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ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

# DIY Manual on engaging stakeholders and citizens in climate adaptation, including tools, good practices and experiences



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# ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS AND CITIZENS IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Engaging stakeholders and citizens enhances the relevance, effectiveness, and credibility of climate adaptation plans, building trust and supporting a collective mandate for implementing adaptation actions. It does so by incorporating local insights and concerns, complementing top-down approaches, fostering shared ownership, and clarifying common goals.

Developed by the EU Mission Implementation Platform for Adaptation to Climate Change (MIP4Adapt), this DIY (Do-It-Yourself) Manual for regional and local authorities emphasises four key actions for engaging stakeholders and citizens in climate adaptation:

- **Communicating:** providing clear and accessible information
- **Engaging** stakeholders and communities
- **Connecting** stakeholders and citizens to facilitate collaboration and
- **Enabling** collective and individual action.



Figure 1. Steps of the Regional Adaptation Support Tool (RAST). Source: *Mission Portal*

The Manual offers practical ways of engaging with stakeholders and citizens and promoting their active participation in all climate adaptation planning and action elements. It guides you through relevant participatory activities and highlights tools, good practices and examples for involving stakeholders and citizens in all climate adaptation planning cycle steps, as outlined in the [Regional Adaptation Support Tool \(RAST\)](#) (Figure 1).

General participatory activities (such as workshops, focus groups, and citizen assemblies) and associated tools for engaging stakeholders and citizens can be used in various contexts, not just for climate adaptation planning and action, to provide a sound basis for engagement. You can use these participatory activities and tools for gathering diverse perspectives, understanding concerns, fostering dialogue, active participation, and building consensus. While they may not always capture every viewpoint, these initiatives can be effective and a basis for developing and implementing more innovative participatory activities and associated tools for engaging with stakeholders and citizens.



## WHAT'S NEW...

The original **DIY Manual on Stakeholder and Citizen Engagement in Climate Adaptation** outlined the general participatory activities and associated tools. This updated version incorporates feedback from users of the first edition and introduces new tools and guidance to enhance its practical use. We have refined approaches to engaging different types of stakeholders, including those from the private and third sectors, ensuring broader applicability. We have also provided thematic flyers focused on participatory activities and related tools to facilitate their decision making throughout the adaptation planning cycle. These flyers address:

- **Creative engagement** to harness creativity for climate adaptation that promotes resilience. Creative participatory activities and associated tools can help capture a broader range of perspectives by allowing people to feel free to express themselves and contribute in diverse, artistic, and original ways. Creative engagement fosters emotional connections, knowledge sharing, community building, inspiring actions and influencing climate policies.

- **Engaging the private sector**, particularly in identifying and implementing climate adaptation actions and innovative solutions. The private sector has resources, expertise, and innovative capacity to contribute significantly to climate action. By involving businesses in developing and implementing climate strategies, you can harness their potential for promoting sustainable practices that support climate adaptation. Collaborations between the public and private sectors can lead to the development of effective, innovative solutions that address climate vulnerabilities and risks, enhancing adaptation from environmental, social, and economic perspectives.
- **Supporting vulnerable groups** to ensure that climate action is inclusive. Those who may be most affected by climate change often need targeted interventions to adapt to changing conditions and build their resilience. Initiatives can focus on providing access to resources, mutual learning, and support systems that allow vulnerable groups to participate in climate adaptation planning and implementation. Empowering these communities requires actively involving them in identifying and prioritising their unique vulnerabilities and capacity gaps in adapting to climate-related hazards. It involves group members identifying, prioritising and implementing climate adaptation actions that address their needs.

By **adopting a whole-of-society approach** and actively engaging all types of stakeholders and citizens, you can ensure that no one is left behind, promote social justice, and enhance the effectiveness of climate adaptation to reduce vulnerabilities and risks and increase resilience.

To use the Manual effectively, start by reviewing Step 1 of the RAST, which is crucial for developing your engagement and communication strategy. This foundational step will help you engage stakeholders and citizens throughout the climate adaptation planning process.

As you move forward, navigate the Manual according to your specific needs. Use the Manual as a flexible, comprehensive resource, selecting the parts that best serve your objectives. Each section corresponds to a different step of the planning cycle and can be accessed independently.

Here is how to get the most out of each section:

- Thematic Flyers: Begin with these for a quick overview of examples of tools.
- RAST Step Tables: Use the tables included in this manual to find detailed tool description.

In the Manual, you can find direct links for further information on each tool, with examples of applications and best practices. All the tools from the previous version are included, with additional ones on how to engage different types of stakeholders.

The Manual follows the RAST, presenting specific participatory activities and associated tools, good practices and experiences related to engaging stakeholders and citizens in each step of the climate adaptation planning cycle.

The selection of participatory activities and associated tools for engaging stakeholders and citizens in climate adaptation planning and action depends on the objectives of each step and your overall goals. These may include exchanging information, undertaking joint analysis, promoting mutual learning, enabling collective decision-making, and involving specific stakeholders. Depending on your in-house knowledge and capability, it may be worth commissioning a consultant to support you in effectively engaging stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors as well as citizens and deploying participatory activities and associated tools.

**Please note that regardless of how far you have progressed in your adaptation cycle, it is important to read Step 1, which addresses developing an engagement and communication strategy. You can refine and adapt your engagement and communication strategy as you progress through the steps of the climate adaptation planning cycle.**

