

EU Adaptation Strategy 2021- Forging a climate-resilient Europe: Key learnings for EU- India Strategic Partnership

7th October 2021, 13:00 hrs to 14:30 hrs

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Session II

EU Adaptation Strategy 2021 - Forging a climate-resilient Europe: Key learnings for EU-India Strategic Partnership

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The European Commission adopted its new EU strategy on adaptation to climate change on 24 February 2021. The new strategy sets out how the European Union can adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change and become climate resilient by 2050. The Strategy has four principal objectives: **to make adaptation smarter, swifter and more systemic, and to step up international action on adaptation to climate change.**

The Commission will continue to actively mainstream climate resilience considerations in all relevant policy fields. It will support the further development and implementation of adaptation strategies and plans at all levels of governance with three cross-cutting priorities:

- Integrating adaptation into macro-fiscal policy
- Nature-based solutions for adaptation
- Local adaptation action.

The strategy's four objectives are underpinned by 14 actions and the steps to be taken to deliver them. The Commission will discuss the strategy with the Member States in the Environmental Council in June 2021.

The strategy builds on the 2018 evaluation of the 2013 EU Adaptation Strategy and Adaptation strategies proposed in the European Green Deal in December 2019. An open public consultation was conducted in preparation for the new strategy between May and August 2020.

In this context, the EU SPIPA project conceptualised this knowledge/experience exchange session on 'EU Adaptation Strategy 2021'.

Mr. Edwin Koekkoek, Counsellor, Energy and Climate Action, EU Delegation to India, provided the welcome address.

Prof. Dr. N.H. Ravindranath, Professor, Centre for Sustainable Technologies, Indian Institute of Science delivered the keynote address. He shared the key insights on Indian and EU adaptation strategies on climate change along with the lessons and challenges for the EU India cooperation.

He discussed basic principles for adaptation which included climate change impacts, adaptation challenges and investment needed in adaptation/ resilience programs. He also mentioned that the ongoing adaptation interventions have high benefits to cost ratio in India are relevant and replicable in EU context as well.

He also mentioned that there are relevant policy recommendations in "EU Adaptation strategy to climate change" and the "Green Deal" in the Indian context. He also talked about the financial framework that the EU has developed that ensures that at least 25% of the European budget is dedicated to climate related expenditure.

He highlighted the following relevant lessons from the EU experiences, including developing a vision for adaptation in India; improving knowledge of climate impacts and adaptation solutions to manage uncertainty; improving the state of knowledge on adaptation modelling, risk assessments and management tools; improving the accuracy of climate risk assessment and compensation planning, sharing knowledge on Monitoring, Reporting, Evaluation and learning.

Mr. Liviu ȘTIRBĂȚ, Deputy Head for Adaptation in the Directorate-General for Climate Action, European Commission explained the EU Adaptation strategy and the European Green Deal – building block for Green Recovery and long-term Adaptation Strategy in detail with the visions and objectives. He mentioned that the EU Green Deal provides a roadmap for sustainable growth. In terms of adaptation the focus is on preventing the unadaptable and adapting to the unpreventable. He mentioned about individual action and youth mobilization that also has potential to contribute to adaptation. He highlighted the whole of government approach to adaptation to make adaptation a constant feature in every government department's policy agenda.

Mr. Liviu welcomed the Indian initiative of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) which was launched in the UN general assembly in 2019. He also highlighted that COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized on the need for building resilience. He also stressed the importance of gender aspects which have been included in the Green Deal. He talked about the [European Climate Law Regulation](#) which targeted of at least 55% net greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

He stated that from the first webinar and from this ongoing discussion, the EU can learn a lot from India. He stated that EU is still in the process of submitting its adaptation plan to the UNFCCC (it has been submitted on 7 October: [Link](#)). He emphasised that India should also prepare a similar communication on adaptation to UNFCCC by documenting the ongoing initiatives and proposed action plans.

Dr. Tom De Groeve, Deputy Head of the Disaster Risk Management Unit, Joint Research Centre of the European Commission shared insights related to the “The future of disasters: the science for policy” where he shared his views on scientific aspects that we are dealing with in the European context and in the global context. He introduced how key projects in Europe are well informed by science.

He mentioned the Projection of Economic impacts of climate change in Sectors of the European Union based on bottom-up Analysis ([PESETA](#)) study which is an integrated modelling exercise that has been run over almost a decade which aims at projecting the economic impacts based on changing climate scenarios.

He also highlighted the book “Science for disaster risk management 2020” as a good reference document. He also talked about the [JRC Risk Data Hub](#), which is a geographic web platform with pan European data and methodologies for disaster risk assessment. He talked about the security context and migration related to climate change.

He also mentioned the JRC's methodological support in developing a guidebook on “How to develop a Climate Action Plan (CAP) in India?” as part of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy project implemented in India.

It was followed by a panel discussion which focused on the science-based policy making. Each panellist shared their insights related to the elements of strategic cooperation between India and the EU. Dr. Ashish Chaturvedi, Director-Climate Change, GIZ-India moderated the panel discussion.

Mr. R R Rashmi, Distinguished Fellow, TERI highlighted how the whole of government approach is one of the key factors to focus on while working on disaster management and climate change adaptation. He also shared example of the 15th Finance Commission allocation of financing for states based on forest cover and biodiversity conservation. He emphasised that mainstreaming of climate change adaptation into development should be the priority of the state governments. He stated that it will help in mobilising investments from private sector and from international sources for climate proofing and building disaster resilient infrastructure. **Prof. A. K. Gosain**, Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, highlighted that there is limited uptake of scientific knowledge by policymakers, and it needs to be enhanced. He stated that both India and EU have lessons to share and learn in the aspects related to urban flooding. He stated that state governments in India should focus on floodplain zoning to reduce the disaster risks. He quoted recent flood events in Kerala and Uttarakhand as case studies.

Ms. Gargi Sen, Senior Associate – Practice, Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), put in the forefront the complexity of a city's infrastructure and the disaster risks associated with it. Studies at IIHS based on analysis of disaster management plans in east coast cities in India found that relevant officials are still focusing more on post disaster management and less on reducing risk of disasters on life and property. She stated that city is at much more complex layers of economic activities, therefore impacts of climate change and natural disasters will have far more cascading impacts at the city and state level. She highlighted that India-EU cooperation can focus on strengthening institutions responsible for addressing impacts of climate change at the city level.

Dr. Tom De Groeve, Deputy Head of JRC.E.1 Disaster Risk Management Unit, Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, highlighted the need for science to reach citizens so that they can influence climate action. He empathized the need for developing a culture that promotes adaptation by providing the message through art. He highlighted that it takes significant time to develop plans for flood plain risk assessment and management. EU has transboundary risk assessment for floods, fires etc. to bring together different states for unified action. A science-based platform has been developed in the EU to provide scientific information for climate action to all relevant Ministries and member states. He highlighted the challenges to local climate action and that the mission on climate change adaptation is providing financing for local climate assessment and action.

Mr. Jai Kumar Gaurav, Senior Advisor-Climate Change, GIZ-India, while delivering the closing remarks acknowledged the panellists for facilitating an insightful session.

Recording for the session: https://kestoneimspvt-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/g/personal/abhishek_mt_kestoneglobal_com/EdwIsT-AoZtMpBJdwBBsP34ByfQWcVUOckihM3w5c69Fzg?e=OijwaR