



VIDZEME, LATVIA

Vidzeme is advancing climate adaptation by developing its first regional SECAP with strong support from the EU Mission. Through expert guidance, stakeholder coordination, and a focus on long-term planning, the region is strengthening its resilience to climate change.

EU MISSION IMPACT

Faced with growing climate risks and responsibilities, Vidzeme Planning Region has taken important steps to strengthen its adaptation planning. With tailored support from MIP4Adapt's technical assistance, the region developed and approved its first Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP), with a strong focus on adaptation.

Assistance providing expert feedback on key elements of the adaptation process, including risk assessment, measure selection, funding options, and monitoring frameworks.

Support focused on identifying funding sources and guided project development, enhancing the region's ability to secure finance for adaptation initiatives.

This combined support has built Vidzeme's capacity and laid a solid foundation for targeted, effective adaptation across north-eastern Latvia.

REGIONAL PROFILE

Vidzeme Planning Region is located in north-eastern Latvia, extending from the Estonian border to the Baltic Sea. As the country's largest planning region, it covers 19,770 km², around 30.6% of Latvia's territory, and comprises 11 municipalities. Home to approximately 273,800 residents (14.6% of the national population), the region combines rich natural and cultural heritage with a diverse economy. It includes Gauja National Park, Latvia's oldest and largest national park, and is known for its nature and cultural tourism. Key economic sectors include wood processing, agriculture, industrial production, and tourism.

CLIMATE CHALLENGES

Vidzeme is facing increasing climate challenges, with average temperatures rising by around 1.2°C since 1960. Wetter conditions and more frequent extreme weather events are putting pressure on key sectors such as forestry, agriculture and tourism. Warmer winters are reducing snow cover, which impacts forests, farming and winter tourism. Ecosystems like wetlands and boreal forests are under stress, while shifting seasonal patterns are disrupting agricultural cycles.

The support from the EU Mission through MIP4Adapt has been highly valuable for our region. Expert input helped refine our climate adaptation plan, particularly on risk mitigation. The Zoom consultations provided practical guidance, relevant methodologies and deeper insight into climate planning. MIP4Adapt also supported us in identifying funding sources and developing monitoring indicators, significantly strengthening our strategy and building our confidence for implementation.

MAIJA RIEKSTA

Project Manager, Vidzeme Planning Region

SOLUTIONS

Vidzeme Planning Region and its municipalities are actively advancing climate adaptation through a range of initiatives. These include assessing the impact of climate change on coastal tourism in Saulkrasti through the [BEACH-SOS project](#), promoting nature-based solutions for rainwater management in Cēsis and Valmiera via the [LATESTAdapt project](#), and revitalising historical peat extraction sites to restore ecosystems.

Most notably, Vidzeme has successfully developed and approved a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP). This comprehensive plan places a strong emphasis on adaptation, incorporating climate vulnerability and risk assessments, identification and prioritisation of adaptation options, evaluation of funding sources, and the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework. The SECAP provides a clear pathway for identifying future projects and securing financing, ensuring that adaptation measures are grounded in evidence and ready for implementation.



OUTPUTS

With support from the EU Mission through MIP4Adapt, Vidzeme successfully developed the climate adaptation components of its Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP). The Mission provided targeted technical assistance, including expert feedback on draft content, participation in knowledge-sharing sessions, and the provision of practical resources and good practice examples. This support helped the region build its internal capacity, clarify institutional roles, and expand its understanding of funding opportunities.

The resulting SECAP strengthens Vidzeme's ability to prepare for climate risks, with a clearer overview of local vulnerabilities and a well-defined list of adaptation options. The plan has also improved coordination between regional and municipal actors, setting a strong foundation for implementation. Through this process, Vidzeme contributes to cohesive and strategic climate adaptation across Europe, showing how Mission support translates into tangible planning and action at the regional level.

LESSONS LEARNED

Defining concrete adaptation actions can be challenging for planning regions like Vidzeme, as their legal responsibilities in climate adaptation are often limited. However, their role as coordinators and facilitators of communication between municipalities and stakeholders proves essential in advancing regional adaptation efforts.

A key challenge faced by the region is the limited availability of data and the lack of established monitoring systems, making it difficult to identify meaningful performance indicators for adaptation. This highlights the need to build capacity in data collection and evaluation to effectively measure progress and support long-term climate resilience planning.