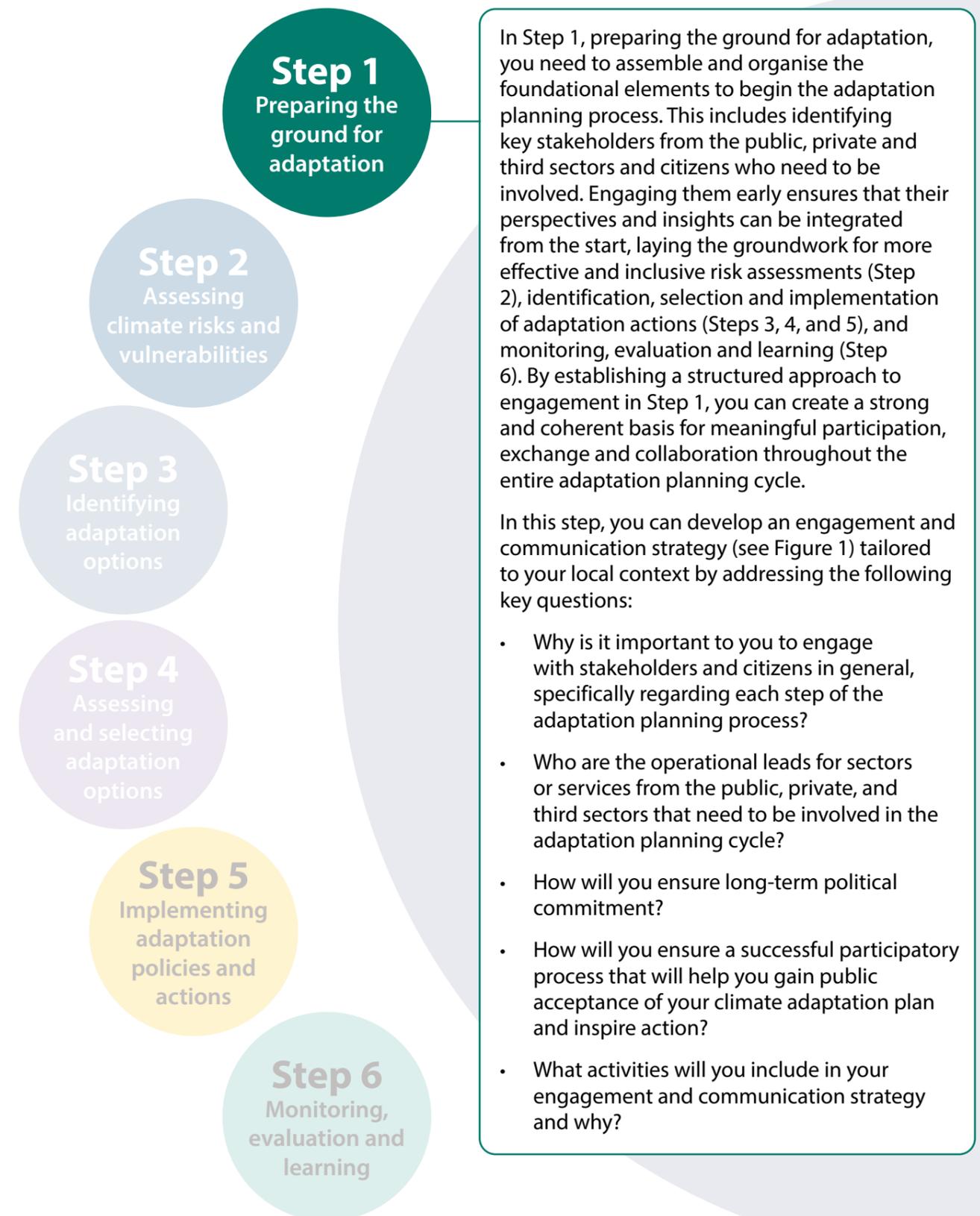
# STEP 1: PREPARING THE GROUND FOR ADAPTATION

## How to read this section:

Begin by reviewing your objectives for engaging stakeholders and citizens at Step 1 of the RAST to understand your reasons for doing so. This section explains the importance of early stakeholder and citizen engagement. Explore the practical examples provided for developing an engagement and communication strategy. This will set the foundation for more effective risk assessments and policy development in later steps.

## Objectives of this section:

- Overview of the first step of the RAST: preparing the foundation for the climate adaptation cycle.
- Focuses on early engagement of stakeholders from public, private and third sectors and citizens in the process.
- Highlights the importance of participatory activities to foster collaboration.
- Provides practical examples for developing an engagement strategy that ensures inclusive and effective adaptation planning.





## STEP 1:

### PREPARING THE GROUND FOR ADAPTATION

To start, you can undertake a stakeholder mapping and network analysis. For example, the [RESIN guide](#) suggests:

- Identifying stakeholders from the public, private, and third sectors through a stakeholder mapping exercise,
- Categorising stakeholders using an **influence-interest** matrix to assess their level of power and engagement in climate adaptation efforts, and distinguish between:
  - Key players (High Influence, High Interest): Crucial stakeholders who should be actively involved in decision-making
  - Key defenders (High Influence, Low Interest): Powerful but less engaged actors who should be kept satisfied to prevent resistance
  - Strong supporters (Low Influence, High Interest): Engaged stakeholders who, despite lacking decision-making power, can bring support
  - Other actors (Low Influence, Low Interest): Less relevant initially but should be monitored for potential shifts in influence or interest
- Analyse stakeholder relationships (see [introductory guidelines to social network analysis](#)).

You can also use a RACI matrix to clarify those who need to be:

- **Responsible**, i.e., those managing sectors, systems, or assets in the adaptation planning process
- **Accountable**, i.e., those making key decisions and overseeing the process
- **Consulted**, i.e., including experts and advisors who can provide critical input
- **Informed**, i.e., including those impacted by climate change and those who may benefit from adaptation actions.

Together, the influence-interest matrix and the RACI matrix can help to inform your development of an inclusive, well-coordinated engagement and communication strategy that identifies who you need to engage and how at each step of the adaptation process.

Effective **communication** and engagement needs to ensure that key messages are conveyed clearly to the target audiences via the most appropriate means, including participatory activities. Messages need to be tailored to resonate with the audience's characteristics, priorities, and concerns; whether they are decision-makers, practitioners, experts, or the general public. Using clear, relevant, and engaging content, compelling stories, accessible language, and visual elements, helps foster understanding, collaboration, involvement and support for adaptation actions.

If you are a large regional or local authority with the necessary capacity and resources, you may wish to consider developing a **community of practice** (See [Community of Practice Playbook](#)) involving relevant stakeholders from across the public, private and third sectors and/or a citizen assembly to be involved in all subsequent steps (see Table 1). However, it is worth ensuring that you can sustain a community of practice or citizen assembly in the long run before committing to their establishment.

Table 1 provides summary information about a wide range of participatory activities, associated tools, and good practices, which you may find useful.

