

Albania's path to climate resilience

The National Adaptation Plan

The NAP aims to reduce climate risks across Albania by strengthening infrastructure and institutional and technical capacities for the long-term integration of Climate Change Adaptation into national planning. Covering the period 2026–2036, it focuses on five priority sectors highly vulnerable to climate change — agriculture and forestry, tourism, energy, transport, and urban development.

PRIORITY SECTORS HIGHLY VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE



Albania NAP prioritizes a total of 66 adaptation measures, with an estimated implementation cost of USD 9.8 billion for the whole period (≈ EUR 8.4 billion). The cost of inaction, however, would be far greater: without adaptation, Albania could face climate-related losses exceeding USD 17 billion.

These include:

SOFT MEASURES	Soft measures, such as capacity building, planning tools, and financial incentives, which strengthen governance and adaptive capacity
GREEN MEASURES	Green measures, which use ecosystem restoration and nature-based solutions to reduce risks
GREY MEASURES	Grey measures, referring to engineered or technological solutions that protect critical infrastructure.

These interventions will enhance resilience, support sustainable growth, and align national priorities with global adaptation goals.

Tourism in Albania

Opportunities and challenges

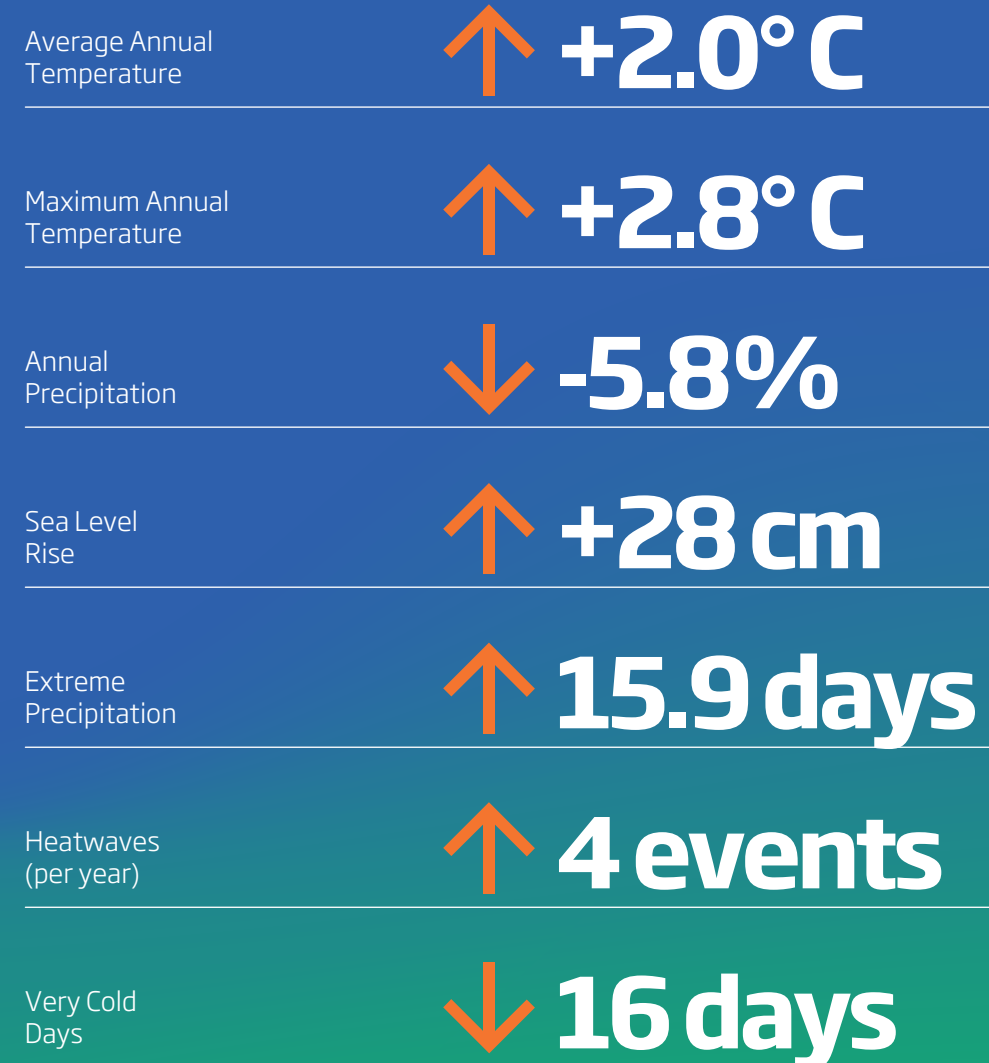
Albania has become one of Europe's fastest-growing destinations. Since 2000, the number of **foreign visitors has soared by over 2000%, reaching a record 10.2 million in 2023** — 35% more than the previous year. The country not only bounced back quickly after the 2019 earthquake and the pandemic but also outperformed classic destinations like Greece, Italy, and Spain. Tourism now drives Albania's economy, contributing **17% of GDP and nearly 20% of jobs**. It also supports many family-run and women-led businesses, from home-stays to handicrafts and hospitality. Foreign visitors spent around **€4.2 billion in 2023, a 47% increase from 2022**, making tourism Albania's largest export earner. Most tourists come from neighboring countries and Southern Europe, with **Tirana, Vlorë, Korçë, and Durrës** among the top destinations. The coast remains the biggest draw — two-thirds of visitors head to seaside towns, especially during summer — but growing numbers are also exploring Albania's cities, mountains, and cultural heritage sites. Albania's tourism industry has grown rapidly, but several challenges still limit its full potential.

