



## **Climate change knowledge for informed policy making and implementation**

Hans Bruyninckx

Executive Director, European Environment Agency (EEA), Copenhagen, Denmark

Climate change is a reality for all. Global temperature increase in the recent decade was around 1°C compared to the pre-industrial level. In Europe, the year 2018 was exceptional with the warmest summer on record with heatwaves and droughts across Europe, wildfires in northern Europe, and low river discharge. These extreme events affected biodiversity, human health, and caused economic losses in various economic sectors such as agriculture, energy and transport. In the European Environment Agency (EEA) member countries the total reported economic losses caused by weather and climate-related extremes over the period 1980-2017 amounted to approximately EUR 453 billion in the period.

While striving for climate neutrality in line with the Paris Agreement, the EU also must adapt to the changes that will result from past emissions. Since 2015, international policy developments such as the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction have substantially reinforced the political momentum for supporting climate change adaptation across the globe. The 2013 EU Strategy on adaptation focuses on developing better knowledge and understanding of climate impacts, climate proofing of specific sectoral policies and on promoting action by Member States and cities. Climate change impacts also interact with other trends or challenges, several policy areas offer significant opportunities for additional action and are likely to top the adaptation agenda in Europe. To further support global and European policies, the EU Copernicus climate change and land monitoring services provide a wealth of data. These can be better used for national and urban level vulnerability and risk assessments that are needed to identify areas and sectors (such as energy, transport and agriculture).

EEA contributes to the climate change knowledge by publishing data, indicators and assessments in order to inform the policymakers and supports policy developments in the EU.