

Europe's environment and climate today: what does it mean for our Future?

ESDN Conference



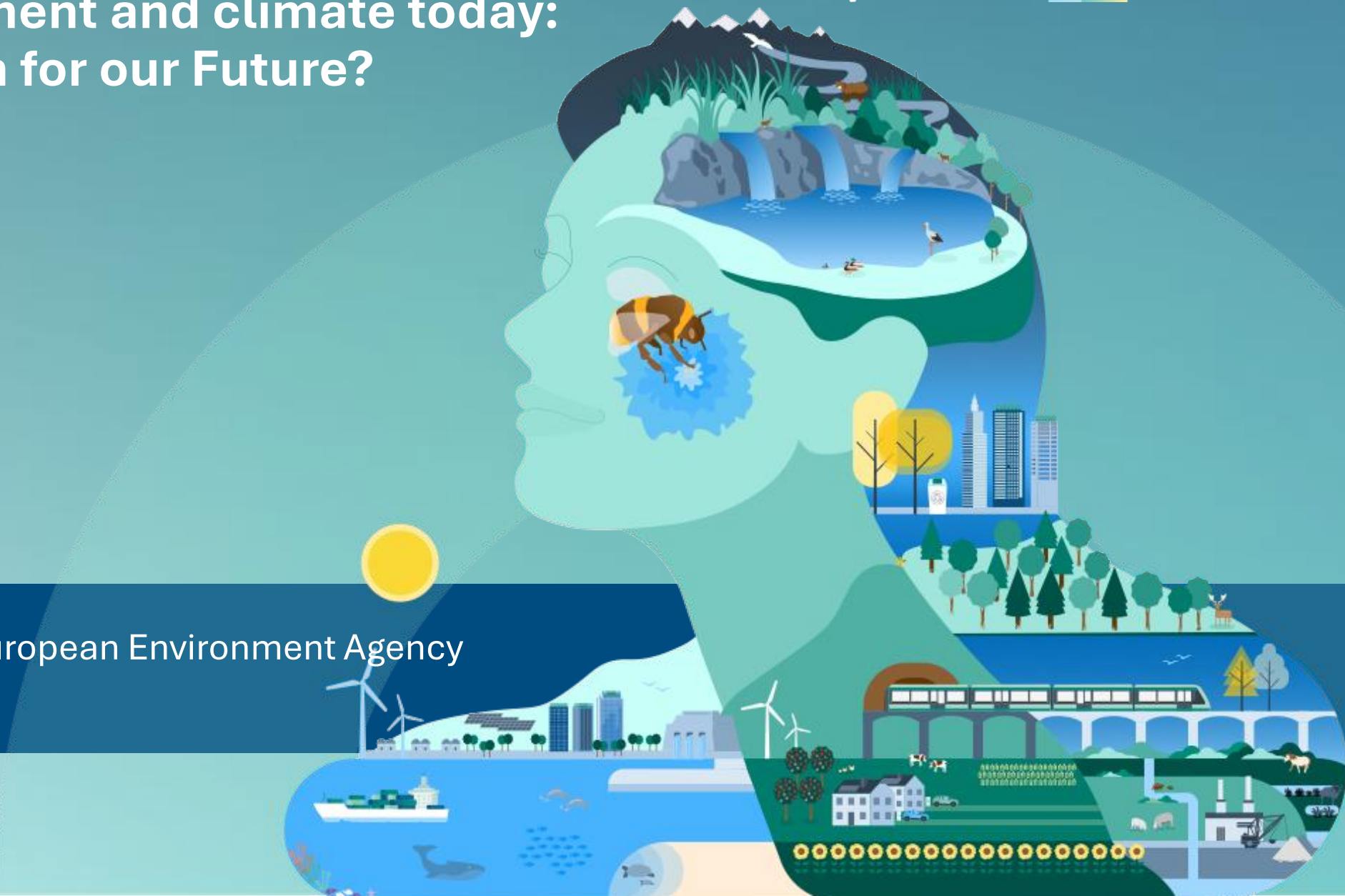
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2025

Catherine Ganzleben, European Environment Agency

26 November 2025



EEA-Eionet: a networking organisation

Who we are



More than
600 institutions



Organised in
12 Eionet groups



Around
3,500 experts



Supported by
experts in
7 European
Topic Centres

What we do

Delivering data, information and knowledge

Europe's environment

Support for EU and national policy



**What is the state of Europe's environment
and climate?**

**What does this mean for the health,
prosperity and security of Europeans?**



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Biodiversity and habitats in decline

