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# Assessing the Role of the SHARED GREEN DEAL Experiments in Advancing Climate Action

SHARED GREEN DEAL

October 2025

Mateja Šmid Hribar • Chiara Antonelli • Emma Bergeling • Daniela Ribeiro • Antje Disterheft • Elizabeta Vršnik • Monica Truninger • João Carraça • João Morais Mourato

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**Mateja Šmid Hribar**
Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
Slovenia

**Chiara Antonelli**
Institute for European Environmental Policy
Brussels

**Emma Bergeling**
Institute for European Environmental Policy
Brussels

**Daniela Ribeiro**
Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
Slovenia

**Antje Disterheft**
Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa
Portugal

**Elizabeta Vršnik**
Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
Slovenia

Rodrigo Cabrita

**Monica Truninger**
Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa
Portugal

**João Carraça**
Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa
Portugal

**João Morais Mourato**
Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa
Portugal

*Contact email for corresponding author:
mateja.smid@zrc-sazu.si


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# Executive Summary of Recommendations

This report synthetises key findings from a secondary analysis of the Horizon 2020 SHARED GREEN DEAL project, examining how the project's six social experiment streams contribute to the European Green Deal's priority on climate action. Conducted between 2023 and 2024 in 24 locations across Europe, the social experiments addressed key themes of the Green Deal: Clean Energy, Circular Economy, Efficient Renovations, Sustainable Mobility, Sustainable Food, and Biodiversity Preservation.

The findings show that local participation plays a crucial role in advancing climate action. Each experiment used inclusive, community-based approaches, such as visioning exercises, knowledge networks, and study circles, which successfully fostered behavioural change, strengthened social trust, and enabled practical contributions to both climate mitigation and adaptation goals. These community-based processes highlight the unique value of participatory methods in building locally embedded responses to global challenges.

However, many of the initiatives encountered barriers related to policy misalignment, bureaucracy, and a lack of institutional support, which limited their scalability and systemic impact. Climate benefits often emerged not from direct environmental goals, but as co-benefits of socially or economically motivated activities, such as energy renovations driven by comfort, or food projects motivated by health and affordability. This illustrates the importance of framing climate action in ways that resonate with local needs and values.

The report also highlights ongoing challenges around justice and inclusion. Vulnerable groups, such as rural households, low-income families, and women, often lack access to funding mechanisms or decision-making processes. This reinforces the need for tailored support systems to ensure that climate action is not only effective, but equitable.

More broadly, the findings underscore that integrated approaches are essential. Across all streams, the fragmentation of policy frameworks, between biodiversity, mobility, energy, and food systems, hampers the potential for coherent and systemic change. Participatory initiatives such as the social experiments can act as important bridges across these domains, but only if they are recognised and supported as such.

In light of these findings, the report puts forward several recommendations. At the local level, communities should be empowered through participatory methods and supported by context-specific resources, such as funding for local food initiatives, youth-led mobility planning, and small-scale circular economy hubs. At the regional and national levels, there is a need to harmonise relevant policies, reduce administrative burdens, and offer long-term funding for initiatives driven by communities and small enterprises. Data systems must also be improved to measure local climate contributions and guide inclusive policy design. At the European and international levels, efforts should be made to align climate, energy, food, and biodiversity strategies, and to fund transdisciplinary models that combine technological innovation with community empowerment. Platforms for trans-national learning and knowledge exchange are key to scaling up what works.

In conclusion, the social experiments analysed in this report demonstrate the potential of community-driven approaches to support climate action. Yet to fully realise this potential, systemic barriers must be addressed and the social dimensions of environmental change must be better integrated into climate governance. Bridging the gap between grassroots innovation and formal policy is essential for achieving a just and inclusive climate transition in Europe. This is more urgent than ever as the EU is pressing politically for a 90% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions GHG by 2040 in order to better secure the European Climate Act 2050 climate neutrality targets and comply with UN goals. To this effect, community-driven climate action initiatives are critical both as a territorialized climate policy incubator and accelerator, and as a policy-monitoring platform to ensure a just transition is achieved.

# List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| **BSC** | Bahavioural, social and cultural insights |
| **COP** | Conference of the Parties |
| **EC** | European Commission |
| **EU ETS** | European Union's Emissions Trading System |
| **GHG** | Greenhouse Gases |
| **JTM** | Just Transition Mechanism |
| **NDCs** | Nationally Determined Contributions |
| **NGO** | Non-Governmental Organisations |
| **SSH** | Social Sciences and Humanities |
| **UNFCCC** | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Introducing the project

This report presents insights from the **SHARED GREEN DEAL** project (Social sciences and Humanities for Achieving a Responsible, Equitable and Desirable Green Deal) which is part of the Horizon 2020 programme. The SHARED GREEN DEAL project aligns with the overarching aims of the European Green Deal policy programme to achieve climate neutrality and a toxic-free environment by 2050. Its core mission is to foster behavioural, social, and cultural transformations across Europe that are aligned with the strategic priorities of the European Green Deal.

SHARED GREEN DEAL provides Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) tools to support the implementation of the Green Deal programme.

At the core of SHARED GREEN DEAL are six thematic streams aligned with key Green Deal priorities: Clean Energy, Circular Economy, Efficient Renovations, Sustainable Mobility, Sustainable Food, and Biodiversity Preservation. SHARED GREEN DEAL implemented social experiments across different EU Member States and affiliated countries, designed to generate lessons for one of the six priority topics. Rooted in transdisciplinary action research, these experiments combined practical and academic knowledge to drive change through hands-on learning, pilots, and grassroots innovation.

The experiment streams were implemented in four European locations each between April 2023 and June 2024, spanning 17 countries (see Figure 1.1). A total of 24 social experiments were delivered across different member states and affiliated countries, working with local municipalities and not-for-profit organisations. Emphasizing two-way dialogue and inclusive participation, local NGOs and public authorities led the initiatives, ensuring alignment with local contexts and existing networks.

