

Adaptation preparedness scoreboard:

Summary for Malta

Disclaimer

Based on the scoreboard in Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2018)460 accompanying the evaluation of the EU's strategy for adaptation to climate change. For referencing this Commission analysis from June 2018, please use the full version in the SWD.

SUMMARY

Overall progress

Malta is currently in the process of revising its national adaptation strategy. The current strategy was adopted in 2012 and while progress has been made, adaptation action has not been a primary focus for the national authorities in the intervening years. However, the size of Malta's administration limits the range of issues that policymakers can address. While there are gaps in relation to a number of the scoreboard's criteria, this is partly explained by the lesser relevance of those criteria to very small states.

Adaptation strategies

The national adaptation strategy (see [here](#)) was adopted in 2012. The government is currently reviewing the strategy with the aim of including relevant adaptation policies in its planned Low Carbon Development Strategy. Recent legislation (The Climate Action Act 2015) includes legal obligations on the government to develop adaptation policies. Actions at sub-national level are less relevant to Malta's situation, given the very small size of local councils.

Adaptation action plans

There is no separate national adaptation plan; the 2012 adaptation strategy effectively fills the function, setting out 72 actions, alongside broad policy principles. Sectoral action on adaptation is reflected by relevant elements of national strategies on water, agriculture, transport, energy efficiency, human health and tourism, although there are no specific sectoral plans directly linked to the national strategy.

Step A: Preparing the ground for adaptation

1 Coordination structure

The Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development, and Climate Change (MESDC) is responsible both for drawing up national adaptation policy documents and for monitoring their implementation. An inter-ministerial committee on climate change has theoretical oversight of the policy area. In addition, a new Climate Action Board, bringing together experts, stakeholders and government, has been established to advise on policy.

2 Stakeholders' involvement in policy development

A formal consultation process was held during the development of the first strategy. A consultation exercise has also been held on a document setting out the vision for the new Low Carbon Development Strategy. The new Climate Action Board is charged inter alia

with facilitating stakeholder input, although there is no public information available on its activities.

Step B: Assessing risks and vulnerabilities to climate change

3 Current and projected climate change

The Malta International Airport Meteorological Services Office provides climate monitoring services, and the University of Malta's Climate Research Group has some climate modelling capability. A challenge noted by the strategy, and which remains relevant, is the difficulty of ensuring climate modelling at a level of resolution that would provide scenarios for a territory of Malta's size. The consultation paper for the Low Carbon Development Strategy notes the need for long-term climate scenarios for Malta, but it is not yet clear how progress will be made.

4 Knowledge gaps

Climate adaptation research issues are addressed by Malta's 2014 Research and Innovation Strategy. The main research capacity is the University of Malta's Climate Research Group, however, a formal process for identifying knowledge gaps does not appear to exist. The 2017 consultation document for the Low Carbon Development Strategy identifies a number of areas where adaptation-relevant research is needed, including desalination for water supply, and building design.

5 Knowledge transfer

Government websites do not provide extensive information on climate scenarios or on adaptation policy, although links to the main policy documents (including the current adaptation strategy, and the consultation document for the new plan) are provided. Capacity-building activities are focused on the Ministry and the University of Malta. No broader efforts to build adaptation capacity in business sectors and civil society have been identified.

Step C: Identifying adaptation options

6 Adaptation options' identification

Priority areas for adaptation action in the current strategy were identified through an informal process of expert judgement and discussion with stakeholders. The Climate Change Act of 2015 sets out a list of criteria that the Government should take into account in its climate policymaking. It is too early to tell if these have been used, in practice, to develop the new plan. The current strategy and its implementation do not involve coordination between climate adaptation policy and disaster risk management.

7 Funding resources identified and allocated

Specific government budgets for adaptation do not exist. In practice, Malta has focused significantly on adaptation issues in its use of European Structural and Investment Funds and the LIFE programme. Investment in water services at national level, by its nature, includes a significant adaptation component. A Climate Action Fund has been announced, but information on its operation and objectives is not available on the Ministry website.

Step D: Implementing adaptation action

8 Mainstreaming adaptation in planning processes

Environmental Impact Assessment in Malta has, since the 2017 transposition of the revised directive, required assessment of climate-related disaster risk impacts and the impact of projects on climate adaptation. However, disaster risk management plans do not cover climate change projections and climate risk is not addressed in detail in land-use and urban planning. Priority sectors, such as agriculture and water management, have integrated climate risks in their strategic planning, but the insurance sector shows little sign of having done so.

9 Implementing adaptation

Implementation of actions identified in the 2012 strategy has not been pursued systematically; some have been pursued, others not. Vertical coordination is not emphasised, although this is not an issue in Malta's case. While Malta has legal requirements for consideration of climate impacts in government policymaking, the requirements have not been translated into detailed guidelines, and it is unclear what mechanisms would enforce them. A new Climate Action Board is tasked with stakeholder engagement in the new climate plan, which is at an early stage.

Step E: Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation activities

10 Monitoring and reporting

No detailed monitoring reports are publicly available. Individual sectoral policy documents report on action, e.g. in water and agriculture, but this is ad hoc rather than part of a concerted central effort to check on progress.

11 Evaluation

There is no public system in place for monitoring of actions in the existing strategy, or of mainstreaming of climate adaptation considerations into sectoral policies. The Climate Action Act 2015 places a duty on the Minister to review and update the national adaptation strategy at least every four years. Preparation of a new Low Carbon Development Strategy, to update the 2012 strategy, is now in hand.