mandates or planning requirements in place at the local and regional level. In some cases, standalone adaptation plans may allow for greater strategic focus and visibility of adaptation priorities, while integrated plans can help align objectives and budgets, streamline implementation, and support co-benefits (e.g. nature-based solutions that sequester carbon while reducing heat and managing flood risk). Integrated approaches may also enable different stakeholders within local and regional authorities to plan and act within a shared framework, helping to break down institutional silos, improve policy coherence, and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of local climate action.

Governance structures and plans provide the framework through which authorities translate climate risks into adaptation goals<sup>(1)</sup>. The number of signatories with formal climate adaptation goals increased between 2024 and 2025 and most of the adaptation goals reported by signatories were designed to address more than one hazard (Table 1).

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(1) CDP Portal – definitions: Adaptation goal: An adaptation goal is informed by the hazards identified in the climate risk and vulnerability assessment.

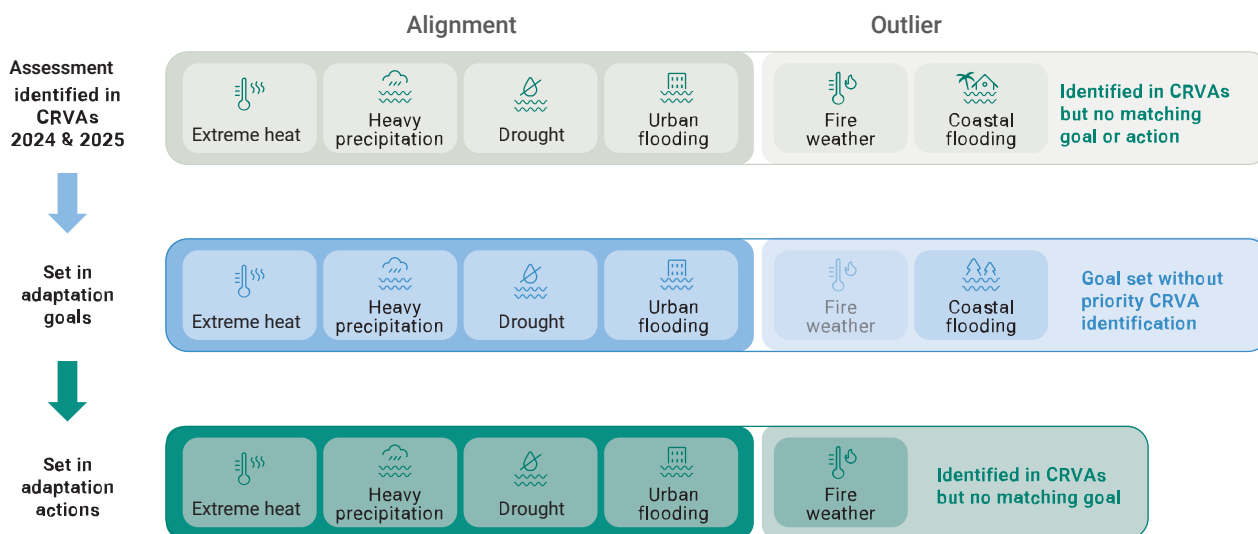
**Table 1** Examples of goals reported by signatories. The goals have been organised to align with sectors by the authors.

Sector	Example goals
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring continuity in agricultural production and food security</li> <li>• Support the implementation of sustainable agriculture</li> <li>• Urban agriculture in vacant lots and parks, backyard and communal gardens and roadside"</li> </ul>
Water Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting and increasing water supplies</li> <li>• Promoting water efficiency practices and prevention of pollution</li> <li>• Increase the efficiency of the water supply network, reducing up to 40% the non-revenue water by 2030</li> <li>• Enhance free access to drinkable water in public spaces</li> </ul>
Human health and social work activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the most vulnerable by designing targeted policies</li> <li>• Anticipate the development of new illnesses</li> <li>• Reduce the impact of extreme weather events on human health resulting from disasters</li> <li>• Ensure healthy working conditions during heat waves</li> </ul>
Sewerage and wastewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop alternative rainwater management</li> <li>• Restore the water quality of rivers</li> <li>• Development of a blue-green infrastructure system within the city</li> </ul>
Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection of forest areas and biodiversity</li> <li>• Strengthen the vitality, biodiversity, and adaptivity of forests to climate change</li> <li>• Maintain, protect and enhance existing biodiversity and ecological habitats</li> <li>• Develop and implement a management strategy for forest fires</li> </ul>