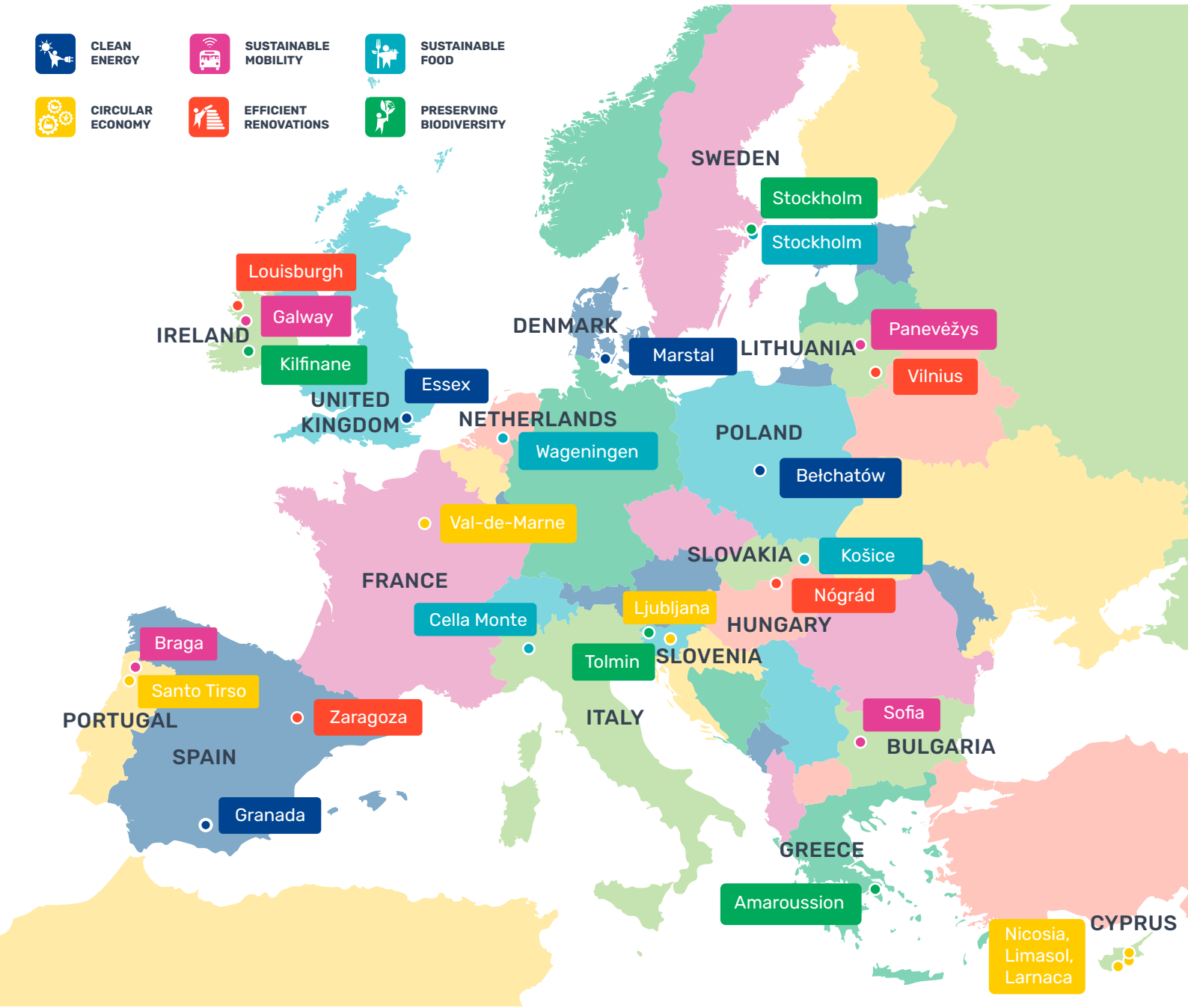


*Figure 1.1. Map of the locations of the 24 SHARED GREEN DEAL social experiments across Europe (Kovács et al., 2024).*

The **Clean Energy experiment stream** explored how community visioning can support climate action through just, inclusive energy transitions. Four local partners were selected to work on this theme from Ærø (Denmark), Granada (Spain), Bełchatów (Poland), and Essex (UK). Social experiments were launched in all four locations to co-create local visions for sustainable energy futures. Although only three of the experiments were brought to completion, they nevertheless provided valuable lessons on connecting local knowledge with broader climate goals, and on fostering relationships, awareness, and capacity-building among stakeholders.

The **Circular Economy experiment stream** focused on supporting business innovation through the establishment of Local Accelerator Hubs in Portugal, Cyprus, Slovenia, and France. These Local

Accelerator Hubs served as physical and digital platforms for co-creation, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among local stakeholders including businesses, authorities, and civil society. The aim was to promote circular business models that reduce waste, regenerate resources, and align with EU climate and sustainability goals. The experiments contributed to building local capacity, embedding circular practices in communities, and linking local action to European frameworks such as the Circular Economy Action Plan under the European Green Deal.

The **Efficient Renovations experiment stream** addressed a critical area of climate action by targeting emissions reductions in the building sector—one of the EU's key priorities for achieving climate neutrality. This stream explored how social, technical, and policy factors intersect in the context of housing renovation. Through the creation of Knowledge Networks in four European locations—Hungary, Ireland, Spain, and Lithuania—citizens and professionals were brought together to share know-how, build capacity, and co-develop solutions. These networks helped foster practical understanding and increased motivation for energy-efficient retrofits.

The **Sustainable Mobility experiment stream** focused on sustainable mobility, especially within schools, by developing context-specific mobility strategies within Urban Mobility Labs, developed within schools in four European cities – Braga (Portugal), Galway (Ireland), Panevezys (Lithuania), and Sofia (Bulgaria). These involved youth and stakeholders including teachers, parents and school administrators with particular focus given to involving young people, and aimed to promote sustainable mobility in schools, infrastructure improvements, and mobility policies. Such co-creative participation processes have proven effective in raising awareness and encouraging sustainable transportation.

The **Sustainable Food experiment stream** explored how agroecology and local food systems can support climate action and sustainability goals. Four social experiments were conducted in Italy, Slovakia, Sweden, and the Netherlands, each applying the transition arena approach—a collaborative process that brings together local actors to co-create visions and strategies for transformation. These initiatives aimed to demonstrate how local practices, rooted in community values and sustainability principles, can drive system-level change in the food system. While each initiative successfully developed locally relevant solutions, they also revealed the need for stronger support and coordination beyond the local level to achieve broader climate impacts.

The **Preserving Biodiversity experiment stream** investigated the various values people place on biodiversity in both rural and urban settings. To achieve this, Study Circles were implemented — a non-formal community learning method — in four locations: Slovenia, Greece, Sweden, and Ireland. Groups of adults met monthly as part of this social experiment, with the expectation that the outcomes will lead to transformative changes in how participants value biodiversity, ultimately aiding in efforts to combat biodiversity loss as part of the broader EU Green Deal agenda.

A summarised overview with further information on each experiment site, the methodological approaches as well as the target groups can be found in Table A1.1, in the Appendix.

## 1.2. Introducing the Report

This report contributes to the evolving policy discourse on Climate Action by examining how socially driven forms of innovation can inform and complement existing environmental governance. Drawing on a secondary analysis of the SHARED GREEN DEAL project, it explores how insights from participatory experiments — though not initially focused on climate action — can support a more systemic and inclusive transition toward a climate neutral Europe by 2050.

The report's objective is to foreground the social, behavioural, and institutional dimensions that are often underrepresented in climate action policymaking. It situates the findings of the SHARED GREEN DEAL within the broader strategic aims of the **European Climate Law (**European Union, 2021), reflecting critically on how bottom-up initiatives may help close persistent policy and implementation gaps—particularly in relation to equity, participation, and local relevance. In this vein, this report will also frame its findings in relation to the aims of the **Just Transition Mechanism** (JTM), which was created to assist areas that depend heavily on carbon-intensive industries, helping to guarantee a just transition for both workers and local communities.

The report begins with an overview of the international and European policy context for Climate Action, identifying key legislative frameworks and structural challenges, with a particular emphasis on social inclusion. It then examines how climate action challenges and concerns were addressed across the six thematic streams of the SHARED GREEN DEAL project, based on data sources collected from each experiment stream.

## Data Sources

This report draws upon insights and recommendations from six individual reports on each social experiment stream (Beers et al., 2025; Foulds et al., 2025; Gray et al., 2025a; Haufe and Tönkő, 2025, Ruiz et al., 2025; Šmid Hribar et al., 2025) (see also Table A1.2 in the Appendix), as well as internal Appendices that included reflections on implications of each experiment stream to Climate Action (guiding questions are provided in Box 1.2). The above mentioned reports and internal Appendices analysed the 24 social experiments, including summaries of their design and participant numbers. These elements were key inputs for the current analysis, alongside the SHARED GREEN DEAL Case Study Guides (Kovács et al., 2024) and the SHARED GREEN DEAL European policies analysis (Urios et al., 2022) for policy contextualization. However, as these materials often contained only limited reflection on climate action and zero pollution (since these issues were not explicitly addressed during the social experiments), the authors of this report complemented them with additional information drawn from existing policy reports and published literature.