In order to continue to build regional and local authorities' mutual understanding of how best to engage stakeholders and citizens in climate adaptation, please take the opportunity to showcase your efforts through the provision of [Adaptation Stories](#) for the [Mission Portal](#) and by contributing to the [EU Adaptation Mission's Community of Practice](#). The Community holds seminars and enables collaboration among all those who are contributing to the delivery of the Mission across Europe. Additionally, it may be also useful to join the [Community of Practice of the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy \(CC-DEMOS\)](#), which provides opportunities to exchange experiences, enhance participatory processes, and strengthen stakeholder engagement in adaptation policies. Led by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, this initiative offers training, research collaboration, and a platform for sharing best practices on participatory and deliberative democracy.

Table 1. Recommended participatory activities for engaging stakeholders and citizens at Step 1: Preparing the ground for adaptation.

Participatory activity	Target group	Why use this activity in Step 1?	Considerations	Examples of useful tools, and good practices and experiences
<b>Stakeholder mapping and analysis</b>	Stakeholders	Joint analysis for identifying and categorising stakeholders. Essential for building the evidence base, political support, setting up governance structures and identifying and analysing stakeholders and roles	Accurate identification and engagement  Potential bias in categorisation	<b>Useful tools</b> <a href="#">RESIN</a> methodology and guidance for stakeholder mapping; categorising and prioritising stakeholders using <a href="#">social network analysis</a> ; assigning roles and responsibilities using the <a href="#">RACI matrix</a> .  <b>Good practices and experiences</b> Network of stakeholders in <a href="#">Rogaland County Council</a> ; how to engage innovators ecosystem with an innovative approach in <a href="#">Blekinge Region</a> ; a roadmap of key stakeholders in <a href="#">Andalusian region</a> .
<b>Communities of practice</b>	Stakeholders; citizens	Involve and consult regarding climate adaptation planning cycle decisions.  Helps mutual understanding, building the evidence base and setting up governance structures through mutual learning and collaboration.	Sustained engagement strategy needed	<b>Useful tools</b> <a href="#">EU-JRC's Community of Practice Playbook</a> ; Specific article on <a href="#">communities of practice and climate change</a> .  <b>Good practices and experiences</b> <a href="#">Regional COP in Centre-Val de Loire</a> to translate environmental ambitions into concrete actions; <a href="#">EU project Digital Water City</a> with a community of practice focused on addressing climate change challenges for the water sector and new technologies.
<b>Climate assembly</b>	Citizens	Ensuring successful participation.  Critical for creating a secure space for debate and deliberation, political support, ownership of issues, and raising awareness about adaptation plans.	High organisational and logistical requirements	<b>Useful tools</b> Toolkit for Climate Assembly and Living Lab from <a href="#">EU project CLIMAS</a> ; resources on Climate Assembly in <a href="#">KNOCA</a> (Knowledge Network on Climate Assemblies).  <b>Good practices and experiences</b> Inspiring experiences in <a href="#">Westminster</a> , <a href="#">Scotland</a> , <a href="#">Krakow</a> , <a href="#">Catalonia</a> , <a href="#">Milano</a> , <a href="#">Cambridge</a> , and <a href="#">Zagreb</a> .
<b>Storytelling</b>	Citizens	Communicating climate impacts through narratives.  Effective for communicating adaptation, raising awareness and mutual learning.	Effectiveness depends on narrative quality	<b>Useful tools</b> <a href="#">ParCos</a> project; <a href="#">Climate story map of Ambrogio and Gaia</a> .  <b>Good practices and experiences</b> Storytelling experience in <a href="#">Nantes Metropole</a> ; <a href="#">Climate Story tool</a> from the region of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Énergie Environnement (AURA-EE).
<b>Climate walk</b>	Citizens	Engaging the citizens through interactive experiences.  It facilitates raising awareness and mutual learning in adaptation in an engaging way.	Weather-dependent, may not engage all audiences	<b>Useful tools</b> <a href="#">Climate City Walk</a> of the Climate Pact; <a href="#">Climate Walk and Wanderers of Changing Worlds project</a> .  <b>Good practices and experiences</b> The Climate Walk in the <a href="#">Graz city</a> .
<b>Climate festival</b>	Citizens	Information exchange and mutual learning by engaging the citizens through art events, shows, and interactive exhibits. Useful for raising awareness, political support, and engaging a broad and large audience.	High organisational effort	<b>Good practices and experiences</b> Climate festivals in <a href="#">Galway</a> and <a href="#">Edinburgh</a> ; climate services and innovation festival <a href="#">Climateurope2 festival in Venice</a> ; <a href="#">Climax Festival in Bordeaux</a> .
<b>Business resilience training</b>	Stakeholders	Programmes or activities that build businesses' capacities to assess vulnerabilities and develop adaptation strategies.	Empowers with knowledge and tools. Requires sustained engagement and resources	<b>Good practices and experiences</b> <a href="#">Scotland with workshops for small businesses affected by coastal erosion</a> .



## KEY POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING YOUR ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

### ESTABLISH YOUR PURPOSES AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Identify your specific purposes for engaging and communicating with stakeholders and citizens, as appropriate to each step of the RAST.
- Identify how you will measure the success of engagement and communication activities.

### IDENTIFY WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED AND AT WHICH STEPS

- Use an influence-interest matrix and RACI matrix to identify the key stakeholders and citizens with whom you need to engage or communicate. This will help secure long-term political commitment and establish effective governance of your adaptation planning and implementation. It also ensures the relevance, credibility, and legitimacy of your plan. Additionally, it helps identify those whose understanding and support are essentials for successful implementation.
- Some stakeholders and citizens will be relevant to all steps of the adaptation planning process, while others will only be relevant to specific steps. When commencing each next step, it is recommended that you review which stakeholders to involve. In Steps 2, 3 and 4, these will include those who need to input due to their responsibilities, accountabilities or expertise regarding the sectors that will be addressed by your assessments of climate vulnerabilities, risks and adaptation options. In Step 5 when developing implementation plans, those to involve will include organisations and individuals who need to input as potential implementing partners or funders.

### PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE ENGAGEMENT

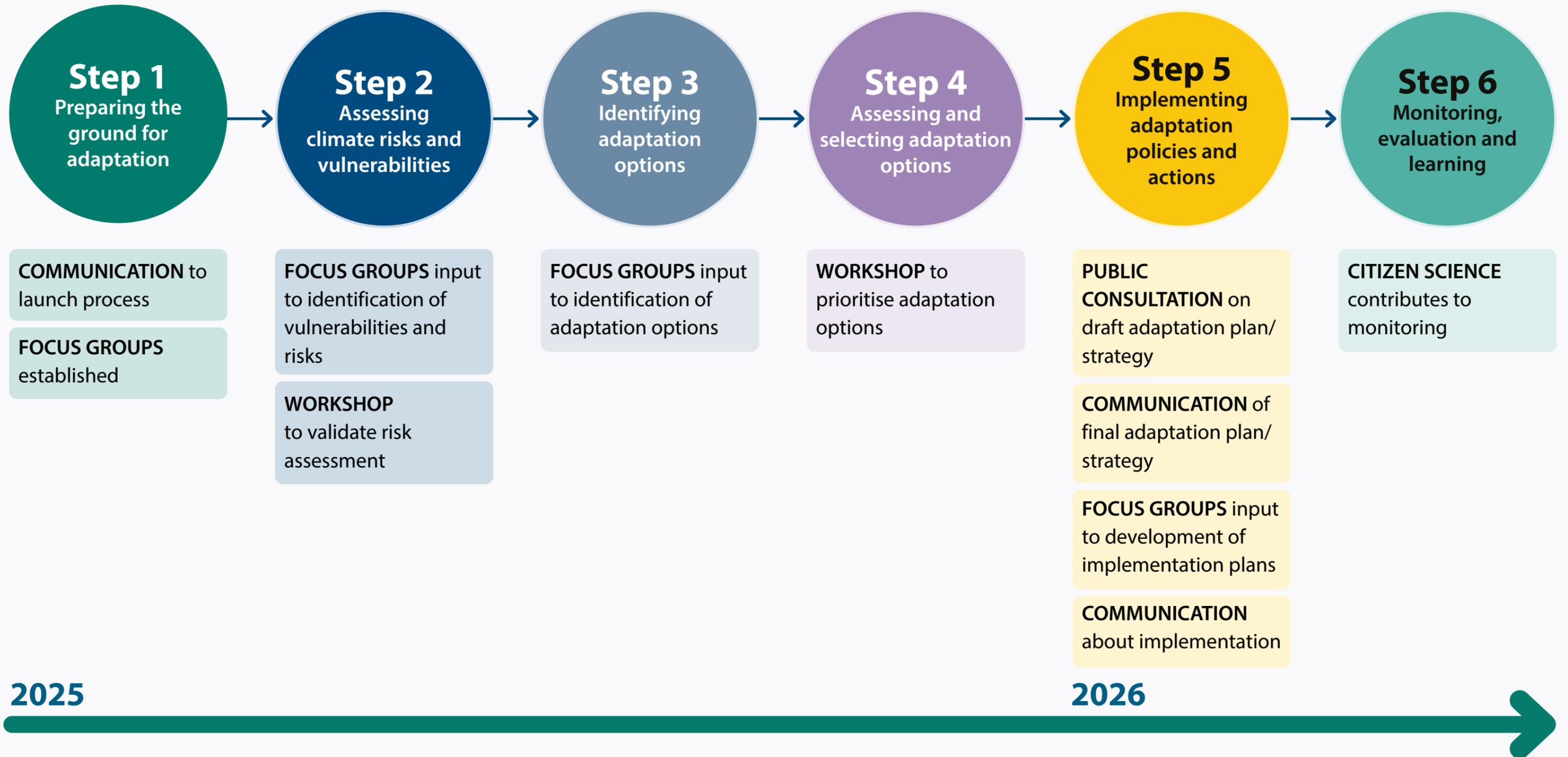
- Identify appropriate participatory activities and associated tools for engaging public and private sector stakeholders and citizens by developing an outline roadmap of participatory activities for each step of the RAST (See Figure 2).
- Clarify the benefits of engagement for your regional or local authority, stakeholders, and citizens, including managing expectations and building a sense of community.
- Outline necessary resources and the expected duration of each participatory activity. Bear in mind that the length of the engagement process may need to change over time.

### ENSURE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Identify key messages, target audiences, and appropriate communication channels, at each step of the RAST.
- Tailor communications to resonate with stakeholders' priorities, concerns, and motivations.
- Use clear, engaging, and visually compelling formats to enhance understanding and participation.



Figure 2. Example of an engagement and communication strategy detailing the participatory activities at different RAST steps





# STEPS 2, 3, AND 4: ASSESSING CLIMATE RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES AND IDENTIFYING, ASSESSING AND SELECTING ADAPTATION OPTIONS

## How to read this section:

Start by reviewing the objectives to understand the focus of this section, which explains how stakeholders and citizens can be involved during Steps 2, 3, and 4 of the RAST. These steps provide opportunities to secure input to and validation of your assessments of climate risks and adaptation options. The section presents specific participatory activities and related tools that can be used to reach, connect, and engage stakeholders and citizens.

## Objectives of this section:

- Explains how stakeholders and citizens can be consulted during Steps 2, 3, and 4 of the RAST.
- Highlights participatory activities and related tools for engaging with stakeholders and citizens, including examples of best practices.
- Emphasises the need to manage expectations to support decision-making and build consensus throughout these steps to vulnerable groups.





#### FOCUS GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS

Focus groups provide an opportunity to secure input and validation regarding single sectors or themes particularly from those who are responsible, accountable or have specific expertise from the public, private and third sectors. Subsequently bringing all such individual focus groups together in workshops can then provide opportunities to identify and resolve synergies and trade-offs across sectors and themes. This includes addressing indirect impacts, spill-over effects, and potential maladaptation.

For knowledge exchange, social learning and co-creation of new ideas, workshop formats such as **World Café**, **Fish Bowl**, role-play exercises and **Pro Action Café** are recommended. These methods create open and interactive spaces for dialogue, helping to generate diverse perspectives and shared understanding.

#### CITIZEN SURVEYS

You can develop surveys to consult citizens about their perceptions, concerns and motivations regarding climate vulnerabilities, risks, and adaptation options. Examples include the **climate change survey in Valladolid - ES**, the **KNOWING EU project survey on coping climate change**, and the **citizen survey in the IMPETUS project in seven bioclimatic regions across Europe**.

