

QUICK TIPS

Integrating Climate and the Environment in EU Peace and Security Action



Climate change and environmental degradation pose increasing **risks to peace and security** around the globe. Extreme weather events, rising temperatures and sea levels, desertification, water scarcity, biodiversity loss, environmental pollution and contamination and loss of livelihoods threaten the health and well-being of humanity, and can create the potential for greater migratory movements and displacement, pandemics, social unrest, geopolitical tensions, instability and insecurity. In **fragile contexts**, they can overburden institutions, exacerbate conflict and increase humanitarian needs.

This is why EU interventions should be **conflict-sensitive** and actively embed environmental aspects into peace and security planning and action. Nature-positive action can be a powerful vehicle to foster resilience at multiple levels and tackle the root causes of fragility in a given context. Examples include sustainable and integrated natural resource management (e.g. landscape approaches), biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, climate and environment-sensitive governance, and **building resilient and conflict-sensitive infrastructure**. A **proactive, integrated**, and hence **transformative approach** is needed to leverage environmental and climate actions potential as a key driver of peace and stability.

This document contributes to the EU's implementation of the **Joint Communication on the Climate and Security Nexus**¹. It provides guidance on how environmental and climate-responsive peace and security interventions can **strengthen resilience**, mitigate conflict risks, and foster long-term **stability and positive peace**. It also provides suggestions for inspiration when designing or implementing related interventions throughout external cooperation, including through **Global Gateway investments** and the **360° approach**.

¹ [A new outlook on the climate and security nexus: Addressing the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on peace, security and defense](#) (Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council, 2023).



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The EU-supported **Great Green Wall initiative** contributes to creating a **mosaic of green and productive landscapes** across the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. Through scaling up farmer-managed natural regeneration and agroforestry practices, soil and water conservation techniques, value chain strengthening and market access, and climate-resilient infrastructure, the initiative is contributing to the stabilization of rural contexts that have experienced heightened levels of fragility.



BOOST RESILIENCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL COHESION THROUGH THE GLOBAL GATEWAY AND ITS 360° APPROACH

- **Channel investment into clean energy, climate resilient, disaster-proof infrastructure (including housing), sustainable agriculture, circular economy initiatives, and green entrepreneurship** aligned with “**build back better**” principles and **strengthen green value chains** by offering technical assistance and capacity building for small businesses in green sectors, helping them access markets and ensuring fair participation.
- Prepare the ground for the effective implementation of **Global Gateway** investments and create an enabling environment by assessing the required **360° approach measures**. Pay particular attention to **conflict- and climate-sensitivity** in **Global Gateway** planning and implementation.
- Support inclusive economic development that connects communities, empowers local producers and fosters environmental protection and better security along key critical **infrastructure corridors**, such as the **Green Corridor** under development in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Encourage the mobilisation of **private sector** investment including in contexts affected by **fragility** to boost economic **transformation** that works hand in hand with nature to support rural populations and vulnerable ecosystems.
- Integrate **green infrastructure** into project design. Nature-based solutions (NBS) absorb rainfall, prevent flooding, recharge groundwater, reduce energy demand, and support biodiversity, offering “**peace dividends**” by improving water access, creating jobs, and fostering healthier environments. NBS can also be combined with engineered structures (hybrid solutions) such as elevated schools that serve as cyclone shelters, solar-powered community centres, or flood-resilient roads lined with vegetation.
- Restore ecosystems after conflict or climate shocks through **reforestation, water conservation, and eco-demining** to reduce disaster risk and **displacement**.
- Direct **Global Gateway investments** into **decentralised energy systems** such as solar-powered irrigation, off-grid community power, and mini-grids that can provide locally owned solutions, e.g. solar streetlights to enhance security in displacement camps or community-run mini-grids.

DRC's **Green Corridor** is a **transformative Global Gateway initiative** putting forward a **new model of green economic development, conservation and peacebuilding**. Designed to establish a sustainable 2,600 km corridor connecting Eastern DRC to Kinshasa and the Atlantic Coast covering 540,000 km², it aims to improve the livelihoods of DRC's citizens through increased agricultural production and inclusive economic development whilst preserving DRC's unique biodiversity considered as the last lungs of the earth.

- Operationalise **responsible and conflict sensitive Critical Raw Materials governance** by requiring thorough environmental and social impact assessments for investments. Support independent monitoring, transparent supply chains, and enforce community benefit agreements. Promote **responsible mining and sustainable processing** by aligning national laws with international best practices, providing legal and technical support to communities to ensure their participation and minimisation of environmental harm.
- Support access to resilient infrastructure to mitigate the impact of flooding, improve hydrological monitoring systems, and enhance **sustainable water resource management and development**, including for transboundary management and conflict reduction within key water basins and sub-basins. Strengthen investment in better water resource management for the preservation of ecosystems, biodiversity and to guarantee water security for local communities.
- **Channel cash-for-work, public employment, and community-driven programmes into green activities** that restore or conserve nature with clear environmental criteria for all projects.

