

RESEARCH REPORT 2016

Climate Change in an EU Security Context

The Role of the European External Action Service

Hannes Sonnsjö & Niklas Bremberg



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Preface

The security implications of climate change have attracted increasing attention in policy and research during the past decade. Since climate change has far-reaching implications for human livelihoods and activities, the potential security implications are broad and complex. As stated in the fifth assessment report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change undermines human security, affects some previously known violent conflict triggers, impacts vital transport, energy and energy infrastructure, and increasingly shapes the conditions of security and national security policies. Overall, this means that climate change entails different types of security challenges, stretching from human security to state security, which require responses from distinct policy communities – foreign affairs, defence, crisis management, finance, environment and development. These communities are currently in different stages of developing strategies for integrating climate security risks in their work.

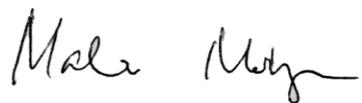
This report was produced within a project funded by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA). The main goal of the project was to assist and inform policy making on security risks posed by climate change, with the focus on two specific areas: How policy organisations such as development and defence actors frame and integrate climate security risks in their work; and how and under what circumstances climate change increases the risk of violent conflict. The first topic was examined through a review of the literature and two separate case studies on how organisations integrate climate security risks in their work. The organisations concerned were the European External Action Service (EEAS) and development organisations in three European countries. The second topic was examined through a review on the climate-conflict literature in one specific region, East Africa. All three studies are described in separate reports published during spring 2016. A synthesising report is also under way and will be released in September 2016.

The present report addresses the responses taken by the EEAS to align various foreign policy tools and instrument within the European Union in addressing security risks brought about climate change. The three policy areas in focus are: climate diplomacy, conflict prevention and defense. The key question is to what extent the policy is translated into action and what room there is for improvement with regard to a more coherent response to climate-related security risks. An important foundation for the analysis was interviews with staff at the EEAS.

The report was produced by researchers at the Department of Political Science, Stockholm University, and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (Ui) in collaboration with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). During the work on this report, we had fruitful discussions and received valuable comments from the project group, consisting of Sebastian van Baalen, Karin Bäckstrand,

Lisa Maria Dellmuth and Maria-Therese Gustafsson. We would like to thank Lina Grip at SIPRI, who acted as a reviewer on the final draft. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the Swedish MFA, who made this study possible.

Malin Mobjörk, project leader and senior researcher at SIPRI

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Malin Mobjörk'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stockholm, June 2016

Executive Summary

The strength of the EU as a foreign policy actor lies in its ability to combine a wide variety of economic and political policy tools, ranging from aid and trade to military and civilian missions in third countries. With growing acknowledgement of the security implications of climate change for e.g. international relations, global trading systems and people's livelihoods, the EU has slowly incorporated climate change into its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CSFP). The Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in 2009, can be seen as a response to demands for a more coordinated and visible security and foreign policy. The treaty was pivotal for the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and led to the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS), which supports the High Representative (HR) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and is the EU's node for diplomatic and external relations. With this ambition to respond to global issues in a comprehensive way, the EU should be well-equipped to address a cross-cutting issue such as climate change. During the past decade, several important steps have in fact been taken towards developing climate security strategies within the EU.

This report analyses these developments with the emphasis on conflict prevention and CSDP, focusing especially on the EEAS and the work being done to align various EU foreign policy tools and instruments in order to address security challenges related to climate change. *A key question examined in the analysis is the extent to which such policies have been translated into action and the scope for improvement with regard to a more coherent response to climate-related security risks.* By viewing climate change as a 'threat multiplier', the response promoted within the EU has primarily been to mainstream the issue into existing policy areas. In this report, three such areas are given special attention.

Multilateralism and climate diplomacy

In light of the slow pace of progress in international climate negotiations, in 2011 the EEAS and the European Commission jointly produced the paper 'EU Climate Diplomacy for 2015 and Beyond' calling for a stronger role of foreign policy in international climate policy. It was suggested that this should be done based on three strands of action: promoting climate action, supporting implementation of climate action and continuing the work on responding to climate change and international security. Climate diplomacy has since grown into a distinct policy area with regard to strategic priorities in diplomatic dialogue and initiatives, and the security implications are being increasingly acknowledged. The conclusions reached by the Foreign Affairs Council in the aftermath of COP 21 in Paris marked a step forward in emphasising the direct and indirect international security impacts of climate change, highlighting migration, food security and reliable access to resources such as water and energy.

Development and conflict prevention

While there is growing consensus among conflict researchers on pathways linking climate change with increased risks of violent conflict, this has not been accompanied by a significant change in the ways in which the EU addresses root causes of conflict. In order to find examples of initiatives where climate change is incorporated into the realm of conflict prevention at EU level, it is necessary to examine the policy area of development and the ways in which climate change and variability can affect fragility and poverty. The long-term goals of promoting stability and peace through humanitarian aid and assistance are also well-suited to incorporation of goals on long-term challenges such as climate change. Since the EU, together with its member states, constitutes the world's largest development assistance and humanitarian aid donor, providing more than €1 billion annually, there is great potential for addressing climate security issues. This is already done to some extent through various financial instruments, such as the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), which aims at building capacity in third countries to address specific global and trans-regional threats, including climate change.

CSDP and a comprehensive approach

Managing the effects of climate change may include civilian-military cooperation. However, the former HR Catherine Ashton called for a broader interpretation, letting 'comprehensive' epitomise the use of the many and varied instruments at the disposal of the EU "in a strategically and coherent and effective manner". In this approach, the CSDP is only one of several instruments. Nevertheless, there are a vast number of institutional and procedural shortfalls, which have prevented coherent EU external action. The negative effects of climate change, which are non-antagonistic, cross-sectoral and requiring long-term responses, are therefore especially difficult to address. The conceptual confusion between e.g. securitisation and militarisation may also have reinforced the difficulty.

In the present analysis of how climate change relates to these policy areas, some implications for policy were identified.

Institutional integration requires strategic guidance

Crisis management, multilateralism, thematic analysis and geographical coverage are equally important in a comprehensive approach to climate security. However, such an approach should only be seen as a method, not a strategy, since it does not specify how the EU should respond, but instead presents a platform for cooperation. Despite several initiatives on policy coherence between e.g. development, security and climate action, the EU is still divided into silos and practitioners still think and act in terms of their own mandate and territory. An updated security strategy describing why and in what cases the EU should engage in climate security could contribute to a more coherent EU response. In the absence of such a strategy, the only way forward is to engage in practical projects in regions where climate change will have an effect on security. The development of the Arctic region, migration to the EU and freshwater scarcity in the neighbourhood of the EU are some examples of issues that would require an integrated response.

Integrating climate change into conflict analysis requires resources

Preventative efforts and upstream strategies receive less attention, and fewer resources, than immediate crisis response and geographical coverage. When the EEAS receives additional resources, these are primarily used to strengthen EU delegations rather than thematic expertise. Thus, the problem of personnel can be argued to be much more important for resolving the difficulties in addressing climate security than the institutional set-up of the EU. The mandate and the expertise exist today, but given the spatial and temporal complexity of climate change, more immediate issues will require resources dedicated to addressing global and emerging issues. The present analysis identified a need to take into account the implications of climate change at an early stage of analysis and policy work, which would require strengthening of thematic units dealing with conflict prevention and climate change.

