



European Climate-Health Cluster Thematic Workshop #2: Science for Policy

Deliverable information for project Climate-Health Cluster	
Document version:	V1
Due date:	30 September 2024; extension date: 31 January 2025
Resubmission due date:	
Responsible project(s):	HIGH Horizons & IDAlert on behalf of Working Group 1

The six Horizon Europe projects, **BlueAdapt**, **CATALYSE**, **CLIMOS**, **HIGH Horizons**, **IDAlert**, and **TRIGGER**, form the climate change and health cluster

Document Information & Version Management									
Resubmission date:									
Document title:					European Climate-Health Cluster Thematic Workshop #2: Science for Policy				
Document type:					Report				
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Approved by:					-				
Nature:									
R	X	DEM	-	DEC	-	DMP	-	OTHER	-
R: Report DEM: Demonstrator, pilot, prototype, plan designs DEC: Websites, patents filing, press & media actions, videos, etc. DMP: Data management plan OTHER: Software, technical diagram, algorithms, models, etc.									

Short Description (3-5 lines)	
This report summarizes the European Climate-Health Cluster's joint 2 nd Thematic Workshop held in December 2024. The cluster conducted an online internal training workshop for the members of its six projects, consisting of two main components: a training session on Science for Policy with external speakers, followed by a second session which focused on policy engagement of cluster partners and potential synergies and collaboration to enhance Science for Policy efforts across the Cluster.	
Keywords:	Climate-Health cluster, workshop, collaboration, science for policy

Dissemination level		
PU	Public	X
SE	Sensitive	-

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The Cluster Deliverable has been produced under the responsibility of the HIGH Horizons and IDAlert projects and strongly supported by all the other projects in the cluster and participating partner organisations in WGs 1 and 3.



The six projects that form the European Climate-Health Cluster are funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme, under grant agreements, No.101057764 (BlueAdapt), No. 101057131 (CATALYSE), No. 101057690 (CLIMOS), No. 101057843 (HIGH Horizons), No. 101057554 (IDAlert), and No. 101057739 (TRIGGER). BlueAdapt also receives funding from UKRI grants Nos. 10052955 and 10049774. CLIMOS also receives funding from UKRI grants Nos. 10038150 and 10039289. HIGH Horizons also receives funding from UKRI grant No. 10038478.

Based on the 6 projects' Grant Agreement, this report on the Thematic workshops/trainings on issues of common interest 2 corresponds to the deliverable numbers listed below.

Project name	Deliverable number
BlueAdapt	D9.19
CATALYSE	D6.18
CLIMOS	D6.14
HIGH Horizons	D1.17
IDAlert	D1.12
TRIGGER	D9.27

How to quote this document

Climate-Health Cluster (2025), EU Climate-Health Cluster Technical Workshop #2: Science for Policy.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
BlueAdapt	Reducing Climate Health Risks in Blue Environments: Adapting to the climate change impacts on coastal pathogens
Catalyse	Climate Action to Advance Healthy Societies in Europe
CeSHHAR	Centre for Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Research
CHAC	Climate and Health in Africa Conference
CHANCE	Climate Health Africa Network for Collaboration and Engagement
CLIMOS	Climate Monitoring and Decision Support Framework for Sand Fly-borne Diseases Detection and Mitigation
DMP	Data management plan
ECHO	European Climate and Health Observatory
EEA	European Environment Agency
EU	European Union
EWS	Early Warning System
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HaDEA	European Health and Digital Executive Agency
HIGH Horizons	HIGH (Heat Indicators for Global Health) Horizons: Monitoring, Early Warning Systems and health facility interventions for pregnant and postpartum women, infants and young children and health workers
ICM	International Confederation of Midwives
ICN	International Council of Nurses
IDAlert	Infectious Disease decision-support tools and Alert systems to build climate Resilience to emerging health Threats
ISS	Italian National Health Institute
KIT	Karlsruhe Institute of Technology
S4P	Science for Policy
TRIGGER	Solutions for mitigating climate-induced health threats
TWS	Thematic Workshop

1 Workshop introduction

The European Climate-Health Cluster held its 2nd Thematic Workshop (TWS), as an online training, consisting of two dedicated sessions, on December 5th and 10th 2024. The overall topic for this workshop is related to Cluster's Science for Policy Strategy and follows the Cluster's Scientific Strategy.

Science for Policy (S4P) is defined as the process of translating scientific information to policymakers to create evidence-informed policy.

Two sessions were planned for cluster members (sessions were not open to public).

Session 1 Technical training on S4P:

The TWS began with a one-half day online workshop with expert speakers who provided training on various aspects of Science for Policy including the following themes:

- 1) General Introduction to Science for Policy
- 2) Perspectives on Climate-Health S4P within the European Union
- 3) Evidence to Policy Approaches
- 4) EU Policymakers Perspective

Session 2 Climate-Health Cluster Partner Collaboration:

A few days later, a second half day session followed. This session focused on inputs from members of the Climate-Health Cluster and discussions on collaboration across partners to promote S4P activities within the Climate-Health Cluster.

2 Workshop preparation

To better define the scope of the workshop, we first surveyed the European Climate-Health Cluster members in September 2024 using an online survey. This survey was used to indicate the preferred interests of members of the Cluster in the following different components of sharing science with policymakers: Science for Policy, Advocacy and Science Communications. The results of the survey are as follows (Figures 1 –3):

