This (unedited) annex supports the SIPRI publications *Mapping European Union Member States’ Responses to Climate-related Security Risks* and *Advancing European Union Action to Address Climate-related Security Risks* by Simone Bunse, Elise Remling, Aniek Barnhoorn, Manon du Bus de Warnaffe, Karen Meijer and Dominik Rehbaum. It contains four unpublished case studies on Belgium, France, Germany and Ireland. It provides additional information and practical examples from different country contexts.

Belgium’s responses to climate-related security risks  
by Manon du Bus de Warnaffe and Simone Bunse

France’s responses to climate-related security risks  
by Dominik Rehbaum and Simone Bunse

Germany’s responses to climate-related security risks  
by Simone Bunse

Ireland’s responses to climate-related security risks  
by Elise Remling
BELGIUM’S RESPONSES TO CLIMATE-RELATED SECURITY RISKS

MANON DUBUS AND SIMONE BUNSE

I. Introduction

Belgium’s understanding of peace and security is ‘global and multidimensional’ and has evolved since the 1990s to encompass non-traditional threats stemming from non-state actors. As such, Belgium’s priorities in security, development and foreign policy include human, economic and environmental considerations. Since the 2016 Brussels attacks, the fight against terrorism has been a core issue of Belgian security policy. While climate and security are only partially integrated into national policies and programs, three developments have pushed climate action to the top of the political agenda.

First is the strength of the ‘Fridays for Future’ movement among youth in Belgium. Second, political pressure rose with the climate litigation. The court case “VZW Klimaatzaak v. Kingdom of Belgium & Others” has been ongoing since 2015. It accuses the federal state and Belgium’s three Regions (Flemish, Walloon and Brussels Capital) of breaching ‘their climate obligations’ by failing to reduce Belgium’s GHG emissions. Third, as in neighboring Germany, devastating floods in July 2021 brought climate change to the forefront of public debate. In his speech at COP26, Belgium’s Prime Minister called the forty-one victims as the first Belgian casualties of climate change.


BELGIUM CASE STUDY

The current government took office on 30 September 2020. It consists of the liberal (Open Vld and MR), the socialists (Vooruit and PS), green (Groen and Ecolo) and the Christian Democratic parties (CD&V). The Greens hold the ministerial portfolios of climate, environment, sustainable development, energy, mobility and gender equality.

Since 2003, Belgium’s National Climate Commission (NCC) has coordinated and implemented environmental and climate action. In addition to federal and regional representatives, the NCC includes Belgium’s Deputy Prime Minister and Internal Affairs and Security Minister. The government’s emission reduction targets mirror the European Green Deal. But according to the latest progress report from the European Commission, Belgium will miss its climate targets in 2030.

This analysis maps Belgian policies and initiatives responding to Climate related security risks (CRSRs). It shows that Belgium has pursued a so-called ‘3D approach’ to integrate diplomacy, defense and development perspectives into its policies and programming on cross-cutting issues. It has contributed to evidence and knowledge building on CRSRs and strengthening the work of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on climate and security. In the EU, Belgium is highly supportive of the 2021 *Integrated Concept on Climate Change and Security*, as well as the 2020 *Climate Change and Defence Roadmap*. Given its own limited resources and to ensure policy coherence, Belgium favors EEAS leadership on initiatives stemming CRSRs and is keen to reinforce its coordinating and capacity building role.

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10 Commission Nationale Climat (note 9).
12 European Commission (note 12).
13 Hardt and Viehoff (note 2).
II. Belgium’s national policies and initiatives to respond to climate-related security risks

Belgium started linking climate and security in recognition of its domestic ‘vulnerability to climate change’, particularly sea level rise. Security concerns related to climate change first appeared in the country’s national climate and environmental policies. As early as 2009 Belgium identified climate change as a ‘source of instability’ linked to food (in)security, biodiversity loss, migration, public health and conflict. Its 2017-2020 National Adaptation Plan talks about human security more broadly and includes energy security and economic development.

The link between climate change and security gradually started to be mainstreamed in other policy areas, including foreign affairs, defense, and development. Crucial and unique in this regard was the integration of the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) into the Federal Public Service (FPS) Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, as part of a broader reform to transform Belgium’s federal administration. Between the two structures, security concerns, including related to climate change, cut across both policy domains and ‘were common ground’ and thus ‘got promoted higher up in the agenda’. The merged Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation now has an environment and climate unit with staff responsible for synthesizing development and foreign affairs goals through climate finance efforts, COP commitments, EU external climate policy, as well as progress towards the SDGs.

CRSRs first appeared in bilateral aid for developing countries including climate adaptation involving food and water security projects. Climate diplomacy and both mitigation and adaptation gained in importance with the...
2015 Paris Agreement. The 2019 Belgian defense strategy explicitly relates climate change to the stability of states, through an increase of both the competition for natural resources and migration. Climate change is seen as an important driver for migration, a topic qualified by one interviewee as ‘very much alive in Belgium’. Overall, the ministry now pursues an ‘integrated 3D approach gathering the different actors from diplomacy, defense, and development.’

In 2019, during its elected UNSC membership, Belgium also advocated for linking climate and security. Echoing the country’s advocacy in the UNSC, Belgium’s Foreign Minister stressed that ‘security is not just armed conflicts’ but needs to consider climate change, especially in vulnerable countries. Despite lower levels of visible activism on mainstreaming climate security at the policy level after concluding its UNSC membership, one interviewee argued that ‘the UNSC expertise and experience helped to keep CRSRs on the radar’ and deepened Belgium’s understanding of climate and environmental factors as ‘risk multipliers of conflict.’

At the project implementation level, Belgium has mostly been active in knowledge and evidence building, to fill gaps on the linkages between climate and conflict and how to reduce countries’ vulnerability to climate change. The country uses ‘policy-supporting-research’ mechanisms, consisting of consortia of Belgian academics and research institutes to help develop evidence-based policies. Between 2020 and 2022, the Directorate-General for Development financed the so-called KLIMSEC research group, led by the Catholic University of Leuven (KU Leuven) to support the government in developing policy initiatives sensitive to the link between climate and security. It consists of five research groups across different Belgian universities and focuses specifically on the Great Lakes regions. It investigates how Belgian development can reduce CRSRs and how investments in resilience and adaptation could contribute to sustainable development. The KLIMSEC group revised the so-called FRAME (Fragility Resilience Assessment Management Exercise) Methodology toolbox.

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24 Interview with Belgian Expert, 14.1.2022.
26 Hardt and Viehoff (note 2).
34 Verbist (note 29).
used in Belgian development cooperation partner countries.\textsuperscript{32} It sought to add a security dimension to the environmental section of the toolbox.\textsuperscript{33} Furthermore, the group updated a toolkit used to mainstream environmental concerns into development cooperation created by a former and similar research consortium (KLIMOS), adding ‘a security twist’ and simplifying the use of the toolkit.\textsuperscript{34} Aside from knowledge and tool building, Belgium has pursued policy initiatives encompassing bilateral and multilateral climate diplomacy in the foreign policy realm, climate finance and context-specific approaches in the development realm and crisis monitoring in security and defense.

The following Table summarizes key policy initiatives Belgium has, is proposing or could fine-tune to address CRSRs across different policy areas. It identifies the time horizon of policy initiatives, as well as whether they prevent or react to CRSRs. Short-term policy responses are those expected to show their effects within three years, medium-term policy responses within three to five years and long-term policy responses after five years.

Table 1. Inventory of relevant policies and initiatives promoted and implemented by Belgium responding to climate-related security risks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Explicit link to CRSRs</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Required fine-tuning</th>
<th>Type of Policy Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy</td>
<td>Multilateral climate-security diplomacy and initiatives in the UNSC</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Open Debates.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Arria Formula Meetings.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• UN Group of Friends.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Finances JPO position in CSM.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Integration of ‘ecological fragility’ in MONUSCO.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium to long-term prevention</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Systematic integration of environmental and climate concerns in UNSC security actions.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• ‘Greening’ of UN Peacekeeping missions in Mali, Somalia, Central African Republic.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Systemic information and knowledge gathering with the UN to guide work of UNSC on climate and security.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• UN SG global report on climate – security every two years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Special Envoys</td>
<td>Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Short-to-medium-term prevention</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Special Envoy for the Sahel</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


\textsuperscript{33} ACROPOLIS and Vervisch (note 31).

\textsuperscript{34} Verbist (note 29). Interview with Belgian expert, 14th January 2022.
### Security and Defense
- Recognition of need for integration of ‘climate crisis and its multiplying effects within Belgium’s security environment.
- Recognition of need to monitor impacts of climate change on security of fragile regions.

### Development Policy
- Legal obligation to consider the protection of natural resources and the environment in development initiatives. (cfr. 2013 Law on Development)
- Mainstreaming of climate change and environmental issues into development action.
- Development of needs-based support to partner countries.
- Enhance coherence among different development cooperation policies.

### Conflict Prevention/Peacebuilding
- Peacebuilding Priority for 2021: Supporting efforts that aim to mitigate the effects of climate change on the safety of people.

### Disaster Risk Management/Crisis Management
- B-Fast: Emergency Aid Tool to offer a rapid answer to man-made or natural disasters.
- Legal obligation to integrate protection of natural resources and the environment within humanitarian aid.

### Research
- KLIMOS Toolkit (Updated by KLIMSEC)
- FRAME Toolkit (Updated by KLIMSEC)
- KLIMSEC Research Group

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The most promising initiatives to stem CRSRs are those that do not only focus explicitly on CRSRs, are currently implemented, cut across different policy domains, but have a short-to-medium term impact to respond to risks already visible.

Most promising short-to-medium term policy initiatives

The most promising policy initiative to respond to climate-related security risks currently pursued by the Belgium government is a regional program for the Sahel, announced in October 2021 by the Development Minister and implemented by ENABEL, the Belgian Development Agency responsible for operationalizing Belgian development cooperation.36 The five-year, 50M€ program explicitly recognizes the link between climate and security and seeks prevention in the short-to-medium-term.37 Focusing on Senegal, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali, this program pays special attention to agriculture and ecological restoration.38 Belgium’s goal is to develop targeted regional approaches rather than generic policies.39 To coordinate its integrated 3D approach in the Sahel, Belgium appointed a Special Envoy for the Sahel as focal point.40 The Sahel Region is a key priority, because it is seen as a potential hub for international terrorism, and because of Belgium’s development focus on ‘fragile’ countries.41 Additionally, Belgium has regional expertise due to its historical presence in Central Africa.42 Similarly, the Great Lakes region has a special Belgian envoy.

Source: Authors’ own compilation.

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37 FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (note 34).
41 De Groof (note 39).
42 De Groof (note 39).
Promising long-term policy initiatives

The most promising long-term initiatives to address CRSSRs is Belgium’s work to anchor CRSSRs in the UNSC, especially in 2007-2008 and 2019-2020. This was achieved through different strategies, including initiating Open Debates and Arria Formula Meetings.\(^{43}\) In addition, Belgium is part of the UN Group of Friends on Climate and Security. Together with nine other UNSC members (including Germany, France and Estonia) Belgium created the Informal Expert Group (IEG) of Members of the UNSC on Climate and Security.\(^{44}\) Belgium also supports the UN Climate Security Mechanism by financing a Junior Professional Officer in this unit.\(^{45}\) Furthermore, Belgium has called for systematically integrating environmental and climate concerns in relevant action of the UNSC, including national, regional or thematic mandates.\(^{46}\) As such, it has also worked to ensure considerations of climatic hazards in UN Peacekeeping missions in Mali, Somalia, and the Central African Republic.\(^{47}\) To this end, Belgium has successfully advocated for the inclusion of the ecological fragility of the Democratic Republic of Congo, such as extreme weather events, in the UN Peacekeeping Missions in the DRC (MONUSCO).\(^{48}\)

In addition, Belgium has advocated for systemic information and knowledge gathering on climate and security within the UN, possibly through a ‘Clearing House’, which could guide the work of the UNSC on climate and security.\(^{49}\) Finally, Belgium support the position shared by several other Member States of calling for the presentation of a UN Secretary General global report on climate and security every two years.\(^{50}\) Belgium aims to raise more awareness around the issue, and to this end organized a high-level seminar on ‘The Security Implications of Emerging Climate Altering Technologies’ in 2019.\(^{51}\) Domestically, the Foreign Affairs Minister has vowed to continue the work started during Belgium’s UNSC membership through ‘preventive diplomacy’


\(^{45}\) FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (note 27).

\(^{46}\) FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (note 27).

\(^{47}\) FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (note 27).

\(^{48}\) FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (note 27).

\(^{49}\) FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (note 27).

\(^{50}\) FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (note 27).

\(^{51}\) FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (note 27).
and the systemic integration of climate change and biodiversity in other areas such as trade.\textsuperscript{52}

**Promising policy initiatives if they come to fruition**

Belgium has proposed different medium-to-long-term prevention policy initiatives that if implemented, could help stem CRSRs. These initiatives signal political will but lack concrete implementation. For example, the defense sector has called for putting ‘the climate crisis and its multiplying effects’ at the center of Belgium’s ‘security environment’.\textsuperscript{53} This was first highlighted in the ‘2019 Security Environment Review’.\textsuperscript{54} The Defense Minister echoed the report in her 2020 policy orientation speech by mentioning the importance of monitoring the impacts of climate change on the security of fragile regions.\textsuperscript{55} In addition, she stressed the link between climate change and migration and between climate change and terrorism, within regions of geopolitical interest such as the Sahel and the Middle East.\textsuperscript{56} In 2021, the link between climate and security was made explicit in the ‘Security Environment 2021-2030 report’.\textsuperscript{57} In that report, climate change is understood as a ‘threat multiplier’, and alongside environmental degradation and scarcity of resources, is seen to represent a clear security threat with both individual and societal impacts.\textsuperscript{58} Climate change is mentioned throughout as a potential driver for conflict in other regions, especially in combination with other factors such as food insecurity or demographic growth.\textsuperscript{59}

In addition, Belgium has identified six thematic as well as a number of geographic priorities for 2021 in peacebuilding.\textsuperscript{60} The former include ‘Support for efforts that aim to mitigate the effects of climate change on the safety of people, particularly the most vulnerable populations’.\textsuperscript{61} The latter are aligned with Belgium’s development approach.\textsuperscript{62} As such, the Sahel and the Great Lakes


\textsuperscript{53} Belgian Defence (note 24).

