

MANIFESTO

“SHORE UP CLIMATE RESILIENCE OF MARITIME REGIONS”

PUTTING MARITIME REGIONS AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES AT THE HEART OF EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL ACTIONS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

Climate change represents one of the greatest challenges of our time, threatening human well-being, Earth's environment and biodiversity and economic development. Coastal communities and maritime regions are on the frontline of this crisis, facing rising sea levels, increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, and significant socio-economic disruptions. It is urgent to reinforce international attention and mainstream climate adaptation into European and national public policies to create the necessary conditions for resilience, adaptability, and regeneration of territories. This is essential to enable maritime regions and their coastal communities to effectively respond to the growing impacts of climate change.

Strengthening the resilience and adaptive capacity of public policies is no longer optional. It represents the only viable and sustainable response to the complex and interlinked climate, environmental and socio-economic challenges these areas increasingly face. Only by empowering an ecosystem-based approach, embedded within multi-level and multi-actor governance frameworks, could maritime regions enhance their ability to withstand and recover from climate impacts, safeguard and regenerate their settlements and natural systems and ensure long-term social and economic well-being to their citizens. Building on these considerations, and drawing on a well-established tradition of cooperation within the ECOMONDO community, the signatories of the present Manifesto draw the attention of European and national co-legislators and main stakeholders to the following recommendations:

- **CHAMPION INNOVATIVE, MULTI-LEVEL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE.** It is time to move towards a renewed model of climate governance that truly reflects the complexity and territorial diversity of Europe. This model must ensure structured and sustained participation from scientific institutions, economic operators, financial actors and citizens, while placing regional and local authorities at the heart of the policy process, from identifying adaptation priorities, to choosing the most suitable instruments and planning strategic investments. Signatories call on the European Commission to take the lead in strengthening the foundations of such a governance model by further improving the collection and territorial analysis of extreme weather events and climate-related data and ensuring their easy and effective access for decision-makers at all levels. The European Commission should also foster exchange of good practices on successful adaptation plans and strategies, as well as to open a structured dialogue with Member States and the European Parliament on how to accelerate legislative simplification, support regional and local authorities in fostering public-private partnerships and ensuring the active inclusion of civil society in the co-design, ownership and co-financing of on-the-ground adaptation infrastructures and measures. Building on this, signatories encourage the creation of structured knowledge and practice communities to sustain long-term peer learning and technical capacity among coastal regions.
- **MAINSTREAM TERRITORIAL RESILIENCE ACROSS ALL POLICY LEVELS.** Climate adaptation must become a central and integrated pillar of both EU and national climate policies. It is essential that adaptation is systematically embedded in integrated planning, investment and territorial development strategies, fully aligned with environmental, economic and social objectives.

Signatories place strong expectations on the European Commission's forthcoming legislative proposal for a "European Integrated Framework for Climate Resilience and Risk Management" expected by the end of 2026. This initiative should establish binding adaptation and resilience targets for Member States, to create the necessary conditions to better support regional and local authorities in designing and implementing effective adaptation actions. Particular attention should also be paid to those territorial contexts that show clear disparities in terms of vulnerability, socio-economic conditions, accessibility to funds and capability to implement appropriate projects and technological solutions.

Moreover, the new Action Plan should ensure that territorial adaptation and resilience objectives are systematically integrated into European and national policies with direct and indirect implications for climate action, with the final aim of promoting coherence and alignment across areas.

In this regard, Signatories welcome and strongly support the draft [opinion](#) of the European Committee of the Regions, which puts forward a comprehensive vision and ambitious recommendations for the EC's forthcoming proposal.

- **ENSURE ACCESSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR COASTAL RESILIENCE.** Signatories believe that multiple, context-specific factors are limiting the development of an EU effective adaptation funding support. EU funds should be designed to reinforce and amplify ambitious investment strategies, empowering regions to implement or scale-up coastal adaptation plans, with confidence and continuity, combining conventional infrastructure interventions with a broader deployment of innovative nature-based solutions (NBS).

Looking ahead, Signatories urge EU co-legislators to ensure that the 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) mainstreams a dedicated and reinforced support for adaptation, with resources clearly prioritised for the most exposed territories, such as maritime regions. Public financing must be leveraged alongside greater mobilisation of private capital and innovative blended finance mechanisms.

Signatories underline the importance of engaging the insurance sector in a strategic reflection on how to better respond to the growing economic impacts of extreme weather events, particularly by improving systems for partial compensation and risk-sharing, to alleviate pressure on public budgets and regional authorities. Banking foundations should also be encouraged to take on a more prominent role, helping to broaden the portfolio of accessible funding streams for regional and local adaptation initiatives, particularly those grounded in innovation and territorial resilience.

Signatories acknowledge the valuable steps taken by the European Investment Bank (EIB) in recent years in support of climate adaptation. However, signatories believe that several key issues must still be addressed to fully harness the opportunities offered by a more supportive environment for EIB's action on coastal resilience. One of the main barriers to progress remains the lack of integrated and bankable projects, often linked to unclear risk allocation, complex governance structures and limited local capacity. The perception of financial risk, which frequently reduces the appeal of investments delivering public goods, must also be addressed. At the same time, it is crucial to reinforce the capacity of authorities to carry out integrated planning that clearly identifies key vulnerabilities and appropriate responses, while improving the assessment of the cost of inaction.

Overcoming these challenges requires a holistic and strategic approach to guide future investment efforts. Signatories encourage the European Commission to provide the EIB with the means to step up its engagement by complementing financial and technical assistance instruments tailored to the specific governance and planning needs of coastal territories (e.g. [JASPERS](#), [ADAPT](#)): capacity-building and awareness raising; upstream support (covering also development of strategies, coastal adaptation plans and identification of project pipelines); project preparation and implementation support.

- **ENABLE ADAPTIVE COASTAL REGENERATION THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COOPERATION.** To foster long-term resilience in maritime regions, coastal regeneration should be reimagined through the lens of adaptation. This requires the development and refinement of integrated planning instruments and public policies that can actively support and accelerate adaptive interventions along the coast by integrating climate risks, environmental safeguards and socio-economic opportunities into spatial and territorial planning.

Integrated planning policies at all levels should promote flexibility, anticipate future scenarios and remove unnecessary procedural barriers that delay or discourage innovative adaptation efforts. Special attention should be given to regeneration projects that combine environmental restoration, sustainable economic development and improved liveability for coastal communities. At the same time, enhancing coordination between public

authorities, scientific institutions, civil society, local communities, and private sector actors is essential to co-design locally grounded solutions, foster social ownership and unlock co-financing opportunities, also providing support and technical assistance mechanisms for those territorial contexts with greater vulnerability and less adaptive response capacity.

Signatories call on EU co-legislators to promote the integration of climate adaptation requirements in key territorial planning and regeneration policies, including the future revision of the Territorial Agenda for the EU and the implementation of Cohesion Policy. Signatories also urge the European Commission to step up its efforts in supporting adaptive coastal regeneration, notably by facilitating the exchange of good practices, ensuring targeted technical assistance and promoting easier pooling between existing EU funding instruments and planning policies.

This Manifesto calls on EU decision makers and stakeholders to mobilize adequate resources, aligning governance frameworks, accelerating coastal adaptation planning and promote innovation, to foster change in Europe's maritime regions making them more resilient and future-proof.

ECOMONDO
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