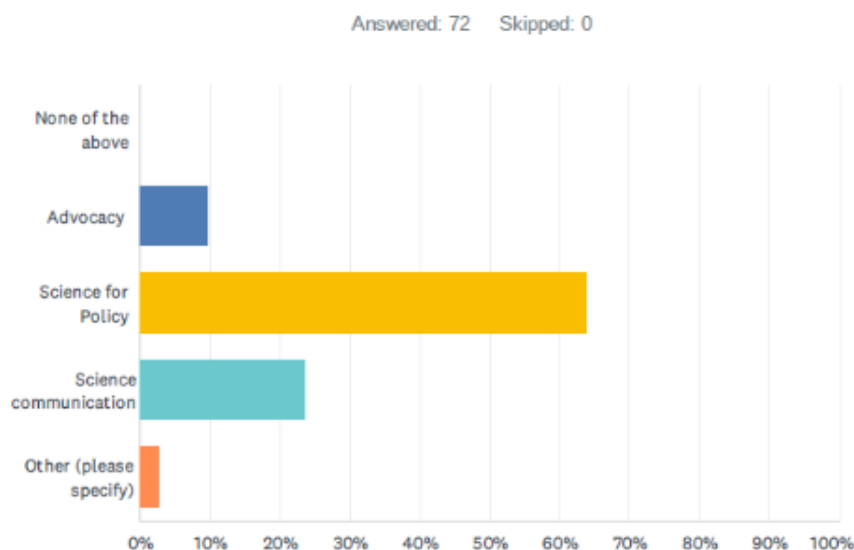


Figure 1 – Results to Q1: ‘Are you more interested in learning about Science for Policy or Advocacy in the 2nd Thematic Training Workshop?’

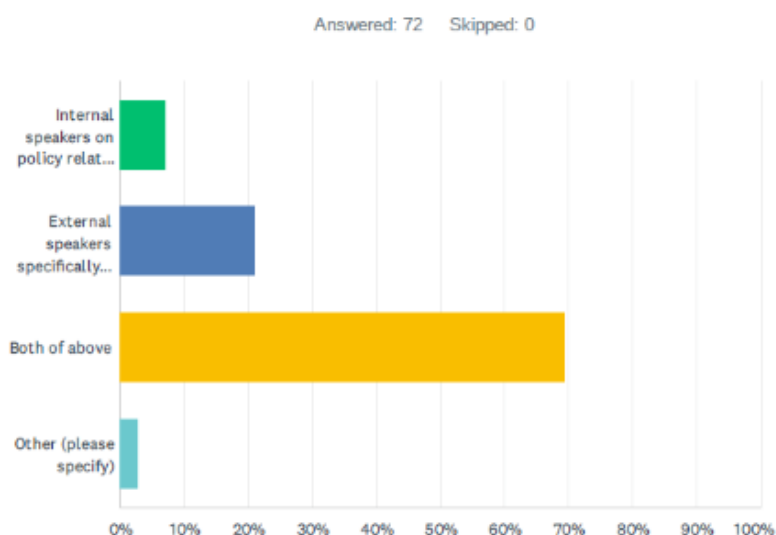


Figure 2 – Results to Q2: ‘This will be an internal workshop focusing on training for our cluster members. For speakers would you prefer internal cluster speakers speaking about policy related work from the cluster projects or external speakers with a focus on training?’

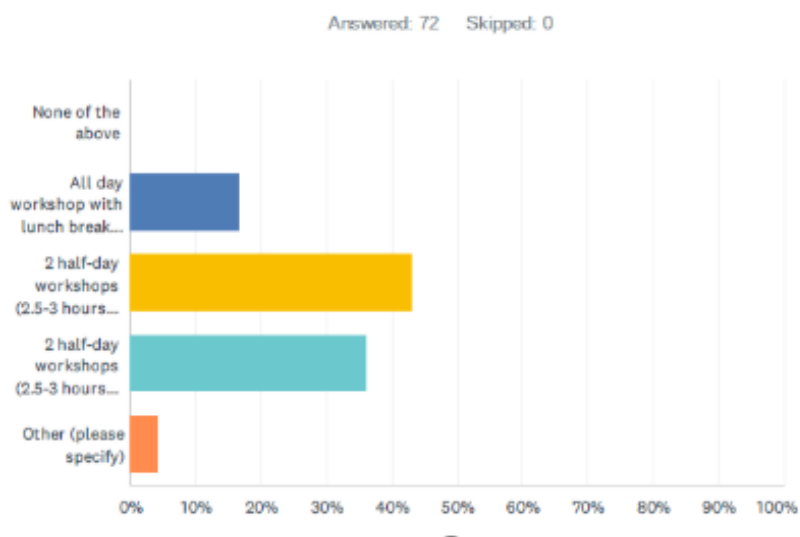


Figure 3 – Results to Q3: ‘This will be an entirely online workshop – sitting all day online is tiring and often not practical. What format would you prefer to increase participation and effectiveness of the workshop?’

Based on these results, we began planning for two half-day workshops with one session focusing on external speakers on Science for Policy and the second to focus on internal speakers and cluster collaboration on Science for Policy.

3 Session 1: Bridging the gap between scientific evidence and policy in the EU

3.1 Introduction

On 5 December 2024, researchers and policymakers gathered at an online workshop hosted by the European Climate-Health Cluster to address the challenge of transforming complex research into actionable policy decisions. The event focused on S4P, revealing essential strategies for bridging the gap between scientific evidence and decision-making processes.

With a focus on health and climate change, the workshop aimed to empower and support researchers from the six cluster projects—BlueAdapt, CATALYSE, CLIMOS, HIGH Horizons, IDAlert, and TRIGGER—to contribute meaningfully to evidence-informed policy development.

3.2 Agenda

See Annex 1

3.3 Session speakers

The session featured five speakers who shared valuable perspectives, practical advice, and strategies to enhance the translation of science into policy:

1. Alba Godfrey - Senior Project Coordinator at EuroHealthNet and member of the BlueAdapt project
2. Kim van Daalen - Postdoctoral Researcher at the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre, IDAlert Research Fellow and member of Lancet Countdown Europe
3. Leire Pajín Iraola - Member of the European Parliament and former Spanish Minister of Health, Social Policy, and Equality
4. Climate adaptation, resilience, preparedness: update on the EU policy context' by Peter Löffler - Policy Officer at DG CLIMA
5. Aleksandra Kazmierczak - Climate Change and Human Health Expert at the European Environment Agency, EEA, and Coordinator of the European Climate and Health Observatory

After each presentation, the audience could engage with speakers during a brief Q&A.