Understanding collective perceptions, concerns and motivations is crucial for successfully developing and implementing your climate adaptation strategy or plan. It can provide you with valuable insights into potential barriers to adaptation actions and help you to develop your climate adaptation strategy or plan aligns with the needs and expectations of citizens, thereby increasing its relevance and their appreciation.

#### LIVING LABS

A living lab is a real-life testing environment where solutions are co-created, tested, and refined. It can enable joint assessment of climate risks and adaptation options with those who are at risk and/or who may benefit from proposed solutions.

A good example is the EU project **FEAST**, which utilises user-focused experimental environments to engage vulnerable groups, gaining their insights to address economic and geographic barriers to adopting sustainable diets. There are others working on turning **climate anxiety** into empowerment, such as those from the **CALM-EY** and **EMBRACE** projects in Lithuania, Italy, and Greece, which address emotional responses to climate change and seek to foster mutual learning and resilience. These living labs transform anxiety into proactive engagement, ensuring emotional well-being is considered when assessing key risks and vulnerabilities, setting adaptation priorities and objectives, and selecting suitable adaptation options through skilled facilitation and community empowerment.

#### PARTICIPATORY TOOLS

There are a myriad of well-proven participatory tools (such as the **MSP guide**) that can be used by focus groups or stakeholder workshops to facilitate input and progress Steps 2, 4 and 4. Tools such as visioning, **Pentagonal Problem**, **participatory mapping**, **study circles**, and cognitive mapping can be useful when seeking to establish common ground. In addition to these participatory tools, other structured formats like collaborative innovation labs provide dedicated environments for key stakeholders (including civil society, researchers, policymakers, and businesses) to co-develop and prototype solutions. These labs facilitate creative problem-solving by fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and iterative experimentation. Other options are hackathons, which are intensive, time-bound events where diverse teams rapidly design and test innovative solutions to specific challenges. They bring together technical experts, practitioners, decision-makers, and can generate ideas and accelerate the development of practical adaptation strategies.

There are also tools to help you manage expectations about roles and aspirations, incorporate diverse perspectives into decision-making and build a consensus to take action in prioritising and selecting adaptation options, including **participatory multi-criteria analysis**, **open forums**, and **round-robin**. The participatory multi-criteria analysis enables stakeholders to be actively involved in defining evaluation criteria, assigning relative importance to these criteria, and scoring different adaptation options. Through workshops, deliberative discussions, and interactive exercises, stakeholders, including policymakers, local communities, businesses, researchers, can express their priorities and reach a shared understanding of the most effective and feasible adaptation strategies. This participatory tool is key for Step 4 and ensures that decisions reflect multiple perspectives, enhance legitimacy, and increase local ownership of the selected actions

Table 2 presents other participatory activities. Your purposes for engaging and communicating with stakeholders and citizens in Steps 2, 3 and 4 should guide your choice of participatory activities.



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Inaugural Meeting, September 2024



Table 2. Recommended participatory activities for engaging stakeholders and citizens in Steps 2, 3, and 4: Assessing climate risks and vulnerabilities, and identifying, assessing and selecting adaptation options

Participatory activity	Target group	Why use this activity in Steps 2, 3 and 4?	Considerations	Examples of useful tools, and good practices and experiences
<b>Participatory workshop</b>	Stakeholders; citizens	Identifying climate risks and vulnerabilities (Step 2), exploring adaptation options (Step 3), and evaluating/selecting measures (Step 4) by promoting mutual learning, active listening and specific engagement tools and facilitation techniques.	Coordination and facilitation challenges	<p><b>Useful tools</b> Create your future – <a href="#">Participatory workshop</a> for creating goals for climate adaptation efforts; <a href="#">role-play</a> simulations for climate change decision-making; supporting adaptation decisions through <a href="#">scenario planning</a>; The <a href="#">Playbook Version 5 of TransformAr</a> on how to organise a participatory workshop used in different regions and cities in Europe.</p> <p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> <a href="#">‘Scenarios for a sustainable Europe in 2050’</a> project; participatory workshops of the <a href="#">EU project REXUS</a>; <a href="#">workshop on challenges and opportunities for climate adaptation across Copernicus, Earth observation and the policy landscape</a>; the <a href="#">ISWEL project</a>, in scenario adaptation planning.</p>
<b>Focus groups</b>	Citizens	Effective for in-depth discussion for detailed exploration of climate risks (Step 2), gathering input on potential adaptation options (Step 3), and refining selection criteria (Step 4).	It may not represent wider community views	<p><b>Useful tools</b> <a href="#">EIP-AGRI 46 Focus Groups</a>; Focus Group on <a href="#">‘Transition Plans on Climate Change Mitigation’</a>.</p> <p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> <a href="#">CREST Focus Group on Urban</a></p>
<b>Awareness raising campaign</b>	Stakeholders; citizens	Important for building the evidence base, increasing public awareness and providing information exchange of climate risks (Step 2).  Promoting potential adaptation options (Step 3), and securing stakeholder buy-in for selected measures (Step 4).	Requires sustained effort to maintain engagement	<p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> <a href="#">‘You control Climate’</a>, a campaign launched by the European Commission; public awareness campaign <a href="#">‘The Netherlands Lives with Water’</a> (video); <a href="#">Zaragoza Water Saving City</a> programme.</p>
<b>Citizens survey</b>	Citizens	Collecting a broad range of perceptions in climate risks and vulnerabilities (Step 2), gauging support for adaptation options (Step 3), and informing the selection of measures (Step 4).	Limited depth of insights, potential bias, specific communities to reach	<p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> Surveys on climate perceptions conducted by local governments, such as the survey launched by the <a href="#">EU-funded IMPETUS project</a>; the European Commission <a href="#">open consultation on the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change</a>; citizen surveys in <a href="#">Dresden</a> and <a href="#">Valladolid</a>; <a href="#">KNOWING EU project</a> survey.</p>
<b>Living labs</b>	Stakeholders; citizens	Joint evaluation in a real-world environment of climate risks and adaptation options (Step 2 and Step 3), and iterative refinement of selected measures (Step 4).	Complex setup, requires ongoing management	<p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> <a href="#">EuCliPa</a> association for climate and its labs; living labs for climate adaptation of the <a href="#">score project</a>; <a href="#">ECO-READY</a> living labs; <a href="#">I-CISK</a> living labs developing human-centred climate services through action research in Europe and Africa’s climate change hotspots.</p>
<b>Hackathons</b>	Stakeholders	Generating innovative adaptation options (Step 3) and collaborative evaluation of potential measures (Step 4).	Intense time commitment, requires facilitation	<p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> Hackathons to develop climate tech solutions such as <a href="#">windeurope hackathon</a>, <a href="#">climate hackathon</a> and for <a href="#">citizens and researchers</a>; <a href="#">‘EU Sparks for Climate’</a> initiative is organising a series of online hackathons in several countries.</p>
<b>Participatory multi-criteria analysis</b>	Stakeholders	Crucial for refining, evaluating and selecting adaptation options based on agreed criteria (Step 4) in a collective decision-making process.	Requires expertise in criteria and analysis	<p><b>Useful tools</b> The <a href="#">BCNUEJ</a>, <a href="#">Participatory Multi-Criteria Decision Aid (MCDA)</a>.</p>