Source: CDP, 2026a, and 2026b

In both reporting years, the hazards most frequently targeted by adaptation goals are broadly consistent with those identified as in climate risk assessments, suggesting that authorities developed goals in response to their most pressing risks (Figure 2.2). However, some hazards stand out as outliers, that is, they were not identified as a hazard of high concern in the CRA, but are prioritized in the goal setting. For example, river flooding appears among the hazards most frequently addressed by adaptation goals despite not featuring prominently in the CRVA or being reflected in adaptation actions (see Box 1 for an example of an action implemented under the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change). Conversely, fire weather is a frequently reported hazard and included in adaptation actions, yet it ranks lower among adaptation goals. These differences point to some variation in how risks are reflected across goal-setting and implementation. Developing goals and actions that address the most urgent hazards is critical for developing plans that support local and regional resilience (Reckien et al., 2025).

**Figure 2.2 Risk to action: hazard alignment at the regional and local level**



**Note:** In this figure, outliers refer to hazards that are emphasized in one stage of the policy process but are not similarly reflected in the other stages.

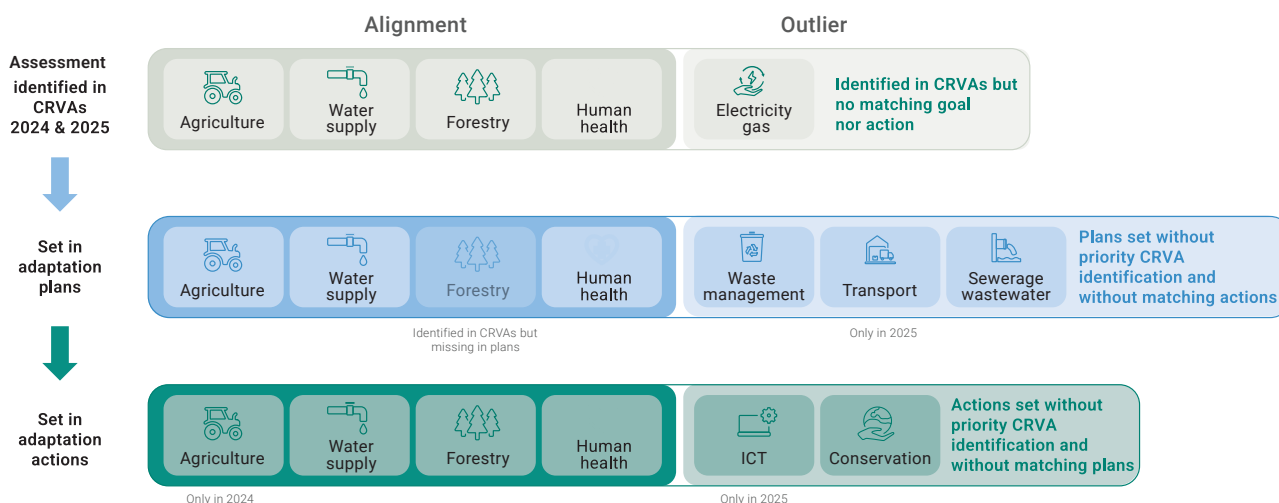
**Source:** CDP, 2026a, and 2026b

A comparable dynamic is evident when examining sectoral priorities across assessments, goals, and actions (Figure 2.3). In 2024 and 2025, sectoral priorities across climate risk assessments, adaptation plans and actions were broadly aligned. Boxes 2 and 3 provide illustrative examples of how identified climate risks are being translated into adaptation action. In 2025, 89% of reported actions were included in either standalone adaptation plans or integrated climate plans (Figure 2.1), up from 75% in 2024, showing stronger integration into formal planning frameworks, rather than ad hoc inclusion in sectoral plans or a standalone project or programme.