3.4 Highlights from presentations

Each speaker presented Science for Policy aspects specific to their own mandate and highlighted the current 'state of play' in the EU for climate and health policy. The summaries of their key points are given below:

1. 'Introduction: Engaging with policy processes and feeding research into policymaking' by Alba Godfrey (Senior Project Coordinator at EuroHealthNet and member of the BlueAdapt project)

Throughout her presentation, Ms. Godfrey highlighted the importance of maintaining a solid evidence base and academic rigor while effectively communicating research findings to policymakers.

Timeliness and relevance

Ms. Godfrey emphasized understanding policy processes and knowing when to share research information, as well as knowing what information to share. She advised researchers to be aware of policy timelines and election cycles, and to align research with policymakers' current priorities. She stressed to do your homework and start early to prepare if possible. Also, it is helpful to incorporate members from civil society organisations who are actively working in relevant areas for support. It is important to identify entry points in policy agendas to assess how your research can address current problems in the EU. Also, it is important to take the political context and evolving priorities into consideration.

Presentation and communication

Clear, concise, and accessible communication of research findings is crucial. Ms. Godfrey recommended short policy briefs, summaries, or infographics instead of lengthy technical reports. She stressed selecting key messages and proposing solutions rather than just highlighting problems. Also, she highlighted the relevance of joining forces, for example on events or policy briefings, to avoid overburdening policymakers.

Collaboration and targeting

Researchers can collaborate with civil society organizations and other research projects to present a united voice. Identifying and engaging with the right decision-makers based on their responsibilities and potential receptiveness to the research is important. It is important to maybe also target people working directly with policymakers to build and maintain your network (advisors, experts, practitioners, civil society).

Persistence and purpose

Ms. Godfrey underscored the need for persistence in policy outreach, emphasizing consistent repetition of messages. She encouraged researchers to approach policy engagement with clear, measurable goals to help assess impact.

2. 'Good practice of S4P: Lancet Countdown example' by Dr. Kim van Daalen
(Postdoctoral Researcher at the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre, IDAlert Research Fellow and member of Lancet Countdown Europe)

Dr. van Daalen explained how the Lancet Countdown Europe makes complex scientific data accessible to policymakers through targeted, concise communications while maintaining scientific rigor in their assessments. Their research reveals increasing trends in health-related hazards from climate change, coupled with insufficient adaptation and mitigation strategies in Europe. This work is part of the

broader Lancet Countdown initiative, with regional centres now established across different continents.

Background and purpose

The Lancet Countdown collaboration works to summarize climate change's diverse impacts on human health through quantitative indicators. These indicators track various aspects like heat-related mortality, infectious diseases, and labour laws related to heat.

Indicator framework

The European collaboration develops indicators that must be meaningful, scientifically sound, and geographically representative. They cover 53 WHO European countries plus Liechtenstein and Kosovo, though data availability is better for EU countries. The indicators are organized into five working groups, covering impacts, adaptation, mitigation, economics, and stakeholder engagement.

Communication strategy

The collaboration has developed several tools to make their research accessible:

- Interactive data visualizations through the European Climate and Health Observatory
- Two-page policy priority documents instead of lengthy reports
- Country-specific data sheets tailored to local contexts
- Infographics translated into multiple languages (English, Spanish, French, German, and Italian)

3. 'Perspective from a Member of European Parliament' by Leire Pajín Iraola (Member of the European Parliament and former Spanish Minister of Health, Social Policy, and Equality)

Climate Disasters and Public Health: A Call to Action

MEP Pajín Iraola began by recounting a recent climate catastrophe in her home region of Valencia, Spain, where a severe weather event called *gota fría* (cold drop) caused 220 deaths, widespread displacement, and significant infrastructure damage. She emphasized that such events underscore the intimate connection between human health and the planet's climate. Beyond immediate recovery efforts, she urged the European Union to mobilize resources swiftly to address the escalating frequency and severity of such disasters.

Disinformation as a Barrier to Progress

MEP Pajín Iraola highlighted the growing challenge of disinformation, particularly in sensitive areas like health, politics, and the economy. Drawing parallels with the "infodemic" seen during the COVID-19 crisis, she noted how false narratives fuelled fear, mistrust, and dangerous behaviours. Recent surveys, including the Eurobarometer, reveal that public confusion about climate-friendly measures persists, with less than half of Spain's population feeling informed on the topic. She stressed the need for better communication strategies to link climate policies with

public health outcomes.

To counter disinformation, MEP Pajín Irola called for robust legal frameworks, technological safeguards, and enhanced media literacy. She praised initiatives like the EU's Digital Services Act, which promotes transparency in online platforms, but emphasized the need for continuous vigilance to combat false narratives that undermine public trust.

The European Context: Climate Risks and Policy Opportunities

The European Climate Risk Assessment of 2024 identified thermal stress as the most severe and urgent climate risk to public health in Europe. MEP Pajín Iraola noted that Europe, as the fastest-warming continent, is grappling with extreme weather, wildfires, and floods, which collectively threaten millions of lives. She pointed to the EU's ambitious Green Deal and Fit for 55 frameworks as crucial steps toward mitigating these risks but argued that much more must be done to reverse the impacts of climate change.

She stressed the need to integrate health considerations into climate policies, particularly for vulnerable populations. She advocated for a "One Health" governance framework that addresses the interconnections between human, animal, and environmental health.

The Role of Science in Policymaking

Central to her message was the importance of evidence-based policymaking. She called for increased collaboration between policymakers, researchers, and academic institutions to ensure that decisions are guided by rigorous scientific analysis. This can be done through the creation of spaces and channels where politicians and scientists can interact in a meaningful multi-stakeholder dialogue. Highlighting initiatives like the EU-funded Climate-Health Cluster, she urged legislators to prioritize health outcomes in climate policies and address disparities that exacerbate existing inequalities.