Linking climate change and security has its benefits and shortcomings

Experts dealing with the impacts of climate change come from various backgrounds and organisational settings. This reflects the multifaceted character of the challenges posed by climate change, which is important to bear in mind when framing climate change as a security threat. The present analysis indicated that the inability to reach policy coherence on climate security might be a result not only of institutional barriers or lack of resources, but also of conceptual confusion and even deliberate efforts to separate the development, security and climate domains. For example, in contrast to CSDP, humanitarian aid is based on needs rather than political negotiations and mixing these two issues could risk compromising the underlying principles of e.g. impartiality and neutrality, which are central in humanitarian aid.

Key words: climate change, security, EU, EEAS, CSDP, external relations, integrated approach

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Abbreviations

FPI	Foreign Policy Instrument
EU	The European Union
EEAS	The European External Action Service
IcSP	The Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
CSDP	The Common Security and Defence Policy
UN	The United Nations
SDG	The Sustainable Development Goals of the UN
MDG	The Millennium Development Goals of the UN
IPCC	The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
UNEP	The United Nations Environment Programme
UNDP	The United Nations Development Programme
EU-ISS	The European Union Institute for Security Studies
EPSC	European Political Strategy Centre
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
HR	The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
DG DEVCO	The Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DG CLIMA	The Directorate-General for Climate Action
DG ENER	The Directorate-General for Energy
DG ECHO	The Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
DG NEAR	The Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement
ENVSEC	Environment and Security Initiative
ERCC	Emergency Response Coordination Centre
DCCD	Development Cooperation Coordination Division
INTCEN	Intelligence and Situation Centre

1. Introduction

The effects of climate change are increasingly being acknowledged as having far-reaching and potentially disastrous consequences for states and societies (see e.g. Steinbruner et al. 2013; Adger et al. 2014; Oppenheimer et al. 2014). As a result, a growing number of policy-makers and researchers are now seeking to address the link between climate change and security. The adverse effects of climate change and global warming may have profound impacts on human security, as people's livelihoods in many parts of the world are at risk due to e.g. sea-level rise, desertification, deforestation and freshwater shortages. Climate change might also act as a conflict driver in local contexts¹, or as a trigger for geopolitical contestation among great powers over natural resources, energy supplies and trade routes. This recognition is illustrated in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) debates on climate change and security (UN 2009; Harting 2013), the awareness and incorporation of climate change into national and regional security strategies (EU 2003, 2008a; DCDC 2010a, 2010b; U.S Department of Defence 2010), and the fact that many development organisations are now seeking to assess the vulnerability, and strengthen the capacity, of societies threatened by climate change² (UNEP 2004; UNDP 2007, 2011). The growing interest in the link between climate change and security is also reflected in an increasing volume of scholarly publications and in the IPCC devoting a chapter of its most recent report to the human security implications of climate change (see Adger et al. 2014).

The effects of climate change are not felt evenly across the globe, but climate change is nonetheless an inherently transboundary phenomenon. Handling the negative consequences for state and human security requires coordinated efforts at both global and regional level, since global and regional international organisations might possess capacities that individual countries lack. One of the most important international organisations in this regard is the European Union (EU). It is a regional organisation with increasing global reach and aspirations and some of its member states are among the most vocal proponents of the need to address the security challenges linked to climate change (e.g. Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom). In the past decade, the EU has taken important steps in its ambition to be a more coherent foreign policy actor, not least with regard to its aid policies and investments for climate adaptation (EU 2015a). Climate change and its negative impacts on societies, both within and outside the EU, are now being discussed at all levels of the EU, including within the area of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) (Zwolski & Kaunert 2011; Van Schaik & Schunz 2012; Liberatore 2013).

¹ See the first background report within this project (van Baalen & Mobjörk 2016).

² See the second background report within this project (Gustafsson 2016).

Even though military assets may come to play a larger role in future EU responses to security challenges related to climate change, there are few signs to suggest that the EU and its member states have sought to militarise the problem of climate change per se (Youngs 2015). On the other hand, there are signs that the EU is tending to securitise “climate refugees” (Geddes 2015). This shows that EU actions vis-à-vis climate change and security are not only affected by a certain amount of conceptual uncertainty, but may also involve difficult normative questions. However, the EU’s institutional set-up, with shared and at times overlapping competences between the European Commission and the Council of Ministers, is often said to hamper the EU’s ability to act coherently and forcefully in policy areas related to climate change and security (Vogler 2013; Floyd 2015). The development of the European External Action Service (EEAS) from 2010 onwards is intended to provide a greater amount of coherence and thus enhance the EU’s foreign and security policy. Some progress has undoubtedly been made in this regard, but there are also indications that some EU member states are showing reluctance towards the EEAS and if this is not overcome it might actually lead to greater incoherence, including in relation to the EU’s action in the field of climate change and security (De Jong & Schunz 2012).

This report analyses the development of EU policies related to climate change and security, with the emphasis on conflict prevention and CSDP. The report focuses especially on the EEAS and the work being done to align various EU foreign policy tools and instruments in order to address security challenges related to climate change. Thus, a key question examined in this report is the extent to which such policies are translated into action and the scope for improvements with regard to a more coherent response to climate-related security risks. The EU actions in this field are in fact broader than the range of issues belonging to the CSDP. For example, the Commission provides the main bulk of EU funding for developmental aid and climate adaptation investments, while individual member states have been influential in terms of setting the agenda for international cooperation on climate change and security. Nevertheless, the EEAS is in a unique position as a node in the EU’s foreign policy system. Moreover, its recent reorganisation and role in crafting the new European Global Strategy make it especially relevant to study at this point in time.

This analysis does not rely solely on policy documents concerning the EU’s actions on climate change and security, but rather builds also upon a set of semi-structured interviews with practitioners primarily working at the EEAS. A total of nine interviews were conducted during spring 2016 with experts within the EEAS (the Global Issues Division, the Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Mediation Division, the Development Cooperation Coordination Division, and the EU Intelligence and Situation Centre) and at the European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC), the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EU-ISS), plus and a former EU ambassador. Thus, the analysis provides unique insights based on practitioners’ accounts of the work currently being done at the EEAS, as well as the challenges and opportunities that the EU faces as a foreign policy actor in the field of climate security.

The report is organised in the following way. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides a brief overview of how climate change has been increasingly linked with international and regional security within the EU during the past two decades. Three policy areas (diplomacy and multilateralism, development and conflict prevention, security and defence) and their links to climate change are of special interest in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, the interviews are presented and the content analysed in terms of three overarching themes; a comprehensive approach to climate security, the need for strategic guidance and prioritisation, and the role of climate factors in conflict prevention. Chapter 4 presents concluding remarks on the fitness of the EU to address global issues such as climate change and on the possible implications of connecting climate change and security.

2. Climate Change in the EU Security Context

The engagement of the EU in climate change has a long tradition, with the primary focus on mitigation of the negative effects through reduction of greenhouse gases. However, it is less than 10 years since the two distinct policy areas – climate and security – were merged in the agenda of climate security³. This chapter introduces the security discourse within the EU and describes how climate security issues are being increasingly acknowledged. This is done by citing important official documents and statements in order to show how the EU, at least at the formal level, is currently emphasising the strategic relevance of climate change and the impacts it can have on security and foreign policy. The practical implications of this theoretical and formal engagement throughout the EU institutions are discussed in Chapter 3.