Sectoral exposure was also consistent between the two years with agriculture, water supply, human health, energy, and the forestry sector reported as the most exposed. However, in a few cases, alignment across assessment, goal setting, and action implementation was less consistent. While forestry featured prominently in CRVA and actions, it was less present in both standalone adaptation plans and integrated climate plans. Similarly, electricity and gas were identified as a priority sector in climate risk assessments but did not feature prominently in either the stand-alone or integrated plans or reported actions. Despite not appearing as a top sector in assessment or planning, conservation emerged as a priority sector in actions with 40 signatories reporting at least one action related to conservation. This may reflect the growing emphasis in the 2024 reporting cycle where biodiversity enhancement, ecosystem protection, and wider social co-benefits within adaptation implementation (EEA EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change, 2025). Adaptation plans also included some sectors that were not prominent in either assessments or actions. These differences may reflect varying local priorities and planning approaches, but they may also relate to differences in the sectoral mandates across governance levels, the influence of national priorities, or the availability of funding and implementation support for particular sectors (EEA EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change, 2025). Altogether, this also points to opportunities to further align sectoral priorities across the adaptation cycle, helping ensure that efforts are closely matched to identified risks and needs (Reckien et al., 2025).

Inconsistencies between risk assessments, planning, and implementation are a key driver of the "adaptation gap," where identified climate risks are not adequately addressed through targeted actions. Strengthening alignment across sectors and stages of the policy cycle can therefore help ensure that adaptation efforts are more systematically linked to identified risks and needs, improving their overall effectiveness (Reckien et al., 2025).

**Figure 2.3 Risk to action: sectoral alignment across both local and regional levels**



**Note:** In this figure, outliers refer to sectors that are emphasized in one stage of the policy process but are not similarly reflected in the other stages.

**Source:** CDP, 2026a, and 2026b

Only 21% of Mission signatories (70 out of 333) reported climate adaptation data to CDP, reflecting gaps in capacity, awareness, and prioritisation of reporting activities. This constrains opportunities for peer learning and limits the evidence base needed to assess progress towards climate resilience at the sub-national level across Europe. Under resourced monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems continue to constrain effective implementation and long-term adaptation outcomes. Although monitoring activities are widely reported by signatories, whereby 89% of plans in 2025 include some form of monitoring, evaluation remains significantly less common (45%), and systematic learning processes are rarely documented. As a result, there is limited information on whether planned measures are being translated into concrete actions and delivering intended outcomes, highlighting the need for more robust and systematic MEL approaches to support progress monitoring and more effective planning and implementation.

At the same time, the formal institutionalisation of adaptation planning remains uneven. Just over half of reporting authorities (54%) have oversight arrangements in place, while 43% have dedicated bodies to handle climate planning and implementation. In 2025, 70% of authorities reported integrating climate considerations into broader planning strategies, suggesting that climate-related issues are being considered in development and financial planning processes. However, the extent to which this integration leads to meaningful changes in decision-making, investment priorities, and implementation practices remains unclear. This aligns with findings of the *EEA report on Climate resilience in Europe, 2025 – progress and challenges*, which notes that despite growing support through EU and national initiatives, many regional and local authorities continue to face

administrative, technical, and financial capacity constraints that limit their ability to translate adaptation priorities into effective local action and contribute to uneven levels of preparedness across countries (EEA, 2026a).

### Spotlight on actions addressing urban flooding through the Mission on Adaptation

The following examples illustrate how EU Mission-supported projects are supporting the implementation of adaptation actions addressing locally identified climate risks.

## Box 2

### City of Turku – turning urban flood risk assessment into adaptation action

Turku's climate risk assessment identifies urban flooding and freeze–thaw cycles as key hazards, linked to heavy rainfall, sea level events, and increased maintenance needs across roads and stormwater systems.