In parallel with this Climate Action report and the report on Zero Pollution (Paliogiannis et al., 2025), another complementary set of documents provide secondary analyses of the social experiments data across five cross-cutting SSH priority themes: (i) Gender and diversity (Aggeli et al., 2025), ii) Justice, Vulnerabilities and Inequalities (Bharucha, 2025), (iii) Societal Challenges post-COVID-19 (Truninger et al., 2025), (iv) Governance agendas, conventions and framings (Gray et al., 2025b), and (v) Geographic differences and evolutions across time (Nieboer et al., 2025). These are available on the project's website. Other resources related to the implementation and impacts from the social experiments can also be found via www.sharedgreendeal.eu.

***Box 1.2. Guiding questions to stimulate reflection on implications of experiment streams to Climate Action.***

- In what ways did your experiment approach support progress toward the Climate Action targets at local, regional, national and/or international levels? Please try to briefly describe at least one concrete action.
- How particular climate policy contexts (policy gaps and regulatory barriers or supportive policy framework) in your geographic locations affected your experiment and its outcome?
- How did your experiment approach create opportunities for regional collaboration and knowledge-sharing to drive climate action efforts?
- How could your experiment approach foster transformative change and systemic solutions to climate change challenges?
- The key difficulties/limitations in terms of promoting climate action; and how future experiments might better mitigate them?

Building on these insights, the report develops a series of multi-level policy recommendations aimed at improving alignment between basic innovation and institutional reform. It concludes with a reflection on the enabling conditions required to advance Climate Action goals in ways that are not only environmentally effective but also socially just and contextually grounded. In doing so, the report highlights the importance of integrating diverse knowledge systems and participatory approaches into climate action governance, underscoring that lasting progress towards a climate-neutral Europe by 2050 will depend as much on inclusive social processes as on regulatory enforcement or technological advancements.

Despite their successes, the initiatives encountered significant systemic barriers that limited their potential to contribute more broadly to climate action. Organised in *Experiences and lessons learnt*, *Challenges and Limitations* and *Actions needed*, the insights from this report highlight how these barriers for climate action manifest and how they can be better tackled.

With climate action as a cross-cutting lens, the report addresses a key priority area of the Green Deal with insights that can be of relevance for ongoing climate negotiations, particularly for the time after 2040.

# 2. Policy Overview on Climate Action

The severe risks posed by climate change to global populations and ecosystems are well understood (IPCC, 2023). Taking measures to address the causes and consequences of climate change in the current - albeit rapidly closing - window of opportunity is thus key to avoiding the worst impacts. Climate action encompasses all measures aimed at addressing the causes and consequences of climate change (European Union, n.d.).

Climate action is twofold and encompasses:

- First, efforts to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in order to mitigate climate change, referred to as *climate mitigation*, and
- Second, efforts to increase resilience to the impacts of climate change, referred to as *climate adaptation*.

This chapter outlines the policy context for climate action, starting from the global context and outlining key international policies and frameworks, then zooming into an EU policy context, and finally concluding with key policy gaps relating to the SSH.

## 2.1. Global Context: International Policies and Legislative Frameworks

Over the past several decades, multilateral progress has been achieved on several international agreements for climate action. In 1992, at the Rio Earth Summit, the foundational **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC) was agreed upon. Ratified by 198 countries (the 'Parties') including all EU member states, it entered into force in 1994, intending to stabilise GHG emissions at sufficient levels to prevent dangerous climate change, allowing ecosystems to adapt and securing stable food production (United Nations, 1992). Central principles include equity, common but differentiated responsibilities, consideration of burdens and disproportionate impacts of climate change, and the precautionary principle.

The UNFCCC established the Conference of the Parties (COP), where the Parties of the Convention come together annually to make decisions. The **Kyoto Protocol** was adopted at the COP in 1997, constituting the first legally binding instrument for GHG emission reductions. However, it only covered some 12% of emissions since large emitters were absent from the signatories (European Commission, n.d.-b). The **Paris Agreement** was adopted at the COP in 2015 to follow the Kyoto Protocol's expiration in 2020. With 195 signatories and increasing ambition, the Paris Agreement specifies that global average temperatures should be limited to "well below" 2 degrees with efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels (United Nations Climate Change, n.d.-b; United Nations Treaty Collection, 2025).

Under the Paris Agreement, Parties submit reports, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), every five years (the last NDC deadline was February 2025)[1], specifying efforts for climate change mitigation and adaptation. The EU submits one NDC for all member states. On another five-year cycle starting in 2023, a so-called 'global stocktake' is held to assess the implementation of the agreement and to inform the updated NDCs (United Nations Climate Change, n.d.-a). The Paris Agreement, together with Goal 13 on Climate Action in the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** constitutes two of the most central international policies and frameworks for climate action.

## 2.2. The EU Climate Action Policy Framework

The EU climate action policy framework has evolved over several decades. During the last European Commission (EC) mandate, between 2019 and 2024, the climate action policy framework was advanced and key legislation was adopted and revised under the **European Green Deal** (European Commission, 2019). It was communicated in 2019 as an integral part of implementing the SDGs, constituting a roadmap to climate neutrality in 2050 (European Commission, 2019). The European Green Deal advanced the EU climate action policy framework in numerous ways.

A major milestone in this framework was the adoption of the **European Climate Law** (European Union, 2021). The law formalises the goal of climate neutrality - i.e., zero net GHG emissions - by 2050, and an interim target of 55% reduction in 2030 compared to 1990 levels of emissions. For 2040, the law requires the EC to propose a target within 6 months of the first global stock-take under the Paris Agreement. In June 2023, the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (ESABC) recommended a 90-95% reduction by 2040 (European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change, 2023), and the EC presented a communication (a non-binding policy document) recommending a 90% reduction, i.e., the lower end of the spectrum recommended by the ESABCC (European Commission, n.d.-a).

The Commission, appointed in December 2024, was responsible for presenting the official legislative proposal to formalize this target, which it did in July 2025.

Secondly, to set the enabling conditions to reach the 2030 target, several pieces of legislation were advanced and adopted under the umbrella of **"Fit for 55"** (Council of the European Union, 2023). 14 different areas are included in the legislative package, including:

- a reform and extension of the **EU Emissions Trading System** (**EU ETS**; Directive (EU) 2023/958) to expand carbon pricing to new sectors and implement the polluter pays principle to drive emission reductions;
- a reform of targets in the **Effort Sharing Regulation** (Regulation (EU) 2023/842) to strengthen national emissions reduction targets for sectors outside the ETS, such as transport and agriculture;
- the introduction of the **Social Climate Fund** (Regulation (EU) 2023/955) to use the revenues from the expanded ETS to support vulnerable micro-enterprises, transport users, and households affected by rising carbon costs.

The European Climate Law also required the Commission to adopt a climate adaptation strategy as required under the Paris Agreement, which was adopted in 2021 (European Commission, 2021).

1 This deadline was only met by a few countries, and until the close of this report (end of October 2025) only 62 countries submitted their NDCs (Climate Action Tracker, 2025). The EU could only agree on a statement of intent, indicating a reduction until 2035 between 66,25-72.5% from 1990 levels as they postponed to define a binding 2040 reduction target. See also Section 2.2.