\textsuperscript{54} Belgian Defence (note 24).


\textsuperscript{56} Dedonder (note 54).

\textsuperscript{57} Criekemans et al. (note 1).

\textsuperscript{58} Criekemans et al. (note 1).

\textsuperscript{59} Criekemans et al. (note 1).


\textsuperscript{61} Federal Public Service of Foreign Affairs (note 59).

Regions are top priorities, along with Syria and Iraq. However, there are no explanations on how the thematic will be implemented.

**Initiatives that need fine-tuning**

Belgium has adopted a range of policy initiatives related to climate change, including long-term, medium to long-term and short-term tools, that lack explicit links to CRSRs and require fine-tuning to respond to them. For example, Belgium’s 2013 National Law on Development Cooperation requires the integration of protecting the environment and natural resources as a cross-cutting topic in all development projects. The integration is implemented through three main objectives: mainstreaming of climate and environmental issues; needs-based environmental support to partner countries; seeking coherence among the different development cooperation policies, both at national and European level. The Law focuses on environmental protection more broadly, but could address CRSRs specifically.

Belgium’s development policy is supported by its climate finance, which focuses mainly on climate adaptation in Africa. While not specifically addressing CRSRs, it is used more broadly to ‘respond to different expectations of developing countries’. Thus, Belgium’s climate finance could be finetuned by increasing the quality of climate finance specifically targeting climate vulnerable conflict contexts.

Belgium also developed a short-term rapid response mechanism, called B-FAST, which requires fine-tuning to respond to CRSRs. B-FAST aims at offering a rapid emergency aid in the event of natural or manmade disasters in other countries. Three requirements condition the use of B-FAST: the scale of the disaster must prevent the aid services of the affected countries to provide the required assistance; the affected country must seek aid from Belgium or from the international community; and there must be no armed conflict in the

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63 Federal Public Service of Foreign Affairs (note 59).
affected regions. The last condition seems contradictory to responding to CRSRs which tend to be most severe in conflict-affected countries.

III. Belgium’s priorities and strategies on climate-related security risks in the EU

At European level, Belgium seeks to strengthen the coordination and leadership role of the EEAS regarding climate and security and apply existing knowledge from other organizations, such as the UN, to the EU. In addition to supporting the EEAS, Belgium seeks to increase ‘capacity building in partner countries and in the EU’, specifically in fragile regions such as the Sahel. Furthermore, the country pays particular attention to biodiversity and the protection of natural resources. Belgium’s main strategy is to ‘reinforce the EU institutions in their capacity and their coordinating role’.

Knowledge and evidence building

Complementing ‘policy-supporting-research’ initiatives at national level, Belgium is pushing for improved knowledge and evidence gathering on climate and security at EU-level. One interviewee said that the EU should be ‘a convener for good practices, and divulge, and help grow expertise on this topic’. Belgium considers expertise, grassroot experience, and conceptual clarity on the topic necessary for further policy development. Specifically, Belgium ‘encourages the coordinating role of the EEAS in increasing capacity in data collection and coordination’ and in integrating the results in proposals on conflict prevention or crisis management. One interviewee argued that the EEAS should involve the Member States in building knowledge and evidence ‘to avoid duplication.’

To facilitate knowledge and evidence building in the Council, Belgium does not call for a specific working group on climate and security, but prefers integrating it into the Council’s conflict prevention work. While the Political and Security Committee (PSC) is currently responsible, one interviewee

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69 Federal Public Service of Foreign Affairs (note 67).
stressed the difficulties this brought with it, because of competing immediate external crises and a heavy workload tied to current events.78

**Collaboration with the EEAS and the European Commission**

Belgium supported the EEAS’ *Concept for an Integrated Approach to Climate Change and Security* published in October 2021. However, Belgium initially preferred a ‘higher-level document’, akin to Council Conclusions.79 The ‘Concept’ is a working document, not legally binding that provides guidance. Nonetheless, Belgium sees it as an opportunity to put the link between climate and security on the agendas across relevant working groups and committees in the Council.80 Furthermore, it provides a shared and clear definition of what the topic ‘climate and security’ implies that can guide national policies.81 Regarding the integration of environmental and climate-related concerns, and environmental advisors in CSDP missions and operations, Belgium did not have a ‘strong position’.82 According to one interviewee, the country is waiting on the first results on this initiative to draw conclusions, but it ‘welcomed the proposal’.83

In the climate and defence realm, Belgium has strongly supported the *Climate and Defence Roadmap*, described by one interviewee as ‘very detailed and very good […] with specific goals and means, and [clarity] who is responsible for what’.84 Belgium provided input based on its specific national interests and priorities, such as geographic points of interests. Belgium’s regional priorities at national level are aligned with regional priorities at the EU level and its ‘Global Strategy for Foreign Policy’.85 Regarding the Strategic Compass adopted in March 2022, on interviewee described it as ‘very strategic and about defence’, but not the most promising initiative to address CRSRs. 86

**Cooperation on CRSRs with other Member States**

While Belgium does not specifically work with other EU members to address CRSRs, the resource constraints faced by the country could serve as common ground for cooperation. As one interviewee suggested middle-sized countries should pool their limited resources to generate greater expertise and collaborate

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84 Interview, Senior Official, Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development Cooperation, 2.12.2021
85 European External Action Service (note 61).
86 Interview, Senior Official, Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development Cooperation, 2.12.2021
with the EEAS. In addition, when policy visions differ domestically in Belgian Regions, federal officials have frequently used EU policy to align national policy makers. One interviewee confirmed: ‘This has been the policy for decades now, of [moving issues] into the EU.’

IV. Conclusions and outlook

Belgium’s ‘global and multidimensional’ approach to peace and security seeks to include human, economic and environmental concerns into foreign, security and development policies. To achieve this, Belgium relies on knowledge and evidence building, as well as climate diplomacy in bilateral and multilateral fora.

While there are promising initiatives to mainstream the link between climate change and security at national policy level, several relevant initiatives lack an explicit link to CRSRs. The political will to address climate and security exists, but implementation of concrete projects to stem CRSRs lags behind. Indeed, various policy strategies hold potential, such as the peacebuilding thematic priority on mitigating climate change, or the monitoring of climate change impacts on the security of fragile regions. But operationalization of the rhetoric recognizing the links between climate change and security risks (and hence mainstreaming efforts at the implementation level) is in its early stages.

In the international sphere, Belgium has mostly been active on climate and security in the UNSC and seeks to bring lessons from UN initiatives into the EU. Belgium favors greater leadership by the EEAS on developing initiatives to stem CRSRs in the EU. It supported the ‘Concept for an Integrated Approach on Climate Change and Security’ and views the ‘Climate Change and Defense Roadmap’ as useful in responding the CRSRs. In the future, it hopes for closer dialogue with NATO, ‘especially with climate and defense’ and with the UN on climate and security.

It will be interesting to follow to what extent Belgium focuses on responding to CRSRs during its 2024 Council Presidency.

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87 Interview, Belgian Expert, 18.1.2022.
88 Interview, Belgian Expert, 18.1.2022.
FRANCE’S RESPONSES TO CLIMATE-RELATED SECURITY RISKS

DOMINIK REHBAUM AND SIMONE BUNSE

I. Introduction

In the run-up to the French Presidential elections in April 2022, thousands of protesters rallied the cities under the slogan “Paix, climat, même combat” (Peace and climate, the same struggle). Although the link between climate and security is gaining increasing momentum in both public and policy debates, France has long struggled to address the relationship between climate impacts, human security and the deterioration of social stability.

The national security concept of France has traditionally emphasised hard security issues.2 The French White Paper on National Security in 2008 was the first strategic policy document to introduce a comprehensive understanding of security, explicitly recognising the long-term effects of global warming and the deterioration of the biosphere as amplifying the environmental crisis.3 However, neither the White Paper in 2008 nor the most recent White Paper on national security in 2013 explicitly linked climate change to national security. Yet only since the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris (COP21), the French government and explicitly the defence ministry has begun to gradually increase its ambitions and commitment to address climate-related security risks through the sustainable defence strategy (2016-2020) in the areas of environmental safety and protection. The election of President Emmanuel Macron in 2017, who had relied on climate action as an important pillar of his presidential campaign, provide the public debate on climate and security with further impetus.4 By recognising the impact of climate change as creating regional vulnerabilities and destabilisation in the 2017 review of the national security strategy5 and supporting the climate and security agenda within the United Nations Security Council (USNC), France succeeded in positioning itself as a military leader on combatting CRSRs.6

While France subsequently spearheaded military cooperation on climate-related security risks (CRSRs), notably through the Climate Change and the Armed Forces Initiative launched at the Paris Peace Forum in 2021, policy mainstreaming beyond the military sphere remain limited. Despite publishing a comprehensive strategy on vulnerabilities to crises and resilience (2017-2021), most of France’s development initiatives failed to mainstream climate and security issues. Similarly, France refrained from advancing CRSRs throughout its Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) as a priority agenda point beyond the adoption of the strategic compass.

The following analysis maps France’s policies and policy initiatives on climate-related security risks. Although France has repeatedly emphasised its ambition of leading global actions on climate and security concerns, most of its strategic assessments only imply the climate and security link without specific qualification or explanation. As a consequence, mainstreaming efforts across different policy domains remain incomplete. In light of the growing momentum for advancing CRSRs both in the public and the policy debate, France should move from reactive to concrete preventive policy tools to advance climate and security mainstreaming both nationally and in the global arena.

II. France’s national policies and initiatives to respond to climate-related security risks

Based on the National Strategy for Sustainable Development7 and the first action plan on the environment, the French Ministry of Defence has addressed the issue of climate and security in 2002.8 In doing so, France was among the first countries to tackle environmental issues in the area of military procurement and operational capabilities. The publication of the first sustainable development report of the defence ministry in 2008 explicitly linked several actions to climate change, including carbon footprints on pilot sites and energy management objectives. Furthermore, the national sustainable development strategy (2010-2013) advanced generalisation of carbon assessment and energy audits of state sites under the “Grenelle 1” law9 and the French White Paper on national security in 2008 acknowledged the consequences of climate change in Sub-Saharan Africa.10

Although France sought to advance the discussion on CRSR, it mainly emphasised the impact of climate change on the operability of the French armed forces in climate-sensitive environments. Yet only the prospect of hosting the

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United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015 (COP21) fostered new momentum about advancing climate and security cooperation beyond the French national military perspective.11 Ahead of the COP21 summit in 2015, France hosted the first international conference of defence ministers and high officials on the implications of climate change on defence policy.12 Subsequently, the French armed forces developed environmental risk analysis capacity, engaged in regional and international dialogue bodies and supported scientific research programmes on climate-security.

Above all, the defence ministry launched the Observatory on Defence and Climate in 2016 to cover climate change issues related to security and raise awareness on climate impacts on defence missions through risk mapping and joint international studies. In the Prevention, Resilience and Sustainable Peace Strategy in 2018,13 the ministry of foreign affairs defines climate-related and environmental factors both as part of the problem and the solution to fragile and conflict situations. Moreover, the 2021 ministerial strategy for the preservation of biodiversity of the armed forces underlines how the irrevocable loss of ecosystems exacerbates existing tensions between countries, regions, and populations and even generates new conflicts around scarce resources.14 Thus, the Observatory’s work helped France to gradually integrate CRSRs throughout both its domestic and international climate engagement.15

France has been vocal in advancing the link between climate and security at the UNSC, calling the “the fight against climate change and for the protection of the environment […] a matter of peace and security” and hence an important part of the Council’s mandate.16 At the same time, France engaged in several cooperation initiatives on greening the armed forces, for example at the Munich Security Conference in 2018 as well as the Paris Peace Forum in 2021.17 More recently, the French ministry of the armed forces has emphasised effective ecological management through cooperation with biodiversity stakeholders in the strategy for the preservation of biodiversity.18 In this regard, the Minister of the armed forces explicitly reiterated the link between defence and the environment by highlighting that “tomorrow’s conflicts will be catalysed and

amplified by the consequences of ecosystem degradation and climate change” at the IUCN Congress in Marseille.19

France further concentrated its international CRSRs cooperation initiatives on the Indo-Pacific.20 Chairing the South Pacific Defence Ministers Meeting (SPDMM) in 2021, France prioritised climate and security aspects21 and during its membership of the FRANZ Agreement on Military cooperation or the Pacific Quadrilateral Defence Coordination Group (QUAD). The Sahel region presents the second French geographic priority for addressing CRSRs. Despite several concrete projects on sustainable development and food security such as the Great Green Wall initiative, however, most of France’s efforts in the Sahel merely consist of climate forecasting elements and lack explicit references of CRSRs. While most of the above efforts contribute to mainstreaming the link between climate and security, almost all of them share an exclusive military lens on climate and security issues. Apart from the French overseas territories and departments, the sources of climate-related insecurities emerge exclusively form outside France mainland territory, referring to vulnerable or conflict-affected regions of the world. France thereby frames climate change as a source of instability in the Global South with repercussions for international stability. 