The city prioritises water management and infrastructure resilience, with actions including clearer stormwater responsibilities, sustainable drainage and nature-based solutions, improved green factors, and wastewater upgrades. Resources also address slipperiness and impacts on roads and drainage.

Through the EU Mission on Adaptation, Turku participates in the [RESIST project](#) (2023-2027), strengthening regional cooperation. Separate Mission technical support has helped refine measures and advance targeted adaptation planning (CDP, 2026a).

## Box 3

### Island Council of Gran Canaria – from multiple climate hazards to action across public health and conservation

Gran Canaria faces multiple climate hazards, including flooding, heavy rainfall, water stress, extreme heat, soil erosion, and biodiversity loss, with stormwater runoff and pollution affecting vulnerable ecosystems and infrastructure.

In response, the island is improving drainage and water management through measures such as stormwater pollution control in the Maspalomas ravine and the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). These aim to reduce flood risk, improve water management, and strengthen ecosystem resilience.

The action is implemented through the Horizon Europe NATALIE project under the Mission on Adaptation, with co-benefits for biodiversity, public health, water security, and climate awareness. (CDP, 2026b).

### 3 Funding and financing adaptation

While financing is increasingly integrated into planning and aligned with identified risks, local authorities remain heavily reliant on public funding, with limited private investment and uneven sectoral allocation. The availability of financial resources is central to translating adaptation plans into concrete action, yet structural constraints continue to limit effective implementation.

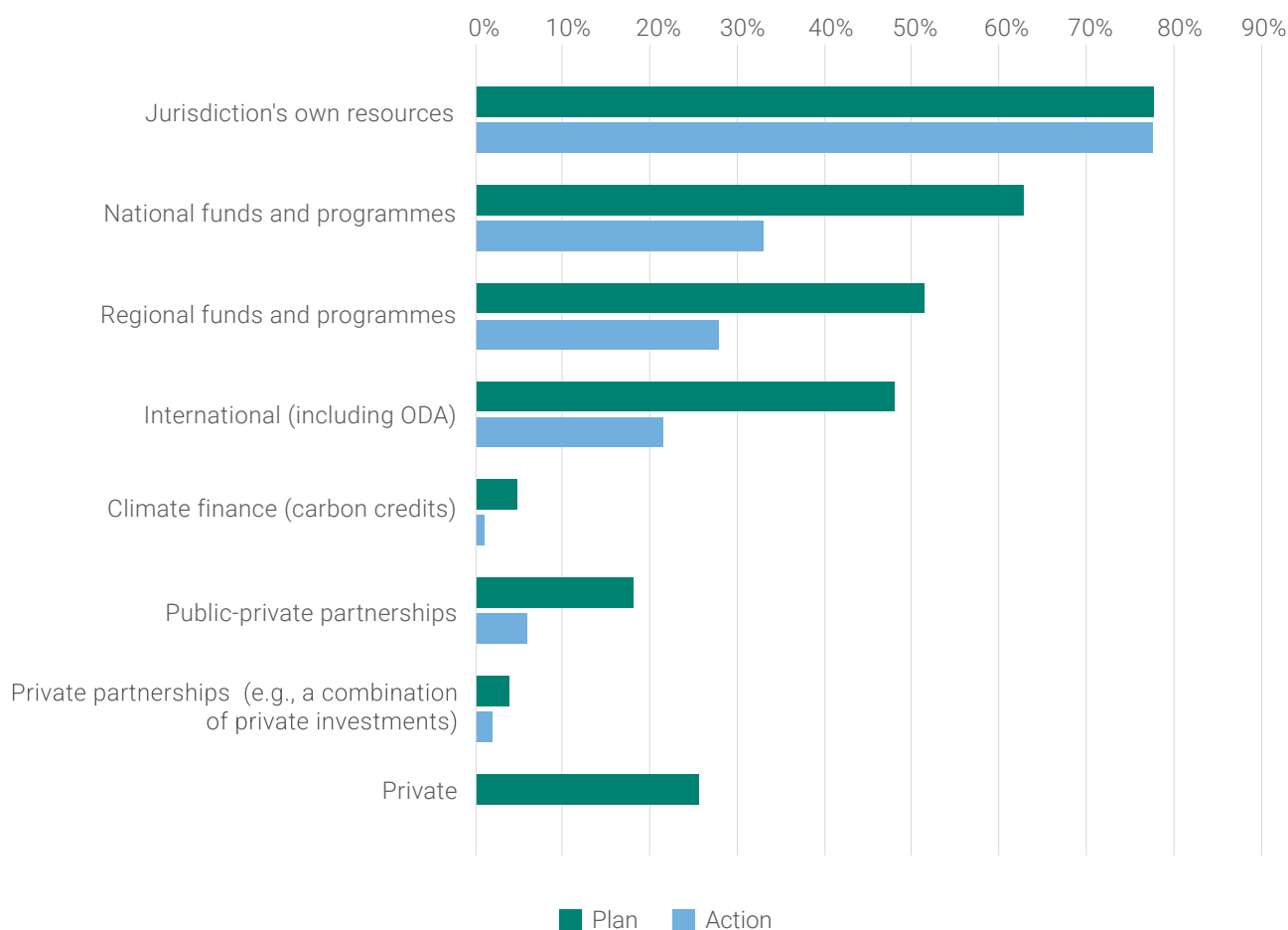
Across the more than 100 reported plans in 2025, 77% draw on authorities' own resources, often complemented by national funds (63%) and regional programmes (51%). International sources, including development assistance, contribute to 47% of plans. By contrast, private-sector engagement remains limited: only 26% of plans report private sector contributions, 18% include public–private partnerships, and just 4% rely exclusively on private partnerships. Innovative climate finance mechanisms such as carbon credits remain largely untapped by local authorities. Innovative climate finance mechanisms, including carbon credits, are not often seen in reported adaptation financing approaches. Overall, local authorities remain heavily reliant on public funding for climate action (Todeschi et al., 2026).