It sets the vision that the EU will be 'a climate-resilient society' by 2050 and points to measures in inter alia national fiscal frameworks, nature-based solutions, and reducing climate-related risk. As climate impacts intensify across Europe, including heatwaves, flooding, and wildfires, adaptation remains a critical pillar of the EU's climate response.

While the EU's climate policies emphasise emissions reduction and adaptation, addressing social equity and climate justice remains an ongoing challenge. The JTM has been developed to support regions heavily reliant on carbon-intensive industries, ensuring a fair transition for workers and communities. However, disparities persist between member states and socio-economic groups in their ability to adapt to new regulations and green technologies. Civil society organizations stress the need for stronger safeguards to protect vulnerable communities from the socio-economic impacts of climate policies (European Environmental Bureau, 2023).

How the EU climate action policy will develop under the current commission (2024-2029) remains to be seen. The Competitiveness Compass published in January 2025 (European Commission, 2025) provides some hints on what to expect. On July 2nd, the Commission published the most expected amendment to the Climate Law (the 2040 Climate Target), as mentioned above, recommending to reduce the EU's net GHG emissions by 90% by 2040, relative to 1990. Key announced policies include the Clean Industrial Deal and an Action Plan on Affordable Energy, a Sustainable Transport Plan, High Speed Rail Plan, a Vision for Agriculture and Food, a Circular Economy Act (European Commission, 2025).

However, this has proven challenging, as the latest negotiations in September 2025 showed delays in voting due to EU member states' inability to agree on the proposed 90% emissions cut (European Council, 2025). Furthermore, environmental civil society and non-governmental organisations stress that the competitiveness and simplification aims of the Commission should not be equated with environmental and social deregulation (European Environmental Bureau, 2025; Climate Action Network Europe, 2025).

## 2.3. Policy Gaps and Structural Challenges for Effective Climate Action

While the global and EU policies for climate action have advanced since the 1990s, significant gaps remain. Looking first at climate change mitigation, the latest global stocktake shows that even full implementation of existing NDCs will still result in around 2.1-2.8 degrees of warming.

This highlights the urgent need for intensified action to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement (United Nations Climate Change, n.d.-b). The pace of emission reductions in the EU needs to at least double to reach climate targets (European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change, 2024) which themselves should arguably be updated to reflect insufficient reductions' impact on the carbon budget (WWF, 2025). The European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (2024) points to areas for improvement, including:

- **ambition gaps** in the price levels and mechanisms in the EU ETS, lacking review of consistency between national long-term strategies and National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs (requirement under Regulation (EU) 2018/1999)), incentives for climate action in the agricultural sector, finance, and too high reliance on voluntary consumer responsibility for reducing energy and material demand;
- **implementation gaps** in Member States' NECPs, for instance, in terms of plans for phasing out fossil fuel subsidies;

- **policy inconsistencies,** for example, with harmful tax exemptions in the Energy Taxation Directive and the EU Taxonomy;
- **policy gaps** relating to when the emission allowances of EU ETS reach zero, an unfounded amount of support for hydrogen development, and policies for demand-side mitigation of emission-intensive products;
- **lack of cross-policy integration:** Even when ambitious climate policies are effectively implemented, they can show misalignment with additional measures that need to work synergistically together. For example, EU adaptation strategies require strong alignment with mitigation policies. When this does not occur, it can create distortions and inefficiencies.

In recent years, EU institutions have increasingly recognized the need for climate adaptation, taking actions based on the adaptation strategy. The European Climate Risk Assessment finds medium policy readiness at the EU level for most climate risks, which highlights the room for improvement. Examples of policy readiness being only 'medium' include climate risks to businesses from interrupted supply chains, soil health, and marine ecosystems (European Environment Agency, 2024).

Looking specifically from the SSH perspective that characterises the SHARED GREEN DEAL Project, we can highlight further gaps. For one, there is significant room for improving understanding and recognition of socio-economic and inequality impacts of and potential interventions in EU climate policy, as well as increasing public engagement in climate policy-making such as the National Energy and Climate Plan process (European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change, 2024). Indeed, when analysing relevant EC Communications, Horizon Europe Mission policy documents, and Impact Assessments of the SHARED GREEN DEAL, Urios et al. (2022) found that Behavioural, Social and Cultural (BSC) insights[2] are generally considered but in a fragmented and limited way. Most documents were deemed to have a limited and superficial inclusion of BSC problem analysis and interventions (approximately 55%). Some 9% were deemed "BSC blind", and 36% were specific and well-informed.[3]

In summary, there are significant gaps in climate policy concerning ambition, policy integration, implementation, consistency, and overall effectiveness. Specifically, there are deficiencies in addressing behavioural, social, and cultural issues, as well as insights and interventions related to them. Given the importance of human behaviour in achieving impactful climate action and policy, it is crucial to work on closing these gaps. This is the focus of the following chapters.

2 BSC issues are defined as "issues as topics that are related to individual and collective drivers of behavioural change, and thereby affect climate policy objectives", and BSC insights are defined as "policy-relevant evidence and/or analysis of BSC issues" (Urios et al., 2022, p. 9).

3 In absolute numbers, 22 documents were analysed of which 2 were BSC blind, 12 had limited and superficial consideration, and 8 were specific and well-informed. See Urios et al.; (2022) for further description of methodology and results.

# 3. SHARED GREEN DEAL Insights on Climate Action

This chapter examines how local communities, citizens, and diverse stakeholders can contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, drawing on social experiments conducted across the six thematic streams aligned with key European Green Deal priorities: **Clean Energy, Circular Economy, Efficient Renovations, Sustainable Mobility, Sustainable Food,** and **Biodiversity Preservation**. The aim is to offer insights, identify key challenges, and propose concrete actions that promote shared responsibility, behavioural change, and the collaborative creation of sustainable solutions to address climate change.

## 3.1. Clean Energy

### Experiences and Lessons Learned

Community visioning proved to be a powerful entry point for engaging diverse stakeholders in clean energy conversations. The process enabled participants to connect personal and community priorities with energy governance and climate action issues, generating more feasible and locally grounded ideas for change. Visioning workshops led to tangible outcomes such as the launch of a community energy hub (Jaywick), strengthened energy communities (Granada), and enabled roles for NGOs and empowered women in transition efforts (Bełchatów). These successes highlight that bottom-up, inclusive approaches can build trust, motivate action, and familiarise local communities with climate policy.

### Challenges and Limitations

Key challenges included misalignment with local policy contexts, resistance from authorities, and lack of sustained funding. In some locations, community-led efforts were seen as competing with official plans. Furthermore, the climate dimension was not always the primary motivator for participants, who were more often driven by economic or social concerns. Framing energy and climate conversations in ways that resonate with people's lived realities requires tailored approaches to the specific local contexts.

### Actions Needed

- Support local-level, inclusive community visioning to foster community ownership and support for clean energy transitions.
- Strengthen cooperation between community actors and local governments to avoid fragmentation and enhance legitimacy.

- Fund grassroots energy initiatives, reduce reliance on volunteers, and provide training and long-term support.
- Adapt communication strategies to align with local interests, focusing on co-benefits such as cost savings, resilience, and health.
- Scale visioning to regional levels to build broader support while maintaining local relevance.
- Ensure legal clarity and institutional support for community-led energy initiatives to unlock their climate mitigation potential.
- Facilitate peer learning between communities to adapt and replicate successful local models.
- Include young people and marginalized voices through engaging formats that empower participation.

