

# Policy recommendations for climate adaptation in **BERLIN-BRANDENBURG**

## Why climate adaptation matters

Europe is already facing the cost of climate inaction. Between 1980 and 2023, climate-related economic losses totalled €738 billion – and that figure could rise to 4% of EU GDP annually by the end of the century without effective adaptation.

## The IMPETUS project

IMPETUS is an EU-funded project active across seven biogeographical regions – arctic, atlantic, boreal, coastal, continental, mediterranean and mountain. It aims to turn adaptation commitments into real-world actions that protect people, ecosystems, and infrastructure.

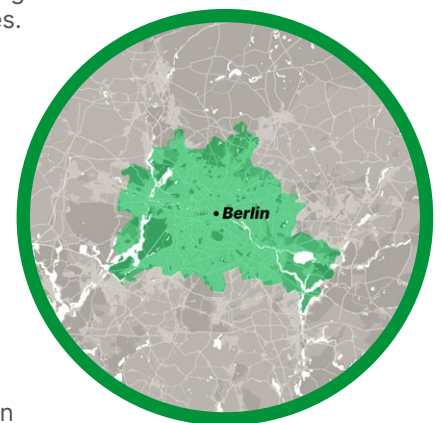
The project develops and tests tailored climate adaptation solutions, combining:

- technological and nature-based innovations,
- financing mechanisms,
- strong stakeholder and policy engagement.

## About the region

The Berlin-Brandenburg metropolitan region, located in north-eastern Germany, has an extensive network of rivers and lakes. However, limited natural water flow, rising temperatures, and prolonged droughts have reduced river volumes. Berlin relies on groundwater for drinking water, with treated wastewater returned to freshwater systems — creating a partially closed water cycle. Brandenburg, by contrast, depends more heavily on water for agriculture and ecosystems. Climate change is placing additional pressure on this already fragile system.

These growing pressures call for better coordination, integrated planning, and targeted climate adaptation policies across the region.



## Key recommendations for Berlin-Brandenburg

### **Enhance cooperation between federal states on water management**

**Issue:** Climate adaptation efforts in the region are fragmented. Berlin functions as an administrative island and lacks an integrated strategy with neighbouring federal states.

#### **Actions:**

- Strengthen inter-state task forces to coordinate cross-border water management.
- Ensure involvement from local and regional authorities.
- Establish funding mechanisms that support cooperation across urban, peri-urban and rural areas.
- Plan using catchment areas or agro-ecological zones instead of administrative borders.

**Outcome:** A more coordinated and efficient approach to water management across state boundaries.

### **Integrate technical expertise into policymaking and improve monitoring**

**Issue:** Scientific knowledge is not systematically used in policymaking. In Berlin, technical and urban issues are often addressed separately at the administrative level, creating gaps in adaptation planning.

**Actions:**

- Create formal structures for collaboration between scientists, technical experts and policymakers.
- Launch joint research projects and capacity-building programmes.
- Introduce monitoring systems using real-time data to evaluate and adjust policies.

**Outcome:** Stronger evidence-based policy and more cohesive adaptation planning.

### **Align urban development with water-focused climate strategies**

**Issue:** Urban planning and water management are not well integrated. Fragmented responsibilities between districts and the Berlin Senate lead to inefficient use of resources.

**Actions:**

- Expand urban climate strategies to include water resilience measures (e.g. groundwater recharge, sustainable drainage).
- Incorporate green and blue infrastructure into land-use planning.
- Strengthen communication and coordination between districts and state-level authorities.

**Outcome:** A more holistic and resilient urban environment.

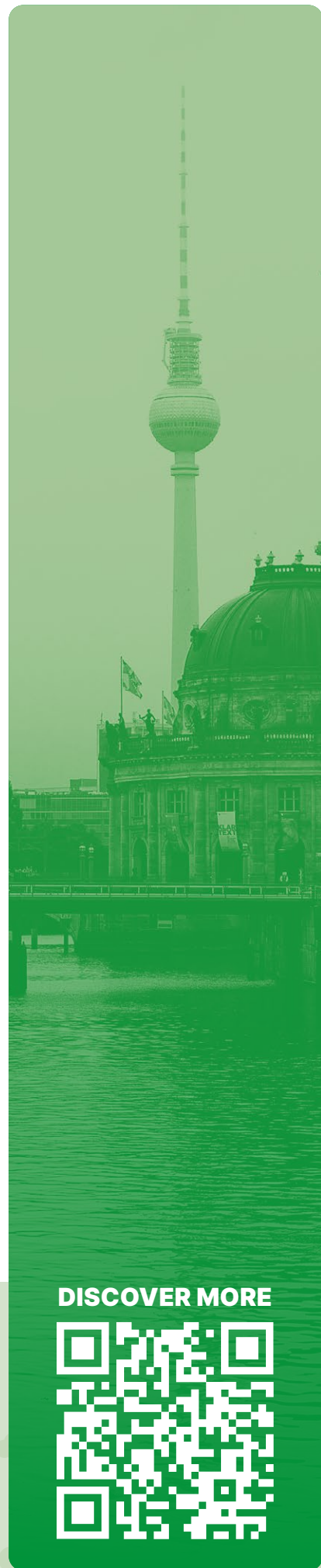
### **Adapt national policies to local needs**

**Issue:** National climate policies often overlook regional and local priorities, limiting their effectiveness.

**Actions:**

- Develop adaptation plans in close collaboration with local and regional authorities.

**Outcome:** Policies that are better aligned with local realities and more likely to be implemented successfully.



**DISCOVER MORE**



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