CITIES FACING HEAT WAVES

Posted on 01/08/2024 by Naider

Heat waves are one of the most worrying consequences of climate change. Extreme heat is particularly alarming in cities, where it causes the urban heat island effect. We need to rapidly reduce gas emissions while reducing exposure and vulnerability and increasing the overall resilience and adaptive capacity of cities. The deployment of green and blue infrastructure is one of the most effective measures to counteract the urban heat island effect. However, a combination of various strategies adapted to local circumstances is the most powerful.

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) policy brief focuses on how to address severe heat in cities and provides recommendations, best practices and analysis tools that can be used.

EU cities and heat extremes

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Heatwaves** are one of the most concerning consequences of climate change, with record-breaking temperatures becoming more frequent and intense, and projected to continue.
- Extreme heat is particularly alarming in cities, where it leads to the **Urban Heat Island** effect.
- In response to the Urban Heat Island effect, both **mitigation** (reducing emissions) and **adaptation** (increasing overall resilience) actions are needed.
- The deployment of urban **green** and **blue infrastructures** is regarded as one of the most effective measures to counteract heat extremes in cities.
- Measurable **indicators** and **evaluation tools** to monitor progress vis-à-vis the implementation of mitigation and adaptation solutions are strongly advocated.
- Although single-point actions at the local level can already offer a significant contribution to the containment of heat extremes, their **integration** and **scaling up** are required to make a difference.

Joint Research Centre

PDF available