Although France has recently advanced CRSRs through a military lens on the global arena, mainstreaming efforts across various French ministries remain rather limited. The partial and somewhat incoherent CRSRs mainstreaming efforts throughout French foreign and development policy initiatives are further exacerbated by the highly centralised political system. As the commander in chief of the armed forces, the French President often furthers more military perspectives on cross-dimensional topics. As a consequence, other ministries have struggled to address CRSRs through a human security perspective and various foreign and development policy tools lack explicit and coherent CRSRs aspects.22 The following Table summarises key policy initiatives France has, is proposing or could fine-tune in order to address CRSRs across policy domains.

Table 1. France: Relevant Policy Initiatives to address CRSRs table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy</td>
<td>Bilateral climate-security engagements</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>implementation of research projects</td>
<td>knowledge-building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Australia-France Environmental Risk Mapping for the Indian and the Southern Oceans (AFinti program)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>medium to long-term adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Franco-Japanese working group on the Indo-Pacific and Maritime Dialog</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


22 French Senior Expert (note 21).
### UN peacekeeping and military missions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission Description</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>requires further action points</th>
<th>medium to long-term adaptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS): France emphasised CRSRs throughout its 2022-2022 Chairmanship</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- France supports integrating climate and security aspects in peacekeeping mission, especially the MINUSMA mission throughout Resolution 2480</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>medium to long-term adaptation and reaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>requires pro-active mainstreaming and concrete action points</th>
<th>medium to long-term adaptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Member of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security and support for the Climate-Security Mechanism through JPO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- co-initiator of the Arria Formula on Climate Change (2017), the Informal Expert Group (IEG) and the Open Debate on Climate and Security (2020)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- France supports making climate change a permanent item on the UNSC agenda</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>awareness raising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- President Macron proposed creating a United Nations Climate Security Envoy</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### French Climate Ambassador

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary focus</th>
<th>UNFCCC negotiations</th>
<th>Requires more comprehensive implementation with a rather long-term effect</th>
<th>medium to long-term adaptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- primary focus on UNFCCC negotiations</td>
<td>Partially</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Security/Domestic Strategies on climate-security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>requires more comprehensive implementation with a rather long-term effect</th>
<th>medium to long-term adaptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Sustainable Defence Strategy (2016-2020) of the Ministry of the Armed Forces</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Strategy for Biodiversity Preservation of the Ministry of Armed Forces (2021)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>long-term prevention adaptation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Multilateral climate-security diplomacy and initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>requires concrete actions</th>
<th>medium to long-term prevention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Australia-France-New Zealand FRANZ Agreement on Military Cooperation</td>
<td>Partially</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>short to medium-term prevention and adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 5+5 Defence Initiative (South-Western European and North African Countries) on security and defence issues in the Western Mediterranean</td>
<td>Partially</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>medium to long-term adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- International Conference on “Defence and Climate: What are the Stakes?“ in 2015</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Climate Change and the Armed Forces Initiative at the Paris Peace Forum (2021)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>long-term adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pacific Quadrilateral Defence Coordination Group (QUAD) to strengthen security and coordination on maritime surveillance</td>
<td>Partially</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>medium-term adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)</td>
<td>Partially</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>medium to long-term adaptation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### FRANCE CASE STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Development Policy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Domestic Strategies on Climate Related Security Risks</strong></th>
<th><strong>Multilateral Development Initiatives</strong></th>
<th><strong>Conflict Prevention/Peacebuilding</strong></th>
<th><strong>Disaster Risk Management/Crisis Management</strong></th>
<th><strong>Research</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• cooperation on maritime security, support for peacekeeping operations training centres and transnational crime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Climate and Security Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Pacific Defence Ministers Meeting (SPDMM) on defence engagement and regional cooperation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Streamlines and gives political momentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• KIVI KUAKA Programme Early Warning Alerts for Cyclones</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>strengthen climate and security link</td>
<td>medium-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France wants to support climate and security cooperation at the Indo-Pacific Command’s Pacific Environment Security Forum • proposed a Security Information Fusion Centre in the Indian Ocean (IFC-IOR)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>requires concrete action points</td>
<td>medium to long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development Policy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFD strategy on vulnerabilities to crises and resilience (2017-2021) • Minka Peace and Resilience Fund as a part of France’s 3D strategy (Prevention, Resilience and Sustainable Peace)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>could benefit from further CRSR mainstreaming</td>
<td>medium to long-term adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Maritime Space Security Strategy • explicitly recognised the link between climate change and maritime security • Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)</td>
<td>Partially</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>requires concrete action points</td>
<td>medium to long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multilateral Development Initiatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adapt’Action: Addressing Climate Impacts Together (AFD)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>climate-security mainstreaming</td>
<td>long-term adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pacific Initiative for Adaptation and Biodiversity (KIWA Initiative) by France, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and EU • The Great Green Wall Accelerator across the Sahel-Sahara Strip • French-Indian International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the French/World Bank Solar Risk Mitigation Initiative</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>requires CRSR mainstreaming</td>
<td>medium to long-term adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Prevention/Peacebuilding</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Risk and Early Warning System (CREWS) to integrate multi-risk warning systems in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS)</td>
<td>Partially</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>link to CRSR could be strengthened</td>
<td>short to medium-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group of Friends of the Environment at the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Depends on the organisation’s functionality</td>
<td>medium-to-long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian-Military cooperation in disaster management • France engages in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) as a part of operational missions of the military</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>short to medium-term reaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue emphasis</td>
<td>Regional emphasis</td>
<td>Research projects during the French Presidency of the 5+5 Defence Initiative for the Western Mediterranean and SPDMM Presidency</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration</td>
<td>N/a: In December 2020, France recognised its first climate refugee in December 2020. While policy documents recognise climate refugees, it does not seem to be a priority entry-point.</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Source: Authors’ own compilation. Note: Dark green colouring represents a strong and explicit link to CRSRs while light green denotes a weaker link. Gold indicates that the respective policy tool could potentially integrate CRSRs, however, the link is not yet made specifically.

The summary table illustrates that while France addresses CRSRs through various policy angles and multilateral initiatives, most of the policy initiatives explicitly linked to climate and security are deploy through a military or defence lens. Furthermore, France lacks concrete policy tools that mitigate CRSRs in the short to medium-term. Instead, the vast majority of initiatives only seek to adapt to CRSRs in the medium to long-term. Here, the most promising policy tools relate to military cooperation, especially in the Indo-Pacific, and France’s engagement in the USNC. While France has launched several promising research projects on CRSRs since the Paris Agreement, many of the findings must now be translated into concrete action points. Overall, explicit climate and security mainstreaming across foreign and development policy appears to be less consisted and coordinated than in the defence policy ream. In this respect, several of the findings are discussed in more detail.

First, the only responses to CRSRs that might show short-term effects are civil and military cooperation missions to support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). In this regard, the military cooperation arrangement between Australia, France and New Zealand (FRANZ) coordinates disaster reconnaissance and relief assistance in the Pacific, for instance through past-natural disaster rescue operations and military cooperation related to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). Moreover, the Climate Risk and Early Warning System (CREWS) on integrating multi-risk warning in least developed countries and small island developing states can prove effect on warning about climate-related risks in the short term. However, both initiatives lack explicitly mainstreaming of CRSRs and require further finetuning.

Second, the most promising medium-term adaptation initiatives are related to the Prevention, Resilience and Sustainable Peace strategy of the French development agency (AFD). The Minka Peace and Resilience Fund supports

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the AFD’s commitment to sustainable peace, climate and social cohesion through projects in crisis or violent conflict-affected regions, namely the Sahel region, countries around Lake Chad, the Central African Republic, as well as in the Middle East. It serves as a financing means to tackle the root causes of crises, dedicated to medium to long-term financing operations in region that are affected by crisis or violent conflict. In Lebanon, the AFD has led the post-flood emergency action of the Crisis and Support Centre (CSCS) and finances risk prevention projects. The Kivi Kuaka programme presents another promising medium-term prevention initiative. The early warning project seeks to contribute to human security in the Indo-Pacific by preparing people and armed forces for climate-induced natural catastrophes through studying the possible behavioural responses of birds to cyclones, earthquakes and tsunamis.

Third, the most promising long-term adaptation initiatives on CRSRs are primarily in the military and defence realm. France has pursued tools to green their armed forces and ensure their operability in climate-sensitive areas over the past two decades. The sustainable defence strategy after the Paris Agreement further refined these efforts, focusing on eco-friendly military equipment and dual technology innovations related to materials and sustainable energy consumption. More recently, France sought to advance military cooperation on CRSRs throughout multilateral defence initiatives. After organising the first international conference on “Defence and Climate” in 2015, the “Climate Change and the Armed Forces” initiative at the Paris Peace Forum in 2021 presents the most promising multilateral cooperation initiative on climate change and defence issues. Next to the armed forces of the United States and the United Kingdom, France is among the countries that published climate change evaluation methodologies for military camps (CEMS). While France currently implements the methodology in military camps in Western Africa, it seeks to cooperate with its partners on advancing lessons learned and sharing best practices on climate-sensitive defence policy.

The most promising medium to long-term prevention initiatives explicitly linked to CRSRs relate to France’s engagement in the United Nations Security Council. As a permanent member of the UNSC (P5), France co-initiated the Arria Formula on climate change, the open debate climate and security and actively participates in the Group of Friends on Climate and Security as a discussion platform for tackling CRSRs. Moreover, France co-established the USNC Informal Expert Group (IEG) on Climate and Security to support the

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26 Guitton, Durbec and Pontoni (note 20).
27 DGRIS, Ministry of the Armed Forces (note 15).
29 DGRIS, Observatoire Défense & Climat, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Climate Change Evaluation Methodology for Military Camps. 
30 French Policy Officer, Ministry of the Armed Forces, informal virtual conversation concluded on 26 April 2022.
Council in developing a more systematic approach to CRSRs. It is also among a group of countries that argues for making climate change a permanent item on the UNSC agenda. In this respect, French President Emmanuel Macron proposed creating of an official UN Climate Security Envoy.

In the UNSC discussions, France underlined the importance of integrated and multidimensional peacekeeping operations. In the UNSC discussion on the situation in Mali in June 2019, the French Ambassador stressed the importance for the United Nations and local governments to “fully consider the impact of climate change […] even further develop the climate and security agenda within the Council.” France further recognises the necessity of reducing the environmental footprint of military and peacekeeping operations, encouraging the UN departments of Peace Operations and Operational Support to consider climate aspect in the deployment and planning of operations. Yet, CRSRs have not consistently featured throughout its interventions in the UNSC. Although France has encouraged the Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) to advance the mandate of the MINUSCA mission in the Central African Republic, climate change has not featured in these discussions. At the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), France has launched the Group of Friends of Environment to recognise the close connection between the environment and security and strengthen cooperation on environmental issues as a part of conflict prevention and building neighbourly relations.

France has recently widened the scope and actions of military initiatives through the 2021 Strategy for Biodiversity Preservation of the Ministry of Armed Forces, dedicating 3.6 million Euro of the annual budget to tackle deterioration of ecosystems which could exacerbate tensions and generate new conflicts. In this regard, the bilateral Franco-Japanese working group and the Maritime Dialogue in the Indo-Pacific presents another promising medium to long-term adaptation initiative. The priorities of the first session in 2020 included areas of maritime safety and security, climate, environment and biodiversity. Next to joint military exercises, the two countries fostered climate change adaptation through joint projects between their development agencies (AFD-JICA). Moreover, the two countries cooperate on responding to natural disaster, water and energy supplies in South-East Asia.

Fourth, France supports medium to long-term climate change adaptation initiatives in the Indo-Pacific. With its overseas territories in the Indian and

33 See Ambassador speech in UNSC. “Reducing the environmental footprint of peacekeeping operations is not only a question of ethics and accountability, but also a matter of cost and efficiency. Often, alternatives to fossil fuels are not only less polluting but also less expensive for an operation than the establishment of heavy logistics chains.”
36 Le ministère des Armées (note 14).
37 Ministère de l’Europe et des Affaires (note 23).
Pacific Oceans and more than 7,000 French soldiers in the region, France is compelled to address the regional impacts of climate change.\textsuperscript{38} Throughout multilateral cooperation formats such as the Pacific Quadrilateral Defence Coordination Group (QUAD) and the South Pacific Defence Ministers Meetings (SPDMM), France addresses climate change adaptation in the Pacific oceans. In 2018, the French ministry of the armed forces coordinated a study at the SPDMM on climate change’s implications for security and defence in the South Pacific by 2030.\textsuperscript{39} At the same time, France cooperates with Australia throughout the AFinti Programme, which is an environmental risk mapping for the Indian and Southern Oceans to anticipate climate change’s impact in the areas of security and defence.\textsuperscript{40}

Yet, most of France’s cooperation initiatives in the Indo-Pacific require mainstreaming CRSRs and concrete action points. Although France’s Indo-Pacific strategy stipulates tools for “anticipating security risks brought about by climate change” (p.54), the Defence Ministers’ Meeting and ADMM+ and ASEANPOL of ASEAN as well as the Pacific Environmental Security Forum have not yet considered CRSRs coherently. In this regard, France’s deployment of an International Liaison Officer (ILO) to the Indian Fusion Centre and the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) and creating a Security Information Centre in the Indian Ocean (SIFCIO)\textsuperscript{41} constitute promising suggestions.