Team Europe initiatives for [Trans-boundary Water Management in Africa](#) or for [Water, Energy and Climate in Central Asia](#) strengthen cross-border water governance and cooperation, **laying the foundation for broader economic development and regional stability**. By fostering joint management of shared water resources, they **transform potential water disputes into opportunities for cooperation**. They contribute to sustainable development, economic growth, peace and stability, **turning shared resources into shared peace**. These resources are essential for agriculture, energy, industry, drinking water, fisheries, transport, biodiversity and healthy ecosystems.



MAINSTREAM ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CONSIDERATIONS IN PEACE FRAMEWORKS

- Use **joint resource management as a confidence-building measure**, following models such as the [Virunga National Park](#) where the EU promotes an integrated approach linking nature conservation with economic development while improving the living standards of local populations. This contributes to better stability by preventing poaching and supporting sustainable forest management, including efforts to combat illegal logging and deforestation.
- **Strengthen local peace mechanisms** by using indigenous knowledge and participatory dialogue, such as community grazing agreements and cross-border commissions, to reduce resource-based conflict and foster cohesion.
- Build **legitimacy and trust with local communities to turn natural resources management projects into stabilising forces** by engaging early and meaningfully, based on a deep **understanding of the local context**; securing **Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)** for projects impacting the rights, lands, or livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples or Local Communities; developing **benefit-sharing mechanisms** from the start (e.g. direct payments, community trusts, infrastructure); and ensuring accessible **grievance redress mechanisms**.
- Ensure **environmentally sustainable Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)** activities, being aware of returns for ex-combatants to rural areas where access to land and natural resources is key. Offer practical jobs to improve the environment, and show former fighters as positive contributors, e.g. tree planting, restoring watersheds, and building irrigation systems and promote future-proof green jobs through **vocational training programmes** in clean energy, sustainable construction, and resource management.



The **EU Peace Laboratories in Colombia** pioneered a **model of peacebuilding** that linked environmental management with social and economic recovery in conflict-affected regions. Environmental actions supported **reconciliation**, the **reintegration of ex-combatants**, and the rebuilding of social fabric.



STRENGTHEN GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

- ▶ **Empower regional organizations** (e.g. AU, ASEAN, ECOWAS, IGAD, Pacific Islands Forum) to lead integrated climate, disaster, peace and security responses and foster climate, environment, peace and security dialogues for tackling transboundary resource agreements, particularly on water and land-use policies to prevent disputes.
- ▶ Strengthen **natural resource governance at national and local levels** to prevent and mitigate conflicts risks related to access and use of natural resources under growing pressures.
- ▶ Support capacity building for local and regional **law enforcement operations against wildlife and environmental crime**, by strengthening border, port, and airport controls, and improving intelligence and other related types of cooperation.
- ▶ Support military and security institutions to integrate **environmental and climate risks into national security, defense and emergency response frameworks**. Promote national security strategies that address climate and environment induced threats, improving regional stability and crisis preparedness.
- ▶ **Support the creation of local climate, environment, security councils** with real decision-making power, integrating adaptive management feedback loops such as the UNEP-EU funded project [Integrated Climate Adaptation and Peacebuilding](#) in Sudan and Nepal where these councils empowered local leaders, women's groups, and youth to manage natural resources, mediate disputes, design adaptation measures, and resolve conflicts.
- ▶ Focus peacebuilding interventions on **solutions that align with national climate policies**, such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), seeking a catalytic effect by **attracting and scaling up funding** from vertical funds like the Adaptation Fund, Green Climate Fund, and Global Environment Facility.



INTEGRATED CONFLICT ANALYSIS, RISK ASSESSMENT AND EARLY WARNING

- ▶ Encourage the undertaking of **Conflict Analysis Screenings** and **Structural Country Assessments** with **climate and environmental lenses** and support the implementation of recommendations. Incorporate **environment and climate-fragility risk assessments** from the earliest stages of project planning taking into account how current and projected climate impacts may intensify existing conflicts.
- ▶ Use **climate risk mapping and biodiversity assessments** to target at-risk communities for cash, employment, and services, following Nepal's example where social protection targeting is informed by hazard mapping and biodiversity loss.

- ▶ **Promote a unified all-hazards risk assessment framework** that merges climate, environmental, conflict, and socio-economic data for strategic planning and priority setting, such as the [EU's INFORM Risk Index](#) and the Joint Research Centre (JRC) scenario planning tools, which have improved crisis anticipation (e.g. in the Mediterranean and MENA regions).
- ▶ **Harness and share EU analytical capabilities** (e.g. European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, the JRC's European Crisis Management Laboratory) for scenario planning, anticipatory response, and geospatial intelligence; consult the [European Climate Risk Assessment \(EUCRA\)](#) for regional contexts.
- ▶ Improve **access to EU Space and Earth Observation data** through platforms like Copernicus² to support risk-informed, evidence-based scientific knowledge and decision-making, based on and tailored to users' needs.
- ▶ Integrate the use of **climate forecasting tools** in risk management, to anticipate and prevent impacts such as food insecurity and prevent market shocks, and/or to predict diseases, epidemics or displacement.