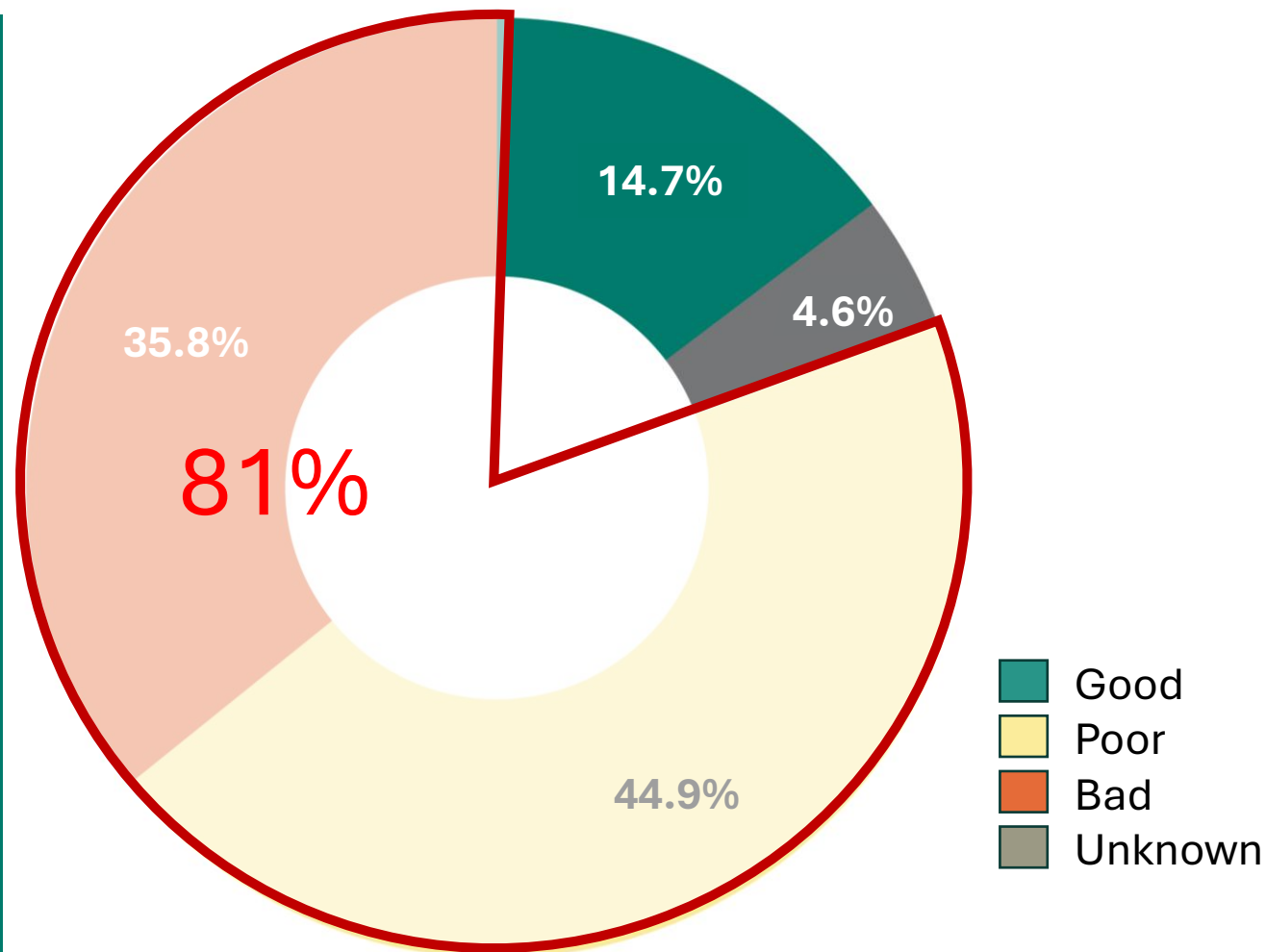
European Central Bank finds

- **72% of euro area companies** depend on natural resources
- Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, food, beverages and tobacco, and construction **100% dependent on natural resources**

European Central Bank, 2024

Sustainable resource management will be a key component of future competitiveness

Source: [EEA, 2020](#)



Conservation status of habitats



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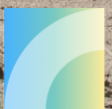
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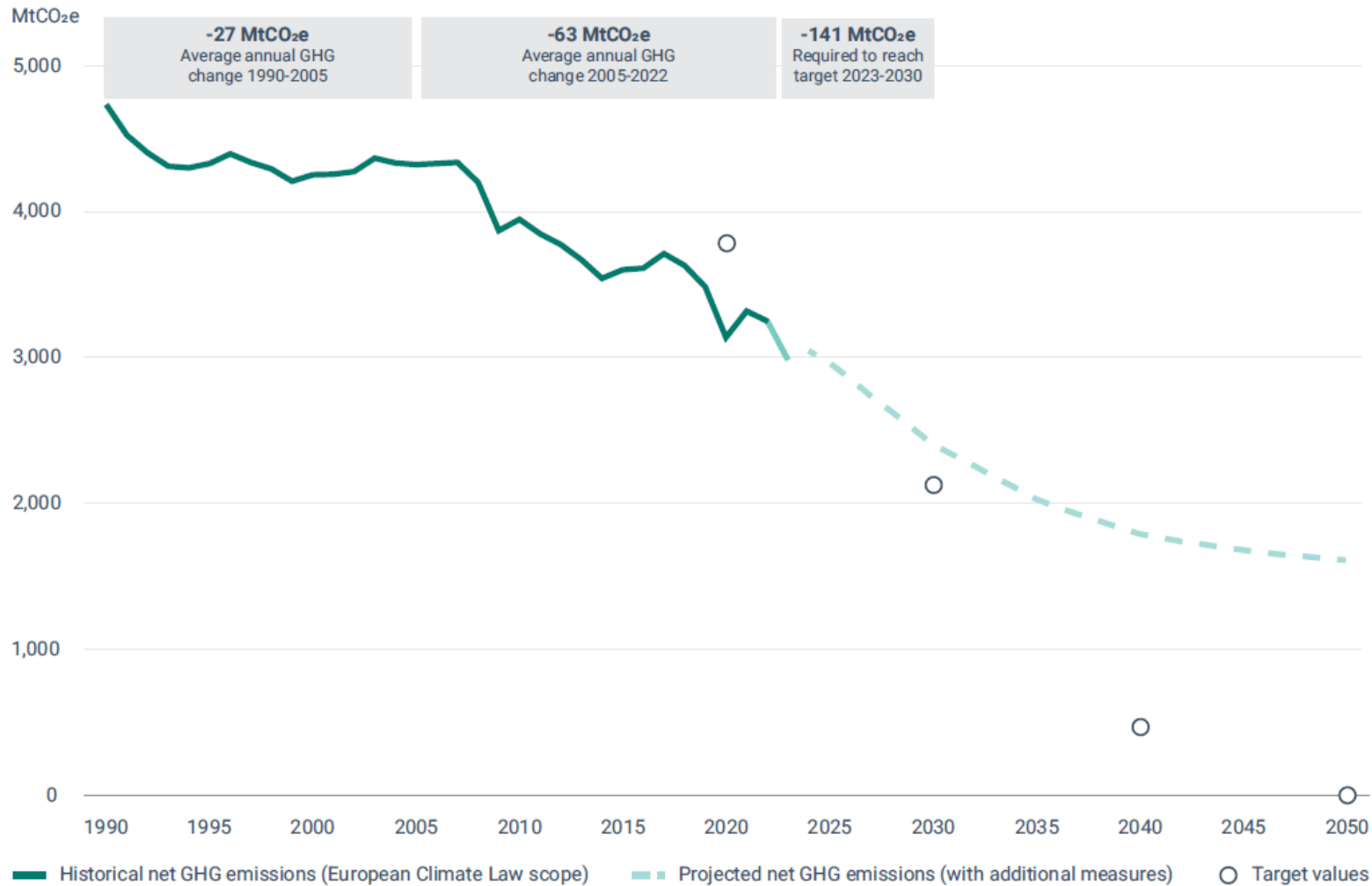
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Good progress on GHG emissions in Europe

