



EU proposes comprehensive new outlook on threats of climate change and environmental degradation on peace, security and defence

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Today, the European Commission and the High Representative adopted a [Joint Communication](#) laying out how the EU will address the **growing impact of climate change and environmental degradation in the fields of peace, security, and defence**.

Recurrent climate extremes, rising temperatures and sea levels, desertification, water scarcity, threats to biodiversity, environmental pollution and contamination are **threatening the health and well-being of humanity, and can create greater displacement, migratory movements, pandemics, social unrest, instability and even conflicts**. Europe's armed forces are also confronted with the changing and challenging operational conditions due to climate change. These new threats have already prompted allies and partners to update their policies too.

The Joint Communication offers a new outlook and sets the EU framework for responding to these challenges as they regard our society and our security operations, as well as the intensifying geopolitical competition for the resources and technologies necessary for the green transition.

New outlook on the climate and security nexus

With this Joint Communication, the EU aims to **better integrate the climate, peace and security nexus** in the EU's external policies, with a set of **concrete actions** across the entire spectrum of data, policies, missions, defence, and cooperation with third partners to ensure that the impacts are accounted for at all levels of external **policymaking, planning and operations**. It sets out the EU's plan for the Union and its partners to become more resilient and secure as the climate crisis intensifies, and improves connections between different policies to ensure that external action and capabilities are fit to tackle these challenges.

The Joint Communication sets out four main priorities:

- **Strengthening planning, decision-making and implementation**, through reliable and accessible evidence-based analysis on the climate and security nexus;
- **Operationalising the response** to climate and security challenges in EU external action, inter alia through integrating the climate and security nexus in regional and national conflict analyses;
- **Enhancing** the climate adaptation and mitigation measures of Member States' **civilian and military operations and infrastructure** to lower costs, carbon footprints, while ensuring that operational effectiveness is maintained;
- **Reinforcing international partnerships** through multilateral fora and with partners such as NATO, in line with the EU's climate change and environment agenda.

To deliver on these priorities, the EU will implement **around 30 actions**, including: establishing a data and analysis hub on climate and environment security within the EU Satellite Centre; deploying environmental advisors in the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations; setting up training platforms at national and EU level such as an EU Climate, Security and Defence Training Platform; developing thorough analysis and studies of related policies and actions, especially in vulnerable geographical areas such as the Sahel or the Arctic.

Background

The term *climate and security nexus* used in the Joint Communication refers to the impacts of both climate change and environmental degradation, including biodiversity loss and pollution, on peace, security and defence.

Climate change and environmental degradation are intrinsically connected exacerbating each other, and are already affecting food production security, reducing the yield of major crops such as maize, rice and wheat, and increasing the risk of simultaneous harvest failures in major producing countries.

At the same time, unsustainable food production also drives environmental degradation and water scarcity. By 2050, it is estimated that more than one billion people will have insufficient access to water, that soil degradation could rise to 90%, while demand for food could increase by 60%.

Climate and environmentally induced instability and resource scarcity can be and is actively instrumentalised by armed groups and organised crime networks, corrupt or authoritarian regimes, and by other parties, including through environmental crimes. The latter has already become the fourth largest and growing global crime sector further accelerating the environmental crisis including through the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.

Europe's armed forces need to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel dependency on the ground while phasing in green energy, without affecting their operational effectiveness and the resilience of defence-related critical infrastructure.

The EU has been at the forefront of addressing climate change in general for many years, and specifically addressing it as a threat-multiplier since 2008, and its links to EU crisis management and European defence since 2020. This Joint Communication responds to the March 2023 [Council conclusions on Climate and Energy Diplomacy](#) calling for better integrating the climate, peace and security nexus in the EU's external policy.

For More Information

[Joint Communication on the Climate-Security Nexus](#)

[Questions and Answers](#)

[Factsheet](#)

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Quotes:

The climate and environmental crises bring sweeping changes to our world at a speed that has never before been seen in human history. They already impact global security, bringing new threats and heightening tensions. Today, the EU sets a new outlook on the nexus between climate and security. We will streamline and adapt our external instruments to help safeguard security around the globe and to prepare the EU for the security implications at home.
Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal

Our peace and security depend on robust climate and environmental policies. Without that, there can be no peace. Climate change is also changing the way Member States' defence forces plan, invest and operate. They must adapt to more severe climatic conditions. At the same time, they need to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and dependency on fossil fuel without affecting their operational effectiveness.
High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell

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