Fifth, France has various relevant foreign and development policy tools that lack explicit links to CRSRs and require substantial elaboration to increase their effectiveness in climate-sensitive conflict settings. While the AFD’s mandate has been extended to Small Island and Developing States (SIDS) for actions related to adaptation to climate change and the protection of biodiversity throughout the strategy on vulnerabilities to crises and resilience, concrete initiatives on CRSR remain scarce. The Adapt’Action tool assists countries’ capacity building for more resilient development to implement their respective Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) at COP21. As such, concrete projects focus for instance on disaster risk reduction in Côte d’Ivoire or risk prevention and management in the Eastern Caribbean through risk analysis and weather forecasting. Pacific Initiative for Adaptation and Biodiversity (KIWA) seeks to strengthen climate resilience of ecosystems and specifically food security in the Pacific Island Countries. However, like the Great Green Wall Accelerator in the Sahel Sahara Strip or the French-Indian Solar Alliance (ISA), the project would benefit from more systematic CRSR mainstreaming. Similarly, France has launched the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) to integrate multi-risk warning systems in LFC and SIDS and subsequently conducted a cooperation event with Germany event at the 2020

\textsuperscript{38} Guitton, Durbec and Pontoni (note 20). French overseas territories in the region include Mayotte, La Reunion, the French Southern and Antarctic territories, New Caledonia, Wallis & Futuna, and French Polynesia.

\textsuperscript{39} Climate Security in the Western Indian Ocean | IRIS (note 12).

\textsuperscript{40} Australia’s break off from the partnership of trust with France on the Future Submarine Program (FSP) has led both countries to re-evaluate their cooperation priorities.

Peacebuilding Review. Despite its important impact on climate change foresight, the initiative would benefit from more consistent mainstreaming of CRSRs.

 Nonetheless, several shortcomings and contradictions should be pointed out in France’s current responses to CRSRs.

 Whereas France is commonly considered as one of the most proactive countries to integrate climate issues into their defence and military doctrine and practice, these efforts are not yet consistently streamlined throughout foreign and development policies. In fact, the majority of the French green military projects will only contribute to long-term climate change adaptation, whereas CRSRs are not yet thoroughly mainstreamed.

 Throughout France’s engagement on climate change and defence, most policy initiatives represent either short-term reactions or medium to long-term adaptation strategies. Although such approaches are valuable and important for responding to French military challenges, they fail to address security issues in the near future. Instead, the root causes and consequences of climate-related impacts on human security and viable paths for societal instability should be priorities through mitigating climate-related insecurity.

 Although French President Emmanuel Macron has been outspoken in recognising the link between climate and security at the UNSC, for example by proposing an official UN Climate and Security Envoy, this engagement is yet to translate into concrete actions. While France supported various initiatives on climate and security as a permanent member of the UNSC, it has usually left it to other non-permanent members to advance the climate-security agenda, for example Germany and Ireland during their non-permanent memberships.

 III. France’s Priorities and Strategies on Climate-Related Security Risks in the EU

 At the European level, France prioritises cooperation with international partners. France’s chief strategy to mainstream climate and security relates to implementing the EEAS roadmap on climate change and defence. While the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2022 committed to “prioritise better incorporation of their impact of climate change and environmental issues into humanitarian action,” CRSRs are not explicitly mentioned in the programme. Instead, the main focus is on achieving climate neutrality in the Union by 2050 and adopting the Strategic Compass, which invites member states to develop national action plans on climate security. In their trio presidency programme, France together with Sweden and the Czech Republic pledged to consider “cross-border dependencies and vulnerabilities, new risks as well as climate change related impacts, and address increasing...
challenges in the area of crisis management and critical infrastructures’ resilience.45 Furthermore, the three countries committed to making climate diplomacy a central feature of the EU’s foreign policy agenda. However, they refrained from making CRSRs an explicitly priority.

Cooperation with the European Commission and the EEAS

Overall, France relies on the Climate Change and Defence roadmap46 to guide its strategic priorities and national actions on the topic. In line with France’s overall environmental agenda points of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, adopting the carbon adjustment mechanism and the so-called mirror clauses, the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union prioritised adopting the strategic compass to advance climate security mainstreaming across the European Union. As the Strategic Compass invites all EU member states to develop national strategies, the Directorate General for International Relations and Strategy of the Ministry of the Armed Forces (DGRIS) together with the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs currently translates the strategic compass into a national climate security adaptation strategy for the armed forces.47 In doing so, all French ministries were invited provide their input on the implementation on the national strategy, suggesting improved CRSRs mainstreaming efforts across the French ministries.48

Beyond its focus on the strategic compass, France has likely provided input and supported the Concept for an Integrated Approach to Climate Change and Security. It further supports the Commission’s climate diplomacy efforts.49

Since 2007, France coordinates the Energy Operational Function (EOF) project within the Permanent Structured Cooperation (Pesco), diversifying the sources of operational energy of inter-allied camps and integrating energy into the planning and conduct of joint operations.50 France further participates in the Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and Security Sector (SEDSS) by the European Agency for Defence (EAD) and initiated the Defence Infrastructure Service’s (SID) ENSSURE project on decarbonising energy needs while preserving operational capacity.

France aims to advance the visibility and activities of the European Union in the Indo-Pacific. More specifically, it seeks to implement an ambitious EU strategy based on the EU’s joint communication on the Indo-Pacific.51 In this

47 French Policy Officer, Ministry of the Armed Forces, informal virtual conversation concluded on 26 April 2022.
48 French Policy Officer (note 47).
49 This needs further verification with French Policy Officers in the foreign affairs ministry.
context, France specifically aims to promote EU partnerships with regional organisations such as the Indian Ocean Commission, the Pacific Community and the Pacific Island Forum.\textsuperscript{52}

**Biodiversity Preservation**

Beyond macro-level strategic policy documents, France cooperates with the European Union on funding biodiversity preservation actions. The Financial Instruments for the Environment (LIFE - L’Instrument Financier pour l’Environnement) co-finances projects on European ecological sites that benefit from the Natura 2000 classification. The LIFE Défense Nature 2mil (2012-2017) was the first European project on conserving biodiversity of French military sites and fostered a national and European network linking the army with managers of natural areas. Subsequently, the LIFE NaturArmy project (2019-2023) implements military side methods integrating biodiversity by applying Natura 2000 regulations on military land. It sets out to create a biodiversity group in the DEFNET army network, developing a European intervention strategy from the Federation of Conservatories of Natural Spaces and the Ministry of the Armed Forces, awareness and training programmes for the army and training schools for future military executives.

**Cooperation with other European Union Member States**

Together with the United States, the United Kingdom and other European member states, France often leads humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. The climate crisis is going to augment their frequency, which puts delivering military assistance during fires, hurricanes, or other natural disasters under stress.\textsuperscript{53} The challenging coordination among the Netherlands, France and the United Kingdom after Hurricane Irma on the Caribbean in 2017 severs as a prominent example. France should thus foster flexible cooperation to better coordinate their capabilities with its partners.

Furthermore, France cooperates with Germany and Italy on preventing violence and reducing irregular migration throughout the EU’s high-level dialogue with Niger. It further co-organised an event on greening humanitarian responses in the context of forced displacement of populations with Norway and Jordan during the first Refugee Forum.\textsuperscript{54} Reducing fuel consumption of the joint French-Italian FREMM programme (Frégate Européenne Multi-Missions or Fregate Europee Multi-Mission) serves as another example on how France wants to integrate climate change in defence matters.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{52} Ministère de l’Europe et des Affaires (note 23).


\textsuperscript{54} Reference

IV. Conclusions and Outlook

The French defence ministry was among the first European militaries to work on green defence, namely the armed forces’ impact on the environment. In particular the adoption of the Paris Agreement and the creation of the Climate and Defence Observatory gave the work on CRSRs additional impetus in the military and defence realm. In this respect, France remains a vocal and leading actor on addressing climate and defence at the international level. The climate change and the armed forces initiative serves as a prominent example for the French leadership on green defence.

However, the analysis has demonstrated that France still lacks a clear and decisive mainstreaming process on CRSRs. Despite initial attempts to include CRSRs in French foreign and development policy, such as the AFD’s strategy on vulnerabilities to crises and resilience, the link is often rather implied than explicitly emphasised. Instead of effective short to medium-term mitigation strategies, France’s main attention lays hereby on long-term defence adaptation initiatives on CRSRs. Furthermore, territorial assessments confined to French overseas department and territories has not yet translated into understanding the potential adverse implications of its engagement for others. Only focusing on one specific kind of climate change impact risks neglecting other aspects, but it rather requires cross-dimensional strategies to address the root causes of the climate-related impacts on human security.

In order to build on the current momentum and mainstream emerging risks of climate change for security more systematically in ongoing policy activities, France offers several promising entry points for cooperation and finetuning. The engagement in the Indo-Pacific could serve as a promising entry-point to share lessons learned with other European countries. Moreover, France’s focus on foresight in the Sahel region could be extended to explicitly include CRSRs and advance civil-military cooperation to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) in response to natural disasters and other climate-related insecurities. Lastly, security and defence cooperation on climate-related insecurities presents the most promising short-term entry point for EU member states to advance their efforts addressing CRSRs.
GERMANY’S RESPONSES TO CLIMATE-RELATED SECURITY RISKS

SIMONE BUNSE

I. Introduction

Germany added human security, including concerns about climate change, environmental degradation and the spread of disease, to its traditional security concept in the 1990s.¹ Yet, not until its 2016 Whitepaper did climate change feature explicitly among risks to Germany’s national security policy and started to be mainstreamed across foreign, development, defense and security policies.²

Some regard climate action during Angela Merkel’s 16-year chancellorship as lackluster.³ Others point to her reputation as ‘Climate Chancellor’ based on her leadership committing the EU to concrete climate and energy targets by 2020 under the 2007 German Presidency of the Council or securing a global climate treaty and international climate finance.⁴

By the 2021 election, pressure to address human security risks related to climate change mounted from three sources. First, devastating floods in July 2021 killing over 140 people moved climate-related human security into focus.⁵ Second, a ground-breaking Constitutional Court ruling in April 2021 rejected parts of the 2019 Federal Climate Change Act for irreversibly off-loading the emission reduction burden to future generations violating plaintiffs’ fundamental freedoms.⁶ Third, the Fridays for Future movement pushed climate action to the top of the political agenda.⁷

Merkel responded by promising a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 65 per cent below 1990s levels by 2030 (up from the EU target of 55 per

⁵ Chazan, G., ‘Floods drive climate to heart of German election campaign’, Financial Times, 17 July 2021, <https://www.ft.com/content/7ef4ab1bd-b3dd-49bc-b903-166eb4c45977>.
⁷ Interview, Senior German official, 21.10.2021.
GERMANY CASE STUDY

cent) and greenhouse gas neutrality by 2045. Since her party’s electoral defeat in September 2021, the left-leaning Social Democrats have formed a coalition government that includes the Green Party, which will lead Germany’s foreign ministry, a newly formed ministry for the economy and climate protection, and the ministries for agriculture and environmental conservation. With the nomination of a state secretary and special envoy for international climate action in 2022, climate security is expected to gain prominence in national and international policymaking. Since the Russian invasion in Ukraine in early 2022, calls have mounted to accelerate Germany’s transition to renewable energy sources, reduce dependency on Russian fossil fuels and pay attention to climate security.

This analysis maps German policies and initiatives on climate-related security risks (CRSRs). It shows that Germany has sought to ‘mainstream the idea that climate change poses a security risk in [its] ministries’ and anchor climate change firmly on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) agenda. Mainstreaming efforts are not only visible at the policy level, but also at the program implementation level where a number of initiatives with an explicit focus on CRSRs can be identified.

Germany also favours framing climate change as a security issue in the EU. It supported the European External Action Service (EEAS) in the development of the 2021 Integrated Concept on Climate Change and Security and the Commission in incorporating climate security in the EU’s Post-Cotonou Agreement. The Strategic Compass, launched during Germany’s 2020 EU Presidency, is seen as key to generate a common understanding among Member States of security challenges to Europe, including CRSRs.

II. Germany’s national policies and initiatives to respond to climate-related security risks

Germany pursues an integrated approach to climate change. The government sees climate change not only as an environmental problem, but also a development and security challenge requiring cooperation in early crisis

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8 The Climate Action Tracker rates German overall climate action as “Insufficient”. According to its projections Germany needs to reduce emissions by at least 69% below 1990 levels by 2030 to meet its Paris Agreement obligations. See: Climate Action Tracker, Climate Action Tracker, Germany, <https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/germany/>, accessed 10 Nov. 2021.


12 Interview, Senior German official, 13.10.2021.

warning and prevention, humanitarian aid and development cooperation, and stabilization and peacebuilding. Germany’s defense minister called the effects of climate change ‘a central challenge for global stability and security’. Hence, climate change features in national security strategies, conflict prevention guidelines or climate diplomacy reports by the ministries of Foreign Policy, Development Cooperation, and Defense.

Government guidelines explicitly recognize that climate change can contribute to state failure, violent conflicts, and migration. They describe it as a threat to peace, stability, and sustainable development. Climate change is linked to an increased risk of humanitarian crisis, resource scarcity (drinking water and food in particular), shrinking habitats, migration (particularly of people from small island states or coastal areas), conflict and instability.

Other specific climate-related challenges Germany pays particular attention to are: the threat of rising sea levels to mega cities (especially in Asia); conflicts of interest between major powers over resources and trade routes (for example in the Arctic); and power shifts away from fossil fuel exporters to hydrogen economies.

To reduce countries’ vulnerability to the negative effects of climate change, Germany pursues policy initiatives spanning bilateral and multilateral climate diplomacy in the foreign policy realm, crisis monitoring, training, and restructuring in security and defense, and climate finance and local resilience building in the development realm. Furthermore, Germany funds disaster risk and crisis management and climate insurance projects, as well as early warning tools and research on climate and security. The latter includes the Climate Security Expert Network (CSEN) a hub for research on the linkages between climate and security run by the Berlin-based think tank Adelphi, the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) and the annual Berlin Climate and Security Conference. The Foreign Ministry launched a Global Climate Security Risk and Foresight Assessment at the 2021 edition of the conference.