2.1. The European security discourse

The strength of the EU as a foreign policy actor lies in its supranational structure and its ability to combine a wide variety of economic and political policy tools, ranging from aid and trade to military and civilian missions in third countries. The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was established under the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 and acts as an umbrella for all areas of foreign policy, including what was then referred to as European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). During the early years, much attention was devoted to defence cooperation and the benefits of pooling resources in various missions (for an overview of missions during 1999-2009, see Grevi et al. 2009). However, the links between the EU's foreign policy as a whole and the ESDP remained unclear and, as the world continued to become ever more complex and interlinked, it became evident that proper crisis management also needed to address humanitarian crises, civil protection and missions with non-military personnel (for an overview of the evolution of EU crisis management, see e.g. Boin et al. 2013).

The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force in 2009, can be seen as a response to the demands for more coordinated and visible security and foreign policies. The treaty not only recognises the EU as a legal entity (i.e. able to sign international treaties), but is also pivotal for the successor to ESDP, namely the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). It has also led to the creation of the EU diplomatic service, the European External Action Service (EEAS), which acts under the

³ Climate security has been defined as “the broad range of foreign policy actions aimed at addressing strategic and political impacts of climate change” (Youngs 2014:3).

authority of the EU's High Representative (HR) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The EEAS supports the HR in delivering the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and in ensuring the consistency of the EU's external relations. Thus, the establishment of the EEAS marked a step forward with regard to the EU's role as a foreign policy actor and has created a more coherent crisis management structure, both civilian and military. A review in 2013 of the EEAS's first few years, in combination with the appointment of the new HR, Federica Mogherini, under the Juncker Commission, led to major re-organisation of the EEAS in 2015. Among many changes, a modified organisational charter meant that additional focus was placed on emerging threats and more long-term challenges, for example by the creation of a department (MD Global) dealing primarily with economic and global issues (such as climate change, energy security, cyberthreats and organised crime).

While the main focus in the present analysis was on the EEAS, our interest in the EU's work on climate change and conflict prevention required a broader scope, including not only the CSDP and the EEAS but also several Directorates-General (DG) in the EU Commission. The most pivotal DG for this are:

- The DG for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO), which is responsible for formulating EU development policy and thematic policies e.g. to reduce poverty, to ensure sustainable economic, social and environmental development, and to promote democracy and good governance primarily through external aid.
- The DG for Climate Action (DG CLIMA), which leads the EU Commission's efforts to fight climate change at the European and international level. This includes multilateral negotiations, implementation of the EU emission trading schemes and monitoring of national emissions. DG CLIMA is also an important partner to EEAS as regards formulating the role of EU Climate Diplomacy.
- The DG for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), which helps promote EU values, policies and interests in and around Europe to strengthen stability and security. Since the manifestation of climate change is likely to be great in both Middle Eastern and North African countries, today covered by DG NEAR, it is important that the thematic priorities are set to incorporate the security risks that may follow.

2.2. The climate security kick-off

Even though environmental and climatic issues were greatly neglected in the European security debate at the beginning of the new millennium, they were not completely absent. The EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts (EU 2001), the European Security Strategy (EU 2003) and Council Conclusions on an EU Response to Situations of Fragility (EU 2007a) are some examples of documents in

which climate or environmental risks are mentioned, at least peripherally.⁴

The momentum for a EU climate security discourse increased in 2007. In that year the IPCC released its Fourth Assessment Report and the United Nations Security Council, at the request of the United Kingdom, held its first-ever debate on climate change, which could explain to some extent the sudden interest in climate security in the EU (Zwolski & Kaunert 2011). One document often referred to as an important step towards integration of tools to address climate security in the EU was published in 2008 by the HR at the time, Javier Solana. *Climate Change and International Security* (EU 2008b:2) was a joint paper with the European Commission and describes climate change as a ‘threat multiplier’ which “exacerbates existing trends, tensions and instability [and] threatens to overburden states and regions which are already fragile and conflict prone”. In addition to this joint paper, the primary focus of which was on water scarcity and the impacts of climate change on regions outside the EU, a revised European Security Strategy published in the same year recognises climate change not only as a global challenge, but also as a “key threat” to the EU’s own security interests (EU 2008a:5). A third initiative in 2008 was a communication from the Commission on *The European Union and the Arctic Region* (EU 2008c:2) re-emphasising the conclusion from the Solana report that “the geo-strategic dynamics of the Arctic [has] potential consequences for international stability and European security interests”.⁵

In late 2009, a Joint Progress Report (EU 2009a) was released to sum up the on-going work on climate change and international security. The recommendations presented in this report were divided into two strands, one focusing on the external role of EU, i.e. its multilateral leadership on climate change and security, and one focusing on reinforcing EU’s internal and institutional capacity to work on climate security. When the Lisbon Treaty came in force in 2009, it brought several important institutional changes for a more coherent foreign policy, such as the establishment of the EEAS, a double-hatted role of the HR/VP⁶ and a formal acknowledgment of civil protection.

2.3. Connecting climate with current events

Along with formal discussions on the role of climate change in foreign and security policies, real-life events have also shaped the climate security discourse. In the past decade, various pressures have resulted in a concern that short-term crises risk crowding out climate security and also many other neglected issues from the EU’s foreign policy

⁴ It is important to stress that the context in which climate security is discussed matters greatly. The European Commission, with its overall interest in the European project, speaks with a different mandate than e.g. the Foreign Affairs Council, consisting of the foreign ministers of the member states, or the diplomatic expertise expressed through the EEAS.

⁵ The Arctic region has managed to retain EU attention since 2008. On the initiative of the EEAS (EU 2012a), the Council of the European Union adopted conclusions on developing a European Union Policy for the Arctic region (EU 2014a).

⁶ High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President to the European Commission

forum (EU 2012b; Sundberg & Sonnsjö 2014). Thus, framing climate change as a threat multiplier may have its advantages in terms of keeping the issue on the political agenda. However, in conflict with the ambition for proactive and strategic thinking on how climate change is manifested as a security risk, the strategies are created *ad hoc* to respond to specific cases, rather than creating new ways of thinking about long-term challenges. Two examples of where climate has been disregarded can be found in the energy security debates and in the discussions of root causes of migration.

Russia's use of energy supplies as political leverage, in Georgia in 2006 and more recently in Ukraine, has put energy security high on the EU's political agenda. Since the Lisbon Treaty came into force, energy policy has been a formal competence within the EU through the establishment of the Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER). With an increased focus on security of supply in light of the Russian gas dispute, the already complex climate-energy nexus now needs to include a third pillar, thus becoming a climate-energy-security nexus. After various initiatives on addressing the strategic relevance of energy (e.g. EU 2010, 2011a), a European Energy Security Strategy was presented by the Commission in 2014 (EU 2014b:3). It aims at preventing major disruptions, improving coordination of national energy policies and strengthening the capacity of the EU to "speak with one voice" on external energy issues.

Even though previous initiatives all mention climate change, they refer to it merely as being one of several issues to be addressed by e.g. moderating energy demand or developing energy technologies. It was not until early in 2015, with the publication of the *Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy* (EU 2015b), that the climate-energy-security nexus was fully recognised by the Commission. The intention of acknowledging the links between energy security and climate action also became evident when the Juncker Commission merged the climate and energy portfolios under one single Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy⁷. However, the election of the former Polish prime minister Donald Tusk as President of the European Council, in light of the fact that Poland is a country that often tries to downplay European climate policies, in combination with the new dual climate action-energy role of the Commissioner, has led some scholars to conclude that "this set-up could seriously undermine EU's credibility as a global leader in climate action" (Herrero & Knaepen 2014:14).