To strengthen the EU's response, she proposed the creation of a dedicated health committee within the European Parliament. She also emphasized the need for improved metrics to monitor climate-related health risks, moving beyond traditional economic indicators to address equity and vulnerability.

Global Cooperation and Knowledge Sharing

MEP Pajín underscored the importance of global collaboration, particularly with partners in the Global South. She noted that these regions often have valuable lessons to share on coping with extreme climate phenomena. By fostering inclusive networks and promoting knowledge exchange, she argued, the EU could enhance its own preparedness while supporting global resilience.

Conclusion: A Healthier, Climate-Resilient Future

In closing, she framed climate change as a public health crisis that demands immediate action. She called on governments, institutions, and citizens to act decisively, leveraging science and cross-sector collaboration to build a healthier,

more sustainable future. Reflecting on her vision, she urged policymakers to prioritize climate health, ensure equitable outcomes, and make this legislative term a turning point in the fight against climate change.

4. 'Climate adaptation, resilience, preparedness: update on the EU policy context' by Dr. Peter Löffler (Policy Officer at DG CLIMA)

Dr. Löffler emphasized the urgent and growing connection between climate change and public health. His speech outlined key challenges and initiatives being pursued by the European Commission to strengthen adaptation and resilience in the face of escalating climate risks.

The Escalating Impact of Climate Change on Health

Dr. Löffler highlighted how climate change is increasingly affecting Europe through extreme weather events such as floods, wildfires, and heatwaves. He pointed out that 2023 has been marked as one of the hottest and wettest years on record, demonstrating the severity of these changes. He explained that a warming world often results in a wetter world, which Europe is experiencing with unprecedented rainfall and flooding in countries like Austria, Spain, Germany, and Slovakia. Climate change also contributes to new wildfire patterns, with recent years seeing some of the largest wildfires on record in places like Portugal and Greece. Furthermore, he emphasized that heat records are being broken year after year, with the likelihood that 2024 may end as the warmest year ever recorded globally.

Climate Change as a Risk Multiplier

Dr. Löffler stressed that climate change is not only a direct source of damage but also a "risk multiplier" that exacerbates already stressed systems. He explained that its effects compound existing risks, creating cascading and systemic challenges. This includes threats to both individual health, such as increased heat-related illnesses and climate-sensitive infectious diseases like dengue, and broader systemic risks that affect health systems and the infrastructure supporting them. He underscored that these risks disproportionately impact vulnerable populations who are least equipped to protect themselves.

The Health Sector's Vulnerability

According to reports from EU Member States, health is identified as the sector most affected by climate change and the most exposed to its risks. Dr. Löffler noted that while this is concerning, it is positive that governments across Europe recognize the gravity of these health risks and are working to address them.

Policy and Adaptation Efforts

Dr. Löffler highlighted the importance of the European Climate Risk Assessment, which has shed light on the critical health risks posed by climate change. This report has strengthened the alignment of climate and health strategies across EU Member States. He emphasized the need for collaboration across different sectors, pointing

out that climate change often overlaps with other societal risks. Dr. Löffler argued that integrating health research with broader climate research could yield more comprehensive solutions.

Future Actions and Initiatives

Dr. Löffler outlined several upcoming actions to address the growing threats posed by climate change. These include the development of a European Climate Adaptation Plan, which will be presented in 2026 and may include potential new legislative initiatives on climate adaptation and health. He also emphasized the expanded role of the European Climate and Health Observatory, which will be given increased resources to undertake a packed programme of activities over the next two years. Furthermore, Dr. Löffler discussed the European Commission's continued commitment to climate neutrality by 2050, which he argued is crucial for avoiding the worst and most deadly climate scenarios while delivering significant short-term health benefits, such as reductions in air pollution.

Global Cooperation

Dr. Löffler emphasized the importance of international collaboration in addressing the health impacts of climate change. He pointed to progress made at COP28 in Dubai, where for the first time, health ministers participated in significant numbers, adopted a Climate and Health Declaration, and established sector-specific targets on health within the global climate resilience framework. He expressed optimism that the agenda is advancing, despite slow progress at events like COP29, and noted that further progress is expected at COP30, which will include another dedicated Climate and Health Day.

A Call to Action

Finally, Dr. Löffler stressed the need to move from declarations to tangible actions. While the challenges of climate change are well understood and supported by strong policy frameworks, he argued that the focus now needs to shift toward implementing practical solutions. He highlighted the importance of faster, smarter, and more systemic adaptation measures, urging the EU and its partners to accelerate efforts to address the health risks posed by climate change.

5. 'European Climate and Health Observatory: a science-policy interface' by Dr. Aleksandra Kazmierczak (Climate Change and Human Health Expert at the European Environment Agency, EEA, and Coordinator of the European Climate and Health Observatory)

Overview of EEA and Observatory

The EEA is an independent agency of the European Union that provides decision-makers with robust environmental information. Dr. Kazmierczak presented the European Climate and Health Observatory, a platform designed to address climate-related health threats in Europe. This initiative was launched under the 2021 EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change to bridge knowledge gaps on the health impacts of climate change and enhance cross-border preparedness.

Strategic Objectives

The Observatory is developing a new work plan for 2025/2026 using the following objectives as a guide:

- Monitor climate-related health risks through indicators such as those developed by Lancet Countdown in Europe, focusing on hazards, vulnerabilities, and exposures.
- Integrate health into climate adaptation policies and vice versa, ensuring mutual reinforcement of these strategies.
- Enhance public authorities' capacity to anticipate and prevent climate-related threats by providing knowledge, forecasts, and tools.
- Increase climate literacy in the health community, especially among medical and public health professionals.
- Disseminate knowledge on effective adaptation solutions, focusing on what works in specific contexts.

