

# Working with Stakeholders for Climate Adaptation

Practice-based guidance for participative climate adaptation solutions in urban areas

## Section 1: Introduction

**Interreg**   
2 Seas Mers Zeeën  
**SPONGE 2020**  
European Regional Development Fund



Leiden



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# Introduction

## SPONGE 2020

The SPONGE 2020 project is an international collaboration between Dutch, British and Flemish governments and organisations. Working collectively, we are exploring ways to tackle the impacts of climate change in urban areas. In particular, we are developing and testing ways to make cities more water-resilient in the face of changes in climate.

The project name, SPONGE 2020, therefore describes the task at hand - how can we improve water management in urban areas and develop towns and cities which act like 'sponges'?

A key focus within the SPONGE 2020 project is working in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, such as local residents, housing corporations, urban developers, local governments and other interest groups. Taking a participatory approach and enabling the 'co-creation' of solutions with stakeholders contributes to a greater awareness of water in urban spaces and a joint shared responsibility for tackling the effects of climate change.

The project is based around 7 complementary pilot schemes, each working in a different urban setting to develop effective, participative climate adaptation solutions.

### *European Collaboration*

SPONGE 2020 receives funding from the Interreg 2 Seas Mers Zeeën programme ([www.interreg2seas.eu](http://www.interreg2seas.eu)). This European Territorial Cooperation Programme covers parts of England, France, the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders) and is part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund. The program aims to increase collaboration for targets that require an international approach, like dealing with the consequences of climate change.

## The SPONGE2020 Toolbox

A key output of the SPONGE2020 project is an online toolbox of help and advice for local authorities and water management organisations who would like to start to take a participatory approach to urban water management and climate change adaptation.

The toolbox is based around a set of methods for stakeholder engagement and co-creation, which have been 'tried and tested' by the SPONGE 2020 partners in their pilot projects. It also includes details about the pilot projects, important types of stakeholders, and steps for stakeholder engagement. It is based within a broader website on urban resilience: 'Urban Green Blue Grids'. Therefore the toolbox also links to descriptions and advice on creating a wide range of on-the-ground climate adaptation measures, with associated case study examples.

## What is in this document?

This document is a guide to taking a participatory approach to creating climate adaptation solutions in densely-built areas. The overall aim of this guidance is to increase adaptation capacity and reduce the risk of urban flooding, at a lower investment cost than traditional solutions.

It is a guide to using the SPONGE 2020 toolbox, with additional practice-based and validated recommendations and advice from the implementation and evaluation of the SPONGE2020 pilot projects.

The document will cover all steps of the participatory process, from stakeholder identification, through participation and co-creation, to the implementation of solutions. The guidance can be accessed and used as a single document, or as shorter guides on the various stages and topics.

The aim is to enable city authorities and water management bodies to improve climate adaptation strategies and actions in partnership and cooperation with local stakeholders.

The guidance pack will:

- Provide a guide to using the SPONGE2020 Toolbox website
- Share experiences, advice and lessons learnt from the SPONGE 2020 pilot projects
- Signpost to other useful resources