With energy security emerging as a core strategic issue in the EU political landscape, there was theoretical potential for a spill-over effect leading to establishment of a stronger framework for climate security. While true in theory, presenting climate change and energy as part of the same security nexus, e.g. in discussions on establishing an energy union⁸ or Energy Security Strategy (EU2014b), has created a situation where overly complex issues are addressed with partly the same policies. Recent discussions on energy have primarily centred around traditional aspects of energy security such as pipelines, domestic extraction and geo-strategic issues, while cross-cutting issues such as the

⁷ Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete (2014-2019)

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/energy-union-and-climate_en

impacts of climate change and the external dimensions of climate action have been neglected (Youngs 2015).

Migration is another example of an issue referred to in terms of lack of policy integration (Trombetta 2014). The links between climate change and forced migration have been acknowledged in the EU at least since the Solana report (EU 2008b:4), which states that “some countries that are extremely vulnerable to climate change are already calling for international recognition of [...] environmentally-induced migration” and that “Europe must expect substantially increased migratory pressure”. In 2009, the Stockholm Programme identified the EU political priorities in the area of migration and asylum for the period 2010-2014 (EU 2009b). One of the thematic priorities presented in the Programme is a need for increased cooperation with third countries and for better consideration of the potential effects of climate change on development and on immigration to the European Union.

In 2013, a Commission Staff Working Document entitled *Climate change, environmental degradation and migration* (EU 2013a) was released as a complement to a Communication from the Commission titled *An EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change* (EU 2013b). The Working Document should be seen as a response to the request expressed in the Stockholm Programme for “an analysis of the effects of climate change on international migration, including its potential effects on immigration to the European Union” (EU 2009b:63). The Working Document presents a thorough analysis of the complex interplay between drivers of migration and climate change, but comes to the conclusion that existing evidence does not suggest that new large-scale international population movements to the developed regions, such as the EU, are likely to occur. Instead, it states that migrants are more likely to move either internally or to countries in the same region. Thus, despite the increasing knowledge on how climate factors may affect migration, these factors are rarely incorporated into policy making. Rather than analysing migration in a holistic way, climate change is seen as “complicating the picture”, leading Youngs (2015:105) to conclude that it is “striking how absent climate concerns have been from the evolution of European migration policies”. Even before the ongoing migration debates within the EU, the European Parliament raised concerns about the lack of “contingency plans” to deal with climate-driven crises occurring outside the EU with direct or indirect security implications, such as climate-driven migration (EU 2012b:9).

A recent initiative regarding migration is the *Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa* (EU 2015c). As the title suggests, the aim of the trust fund is to help foster stability, primarily in three African regions – the Sahel and Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa and North Africa – by “promoting economic and equal opportunities, security and development” (EU 2015d:1). As pointed out by Pohl (2016:2), however, climate change is unfortunately not mentioned a single time in the nine-page decision and, rather than addressing the root causes, as was the original intention with the trust fund, the EU thus fails to address how climate change “threatens to undo decades of development progress”. Instead, the fund is yet another example of a missed opportunity for responding in a comprehensive way.

As the previous sections have shown, climate change has primarily been framed as a security risk in terms of being a threat multiplier. As such, climate change is seen as one of several structural factors, similar to e.g. gender or inequality, and is intended to be incorporated into existing policy areas. The next section focuses on how three policy areas – multilateralism and diplomacy, development and conflict prevention, and security and defence – have integrated climate factors into their work.

2.4. Climate change in related policy areas

For pedagogic and analytical purposes, one way of understanding the links between climate security and other policy areas is to divide these areas into diplomacy, development and defence. Furthermore, the responses of the EU to climate security can be divided into policies that are either ‘conceptual’, which are aimed at framing the debate, e.g. in the United Nations or in other dialogues, or ‘operational’, which are aimed at actual implementation of e.g. missions, projects and budget allocation in various instruments.

2.4.1. Multilateralism and climate diplomacy

In light of the slow pace of progress in international climate negotiations after the Copenhagen climate summit, the EEAS and the Commission, in a Joint Paper, urged for a stronger role of foreign policy in international climate policy and suggested that this be done based on three strands of action: promoting climate action, supporting the implementation of this action and continuing the work on climate change and international security (EU 2011b). The Foreign Affairs Council endorsed this paper shortly afterwards, giving it legitimate status, with the remark that energy security should also be included as one strand related to climate diplomacy (EU 2011c). The fact that the Foreign Affairs Council, despite having to deal with more short-term issues at the time, still adopted conclusions on climate diplomacy was seen as a success and as reflecting “the importance attached now by foreign ministers to this longer-term agenda” (Youngs 2015:41).

In 2012, the Green Diplomacy Network, which was established back in 2002, was placed under the organisation of the EEAS, in an attempt to better integrate “the EU environmental policies into the external relations practices”⁹. The way of accomplishing this was to rely more on the EU delegations and diplomatic missions and on gathering and exchanging information from the member states in order to create a better coordinated response by the EU as a whole. In 2013, the EEAS and the Commission once again published a document (this time a Reflection Paper) with more specific operationalisation of how to work with climate diplomacy. In this new version, titled *EU climate diplomacy for 2015 and beyond* (EU 2013c), it is suggested that the EU should make climate change a strategic priority in diplomatic dialogues and initiatives; give support to low-emissions and climate-resilient development; and sharpen the EU narrative on the nexus between climate, natural resources, prosperity and security. Shortly af-

⁹ http://eeas.europa.eu/environment/gdn/index_en.htm

terwards, the Foreign Affairs Council adopted the conclusions on climate diplomacy, arguing that these initiatives needed to be reinforced (EU 2013d).

The latest development in the field of climate diplomacy is the Council Conclusions (EU 2016) adopted in the aftermath of the climate conference COP 21 in Paris in late 2015. These Conclusions mark a step forward in emphasising the direct and indirect international security impacts of climate change (in terms of e.g. migration, food security, reliable access to resources, water and energy). Furthermore, they state that the “strategic and multifaceted threat posed by climate change” (EU 2016:5) should be addressed by the EU, for example as part of the EU Global Strategy, which is planned to be presented by HR Frederica Mogherini in June 2016. The three strands initially presented in 2011 are once again highlighted in the Conclusions as elements of climate diplomacy in 2016, but this time with the invitation to the HR and the Commission to work with member states to develop a better elaborated climate diplomacy action plan, to be reported back by summer 2016.

In conclusion, there seems to be a new momentum as regards placing the role of climate change on the agenda of foreign policies and it is fair to say that the EU is attempting, since at least 2013, to mainstream climate into other policy areas and directorates in the Commission.

2.4.2. Development and conflict prevention

The so-called Gothenburg Programme for preventing violent conflict mentioned the role of environment policies as one of several instruments in an extensive set of conflict preventive actions (EU 2001 §11) and stated that the EU must use these instruments in a “more targeted and effective manner in order to address root-causes of conflict such as ... competition for scarce natural resources” (§12). More than a decade later, despite the various initiatives described above to highlight the links between climate change and international security, climate change is still neglected in conflict prevention, as illustrated in the 2011 Council Conclusions (EU 2011d). These state that the creation of the EEAS will give renewed impetus to conflict prevention action by the EU, by better integrating conflict prevention and “key cross cutting issues”. However, neither the environment nor climate change is mentioned as an example of such a short- and long-term issue. Instead, human rights, gender and protection of civilians are highlighted.