Key Insights and Activities

- **Knowledge Gaps:** Understanding exposure and vulnerability is more advanced than assessing the actual impacts of climate change or the effectiveness of responses. Examples include analysing healthcare facilities' exposure to flooding or urban heat islands and the distribution of green spaces relative to vulnerable populations. Also stressed that migration and displacement due to climate impacts are still not well understood and understudied. And the implementation of adaptation policies is not well understood and could be another key action point. Furthermore, less apparent issues like mental health need to be examined, along with research on health impacts that may provide weaker, less obvious signals that could be picked up by horizon scanning could be of value.
- **Policy Analysis:** An EEA study revealed that climate impacts are more frequently addressed in national adaptation strategies than in health policies, underscoring the need for greater awareness within the health sector. Additionally, some risks, like indoor air quality and migration-related health impacts, remain underexplored.
- **Subnational Priorities:** Local governments often deprioritize health in their climate actions, creating a gap between national and local adaptation measures.
- **Capacity Building:** The Observatory collaborates with partners like Copernicus and ECBC to offer tools like pollutant forecasts and disease risk maps. Evidence on less apparent climate impacts, such as mental health or food security, remains an area needing further research.
- **Education and Professional Training:** Despite strong student interest, only a quarter of European medical schools include climate change in their curricula. Efforts are ongoing to improve training at universities and through professional courses.

Focus on Adaptation Solutions

The Observatory promotes case studies on effective climate adaptation solutions, particularly in health. However, understanding their effectiveness, scalability, and potential drawbacks remains a critical challenge. Dr. Kazmierczak highlighted that solutions must be tailored to context, making generalized recommendations difficult.

Opportunities for Collaboration

Researchers are encouraged to contribute to addressing knowledge gaps in climate and health, particularly in monitoring the effectiveness of policies and solutions, forecasting emerging risks, and enhancing communication between scientists and decision-makers. The Observatory provides resources such as case studies, reports, and data through its portal.

3.5 Main Messages from Session 1

Effective science communication, paired with strategic engagement between researchers and policymakers, can bridge the gap between scientific evidence and policy action. This collaborative approach promises to enhance decision-making processes and effective responses to Europe's growing climate and health challenges.

- **Effective communication:** Successful science-policy interaction relies on concise, accessible formats that convey complex information clearly. Short policy briefs, visual summaries, and interactive data visualisations are particularly effective.
- **Tiered Documentation:** To maximise impact, a tiered approach to documentation is recommended. This includes brief summaries for quick reference, detailed overviews for deeper understanding, and comprehensive reports for thorough analysis.
- **Meaningful collaboration:** Effective collaboration between researchers and policymakers requires more than just presenting findings, like creating shared spaces for discussion and maintaining consistent dialogue. Aligning research with policy timelines and engaging with civil society organisations are crucial.
- **Build on successful examples:** The Lancet Countdown on Climate Change and Health in Europe provides tangible data for informed decision-making through quantitative indicators.
- **Countering misinformation:** Science-policy collaboration is essential for countering the spread of misinformation and false narratives. **Practical implementation:** The workshop marked a shift from theoretical frameworks to practical implementation in science-policy communication. This evolution is crucial as climate and health challenges intensify.

4 Session 2: Bridging the gap between scientific evidence and policy in the EU & Beyond: The European Climate & Health Cluster

4.1 Introduction

The second session focused on sharing experiences within the Climate-Health Cluster and streamlining cooperation and strategic goals of the six Cluster projects. The session began with each Cluster project providing updates on their science-for-policy (S4P) processes, highlighting key policy activities, best practices and challenges. Following this, participants engaged in break out groups to focus more deeply into various aspects of the science-policy interaction, including discussions on best practices, improving communication channels, and identifying policy opportunities. The session concluded with a plenary discussion aimed at developing a joint S4P plan for the Climate-Health Cluster, to foster collaboration and ensure a lasting impact.

4.2 Agenda

See annex 2

4.3 Session speakers

1. Shouro Dasgupta (IDAlert) - Environmental Economist, Fondazione CMCC
2. Alba Godfrey (BlueAdapt) - Senior Project Coordinator at EuroHealthNet
3. Josep Antó (CATALYSE) - Barcelona Institute of Global Health
4. Maria João Maia (CLIMOS) - Researcher at the Karlsruhe Institute for Technology (KIT)
5. Fortunate Machingura (CeSHHAR) - Director Climate, Environment & Health at CeSHHAR Zimbabwe and Lecturer at Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
6. Elizabeth Robinson (IDAlert) - Acting Dean of the Global School of Sustainability, London School of Economics and Political Science
7. Ben De Groeve (TRIGGER) - Social Scientist at the LIFE Institute for Climate, Energy and Society

4.4 Highlights from presentations

1. BlueAdapt by Alba Godfrey (Senior Project Coordinator at EuroHealthNet)

Key Policy-Related Activities

A significant deliverable at the project's conclusion will be the formulation of policy recommendations. Throughout the project, three policy briefs, each designed to provide specific policy recommendations, will be initiated, with the first focusing on the One Health framework.

External workshops will be organized, with the first one tentatively planned in early 2025 to introduce BlueAdapt to EU policymakers. This workshop will present the draft of the first policy brief, to facilitate bilateral exchanges and gather input from

policymakers. The aim is to co-create and tailor the recommendations based on interactive discussions. Additionally, external workshops will be conducted with local stakeholders in various countries where case studies are being performed. Internal workshops will also be held to share and exchange knowledge within the project.

Ad hoc activities will include responding to public consultations and speaking at events, allowing BlueAdapt to adjust to evolving situations.

Best Practices and Challenges

Opportunities will be leveraged through the EU and global policy agenda, such as discussions around One Health and antimicrobial resistance, where BlueAdapt will contribute expertise. Other opportunities included the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and the increased priority on water resilience from the new European Commission. However, the crowded policy space requires a unified voice from the Cluster to avoid overlapping efforts. The complexity of translating research into policy and ensuring mutual understanding between researchers and policymakers will be a significant challenge. Additionally, the new European Commission's focus on defence, security, and competitiveness over environmental and health issues will pose a challenge for keeping these topics on the agenda.

