



**Climate Change and Security:  
Recommendations of the High Representative  
on follow-up to  
the High Representative and Commission report  
on Climate Change and International Security**

## 1. Introduction

In March 2008, the High Representative and the European Commission presented a joint report to the European Council, analysing the consequences of climate change for international security. The European Council welcomed this report, and requested further recommendations on appropriate follow-up.

The EU is well suited to taking forward the climate security agenda. Climate change represents a fundamental challenge, and should be in the mainstream of EU foreign and security policies and institutions. The issue has received particular focus in the report by the High Representative on the implementation of the European Security Strategy, presented to the European Council in December 2008.

The Council Secretariat and Commission have worked in close cooperation with incoming EU presidencies and others, building on a roadmap of action in follow-up to the March report. The recommendations in this report are based on this work, in particular regional and thematic analysis by the Commission, Member States and others, along with expertise from civil society and think tanks. The report contains three main recommendations:

more detailed analysis of the security implications at **regional level**;  
integration of these analyses into our **early warning** mechanisms;  
and an **intensified dialogue** with third countries and organisations.

## 2. Regional Implications

Climate change will exacerbate existing drivers of instability, and may lead to disputes over trade routes, maritime zones and resources previously inaccessible. Adaptation is key. Integration of climate change adaptation into development cooperation will help to enable vulnerable societies to cope with the additional pressure brought about by climate change. Initial case studies on the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia, undertaken in 2008, have revealed risks to development and security. The findings are summarised below. As a next step, studies should be undertaken on areas such as Afghanistan and its neighbourhood; South and East Asia; the Arctic; the Pacific; the Caribbean; and Latin America.

The joint report in March 2008 highlighted implications for the Arctic. In May 2008, on the invitation of Denmark/Greenland, foreign ministers from Arctic Ocean states (Denmark, Canada, Norway, Russia and the US) met at Ilulissat, in Greenland, and re-confirmed their commitment to the international legal framework which applies to the Arctic, and to the appropriate settlement of possible overlapping claims. In November 2008, the Commission published a communication, *The European Union and the Arctic Region*, which marks an important first step towards an EU Arctic policy, including on environmental and geo-political challenges.

(a) **Africa**

Climate change is likely to have a **serious impact on Africa**. Main areas of concern are:

- Further **desertification in the Sahel** could lead to more regional instability, and migration northwards, to the Maghreb and Europe. The timescale could be quite short - within the next two decades - if current rainfall patterns continue.
- Sea level rise in the **Niger delta**, coupled with desertification in the north might destabilise Nigeria. Though the timescale is harder to predict, this could affect regional security and energy supply (20% of Nigerian oil and 80% of gas is exported to Europe). Neighbouring countries, notably Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, are also vulnerable.
- Sea level rise, decreasing rainfall and more storms in **East Africa** could increase pressures on Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique and Madagascar. Exceptional cyclones and flooding in Mozambique during 2000, for instance, displaced 500,000 persons.

The EU/Africa Strategy adopted in December 2007 covers activities in eight areas, including climate change and security. Building on this, our actions should focus on the following areas:

**Enhanced dialogue.** The EU has worked with the African Union (AU) to establish a common position on climate change issues. Consultations are planned in 2009, bringing together EU and African security and environmental specialists. This could be followed by discussion between the EU PSC and AU PSC.

**Continental Early Warning System.** Co-operation between the AU Situation Room and corresponding EU structures is being enhanced. There is scope to bring in a climate change dimension, using data provided by the strengthened observation networks for climate change and migration developed under the EU/Africa Action Plan for the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership.

**Strengthened regional co-ordination.** The EU and AU could stimulate greater sub-regional collaboration, to build confidence and improve cooperation across borders.

(b) **Middle East and North Africa**

Climate change is likely to have an impact on social and political stability in the Middle East and North Africa in the future. The main areas of concern are:

- Tensions related to the management of **scarcer water resources in the Jordan Valley and Tigris-Euphrates Basin**. Demographic and economic growth, and accelerated development of irrigated agriculture, will put more pressure on regional water systems. Temperature rises will exacerbate this.
- While difficult to predict, decreasing rainfall in the Ethiopian highlands could lead to **lower flow through the Nile**, and a possible impact on Sudan and Egypt. Reduced food production in Ethiopia and Somalia would also put pressure on the Horn of Africa.
- Egypt could face **flooding of the heavily populated and industrialised Nile Delta**. The Egyptian economy is already struggling to absorb some 600,000 new entrants each year into the labour market. Accordingly, social and economic consequences from possible loss of the Delta area could be severe.
- **Environmentally induced migration in the Maghreb**. Over the next quarter-century, the population in this region and in the Sahel is expected to grow significantly. At the same time, agricultural land is expected to decline. Together, these factors could increase migratory pressures causing social tensions and political destabilisation.
- **State fragility in Yemen**. The country is already struggling with declining oil revenues, water scarcity and north-south tensions. Climate change and falling agricultural production could bring this to a critical level, with political and social instability.

Building on initiatives undertaken within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean and the European Neighbourhood Policy, our response should focus on the following:

**Enhanced dialogue.** Work with the Euro-Mediterranean Climate Change Network to promote the mainstreaming of climate change and the development of adaptation strategies that take social factors and the risk of conflict into consideration.

**Strengthened regional co-ordination.** Alongside EU dialogue with these countries, we should encourage them to improve regional cooperation and coordination of their response. The Nile Basin Initiative is an obvious area for more work, which could be linked to the European Water Initiative.

