Opening Access to Climate Knowledge

Conclusions of the OrientGate project
Impacts and outputs

Many countries in South Eastern Europe (SEE) are adversely affected by the impacts of climate change, which are expected to become even more severe in the future. Thirty-two institutions from 13 European countries established the OrientGate partnership in order to work together to address the climate change challenges facing the SEE region by fostering the integration of scientific climate knowledge into policy planning. The partners aimed to encourage policy makers; national, regional and local authorities; research institutions; and other stakeholders to strengthen their climate resilience and promote better-informed decision making in line with the EU’s Adaptation Strategy. The project also helped to strengthen cooperation between communities that produce knowledge and experimental studies, and communities that apply that knowledge. The project’s final publication, Integrating Climate Knowledge into Planning: A Guidebook for European Regions and Communities, consolidates the results achieved and disseminates the accumulated experience and knowledge.

One of the main outputs of OrientGate is the Online Climate Data Platform, which offers a single entry point to all the data produced during the project. Using the platform, data can be accessed, visualised, downloaded or converted from one format to another.

The results of the six OrientGate pilot studies have been integrated into the European Commission’s European Climate Adaptation Platform (Climate-ADAPT), which supports stakeholders at all levels of governance by making available a broad range of information on climate change risks, EU sectoral policies, adaptation practices, national initiatives and decision support tools. The Climate-ADAPT platform contains significant EU research findings, in particular from INTERREG and ESPON projects that have strengthened the adaptation knowledge basis in Europe.
AUSTRIA

At the heart of Pilot Study 1 was the development of model-based scenarios of climate change impacts on the amount and quality of water runoff in the Austrian Alps.

Scenario results were discussed with local authorities, forest managers and policy makers, and optimal adaptation strategies for forest management were defined. One of the conclusions of the pilot study activities is that research which is useful for local management and which accompanies practical adaptation is important for gaining a better understanding and deeper knowledge of the best adaptation measures.

Elisabeth Gerhardt
Federal Research and Training Centre for Forests, Natural Hazards and Landscape, Vienna

Thomas Dirnböck
Environment Agency Austria

ROMANIA

Pilot Study 2, coordinated by the National Meteorological Administration of Romania and the Environmental Protection Agency of Covasna, contributed to raising public awareness of the impacts of climate change on agricultural crops and offered effective adaptation measures. As a result of its activities, the municipalities of Covasna and Caracal will aim to include the pilot study findings into actions at regional and local level. This will serve as a bridge between the scientific community and stakeholders such as local and regional authorities in the fields of agriculture, water resources and the environment. The results contribute to a better understanding of climate change impacts and adaptation actions, and Pilot Study 2 activities were a good example of providing help to authorities at regional and local level to implement measures and actions.

Elena Mateescu
National Meteorological Administration

ITALY

Targeting water and coastal areas in Puglia Region, Pilot Study 3 contributed to mainstreaming climate adaptation into planning by focusing on vulnerability and risk assessment. A balanced bottom-up (based on dialogue with stakeholders) and top-down (based on indicators) approach was used to identify the most useful indicators. This contributed to the selection of specific adaptation issues, priorities and
management goals relevant to the final definition of strategic action plans.

Giulia Galluccio
Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Climate Change (CMCC)

GREECE

Attica Region has included the OrientGate project in its five-year programme to plan and implement policies to address the effects of climate change on wetland ecosystems. The Strategy for Wetlands in Attica Region was prepared on the basis of scientific research carried out by Orient-Gate partners under Pilot Study 4. The Wetlands Strategy is a result of the integration of climate knowledge into policy planning in Attica.

Eleni Fytoka
The Goulandris Natural History Museum, Greek Biotope Wetland Centre (EKBY)

ITALY

The pilot study carried out in Trentino evaluated the impacts of climate change on the hydropower sector, particularly in terms of the seasonal availability of water and changes that will exacerbate problems related to the management of water resources. Pilot Study 5 results have yielded valuable input that will allow policy makers to promote the ecologically sustainable management of water resources in the future.

Roberto Barbiero
Autonomous Province of Trento

HUNGARY

Climate change is already on the agenda of local public debate in the municipality of Veszprém. The implementation of Pilot Study 6 on urban adaptation and public health coordinated by the REC contributed to obtaining new knowledge and experience that is helpful in initiating further actions towards the more coherent integration of adaptation considerations into existing climate policies. The project was particularly useful for understanding the consequences of high-end climate scenarios and thus for beginning to design local policies according to the challenges foreseen. In this respect, Veszprém has played a pioneering role in Hungary in recent years.

Tamás Józsa
Veszprém Municipality
**SERBIA**

The participation of the Republic Hydrometeorological Service of Serbia (RHMSS) in the OrientGate project is a natural outcome of one of its objectives — to apply research results in impact studies, vulnerability assessments and adaptation options. As leader of Work Package 3, one of the tasks of the RHMSS was to propose a set of indices to be tested in different pilot study areas. The contribution of work package and pilot study partners was essential in creating specific groups of climate indices applicable to forestry, agriculture, water management, drought and coastal areas, urban adaptation and health.

*Ariel Milošević*

Republic Hydrometeorological Service

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**ITALY**

The Data Platform is a key outcome of the OrientGate project, representing a single entry point to the data produced by project partners. During the design phase, various requirements and needs were taken into consideration, as the platform needs to provide harmonised access and an integrated view of the data; metadata management; monitoring; and data browsing capabilities. The heterogeneity of the data produced by project partners has been a challenging aspect of platform design. A dashboard-based system was released, which provides data browsing and service monitoring capabilities, as well as easy integration into other web contexts through a set of permalinks.

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This map is based on the map published on the SEE Transnational Programme website.

www.orientgateproject.org