Total net GHG emissions in the EU, 1990-2050



EU domestic GHG emissions have **decreased by 37% since 1990**

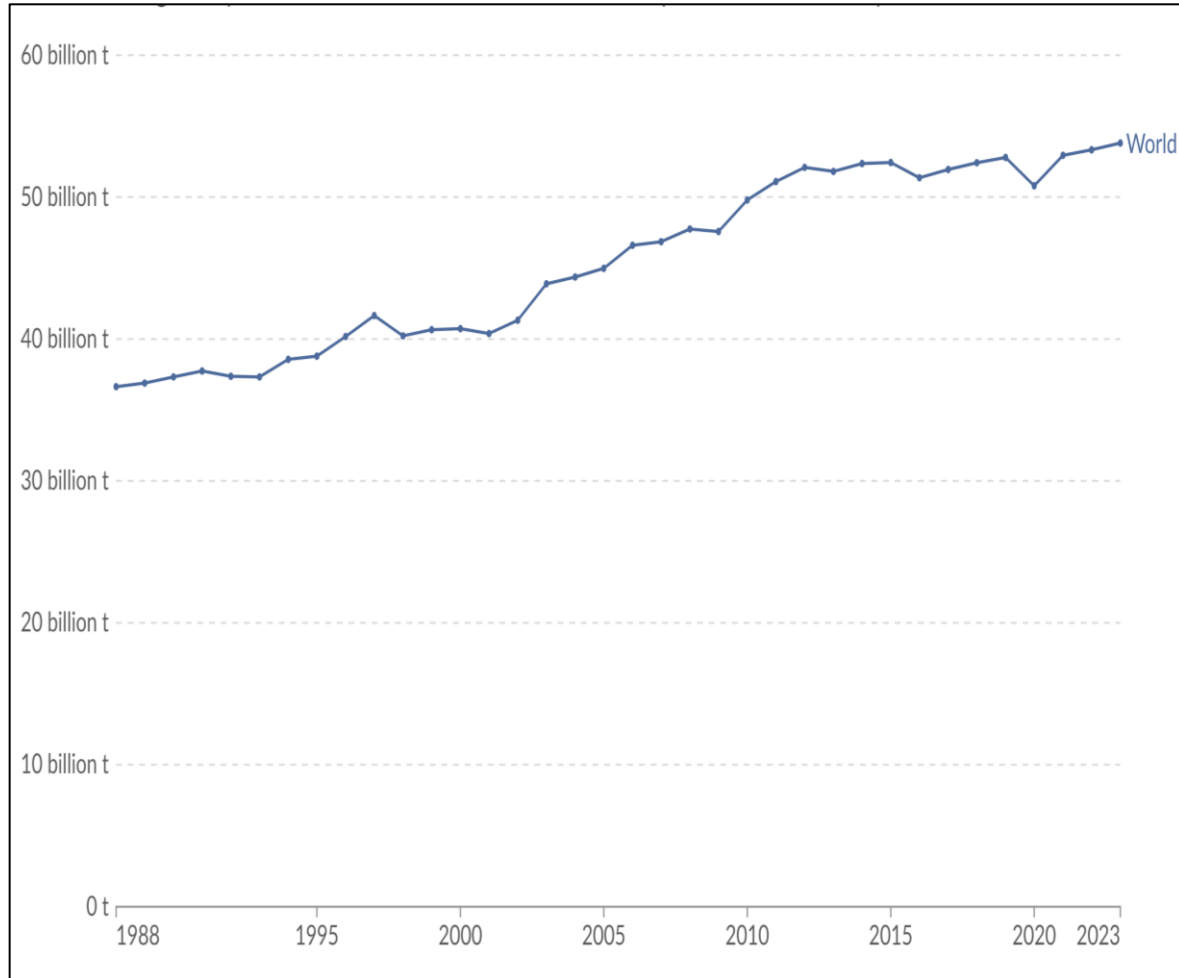
EU is moving towards the **2030 target of net 55 %**

Need to **accelerate change** and deepen emission cuts

Europe's **carbon sink is declining**

GHG emissions rising globally

Global GHG emissions continue to rise



Source: [Jones et al., 2024](#)





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Climate change threatens our security

Floods, droughts, extreme heat & wildfires **increasing in frequency and cost causing deaths**

- Over **240,000 fatalities** from extreme climate events from 1980 to 2023
- 2025 June-July heatwave caused **2,300 deaths** across Europe
- 19% of the EU population experience **summer energy poverty**

a Getty Images



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Food production threatened by climate risks

