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What it takes to increase Europe's resilience to drought – Insights from a pan European survey on recent drought perception, impacts and management

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In recent years, drought impacts have been more severe and frequent than past impacts throughout Europe. Due to the heterogeneity of Europe's hydro-climatological situation as well as the multiple nations on the continent, drought events and their impacts vary with respect to location, sector, extent, duration and scale. In order to understand recent effects of drought and their possible drivers, national representatives distributed a uniform questionnaire to water management stakeholders of 28 contributing countries. Here, we focus on obtaining information on stakeholders' drought perception, impacts, and current management strategies on a national and sub-national scale. With the survey, we analyse how strong the relationship between perceptions and actual hazard information is. Actual drought hazard information from the European Drought Observatory for the years 2018 and 2019 is compared with the questionnaire's results. The results of the study highlight the diversity among national drought perceptions and the value of already existing drought management strategies. An absence of coordinated drought management is mostly attributed to a lack of resources and macro-governmental guidance. Supported by the national perspectives, possible macro-governmental pathways to increase national and sub-national awareness and resilience are discussed. The results support the need for national drought policies, which could be pushed forward with international drought management directives.