

# Annual work programme 2026

European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change

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# 1 The European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change

## 1.1 Role of the Advisory Board

The European Climate Law <sup>(1)</sup>, adopted in June 2021 and amended in 2026 <sup>(2)</sup>, enshrines the European Union's objective of becoming climate neutral and climate resilient by 2050, alongside intermediate EU climate targets for 2030 and 2040. The law also established the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (the 'Advisory Board') to support EU climate action with independent scientific expertise and the best available, up-to-date and transparent evidence on pathways, targets and policy measures <sup>(3)</sup>.

Article 3(1) of the European Climate Law defines the role of the Advisory Board as follows:

*The European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (the 'Advisory Board') shall serve as a point of reference for the Union on scientific knowledge relating to climate change by virtue of its independence and scientific and technical expertise.*

The Advisory Board consists of 15 senior scientific experts covering a broad range of relevant disciplines. Acting in a personal capacity, the members of the Advisory Board give their positions independently of the Member States and the EU institutions.

The second term of the Advisory Board formally began on 1 April 2026, with a duration of four years until 2030.

## 1.2 Work and tasks of the Advisory Board

The tasks of the Advisory Board are broadly defined in Article 3(2) of the European Climate Law. They include:

- (a) considering the latest scientific findings of the IPCC reports and scientific climate data, in particular with regard to information relevant to the European Union (EU);
- (b) providing scientific advice and issuing reports on existing and proposed EU measures, climate targets and indicative greenhouse gas budgets, and their coherence with the objectives of this Regulation and the EU's international commitments under the Paris Agreement;
- (c) contributing to the exchange of independent scientific knowledge in the field of modelling, monitoring, promising research and innovation which contribute to reducing emissions or increasing removals;
- (d) identifying actions and opportunities needed to successfully achieve the EU climate targets;
- (e) raising awareness on climate change and its impacts, as well as stimulating dialogue and cooperation between scientific bodies within the EU, complementing existing work and efforts.

Through its work, the Advisory Board aims to support pathways towards climate neutrality and climate resilience that are just, socially balanced, fair and cost-effective. In carrying out its tasks, the Advisory Board is guided by the best available and most recent scientific evidence, including the latest reports

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999.

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) 2026/667 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2026 amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 as regards the setting of a Union intermediate climate target for 2040.

<sup>3</sup> Article 12 of the European Climate Law formally establishes the Advisory Board through an amendment of Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network.

of the IPCC, IPBES and other international bodies. It also builds on data and knowledge from European research, technology and innovation networks. The Advisory Board complements existing international and European scientific assessments, such as those from the IPCC and the EEA. It also considers, where available, the work of national climate advisory bodies. The Advisory Board follows a fully transparent process and makes its reports publicly available.

### 1.3 Composition of the Advisory Board

The 15 independent senior scientific experts serving during the current term (2026-2030) were designated on 4 December 2025 by the Management Board of the EEA, of which nine members served also in the previous term. They were appointed in a personal capacity for a term of four years. As required by the European Climate Law, there are no more than two members of the Advisory Board holding the nationality of the same EU Member State. The 15 members of the Advisory Board for its second term (2026-2030) are:

- Annela Anger-Kraavi (Estonia)
- Constantinos Cartalis (Greece) (\*)
- Suraje Dessai (Portugal) (\*)– Vice-Chair
- Laura Díaz Anadón (Spain) (\*)– Vice-Chair
- Ottmar Edenhofer (Germany) (\*) – Chair
- Vera Eory (Hungary) (\*)
- Lena Kitzing (Denmark/Germany) (\*)
- Kati Kulovesi (Finland)
- Lars J. Nilsson (Sweden) (\*)
- Åsa Persson (Sweden)
- Keywan Riahi (Austria) (\*)
- Jean-François Soussana (France) (\*)
- Giorgio Vacchiano (Italy)
- Detlef van Vuuren (The Netherlands)
- Zinta Zommers (Latvia)

(\*) Nine members were reappointed from the previous mandate.