Comparing planned funding with resources actually used for implementation highlights some important signals. The 630+ adaptation actions with identified funding sources reported in 2025 draw on a combination of resources (internal, national, regional, or international). However, authorities' own funding remains central, accounting for 77% of both planned and implemented budgets. This diversification is uneven: 38% of actions relying on internal resources do so exclusively, without combining other sources. This indicates that, despite presence of other funding sources, a significant portion of implementation still depends entirely on internal public funding.

Compared with 2024, reported funding across all sources has declined slightly, from 85% for authorities' own resources to 77%, with similar decreases for regional, national, and international contributions. This may reflect differences in reporting practices or plan typologies (particularly the distinction between standalone adaptation plans and integrated plans) rather than a true reduction in resources. Nonetheless, the trend highlights the persistent challenge of mobilising external finance, particularly private investment, to support adaptation at scale (EEA, 2020, 2024c). Evidence on the "adaptation financing gap" also points to systemic barriers, including administrative complexity, co-financing requirements, and limited bankability of adaptation projects, which constrain subnational authorities' ability to access external funds (UNEP, 2025). Local authorities therefore continue to bear the primary financial responsibility for implementing adaptation actions.

This balance between funding sources, and how it evolves from planning to implementation, is illustrated in Figure 3.1 showing the proportion of plans in which different resources were identified in being used (most often in combination with another type of resource).

**Figure 3.1 Identified Funding Sources from Plans to Action (2025)**



**Note:** "Private" was not a response option for adaptation actions and is therefore not applicable there. It is retained because adaptation plans foresaw significant private funding.

