European Climate and Health Observatory

- Workplan 2025-2026 -

The European Climate and Health Observatory is operating according to two-year workplans agreed by the Partners. This document sets out the thematic priorities and key actions for the 2025-26 period. The previous work plan for 2023-24 focussed on water, climate change and health.[1] The focus of this work plan is on capacity building.

The policy context

In March 2024, the European Climate Risk Assessment warned that climate change will affect our health at the individual level but also through risks to health and other systems. This includes rises in mortality and morbidity due to heatwaves, the spread of vector-borne diseases, increased respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses due to air pollution, or mental health challenges exacerbated by extreme weather events.

Ensuring a healthy future for all and the well-being of the next generations is a central goal that unites EU climate and health policies. The climate crisis makes us aware of the extraordinary potential of policies that, within a One Health approach, contribute simultaneously to climate mitigation, climate adaptation and public health.

The EU leads a global effort to combat climate change. It is committed to making Europe climate-neutral by 2050, and to strengthen its policies for climate adaptation, resilience and preparedness. These commitments are not only essential for reducing emissions but also for protecting vulnerable populations from the disproportionate health impacts of climate change, including the elderly, children, and those with pre-existing conditions.

Published in March 2024, the Communication of the European Commission 'Managing climate risks: protecting people and prosperity' demonstrates Europe's readiness to respond to the evolving reality of climate change. Further to this Communication, the Commission will now develop an ambitious and robust European Climate Adaptation Plan.

In this context the commitments outlined in the Budapest Declaration and the COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health from 2023 provide a framework of principles and actions on climate change and health. Actions directed at the policy level should be complemented by empowering communities to adapt and thrive in the face of climate challenges, ensuring that no one is left behind in the transition to a sustainable and healthy future.

About the European Climate and Health Observatory

The European Climate and Health Observatory is a key European policy initiative in the field. Jointly managed by the European Commission and the European Environment Agency, it is a unique multidisciplinary partnership between key players in the fields of climate, health and environmental policy and research.

The Observatory supports Europe in preparing for and adapting to the impacts of climate change on human health, alongside mitigating the impact of health systems on climate change, by providing access to relevant information and tools. Through its commitment to fostering knowledge exchange

[1] You can find the previous workplans here on the Observatory portal.

and facilitating cooperation across a broad spectrum of international, European, national, sub-national and non-governmental actors, the Observatory acts as a central hub for coordinating action on climate-related health risks in support of the One Health approach. For more information about the Observatory and its activities, see here.

Strategic objectives

The Observatory aims to become an authoritative source of actionable knowledge on climate change and human health, including current and projected climate change risks to health at all life stages and in all settings, providing a platform to inform on policies and guide actions addressing or mitigating the impact of climate change on health.

In this document, the Observatory partners agreed to contribute to the following strategic objectives for 2030, in collaboration with public administrations, civil society organisations, the research community and other relevant stakeholders:

1. Observatory users can monitor key climate-related health risks, impacts and adaptive responses through robust indicators.
2. National and sub-national health policies and systems can integrate adaptation more systematically and consistently.
3. Public authorities have greater capacity to anticipate and prevent climate-related threats to health in a timely manner.
4. The health community in Europe is climate-literate and better involved into adaptation decision-making.
5. Evidence-based efficient, effective, and inclusive adaptation solutions and public health and healthcare interventions are widely known and shared.

The 2025-26 workplan builds on and further develops the work carried out in the years before, while strengthening synergies between the contributions of the partners. Additionally, this 2025-26 workplan starts to explore the new area of green-house gas emissions **mitigation in the health system**, in synergy with **adaptation**. A further new focus area will be to strengthen **capacity building** among **national, regional,** and **local** stakeholders within the European health community and beyond.~~,~~ This initiative aims to equip stakeholders with the necessary expertise in addressing the impact of climate change on health and support the transition towards climate-neutral and climate-resilient health systems. By fostering these synergies and expanding our focus areas, the 2025-26 workplan sets a robust framework for sustainable and resilient health outcomes across Europe.

Below are the key actions of the Partners of the EU Climate and Health Observatory, reflecting a concerted effort to advance these critical objectives through collaborative and innovative strategies.