In April 2026, the members elected Ottmar Edenhofer as Chair for a 4-year term, and Laura Díaz Anadón and Suraje Dessai as Vice-Chairs for a 2-year term.

[Short biographies of the members](#) of the Advisory Board are presented on the Advisory Board's website.

### 1.4 Resources of the Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is supported by a Secretariat (14 full-time staff) hosted by the EEA, alongside a dedicated operational budget (EUR 500 000 per year) covering communication, publications, meetings, outreach and expert engagement activities.

## 2 First term of the Advisory Board (2022-2026)

The first term of the Advisory Board (2022–2026) was primarily devoted to establishing the Advisory Board as a new independent scientific body within the EU climate governance framework. To enable the delivery of its mandate with full scientific and operational independence, the Advisory Board focused its early efforts on developing the organisational, procedural, and strategic foundations necessary for effective operation, including governance structures and working methods for both the

Advisory Board and its Secretariat. This foundational phase was also supported by outreach activities and engagement with a range of stakeholders.

Between November 2022 and March 2026, the Advisory Board published 11 reports covering a range of topics (see Table 1). The selection of topics was guided by their relevance and timeliness, responding both to specific mandates or legislative processes, such as advice on the 2040 target and the European Climate Law, as well as to broader issues relevant to EU climate policies. The reports also reflect the strategic, organisational and operational development of the Advisory Board, demonstrating a range of formats and methodological approaches.

**Table 1. Overview of the Advisory Board’s publications during its first term (2022-2026)**

Title	Publication date
Towards a climate-neutral and climate-resilient EU energy infrastructure – Advice on scenario guidelines for trans-European networks for energy	14/11/2022
Setting climate targets based on scientific evidence and EU values: initial recommendations to the European Commission	16/01/2023
Addressing the energy crisis while delivering the EU’s climate objectives: recommendations to policymakers	07/02/2023
Towards a decarbonised and climate-resilient EU energy infrastructure: recommendations on a harmonised EU energy system-wide cost-benefit analysis	15/03/2023
Scientific advice for the determination of an EU-wide 2040 climate target and a greenhouse gas budget for 2030–2050	15/06/2023
Towards EU climate neutrality: progress, policy gaps and opportunities	18/01/2024
Towards climate-neutral and resilient energy networks across Europe – advice on draft scenarios under the EU regulation on trans-European energy networks	27/06/2024
Scaling up carbon dioxide removals – Recommendations for navigating opportunities and risks in the EU	21/02/2025
Scientific advice for amending the European Climate Law – Setting climate goals to strengthen EU strategic priorities	02/06/2025
Strengthening resilience to climate change – Recommendations for an effective EU adaptation policy framework	17/02/2026
Climate adaptation and mitigation in the agri-food system – Recommendations for coherent EU policies	11/03/2026

The 2040 target advice was among the most influential outputs of the first term. This advice was frequently quoted as a basis for discussions in the process of amending the European Climate Law and it is reflected in the adopted amendment ((EU) 2026/667).

Taken together, these reports illustrate how the Advisory Board progressively developed its analytical agenda during its first mandate. By addressing key questions related to the EU’s climate transition, the Advisory Board provided independent scientific input to key policy debates, aiming to translate complex scientific knowledge into policy-relevant recommendations. The breadth of topics covered also reflects the multidisciplinary expertise of the Advisory Board and its ability to engage with both mitigation and adaptation challenges.

## 3 Implementation of the extended 2025 work programme

### 3.1 Short overview of the extended 2025 work programme

In its 2025 work programme, the Advisory Board identified the following topics for its work:

1. Scaling up carbon dioxide removals in the EU
2. Climate adaptation and resilience
3. Strengthening climate mitigation and resilience of EU agriculture
4. Engagements with experts and stakeholders

Additionally, the Advisory Board deemed relevant and timely to reiterate its advice on the 2040 targets and call for a strengthening of the EU's adaptation framework ahead of the revision to the European Climate Law in 2025.