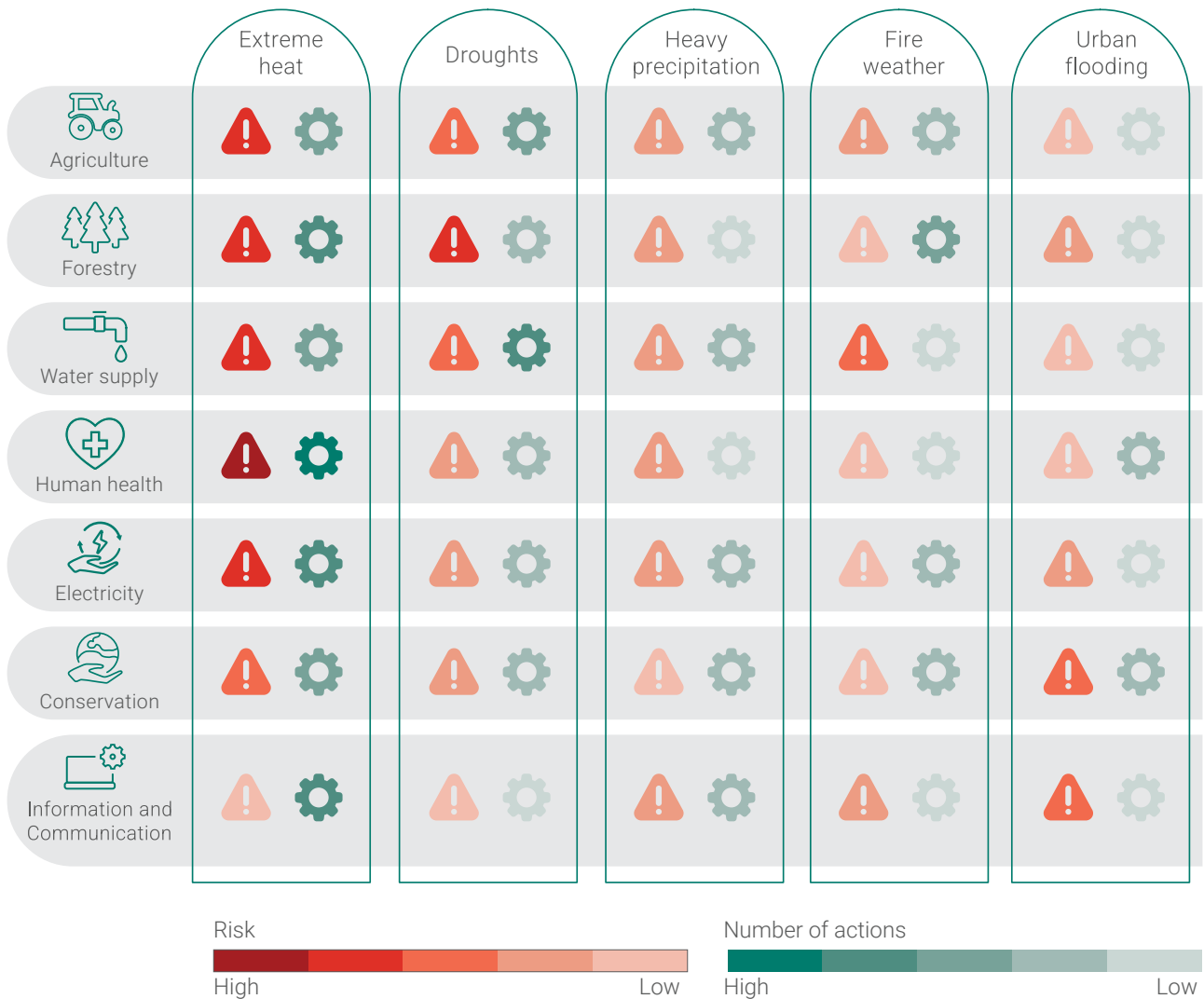
**Source:** CDP, 2026a, and 2026b

There is a disconnect between planning and implementation of actions in the use of external funding from national funds, regional programmes and international sources (Figure 3.1). This mirrors findings from the 2024 reporting assessment, illustrating a gap between financing intentions and actual resource mobilisation (EEA EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change, 2025). Local authorities therefore continue to bear the primary financial responsibility for delivering adaptation actions.

Against the backdrop of funding constraints, understanding the alignment between identified climate hazards and adaptation actions becomes particularly important. Assessing the number of reported actions is used here as a proxy to examine how funding is prioritised across hazards and sectors. Looking at hazard prioritisation, and whether actions are being developed toward the most pressing risks, provides insight into how data from CRVAs is being translated into sectoral actions.