17 Deutscher Bundestag (note 12).
18 Deutscher Bundestag (note 12).
19 Deutscher Bundestag (note 12).
4  GERMANY CASE STUDY

Similarly, the German Defense ministry has financed studies on the security implications of climate change. Prevention is given clear priority.

The following Table summarizes key policy initiatives Germany has, is proposing or could fine-tune to address CRSRs across different policy areas. It identifies the time horizon of policy initiatives, as well as whether they prevent or react to CRSRs. Short-term policy responses are those expected to show their effects within three years, medium-term policy responses within three to five years and long-term policy responses after five years.

Table 1. Inventory of relevant policies and initiatives promoted and implemented by Germany responding to climate-related security risks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Tool/Initiative</th>
<th>Explicit link to CRSRs</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Required fine-tuning</th>
<th>Time Horizon and Type of Policy Response (Prevention vs. Reaction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy</td>
<td><strong>Bilateral climate-security engagements/diplomacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Somalia, Nigeria or Northern Mali: Finding local solutions to climate-related conflict issues</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Short-to-medium term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mali, Chad and Niger: Financing, together with the EU a project that involves local stakeholders in improving security and climate resilience through ‘peaceful management of natural resources’</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Short-to-medium term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Green Central Asia: Cross-border dialogue on climate, environment and security issues in Central Asia and Afghanistan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Short-to-medium term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Bilateral Climate Partnership</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• China</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Sensitize to climate and security link</td>
<td>Medium to long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Bilateral Climate and Energy Partnership</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• US</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Sensitize to climate and security link</td>
<td>Medium to long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Multilateral climate-security diplomacy and initiatives in the UNSC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Open Debates, Arria Formula Meetings</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Group of Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Creation of IEG</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Financial support of the Climate Security Mechanism</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make climate change a permanent item on the UNSC agenda</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Regular 5G reports on CRSRs to the UNSC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Add climate security issues in country-specific reports to the UNSC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GERMANY CASE STUDIES</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisory role for Peacebuilding Commission to UNSC on climate security concerns</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN environment and security expert (Somalia)</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pilot project determining the impact of climate change as a conflict factor (Horn of Africa)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Envoy for Climate Security</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>improve early warning, local capacity, mediation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium-to-long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security/Defense</strong></td>
<td>Early Crisis Recognition</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Informal inter-ministerial coordination to identify threat scenarios</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced analytics and expertise sharing by state and non-state actors to improve early crisis recognition</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crisis monitoring, training and restructuring of Germany’s armed forces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Short-to-medium term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green technology by the military</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development Policy</strong></td>
<td>Local initiatives</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food security, peacebuilding and disaster risk management to increase resilience in Chad</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bilateral Climate and SDG Partnerships/Global Partnerships</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E.g. Pakistan, India, Peru</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium to long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E.g. Brazil</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nexus and Peace Partners</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Africa</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Integrate goal to stem CRSRs and coordinate initiatives and priority countries with Foreign Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MENA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Medium-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate Finance (Adaptation)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increase quality of climate finance by targeting it specifically to the most climate vulnerable, fragile, conflict contexts</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Medium-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Prevention/Peacebuilding</strong></td>
<td>Early Warning</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate Risk and Early Warning System (CREWS)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feed results of forecasts into foreign and security policy discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forecast-based mechanisms for risk financing in the humanitarian system</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Short-term reaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Disaster Risk Management/Crisis Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>Target to conflict-affected or fragile context</th>
<th>Short-term reaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Climate and Disaster Risk Finance/Insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening of the Indian Ocean Rim Association in Disaster Risk Management, Maritime Security and Blue Economy (i.e. sustainable use of the maritime ecosystem)(^{24})</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Short-to-medium-term reaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships to strengthen resilience against environmental disasters</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Target to conflict-affected or fragile contexts</td>
<td>Medium-term prevention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>Knowledge building (long-term prevention)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Climate and Security Research</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSEN, Adelphi, PIK, Berlin Climate and Security Conference, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Migration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>na</th>
<th>na</th>
<th>na</th>
<th>na</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/a: Migration policy is not seen as a tool to stem CRSRs but acts as a driver to address them. Germany does currently not grant asylum to climate refugees, for example. However, some of its development initiatives seek to help governments in affected areas to develop human rights-based approaches to climate-related mobility issues.(^{25})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Issue emphasis

Water and food scarcity, sea level rise, migration, resource conflicts, power shifts away from fossil fuel exporters

### Regional emphasis

Contradictory: While the Foreign ministry stresses the Sahel and Central Asia, most climate finance goes to adaptation in middle income countries and the development reform foresees a shift away from Asia.

**Source:** Authors’ own compilation.

The most promising initiatives to stem CRSRs are those that do not only focus *explicitly* on CRSRs, are *currently* implemented, cut across/integrate different policy dimensions but also have a *short-to-medium* term impact to respond to risks already visible.

**Most promising short-to-medium-term policy initiatives**

The most promising short-to-medium-term initiatives Germany is currently pursuing to address CRSRs include a regional political dialogue program on climate, environment and security in Central Asia and Afghanistan in response to increasing water shortages, droughts and desertification\(^{26}\) and bilateral engagements with Somalia, Nigeria and Northern Mali to find local solutions to climate-related conflict issues.\(^{27}\) The former is accompanied by research designed for policy makers to apply ‘international instruments for security-relevant environmental and climate policy […] more confidently and quickly’ and ensuring ‘successful methods [are] used across borders and regionally.’\(^{28}\) The political dialogue is further complemented by media and research initiatives designed to enhance policy makers’ understanding of the linkages between climate change and security.

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\(^{24}\) [https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/80297.html](https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/80297.html)

\(^{25}\) [https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/67177.html](https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/67177.html)

\(^{26}\) [https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/93896.html](https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/93896.html)


\(^{28}\) [https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/93896.html](https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/93896.html)
communication work to enhance cooperation and trust between the participating countries. These initiatives are encouraging because they explicitly recognize the link between climate change and security, are currently undertaken by Germany and allow for short-to-medium-term prevention of CRSRs in conflict contexts. In Mali, Chad and Niger, Germany further finances, together with the EU, the so-called FREXUS Project which involves local stakeholders in attempts to improve security and climate resilience through ‘peaceful management of natural resources’.29 The emphasis on local stakeholders and resilience building is central to another project in Chad co-financed with the EU aimed at improving food security, local governance, access to basic services, local conflict management structure, as well as ‘sustainable safeguarding of natural and productive raw materials in the Sila region’ by improving disaster risk management.30

Noteworthy is also a project aimed at strengthening the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to enhance disaster risk management, maritime security and economic concepts for sustainable use of the maritime ecosystem (i.e. blue economy) in the Indian Ocean Rim.31 To stem the risks climate change poses to Indian Ocean security, the program includes hiring local specialists on the different dimensions of the project (disaster risk, maritime security, sustainability), establishing a clue economy working group, and regional maritime security training.32 Given its focus on disaster risk management, this initiative appears a short-to-medium term reactive policy. However, if a strengthened IORA contributes to enhancing regional stability, it can also help prevent CRSRs.33

Promising medium-to-long-term policy initiatives

Germany’s most relevant longer- or medium-term international prevention policy is its engagement on CRSRs in the UNSC. Germany is part of a group of countries advocating for climate change as a permanent item on the UNSC agenda. It has pursued this goal during its elected UNSC memberships through two (out of ten) ministerial level open debates on climate change and security, two (out of six) Arria formula meetings, and the formalization of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security (together with the Pacific Island state of Nauru) - a platform of discussion how to tackle CRSRs.34 Together with nine other

30 https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/24829.html
31 https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/80297.html
32 https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/80297.html
Security Council members (including Belgium, France and Estonia) Germany also created the Informal Expert Group (IEG) of Members of the Security Council on Climate and Security to support the UNSC in generating ‘a more systematic approach to climate-related security risks’.  

Since anchoring discussion about CRSRs in the UNSC, the Foreign Ministry has contributed to fund several concrete initiates to respond to CRSRs. These include the first UN environment and security expert in the Somalia office, the UN’s Climate Security Mechanism, and a pilot project on CRSRs in the Horn of Africa to determine the impact of climate change as a conflict factor. 

Other initiatives Germany supports politically in the UN are enhanced early warning and risk analyses, local capacity building, and mediation in situations where climate change has triggered resource competition. German proposals have included the creation of a special envoy for climate security, regular reports on CRSRs to the Security Council by the Secretary General, adding climate security issues into country-specific reports to the UNSC, and an advisory role for the Peacebuilding Commission to the UNSC on climate security concerns. With these initiatives, Germany seeks to ‘streamline the question of climate and security within the whole UN system’. 

Promising policy initiatives if they come to fruition

Several short-to-medium-term prevention initiatives that explicitly address the link between climate change and security are promising but remain at proposal stage. These include, for example, crisis monitoring and training or restructuring of Germany’s armed forces to enable them ‘to react to the consequences of climate change’ in the defense realm.
Identifying crises early by connecting expertise from national and international, state and non-state actors (including industry and the scientific community), as well as relying on advanced analytics is also stressed in Germany’s security and defense policy.\(^{40}\) So is the need for enhanced interministerial coordination by the Federal Security Council to identify threat scenarios and coordinate crisis management priorities and interventions accordingly. This may also require more regular institutionalized dialogue between diplomatic, peacebuilding and the hard security sector.

**Initiatives that need finetuning**

Various relevant foreign and development policy tools lack explicit links to CRSRs. Therefore, they are likely to be less effective in stemming them unless finetuned and addressing CRSRs becomes an explicit objective. Germany’s new bilateral climate partnerships and partnerships on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (for example with Pakistan, India, and Peru) do not address CRSRs specifically.\(^{41}\) Instead, they focus mainly on the implementation of the Paris Agreement and supporting third countries in their transition to climate-neutral economies as well as adaptation efforts.\(^{42}\) The same is true for climate cooperation with China and a proposed climate and energy partnership with the USA.\(^{43}\)

Although climate and energy, food security, environment and natural resources, together with peacebuilding are core themes in German development cooperation, the climate and security link is not explicit.\(^{44}\) Germany’s key focus on reducing emissions contrasts with the need to invest in climate adaptation in fragile contexts which one interviewee stressed: ‘Tackling climate-related-security risks is a question of adaptation – for mitigation it is too late. So now it becomes an issue of funding adaptation and through funding adaptation to prevent conflict’.\(^{45}\) However, increased adaptation funding does not automatically reduce CRSRs. Thus far, many adaptation interventions, even in

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\(^{40}\) Federal Ministry of Defence (note 2).


\(^{44}\) See: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (note 18).

fragile and conflict-affected situations, ignore maladaptation risks and their potential repercussions for conflict.\(^{46}\) Unless they explicitly aim at decreasing CRSRs, they might even contribute to conflict dynamics.

Similarly, partnerships with fragile and least developed countries - the so-called ‘nexus and peace partners’ - mostly in Africa (CAR, Chad, DR Congo, Somalia, South Sudan) and the MENA region (Syria, Libya, Yemen, Iraq) where Germany seeks to address root causes of conflict and support stabilization – do not mention CRSRs.\(^ {47}\) At the same time, two of the so-called ‘quality criteria’ underlying Germany’s new direction of development cooperation include environmental and climate impact assessment and conflict sensitivity.\(^ {48}\) Applying these criteria systematically and simultaneously with the implementation of Germany’s BMZ 2030 reform strategy is a step towards addressing current shortcomings.

**Shortcomings and contradictions**

Several other contradictions stand out in Germany’s current initiatives on CRSRs:

- German climate finance currently focuses on middle income countries and its new bilateral partnership model seeks to link development cooperation to good governance indicators, countries’ willingness to reform and private investment.\(^ {49}\) Yet a history of fragility and conflict in poorly governed places is the main predictor of climate insecurity. If a significant part of Germany’s development cooperation with bilateral partners will upon implementation of the 2030 strategy indeed be tied to good governance, it is unlikely to contribute to addressing CRSRs.

- All projects undergo safeguard checks including a peace and conflict assessment and an environmental and climate assessment. However, upon implementation, such risks are not followed up or monitored.\(^ {50}\)

- Although the concept of ‘early warning, early action’ is firmly enshrined in Germany’s policy and specific projects and Germany is one of the members of, and contributors to the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) Initiative delivering early warning systems in least developed countries and small island developing states, it is not clear


\(^{47}\) [https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/29026/a73123a6094263264e921881d6b76f90.Materialie520_BMZ%202030%20reform%20strategy](https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/29026/a73123a6094263264e921881d6b76f90.Materialie520_BMZ%202030%20reform%20strategy)

\(^{48}\) [https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/29026/a73123a6094263264e921881d6b76f90.Materialie520_BMZ%202030%20reform%20strategy](https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/29026/a73123a6094263264e921881d6b76f90.Materialie520_BMZ%202030%20reform%20strategy)


\(^{50}\) Informal conversations, Senior German official, 19.11.2021 and Senior German official, 4.5.2022.
that the results are systematically integrated into broader strategic foreign and security policy discussions.\textsuperscript{51}

- While Germany’s Foreign and Defence ministries have relied on alliances and partnerships to strengthen international crisis management and resilience to environmental disasters, and support climate risk insurance schemes, unless such financial tools and funds are specifically targeted for conflict-affected or fragile contexts, they will hardly stem CRSRs effectively.\textsuperscript{52}

- Finally, a lack of inter-ministerial coordination can be identified when it comes to climate security. For example, while the unit at the Foreign Ministry working on climate and security emphasizes Central Asia and the Sahel in their work, the development reform foresees a shift away from Asia.\textsuperscript{53}

Green Party members criticized Merkel’s government for lacking a coherent climate and security policy approach and failing to comply with the EU’s January 2021 Council Conclusions which called for strengthening and mainstreaming the work on the climate and security nexus.\textsuperscript{54} Despite the narrative of an integrated, preventative approach, the climate security unit at the Foreign Ministry works separately within the ministry and from other ministries, including the ministries in charge of economic cooperation and development. According to one interviewee, the respective ministries responsible for foreign, economic, environmental, and energy affairs, as well as economic cooperation and development have started coordinating activities related to climate security since the Constitutional Court’s rejection of parts of Germany’s climate laws in 2021 and at secretary of state level and below.\textsuperscript{55}

While this informal coordination is promising, greater efforts at ministerial level are necessary to rectify existing contradictions.\textsuperscript{56} Germany’s incoming Green Foreign Minister highlighted the need to overhaul current shortcomings where ‘every ministry does what they want’.\textsuperscript{57} Initiatives to increase climate competences at Germany’s embassies is another positive recent development.

