

EEAC SPRING

# NEWSLETTER

22-23 April 2026, 11<sup>th</sup> ESDN Peer Learning Platform in Brussels



## A message from the Board

Dear colleagues,

Since the last newsletter, the EEAC has remained very active, with insightful webinars organised by our WGs. We also end the first semester with a change in the coordination of the EEAC and many relevant initiatives in preparation for the incoming months, and we will be one of the institutions supporting an official side-event to the HLPF 2026, focused on the post-2030 agenda.

As summer approaches, the Board wishes you a restful and enjoyable break, and looks forward to strengthen our joint work during the second half of 2026.

This newsletter has been prepared by the EEAC Secretariat and opens with an overview of recent EEAC activities. It highlights key events and engagements from March 2026 until June 2026, showcasing the breadth of EEAC's involvement across Europe. On the last pages, you can find some of the most recent publications of our councils and upcoming working group activities. If you would like us to include any specific reports/achievements from your council in the next newsletter, **please send it to us by 15<sup>th</sup> September.**

*[Follow our linkedIn for upcoming activities](#)*



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## A New Chapter for the EEAC Secretariat

### 11 May – Farewell to Mari-Carmen...

11 May marked the final working day of our Network Coordinator, Mari-Carmen Pineda Torres. During her time with us, Mari-Carmen played a key role in keeping our network operations running smoothly and reliably. Her attention to detail, responsiveness, and commitment made a meaningful impact across the Network. Mari-Carmen will now be returning to the Advisory Council for Sustainable Development of Catalonia (CADS). We are proud to see her continue contributing to meaningful work in the sustainability field.



### 1 June – New Network Coordinator

Yaelle Reed, who previously interned with the EEAC Network Secretariat, has returned as Network Coordinator. Since completing her internship in February 2026, she has graduated from Sciences Po Paris with a Master's degree in Environmental Policy. We are very pleased to welcome her back to the Network, and she is excited to reconnect with members and support the Secretariat in serving the Network. In the coming period, Yaelle looks forward to meeting with the member councils to discuss how the Secretariat can best support them.



## New chair at the Climate Change Advisory Council Ireland



Mr Alex White has been appointed the new Chair of the Climate Change Advisory Council for a 5-year term, with effect from 24 March 2026. On his appointment, Mr. White has said: "I would like to thank Minister O'Brien for appointing me as Chairperson of the Climate Change Advisory Council. The Council plays a vital role in progressing the national climate objective and I look forward to building on the excellent work of my predecessors in this important role."

## March 19<sup>th</sup> – EEAC network exchange meeting series: Giving advice under adverse conditions

The latest session of the EEAC Network Exchange Series, hosted by the German Advisory Council on the Environment (SRU), examined how advisory bodies can continue offering independent guidance under politically challenging conditions. Johanna Kentala-Lehtonen from FEPSD shared Finland's experience and reflected on practical ways to maintain credibility and impact in such situations. A roundtable discussion followed, giving other councils the chance to exchange their own experiences and lessons learned.

### 22-23 April 2026, 11<sup>th</sup> ESDN Peer Learning Platform in Brussels



Dr. Gábor Bartus represented the EEAC Network at the ESDN Peer Learning Conference, where he presented on the Post-2030 International Framework for Sustainable Development and the scientific and policy considerations shaping it. Over two days, participants explored how European countries are beginning to look beyond 2030, sharing early strategies and reflections on what the next phase of sustainable development governance could entail.

### 14 April webinar titled “2026: Times of political uncertainty – What will be the new normal?”

In April, the Sustainable Development Working Group hosted a webinar exploring the current geopolitical landscape and the ideas shaping its future. The webinar, moderated by the co-chair of the Sustainable Development Working Group Jürgen Janssen, featured two esteemed researchers, Carme Colomina Saló and Achim Steiner, who used their experience to explain current political developments. The session ended with final remarks and an active discussion, as participants brought many different questions.



### 4 May - WG Health Internal Online Session



**A concept note on health and the environment**  
 Josep Maria Antó & Arnau Queralt  
 Advisory Council for Sustainable Development of Catalonia

EEAC WG Health: internal online session  
 May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026



Vrindts (FRDO-CFDD), who highlighted the intuitive connection between human and environmental health. Closing remarks were made by WG Chair Valentin-Veron Toma, who emphasised that this message needs to reach the relevant policy sectors.