The project implemented several good practices, including the use of videos, blogs, and other resources on the project website. A specific work stream is dedicated to working with water authorities and utilities, with the Italian National Health Institute (ISS) as a collaborating partner, linking the project to the direct needs of the national Ministry of Health.

2. CATALYSE by Josep Antó (Barcelona Institute of Global Health)

Key Policy-Related Activities

The project involves a diverse user stakeholder group comprising policymakers and practitioners who also serve as an Advisory Board. This board acts as a sounding board and guides the project.

WP4 focuses on knowledge transfer and policy impact through various methods such as literature reviews, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions with national and EU policymakers, surveys, and survey experiments. The outputs from these activities are designed to link directly to policy processes and engagement. The indicators produced will contribute to the European Climate and Health Observatory (ECHO) and be featured in the Lancet.

Collaboration with public authorities at both local and regional levels, as well as health professionals, is a key aspect of WP5. This work centres on adaptation and mitigation strategies for heat and allergies, including early warning systems (EWS). An online platform is being developed to deliver tools tailored for diverse audiences, including policymakers, healthcare and health system professionals, citizens, and journalists. Additionally, workshops are planned to present and discuss case studies.

Best Practices and Challenges

The project emphasizes continuous engagements with stakeholders through regular workshops, individual meetings, and a co-design process, ensuring iterative and collaborative development. However, a significant challenge lies in the coordination of findings across the project, which is crucial for effective knowledge transfer.

3. CLIMOS by Maria João Maia (Researcher at the Karlsruhe Institute for Technology (KIT))

Key policy-related activities

A comprehensive report with policy recommendations will be produced at the end of the project. There is a strong engagement with national health ministries in Italy, Israel, and Turkey, who are project partners and end users, to facilitate the adoption of developed tools in human and veterinary health sectors. Knowledge translation outputs include three policy briefs and workshops in nine countries for the co-creation of an Early Warning System and foresight scenarios, involving stakeholders and local communities such as citizens, policymakers, and local government and private authorities. The project aims to conduct webinars next year to present conclusions for policymakers and develop training materials, led by one of the Health Ministries in the consortium. Media engagement at the local level, including interviews and features in local journals and radio stations, is expected to amplify the project's impact. The project will culminate in a final conference with policymakers.

Best practices and challenges

The project leverages a robust stakeholder network, maintaining extensive contacts with policymakers at local, national, and EU levels, including the WHO, and those interested in both human and animal health perspectives. Active engagement with stakeholders is prioritized through invitations to events and sharing research results. The project also utilizes various media channels, such as podcasts, opinion articles, and guidelines available in multiple languages, to focus on policy-level communication. Internal workshops ensure that the project's messages are effectively circulated within the team.

However, challenges include a lack of comprehensive human and animal data for vector-borne diseases like leishmaniasis, as these diseases are not notifiable in many EU countries, and there are no standard operating procedures (SOPs) for monitoring vector presence or infection rates. Integrating all information into a single platform such as an early warning system (EWS) that tries to meet the diverse needs of users, including citizens and policymakers, is also challenging. Additionally, replicating co-creation activities across different countries is difficult due to language differences and the need to adapt to specific target groups. Despite these challenges, the first workshop held in Portugal was a significant success, and the team is eager to share insights from this experience.

4. HIGH Horizons by Fortunate Machingura (Director Climate, Environment & Health at CeSHHAR Zimbabwe and Lecturer at Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine)

Key policy-related activities

HIGH Horizons focuses on actionable strategies and implementation on heat and maternal, newborn and child health both direct (preterm birth) and indirect pathways (food insecurity). A conceptual framework developed with WHO outlines these mechanisms of action.

HIGH Horizons aims to align regional and global efforts to address pregnant women, newborns and children in climate and heat-related policy dialogues, as they are an often ignored but a very vulnerable group.

Stakeholders of HIGH Horizons include many from Europe (e.g. European Climate and Health Observatory, European Environment Agency) and from Africa (e.g. CHANCE, the Climate Health Africa Network for Collaboration and Engagement, & WHO Afro) but also international (professional) confederations (ICM, the International Confederation of Midwives, and ICN, the International Council of Nurses) representing health workers who are also a focus of our work.

We have engaged in several activities, including blogs, interviews, scientific papers. Our biggest effort to date has been the first Climate and Health in Africa Conference (CHAC) held in October 2024 in Harare, Zimbabwe to connect science with policy. This conference brought together scientists and ministers of health from all over Africa and was opened by the President of Zimbabwe. It represented the first and largest event of climate and health scientists, programme managers and policy makers to date in Africa.

Best practices and Challenges

CHAC strived for broad representation: voices from Africa and beyond, inclusive space to address climate change and health with wide-ranging information. The conference achieved significant policy impact: What did this mean for policy? 80% of attendants valuing the conferences, stressed the urgency of climate change and health agenda on the African continent. In addition, the conference ended with the Harare Declaration, a unified Declaration on Climate Change and Health for Africa.

Continuing challenges include fiscal priorities in a context of limited resources and greater advocacy and targeted interventions for mothers and babies who are not always included in the global or national agenda.

5. IDAlert by Elizabeth Robinson (London School of Economics and Political Science)

Key policy-related activities

IDAlert is actively engaged in Europe-wide activities at both country and city levels, with notable efforts in Spain and Greece. In Spain, Mosquito Alert photos and reports are now integrated into the Ministry of Health's National Plan for Vector Control, enhancing the country's ability to monitor and manage vector-borne diseases. Similarly, in Greece, Mosquito Alert photos are utilized to assess vector risk

in hard-to-reach areas or regions impacted by extreme weather events. At the EU level, IDAlert is focused on developing novel or updated indicators related to the Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change. These indicators, which track diseases such as malaria, Chikungunya, Zika, Dengue, Vibrio, and West Nile Virus, are featured in the European Climate and Health Observatory (ECHO) and are co-created with stakeholders to ensure their relevance and effectiveness.