Seasonal water scarcity across Europe, 2022

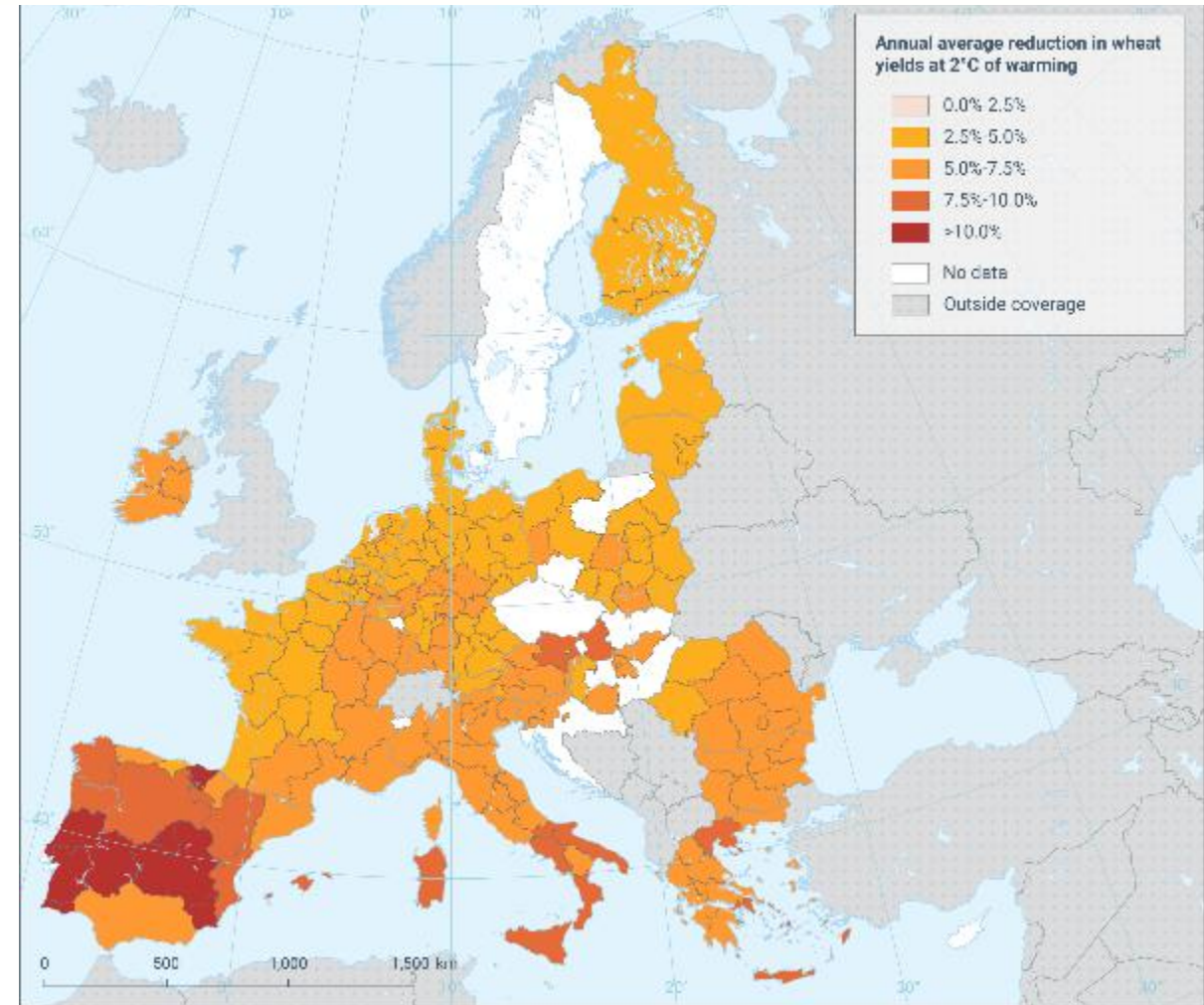
30% of land in water stress

1 in 3 Europeans affected

Impacting the energy sector,
inland navigation and
agriculture – behind
60% of water use

Source: [EEA, 2025](#)

Average annual reduction in wheat yields at 2°C of warming



Source: [Copernicus, 2025](#)