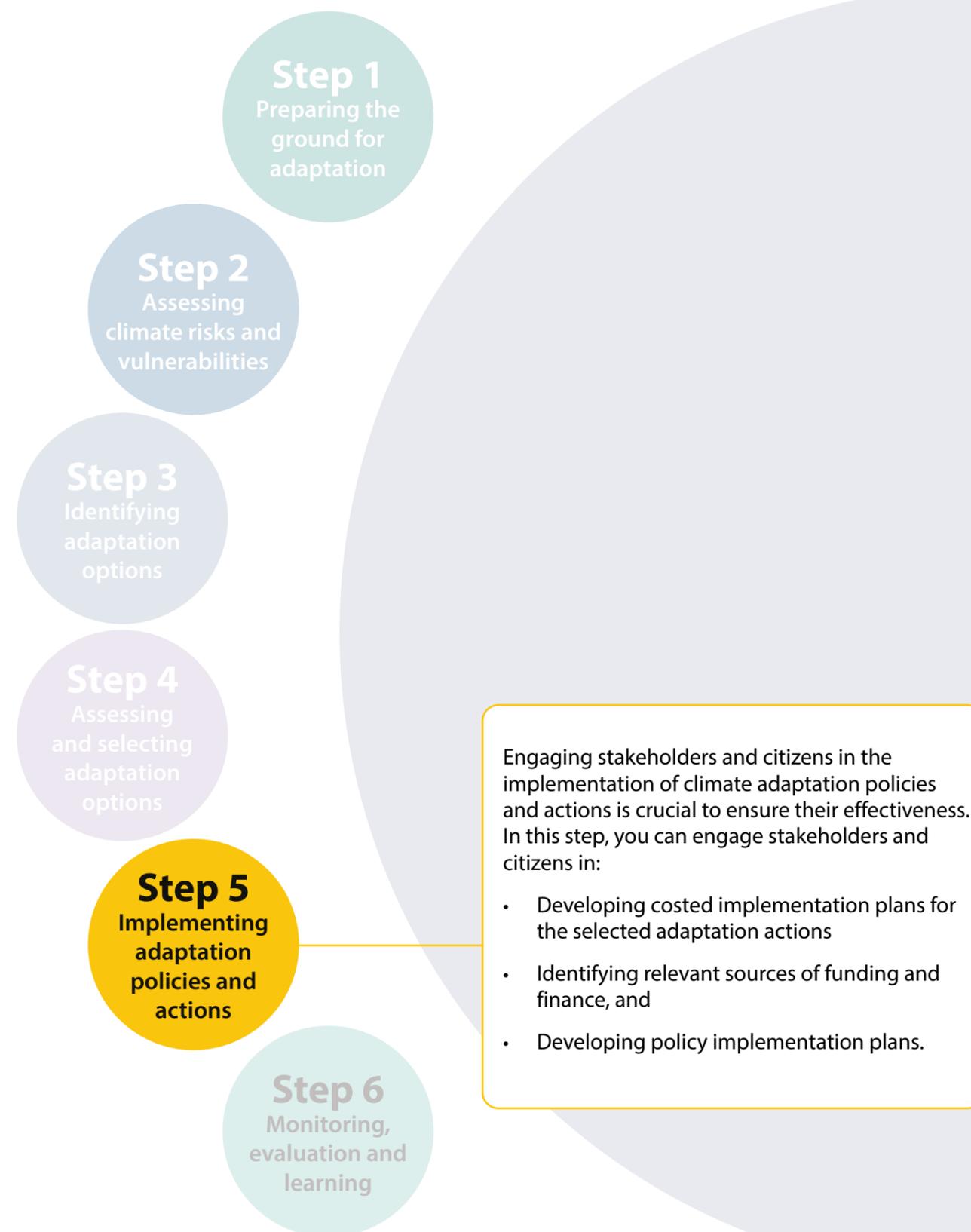
# STEP 5: IMPLEMENTING ADAPTATION POLICIES AND ACTIONS

## How to read this section:

Begin by reviewing the objectives to understand the need to engage stakeholders and citizens during Step 5 of the RAST, which focuses on implementation. Participatory activities and practical tools are suggested, on how to engage and communicate with stakeholders and citizens in developing adaptations strategies, plans and costed implementation plans, identifying funding sources, and implementing adaptation actions.

## Objectives of this section:

- Explain how stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors and citizens can be engaged during Step 5 of the RAST.
- Highlight participatory activities to develop costing for implementation plans, identify funding sources, and involve key public and private stakeholders in policy implementation.
- Provide tools, examples of frameworks and experiences for collaboration and consensus-building, participatory budgeting, and other examples to foster structured dialogue and collective work for successful adaptation action and implementation.





## ADAPTATION IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLANS

In developing implementation plans, it will be important that you involve:

- Operational leads from the public, private or third sectors who will be responsible or accountable for their implementation
- Experts with specific relevant knowledge, e.g. of standards, specifications or good practices
- Stakeholders and citizens who can contribute in some way to their implementation

It will also be important that you inform all those citizens who may be impacted by or benefit from the implementation of such plans.

## PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES DEVELOPED IN EU-FUNDED PROJECTS

Adaptation implementation action plans, including any necessary development of the enabling environment (such as legislation, regulation, policies, strategies, plans or incentives), can be a process where diverse participants discuss and deliberate on specific issues to ensure an inclusive and structured dialogue. This process can include facilitating informed discussions, consensus-building, and the integration of diverse perspectives to ensure that the resulting actions and plans are comprehensive and widely supported. You can see examples of frameworks developed by the EU-funded projects **PHOENIX** and **REAL DEAL**, and engagement tools, like **Community dialogue**, for more inspiration. Other tools, such as climate advocacy campaigns and Community-Based Participatory Research, are also proposed to leverage engagement and foster collaborative decision-making.

## GREEN PARTICIPATORY BUDGETS

For developing costed implementation plans, a co-decision process can accompany Step 5 with **green participatory** budgeting. This was demonstrated in **Lisbon** and **Barcelona** with involved citizens directly in resource allocation for climate projects. To gather diverse insights and ideas from stakeholders about relevant sources of funding and finance for implementing climate adaptation policies, you can use participatory activities (such as participatory budgeting, stakeholder workshops, deliberative forums, focus groups, community-based participatory research, or public meetings). To aid your understanding regarding options for funding and financing, **this guide** introduces sources and instruments, such as grants, public-private partnerships, crowdfunding, and philanthropic funds, each explained with benefits for informed decision-making.

## INCENTIVES

At Step 5, you can engage with existing local action groups and networks (for example, the AdaptLocal network and initiative from the **City Council of Cascais**, Portugal) or encourage their formation if not already established. Additionally, when implementing adaptation measures, you can use **incentives** such as Environmental Policy Instruments (EPIs) or Nudge (for example, see the **EU project Nudge for energy efficiency**), and also micro grants, can drive behavioural change and support collective goals (see Table 3).





Table 3. Recommended participatory activities for engaging stakeholders and citizens in Step 5: Implementing adaptation policies and actions

Participatory activity	Target group	Why use this activity in Step 5?	Considerations	Examples of useful tools, and good practices and experiences
<b>Green participatory budget</b>	Citizens	Joint decision-making on budget allocation by involving citizens to ensure that funds are used for adaptation measures. It helps in prioritising actions based on community needs and contextual aspects.	Complexity in budgeting and financial management	<p><b>Useful tools</b> <a href="#">Participatory Budgeting Theory of Change</a> as a tool to understand changes.</p> <p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> Experiences of Green Participatory Budget from <a href="#">Scotland</a>, in <a href="#">Lisbon</a>, in <a href="#">Barcelona</a>.</p>
<b>Climate advocacy campaign</b>	Stakeholders; Citizens	Advocate for integrating adaptation plans into broader policies, for raising awareness and securing political support for adaptation measures.	Requires strong communication strategies	<p><b>Useful tools</b> Description of <a href="#">advocacy strategies in Climate-ADAPT</a>.</p> <p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> Climate Change Europe 2024 Wallonia Summit. <a href="#">European Transparency Register</a> – European Parliament.</p>
<b>Incentives</b>	Stakeholders; Citizens	Implement incentives to encourage behavioural change and motivate and engage stakeholders and citizens in the implementation and adoption of adaptation measures.	Needs effective monitoring and evaluation	<p><b>Useful tools</b> The description of <a href="#">economic incentives for behavioural change in Climate-ADAPT</a>. FP7-funded <a href="#">WEATHER</a> project and incentives to transport adaptation and their potential impact. Overview of economic instruments in the EU project <a href="#">EPI-Water</a>.</p>
<b>Public meetings</b>	Stakeholders; Citizens	Share information about adaptation plans and gather collective input for decision-making. This ensures transparency and broad community involvement.	Potential for low turnout, requires good facilitation	<p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> <a href="#">Plenary session of Benidorm</a> City Council for Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Public World Economic Forum: <a href="#">weforum</a> Federal City of Bonn, in collaboration with ICLEI, hosts Daring Cities, a <a href="#">global forum</a> empowering urban leaders and decision-makers to tackle the climate emergency.</p>
<b>Community-based participatory research (CBPR)</b>	Citizens	Involve citizens in a joint analysis of adaptation measures and support mutual learning with the development of more informed and accepted adaptation actions.	Requires strong community collaboration	<p><b>Useful tools</b> <a href="#">University of Girona toolbox including CBPR</a>. <a href="#">CBPR from Swedish International Centre for local democracy</a>.</p>
<b>Local climate action group</b>	Citizens	Engage local climate action groups to involve communities and facilitate mutual learning. This supports the development and implementation of localised adaptation strategies.	Sustained motivation and coordination needed	<p><b>Useful tools</b> <a href="#">Local Climate Action Group</a>.</p>
<b>Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)</b>	Stakeholders	Partnerships between governments, local authorities and businesses to co-fund and implement climate adaptation projects.	Shared funding and expertise. Risk of complex negotiations.	<p><b>Good practices and experiences</b> <a href="#">Thames Barrier</a> (UK) with a partnership to protect London from tidal flooding.</p>