Best practices and Challenges

The project has identified that iterative processes are essential for effective stakeholder engagement, starting with initial consultations to develop ideas and followed by further engagement to refine these ideas. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of timely and robust data, with a focus on incorporating an inequality lens. Local capacity building and the use of innovative technology, such as mobile suitcase labs used to train medical representatives in Greece and Bangladesh, have been particularly successful. However, the project has faced several challenges, including the timely deployment of resources in Europe and Bangladesh during mosquito seasons and concerns about overload and the need for well-coordinated actions within the cluster.

6. TRIGGER by Ben De Groeve (Social Scientist at the LIFE Institute for Climate, Energy and Society)

Key policy-related activities

The project has undertaken a range of activities to strengthen the connection between research and policy. Stakeholder engagement activities at five Climate-Health Connection Labs across Europe (Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Switzerland) have been initiated, and a policy analysis at the local level has been conducted to identify barriers and enablers for citizen engagement. Additionally, the project did a policy gap analysis at both EU and international levels, and a German case study has explored the role of citizen trust in the federal government and scientists in supporting climate-health policy. The Policymakers and Practitioners Labs plays a crucial role by providing policy advice and feedback on policy briefs and guidelines. Currently, four policy briefs are in progress at the EU level, focusing on cardiovascular, respiratory, and mental health issues linked to climate change, as well as EU policy analysis.

Looking ahead, the project plans to develop more than 25 policy briefs, along with guidelines and protocols to enhance the preparedness and response of health systems. The project also includes a cost-benefit assessment of climate adaptation and mitigation measures, involving the Policymakers and Practitioners Labs in developing cost-benefit tools. An online exchange forum will be used to discuss Climate-Health Connection lab experiences and findings in the Policymakers and Practitioners Labs, helping to identify policy recommendations.

Best practices and Challenges

The project has developed a roadmap to align goals and tailor all engagement activities to local needs and contexts. A synergy template is used to coordinate

engagement activities, and a tool was made to screen deliverables for relevance translation into policy briefs, guidelines and protocols. There is no local evidence yet and thus challenges to attract the local policymakers and to get buy-in.

4.5 Breakout room discussions

Following the individual project presentations, all session participants were divided into breakout groups, in which three different policy-related topics were discussed focused on improving different aspects of the science-policy interaction:

Room 1: Policy Collaboration Opportunities

Room 2: Best Practices

Room 3: Communications Channels

At the end each working group presented back to the general workshop on breakout room discussions.

Highlights Room 1: Policy Collaboration Opportunities

The group discussed tangible opportunities for 2025 and beyond to insert cluster evidence, at the EU, global and local level. Many good practices already exist, but it is important to find the right time to engage with policymakers.

Three opportunities where science really should be involved on EU level in the next year and beyond include the following:

1. Next year the EU will discuss its climate goal for 2040 with a planned update aiming for a 90 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Policymakers will seek evidence and scientific input on this topic, especially in the first 3 months of year.
2. The EU is preparing an adaptation strategy, and the health sector is still missing in the assessment. So, there is a need to bring forward the evidence.
3. In the Summer of 2025, the next EU multi-annual financial framework (2027-2033) discussions will start. This will include the discussion on how much should be allocated to climate action and especially to climate and health.

At the national and local level there are also many opportunities like energy and climate plans, which link back to the EU level. Member states must draw up energy and climate plans and are currently in the process of updating them. There is the option to include health impact assessments but not many member states are carrying this out yet so there is an opportunity to get involved there.

Also, at the city level there are opportunities, as many cities have commitments to reach net zero by 2030 and are implementing a range of climate policy. HEAL has found that decision makers on the city level are very much looking for scientists to guide their actions, so this is also a great opportunity to share evidence.

Highlights Room 2: Best Practices

Translating research into policy is often perceived as a linear process - conducting research, writing a policy brief, and then communicating it to decision-makers. However, this process is rarely straightforward and frequently involves extensive back-and-forth discussions. To effectively influence policy, it is crucial to have a theory of change or defined pathways to impact. This means considering from the start how research will shape policy.

Using case studies can be a very good way to engage policymakers.

Policymakers prefer to receive the most important messages or results to avoid information overload, making it essential to coordinate within the cluster.

Highlights Room 3: Communication Channels

To work effectively together, we should share our findings, results, and lessons learned, and consider creating an impact matrix to visualize our progress. Sharing success stories can highlight the positive outcomes of our efforts, while discussing struggles and strategies to overcome them can help us address challenges collectively. Additionally, streamlining policy recommendations across the six projects will ensure consistency and clarity when communicating with our direct contacts.

Potential Communication Channels for the European Climate-Health Cluster, identified by the group, were social media, newsletters, the Cluster website, press releases, bilateral meetings, infographics, podcasts, webinars, white papers, events, and collaborations with civil society) organisations and dissemination platforms, such as [Climate-ADAPT](#).

5 Next steps

The next steps related to Science for Policy for the European Climate-Health Cluster are as follows:

1. Write a report of the European Climate-Health Cluster Thematic Workshop #2: Science for Policy (led by WG1)
2. Plan a dissemination event for Members of the European Parliament to share recommendations of the Cluster's policy brief #1 and related work in June 2025 (led by WG1 & WG3)
3. Draft Policy Brief #2 focusing on equity by September 2025 (led WG1) and a dissemination/advocacy plan for the policy brief (led WG3).
4. Plan for a Thematic Workshop #3 on Indicators by September 2025 (led WG5)

6 Annexes

6.1 Annex 1: Agenda Session 1



2nd Thematic Training Workshop on Science for Policy (S4P)

December 5th
From 10:00AM to 13:00PM CET



OVERVIEW

Science for Policy (S4P) is defined as the process of transferring scientific information to policymakers to create evidence-informed policy. The cluster has organised two half-day sessions.