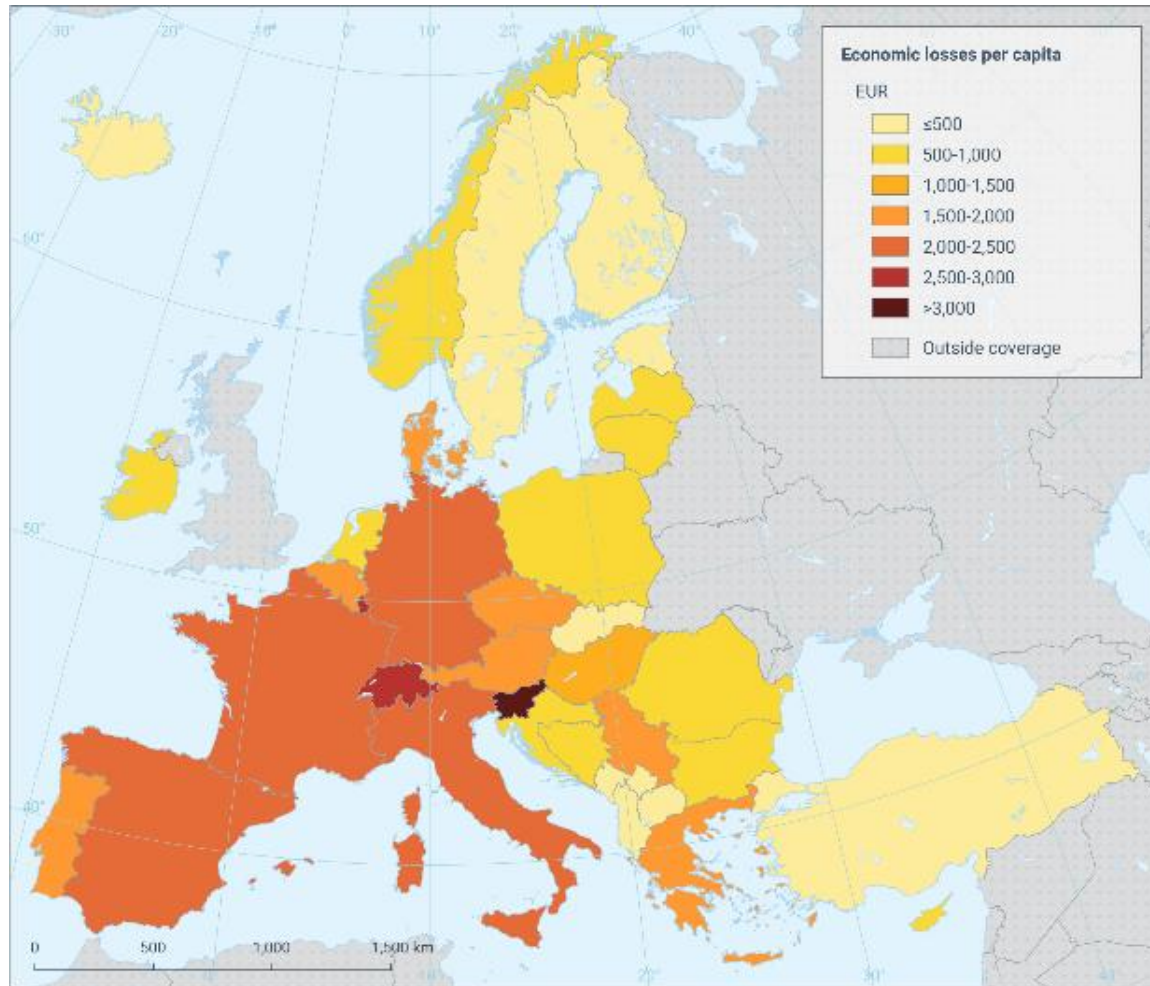


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Rising economic losses and the insurance protection gap

Historic economic losses per capita from climate change 1980-2023



Source: [EEA, 2025](#)

EU faced **€738 billion in losses**
from 1980 to 2023

Annual costs are increasing

€162 billion from 2021 to 2023

Single events take a heavy toll

2023 floods in Slovenia cost 16% of GDP



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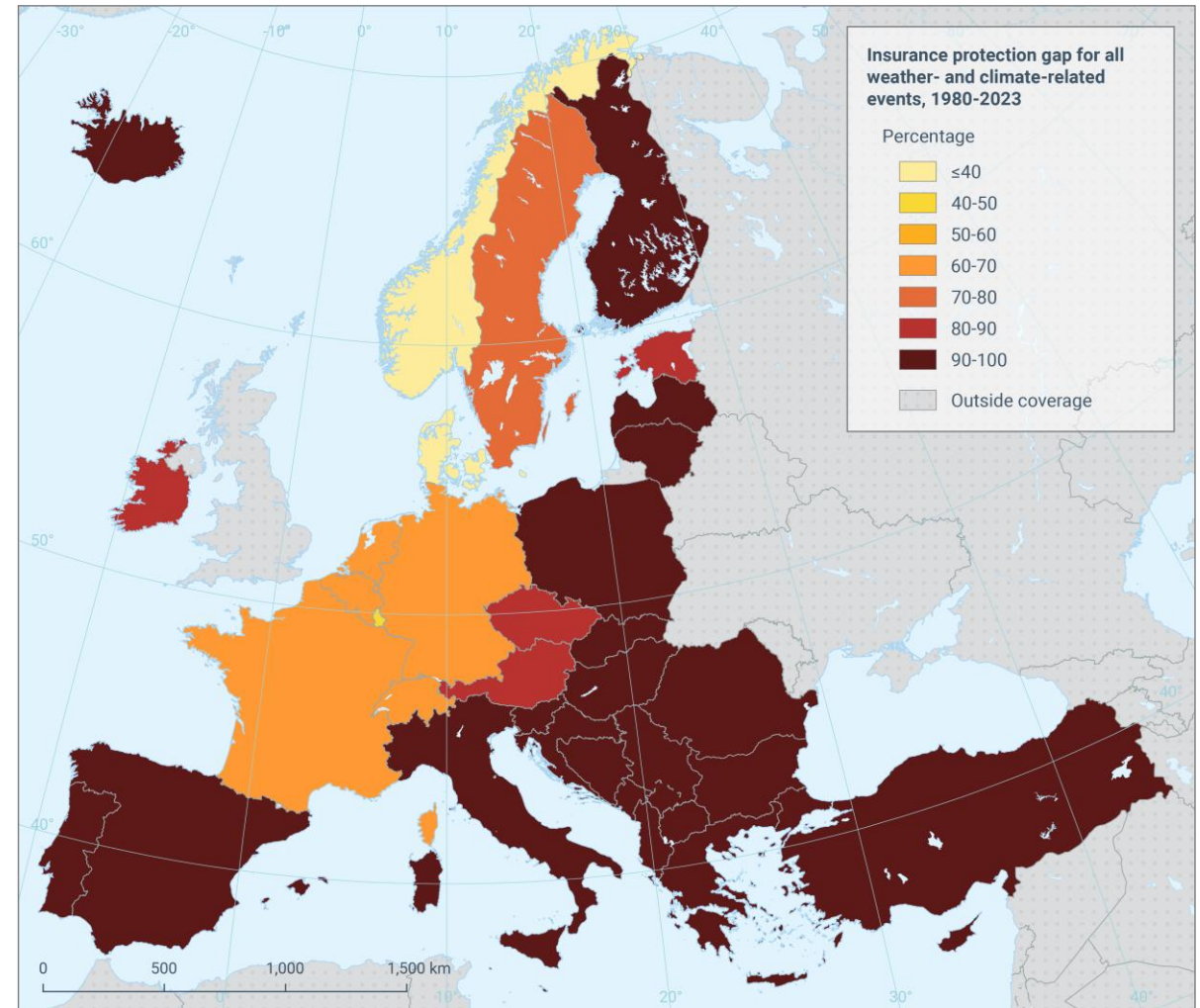
Financial exposure to climate risks