The 2025 work programme was extended over the three months of 2026 without additional work priorities. The extension covered in full the mandate of the first Advisory Board which ran until end March 2026, allowing for continuity of priorities and focus on completing the remaining key publications and follow-up activities foreseen under the 2025 work programme.

### 3.2 Execution of the extended 2025 work programme

The following sections describe how the Advisory Board delivered on each of the work priorities from its 2025 extended work programme.

#### 3.2.1 Carbon dioxide removals in the EU

**Extended 2025 work programme:** *“According to the latest scientific evidence, carbon dioxide removals are necessary to achieve the EU's climate objectives of net zero emissions by 2050 and net negative emissions thereafter. Although removals cannot substitute for the immediate need to deeply reduce emissions, they can contribute to global temperature stabilisation efforts. While the EU's policy framework for removals has evolved significantly over the past years, it remains so far insufficient to support the scale and speed of deployment necessary to meet the EU's climate targets.”*

**Actions in 2025-Q1 2026:** Based on work carried out in 2023 and 2024, the Advisory Board published on 21 February 2025 a report exploring options for scaling up carbon dioxide removals in the EU. This assessment covered both permanent removal methods and temporary removals in the LULUCF sector, analysing their status, potentials, costs, opportunities and risks. It also set out key functions for an effective governance of removals; and examined a range of incentive and pricing options, including their roles and risks within the EU's carbon market, and options to incentivise net-negative emissions. The report presented several recommendations for EU policies, which can inform the preparation of the post-2030 EU climate policy architecture where permanent and temporary removals are expected to play an increasingly prominent role. Since the publication of the report, the revision of the European Climate Law included a commitment for the Commission to reflect the role of domestic permanent removals in the EU ETS as part of legislative proposals to review the climate policy framework. The Advisory Board's work on removals was later complemented by the Advisory Board's work on agriculture (see [section 3.2.3](#)) and climate resilience (see [section 3.2.4](#)).

#### 3.2.2 Scientific advice for amending the European Climate Law - Setting climate goals to strengthen EU strategic priorities

**Extended 2025 work programme:** *“The upcoming revision of the European Climate Law offers an opportunity to emphasise the importance of climate resilience and preparedness in EU climate policy. To support this, the Advisory Board will, in the first half of 2025, deliver a science-based analysis on*

*strengthening climate adaptation and resilience in the European Climate Law. As part of this output, the Advisory Board will also reiterate its recommendations on an EU 2040 climate target.”*

**Actions in 2025-Q1 2026:** The Board published a targeted report on ‘Scientific advice for amending the European Climate Law - Setting climate goals to strengthen EU strategic priorities’ on 2 June 2025. This targeted advice builds on previous work of the Board: it reaffirms the Advisory Board’s 2023 recommendation, consolidates its 2024 and 2025 advice on policy opportunities to support EU climate targets, while introducing new analysis and recommendations on strengthening climate adaptation in EU climate governance, further developed in its subsequent report on climate resilience (see [section 3.2.4](#)). The advice also reiterates the need for ambitious EU domestic climate ambition in light of the new strategic priorities of the EU, and in line with latest scientific evidence, international commitments and legal guiding principles.

### 3.2.3 Strengthening climate mitigation and resilience of EU agriculture

**Extended 2025 work programme:** *“The EU’s agri-food system plays a vital role in achieving the climate mitigation and adaptation goals established by the European Climate Law. The agriculture sector, strongly impacted by climate change, has significant potential to enhance resilience through adaptation measures, while also contributing to greenhouse gas emission reductions and removals. Recognising the need for a balanced approach that considers various perspectives such as climate objectives, food security, economic competitiveness, and farmers’ welfare, the Advisory Board aims to provide science-based advice to EU policymakers to support the upcoming revision of the CAP and the anticipated post-2030 climate policy package, expected in 2026.”*