In order to find examples of initiatives where climate change is incorporated into the realm of conflict prevention, it is necessary to look at the policy area of development and the ways in which climate change and variability impact on fragility and poverty. This requires a move away from conceptual to more operational policies and the ways in which various financial instruments are used to address climate security.

The EU, together with its member states, together constitutes the world’s largest development assistance and humanitarian aid donor, providing more than €1 billion annually (EU 2014c). In 2007 the Commission released a communication titled *Towards an EU re-*

sponse to situations of fragility (EU 2007b), aiming to make better use of the wide variety of instruments at the EU's disposal. Fragility is defined in the communication as "weak or failing structures and [to] situations where the social contract is broken due to the State's incapacity or unwillingness to deal with its basic functions" or to meet its "obligations and responsibilities" regarding e.g. management of resources or the security and safety of the populace (EU 2007b:5). It is thus the underlying problem of governance, rather than external stress, that is emphasised. Nevertheless, climate change is mentioned as a trigger that may exacerbate fragile situations by introducing multiple new impacts in low-capacity contexts. Furthermore, the link between peace, security and development is considered to be a primary concern in fragile situations and the Commission recommends a newly established Instrument for Stability as well as various CSDP tools to strengthen the EU approach to fragility. This document was followed shortly afterwards by a Council Conclusion stating that "preventing and addressing situations of fragility" must also include "climate change and migration issues" (EU 2007a:3).

The Instrument for Stability, which came into effect in 2006, had the overarching aim of supporting stability in third countries through crisis response and prevention. The focus in these early years, as with the former "Rapid Reaction Mechanism" it replaced, was primarily on dealing with short-term crises such as early recovery after natural disasters or support in post-conflict political stabilisation. The Lisbon Treaty signalled the creation of the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI). This Commission service works alongside the EEAS and both services report to the HR (although the FPI technically reports to the HR in her role as vice-President of the European Commission). This organisational change led to a review of the instrument in 2011 (EU 2011e) and some years later to a new legislative act in 2014 (EU 2014). The revised instrument, now called the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), puts greater emphasis on so-called "stable situations" with a long-term component, in addition to "situations of crisis" which are more short term. In these stable situations, the IcSP aims at helping third countries build capacity to address specific global and trans-regional threats having a destabilising effect, including climate change, which is stated as having a "destabilising impact on peace and security" (EU 2014d). Thus, efforts are being made to complement the more immediate crisis response strategies with preparedness and preventive action, while at the same time promoting a security and development nexus in which the EU's development and security policy frameworks converge.

This convergence of development, security and climate change is further emphasised in various initiatives around the UN's former Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and even more so in the accelerated progress until 2015 to establish their successor, i.e. the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in Agenda 2030 (UN 2015). A communication from the EU Commission in 2013, entitled *A decent life for all: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future* (EU 2013e), states that eradicating poverty and ensuring that the prosperity and well-being are sustainable are two of the most pressing challenges of our time that cannot be dealt with separately. Instead, the Commission calls for a unified policy framework that is also closely related to governance, human rights and peace and security issues. In the Council

Conclusions, *The Overarching Post-2015 Agenda* (EU 2013f), the EU calls for a single overarching framework for poverty eradication and also emphasises that policy coherence needs to be enhanced across all sectors to better achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development.

The initiative from the Commission was followed up one year later with the more operationalised document *A decent life for all: form vision to collective action* (EU 2014e) and elaborated even further in 2015 with the communication on *A global partnership for poverty eradication and sustainable development after 2015* (EU 2015e). Both initiatives were followed by Council Conclusions, in 2014 entitled *On a transformative post-2015 agenda* (EU 2014f) and in 2015 entitled *A new global partnership for poverty eradication and sustainable development after 2015* (EU 2015f). Once again, the need for policy coherence was highlighted, as well as efforts to avoid working in silos. Climate change has a pre-eminent role in the documents and is argued to have an amplifying effect on the challenges associated with both poverty eradication and sustainable development. However, it is noteworthy that, even though these documents talk about development, security and climate change, they fail at linking all three together in a coherent manner. Instead, they continue to keep the three issues separated with regard to economic, social and environmental sustainability. Thus, there seems to be a strategic void in which conflict prevention should be carried out, where recognition of the link between climate change and conflict has not led to any significant upgrade in EU conflict prevention efforts.

2.4.3. CSDP and the comprehensive approach

The third policy area where climate change has to some extent become an integral part is defence or, more specifically, as one aspect of the EU's comprehensive approach. Defined narrowly, such an approach can be understood as civilian-military cooperation in CSDP missions, but as former HR Catherine Ashton stated in her report (EU 2013g:3) in preparation of the European Council on Security and Defence in 2013, the comprehensive approach should rather be understood as the use of the many and varied instruments at the disposal of the EU "in a strategically and coherent and effective manner", where the CSDP is only one of several such instruments (see also EU 2013h). In the report by HR Ashton, climate change is framed as one of the new security threats at both national and international level and it is emphasised that the work on further developing the comprehensive approach to conflict prevention, crisis management and stabilisation should build on successful concrete examples. One such example mentioned in the report is the *EU's Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa* (EU 2011f:4), where climate change is seen as posing an "additional challenge to all countries in the region", requiring integration of climate change into development strategies. In later Council conclusions (EU 2014g:1), it is stressed that "the comprehensive approach is both a general working method and a set of concrete measures and processes to improve how the EU, based on a common strategic vision, [...] can deliver more coherent and more effective policies". Furthermore, regional specific context is said to be a crucial starting point for understanding the root causes of a crisis situation. However, in contrast to the report by HR Ashton (EU 2013g) and the Joint Communication

(EU 2013h), in the Council Conclusions climate change is not mentioned as an issue that needs particular attention.

In 2014, the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs released a report (EU 2014h) entitled *On the EU comprehensive approach and its implications for the coherence of EU external action*. In this report, climate change is mentioned in the paragraph on climate diplomacy and the need for partnerships in the run-up to the Paris conference and is also cited as a driver of national, regional and international conflicts. Using the Sahel region as a case, the report concludes that the comprehensive approach needs to incorporate the concept of human security and also needs to acknowledge that climate change could result in violence and armed conflict in some cases. The report EU also notes that several important steps have been taken in creating more coherent EU external action, but that there is room for improvement and that "institutional and procedural shortfalls have largely prevented such coherent EU external action". The report goes even further to argue that the EU, in most crisis areas where it has acted, has damaged its own "credibility as a global actor and security provider". Special attention is paid to coordination and cooperation between the Commission's humanitarian aid and civil protection work (DG ECHO) and the EEAS, which is described as being insufficient. Thus, it indicates that, rather than just stating the obvious fact that security and development are interdependent, a truly comprehensive approach is needed to address the organisational difficulties of coordination between e.g. the EEAS and the Commission.

