

Background document **Break-out group discussions – part 2 (13 June): Ecosystem-based Adaptation**

Recent policy and knowledge developments:

The use of ecosystem-based approaches for climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR), termed **Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA)** and **ecosystem-based approaches to Disaster Risk Reduction (eco-DRR)**, has emerged within multilateral frameworks and adopted as effective practice for CCA and DRR at global and European level.

In November 2018, the Parties of *Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)* at COP14 (Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt) adopted the '[Voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction](#)' to promote among parties more integration of biodiversity, ecosystems, CCA and DRR.

In May 2019, the *Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)* has released the '2019 Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services', which provides a comprehensive view of the current conditions of global biodiversity and stresses the promotion of **Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)**¹ in urban areas.

The '[EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change](#)', adopted in 2013, aiming at contributing to a more climate-resilient Europe, recognises multiple benefits of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation. In 2013 the EU adopted a '[Strategy on Green Infrastructure](#)', to promote the deployment of **green infrastructure (GI)**² in the EU in urban and rural areas', with a direct reference to the EU CCA Strategy to converge actions on green infrastructure and ecosystem-based approaches to CCA and DRR. The GI concept and approach have synergies with environmental policies (e.g. land use, freshwater and the marine environment) and with policies on agriculture and forestry, climate change (mitigation and adaptation) and disaster risk prevention.

EU is also further enhancing research on NBS. The '[EU Research and Innovation agenda on Nature-Based Solutions and Re-Naturing Cities](#)' aims to enable Europe to become a world leader both in research and innovation and in the growing market for NBS.

Background information on EEA and ETC CCA activities:

The EEA started in 2019 an activity to prepare a '*Scoping Paper on Ecosystem-based approaches for CCA and DRR*' to be finalized by the end of the current year. This Scoping Paper aims to explore different approaches on how to address the knowledge base, policies, case studies, good practices in European countries in EbA, eco-DRR, GI and NBS for CCA and DRR. This paper will define the contents for a specific **EEA assessment report** to be published at the end of 2020. The report will be built on available information from scientific/technical literature and from international, European, national and, where possible, subnational projects and initiatives. We will furthermore make use of existing information from EEA reports or those due to be published next.

¹ **Nature-Based solutions (NBS)** are solutions that are inspired and supported by nature, which are cost-effective, simultaneously provide environmental, social and economic benefits and help build resilience. (source: <https://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/index.cfm?pg=nbs>)

² **Green Infrastructure (GI)** is defined as 'a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services such as water purification, air quality, space for recreation and climate mitigation and adaptation. Green infrastructure planning is a successfully tested tool to provide environmental, economic and social benefits through natural solutions and help reduce dependence on 'grey' infrastructure that is often more expensive to build and maintain. (source: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/index_en.htm)

*13th EIONET workshop on Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation,
12-13 June 2019, EEA, Copenhagen*

The 2019 Scoping Paper and the 2020 EEA Report will be prepared by a team of experts from different EEA groups and from the *European Topic Centre on Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation (ETC/CCA)*, the *European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD)* and the *European Topic Centre on Urban, Land and Soil systems (ETC/ULS)*. Finally, the paper and the report will be reviewed from an Advisory Group including external experts active in these topics and experts from the European Commission and international organizations.

To support this activity, EEA organized on 13-14 March 2019 an ‘*Expert meeting on biodiversity and ecosystem services approaches for climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR): knowledge base, policies and practices at European, national and subnational level*’ with participation by key experts across Europe, as well as representatives from the European Commission.

Questions for the discussion

1. Taking into consideration the annotated outline of the Scoping Paper, what are your views on the focus, objectives and approach of the EEA work on this topic?
2. Which EEA activities within this topic have a high priority from your perspective?
3. Are you interested to provide some support to this EEA work (e.g. providing some relevant information on these topics at national and subnational level, or reviewing the final draft of the Scoping Paper)?

Additional document:

The annotated outline of the EEA Scoping Paper.