## 3.2. Circular Economy

### Experiences and Lessons Learned

The experiments demonstrated that creating dedicated collaborative spaces, such as Local Accelerator Hubs, can effectively support the transition to circular business models. These hubs fostered local ownership and facilitated stakeholder engagement through design-thinking workshops and cross sector dialogue. This participatory approach enabled businesses to co-develop and pilot innovative solutions, and allowed public authorities to align local strategies with national and EU-level climate goals.

Methods of co-creation, such as ideation sessions and award schemes, successfully incentivised participation and triggered innovation. Cross-site knowledge sharing, facilitated by inter-hub meetings and a central repository, helped to disseminate good practices and built collective momentum across regions. While the experiments focused on value chains related to food, water, and nutrients; construction and buildings; and textiles, with a particular focus on waste reduction, climate change aspects were nevertheless included in all these areas.

### Challenges and Limitations

Several challenges limited the broader climate action of the social experiments. Businesses, particularly SMEs, faced barriers in accessing financial and regulatory support due to fragmented policies, complex application processes, and limited awareness of circular economy benefits. In Cyprus and Portugal, bureaucratic hurdles and market size constrained implementation, while in Slovenia and France, eligibility criteria excluded smaller actors from funding opportunities.

Public funding remains a key enabler, but long-term financial sustainability is still a concern. Moreover, low public awareness and limited citizen engagement restricted demand for circular products and services. Technological integration varied widely, with disparities in digital readiness hindering innovation adoption. A lack of harmonised impact metrics also made it difficult to measure and communicate the climate benefits of circular strategies effectively.

### Actions Needed

- Establish and scale Local Accelerator Hubs to foster collaboration, pilot innovations, and connect stakeholders.
- Streamline regulatory and financial support mechanisms to make circular economy adoption more accessible for SMEs.
- Harmonise national and EU-level policies to reduce fragmentation and ensure coherent support for circular business models.
- Invest in circular economy education, workforce reskilling, and digital infrastructure to build capacity for innovation.
- Develop and implement standardized metrics to measure the climate impact of circular economy practices (e.g. Life Cycle Assessment or the EU Circular Economy Monitoring Framework).
- Facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships to bridge gaps between research, policy, and practice and enhance systemic change.
- Increase public awareness campaigns to shift consumption behaviours and stimulate demand for circular products and services.

## 3.3. Efficient Renovations

### Experiences and Lessons Learned

The experiment demonstrated that Knowledge Networks are an effective way to engage both citizens and professionals in the renovation process. One of the key successes was the empowerment of residents who, through the knowledge network, gained the confidence and skills to lead renovation efforts—e.g., a couple in Vilnius who successfully organized a vote for renovation in their multi-apartment building. These knowledge networks also helped build trust, promote social learning, and collaboration across sectors. Importantly, professionals involved in the networks shared their expertise within and beyond the local experiment context, amplifying the experiment's reach. Furthermore, embedding the experiments within supportive policy contexts (e.g., national renovation subsidies in Lithuania) proved crucial in enabling real-world impacts.

### Challenges and Limitations

Despite the positive outcomes, several challenges were identified. A major challenge was unequal access to renovation funding and bureaucratic hurdles, especially for vulnerable or rural households. In multi-apartment buildings, collective decision-making posed difficulties, with some residents opposing renovation despite broad support. Additionally, gendered dynamics sometimes limited women's roles in renovation processes. The fragmented regulatory landscape—e.g., overlapping municipal, regional, and national policies—also complicated efforts. While the networks reached many stakeholders, there remained a risk of engaging only the 'usual suspects', limiting broader systemic transformation.

### Actions Needed

- Scale-up Knowledge Networks across regions, ensuring participation of diverse social groups and professionals.
- Strengthen support for vulnerable households by partnering with trusted community organizations and streamlining access to funding.
- Improve alignment of policies across governance levels to reduce regulatory complexity and foster coordinated action.
- Integrate social justice and gender equality as core elements in renovation planning and outreach.
- Promote systemic change by using renovation as an entry point for broader energy transitions, green economy development, and community empowerment.

## 3.4. Sustainable Mobility

### Experiences and Lessons Learned

The Urban Mobility Labs resulted in policy recommendations for school travel strategies and context-specific solutions. The social experiments demonstrated that schools can successfully raise awareness and promote learning about sustainable mobility, engaging both students and adults. These initiatives led to positive behavioural changes in regards to climate action, such as increased walking and public transport use.

Additionally, changes in the material environment were seen, specifically the implementation of a pedestrian crossing in front of a school in Braga which shows that the urban mobility labs can lead to changes in the material environment. The active participation of various stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and municipalities, promote the development of localized solutions.

A multigenerational approach was crucial for ensuring the long-term success of these initiatives. Young people emerged as key influencers and change agents, inspiring their peers and families to adopt sustainable transport which resulted in a stronger impact of the projects. Context-specific and co-created solutions proved to be the most effective in driving change. These encourage sustainable travel modes as well as empower and promote the engagement of young people. Schools also became central hubs for promoting sustainable mobility.

### Challenges and Limitations

The main barriers to changing the behavior of participants of the Urban Mobility Labs included factors such as the distance to school, the integration of school travel into family routines, weather conditions, heavy school bags, gender norms, road safety issues, and parental concerns. Poor transport infrastructure was another challenge, as it limited the adoption of sustainable mobility. Many viewed infrastructure and built environment changes as difficult, requiring involvement from actors at the macro level.

Additionally, the use of public transport was often hindered by perceptions of unreliability, infrequency or poor function. Safety concerns also played a role, with people hesitant to use

climate-neutral transport like bicycles due to road safety issues. The fact that behaviour is hard to change is another important challenge – people often stick to their routine transport habits, rarely changing them despite supporting climate action, as institutionalized norms and values are hard to overcome. Lastly, there was no evidence about the broader effects of the Urban Mobility Labs and of their long-term influence beyond the school environment.

### Actions Needed

- Coordinate with public and school transport providers to optimize accessibility and affordability, align bus schedules with school hours, and offer student discounts.
- Ensure equitable access to sustainable transport by prioritizing inclusive infrastructure for all students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Engage multiple generations in co-creative planning by involving students, parents, and local residents in designing transport improvements through family-friendly activities and community discussions.
- Develop and implement supportive policies and resources that promote walking, cycling, and public transport, while restricting car traffic in the vicinity of schools.
- Raise awareness and increase visibility of sustainable mobility through targeted campaigns, community events, and active use of social media to highlight its benefits.
- Deliver tangible improvements such as safer walking and cycling routes and enhanced transport options to motivate student participation and generate lasting impact.

## 3.5. Sustainable Food

### Experiences and Lessons Learned

The experiments showed that local engagement is a powerful driver of food system change. Each initiative was able to foster strong community networks and build local ownership over food transitions. The use of the transition arena approach enabled stakeholders to collaboratively explore new ideas, challenge existing assumptions, and develop shared visions and transformative agendas towards agroecology transition pathways (e.g. reduce pesticide use in Cella Monte - Italy; promote school meals and sustainable public food procurement sourced from local food supply chains in Kosiçe - Slovakia; transform the urban food environment in Stockholm - Sweden to make easier the access to healthy, fair and sustainable food).

Participants appreciated the structure and creativity the process offered, especially the use of visioning and backcasting exercises to think strategically about the future. Additionally, the social aspects of the process—such as sharing meals—were key to building trust, belonging, and a sense of shared purpose, underlining the importance of relational dynamics in sustaining collective action. The experiments also enhanced food knowledge on sustainable food systems and agency among participants, helping them better understand the links between food, health, and climate.