This is well in line with conclusions in an earlier report issued in 2012 by the same Committee within the Commission on *The role of CSDP in case of climate-driven crises and natural disasters* (EU 2012b). That report places the focus on one issue that is occasionally raised in discussions on a comprehensive approach and the concept of climate security, namely the risk of "militarisation" of the EU's climate policy and the role of CSDP in addressing impacts of climate change. The report points out that natural disasters potentially caused by climate change are highly destabilising, particularly for vulnerable states, and that complex crises should be prevented by "applying a comprehensive approach including the CSDP" (EU 2012b:5). It notes that NATO was early in its response by forming the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) in 2004. Furthermore, the report calls on the HR/Commission vice-President to mainstream the potential effects on security into the most important strategies, policy documents and financial instruments for external action and CSDP in a similar way as has been done with e.g. human rights or gender issues. In a minority opinion to the report, three members of the European Parliament belonging to the GUE/NGL¹⁰ criticise it because it "wrongly focuses on repressive and military counter-measures whilst advocating further EU-militarisation" (EU 2012b:13). Two of the main concerns expressed are that EU would lean towards systematic implementation of military elements into climate policy and that closer coordination between the EU and NATO would lead to merging of civil and military assets and capabilities. Instead, the three members behind the minority opinion demand a focus on the underlying root causes of global dis-

¹⁰ European United Left/Nordic green Left, European Parliament Group

tributive inequality and strict separation of civil and military capabilities.

Others argue that, while the EU may have been over-enthusiastic to some extent about the benefits of CSDP missions and military interventions some years ago, it has now placed itself at the other end of the spectrum (Liberatore 2013; Witney et al. 2014). Consequently, the comprehensive approach is now seen by some as an “example of self-deluding and harmful sloganeering” which has provided “a smokescreen behind which the EU’s CSDP has virtually collapsed” (Witney et al. 2014:5-6). It can be noted that the most recent CSDP missions, such as those in the Horn of Africa, Sudan and Niger, have been very modest and have mainly comprised security sector training, whereas other crises, such as that in Libya, did not involve CSDP missions at all. This led Youngs (2015:77) to draw the conclusion that the risk of over-militarisation of climate issues, whereby EU military missions are deployed regularly in a response to climate change events, “appears a distant one”.

As noted both in the Joint Communication by the HR and the Commission (EU 2013h) and in a report by the European Parliament (EU 2012b), there is a need for a tighter coordination between the CSDP and civilian crisis management, including the Civil Protection Mechanism which facilitates cooperation in EU emergency responses. The EU has several concepts for operational conflict management at its disposal, such as Military Planning at the Political and Strategic level, Military Command and Control, and Military Rapid Response, as well as civilian CSDP missions such as the Concept for Comprehensive Planning. However, instead of finding that such concepts have led to too much focus on the role of the military in climate action, the report by the European Parliament calls for improvements and modifications of these documents to better address the implications of climate change and natural disasters. A more recent initiative, relating to the operational response to climate security, is the newly established monitoring system Copernicus (previously Global Monitoring for Environment and Security). This tool, located within the Commission, supports the external actions of the EU, including peacekeeping operations, by monitoring European land and maritime borders while at the same time facilitating crisis response through the Emergency Response and Coordination Centre (ERCC) at DG ECHO. The use of this tool in missions such as in Pakistan and Haiti could to some extent be seen as a change in how the military thinks in terms of climate security, but it still does not mean that the military will be deployed primarily in climate issues.

In sum, the narrative on why and how EU should respond to climate security is developing. Climate change has emerged as one of several global issues within the EU discourse during the past decade and has thus far been seen as having a damaging effect on already fragile countries. By avoiding viewing climate security as a strategic issue in itself, as opposed to e.g. energy security, an integrated response relies on strong coordination and working across silos. On the basis of material obtained in interviews, the next chapter describes the ongoing work related to climate security at the EEAS, with particular focus on what this cross-sectoral issue demands in terms of policy coherence and clear strategic objectives.

3. Opinions and insights on the EU response to climate security

Dealing with the negative effects of climate change will always be a work in progress and much is already being done within the EU as a whole, as well as at the EEAS. This chapter, which is based on interviews, mainly with representatives of the EEAS, provides an analysis of what is being done today in terms of climate security, and what could be the way ahead when making policies to address the climate change, security and development nexus. The first section provides a discussion on the challenge of reaching a common starting point when framing climate change as a security risk, followed by a section regarding the need for strategic context and resources to enable an integrated approach. The last section presents a discussion concerning the efficiency of the EU's conflict prevention efforts with regard to climate security.

3.1. A comprehensive approach to climate security?

The comparative advantage of the EU as a foreign policy actor, as mentioned earlier, is the wide variety of policy tools at its disposal. This would suggest that the EU is well-equipped for addressing climate security, a truly cross-sectoral issue. Although true in theory, several interviewees stressed that a comprehensive approach to climate security requires institutional integration and policy coherence between e.g. development, security and climate action, which is still lacking. In interview, a former EU ambassador elaborated on EU foreign policy and described it as being based on four pillars; multilateralism, crisis management, geography and thematic issues.¹¹ All parts are equally important in a comprehensive approach to climate security but, that interviewee argues, such an approach can only be regarded as a method, not a strategy. It creates a framework, but does not specify how these various parts could be incorporated in a proper response to various security risks.

Within the EU, there is no actor with unequivocal responsibility for climate security. Instead, various actors, such as the EEAS, DG DEVCO, DG CLIMA, DG ECHO, DG Environment and DG ENER, deal with different aspects of this multivariate issue. This is not necessarily a problem, and could even be viewed as a strength in terms of making the most of the EU's capacity in different policy areas, but it requires coordination and resources. None of the nine interviewees supported the idea of a new institutional set-up to respond to climate security. Instead, in a more pragmatic approach, several suggested applying a form of "reverse engineering" by adding climate change

¹¹ Interviewee 8

into existing work tasks, rather than inventing new instruments.¹² Thus, the mainstream approach of having security actors view climate change as a “threat multiplier” seems to be firmly rooted throughout the EU, with gender issues used not infrequently as a good example of how an issue can be incorporated into the EU’s foreign policy.

One issue that came up during the interviews was the different mandates and principles that guide EU actors. One interviewee describes this as institutional warfare on peace, aid and security, resulting in conceptual confusion over how to frame the negative impacts of climate change.¹³ Using DG DEVCO as an example, that interviewee described it as a pedagogic task to speak in terms of fragility and long-term development instead of state-centric security. In contrast to the EEAS and the CSDP, humanitarian aid is based on needs rather than political negotiations, and therefore mixing climate and security could risk compromising the underlying principles of e.g. impartiality and neutrality, which are central in aid. Furthermore, responding to e.g. natural disasters requires swift administration and must not be a matter of political consensus, which usually takes months to reach. DG CLIMA was also mentioned during the interviews as being very good at its core responsibilities, i.e. negotiating and setting climate standards with which all parties must comply. However, what has happened, according to one interviewee, is that DG CLIMA has been forced to address the security aspects of climate change without the proper competence.¹⁴ This has led to differentiation of the security concept, which has become inconsistent and confused with concepts with which other experts are more familiar, such as fragility, resilience and vulnerability, but not necessarily the threats to which it formerly related.