Key actions for 2025 and 2026, structured under the Strategic Objectives of the European Climate and Health Observatory

Objective 1: Observatory users can monitor key climate-related health risks, impacts and adaptive responses through robust indicators.

To help reach this objective, the Observatory partners will continue to bring together, develop and spread knowledge on key climate change related health risks, impacts and adaptive responses in a format that allows distinguishing regional differences across Europe and changes over time.

This includes, in particular, the joint development of indicators and their regular update. Regular reports and other periodical assessments support complement the evaluation of progress towards climate resilience and adaptive capacity in relation to health (see Objective 2).

Action	Lead partner	Associated partner
Key publications and outputs		
Assessment report, subject TBC	EEA	
Briefing: mycotoxins and climate change	EEA	EFSA
Briefing: pollution and climate change	EEA	
Publication of indicator-based report	LCDE	
Publication of urban-scale report	LCDE	
Update of water- and foodborne diseases evidence page	EFSA	EEA
Review of and update of data for the webpages on infectious diseases	ECDC	EEA
Incorporation of climate information in ECDC factsheets on infectious diseases (TBC)	ECDC	EEA
New section in the Observatory focussed on mitigation in the health sector	EEA	
General knowledge developments		
Publish and start implementing the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda on Climate and Health	DG RTD	
Strengthening the climate and health aspects in EUCRA 2	EEA, CLIMA	All
Understanding the GHG emissions in the health sector based on the existing literature, policies and databases	EEA	
Assessment of impact of climate change on labour productivity at the regional level	JRC, DG EMPL	
E-survey with questions on climate change impacts on health	Eurofound	EEA, all
Inclusion of climate-health aspects in the	Eurofound	
Integrating Eurocigua II outputs on links between ciguatera toxins and environmental conditions into the Observatory	EFSA	EEA
Mitigation in the health sector: investigation of the GHG emissions based on the existing databases	EEA	
Contributing findings from the multiannual project 'OSH overview': collection of evidence of the direct and indirect impacts of climate change on worker's health and safety, including on heat stress at work	EU-OSHA	
Contributing findings of the review on cardiovascular diseases at work and climate change	EU-OSHA	
Integrating outputs of the Climate and Health Cluster into the Observatory	DG RTD	
Improving access to actionable data via the Copernicus Health Hub	ECMWF	
Developing new indicators, with focus on adaptation	LCDE	
Further develop the indicator on climate education in public health schools	ASPHER	
Updating existing indicators of climate risks to health and adaptation responses in the Observatory	LCDE	

Objective 2: National and sub-national health policies and systems can integrate adaptation more systematically and consistently.

The Observatory will build and promote knowledge on climate risks and solutions for national and sub-national health systems. To do so, the Observatory supports networking, knowledge exchanges and collaboration between all relevant actors; periodically provides analyses and assessments of national policies and initiatives; and offers support to climate-aware policy development, health sector planning, and health system preparedness for climate change, amongst others drawing on the lessons learnt by the regions and communities participating in the Mission on Adaptation.

Action	Lead partner	Associated partner
Policy developments and policy analyses		
Consider and address climate-related health risks in the European Climate Adaptation Plan	DG CLIMA	
Include health topics in the adaptation subprogramme of LIFE (Multiannual Work Programme 2025-27, annual calls under this programme)	DG CLIMA	
When reviewing occupational safety and health (OSH) legislation that protects workers from all occupational risks, including the risks related to increased ambient temperatures and heat stress, the Commission will consider the need for more action to protect workers on climate risks, also building on the existing guidance and tools (TBC)	DG EMPL	
Update of the climate and health country profiles based on Governance Regulation reporting	EEA	
Overview of subnational action on climate and health	EEA	
Analysis of high temperature regulations in work, school, and hospital settings (TBC)	EEA, EU-OSHA	DG EMPL
Policy support		
Structured exchanges with Member States health authorities (TBC)	DG SANTE	
On-on-one programme to help MS/national authorities conduct periodic and climate and health risk assessments and develop/implement Health-National Adaptation Plans TBC	WHO/Europe	
Support a campaign on extreme heat in cities run by the Covenant of Mayors	DG CLIMA	
Organising a meeting between the European Climate and Health Observatory and national climate and health observatories to exchange experiences and enhance collaboration	IANPHI	
Webinar on climate change and infectious diseases for ECDC/EEA combined networks	ECDC, EEA	
Handbook for national vulnerability, impact and adaptation assessments for climate change and communicable diseases	ECDC	EEA

Objective 3: Public authorities have greater capacity to anticipate and prevent climate-related threats to health in a timely manner.

