



Think2030 Conference Cyprus
Fifty Years of the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP)

Organised by



Under the auspices of



Science4Policy session 1

From risk to resilience in an age of systemic risk and polycrisis

Europe is facing a polycrisis: a complex and interconnected set of crises unfolding simultaneously and reinforcing one another, spanning economic uncertainty, technological and energy disruption, climate change, geopolitical instability, and profound social change.

The concept of “resilience” is already well established in academic discourse. However, in the context of the new EU work programme and this evolving polycrisis, resilience has become an increasingly central capability alongside adaptation, mitigation, and transformation. Policy discussions are evolving around the concept, centring not only on “bouncing back” after a shock, but also in “bouncing forward,” wherein crises are treated as opportunities to learn, adapt, and transform while preserving core values and pursuing long-term sustainability goals.

This panel approaches the term of resilience through the lens of systemic climate risks, drawing inspiration from EU-level work on climate risk assessment and governance in complexity, and emerging thinking on transformative resilience. It aligns with the direction of the EU Preparedness Strategy, the European Water Resilience Strategy, and the forthcoming Climate Resilience and Risk Management integrated framework expected in 2026.

The discussion will explore resilience as a transformative process in response to systemic risks, as something that can be built, fostered, and sustained over time. It will unpack what this means in practice for policymakers and practitioners operating under deep uncertainty. Throughout the panel, we will challenge common misconceptions that resilience simply means enduring more; instead, the panel will ask whether true resilience sometimes requires experimentation, changing course, or letting go of models that no longer serve us.

Guiding questions

1. How should we rethink resilience in an era of polycrisis, where risks are interconnected and cascading rather than isolated and predictable?
2. What does it mean in practice to move from “bouncing back” to “bouncing forward,” and how can policy and institutions enable learning and transformation rather than just recovery?
3. Where do current policy, investment, and infrastructure choices risk locking Europe into maladaptive pathways under a changing climate?
4. How can policymakers and organisations make robust decisions under deep uncertainty?
5. What kinds of policy changes are needed at the EU level—whether through new policy levers or modifications to existing frameworks or instruments—and which specific ones would be most impactful

About Think2030

Launched by IEEP and its partners in 2018, Think2030 is an evidence-based, non-partisan platform of leading policy experts from European think tanks, civil society, the private sector and local authorities.

By focusing on producing relevant, timely and concrete policy recommendations, Think2030’s key objective is to identify science-policy solutions for a more sustainable Europe.

#Think2030



**Think
2030**

Science-policy
solutions for a more
sustainable Europe