\textsuperscript{51} See for example: German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (note 35); Die Bundesregierung (note 27). World Meteorological Organization, 2021, on behalf of Climate Risks and Early Warning Systems (note 39).

\textsuperscript{52} They support, for example, the Central United National Emergency Relief Fund (CERF), the Disaster Relief Fund of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (DREF), and the START fund by the START network of humanitarian agencies. See: Start Network, ‘About Us: A New Era of Humanitarian Action’, Start Network, <https://startnetwork.org/home>, accessed 10 Nov. 2021.

\textsuperscript{53} Interview, Senior German Official, 13.10.2021. Atteridge et al. (note 36).


\textsuperscript{55} Interview, Senior German Official, 13.10.2021.

\textsuperscript{56} German ministers are semi-autonomous and no formal climate security coordination mechanism was planned by the outgoing government. Deutscher Bundestag (note 32).

\textsuperscript{57} Time.com/6124079/germany-government-green/
III. Germany’s priorities and strategies on climate-related security risks in the EU

At European level, Germany seeks ‘to anchor [its] holistic, networked and prevention-focused approach [to the security dimension of climate change] in the EU’s foreign policy’. In addition to generating Council conclusions, Germany supports embedding climate risks firmly into the EEAS’ Global Strategy and the EU Neighbourhood Policy. It advocates for ‘a new foreign policy toolbox […] providing] partners with targeted support to deal with the security risks resulting from climate change’. One interviewee explained: ‘Germany wants to make sure climate change not only becomes part of the [EU’s] technological and economic policies, but also features in its foreign policy’.

Strategies to mainstream climate security across the EU’s foreign and security policy have included using the 2020 German Council Presidency and its trio structure to advance the issue, collaboration with the EEAS and the European Commission, and seeking out like-minded countries to strengthen existing tools or launch new initiatives. Each is examined in turn.

Climate security during the German 2020 Council Presidency: Agenda-setting constraints and progress

The trio-Presidency program which Germany elaborated together with Portugal, Slovenia and the High Representative, stressed a commitment ‘to enhance climate action both domestically and through external action’. Africa and the conclusion of the Post-Cotonou Agreement were key priorities. The trio presidency promised to work towards ‘sustained peace and security on the African continent as well as sustainable and inclusive growth, investment, job creation and human development, while at the same time seeking joint and positive solutions to the climate, migration and mobility issues’. Furthermore, it pledged to intensify ‘intercontinental efforts to fulfil the commitments to the Paris Agreement’ and advance the development of the EU’s Strategic Compass to facilitate more rapid response in the event of a security crisis.

Attempts to spotlight CRSRs specifically during the German Presidency were derailed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Germany’s six-month presidency program ‘Together for Europe’s recovery’ did not explicitly mention climate...
security. Objectives in the international realm were somewhat vague stressing Germany’s support to the HR and the EEAS. This is in stark contrast to environmental matters, where - as chair - the German Presidency could set very concrete goals (adopting conclusions on the Commission’s Circular Economy Action Plan, launching Council conclusions on the new EU Biodiversity Strategy, or concluding deliberation on the draft European Climate Law enshrining climate neutrality into law by 2050).

Nonetheless, the 2020 German Presidency program highlighted the EU’s role in implementing the European Green Deal, emphasized the need to raise Paris climate goals, improve national climate contributions, prevent CO2 emissions and avoid carbon leakage to third countries. In this context, the German Presidency arranged a top-level virtual meeting between the EU (Commission President von der Leyen, President of the European Council Michel and Chancellor Merkel) and China (President Xi Jinping) in September 2020.

Rather than softening China’s stance on linking climate and security, climate protection, biodiversity, global health and cooperation in Africa featured heavily. The EU delegation used the meeting to pressure China to: strengthen its climate commitments, set a climate neutrality goal, discontinue building or financing coal-fired power plants, and speed up the launch of its national emissions trading system. Agreement was reached on a high-level environment and climate dialogue to ‘pursue joint commitments on these issues’.

Climate change, energy transition, biodiversity and health alongside peace and security, good governance, economic cooperation for sustainable development, employment and migration were also on the agenda of the October 2020 EU-Africa Summit. However, due to COVID-19, the Summit was postponed to 2021. Nonetheless, Germany could pursue some concrete initiatives to advance climate security at EU level during its Presidency.

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65 Council of the European Union (note 50).
66 While the presidency succeeded in these three efforts, it failed to start negotiations on the EU’s 8th Environment Action Program which had also been a Presidency priority.
The EU budget: Adopting climate spending targets

The German 2020 Council Presidency’s main achievement was finishing the negotiations of the EU’s long-term Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) which includes a climate spending target of 30 per cent, 5 per cent higher than the 25 per cent Germany had set as a minimum starting point. The 30 per cent target applied equally to the EU’s new external development financing tool “Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe” (NDICI) – the main financing instrument of EU external action. Its international partnerships address good governance, democracy and human rights, climate change and migration and mobilities. Countries most in need, fragile and crisis struck, are to be given particular priority.

Enshrining Climate Security in EU Development Policy: The Post-Cotonou Agreement

Crucial to mainstream climate security in the EU’s development policy was the political deal reached in December 2020 on the Post-Cotonou agreement – a key German priority. It provides the framework of EU cooperation with the Organisation of African Carribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) for the next 20 years. The deal allowed for the formal conclusion of negotiations (ongoing since 2018) by Portugal in April 2021. Negotiations on the EU’s side were led by Jutta Urpilainen, Commissioner for DG INTPA. The German Presidency lend its full political weight to reaching an agreement that covers peace and security, human development, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, environmental sustainability, climate change, and migration.

Climate security features prominently in the overarching protocol, as well as regional protocols on Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. The overarching protocol calls on parties to ‘address the security threat that climate change and environmental degradation pose, particularly in situations of fragility and in the most vulnerable countries’ and ‘develop resilience strategies’. This is reiterated in the regional protocols, together with mention of adaptation measures to ensure conflict prevention and early warning systems, risks and impact assessments.

The emphasis on early warning is a recurring theme in Germany’s national policy stances, its 2020 Council Presidency program, as well as its positions within the EU’s external action more broadly. The wish to mitigate the causes of displacement and irregular migration and develop measures to strengthen ‘the

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70 Federal Foreign Office (note 19). See also Interview, Senior German Official, 21.10.2021.
73 European Union (note 61).
effectiveness of external crisis prevention and crisis management instruments of EU institutions and Member states’ plays a key role within this context.\textsuperscript{74}

\textit{Adapting humanitarian action to climate change}

Humanitarian aid is among those instruments. While chairing the Council Working Party on Humanitarian and Food Aid (COHAFA), Germany prioritized ‘the role of anticipatory humanitarian action – pre-determined/pre-financed activities that, based on a credible forecast, enable action ahead of crises, in order to save lives and mitigate the impact of crises – and its relevance for pressing global issues like climate change and disaster risk reduction’.\textsuperscript{75} Germany took stock of ‘the current state of anticipatory approaches’ and held a discussion on the role that Member States and the EU as a whole can play in them. A common EU position on ‘anticipatory humanitarian action’ was not reached, however.\textsuperscript{76}

\textit{Advancing the Strategic Compass}

In the security realm, the German Presidency’s main priority was advancing the Development of the EU’s Strategic Compass which seeks to close gaps between rhetoric and action in security and defence.\textsuperscript{77} To do so, the EU’s first threat analysis was conducted and presented by the HR in December 2020.\textsuperscript{78} Unlike the development of the 2016 Global Strategy for the EU’s Foreign and Security Policy, this effort is Member State- rather than Commission-driven. EU Member states now deliberate what the EU ‘should - or should not - be able to do in terms of crisis management, capacity building for partner states and protecting the Union and its citizens’.\textsuperscript{79} The process is to be finalized during the 2022 French Council Presidency.

The reasons why Germany considers the Strategic Compass a key operationalizing tool to address climate security concerns were stressed in interviews: ‘[The Strategic Compass] is a very concrete policy project […] concerned with operationalizing the EU’s Global Strategy. The threats have changed over the years. Climate is part of it and we want to make sure that climate and security are properly reflected in Strategic Compass. Security is also about how we make sure that climate does not become an additional threat factor in international relations. But we should not simply see it as an additional'}
threat, we should try to mitigate this threat and explore how. One basket of the Strategic Compass is about resilience, also against climate change, by mitigating climate change, but also through partnerships, to mainstream climate security.\footnote{Interview, Senior German Official, 21.10.2021.}

Furthermore, under the German Presidency agreement was reached on third-state participation in so-called Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) projects allowing like-minded countries to cooperate in the military domain. Germany hopes the agreement will benefit its attempts to mainstream climate security into EU-NATO relations and provide an entry point to bring climate into security dialogues with the US.\footnote{Interview, Senior German Official, 21.10.2021.}

**Collaboration with the EEAS and the European Commission**

Germany’s collaboration with the EEAS on CRSRs has, inter alia, consisted in providing input on the Concept for an Integrated Approach to Climate Change and Security published in October 2021.\footnote{European External Action Service, *Concept for an Integrated Approach on Climate Change and Security*, (Council of the European Union: 5 Oct. 2021) <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12537-2021-INIT/en/pdf>.} One interviewee described close working relations with the EEAS: ‘The paper had our full support. [The EEAS…] has to aim for consensus [and] knows that they can rely on Germany to push and have strong support from us [on climate security]’.\footnote{Interview, Senior German official, 21.10.2021.}

Germany does not only see the concept as an opportunity to mainstream the climate and security nexus and shape it in line with its own prevention-focused, networked national approach. It also regards it as an instrument for change at national level, for example to reduce the environmental footprint of foreign security operations.\footnote{Interview, Senior German official, 21.10.2021.} To address CRSRs, the concept proposes: strengthening the links between early warning, analysis and action; mainstreaming climate and environmental aspects into CSDP missions and operations; deploying environmental advisors; equipping peace mediators with climate expertise; mitigating the negative aspects of climate change on natural and cultural heritage; monitor conflict and climate sensitivity in humanitarian aid funding; taking a human rights based approach to climate change and sensitivity; drawing on experiences from the UN and its Climate Security Mechanism (CSM); and closer cooperation with other multilateral actors.\footnote{European External Action Service (note 71).}

In terms of cooperation with the Commission, Germany supports the Commission’s climate diplomacy efforts, for example by supporting negotiations with China.\footnote{Deutscher Bundestag (note 32).} However, these contribute to mitigation efforts and are not designed to stem CRSRs.

\footnote{Interview, Senior German Official, 21.10.2021.}
\footnote{Interview, Senior German Official, 21.10.2021.}
\footnote{Interview, Senior German official, 21.10.2021.}
\footnote{Interview, Senior German official, 21.10.2021.}
\footnote{European External Action Service (note 71).}
\footnote{Deutscher Bundestag (note 32).}
Cooperation on CRSRs with other Member States

Finally, Germany works with other EU members to address CRSRs. Together with the Netherlands it founded the informal EU Early Warning Early Action Forum to facilitate a twice-yearly exchange on early identification of crises and crisis prevention between EU Member States, as well as the EU institutions and to jointly analyse at-risk countries.

Other initiatives have included the creation of the European Center of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management in Berlin to strengthen civilian crisis management within the EU’s CSDP through sharing good practices between its Member States, the EEAS and NATO. Climate and security is among the Center’s priorities.

Noteworthy is also Germany’s partnership with Italy and France focused on preventing violence and reducing irregular migration within the framework of the EU’s high-level dialogue with Niger.

IV. Conclusions and outlook: Towards comprehensive, networked security to prevent climate risks

Germany’s ‘comprehensive’ security concept seeks to integrate climate change into foreign, security, and development policies. To do so Germany pursues a ‘networked’ approach relying on partnerships with state and non-state actors at both bilateral and multilateral level.

Despite successful attempts to mainstream the link between climate change and security at both policy and implementation level, several relevant policies lack explicit links to CRSRs. To boost medium-term prevention, for example, Germany’s “Nexus and Peace Partnerships” could integrate the goal to stem CRSRs explicitly. In addition, initiatives and priority countries should be coordinated between different ministries. Climate financing should be targeted to the most climate vulnerable, fragile, conflict contexts and the results of early warning systems should be fed into regular dialogues bridging diplomatic foreign policy, development and security actors. Germany’s announcement, in June 2021, to increase both the quantity and quality of its climate financing could be a step into this direction.