Figure 3.2 presents a snapshot of how some of the most frequently reported climate related hazards are impacting different sectors and the corresponding number of sectoral actions designed to address the risk related to these hazards. Extreme heat, drought, and heavy precipitation were among the hazards most frequently identified in risk assessments and also feature prominently across sectoral reported adaptation actions. The figure shows that these high-priority hazards are associated with a comparatively large number of actions, suggesting a relatively strong alignment between identified risks and adaptation planning priorities.

**Figure 3.2 Snapshot of hazards and sectors reported in risk assessment and adaptation actions in 2025**



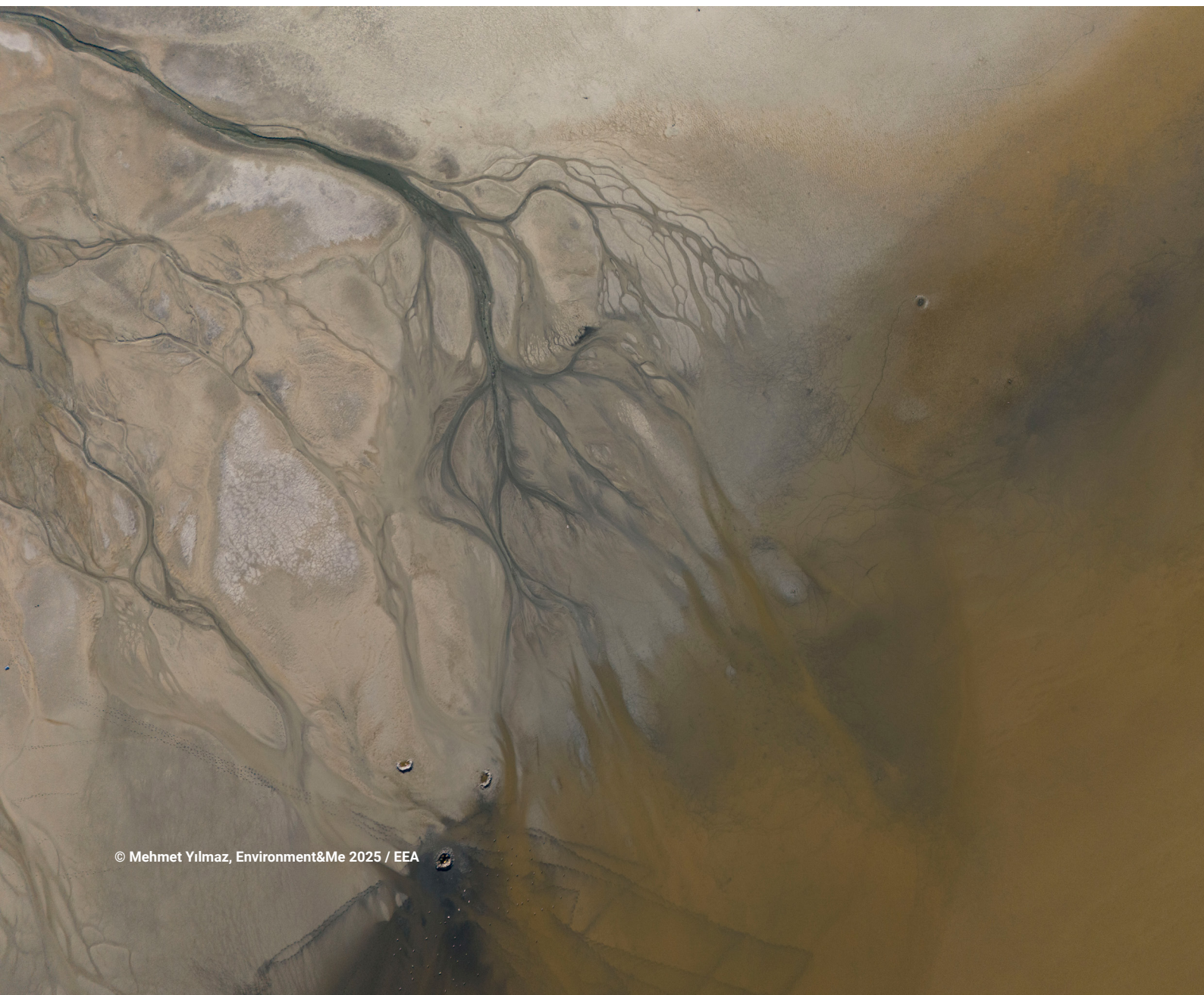
**Note:** Red symbols indicate the relative frequency with which sectors were identified as exposed to each hazard in climate risk and vulnerability assessments (CRVAs), while green symbols indicate the relative frequency of adaptation actions addressing each sector-hazard combination. Darker colours correspond to higher frequency intervals of reporting among Mission signatories. Lighter colours indicate less frequent reporting.