**Targeted analysis** on: (i) strategies for sharing water resources in the Jordan Valley and Tigris-Euphrates, drawing on best practice in water management and conflict mediation; and (ii) assessment of likely impact of climate-related migration on North Africa.

(c) **Central Asia**

Climate change could have a substantial impact on Central Asia. Main areas of concern are:

- **Amu Darya-Syr Darya river basin.** Water management is a source of tension between the upstream countries (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan) and their downstream neighbours (primarily Uzbekistan, but also Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan). Climate change will worsen water supply and could significantly increase the existing potential for conflict.
- **Kyrgyz glaciers.** By 2050, 20% of these may have disappeared. This would cause a reduction in river levels and have a serious impact on hydroelectric power in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and on cotton production in Uzbekistan, potentially leading to tensions.
- The **Aral Sea** has gradually silted up over recent decades. As this continues, agriculture declines, leading to unemployment, poverty, and potentially social unrest and migration.

The EU Central Asia Strategy has a substantial environmental component. Our response to the security challenges should build on this in the following areas:

**Integrated water management.** The link between water and environment is an important strand of the Central Asia Strategy and the EU-Central Asia Environmental Dialogue. We should encourage neighbouring countries to improve cooperation over shared river systems and promote sustainable agriculture. Further analysis on water management in the Amu Darya river basin is required.

Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan need support to **reduce the dependence on hydroelectricity**. We should continue to offer our expertise in support, including on diversification towards alternative sources of energy, especially renewables, and the construction of smaller, decentralised hydro-electrical power plants.

**Strategies to address social tensions.** Through the Central Asia Strategy, we should address potential sources of conflict in the Fergana Valley and around the Aral Sea, including migration and ethnic tension. In doing so, we can build on the Central Asian Initiative for Sustainable Development, and Environmental Action Programme for Central and Eastern Europe Task Force (OECD).

### **3. Early Warning**

Early action to address the security implications of climate change is essential. The current EU early warning instruments must focus more on climate change and environmental degradation, alongside other relevant variables such as governance, demographic pressures or regional conflicts. We should incorporate a wider range of climate-related data, to assist in identifying potential dangers and areas at particular risk. This could include: (i) food production; (ii) extreme weather events (cyclones, storm surges, flooding etc); (iii) drought/rainfall/desertification; (iv) retreat of glaciers, sea-ice etc; (v) water supply; (vi) migration related to environmental factors; (vii) global factors, such as commodity prices.

Information can be drawn from the EU Satellite Centre, national and European metrological agencies, Member States' national administrations and embassies, Commission delegations, EU Network of Energy Correspondents, and Joint Research Centre (JRC), as well as third countries and international organisations. New analytical methods and tools will be needed.

In the context of early warning and raising awareness, we will reinforce co-ordination with the relevant EU crisis management structures, to ensure that the impact of climate change is taken into account for strategic planning and capability development.

Climate change is likely to have a significant impact on energy security. Building on the recent Strategic Energy Review, Council and Commission could examine potential threats to supply (e.g. infrastructure damage; supplier instability).

### **4. Dialogue with Third Countries and Organisations**

Since March 2008, the EU has continued to take a lead by raising the issue of climate change and security in our dialogue with third countries and international organisations. These have included key players such as the US, Canada, Japan, Australia, China, India, Brazil and Russia, and countries which are particularly affected, such as Nigeria, Indonesia, Israel, Egypt and in Central Asia. In the multilateral arena, meetings have been held with UNEP, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC). We have also stimulated discussion outside government circles, in events such as the EU-Central Asia Security Forum and meetings organised by the European Parliament.

The EU is at the forefront of efforts to achieve a global and comprehensive new international agreement at Copenhagen in December 2009. Neither reducing emissions nor addressing the security dimension can be done by the EU alone. It needs a multilateral effort. At national and EU level, action is needed across different parts of government, parliaments, media and civil society. During 2009, the EU should focus on the following:

- **Key global partners**, such as the US, China, India, and Russia. The EU will work closely with these, sharing assessments and exploring potential for more cooperation on climate change and security. Early engagement with the US will be crucial.
- **Regions at particular risk.** The EU has already built close relations on climate change and security with organisations representing regions at particular risk, such as the Alliance of Small Island States, the Arab League, and the African Union. We should use these to gather support ahead of Copenhagen, while also working to enhance resilience to cope with the security aspects of climate change.
- **Key international organisations** (e.g. UN, AU and OSCE). Climate change is a global challenge. Building on work to date, the EU is committed to engaging further with these organisations, including in the context of ENVSEC. This can draw on early warning analysis and should lead to a co-ordinated response. Trans-boundary water management is a particularly promising area for a multilateral approach.

## 5. Conclusion

As the joint High Representative and Commission report on Climate Change and International Security emphasised, the security implications of climate change are potentially vast. Our response needs to combine global actions with detailed understanding of the consequences at a local level. Knowledge and awareness will both be key.

We also have to promote our messages effectively, both externally and internally. To ensure better information flow, more coordination and greater coherence between initiatives at EU and Member State level, the Council Secretariat and Commission should set up a Brussels based network of focal points in national delegations. A central webpage to exchange analysis will be available shortly with the support of the JRC. At the same time, Council Secretariat and Commission should ensure effective co-ordination of public diplomacy efforts.

Progress on the issue of climate change and security as well as implementation of these recommendations should be reviewed by the Council in the second half of 2009.

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