The [Team Europe Initiative on Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience in Africa](#) seeks to strengthen adaptive capacity and resilience of Africa's most vulnerable populations against climate and natural hazard risks. Interventions gathered under this TEI are based on coordinated support and strong partnerships among European and African actors and grounded on shared priorities and in-country ownership for long-term sustainability. By strategically enhancing climate and hazard-risk knowledge, improving governance and early-warning systems, expanding access to finance, and protecting against residual risk, the initiative addresses the key roots of vulnerability and provides concrete/actionable pathways to safeguard lives, livelihoods and development gains from the impacts of climate shocks, thereby fostering social cohesion, resilience, and long-term security.



EARLY ACTION AND DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

- ▶ Make **climate, biodiversity, and land risks a must-check for all critical services** (e.g. infrastructures, business continuity) to coordinate rapid recovery and prevent cascading failures. Use green solutions, e.g. wet-land restoration for flood control, to keep them running during crises.
- ▶ Make communities the backbone of disaster resilience by linking **local Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) committees** and early warning systems to regional alerts.
- ▶ Support the establishment of **regional disaster response hubs** that integrate climate and biodiversity considerations and pool resources such as satellite mapping and risk assessments.
- ▶ Deploy **anticipatory financing mechanisms** that integrate climate early warning systems with conflict risk analysis, whereby predefined risk thresholds automatically trigger direct monetary assistance when environmental conditions (droughts, floods, resource degradation) threaten to generate community tensions, with funds disbursed to support both national governments and local organisations in implementing green employment programmes that reduce climate vulnerability and strengthen social cohesion.
- ▶ **Expand drought and climate insurance, flexible cash, and grants** to help vulnerable populations recover quickly, e.g. the EU-WB-GFDRR Global Partnership on Disaster Risk Financing supports sovereign and local insurance, index-based products and risk analytics in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific. Other notable examples include the [African Risk Capacity](#) or the [Global Shield against Climate Risks](#) where the EU seeks to enhance capacities to help African governments and populations better plan, prepare for, and respond to climate-induced disasters and disease outbreaks, improving their resilience and protecting livelihoods.
- ▶ Use **disaster risk finance and blended funds** to unlock investments in green infrastructure and ecosystem repair. Take inspiration, for example, from the [Peace Renewable Energy Credit \(P-REC\) Aggregation Facility](#), led by Energy Peace Partners, which uses blended finance to support distributed renewable energy in conflict-affected areas. By aggregating credits and leveraging concessional and private funds, such initiatives enable investments in regions like the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan to use risk-sharing tools (guarantees, first-loss tranches) and results-based payments (e.g. for verified carbon or biodiversity credits). Similarly, [UNDP's Insurance and Risk Finance Facility \(IRFF\)](#) also provides insurance solutions to support climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction in conflict areas as Yemen.

² For example, Copernicus Land Monitoring Service, Corine Land Cover, uses satellite-based water quality monitoring and different remote sensing tools to plan the operations to recognize and protect ecological and social high-value areas and critical water supplies and reservoirs. These tools are important to monitor land cover and water quality changes.

Further Information and support

- ▶ [See more sector specific Quick Tips which can also be relevant for peace and security actions](#)
- ▶ [Joint Communication on the Climate and Security Nexus](#) (June 2023)
- ▶ [Tip Sheet on Climate, Peace and Security](#) (UN Peacebuilding Fund, 2025)
- ▶ [Nature-based Solutions for Peace: Emerging Practice and Options for Policymakers](#) (UN Environmental Program UNEP, 2024)
- ▶ [Climate, Peace and Security Research Paper: Insights on Climate, Peace and Security. Norwegian Institute of International Affairs](#) (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs NUPI, 2024)
- ▶ [The Nexus Approach: Bringing together climate, human security, and demographic change in times of permacrisis](#) (European Policy Centre EPC, 2023)
- ▶ [Thematic Review on Climate-Security and Peacebuilding](#) (UNU, 2023)
- ▶ [Addressing climate-related security risks: Conflict sensitivity for climate change adaptation and sustainable livelihoods](#) (UNEP, 2022)
- ▶ [The Way Forward: Environment Strategy for Peace Operations 2023-2030](#) (UN Department of Operational Support, 2023)
- ▶ [Environmental- and Climate-Sensitive Approach to UN Peacekeeping Operations \(Policy Brief\)](#) (International Peace Institute, 2022)



In Tajikistan, the Team Europe Initiative for Water, Energy and Climate in Central Asia supports dialogue on water to accelerate progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 6 on clean water and sanitation.

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GREENING EU COOPERATION



Technical support

Contact the EU Greening Facility at:

INTPA-GREENING-FACILITY@ec.europa.eu | MENA-GREENING-FACILITY@ec.europa.eu |

ENEST-GREENING-FACILITY@ec.europa.eu