Potential for cascading risks where:

12% of the European population lives in flood prone areas

- 11% of healthcare facilities
- 15% of industrial facilities in Europe
...are located in flood-prone areas

Historic insurance protection gap for weather/climate-related events, 1980-2023



Source: [EEA, 2025](#)



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Pollution reduces quality of life in Europe

Top six chronic diseases causing deaths from pollution in the EU, 2021

1st
Cardiovascular disease
204,575

2nd
Cancers
116,442

3rd
Chronic respiratory disease
51,576

4th
Diabetes mellitus
12,960

5th
Chronic kidney disease
4,187

6th
Other chronic diseases
1,506

10% of premature deaths in the EU-27 are driven by exposure to pollution

Need to address social inequities and delivery high quality environments for all





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Europe's circular material use rate is stagnating



Circular material use rate is the share of raw materials used in domestic production that is sourced from waste

Increased by 1.1% from 2010 to 2023

**EU Circular
Material Use
Rate**

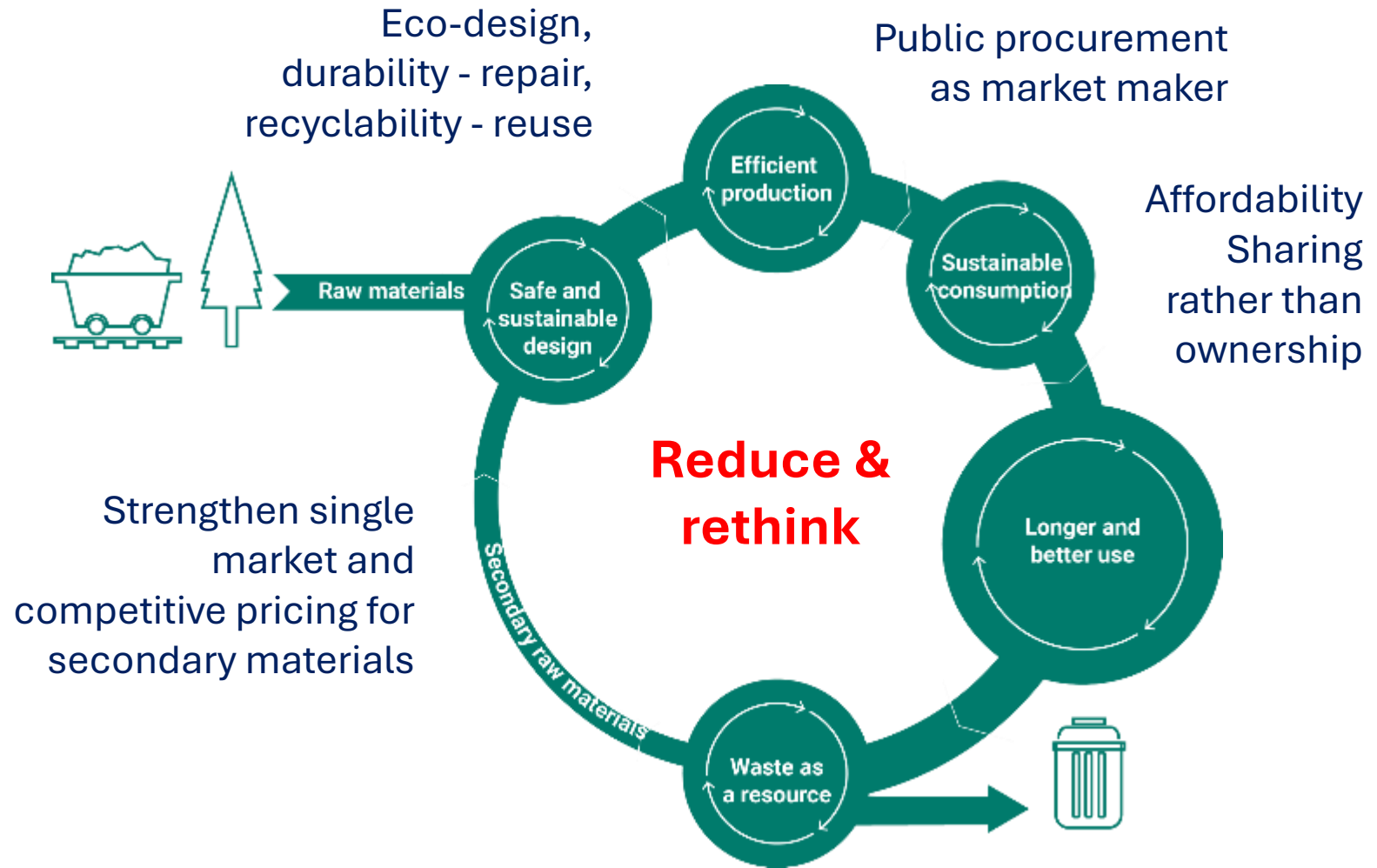
11.8%

Source: Eurostat

A cause of hope

**Action on the ground and seeds of
transformative change**

Sustainable business models

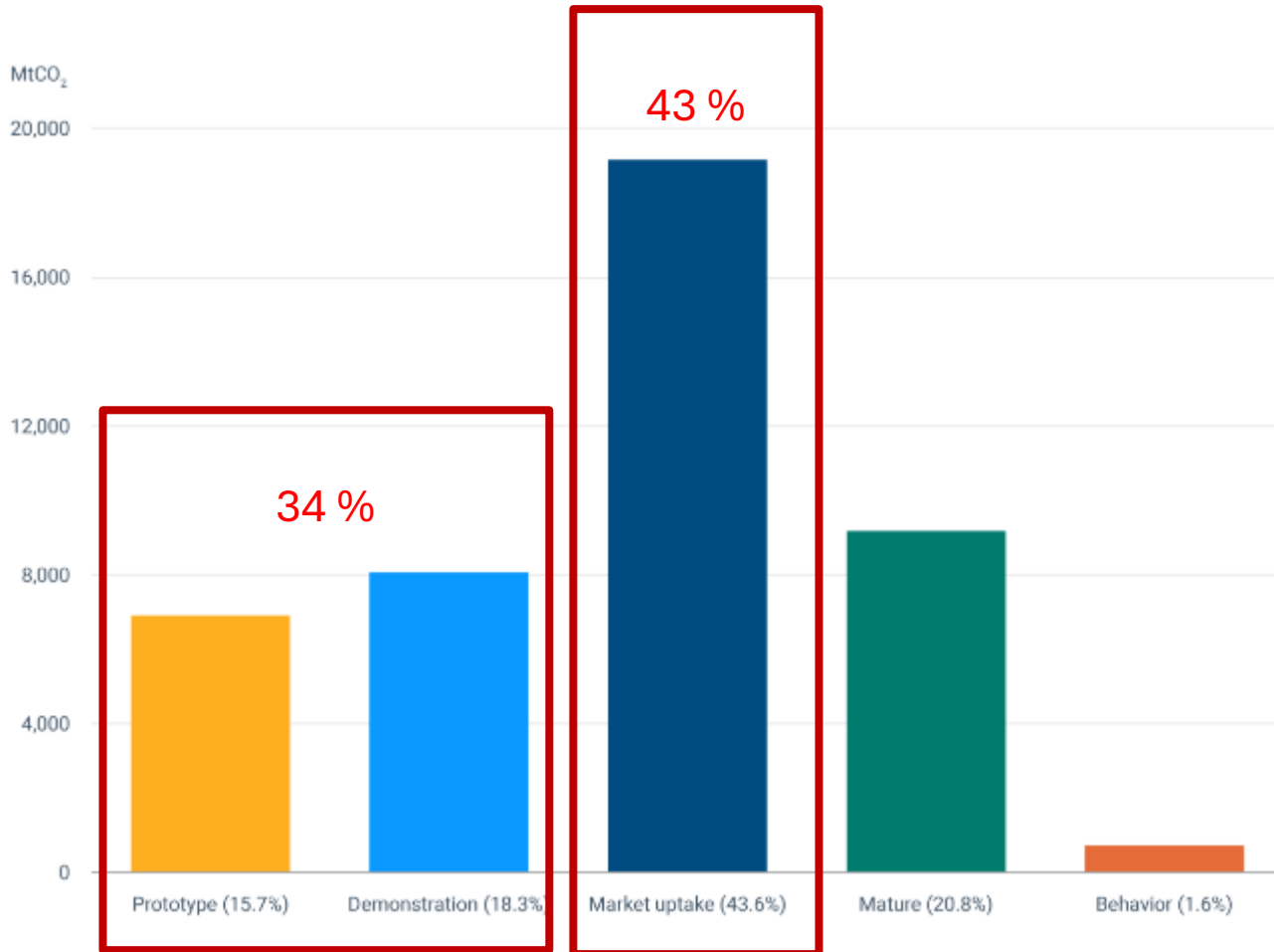


Strengthen single market and competitive pricing for secondary materials



Demand for technology to deliver emission reductions creates opportunity

Percentage of global energy emission reductions need to stay within 1.5°C by 2050 dependent on technologies at different levels of readiness, 2022



IEA, 2023

Enabling industrial transformation

- Electrification of hard to abate sectors
- Green hydrogen
- Battery technologies
- Carbon capture, utilisation and storage
- Solutions for energy storage and flexibility in the energy system



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Surge in renewables across the EU