Observatory partners support the development of suitable mechanisms – such as public surveillance, forecasting and early warning systems - to enable timely detection and response to climate-sensitive health risks. They periodically assess the geographic and thematic coverage, possible gaps and the effectiveness of these mechanisms in Europe.

Action	Lead partner	Associated partner
Calendar of heatwaves: application for non-technical users	EEA	
ArboRisk Tool published (TBC)	ECDC	
Further development of data on Vibrio spp including the revision of the Vibrio risk tool (TBC)	ECDC	EFSA, EEA
Development and testing of national applications on pollen	ECMWF	
Short-term forecasts of wildfire and dust PM (global and regional reanalyses, and policy products related to dust are also available)	ECMWF	
Contribute findings of EU-OSHA's foresight study 'OSH implications of future climate change-related developments and crises' as regards worker protection	EU-OSHA	All to input to the exploratory phase
Project investigating climatic factors and the transmission dynamics of vector-borne diseases and developing projections for human health risks	JRC	ECDC

Objective 4: The health community in Europe is climate-literate and better involved into adaptation decision-making.

Observatory partners carry out capacity building, education, training, knowledge sharing and outreach activities to improve the climate change awareness and literacy among health care and public health professionals and other relevant professions, such as e.g. urban developers, with the aim to integrate health aspects more strongly into the work of those working on adaptation policy and practice in general.

Action	Lead partner	Associated partner
Collect experiences and knowledge on calculating Green House Gas (GHG) emissions in health systems; and to identify good practices in low-GHG clinical practices and models of healthcare.	DG SANTE, EEA	
Developing, maintaining and updating resource catalogue of training materials for public health/healthcare practitioners	ASPHER	
Development and running of training course(s) for public health/healthcare practitioners	ASPHER	WHO/Europe, all
Guidance on inclusion of climate change in public health curricula as well as broader professional agenda	ASPHER	
Develop specific capacity building interventions towards policymakers	ASPHER	All
Publish, disseminate and promote the uptake of the updated guidance on heat-health action planning according to the dedicated communication plan	WHO/Europe	
Bonn School with focus on climate change	WHO/Europe	
Facilitation of peer-to-peer learning on the sub-regional level	WHO/Europe	
Climate-related activities under the Transatlantic dialogue	WHO/Europe	

Objective 5: Evidence-based efficient, effective, and inclusive adaptation solutions and public health and healthcare interventions are widely known.

The Observatory collects and promotes examples of effective, cost-efficient and inclusive solutions for adaptation to climate change of health at various spatial scales and by a broad range of entities.

Action	Lead partner	Associated partner
Case studies of adaptation solutions	EEA	all
Case studies on mitigation solutions in the health sector	EEA	
Contributions based on multiannual project 'OSH overview': collection of information on practices and effective strategies to adapt and increase resilience at the workplaces (TBC)	EU-OSHA	
Contributions based on a review on cardiovascular diseases at work and climate change	EU-OSHA	
Policy Watch – collection of responses to extreme weather events	Eurofound	
Collection of case studies on climate change and mental health	WHO/Europe	
Case study on vector control by Sterile Insect Technique (SIT), adaptation strategy	IAEA, SANTE, ECDC	
Under the EU Mission Adaptation to Climate Change, and supported by four new health-related research projects (ISMED-CLIM, MOUNTADAPT, AURORA, HealthRiskADAPT): test and demonstrate transformative solutions to address climate-related health risks	DG CLIMA, DG RTD, CINEA	
Exchange of knowledge with the EHP partnership on climate action in health systems	EEA	All
Support to Member States' authorities for the scaling up of national systems for vector surveillance and control capacities	HERA	
Support for the development of new diagnostic tests for vector-borne diseases	HERA	