

# Just Transition Framework for Climate Resilience



Climate change severely affects regions, communities and livelihoods across the EU and globally. Adapting to the changing climate is inevitable. Yet, if the process of climate change adaptation is not carefully thought through, it risks aggravating already existing inequalities in society and exacerbating the burdens for those who are the most affected by the impacts of climate change. This calls for a just transition to climate resilience.

Against this background, a **Just Transition Framework** was put forth as a part of the Horizon Europe-funded Regions4Climate project. The Just Transition Framework aims to address climate change through a human-centred approach. It facilitates the recognition and inclusion of relevant stakeholders in climate change adaptation processes, including vulnerable and marginalised groups. It tackles the unequal distribution of climate change impacts and unequal capacities to respond to these impacts. It also helps to share the burdens and benefits of adaptation equitably and fairly.

Transformation requires a mindset change. This change is not an easy task. It involves many interdependent steps, such as enabling socially vulnerable groups to be directly involved and represented in policy and decision-making and ensuring appropriate funding mechanisms to enable transformative approaches. Accordingly, the “Just Transition Framework” describes transformation enablers and barriers within climate adaptation initiatives.

### Transformation enablers

- A shared vision and goals provide orientation for a wide range of strategies and projects.
- Practical experiments implemented on the ground act as catalysts of social learning. Learning loops include structured monitoring and assessment to offer insights for the next steps.

**Just transition to climate resilience requires a transformational approach to fundamentally re-arrange the ways we live, work, and govern our society, to make it capable of coping with and adapting to a changing climate while continuing to cut emissions and natural resource consumption.**

- Supportive funding and regulation are required to enable multi-stakeholder collaboration and the empowerment of local communities.
- Communities must be given autonomy and resources to increase their self-efficacy and self-determination.
- Participatory decision-making is necessary to develop the trust, knowledge and political support needed for transformations.
- Monitoring and actively challenging actors’ everyday practices, mindset and values are required to nurture a transformative change of daily practices and a broader cultural change.

### Transformation barriers

- Strong path dependency creates resistance to transformative change due to over-reliance on existing ways of thinking and doing.
- Centralised knowledge and power can



hinder transformation and should be complemented by co-produced and shared knowledge systems, and inclusive decision-making processes.

Building on this conceptual approach, the Just Transition Framework is operationalised through roadmapping.

Roadmaps layout and manage actions that serve a specific goal or vision among a broad range of stakeholders within a given time horizon. They function as a catalyst for transformation via a shared vision by enabling a better understanding of the interdependencies of political, sociocultural, economic, and environmental factors and overcoming systemic barriers. In the context of Regions4Climate, the jointly recognised need for transformative action towards regional climate resilience is operationalised through roadmaps containing region-specific transformative visions, clearly defined goals and a set of actions paving the way towards these goals.

### Regional Just Transition Roadmaps

There are five steps to build an actionable, region-specific roadmap for just transition:

**1. Scope and Context Building** provides the basis for the roadmap process. A core group of regional actors collects relevant information about the region's climate challenges, policies, governance structures, and territorial characteristics, considering the overall rationale of transformative action towards regional climate resilience. In this step, a preliminary scope for the roadmap is suggested, indicating the degree and level of systemic change the roadmap aims for.

**2. Actor Identification and Involvement** maps all actors and stakeholders that should be involved in the roadmap process within the given scope, with particular attention given to marginalised and vulnerable groups. Since the active involvement of these actors is important, this step also considers incentives for participation and the accessibility and inclusiveness of the process.

**3. Defining the Vision and Goal Together** includes two major activities. In the first activity, participants create a vision together – an ideal state of climate resilience – within the scope of the roadmap. The second activity provides a narrower, shorter-term goal in line with the vision that considers the availa-



ble time, resources, and capacities of the involved actors.

**4. Defining Actions Together**, the actors jointly define actions that facilitate the transition from the current situation to the goal defined in the previous step. Each action is assessed with the principle of “leaving no one behind”, how it accounts for current and future vulnerabilities, and how its burdens and benefits are distributed. Action descriptions include information about the timing, accountable and responsible actors, resources, and progress monitoring and implementation success criteria. Within this step, local stakeholders and experts iteratively assess such aspects as the action’s effectiveness, costs, or acceptability. The actions can be adjusted and improved based on different types of knowledge.

**5. Adoption**, the commitment of actors accountable and responsible for implementing the roadmap and the transition process is essential for legitimacy and credibility. Depending on the scope of the roadmap and the involved actors, the commitment can be expressed by the approval of the roadmap by a (regional) public authority or by a publicly stated commitment by relevant actors with the necessary mandate and resources to implement the roadmap.



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**Centralised knowledge and power can hinder transformation and should be complemented by co-produced and shared knowledge systems, and inclusive decision-making processes.**

If you are curious to know more about the Just Transition Framework, more information is available here:

<https://regions4climate.eu/resources/>.

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