### Challenges and Limitations

Local actors were often constrained by market dynamics and institutional frameworks that favour industrial agriculture and multinational corporations, making it difficult for agroecological or small-scale producers to compete. Food and climate policies were found to be fragmented, with little integration of biodiversity and sustainability goals into food system governance. Most local initiatives struggled to translate their work into influence at national or EU levels, revealing a lack of perceived and actual agency beyond the local context. Furthermore, structural drivers such as unhealthy food environments, aggressive marketing, and public procurement practices reinforced unsustainable consumption patterns, particularly in vulnerable communities. These conditions made it harder for local actions to scale up or influence broader system change in regards to climate change mitigation.

### Actions Needed

- Reform procurement laws, advertising rules, and subsidies to support agroecological, community-based food systems and local producers.
- Strengthen trans-local coordination to connect initiatives across regions and amplify their influence on higher-level policymaking.
- Address structural barriers to healthy and sustainable food by improving affordability, access, and regulating the marketing of unhealthy food.
- Incorporate participatory methodologies into institutional frameworks like the transition arena approach in food and climate policy processes.
- Recognise and support the social dimension of food system transitions by fostering community-building and long-term collective engagement.

## 3.6. Preserving Biodiversity

### Experiences and Lessons Learned

The Study Circle approach demonstrated that fostering dialogue between local communities and experts can significantly enhance understanding of biodiversity and its vital role in climate action. A key lesson was that direct, place-based engagement fosters understanding and encourages everyday solutions (for example supporting local food systems) that could contribute to climate goals. Although policy frameworks were not the focus, participants noted that limited support for sustainable agriculture can hinder progress, highlighting the value of community-driven learning in shifting perceptions, empowering individuals, and sparking small-scale, actionable changes that can contribute to broader climate resilience over time.

## Challenges and Limitations

One of the key difficulties in promoting climate action is the lack of understanding among the general public about the need for immediate climate action. Many people see climate action in terms of carbon emissions but fail to recognize the role of biodiversity in climate regulation. However, biodiversity and climate change are deeply intertwined (for example, the crucial role of specific ecosystems in carbon sequestration), making it difficult to promote one without considering broader ecological, economic, and social factors. Another limitation is the fragmentation of policy: climate and biodiversity policies are often treated separately, which leads to a lack of integrated strategies. In addition, there are also some trade-offs between the two policies.

## Actions Needed

- Align climate and biodiversity policies to emphasize the role of biodiversity in building climate resilience.
- Scale up participatory approaches like Study Circles to meaningfully integrate community voices and bottom-up ideas into formal decision-making.
- Integrate biodiversity conservation with climate action in the activities of future Study Circle participants.
- Promote and integrate community-based nature-based solutions such as establishing community gardens and community green spaces in climate strategies.
- Encourage the planting of native vegetation to support pollinators, birds, and overall local biodiversity, as well as to mitigate the impact of heat waves intensified by climate change.
- Strengthen subsidies for sustainable agriculture by providing targeted financial incentives, technical assistance, and market access.
- Support farmers who adopt biodiversity-friendly and climate-resilient practices through tailored programs and funding.

# 4. Recommendations for Multi-Level Action on Climate

Drawing on the insights and outcomes of six SHARED GREEN DEAL social experiments, we propose a set of multi-level recommendations designed to translate high-level climate policy frameworks into practical, actionable measures (Table 4.1). These recommendations explicitly align bottom-up innovation approaches with the objectives of the Euroepean Climate Law, NECPs, the Fit for 55 package, the JTM, and the European Green Deal pillars to favour a better alignment between community-based action and EU policymaking.

The key priority at the **local level** is to empower communities and provide context-specific solutions. Participatory community-based learning initiatives such as Study Circles, Knowledge Networks, community visioning and Local Accelerator Hubs empower citizens to learn, connect with local experts, and engage in initiatives that inspire wider community action. Local initiatives should be recognised as contributors to National Energy and Climate Plan implementation and European Climate Law, incorporating ways of reporting their outcomes to national authorities.

To get over barriers detected in renovations and food experiments, simplified access to EU structural funds, cohesion policy instruments, and the Social Climate Fund is needed to ensure communities and SMEs can participate without disproportionate administrative burdens. Additionally, these initiatives encourage multi-generational and youth-led engagement through schools, involving students, parents, teachers, and local communities.

This is in line with the subsidiarity principle in EU law, acknowledging that municipalities are key actors for climate neutrality. It is critical to support and foster context-specific local actions, such as place-based initiatives to promote native species, climate-friendly local food systems, grassroots energy initiatives and safe public and school transport systems, or facilitate local circular businesses through accessible funding and shared spaces.

It is essential that local authorities recognise grassroots initiatives and scale up participatory approaches, meaningfully integrating community voices (e.g. through approaches used in the social experiments within the SHARED GREEN DEAL) into formal decision-making and grounding climate strategies in lived experience. This sort of engagement can foster diverse learning environments, helping people to better understand the need for immediate climate action and encouraging broader public involvement.

At the **regional and national level** policy and decision-makers must make sure to align and better address the relationship between different policies that are currently sometimes conflicting and fragmented across energy, agriculture, mobility, biodiversity and economic sectors to create a coherent framework for effective climate action. This coherent framework is well aligned with the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change's findings on mismatch between mitigation, adaptation, and sectoral policies.

Furthermore, it is essential to scale up good practices by incorporating participatory approaches across sectors, fostering trans-local peer learning to adapt and replicate successful local models, and ensuring stable, long-term funding for grassroots and SME-led initiatives. Governments and policymakers should encourage the uptake of participatory approaches in the design of National Energy and Climate Plan updates, Social Climate Fund and national climate adaptation plans, for

instance. Transparent and equitable subsidies (for example for sustainable agriculture, efficient renovations, circular economy etc.) to promote local climate initiatives, along with robust data systems, are needed at regional and national levels to measure the mitigation impacts achieved by local actors, e.g. through reducing the carbon (or ecological) footprint of schools, villages and cities, as well as e.g. enhancing local biodiversity through garden projects or nature restoration areas, etc., feeding both into climate reporting and European Climate Law reviews. Equally important are legal clarity, effective legislation and consistent institutional support.

At **the European and the international level**, it is even more important to harmonize policies across the various pillars of the European Green Deal to ensure coherence and synergies between them. This should include guidance on presenting existing trade-offs between policies and showcasing best practices in policy integration, for example, reforestation initiatives that contribute to both climate mitigation and biodiversity goals.

Such integrative approaches are recommended under the EU Adaptation Strategy and the 2040 climate target proposals. Funding schemes should be designed to support integrated social-ecological innovations that combine technological solutions with community empowerment, local knowledge, and inclusive governance, as part of the Fit for 55 package and following policies. The EU should strengthen its leadership in transnational learning platforms that facilitate the exchange of best practices and scale up effective models across borders. Linking research, policy, and practice by promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships is key to fostering systemic change and bridging persistent implementation gaps. Additionally, targeted public awareness campaigns, as highlighted by the European Climate Law's adaptation obligation, are needed to influence consumption patterns and drive demand for sustainable & circular products and services.