**Source:** CDP, 2026a, and 2026b

Heat was reported by Signatories as the hazard posing the highest risk across all the listed sectors (except for ICT) (Figure 2.3). For these sectors, a high number of adaptation actions designed to address heat were also reported. On the other hand, fire weather shows a different pattern. Sectors that are highly exposed to wildfire, such as forestry and agriculture, show a high level of concern and a relatively high number of adaptation actions, whereas sectors such as water supply and human health show lower reported risks and fewer associated actions. This suggests that wildfire-related adaptation remains concentrated in sectors most directly exposed to landscape and ecosystem impacts. Overall, Signatories prioritised adaptation actions in line with the hazards identified as posing the greatest concern. The examples presented in Box 2 and 3 further illustrate how local authorities are aligning adaptation actions with priority hazards such as urban flooding, water stress, and

extreme heat. At the same time, variations across sectors and hazard types suggest that adaptation responses remain uneven, reflecting differences in exposure, institutional capacity, financing availability, and sector-specific priorities.

Sectoral priorities also vary across governance levels. Local authorities tend to fund and implement concrete, place-based actions addressing local risks, while regional authorities focus on coordination and enabling frameworks to support local implementation (EEA, 2020, 2024b). Despite a high level of concern across sectors, adaptation remains underfunded (EEA, 2026b). In this assessment, heat was assessed as a high risk hazard across all sectors, but only the health sector had a correspondingly high number of actions (Figure 3.2). Private-sector involvement is limited, long-term investment strategies are still developing, and access to external funding continues to pose challenges (OECD, 2025). Closing these gaps will require stronger alignment of EU financial frameworks, such as the Multiannual Financial Framework and economic governance instruments, to better support subnational implementation and bridge the structural mismatch between adaptation goals and available resources (ESABCC, 2026).



## 4 Looking forward

The 2025 reporting cycle shows that local and regional authorities across Europe are increasingly embedding climate adaptation within their planning processes. Most reporting authorities now have climate risk assessments and adaptation plans in place, with growing alignment between identified hazards, sectoral priorities, and planned actions.

Despite these advances, the state of adaptation is uneven and is not yet reflected into implementation at the scale and speed required (EEA, 2024a). Gaps remain in moving from planning to implementation, with partial alignment between risk assessments, planning, financing, and on-the-ground action. Key sectors and high-risk hazards continue to be underfunded relative to their exposure, pointing to weaknesses in prioritisation and resource allocation. At the same time, governance and coordination challenges across levels of administration limit coherent implementation, while adaptation efforts remain heavily reliant on public funding, with limited private-sector engagement and uneven access to external finance.

Progress should therefore be interpreted cautiously due to data limitations and reporting inconsistencies, which make it difficult to fully assess implementation outcomes and adaptation progress over time. Expanding and strengthening reporting by local and regional authorities, alongside improved MEL systems and ongoing EU monitoring initiatives, will be critical for improving data quality, enabling performance tracking, and supporting more effective implementation and course correction. Strengthened reporting can also help identify investment needs and support the scaling of adaptation action through targeted EU funding and greater mobilisation of private finance to translate plans into concrete and adequately funded actions that enhance climate resilience across Europe.

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