## 6 May – Online presentation "Europe's Environment 2025" report

On May 6th, EEAC members had the opportunity to listen to a presentation by Tobias Lung, Project Manager at the State of the Environment Reporting section of the European Environment Agency (EEA), who presented the Europe's Environment 2025 report published by the EEA. He outlined the report's four main sections, biodiversity and ecosystems, climate change, environment and health, and the circular economy, and stressed that it sends an urgent message, even as it highlights some hopeful developments. Nature, he noted, is fundamental to security, competitiveness, resilience and prosperity.

## 12 May – Advancing Just Transition conference in Brussels

The EEAC was represented by Zofia Manka at the "Advancing Just Transition: Tackling distributive impacts and building societal support" conference in Brussels. The event was organised by the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) in collaboration with European Economic and Social Committee, as well as the AdJUST partners. The agenda included presenting AdJUST's Just Transition Vision and showcasing key study findings on labour market impacts, broader justice dimensions beyond labour and institutional capacity.



## 22 May – Planetary Health Symposium in Rotterdam

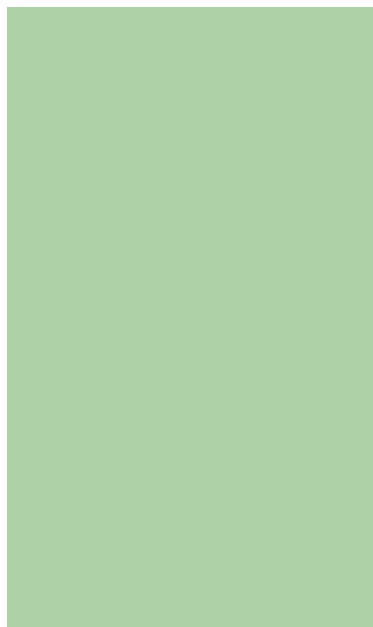


The EEAC was represented by Kate Grinfogele at the Planetary Health Symposium in Rotterdam on Friday, May 22nd, organised by Erasmus School of Health Policy & Management (ESHPM). The symposium brought together people from research and policy to discuss how planetary health can help shape more sustainable futures, under the question: "How can we actively shape tomorrow through Planetary Health?"

The programme also included Dr. Josep Maria Antó (ISGlobal & CADS), who contributed his insights during the session "Planetary Health in All Policies: A Dialogue". A particularly interesting and highly relevant topic for the EEAC's work, with further contributions from our Working Groups and member councils on the way.



# RECENT COUNCIL UPDATES



Our members have had a busy few months, working on a variety of inspiring projects. Although all work of our councils is important, for the purpose of keeping the newsletter concise, the Secretariat has highlighted a selection of the recent council activities and publications.

## **Flooding and Mental Health, Our Changing Climate and Electricity Annual Report 2026**

*Climate Change Advisory Council, Ireland, 2026*

A working paper "Flooding and Mental Health" commissioned by the CCAC, provides an important perspective for climate adaptation and recovery planning.

The paper highlights how climate impacts extend beyond physical damage, affecting areas such as the wellbeing and resilience of communities.

Furthermore, "Electricity Annual Report 2026" examines the future of Ireland's electricity system and the policy measures needed to support the country's climate ambitions.

## **Security - sustainable and integrated**

*German Advisory Council on Global Change, 24-03-2026*

The WBGU argues that the concept of 'integrated security' (from Germany's National Security Strategy) should be understood much more broadly. They argue that the targeted promotion of social cohesion should be the foundation for internal, external, and economic security. The report highlights the need to guarantee information integrity, use raw materials and technologies responsibly, reduce one-sided dependencies, and strengthen international relations.

## **Recommendations on Higher Education Institutions and Sustainable Development**

*National Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development, Portugal, 24-03-2026*

The document focuses on the place of sustainable development within higher education and on the contribution that universities and polytechnics can make in this area. It reflects how sustainability can be more deeply integrated into higher education institutions, when it comes to both academic practice and their broader institutional role.

### **Strengthened through Circularity**

*Scientific Climate Council, the Netherlands, 26-03-2026*

The WKR emphasises that circular economy policies are essential for tackling climate change. Rather than focusing primarily on recycling and waste reduction, it calls for a broader shift towards reducing material use at the source and rethinking how societal needs can be met with fewer and more sustainable resources.