At international level, most of Germany’s initiatives on climate security have centered on the UNSC where discussions are more advanced – if more controversial - than in the EU. At EU level, Germany has tried to mainstream climate security into external action during its 2020 Council Presidency and

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through close cooperation with the EEAS, the Commission and individual member states. The German 2020 Council Presidency fostered agreement on the EU’s new MFF and NDICI containing horizontal climate targets of 30 per cent. Working closely with the Commission, it also contributed to the political deal reached on the Post-Cotonou Agreement which enshrines climate security into the EU’s development cooperation with OACPS. Germany supported the EEAS’ Concept for an integrated approach on climate change and security and advancing the EU’s Strategic Compass and hopes to generate closer dialogue with NATO on climate security. Specific tools to address CRSRs Germany has advocated at EU level include early warning systems and equipping peace mediators with climate expertise.

Despite Germany’s advances in mainstreaming the link between climate change and security into national and EU policies and its activism within the UNSC, in terms of concrete domestic policy action important gaps remain. Its national implementation of the Paris Agreement, quantity and quality of climate finance (in terms of targeting the most fragile contexts), as well as coherence of its climate security policy lack somewhat behind its leading discourse. It remains to be seen if the new government, including the Greens, gives CRSRs greater prominence and creates the structures and cross-cutting coordination mechanisms needed to address them at a time when Europe’s security crisis triggered by Russia’s invasion into Ukraine risks to overshadow climate security efforts.89

89 Informal conversation, Senior German official, 16.9.2021.
IRELAND’S RESPONSES TO CLIMATE-RELATED SECURITY RISKS

ELISE REMLING

I. Introduction

Ireland’s understanding of peace and security challenges is comprehensive and includes environmental and climate aspects.1 As elsewhere, the country’s national security concept has broadened since the end of the Cold War. Security risks from natural disasters, cyber security, pandemics and threats to the states’ economy through financial crises were built in over time.2 In addition, climate change and increased competition over resources related to climate change have become increasingly recognised in Irish security policy over the past decade and a half.3

While a signatory of the Paris Agreement, and its predecessor the Kyoto Protocol, actual progress on cutting emissions in Ireland has been slow. One interviewee described Ireland as a ‘clever laggard’ on climate change in the international arena, not pressing forward with new topics or innovative ideas but not blocking them either to avoid becoming unpopular.4 The country relies heavily on agriculture, and recent years have seen a state-backed expansion of the national dairy industry.5 In Europe, Ireland remains among the worst performing counties on overall climate action. Second last after Malta, it is furthest off to missing set EU targets on emission reductions.6 The Climate Change Performance Index 2022 ranks it 22nd in the EU27, seven ranks down from 2021.7

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Measures proposed in the first Irish climate strategy in 2000 were never implemented, and climate change only started to play a bigger role in domestic politics when a citizen’s assembly on climate change, the replacement of the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, and a growing domestic school strike movement converged in 2017/2018 and placed climate change more firmly on the Irish agenda.\(^8\)

With the Green Party part of the tripartite government coalition since 2020, Ireland indicated ambition to make a step-change on climate change and transform its position as a real ‘climate laggard’ to catch up on climate action.\(^9\) As part of this change, the Government’s 2021 Climate Act commits the country to legally binding net-Zero emissions no later than 2050, and to a 51% reduction in emissions by the end of 2030.\(^10\)

Some see Ireland’s policy change on climate as being motivated not only by concerns over climate change, but also by an ambition to leverage its ‘soft power’ positions, in the EU and elsewhere.\(^11\)

The following analysis maps Ireland’s positions and initiatives on climate-related security risks (CRSRs). It shows that Irish efforts to mainstream the link between climate and security are in the very early stages. Attention to the topic has so far mainly been rhetorical and real efforts to mainstream the link between climate and security in practice are only beginning. Ireland has made climate-related security risks a focus of its 2021-2022 UNSC elected membership and the country’s development cooperation policy has a clear focus on climate change and fragile and conflict-affected contexts. However, these important emphases are not yet brought together effectively in an integrated approach that addresses CRSRs systematically across relevant policy domains, including Irish foreign policy/diplomacy, security/defence, development, peace and conflict, and disaster risk reduction/crisis management and migration, nor has Ireland taken efforts to advance climate security debates in international fora beyond the UNSC, such as the European Union.
II. Ireland’s national policies and initiatives to respond to climate-related security risks

Ireland explicitly recognises the relation between climate change and security. For example, the current Government’s Programme declared climate change ‘an increasing security threat across the world, and a significant factor in the incidences of war, famine, forced migration and disaster management’. However, climate-related security concerns have only become more pronounced on Ireland’s foreign policy agenda in the years 2019-2021, ahead of Ireland’s UNSC elected membership in 2021-2022.

Interestingly, interest in the topic seems largely driven by four external factors. First, were ongoing climate security debates within the UNSC. One interviewee explained that although Ireland ‘had a strong platform’ in its development and foreign policy on climate change and protracted crisis, CRSRs as such were ‘not articulated before’.

Second, were increasingly alarming scientific insights into the climate crisis from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). A third factor were priorities brought to the table by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the context of Ireland’s bilateral talks during its UNSC campaign; and, fourth, conversations in the European Council around the Concept for an Integrated Approach on Climate Change and Security. In addition to these external drivers, one interviewee suggested that Ireland’s recent interest in the topic also stems from an internally felt need to present a ‘good news story’ in relation to climate change.


15 Senior Official 1 Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 14); Senior Expert 1 on Irish and European defense and environmental policy (note 4).
climate change, as the country’s track record on climate change action remains poor. The importance of external drivers in contributing to the national agenda setting on CRSRs does not mean Ireland’s interest in CRSRs is disingenuous. In fact, considering the adverse impacts of environmental and climate change on conflict and fragility aligns well with core principles enshrined in national development cooperation policy, such as the country’s broader interest in humanitarian assistance, protracted and forgotten crisis and assisting the most in need first. While not proposing any concrete responses to CRSRs, Ireland’s two central foreign policy statements mention climate change as a risk to security as part of a broader changing security landscape. They describe climate change as ‘a catalyst, exacerbating tensions over land, water, food and energy prices and creating migratory pressures and threatening food and nutrition security and public health’.

When it comes to CRSRs, the concern for Ireland appears to be largely human rights-based, with a focus on poverty reduction and socio-economic development, and not fears that these insecurities will ‘spill over’ into Ireland. For example, the pathways by which climate change is seen as exacerbating insecurity are ‘slow[ing] down economic growth, exacerbat[ing] gender inequality, intensify[ing] fragility, further erod[ing] food security, and prolong[ing] existing and creat[ing] new poverty traps’. The Irish position on CRSRs is distinct in two ways. First, it emphasises the need for preventative initiatives on CRSRs rather than reacting and responding to crises after they happen, and on tangible things that can be done. Second, Ireland promotes a positive approach to climate-security debates. This means it highlights that addressing climate change can have positive effects on peace and tackling instability. This is deliberate; ‘The debates of climate-security have been conceptual, and divisive. Ireland’s approach has been to shift that away from large conceptual debate to more technical, evidence-based, to point out the ‘peace dividends of climate action’.

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16 Senior Expert 1 on Irish and European defense and environmental policy (note 4).
17 Department of Foreign Affairs (note 3).
19 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (note 18), p. 42.
20 Department of Foreign Affairs (note 3), p. 10.
22 Senior Experts 2 & 3 on Irish climate, energy and foreign policy (note 9).
Institutionally, the topic of climate security is part of the portfolio of the Climate Unit within the Development Cooperation and Africa Division of the Department for Foreign Affairs, newly established in October 2020.

To build knowledge on CRSRs, Ireland supports a research initiative on CRSRs. This initiative, the Weathering Risk Project, aims to develop ‘integrated approaches for climate and security risk and foresight assessments in order to facilitate risk informed planning, enhance capacity for action and improve operational responses that promote climate resilience and peace’. This research hold promise to build long-term knowledge and contribute to the prevention of CRSRs.

Due to its relative novelty as an explicit interest on the Irish policy agenda, the topic of CRSRs has not yet evolved into any coherent approach, and the recognition of climate-security interactions has not been systematically integrated into the different foreign, development, security and defense policy realms. It also seems that much of the Ireland’s recent efforts has been on the UNSC. It remains to be seen whether Ireland’s leadership momentum continues beyond its current two-year term on the UNSC, and whether engagement with the topic will be extended to other multilateral fora such as the EU.

The following Table 1 summarises the key policies Ireland has, is proposing or could fine-tune to address CRSRs.

**Table 1. Inventory of relevant policies and initiatives promoted and implemented by Ireland responding to climate-related security risks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Link to CRSRs explicit</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Required fine-tuning</th>
<th>Time Horizon and Type of Policy Response (Prevention vs. Reaction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy</td>
<td>Bilateral climate-security diplomacy/engagements</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Expand to other bilateral engagements</td>
<td>Medium to long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Climate security no clear bilateral foreign policy priority, some cooperation with Germany, Norway and Niger but mainly around UNSC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Expand to other bilateral engagements</td>
<td>Medium to long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Climate Diplomacy Strategy to include climate security</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Medium to long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UN agenda setting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Open Debates, Arria Formula Meetings</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Like-minded formal and informal groups:</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Long-term prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Group of Friends</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Informal Expert Group (IEG) of Members of the</td>
<td></td>
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### 6 IRELAND CASE STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Security Council on Climate and Security (2021 co-chair with Niger)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Make climate change a permanent item on the UNSC agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thematic UNSC resolution on climate and security</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish a Special Representative of the SG to coordinate the UN’s response to climate-related security risks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regular SG reports on climate and security</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| | Working across established agendas (e.g. UN Women Peace and Security agenda) and with other regional organisations (e.g. African Union) |
| | X | - | X | Further integrate climate-insecurity into Ireland’s own WPS national action plan |

| | Co-chair of the Informal Expert Group (IEG) on WPS |
| | - | X | - | Integrate climate security | Long-term prevention |

#### UN peacekeeping and military missions

| | Peacekeeping operations must be aware of own environmental footprint as well as environmental drivers of insecurity, environmental strategy for UN missions |
| | X | - | X | - | Long-term prevention |

| | Systematic assessment of CRSRs, opportunities and responses in UN peacekeeping operations; integration of climate perspective into special political missions, mediation efforts and peace negotiations to climate-proof settlements |
| | X | - | X | Could hold promise, Ireland could also integrate demands into own defence forces | Mid-to-long term |

| | Funding UN climate security advisor in South Sudan through the UN Climate Security Mechanism |
| | X | X | - | - | Medium-term prevention |

#### UN capacity building

| | Build UN capacity to analyse and synthesize climate security risks and response opportunities |
| | Train UN and member state staff on climate security risk assessment and management |
| | Enhance the requisite knowledge and capacity within the Mediation Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs |
| | Systematically consider climate-related risks and opportunities across UN early warning, assessment, and planning processes as well as conflict prevention tools, stabilization plans and regional strategies and actions |
| | X | - | X | - | Medium-to long-term prevention |
| Security/Defense | Climate and development finance to Least Developed Countries and fragile states  
- Climate finance (99% for adaptation)  
- Specific focus on countering fragility by reducing poverty, inequality and exclusion  
- Targeted specifically to LDC and fragile places, esp. Africa and SIDS  
- Funding the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) | X | X | - | Sensitize to climate and security link | Mid-term prevention |
| | Climate-proofing ODA | - | X | - | Sensitize to climate and security link | Mid-term prevention |
| | Establishment of informal Champions Group on Adaptation Finance | - | X | - | Sensitize to climate and security link | Mid-term prevention |
| Conflict Prevention/Peacebuilding | Mainstream climate-related security risks into missions  
- Reduce carbon footprint of Irish military  
- International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) | X | - | X | - | Long-term prevention |
| Disaster Risk Management/Crisis Management | New trust fund for Pacific SIDS through ADB | - | X | - | Integrate climate-security awareness into programming | Short-to-midterm prevention |
| Research | Climate and Security Research  
- Weathering Risk Programme (PIK/adelphi) | X | X | - | - | Knowledge building (long-term prevention) |
| Migration | No available information on CRSRs specific tools |  |
| Issue emphasis | No available information on specific issues in focus/priorities for CRSRs. In development policy in general: gender equality, reducing humanitarian need, climate action, strengthening governance. |  |
| Regional emphasis | No specific regional focus for CRSRs. In development policy in general: focus on LDCs, fragile countries and contexts, especially in Africa, recently also on SIDS. |  |

ADB = Asian Development Bank; CRSRs = Climate-related security risks; ODA = Overseas Development Aid; PIK = Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research; SG = Secretary General; SIDS = Small Island Developing States; UN = United Nations; UNSC = United Nations Security Council  
\(^a\) Forthcoming in the first quarter of 2022.  
\(^b\) Announced in mid-2021, no available information on when this will be operational.  
\(^c\) Forthcoming in the first half of 2022.  

Source: Authors’ own compilation.  
The most promising initiatives to stem CRSRs are those that do not only focus explicitly on CRSRs, are currently implemented, cut across different policy domains, but have a short-to-medium term impact to respond to risks already visible. None of the above mapped initiatives currently used by Ireland fall into this category. In the medium-to-long term, several policy initiatives stand out.