International funding and policy frameworks should also explicitly include socio-technical approaches, recognizing the critical role of social learning, participation, and place-based action in climate resilience. In this respect, the SHARED GREEN DEAL project is unique, as it addresses six different Green Deal priorities simultaneously. This integrated approach can teach future initiatives a valuable lesson in how to bridge thematic silos and foster systemic change. Together, these actions can accelerate a just and inclusive transition aligned with the broader ambitions of the Green Deal.

While community efforts provide the foundation, regional and national policies must align to sustain and scale them. Future NECPs, Climate Law stocktakes, and Social Climate Plans should require evidence of social participation, inclusion, and justice impacts alongside technical progress. EU-wide indicators covering biodiversity, resilience, and social innovation outcomes in addition to GHG metrics should be considered, ensuring that local actions are visible at higher governance levels. Only through such an integrated approach can public understanding of the urgency of climate action be strengthened.

*Table 4.1. Recommendations for Action: From Local to EU Level – A Multi-Level Approach to Climate Action.*

| Governance level | Key priorities | Suggested Actions / Methods | Inspirational Examples | Key actors |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Local | ▪ Empower communities and provide context-specific solutions<br>▪ Sustainable lifestyles<br>▪ Place-based innovation | ▪ Support citizen assemblies and Study Circles on climate action<br>▪ Develop community energy projects, urban gardens, and local mobility plans<br>▪ Foster co-creation between residents, schools, and municipalities | ▪ Study Circles<br>▪ Knowledge networks | ▪ Local NGOs<br>▪ Schools<br>▪ Citizen groups<br>▪ SMEs<br>▪ Private forest owners |
| Regional / National | ▪ Policy coherence<br>▪ Scaling up local initiatives | ▪ Harmonise funding opportunities and make them accessible for local initiatives<br>▪ Align regional development strategies with climate neutrality targets<br>▪ Provide funding schemes for integrated rural–urban projects<br>▪ Support capacity-building for local authorities and intermediaries | ▪ National call by the German Federal Ministry for Research & Innovation for 'Future City' that funds cities and their local initiatives on their paths towards being a sustainable city<br>▪ National call by the Slovenian government 'Forest Funds' | ▪ Municipalities<br>▪ Higher Education Institutions<br>▪ Regional development agencies |
| International | ▪ Policy harmonisation<br>▪ Transnational learning | ▪ Harmonise Green Deal pillars for coherence and synergies<br>▪ Establish EU-wide platforms for exchange of best practices<br>▪ Integrate socio-technical approaches (participation, social learning) into climate and funding frameworks<br>▪ Design awareness campaigns to shift consumption patterns | ▪ SHARED GREEN DEAL (covering six Green Deal priorities) | ▪ European Commission<br>▪ European Environment Agency<br>▪ International research networks<br>▪ Business alliances |

# 5. Conclusions

Climate action must address both the causes and the effects of climate change, and while significant progress has been made at global and EU levels, notable challenges remain. International agreements such as the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement have set important targets and frameworks that encourage countries to reduce their emissions and build resilience.

In the EU, initiatives such as the European Green Deal and the European Climate Law have strengthened climate policy, setting targets like a 55% reduction in emissions by 2030 and achieving climate neutrality by 2050. The "Fit for 55" package and accompanying measures, including reforms to emissions trading and the Social Climate Fund, aim to ensure a fair and effective transition. However, there are still gaps in ambition, coherence and implementation, and more attention needs to be paid to the BSC insigts of climate policy.

In this context, the SHARED GREEN DEAL project has played a vital role in tackling key gaps and challenges in climate action by placing SSH at the core of European Green Deal implementation. Recognising that climate policies often prioritise technical and economic measures, the project seeks to highlight the crucial role of BSC dimensions in supporting more inclusive and impactful green transitions. To do so, it draws on the analysis of six core topics (Clean Energy, Circular Economy, Efficient Renovations, Sustainable Mobility, Sustainable Food, and Biodiversity Preservation) through 24 social experiments  mainly in addressing the human activities that release GHG emissions. As such, while the SHARED GREEN DEAL sets a focus on the dimension of human activities, the project addresses both causes and effects of climate change, striving for holistic climate action that tackles causes for rising greenhouse gas emissions and stimulates necessary actions to better adapt to effects of global warming.

Based on the above mentioned analysis several key recommendations emerge to strengthen climate action through inclusive, community-based approaches.

**First, local communities should be actively supported and empowered with tailored resources and funding to lead initiatives that align climate goals with everyday needs,** such as food security, health, comfort, and affordability. Participatory methods like Study Circles and visioning exercises should be promoted as effective tools for fostering behavioural change and social trust.

**At the regional and national levels, policies need to be better aligned across sectors** such as energy, mobility, food, and biodiversity, while also reducing bureaucratic barriers and ensuring long-term support for community-led efforts. It is especially important to create funding mechanisms and decision-making spaces that are accessible to vulnerable groups, including rural households, low-income families, and women, to ensure that climate action is also socially just.

**Additionally, improved data systems are needed to capture the contributions of local initiatives and inform more inclusive policy design.** At the European and international scales, greater integration of climate, energy, and environmental strategies is essential, along with funding for transdisciplinary approaches that combine innovation with community engagement.

**Platforms for sharing knowledge across borders can help scale successful practices and bridge the gap between grassroots action and formal policy,** paving the way for a more equitable and effective climate transition.

Future research on climate action should examine:

- how different **community-level** participatory initiatives across Europe contribute to mobilize and strengthen, over-time, the impact of **climate mitigation strategies**;
- how different **community-level** participatory initiatives across Europe foster and contribute to the development and implementation of territorialized **climate adaptation strategies**;
- how to better fill the knowledge gap regarding the **social innovations in climate action** across different levels in the EU.

Future research should also focus on:

- what the long-term **impacts of grassroots initiatives** are, and how to support them;
- how participatory **community-based approaches** can be scaled and embedded into **formal governance**;
- how to ensure **equitable access to funding and decision-making**, especially for vulnerable groups;
- how to **reduce policy fragmentation** across sectors like energy, mobility, food, and biodiversity, and explore how to better align local, regional, and national strategies.

## Declaration of generative AI in scientific writing

During the preparation of this work the authors used DeepL Write and ChatGPT-4o in order to revise text for conciseness and conduct spell-checking. After using these tools, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the published report.