Given that actors come with different mandates and are guided by fundamentally different principles, one way forward could be not to impose the security concept onto e.g. DC CLIMA or DEVCO, but instead to raise awareness of climate change within the EEAS, which is already working with security and foreign policies. Several respondents viewed this as a sound idea, but stressed that it would require a more explicit mandate, followed by additional resources, to the EEAS.¹⁵ In the absence of this, the EEAS will not have the critical mass needed to deal with emerging threats. Climate security is dealt with in various parts of the EEAS, such as at the Global Issues Division, the Development Cooperation Coordination Division, (DCCD), the Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Mediation Division and the Intelligence and Situation Centre (INTCEN). One theme that recurred during interviews was the extent of cooperation on climate issues within the EEAS, especially in terms of the thematic expertise offered at these divisions and the geographical desks. By having approximately two-thirds of its staff assigned to the geographical desks, these are in the foreground at the EEAS, while the thematic experts within divisions provide support, an approach that was described by many interviewees as working relatively well. One concern raised by two separate interviewees was the extent to which the products and

¹² Interviewee 5; 1

¹³ Interviewee 9

¹⁴ Interviewee 7

¹⁵ Interviewee 2; 3; 8

recommendations made by the thematic experts are actually implemented, or whether they only act as awareness raising.¹⁶

3.2. A need for strategic context and prioritisation

The interviews confirmed much of the literature on the EU response to climate change, e.g. that there is a strong “epistemic community” within the EU, i.e. a thorough understanding of how climate change could impact on a wide range of EU responsibilities, but also that there is a mismatch between this analysis of climate security risks and the political efforts to avoid these risks (see e.g. Mabey 2010; Zwolski & Kaunert 2011:23). Thus, the current focus on awareness-raising initiatives and on creating an EU narrative for dealing with climate security has to be followed up by a discussion on why the EU should get involved with climate security, i.e. its comparative advantage relative to the multitude of other multilateral actors and the nature of its involvement. As argued by one interviewee, the question that must be answered is in what ways the effects of climate change, manifested both within the EU and in third countries, affect EU strategic interests and what the priorities for the EU should be in responding to these effects.¹⁷

During the interviews, several participants argued that the EU is ready to enter a new phase in its responses to climate change. The Juncker Commission, with HR Frederica Mogherini, is seen as willing to take the lead in responding to climate change and promoting sustainability in peace building and that there may be a new momentum in the “post-Paris setting”¹⁸. So far, according to one interviewee, the risks to the EU emerging from climate change have primarily been considered to be the change in dynamics in the Arctic region and, to some extent, migration flows to the EU, without any clear strategic guidance.¹⁹ Thus, there are high expectations on the forthcoming EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security policy²⁰ to place climate change in a strategic context and, especially importantly according to that interviewee, to acknowledge the links between climate change, environmental degradation and migration.²¹

An integrated approach to climate security not only requires a strategy, but must also be allocated sufficient personnel. One interviewee at the EEAS explained that, even though the ideal way of integrating climate change in foreign and security policies would be through explicit mandates and clear responsibilities, most of the coordination today is dependent on individuals.²² That interviewee agreed that the

¹⁶ Interviewee 1; 7

¹⁷ Interviewee 7

¹⁸ Interviewee 7; 2; 3

¹⁹ Interviewee 2

²⁰ For more information, see <https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en>. The strategy will be released in June 2016 to coincide with the “elaborated action plan” on climate diplomacy called for in the Council conclusions after COP 21 (EU 2016).

²¹ It is beyond the scope of this report to discuss the need for, and challenges in implementing, a European Global Strategy. For an overview of the process behind the strategy, see Missiroli (2015).

²² Interviewee 3

EEAS has done much to address the complex and emerging threat, but that much more could be done if only the resources were sufficient. In general, according to the interviewee, it is the EU delegations that are given additional staff when resources permit, while the thematic expertise divisions must deal with a growing number of issues with unchanged or even fewer resources. This seems to have been the case in the months before COP21, when much attention was placed on climate diplomacy, while other aspects of climate change were given a lower priority. The interviewee concluded by saying that the issue of personnel is far more important in explaining the failure to integrate climate, and other thematic issues, in the security debate than the institutional set-up of the EU.

3.3. The efficiency of conflict prevention and early warning

Despite a strategic void and possible lack of resources, there are some initiatives in place for addressing climate-induced security risks outside the EU, especially with regard to development and conflict prevention. One project frequently mentioned during the interviews²³ is the joint EU-UNEP initiative on Climate Change and Security, financed under the IcSP (EU 2015g). This project, with a total estimated budget of 5.4 million Euros, is the first action under the IcSP to address global and trans-regional effects of climate change with a potentially destabilising effect on fragile states. By focusing on two pilot countries, the project aims at reducing “conflict risks from the shock and stresses associated with climate change” (EU 2015g:2). One interviewee involved primarily with development and poverty reduction was optimistic about the project²⁴, but others were more doubtful about the results coming from these case studies. The criticism was first and foremost that the small number of case studies and the geographical areas chosen for these studies (two African countries) might not be the best way to explain theoretical links between climate change and security in fragile states. Instead, according to one interviewee from the EEAS, the project should highlight how different bodies can cooperate, both within the EU and between e.g. the EU and national actors in the affected countries.²⁵ That interviewee suggested that case studies should preferably focus on water and its links to security, and with the geographical focus on South East Asia rather than Africa, since the cross-fertilisation that the present EU-UNEP project is aiming to achieve will most likely fail to materialise due to lack of coordination between e.g. DG DEVCO and the EEAS.

A second criticism is that climate change should not always be stated to be the single most important factor, but could instead be seen as one of several structural factors to be covered in context analysis.²⁶ The interviewee above pointed out that each case of conflict prevention is highly context-specific, e.g. water stress in Central Asia, farmer-pastoralist tensions in Mali or forced migration and urbanisation in a

²³ The project is also mentioned in Council Conclusions (EU 2016) as an increased effort to address the climate, natural resources, prosperity and stability nexus.

²⁴ Interviewee 6

²⁵ Interviewee 7

²⁶ Interviewee 9

specific region, and thus the ways in which climate change will manifest itself are also highly context-specific. Thus, if the context analysis is performed properly, climate factors will automatically be included. By singling out one individual factor as *the* most important factor in a conflict and then building the entire analysis on changes in this factor, the holistic approach to analysis is undermined. Using Boko Haram as an example, this network cannot be regarded as either a national or a regional phenomenon, or as an ideological or a political organisation, but must rather be considered to fit all of those descriptions. The same goes for climate change, which is not either a national or a regional issue affecting either human security or the state, but a complex issue with possible impacts on all of these.²⁷

During the interviews, it became clear that there is discord within the EEAS on the efficiency of the EU's conflict prevention measures. In some instances, long-term indicators such as those used in conflict early warning systems were dismissed as making only a small contribution to the work on climate security, which was described as being better addressed by practical projects.²⁸ It was claimed that the EU is poorly suited to perform this kind of early warning mapping, which requires a physical presence in the affected areas, and that such analyses are better outsourced to other actors. The EEAS could then come in, later in the process, and translate this information into practice, which is more in line with its mandate.

On the other hand, experts involved with conflict prevention at the EEAS described a culture of "get on with it" in the rest of the organisation, where the interest in creating projects overshadows the upstream analysis and strategic thinking represented by the conflict prevention unit.²⁹ Hence, much work is being devoted to in-house activism since the EU as a whole, along with the EEAS, tends to favour more immediate crisis response rather than long-term preventative efforts. As a consequence, the more strategic products are not always implemented by the geographical desks, which are already overloaded with more urgent issues.