- **Seasonality:** Most visitors arrive in July and August, creating pressure on coastal destinations while other areas remain underused.
- **Urban and environmental issues:** Unplanned development and limited access to cultural and natural sites affect the quality and sustainability of tourism experiences.
- **Infrastructure gaps:** Roads, ports, airports, and railways are not fully adapted to tourism needs, while limited urban transport and signage reduce accessibility.
- **Public services under strain:** High seasonal demand challenges water, energy, waste, health, and safety systems in major destinations.
- **Digital gap:** Limited innovation and digitalization constrain modernization and access to new markets.
- **Governance and coordination:** Weak institutional cooperation between public and private actors hinders effective planning and investment.

Strengthening planning, investment, and coordination is essential to ensure Albania's tourism sector grows sustainably and remains resilient to future challenges.

National climate projections

Climate projections for Albania by 2050 reveal a clear pattern of rising temperatures, declining precipitation, and increasing frequency of extreme events across all emission scenarios.



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Tourism in Albania's National Adaptation Plan

Building a sustainable and climate resilient sector in Albania

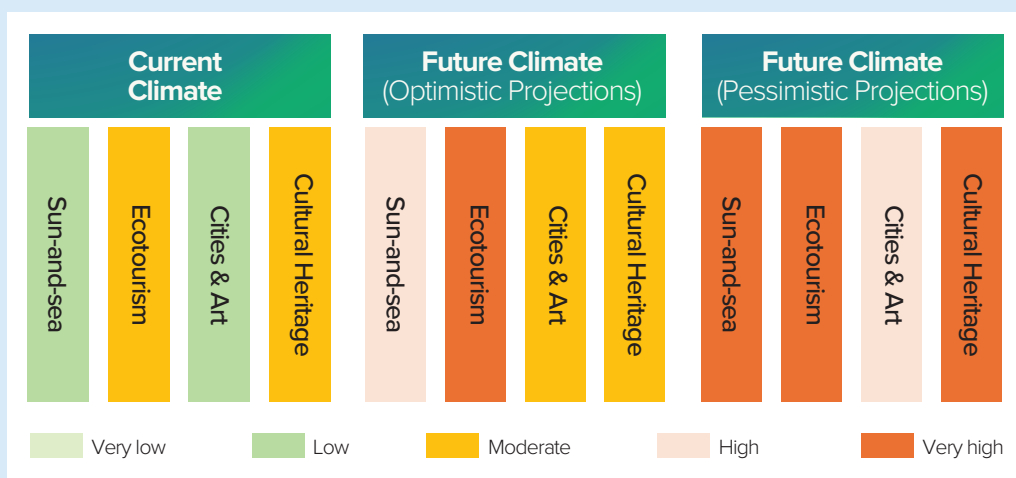


Tourism

How does climate change affect the Albanian Tourism sector?