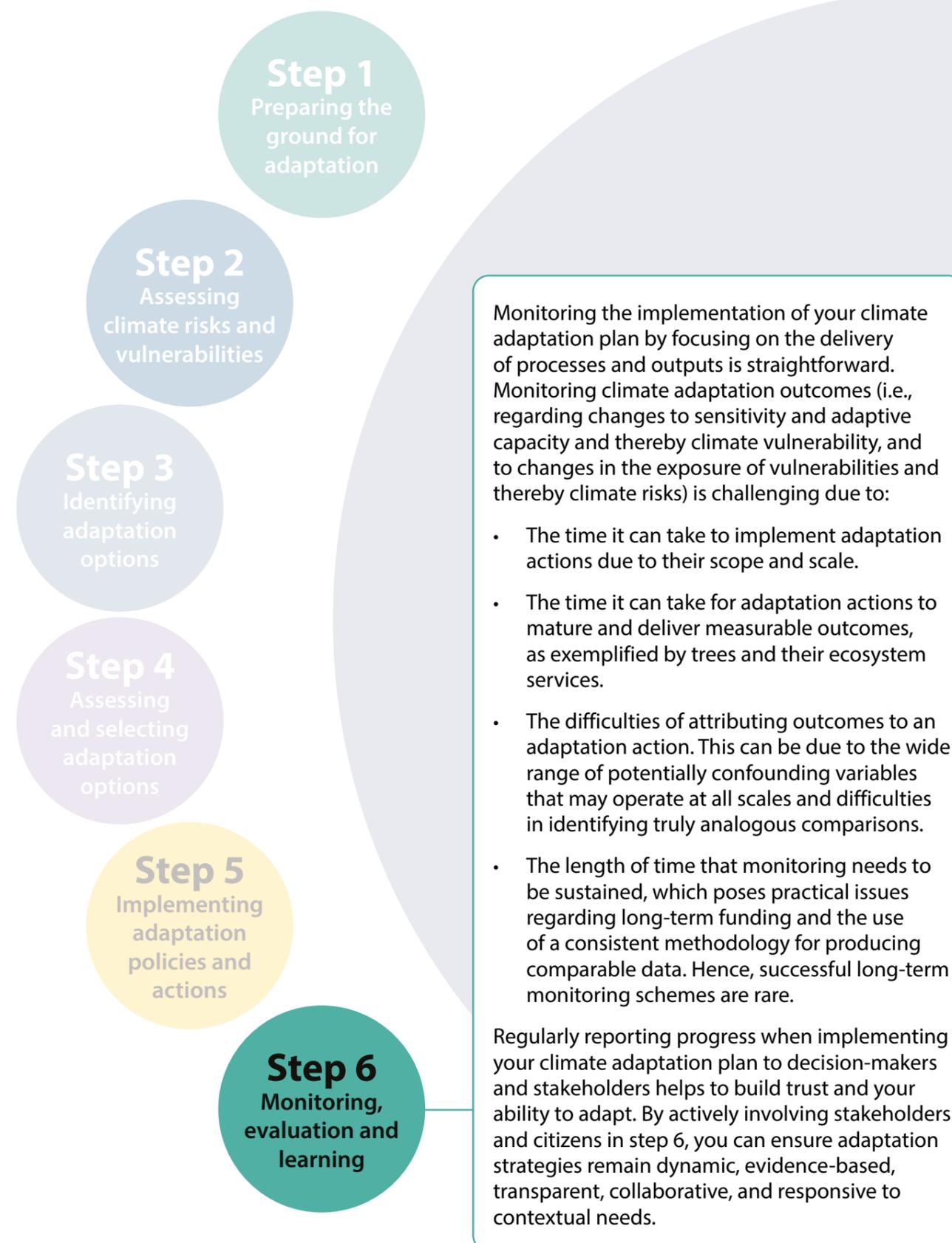
# STEP 6: MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

## How to read this section:

Start by reviewing the objectives, which focus on engaging stakeholders and citizens during Step 6 of the RAST, covering monitoring and evaluating the implementation of climate adaptation plans. This section contains tools and successful and powerful projects that can encourage public engagement and co-creation, mutual learning, and support for monitoring efforts.

## Objectives of this section:

- Explain how stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors and citizens can be engaged in Step 6 of the RAST.
- Understand how to perform monitoring of processes, outputs, and outcomes, and address challenges related to timelines and difficulties in attributing outcomes.
- Highlight tools to foster engagement, mutual learning, and support for monitoring efforts.
- Provide examples of successful projects that demonstrate public participation in assessing progress, reducing vulnerabilities, and ensuring long-term engagement and data quality.





## ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS AND CITIZENS TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Engaging stakeholders and citizens in this step can help in building a mutual understanding of adaptation progress, foster collaboration, enhance trust, and encourage active participation in refining and implementing climate adaptation strategies. This involvement ensures that monitoring efforts are inclusive, transparent, and responsive to evolving climate risks.

How to engage stakeholders and citizens in Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning:

- Encourage co-monitoring: Public authorities, private sector and civil society can collaborate to track progress and measure adaptation outcomes. It is important to define clear roles (who reports what data, how often, etc.) to enhance accountability.
- Facilitate data-sharing and learning networks: You can do this by establishing processes and platforms for sharing insights, best practices, and lessons learned between different sectors and communities towards strengthening climate resilience.
- Use participatory evaluation methods: Stakeholders and citizens can be involved in evaluating effectiveness through structured feedback sessions, participatory assessments, or storytelling approaches that capture qualitative insights.

## CITIZEN SCIENCE

**Citizen science** offers an important approach for step 6 to engaging the public in tracking climate-related variables (also relevant in step 2), contributing real-time data, and strengthening collaboration between authorities and communities. Involving citizens fosters mutual learning, joint analysis, and improves public awareness of climate risks and effectiveness of implemented solutions.

How to engage citizens in climate adaptation monitoring:

- Define meaningful participation roles and provide clear guidance on how citizens can contribute (e.g. tracking temperature, reporting flood levels, identifying climate impacts on biodiversity).
- Ensure data quality and consistency with citizen science methodology, with training sessions, accessible tools, and validation mechanisms to help maintain reliable contributions.
- Sustain engagement over time by using mechanisms to share results and get feedback on how citizen data informs policies and enhances long-term participation.

Examples of citizen science initiatives include the **ScienceUs project**, the EU **NEWSERA** co-creation labs, the project **Hackair** on air quality, the EU **project AGORA** and its application of citizen science, and the **European Citizen Science Association (ECSA)**, which provides resources and showcases participatory monitoring projects.

## PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Businesses play a key role in tracking climate risks, assessing the impact of adaptation actions, and integrating resilience into their operations. Engaging the private sector in this step can enhance innovation, create investment opportunities, and strengthen public-private collaboration.

How to engage businesses in monitoring, evaluation and learning:

- Surveys and feedback mechanisms: Local governments, industry associations, or multi-stakeholder initiatives can co-design surveys to assess private-sector adaptation actions, identify gaps, and track progress over time. For example, Austria has used **surveys** to evaluate flood risk reduction efforts, gaining insights into private-sector contributions and areas for improvement.

- Co-developing monitoring dashboards: Multi-stakeholder digital platforms can be designed collaboratively to visualise climate risks, adaptation progress, and sector-specific vulnerabilities. In Italy, River Basin Authorities have developed **flood risk dashboards** that engage insurers, developers, and policymakers in proactive risk management
- Encouraging adaptive business strategies: Businesses can participate in peer-learning groups, sectoral dialogues, or innovation labs to refine adaptation approaches based on evolving risks and shared experiences.





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Mission platform [https://futurium.  
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