### **Our Changing Climate**

*Climate Change Advisory Council, Ireland, 27-03-2026*

The report shows that summer 2025 was the warmest on record in Ireland, with average temperatures reaching 1.94°C above the 1961–1990 long-term average. It also highlights the significant role of elevated night-time temperatures in driving this increase, underlining how climate change is already affecting seasonal patterns across the country.

### **The Future of the Gas Grid in Flanders**

*Environment and Nature Council of Flanders, 07-04-2026*

Minaraad points to growing pressure on the current gas distribution model. The underlying study shows that gas consumption is expected to decline faster than the number of connections. This means that, without clear policy choices, a largely intact network could end up being financed by fewer and fewer users

### **Opinion on the Socio-Economic Impacts of the Climate Transition**

*Federal Council for Sustainable Development, Belgium, 04-04-2026*

The CFDD-FRDO opinion assesses the socio-economic impacts of the climate transition, focusing on effects on sectoral activity, employment, labour market dynamics and investment patterns. It provides policy recommendations to help public authorities and business to manage this transition in a competitive manner, while leveraging the opportunities in green growth.

### **Circular Building: Preserving Existing Structures and Closing Resource Loops**

*German Advisory Council on the Environment, 14-04-2026*

The SRU outlines how the construction sector can become more resource-efficient by preserving existing buildings, encouraging the use of secondary construction materials, and creating stronger legal, financial, and educational frameworks for circular building practices.

### **A systemic, science-based government programme vision for Finland**

*The Finnish Expert Panel for Sustainable Development, 17-04-2026*

The vision places the wellbeing of people and nature at the heart of policy objectives, moving beyond reactive crisis-to-crisis policymaking and aligning democracy, security, and the economy within planetary boundaries.

### **Artificial Intelligence in Service of Society: Navigating Our Way Forward**

*National Economic and Social Council, Ireland, 28-04-2026*

The purpose of this report is to offer a series of reflections on how Ireland can best secure its ambition to develop and deploy AI in ways that are safe, ethical and rights-respecting. It considers how Ireland can harness AI to support economic prosperity and serve the public good.

### **Care for Water: The Future of Our Drinking Water as a Shared Responsibility**

*Council for the Environment and Infrastructure, the Netherlands, 30-04-2026*

The advisory report highlights growing pressures on the system caused by climate change, pollution, and population growth. The Netherlands has long had clean, high-quality and affordable drinking water. To keep it that way, action is needed now. The report calls for changes to the freshwater system, more space for drinking water, and stronger action from public authorities to protect future supply.

### **Social Cohesion: European Case Studies**

*National Economic and Social Council, Ireland, 11-05-2026*

A new report compares 12 European case studies from seven European National Economic and Social Councils (NESCs) to understand how real-world policies strengthen social cohesion. This approach shows how things work in practice, supports institutional learning, and allows for comparison across countries.

### **Review of the Electricity Sector as part of the Annual Review for 2026**

*Climate Change Advisory Council, Ireland, 12-05-2026*

The report examines the future of Ireland's electricity system and the policy measures needed to support the country's climate ambitions. It looks at the challenges linked to electricity demand, grid development, renewable energy integration, and long-term energy security.

### **Climate Change and Health: Directions for Policy**

*Scientific Climate Council, the Netherlands, 21-05-2026*

Together with the Health Council of the Netherlands, WKR has published a new advisory report on the health risks of climate change.

The report highlights the growing impact of heat, UV radiation, air pollution, pollen, and extreme weather events on public health, and calls for stronger preventive measures to protect vulnerable groups and strengthen societal resilience.

### **Upcoming EEAC Activities**

#### **WG ES and EC - Webinar: Multi-annual Financial Framework, 6 July**

The Working Groups on Ecosystem Services and Climate & Energy will co-host a webinar on the Multiannual Financial Framework, offering members a concise overview of key developments and space for discussion. The session will also highlight its relevance for future EU priorities. Register [here](#).

#### **Living within Planetary Boundaries conference and EEAC Annual Strategic Assembly, 6-8 October**

The Board sends a special invitation to all councils to participate to the Living within Planetary Boundaries conference, organised by the SRU, the German Federal Agency for the Environment and the EEAC (6 October 2026), as well as to the EEAC Annual Strategic Assembly (7-8 October 2026), which will focus on EU Strategic Autonomy. Please contact the Network Coordinator for more information.