

Concept Note
Workshop on Climate, Peace and Security
How to operationalise principles on environmental peacebuilding

Seville, 9 – 10 December

While humanity faces the worsening of the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation, their impact on international peace and stability is becoming ever more visible. Experts increasingly point out to the roles that environmental factors can play as **'threat multipliers'** as well as **drivers** accelerating or intensifying vulnerabilities, risks and conflicts, both existing and potential. The *Workshop on Climate Change, Peace and Security* will focus on these roles, with the aim of identifying possible initiatives for **operationalisation of actions on the ground** to address the challenges posed.

The **specific role that the EU can play** in this context will be explored and debated. Europe hopes to become a **global leader** in matters pertaining to environment and conflict, as exemplified in multiple Council Conclusions since 2018, and has recently adopted key documents to update its thematic work along these lines. The current Commission's Green Deal agenda, as well as the latest NDICI requirement to earmark 30% of external budget to climate adaptation and mitigation efforts, provide unique opportunities to ensure this. Yet, knowledge on how to operationalise its role in the field is still lacking, and the EU needs a formal setting to discuss these efforts.

Following the COP 25 organised in Madrid in December 2019, where climate and conflict topics were first debated at such high-level setting, Spain together with other EU Member States, the European External Action Service and partner organizations are co-convening this workshop to offer **a unique opportunity to reflect on the role that the EU must play on environment and peace**, particularly in key scenarios such as the Sahel, as well as on the need to integrate climate and conflict sensitivity into the international discussions.

The **operational focus** proposed for this workshop entails **three key objectives**:

1. **Bringing together the concerned communities of experts:** Considering the current lack of integration and coordination among concerned experts, particularly the peace, environmental and development communities, the workshop would allow for a systematic exchange of opinions, experiences, and reflections on such relationship, promote the development of joint analysis and understanding, as well as sensitise environmental and conflict actions.
2. **Identifying methodologies and opportunities for accelerating operationalisation on the ground:** Prioritising the search and design of specific methodologies and opportunities to accelerate the operationalisation of the acquired knowledge on the relationship between the environment and conflict, including the exchange of lessons learned from initiatives and work already under way as case studies, the identification of challenges for scaling up of best practices as well as of concrete ideas and

opportunities for how to address these. These are to be implemented on the ground, in key scenarios in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, among others.

3. **Exploring the establishment of a collaborative space to advance operationalisation of environmental and peace action:** Exploring the benefits of establishing a collaborative space serving as a dedicated channel for the cooperation, exchanges, and development of operational projects at the European level.

The Workshop will feature six **thematic discussions** to advance the debate on identified priority areas. These include: 1) Responding to environmental threats to peace with action on the ground, 2) The way forward: Lessons learned, best practices and success stories from the Sahel and beyond, 3) Leveraging big data and the digital transformation for integrated climate and conflict-sensitive action, 4) Interreligious dialogue, peace, and the environment, 5) Local governance, landscapes, and conflict resolution, and 6) International Environmental Law. High-level speakers and thematic experts from concerned organizations will gather in Seville to exchange their experiences and reflections on these topics.

The Workshop is intended to support the ongoing efforts by the European External Action Service in the integration of climate and peace considerations into their conflict prevention and mediation support tools. In this regard, the Workshop is complimentary to the **EEAS' series of events on climate and conflict** that includes training and capacity-building efforts. The **main outputs** of the workshop could include: 1) the establishment of a network of climate, peace and security experts, 2) the approval of a roadmap of action points, and 3) the drafting of a declaration supporting the climate, peace and security agenda.

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