**Actions in 2025-Q1 2026:** Based on work carried out in 2024 and 2025, the Advisory Board published its report on ‘Climate adaptation and mitigation in the agri-food system – Recommendations for coherent EU policies’ on 11 March, 2026. The assessment covered potential mitigation and adaptation pathways in the agri-food system, including their potential contributions to greenhouse gas emission reductions and removals, links with adaptation and resilience to climate change, and implications for other environmental and socio-economic dimensions. Based on this assessment, the Advisory Board concluded on the need for a systemic transition of the agri-food system, and explored what policies would be needed at the EU level to deliver such a transition. This publication was connected closely with other work on carbon dioxide removals (see [section 3.2.1](#)) and climate resilience (see [section 3.2.4](#)).

### 3.2.4 Climate adaptation and resilience

**Extended 2025 work programme:** *“To support EU’s efforts in enhancing its adaptive capacity, the Advisory Board will deliver several sets of recommendations on this issue. As discussed in section 3.4, the Advisory Board will assess adaptation and resilience in the EU’s agriculture and food systems, building on work from 2023 and 2024. This analysis will contribute to the Advisory Board’s broader report on mitigation and adaptation pathways within the EU’s agri-food sector.*

*Additionally, in the second half of 2025, the Advisory Board will evaluate the current policy framework and provide recommendations aimed at bolstering the EU’s adaptive capacity, resilience, and reducing vulnerability to climate change. This output will aim to inform the preparation of a European Climate Adaptation Plan.”*

**Actions in 2025-Q1 2026:** The Advisory Board published its report ‘Strengthening resilience to climate change – Recommendations for an effective EU adaptation policy framework’. This advice builds on the key priorities for adaptation in its advice on the European Climate Law (see [section 3.2.2](#)), and complements the later publication on agriculture (see [section 3.2.3](#)). Further consultation with experts

and review of the relevant EU policies and policy proposals, scientific and grey literature served to inform the analysis. The result is a report articulated around six guiding principles, along with specific recommendations on EU policies. The report aims to provide independent, science-based advice to inform the upcoming package for an integrated framework for European climate resilience and risk management, expected in the last quarter of 2026.

### 3.2.5 Continued engagement with experts and stakeholders

**Extended 2025 work programme:** *“The Advisory Board will continue its dialogue with a wide range of experts and stakeholders across the EU and beyond. The dialogue will help to scope the new activities and disseminate the findings from accomplished tasks.*

*The Advisory Board will keep up the engagement with the national scientific climate councils, with a view to taking stock of national progress and challenges and nurturing the network of climate advisory bodies across the EU. It will continue its dialogue with Central and Eastern European scientific and climate stakeholder community.”*

**Actions in 2025-Q1 2026:** The Advisory Board continued to engage actively with experts and stakeholders within the EU and beyond. Members disseminated the Advisory Board’s publications and recommendations through outreach events, conferences, workshops and engagements with key audiences, including EU institutions, the scientific community, national climate councils and the wider public. The Advisory Board maintained a regular dialogue with the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission, while also engaging with business and civil society organisations, including think tanks and non-governmental organisations.

Through its Secretariat, the Advisory Board further strengthened exchanges with the European scientific community and national climate advisory bodies, contributing to the broader ecosystem of independent climate expertise in Europe. This included continued engagement with the International Climate Councils Network (ICCN), expert workshops and webinars, participation in scientific conferences, and exchanging with organisations such as the European Academies’ Science Advisory Council (EASAC).

## 4 2026 work programme

### 4.1 Strategic and policy context

Through the delivery of its 2026 work programme, the Advisory Board aims to provide timely, relevant and scientifically robust advice, supporting the development, implementation, and monitoring of EU climate policies. The evolving EU policy agenda for 2026 and 2027, alongside broader strategic and geopolitical developments, will play an important role in shaping the Advisory Board’s activities and priorities.