**Most promising medium-term policy initiatives**

The most promising medium term initiative with an explicit focus on CRSRs that Ireland currently pursues, is providing financial support for a dedicated climate security advisor to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) through the UN CSM.\(^{26}\) Announced in 2021, and modelled on the German support for a Climate Security and Environmental Advisor to the UN Assistance Mission to Somalia (UNSOM), this initiative is encouraging because it strengthens the capacities of UN and other regional organisations working on the ground in this conflict and climate change-affected area to conduct CRSR analysis.\(^{27}\)

**Promising long-term policy initiatives**

Ireland’s most relevant longer-term initiatives that address CRSRs preventatively, include the country’s efforts in the UNSC. During its current two-year term (2021-2022) as one of the ten non-permanent members, Ireland has vowed to contribute to the work on CRSRs and thereby joins countries that have advocated for climate change as a permanent item on the UNSC agenda for a while.\(^{28}\) As part of this commitment, during 2021 Ireland co-chaired along with Niger the Informal Expert Group (IEG) of Members of the Security Council on Climate and Security.\(^{29}\) Under their co-chairmanship, the IEG hosted meetings on the Sahel and South Sudan, the focus of which was on tangible things UN peacekeeping missions in the region (UNOWAS and UNMISS) are doing to mitigate CRSRs, including integrating local expertise in the missions, better resourcing and increasing skill development.\(^{30}\)

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\(^{26}\) Senior Official 1 Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 14).

\(^{27}\) Sinéad Walsh, Climate Envoy & Deputy Director General of Development Cooperation and Africa Division, Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 21).


\(^{29}\) According to the Minister, this is ‘a vital platform for sharing information on the why and how of climate action in the context of building and sustaining peace’, see Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Simon Coveney TD (note 12).

Ireland’s broader commitment to move to largely conceptual discussions at the UN towards practical approaches to CRSRs.31

Ireland, which is part of the informal UN Group of Friends on Climate and Security, has also vowed to ‘partner’ with other members on the topic.32

As part of its UNSC presidency during September 2021, Ireland hosted an Open Debate on the ‘Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Climate and Security’ chaired by Taoiseach (head of government) Micheál Martin with the objective to ‘deepen substantive awareness of how climate security risks are relevant to the work of the Security Council, and explore what tangible actions can be taken’.33

Collectively, all these strategies are efforts to place the topic more firmly onto the UNSC agenda and therefore hold promise to help address CRSRs in the long-term.

Promising policy initiatives, if they come to fruition

Ireland has proposed different medium to long-term prevention policy initiatives that if implemented, hold potential to address CRSRs. In Irish proposals oriented at the multilateral level, ‘[t]he emphasis is on early warning and prevention, rather than reacting and responding to crises after they happen’.34 Ireland has joined calls for appointing a UN special representative on climate and security.35 In addition, Ireland proposes i) the systematic assessment of CRSRs in peacekeeping operations, ii) the integration of a climate perspective into special political missions, mediation efforts and peace negotiations and iii) the systematic consideration of climate-related risks and opportunities in UN conflict prevention efforts.36

Ireland expressed ambition to have a thematic resolution on climate change and security adopted in the UNSC during its presidency.37 Co-authored by Ireland and Niger and modelled on an earlier draft resolution by then-Council member Germany, the resolution eventually failed to be adopted on 13 December 2021 due to a veto from Russia.38

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32 Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Simon Coveney TD (note 12).
34 Senior Experts 2 & 3 on Irish climate, energy and foreign policy (note 9).
36 Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations (note 32), p. 3f.
37 Sinéad Walsh, Climate Envoy & Deputy Director General of Development Cooperation and Africa Division, Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 21).
38 The draft resolution received 12 votes in favour, two against (India and Russia) and one abstention (China). It was co-sponsored by 113 member states. See, Security Council Report, Climate Change and
Domestically, as part of its Climate Action Plan, Ireland committed to developing a Climate Finance Roadmap and a Climate Diplomacy Strategy in early 2022 [both forthcoming in Q1 2022]. The Action Plan suggests that CRSRs will feed into the Climate Diplomacy Strategy, which would help complement Ireland’s current efforts at the UN level. While there has been some cooperation with Germany, Norway and Niger around efforts in the UNSC, there is no evidence that CRSRs are currently a clear bilateral foreign policy priority for Ireland. Incorporating climate insecurity into the forthcoming Diplomacy Strategy would be an important step to streamline current efforts.

In addition, Ireland’s 2019 Strategy for Partnerships with SIDS commits the country to ‘commission analytical work on the relationship between climate impacts and security in the Pacific region’. This is promising, but as yet it remains unclear how it will be implemented in practice and what the focus of this analytical work will be.

**All initiatives that need fine-tuning**

There are several existing tools used by Ireland that could be fine-tuned to address CRSRs, but currently lack explicit reference to these risks and therefore are unlikely to be effective in stemming them. Most prominently among them is Ireland’s international development cooperation policy and Overseas Development Aid (ODA). The country’s current policy provides a clear mandate to focus on fragility and protracted crisis as well as climate change, and provides good ground for integrated work. Rather than having a fixed list of partner countries, Ireland takes a needs-based approach by prioritizing ‘reaching the furthest behind first’, which translates to directing large proportion of bilateral ODA to Least Developed Countries (LDCs), especially fragile and conflict-affected states. It is the OECD DAC member that ‘allocates the largest share of its allocable bilateral ODA to fragile countries and contexts (53% in 2018, against a DAC average of 35%)’. As a result, what
Ireland ‘advocate[s] on and spend[s] on is pretty similar’. This is significant, as fragile countries are often the most susceptible to the adverse effects of climate change as well as coping with fragile governance or conflict.

However, at present there is no evidence that climate adaptation programmes funded by Ireland are accounting for conflict sensitivity in practice (or that peacebuilding projects are climate-sensitised). A clear emphasis in reported and spent ODA on climate security objectives in past years cannot be discerned. For instance, there is no mention of security, conflict or fragility in Ireland’s recent Climate and Environmental Finance Report 2019 – but the reported spending of course preceded the recent policy shift. Ireland could further integrate its policy priorities of climate action and conflict prevention as well as its unique development expenditure by taking climate-insecurity more explicitly into account. It could also—together with other EU member states and OECD DAC donor countries—develop climate and conflict-sensitive planning tools. This is particularly paramount in fragile and conflict-affected settings, where Ireland spends a lot of its ODA.

Relatetdly, Ireland is currently looking at climate-proofing its ODA—essentially integrating climate awareness into all its development interventions—which is an important step. And while there is interest in layering it in peace elements as well, integrating climate-proofing and conflict-proofing at the same time is seen as a challenge. Because of Ireland’s commitment to supports the bulk of its ODA to LDCs, integrating conflict sensitivity into this (or similar) exercises, would be another important opportunity for Ireland to finetune existing efforts, with potentially significant benefits in terms of medium-term prevention of CRSRs.

Ireland could also take a lead on this in the new informal Champions Group on Adaptation Finance, which Ireland, together with the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Finland launched at the 2021 UN General Assembly. Set to improve the quantity and quality of adaptation finance flowing to developing countries, especially LDCs and SIDS, this would be an additional platform to sensitise adaptation and CRSRs.

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45 Senior Official 2 Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 30).
47 Department of Foreign Affairs (note 45).
48 Senior Expert 1 on Irish and European defense and environmental policy (note 4); Senior Official 1 Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 14).
49 Senior Official 1 Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 14).
Shortcomings and contradictions

Finally, several shortcomings and contradictions stand out in Ireland’s current initiatives on CRSRs, mainly related to what Ireland proposes the international community should do and what actions the country takes at national level, where several relevant policies lack explicit links to CRSRs. For example, while Ireland called for climate change considerations to be made integral to UN peacekeeping efforts, domestically CRSRs are not systematically integrated into the Irish defence forces’ operations or trainings.\(^{51}\) The current (2021-2023) Strategy Statement of the Department of Defense mentions the need for Defence forces to take into account climate change, only in terms of reducing the forces’ greenhouse gas emissions.\(^{52}\) One interviewee suggested that there is an interest to increase knowledge and training for staff on these risks, and this is an area where Ireland could improve in terms of internal capacity building and action.\(^{53}\)

Ireland also emphasises the need to build synergies with other areas of development and instruments of foreign policy, such as the UN Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, and working with regional partners to address the root causes of instability.\(^{54}\) Yet, neither Ireland’s 2019 WPS National Action Plan (NAP) nor its 2021 annual review integrate CRSRs consistently, only the need for more ‘research and programming on gender and security impacts of climate change’.\(^{55}\) Incorporating concrete goals and actions in the WPS NAP to address CRSRs would be an obvious area for Ireland to step up its own commitments.

Lastly, in addition to Ireland’s policy for international development \textit{A Better World}, its development cooperation is guided by two other strategic documents, in which climate-related security concerns do not feature strongly. The 2018 \textit{Strategy for Africa to 2025} does not make any mention of CRSRs, nor does its 2021 evaluation.\(^{56}\) The risks are mentioned only once in the 2019 Strategy for

\(^{51}\) Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations (note 32); Senior expert 1 on Irish and European defense and environmental policy, informal virtual conversation via Zoom, 5 Oct. 2021; Two senior experts on Irish climate, energy and foreign policy, virtual interview via Zoom, 2 Nov. 2021.


\(^{53}\) Senior Experts 2 & 3 on Irish climate, energy and foreign policy (note 9).

\(^{54}\) Senior Experts 2 & 3 on Irish climate, energy and foreign policy (note 9); Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Simon Coveney TD (note 12).


Partnerships with SIDS.\textsuperscript{57} This seems an important oversight where Ireland could develop more consistent policy.

III. Ireland’s priorities and strategies on climate-related security risks in the European Union

When it comes to Ireland’s positions and strategies on CRSRs in the EU, the country’s position is less clear. There is no publicly available information on Ireland’s positions, priorities or strategies regarding climate-related security issues within the EU, nor is there available information to infer Irish leadership ambitions at EU level in this space.\textsuperscript{58} One informant suggested that Ireland has simply not had the capacity to work on the topic in the EU due to a relatively small government compared to other member states.\textsuperscript{59} Others proposed that Ireland has more soft, influencing power in the UNSC due to its UN peacekeeping record and that in the EU Brexit has taken up much of the focus.\textsuperscript{60}

However, interviewees indicated that CRSRs are an issue Ireland would like to work on more in the EU.\textsuperscript{61} Expectations are that Ireland’s focus in the EU would be similar to that in the UNSC; ‘The next step is to take what we have done in the UN context and bring that down to other contexts [including in the EU]’.\textsuperscript{62} If this was the case, Ireland would likely support a) making climate change a permanent item on the PSC agenda, b) establishing a special representative for Climate and Security in the EEAS ideally in collaboration with DG INTPA and others and c) the integration of climate security into the CSDP. In addition, two key strategies by Ireland here will be to discuss climate action as a tool for peacebuilding (a ‘positive framing’\textsuperscript{63}) and arguing for resources to be dedicated to the topic so that it moves beyond pure rhetoric.\textsuperscript{64}

So while Ireland is perhaps less likely to take a lead on CRSRs in the EU, any initiative that is concrete (rather than conceptual), preventative and that highlights the peacebuilding potential of climate-related development interventions will likely be supported by Ireland.\textsuperscript{65}

As a potential hurdle for Irish leadership on CRSRs in the EU, interviewees mentioned that there is a general unease domestically within Ireland with tackling security issues at EU-level. Ireland sees itself as one of the few

\textsuperscript{57} Government of Ireland (note 40).
\textsuperscript{58} The Irish permanent representation in Brussels was contacted, but not available for an interview.
\textsuperscript{59} Senior Official 1 Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 14).
\textsuperscript{60} Senior Experts 2 & 3 on Irish climate, energy and foreign policy (note 9).
\textsuperscript{61} Senior Official 2 Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 30).
\textsuperscript{62} Senior Official 1 Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 14).
\textsuperscript{64} Senior Official 1 Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 14).
\textsuperscript{65} Senior Official, Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development workshop, 23 June 2022.
remaining ‘neutral’ powers in EU and loosening this stance was a red line for the Green party in the 2020 coalition talks. It is unclear if Ireland would be able to lead on climate and security efforts in the EU without facing domestic backlash.66

In terms of potential agenda-setting capacity, Ireland is not due to hold the rotating presidency of the Council until July-December 2026.

IV. Conclusions and outlook

Political momentum in Ireland around CRSRs is building and Ireland is increasingly involved in international discussions on the topic. Since the change in government in 2020 and the country’s UNSC campaign, Ireland has significantly stepped up its commitment to climate action. CRSRs have featured prominently in the county’s efforts in the UNSC. In its UNSC activism, it seems Ireland is leaning heavily on initiatives of Germany and other states that have been active on this topic for a while, for example with the establishment of a Special Envoy for South Sudan and building on Germany’s earlier draft resolution on climate security from 2020.67 However, Ireland’s approach is distinct in two ways: it emphasises a positive approach to peace, and the need for preventative action, instead of short-term reactive responses such as Early Warning Systems or humanitarian responses.

To ramp up medium-term prevention, Ireland could lead by example by climate and conflict sensitizing its own development cooperation. While a smaller donor country in terms of total USD spent, Ireland’s development expenditure is unique in its explicit focus the most vulnerable, fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Integrating CRSRs more systematically into these existing ODA flows would be a significant step in tackling emerging climate-related insecurities. This would also signal a clear commitment to operationalise the position advocated for by Ireland – that climate action can positively support peacebuilding efforts. Ireland’s announcement, in November 2021, to more than double its climate finance by 2025 as well as ongoing climate-proofing exercises of all Irish development expenditure and the development of a Climate Diplomacy Strategy are important entry points for taking concrete steps into this direction. At international level, Ireland’s efforts could be extended into the EU.

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67 see e.g. statements made by Sinéad Walsh, Climate Envoy & Deputy Director General of Development Cooperation and Africa Division, Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (note 21).
It remains to be seen whether Ireland’s momentum continues beyond its current two-year term on the UNSC, and whether engagement with the topic will be extended to other multilateral fora such as the EU. Despite Ireland’s recent efforts on placing climate change and security onto the multilateral agenda at UN level, it needs to integrate these demands more consistently into its national actions. Its national implementation of the Paris Agreement, as well as coherence of its climate security policy lack behind its discourse.