One important part of conflict prevention is early warning systems. The EEAS was given the mandate to start working on this through the 2011 Council Conclusions on conflict prevention (EU 2011d), a document which was later accompanied by a Joint Communication by the Commission on the comprehensive approach (EU 2013h). A common concern throughout the literature on early warning systems is that there is a gap between early warning and early action, i.e. how to address the question of when an actor should respond and in what ways (see e.g. Wuld & Debiel 2009; Mabey et al. 2013; Red Cross 2014). The interviewee at the conflict prevention unit at the EEAS explained that an EU response is guided by two overarching questions;³⁰ whether the EU has a comparative advantage, meaning that it can contribute something unique or is better than any other institution involved; and whether EU interests are at stake and whether there is a positive (or negative) outcome for the EU from getting involved. It is important to

²⁷ Interviewee 9

²⁸ Interviewee 7

²⁹ Interviewee 9

³⁰ Interviewee 9

bear in mind that involvement could affect other EU relations and it is therefore utterly important to analyse the context.

The data used in the EU's conflict early warning system are taken from a variety of sources, including open-source quantitative conflict data, INTCEN analyses, such as its global strategic review, other parts of the EEAS, such as the EU delegations, and the Commission itself, such as the Fragility and Resilience unit at DG DEVCO. The system is built upon a checklist for "Structural Risks of Conflict" and consists of 25 indicators arranged under five categories; political, social cohesion, conflict prevalence, geographical/environmental and economic.³¹ The analysis is performed globally and followed up twice a year to create a broad overview on regions that need further attention. If an early warning is triggered, the case receives more in-depth, qualitative analysis to address conflict contexts and case-specific issues, including impacts of climate change. The benefit of such a checklist is that a region can be compared over time as either improving or deteriorating. The downside, according to the interviewee, is that long-term and complex issues, such as climate change, are ignored if not identified explicitly as a factor. The checklist used today handles this challenge by incorporating climate change through six indicators, categorised as: the capacity to respond to disasters, managing the effects of climate change, and investment in natural resources.³² During the interview, it was mentioned that one factor gaining particular interest is water, especially freshwater availability, since correlation studies on historical conflicts show that water stress is an important factor.

³¹ Global Conflict Risk Index, available at: <http://conflictrisk.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

³² The conflict risk model is also incorporated in the Index for Risk Management (INFORM, <http://www.inform-index.org/>)

4. Concluding remarks

The EU as a global actor

With the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the European Union took important steps towards becoming a coherent global actor. The Treaty created a legal basis for the European Commission to engage in external representation of the EU which, in combination with credible commitments in mitigating the emissions of greenhouse gases within its borders, made the EU an important partner in international climate negotiations. The European External Action Service, formally launched in 2011, was given the task of assisting the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy in carrying out the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, and was thereby given a complementary role in climate diplomacy. In the highly polarised academic debate on the role of the EU in world politics, much focus has been placed on what constitutes power and how to make sense of the EEAS mandate (Howorth 2010). Based on the fact that the EU is a collaboration of sovereign member states, with no military power of its own, Liberatore (2013:87) categorises the EU as a “civilian power” with a clear preference for multilateralism (see also Mabey et al. 2013). With no coercive means of power, the EU seeks to avoid unilateral action and instead uses economics, law and diplomacy in pursuing common interests. This has been evident since at least the European Security Strategy of 2003, which describes the EU's “security and prosperity” as being increasingly dependent on an “effective multilateral system” (EU 2003:9).

This strategy was revised in 2008 and there are great expectations on the forthcoming EU Global Strategy,³³ to be released in 2016. Many of the discussions centre around the strategic interests and values of the EU, and many are hopeful that this strategy will contribute, at least partly, to clarifying how these interests and values should be understood (Missiroli 2015). However, even though there is a great need for strategic guidance, as was evident during the interviews conducted within this project, the coming strategy must primarily be seen as a communication to the outer world, rather than providing guidelines and objectives on prioritising internal work. With regard to climate security, the Juncker Commission has so far insufficiently acknowledged the links between the EU's work on climate change and its foreign policies. This is evident e.g. in its letters to the Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy and the High Representative, where reference to climate change, sustainable development and international security is lacking. It can also be seen in the priority *A Stronger Global Actor*³⁴, which lacks any reference to the global challenge of climate change (Herrero & Knaepen 2014). In conclusion, it is still uncertain to what degree climate change will be mentioned as one of the global

³³ <https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/global-strategy-foreign-and-security-policy-european-union>

³⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/priorities/stronger-global-actor_en

challenges in the coming EU Global Strategy, and a more clearly articulated response to climate security is unlikely in the near future.

A ‘climatisation’ of security

In the absence of a grand strategy for engaging with climate security in an integrated way, various actors in the EU system will continue to create projects and develop tools for incorporating climate factors into their work. However, one important finding in this report is that the inability to achieve policy coherence on climate security might be a result not only of institutional barriers or lack of resources, but also of conceptual confusion and even deliberate efforts to separate the development, security and climate domains. As noted by Trombetta (2008:586), the concept of security may also introduce a “zero-sum rationality” into discussions, which could undermine cooperative efforts and create winners and losers. There could be some important implications of using a security language when discussing e.g. the governance of migration or environmental problems, since it could lead to a distinction between ‘their’ security and ‘ours’. To avoid reactive, *ad hoc* measures, for example a military response, one option would be to take a risk-based approach to promoting preventive actions and to highlight the dependencies in modern societies (Trombetta 2008; Beck 2006). This approach is also acknowledged by Oels (2011:27) who argues that, instead of securitisation of climate change, flexible response capacities for e.g. disaster management that are emerging in the defence sector or monitoring and early warning systems should be viewed as a “climatisation of defence, migration and development policies”. Even though such “climatisation” might be an important step in the right direction towards integration of distinct policy areas, it is still the second best option to promote resilience and disaster management instead of engaging in truly preventive efforts to avoid the security issues in the first place. Thus, one field in which the incorporation of climate factors is of great importance is in conflict prevention.

Whether to discuss climate change in terms of climate security or to regard it as one of several structural factors of importance for building resilience is not only a matter of semantics. Linking defence and military assets with humanitarian response and peace-building efforts is a challenging task which, if badly handled, could compromise the underlying principles of humanitarian agencies. Thus, a question raised in this report is whether the EU is fit to engage in conflict prevention in third countries, or whether part of this work should be outsourced to organisations better rooted in the local context and with better access to data. If the EU were to continue with its work on conflict prevention and to become an important actor in this field, the present analysis suggests that further in-house activism is needed in order to obtain the resources needed and to make better use of the EU delegations around the world in collecting data, e.g. for early warning systems. The other possibility, i.e. primarily supporting regional organisations in their work on conflict prevention, requires stronger engagement in e.g. the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership.

With the current focus on internal coordination and organisational set-up within the EEAS, the results of the present analysis suggest that its supporting and coordinating role, in combination with its vast network of EU delegates, will continue to play an important part in achieving a

more integrated response to climate security. One crucial factor in such an integrated response will be to bring together thematic experts in e.g. energy, food, water and agriculture, geography desk experts and representatives from distinct policy communities such as development, climate and security. Furthermore, the Green Diplomacy Network will continue to be an important forum for member states and the Commission to exchange views and experiences on how to integrate environmental and climate issues into external relations. A key question considered in this report was the extent to which the formal and official “ambitions” or “efforts” to integrate climate change into CSDP have been translated into practice. The analysis revealed that several projects for addressing climate-related security risks are in place at the EEAS, but a major obstacle to deeper involvement is lack of prioritisation and insufficient resources among thematic experts. Lastly, climate security is currently not regarded a policy area of its own and thus future research is needed, preferably with a broader scope on EU institutions, to investigate the degree of coordination between the EEAS and the Commission in specific initiatives.

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