The strategic priorities of the European Commission place a strong emphasis on strengthening the EU’s security, competitiveness, resilience and preparedness. These priorities build in particular on several key 2024 reports, including the Letta report on the Future of the Single Market, the Draghi report on the future of European competitiveness, the Niinistö report on strengthening Europe’s civilian and military preparedness and readiness, and the report of the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture. Taken together, these reports underline the importance of accelerating the transition towards a climate-neutral and climate-resilient economy as a condition for Europe’s long-term prosperity, resilience and strategic autonomy.

The establishment of the EU 2040 target through the amendment to the European Climate Law in 2026 has further set the direction for the development of the EU's post-2030 climate policy framework. Building on the Fit for 55 package and other existing policies, the next phase of the EU climate policy framework is expected to increasingly focus on implementation, policy coherence and the conditions required to achieve climate neutrality and climate resilience in a changing global context.

Several key elements of the EU climate, energy and industrial policy framework are expected to be reviewed or developed in 2026 and 2027. This includes revisions to the EU ETS, the Effort Sharing Regulation, the LULUCF regulation and the Governance Regulation, alongside initiatives related to industrial decarbonisation, energy infrastructure, electrification, circular economy and energy security. In parallel, the EU is expected to introduce an integrated framework for climate resilience and risk management across sectors. Preparations for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) – the EU budget for the period 2028-2034 – are also expected to shape discussions on the financing of climate adaptation and mitigation, industrial transformation and support for just transition.

At the same time, achieving the EU's climate mitigation and resilience objectives will require sustained implementation efforts across sectors and governance levels, amid growing geopolitical, economic and climate-related pressures. Questions related to implementation capacity, infrastructure, investment, social fairness, competitiveness and resilience are expected to play an increasingly important role in EU climate policy discussions. In this context, independent scientific advice remains essential to support policy coherence, assess progress towards climate objectives, and identify opportunities and challenges associated with the transition.

In parallel, the EU will continue to promote ambitious climate action internationally, including in the context of the Paris Agreement and preparations for the second Global Stocktake in 2028. Building on the April 2026 European Council conclusions reaffirming the EU's climate commitments and support for stronger international cooperation, the EU is expected to continue advancing climate diplomacy, international partnerships and cooperation on mitigation, including carbon markets, as well as adaptation and resilience.

## 4.2 Overview of the 2026 work programme

In 2026, the Advisory Board will continue providing independent scientific advice to support the EU's progress towards climate neutrality and climate resilience, in line with its mandate under the European Climate Law. The work programme will focus on key policy and implementation challenges related to the development of the EU's post-2030 climate policy framework and the delivery of the EU's climate objectives in an evolving strategic context.

The Advisory Board's activities in 2026 will focus in particular on:

- assessing progress towards the EU's climate objectives, policy gaps and opportunities;
- exploring pathways and policy conditions supporting industrial transition, geopolitical resilience and international cooperation on climate action;
- communicating scientific advice and strengthening engagement with experts, policymakers and stakeholders.

Through these activities, the Advisory Board aims to contribute to ongoing discussions on the development, implementation and coherence of EU climate policies. Across its work, the Advisory Board may consider cross-cutting issues such as the integration of mitigation and adaptation objectives, policy coherence, the co-benefits of climate action, financing needs, and the socio-economic dimensions of the transition, while also supporting broader EU strategic priorities related to resilience, competitiveness, preparedness and long-term prosperity.

Subject to available resources, the Advisory Board may also undertake additional activities during 2026 in response to emerging scientific evidence, policy developments or requests for timely scientific input relevant to its mandate.

### **4.3 EU progress towards its climate targets, policy gaps and opportunities**

The European Union has substantially expanded and strengthened its climate policy framework in recent years, in particular through the European Green Deal, and the European Climate Law and the Fit for 55 package. However, maintaining the pace and scale of progress required to achieve climate neutrality and strengthen resilience by 2050 will require sustained implementation efforts across sectors and governance levels, alongside continued policy development and adjustment in response to evolving scientific evidence and societal challenges.