Renewable energy at 24.5% of final energy use

Onshore wind and solar PV power now cheaper than fossil fuels

Battery costs are falling rapidly

Boosting EU energy sovereignty

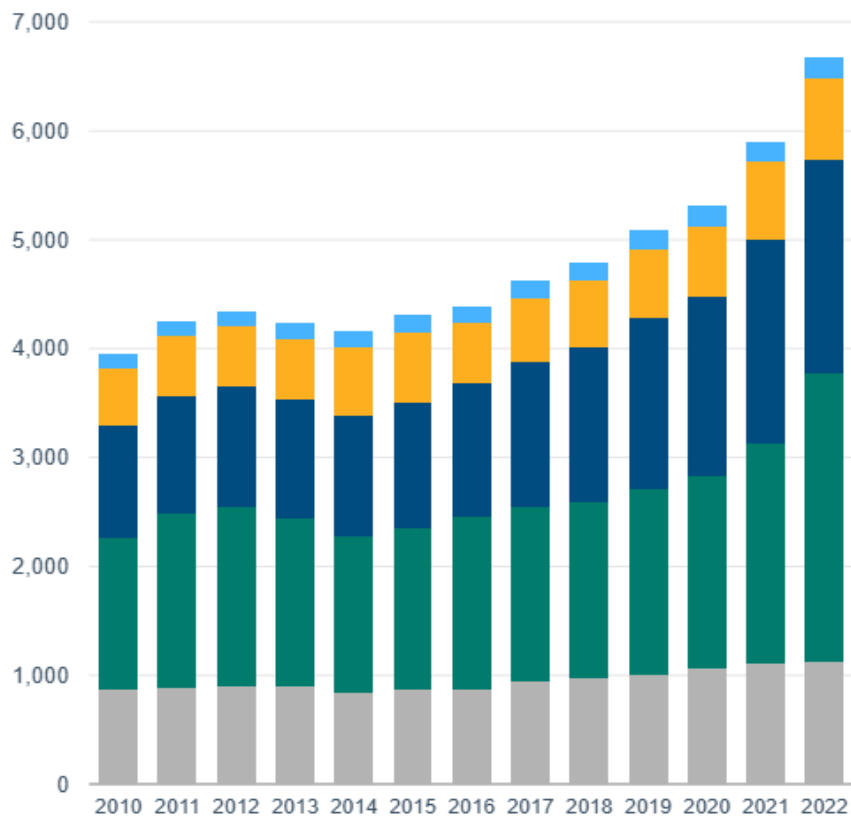
Acceleration needed to meet EU renewable energy target of **42.5% by 2030**



Growth in green jobs

Employment in the environmental economy, by domain, EU, 2010-2022

Thousands of Full Time Equivalents (FTE)



6.7 million jobs in 2022

3.1% of employment

Jobs in renewables 1.2 million

Source: [Eurostat](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)



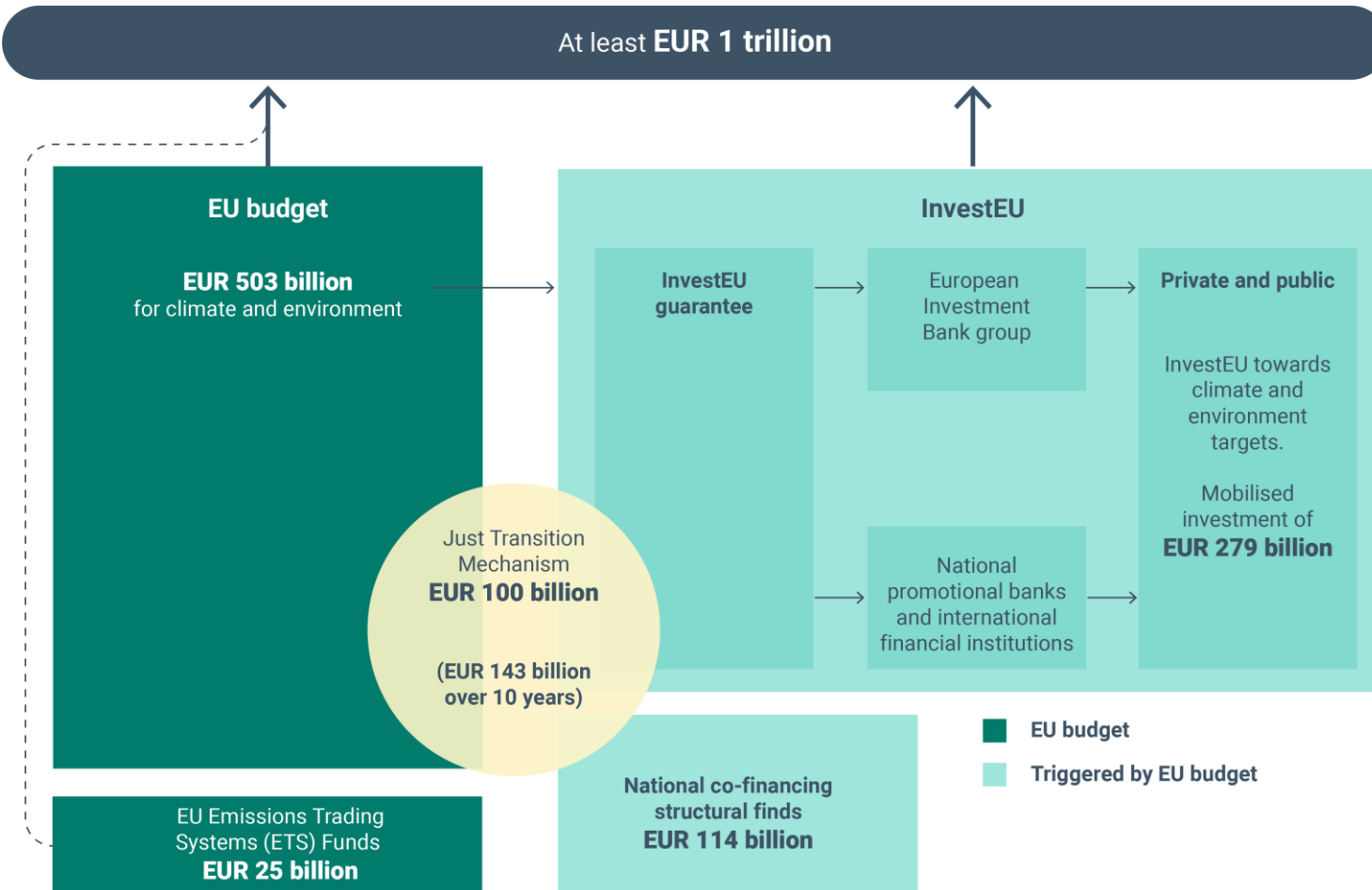
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Boosting investment in change

The European Green Deal Investment Plan, MFF 2021-2027



Europe needs to mobilise
4% of GDP annually until 2030

Need private finance to fill the gap

How to make investment in nature and climate adaptation attractive?





Urgency

Hope



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Thank you!

