



EEAC ANNUAL ASSEMBLY: FROM GREEN TO CLEAN

29 Sept-01 Oct 2025

The 2025 EEAC Network Strategic Assembly took place from Monday September 29th to Wednesday October 1st 2025 in Brussels, with the aim to give EEAC members a platform for structured discussions about the issues that matter most to their work, and an opportunity to exchange experiences, best practices, and common projects.

The Assembly brought together 36 participants from 15 member councils representing 10 member states, and two external councils, with the participation of three speakers from the European Commission.

The discussion was structured around the key topic areas that the EEAC is currently working on, taking into account the current EU policy climate.



SESSION 1: THE NEW EU AGENDA, THE SAME CRISIS: CLIMATE GOALS IN A CHANGING WORLD

In the first session the keynote speaker **Pau Ruiz Guix** (DG International Partnerships) discussed climate goals in the current geopolitical context.

Key takeaways from this session:

- The EU is leveraging the Global Gateway to reduce dependency on China, strengthen energy security, and support EU industry competitiveness in the global green transition.
- Private sector involvement is essential to scale climate investments and meet global energy access and decarbonisation goals.



SESSION 2: LOST IN SIMPLIFICATION: CLIMATE AND CIRCULARITY AMID EUROPE'S POLICY SHIFT

The keynote speaker of this session was **Ewa Malz** (DG Environment) who together with **Jeanet van Antwerpen** (Rli), **Jürgen Janssen** (RNE) and **Ine Baetens** (Minaraad) elaborated on climate, circularity and simplification.

Key takeaways from this session:

- Simplification aims to reduce administrative burdens for SMEs to enhance competitiveness and speed up implementation.
- True pricing and consumption change are critical to enabling a sustainable circular economy; governments must lead on transparent product sustainability.



SESSION 3: CONTRADICTIONARY PRIORITIES: PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO SAFEGUARD NATURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS

The keynote speakers **Jan Verheeke** (Minaraad) and **Joan Pino** (CADS) discussed the Nature Restoration Law and its implementation.

Key takeaways from this session:

- Better coordination and integration across existing policies and stakeholders are required to overcome conflicting interests and knowledge gaps.
- Long-term, region-specific roadmaps must be developed that prioritise restoring ecosystem functionality, monitoring progress, and securing sustainable financing.



SESSION 4: A EUROPE THAT CARES: CENTERING HEALTH, RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING IN EUROPE'S GROWTH AGENDA

The speakers of this session, **Josep M. Antó** (Lancet Countdown Europe), **Alex Mulet** (DG Research), **Valentin-Veron Toma** (CCSD), **Jouni Jaakkola** (FEPDS) and **Joris Stok** (Rli) discussed the links between climate and health.

Key takeaways from this session:

- Many countries lack adequate adaptation policies and healthcare preparedness to address increasing health risks due to climate change.
- Tackling climate-related health impacts requires integrated approaches linking planetary health, sustainable development, and improved regulation of environmental exposures.



COUNCIL BEST PRACTICES

Councils also shared some of their recent experiences, best practices, and advice, which included:

- Exploring new methodologies such as futuring
- Engaging with young people's perspectives
- Collaborating with a diverse range of stakeholders
- Using creative methodologies such as workshops and podcasts
- Engaging in critical discussions with stakeholders of different opinions
- Proactively monitoring EU decision-making for work topics
- Making advisory reports more targeted and concise

Current key work topics for member councils include:

- Industrial policy and the built environment
- Nature restoration and biodiversity
- Water policy
- Carbon storage and sinks
- Health and wellbeing