Under the European Climate Law and in the context of the second Global Stocktake under the Paris Agreement, the European Commission is required to assess progress towards the EU's climate objectives, taking into account the latest scientific evidence, including the reports from the Advisory Board. In this context, the Advisory Board intends to continue providing independent scientific input on the progress, coherence and effectiveness of EU climate policies and measures.

Building on its 2024 report *Towards EU climate neutrality: progress, policy gaps and opportunities*, the Advisory Board plans to initiate a new analytical workstream assessing progress towards the EU's climate objectives and identifying key policy gaps, opportunities and implementation challenges. The analysis will consider developments across key sectors and policy areas, while also examining broader questions related to policy coherence, adaptation and resilience, implementation conditions and long-term transition pathways.

The analysis is expected to contribute to discussions on the evolution of the EU's post-2030 climate policy framework and the implementation of existing policies in a changing strategic context. The work will be initiated in the second half of 2026, with the publication timeline to be communicated at a later stage.

### **4.4 Industrial transition, geopolitical resilience and international cooperation on climate action**

Achieving climate neutrality and strengthening resilience will require a profound transformation of industrial systems, energy use and production processes, both within the European Union and globally. At the same time, growing geopolitical tensions, increasing fragmentation of international cooperation, energy market volatility and strategic dependencies on fossil fuels, critical resources and clean technology supply chains create additional challenges for the transition. In particular, recent crises have highlighted Europe's energy vulnerabilities. In this context, accelerating the transition towards a climate-neutral and resilient industrial base, while deepening the EU single market and strengthening international cooperation on climate action, could support several of the EU's broader strategic objectives, including competitiveness, preparedness, climate resilience, energy security and reduced exposure to geopolitical and energy-related risks.

Many industrial sectors remain strongly dependent on fossil fuels for energy and feedstock, and on carbon-intensive production processes. This contributes substantially to greenhouse gas emissions while also creating vulnerabilities linked to energy and commodity price volatility, supply chain disruptions, and dependence on imports of fossil fuels and critical resources. Energy-intensive and trade-exposed sectors also face increasing pressures linked to high energy prices, global competition, uneven international industrial policy and subsidy frameworks, carbon-price asymmetries and growing

dependence on externally supported clean technology supply chains. The transition towards more electrified, resource-efficient and low-carbon industrial systems may therefore contribute to reducing strategic dependencies, enhancing energy affordability and strengthening the resilience and competitiveness of the European economy.

In this context, the Advisory Board plans to explore how EU policies could support the transition of industry towards climate neutrality and resilience in a changing global environment. The work may examine policy coherence and broader system conditions relevant to industrial transformation, including energy and resource use, infrastructure needs, supply chains, innovation and competitiveness, international cooperation and resilience considerations. It could also explore how EU policies and international partnerships may contribute to strengthening global climate action, energy security, reducing strategic dependencies and supporting cooperation on the transition away from fossil fuels, including through issues related to carbon leakage, carbon markets, CBAM and global industrial competitiveness.

The analysis is expected to contribute to discussions on the evolution of the EU's post-2030 climate, energy and industrial policy framework, including the conditions required to support a competitive, resilient and climate-neutral economy in an increasingly uncertain global context. The work will be initiated in the second half of 2026, with the publication timeline to be communicated at a later stage.

#### **4.5 Communication activities and continued engagement with experts and stakeholders**

The Advisory Board will continue to communicate proactively on its work and contribute to the public debate on climate change and its impacts through its regular formats and channels. This includes further enhancing the accessibility and visibility of its scientific advice and outputs, while raising broader awareness on climate change, climate policies, and impacts among key stakeholders and the wider public. In recognition of a dynamic and challenging context, the Advisory Board will consider other formats to be able to provide more agile inputs into relevant policy processes.

The Advisory Board will continue and expand its dialogue with a wide range of experts and stakeholders. The dialogue will help to scope and inform the work of the Advisory Board and disseminate the findings from completed tasks.

The Advisory Board will also continue strengthening engagement with national scientific climate councils, with a view of taking stock of national progress and challenges and nurturing the network of climate advisory bodies across the EU.