

Adaptation to climate change

In its "Grenelle I" programme law in 2009, France decided to adopt a **National Climate Change Adaptation Plan**.

This plan is based on the observation that, given the climate change that is currently underway, adaptation must now be seen as an **essential complement** to the attenuation efforts (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) already in progress.

It is now crucial that we **anticipate** both long-term phenomena like global warming and the increased frequency of extreme events.

A question of equity and equality

The issue of adapting to climate change is **directly connected to the ambition of territorial equality and urban equity**. As the report on the consultation about this plan states:

The impact of climate change will not be distributed uniformly or equitably at the territorial level.

- From a geographical point of view, **some regions may be severely affected by the forecasted changes, while others will be less so and might even benefit**; these differences depend on exposure to unpredictable weather conditions as well as on specific geographic and socioeconomic characteristics of different territories that could influence the vulnerability of their systems.

- From an individual point of view, not everyone is affected by climate change in the same way. **Its effects will be distributed differently, according to economic activity**

sectors and social vulnerability. The most disadvantaged individuals will probably be the most affected by the negative consequences of climate change, and affected the soonest.

As such, a national and territorial effort must be made to adapt.

An urgent issue

- Since decisions on **urban planning** have long-term effects on land use, the concept of adaptation must be integrated into policies in the field as soon as possible
- 75% of the **housing** stock that will be occupied in France in 2050 has already been built

Adapting to climate change is also a question of intergenerational equity

Any approach must be integrated to avoid inconsistency between the strategies adopted

Adapting to climate change means not looking at buildings individually, but rather seeing them as **components of a larger system**, within a neighbourhood or city.

Adapting to climate change illustrates the need for **integration** between multiple interacting policies.

Rising temperatures, especially during the summer, will threaten the health and comfort of people living in unsuitable buildings. Alongside urban planning and



architecture, which have a role to play in limiting these effects, integrating water and nature into cities will reduce the need for cooling.

A city that devotes more space to water and nature will gradually accumulate urban biodiversity and ecological corridors, but it will also require more monitoring of factors such as the health quality of the surface water used.

Aspects of the French National Climate Change Adaptation Plan addressing “urban planning and the built environment”

- Integrate adaptation into urban planning documents.
- Promote nature in the city as a way to regulate the urban climate.
- Prevent the effects of heat waves and urban heat islands.
- Act to make summers more comfortable with temperature rises on the horizon

An approach linked to other strategies

...already adopted...

- the National Biodiversity Strategy

...or in the process of being adopted...

- the national flooding risk management strategy
- the national strategy for ecological transition toward sustainable development.

An approach reflected in **recent and forthcoming legislation**:

- law on access to housing and urban renovation (ALUR): fights urban sprawl and soil sealing through methods such as developing inter-municipal local urban planning schemes (PLU)
- biodiversity bill: protects everyday landscapes
- bill on the future of farming: preserves agricultural land.