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# Appendix

*Table A1.1. Social experiments profiles.*

| # | Priority area (thematic stream) | Approach | Target group | Place of social experiment | Local partner organisation | Context (rural/ urban)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Clean Energy** | **Community visioning** | Policymakers, businesses, local communities | Granada, Spain | Local authority (Diputación de Granada) | mix |
| | | | | Bełchatów, Poland | NGO (Polish Green Network) | mix |
| | | | | Jaywick, UK | Local authority (Essex County Council) | rural |
| | | | | Ærø, Marstal, Denmark | NGO (Fonden Motorfabrikken Marstal and Blue Innovators) | rural |
| 2 | **Circular Economy** | **Local accelerator hubs** | Local businesses, academics, authorities, and NGOs | Santo Tirso, Portugal | Local authority (Municipality of Santo Tirso) | urban |
| | | | | Val-de-Marne, France | NGO (Val de Marne en Transition) | urban |
| | | | | Nicosia/Limassol/Larnaca, Cyprus | National authority (Cyprus Organization for Standardization) | mix |
| | | | | Ljubljana, Slovenia | Local authority (Technology Park Ljubljana) | urban |
| 3 | **Efficient Renovations** | **Knowledge networks on energy renovation and eco-home-tours** | Under-represented and marginalised groups and renovation professionals (40-60% women) | Zaragoza, Spain | NGO (ECODES Zaragoza) | urban |
| | | | | Nógrád County, Hungary | NGO (Habitat for Humanity Hungary) | rural |
| | | | | Vilnius, Lithuania | Local authority (Let's Renovate the City Vilnius) | urban |
| | | | | Louisburgh, Mayo County, Ireland | Regional authority (Mayo County Council Louisburgh) | rural |
| 4 | **Sustainable Mobility** | **School mobility labs** | Per experiment 30 young people (aged 10-16) and 5 to 10 stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and school administrators | Braga, Portugal | Local authority (Municipality of Braga) | urban |
| | | | | Galway, Ireland | NGO (Am Meitheal Rothar Ireland) | urban |
| | | | | Panevėžys, Lithuania | NGO (ECAT Lithuania) | urban |
| | | | | Sofia, Bulgaria | NGO (Sofia Development Association Bulgaria) | urban |
| 5 | **Sustainable Food** | **Local food Assemblies** | Young people aged 18-35 years | Stockholm, Sweden | NGO (REFORMATEN) | urban |
| | | | | Cella Monte, Italy | NGO (ASFODELO) | rural |
| | | | | Košice, Slovakia | NGO (Klíma ťa potrebuje) | mix |
| | | | | Wageningen, Netherlands | NGO (Gemeente Wageningen) | mix |
| 6 | **Preserving Biodiversity** | **Study Circles** | Diverse group of 10-15 adults per Study Circle (ensure diversity in age, gender, occupation and social vulnerability) | Tolmin, Slovenia | NGO (Posoški razvojni center) | rural |
| | | | | Amaroussion, Greece | Local authority (Municipality of Amaroussion) | urban |
| | | | | Kilfinane, Ireland | NGO (Ballyhoura Development CLG) | rural |
| | | | | Stockholm, Sweden | Local authority (Environment and Health Department of the Municipality of Stockholm) | urban |

**Note: Rural/urban is based on* European Commission (2014), A harmonised definition of Cities and Rural Areas: The new Degree of Urbanisation.

*Table A1.2. Overview of data sources that fed into the D5.2 Climate Action.*

| # | Data source / Reference | Description / Comment |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ruiz, H., Katusic, V., Hamika S., 2025. Implementing Local Accelerator Hubs to foster business innovation in the circular economy. In: Robison, R. and Royston, S. (eds.): Findings and Recommendations from the SHARED GREEN DEAL Social Experiments. Cambridge: SHARED GREEN DEAL. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15270150.<br>*(and internal Appendices A+B)* | This report builds on the insights from the social experiments in Portugal, Cyprus, Slovenia, and France  The report presents key recommendations for enhancing the circular economy by developing local accelerator hubs to promote business innovation and improved knowledge dissemination, ecosystem development, regulatory support, and multi-stakeholder collaboration for local organizations. |
| 2 | Gray, E. K., Rohse, M., Fahy, F., Jost, C., 2025. Community visioning for just, clean energy futures in Europe. In: Robison, R. and Royston, S. (eds.): Findings and Recommendations from the SHARED GREEN DEAL Social Experiments. Cambridge: SHARED GREEN DEAL. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15270128.<br>*(and internal Appendices A+B)* | This report explores community visioning's potential as a tool for stakeholder engagement in energy decision-making based on examples from social experiments in four sites: Bełchatów, Poland; the province of Granada, Spain; Jaywick, Essex County, the United Kingdom; and the island of Ærø, Denmark. Recommendations for policy makers to enhance participation in energy transitions are provided. |
| 3 | Foulds, C., Royston, S., Crowther, A., Aggeli, A., Robison, R., Noreña Ospina, M., Wieser, P., 2025. Bringing together citizens and professionals to develop know-how for energy efficient renovations. In: Robison, R. and Royston, S. (eds.): Findings and Recommendations from the SHARED GREEN DEAL Social Experiments. Cambridge: SHARED GREEN DEAL. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15270137.<br>*(and internal Appendices A+B)* | This report outlines the design and implementation of Knowledge Networks that bring together professionals and citizens to share knowledge about renovations. We recommend a Knowledge Network approach to policyworkers and practitioners as an effective tool in the delivery of the Renovations Wave and other energy efficiency goals. Based on four Social Experiments, delivered in Hungary, Lithuania, Ireland and Spain, several recommendations for policy makers are provided. |
| 4 | Šmid Hribar, M., Ribeiro, D., Strasser, S., Paliogiannis, H., 2025. Exploring the Study Circle approach in fostering change in biodiversity values among adults. In: Robison, R. and Royston, S. (eds.): Findings and Recommendations from the SHARED GREEN DEAL Social Experiments. Cambridge: SHARED GREEN DEAL. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15270156<br>*(and internal Appendices A+B)* | This report presents insights from non-formal community learning, using a study circle approach, that was applied in social experiments related to preserving biodiversity in Tolmin (Slovenia), Athens (Greece), Stockholm (Sweden) and Ballyhoura (Ireland). It reflects on citizen participation and collaborative community projects for biodiversity protection and how these can strengthen policy and decision-making. |

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| 5 | Beers, P.J., van Bellen, L., Carraca, J., Girardi, A., Gritti, V., Hebinck, A., Kiewik, J., Mourato, J., Nieboer, S., Silvestri, G., Truninger, M., 2025. Scaling food systems transitions. In: Robison, R. and Royston, S. (eds.): Findings and recommendations from the SHARED GREEN DEAL social experiments. Cambridge: SHARED GREEN DEAL. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15369887<br><br>*(and internal Appendices A+B)* | This report presents insights from four social experiments in Italy, Slovakia, Sweden and Netherlands, with agriecological-oriented local partners who carried out a transition arena process to create a local food transition narrative.The local-specific transition narrative and associated action agenda, as well impediments on meso-level are identified, and recommendations for policy makers provided. |
| 6 | Haufe, N., Tönkő, A., 2025. Accelerating the transition to sustainable mobility in schools. In: Robison, R. and Royston, S. (eds.): Findings and Recommendations from the SHARED GREEN DEAL Social Experiments. Cambridge: SHARED GREEN DEAL. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15315291<br><br>*(and internal Appendices A+B)* | This report presents insights from social experiments Braga (Portugal), Galway (Ireland), Panevezys (Lithuania), and Sofia (Bulgaria) based on local urban mobility labs in schools in order to enhance sustainable school travel. |
| 7 | Kovács, K., et al., 2024. SHARED GREEN DEAL Case Study Guides. Cambridge: SHARED GREEN DEAL | This publication provides an summary of the design and implementation of social experiments in the six Green Deal priority topics (Circular Economy, Clean Energy, Efficient Renovations; Preserving Biodiversity, Sustainable Food, Sustainable Mobility, with a concise and accessible overview of key insights from these social experiments and emphasis on practical takeaways. |
| 8 | Urios, J., Fasert, C., Gore,T., Foulds, C., Afghani, N. 2022. Behavioural, Cultural and Social issues in EU Green Deal policy documents. Cambridge: SHARED GREEN DEAL. | This report sets out the policy context for the SHARED GREEN DEAL project by providing an overview of the most relevant EU policy documents for the project's research agenda. It assesses the extent to which these documents present insights into behavioural, social, and cultural issues drawn from SSH disciplines, in identifying drivers of and/or barriers to successful policy implementation and propose interventions for successful policy implementation. |

sharedgreendeal.eu

info@sharedgreendeal.eu

# SHARED GREEN DEAL

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