Session 1: Science for Policy Training

The cluster has invited 3 external speakers, who each present 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of Q&A. A 30-minute general discussion with all participants will follow and finish with conclusions.

[Register here](#)
to session 1

Thematic Training Workshop on Science for Policy (S4P) 5 December 2024

10:00	Welcome
10:05	Introduction: Engaging with policy processes and feeding research into policymaking
10:15	Good practice of S4P: Lancet Countdown example
10:25	Q&A
10:35	Perspective from a Member of European Parliament
10:55	Q&A
11:05	Climate adaptation, resilience, preparedness: update on the EU policy context

Thematic Training Workshop on Science for Policy (S4P) 5 December 2024

11:25	Q&A
11:35	Break
11:50	European Climate and Health Observatory: a science-policy interface
12:10	Q&A
12:20	General Discussion
12:50	Conclusions

Register here
to session 1

Thematic Training Workshop on Science for Policy (S4P)
5 December 2024

Speaker introductions

Moderator



DEBRA JACKSON

HIGH HORIZONS

Thematic Training Workshop on Science for Policy (S4P)
5 December 2024

Speaker introductions



ALBA GODFREY

BLUEADAPT



KIM VAN DAALEN

BARCELONA
SUPERCOMPUTING CENTER

Thematic Training Workshop on Science for Policy (S4P)
5 December 2024

Speaker introductions



LEIRE PAJÍN IRAOLA

MEMBER OF
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



PETER LÖFFLER

POLICY OFFICER
DG CLIMA

Thematic Training Workshop on Science for Policy (S4P)
5 December 2024

Speaker introductions



**ALEKSANDRA
KAZMIERCZAK**
EUROPEAN CLIMATE AND HEALTH
OBSERVATORY





climate-health
cluster

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to session 1



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6.2 Annex 2: Agenda Session 2



2nd Thematic Training Workshop: Climate- Health Cluster Partner Collaboration

December 10th
From 10:00AM to 13:00PM CET



Session 2: Climate-Health Cluster Partner Collaboration

The second session is focused on sharing experiences within the Climate-Health Cluster and streamlining cooperation and strategic goals of the six Cluster projects. First, each Cluster project will provide updates on science-for-policy (S4P) processes, highlighting key policy activities, best practices and challenges. Next, participants will engage in break out groups to focus more deeply on different aspects of the science-policy interaction, including discussions on best practices, improving communication channels, and identifying policy opportunities. The session will conclude with a plenary discussion to develop a joint S4P plan for the Climate-Health Cluster, to foster collaboration and ensure a lasting impact.

[Register here](#)
[to session 2](#)

Thematic Training Workshop Climate-Health Cluster

Partner Collaboration

10 December 2024

10:00-10:05	Welcome.
10:05-10:35	Updates on policy processes within Cluster projects: BlueAdapt, CATALYSE, CLIMOS, HIGH Horizons, IDAlert, TRIGGER.
10:35-11:05	Break out group 1. Policy Calendar: What policy opportunities are happening in the next 2 years which we can take advantage of to promote S4P dissemination and uptake? Break out group 2: Best Practices: What are the challenges faced in S4P across the cluster and what best practices do we have to address these challenges?

Thematic Training Workshop Climate-Health Cluster

Partner Collaboration

10 December 2024

	Break out group 3: Communication Channels: What joint communication channels are (or could be) used to share policy-related work of the projects?
11:05-11:15	Short Break.
11:15-12:00	Presentation by each group of what was discussed.
12:00 - 13:00	Plenary discussion: Joint S4P plan for the EU Climate-Health Cluster - How can we work together.

[Register here](#)
to session 2

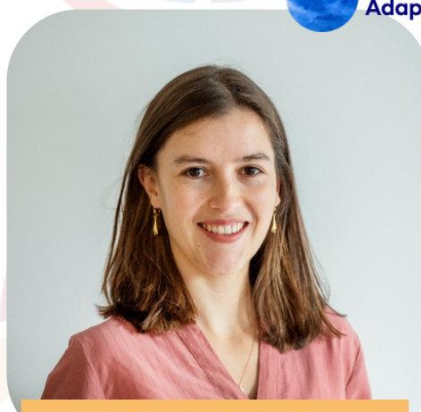
Thematic Training Workshop Climate-Health Cluster
Partner Collaboration
10 December 2024

Speaker introductions

 iDAAlert
disaster support

SHOURO DASGUPTA

Environmental Economist,
Fondazione CMCC Lecturer

 Blue
Adapt

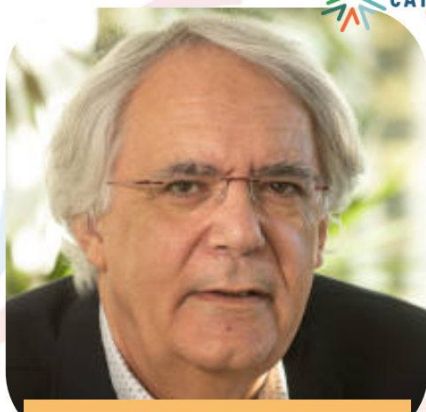
ALBA GODFREY

Senior Project Coordinator at
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the European Union

Thematic Training Workshop Climate-Health Cluster
Partner Collaboration
10 December 2024

Speaker introductions



JOSEP ANTÓ

Barcelona Institute of Global
Health



MARIA JOÃO MAIA

Researcher Karlsruher Institut
für Technologie (KIT)



Thematic Training Workshop Climate-Health Cluster
Partner Collaboration
10 December 2024

Speaker introductions



**FORTUNATE
MACHINGURA**
Climate, Environment & Health;
Lecturer - Liverpool School of
Tropical Medicine



**ELIZABETH
ROBINSON**
Director of the Grantham
Research Institute on Climate
Change and the Environment

Thematic Training Workshop Climate-Health Cluster
Partner Collaboration
10 December 2024

Speaker introductions



BEN DE GROEVE

Social scientist (PhD) at the
Institute for Climate, Energy and
Society





climate-health
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