Risks and vulnerabilities

Today, the sector faces mixed levels of risk, yet projections show that threats will grow sharply in the future — becoming especially alarming under pessimistic climate scenarios. **Without strong adaptation, Albania's tourism potential could be severely undermined.**



Among the subsectors, **ecotourism** shows increasing vulnerability — moving from moderate to high risk in future scenarios — as mountain and rural destinations face greater exposure to changing weather patterns, erosion, and extreme events. **Coastal tourism**, including beaches and resorts, is increasingly threatened by **sea level rise** and stronger storms, while cultural and urban tourism face risks to historic sites, monuments, and coastal cities.

Although **cities and art tourism and cultural heritage** appear less exposed to climate risks in optimistic scenarios, they are not immune — with risk ratings rising to high or very high in the long term.

Urgent investment in infrastructure, better governance, and stronger adaptive strategies will be key to protecting Albania's reputation as a diverse and resilient tourist destination.

Tourism sector

Adaptation Measures & budget overview

In the tourism sector, there are **11 priority interventions, most of which are “soft” measures**, reflecting the sector's strong need for enhanced planning, governance, and institutional capacity. These interventions aim to integrate climate considerations into tourism management and development, ensuring the long-term sustainability of one of Albania's most dynamic economic sectors. Each measure under the NAP is supported by a comprehensive **implementation framework** that includes:

- A defined **budget and funding sources**
- **Institutional roles and responsibilities**
- **Detailed sub-activities** for implementation
- **Monitoring indicators** to track progress and impact

Within this framework, the tourism sector's priority actions include:

Climate-informed spatial planning: Guide tourism development to avoid high-risk zones such as floodplains and eroding coastlines.

Climate-proofing infrastructure: Update building standards and introduce incentive programs for resilient, energy-efficient tourism facilities.

Policy and regulatory reform: Integrate climate risk management into tourism operations, investment decisions, and regional planning frameworks.

Ecosystem-based action: Implement the Protecting Vlova Bay's Underwater Heritage initiative, combining conservation, tourism management, and nature-based solutions.

Capacity development: Train tourism operators in adaptive practices, establish digital knowledge hubs for resilient tourism, and regulations to safeguard natural/cultural assets.

Together, these interventions represent a strategic effort to ensure that Albania's tourism sector remains competitive, sustainable, and resilient in the face of evolving climate challenges, with a total estimated cost of USD 8,491,619 (≈ 1% of the NAP's total budget).

SOFT MEASURES	1 Strategic Spatial Planning for tourism: Redirecting Development from High-Risk Areas
	2 Climate-proofing tourism infrastructure: Incentive packages for climate-proofing the tourism sector infrastructure
	3 Strategic Planning for Coastal Resilience: Buffer Zones and Sea Gate Adaptations
	4 Strengthening the policy and regulatory framework for Sustainable Tourism: Policy Review and Regulatory Enhancement
	5 Integrating Climate Data for Sustainable Tourism: Guidelines for resilient business management and National Reporting
	6 Protecting Coastal Zones: Integrated Regulations, Planning and Management for Climate Resilience and Sustainable Development
	7 Building Climate Resilience Capacity: Training Tourism Operators in Sustainable Practices and Adaptation Strategies
	8 Digital Hubs for Climate-Resilient Tourism: Sharing Knowledge and Best Practices
	9 Protecting Tourism Assets: Enforcing Regulations and Restoring Ecosystems for Sustainable Development
GREEN MEASURES	10 Protecting Vlova Bay: Preserving Posidonia Habitats and Underwater Cultural Heritage Against Climate Impacts
GREY MEASURES	11 Climate-proofing Tourism Infrastructure: Adaptive Designs for Climate Risk Mitigation