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Editorial

The food crisis in the Sahel, forest conflicts in Indonesia, mining disputes in Colombia: environmental aspects are increasingly recognized as important elements of sustainable peace. Governments have urged international organisations such as the UN to initiate discussions on the potential impacts of climate change on the security and stability of states. Environmental security has become a central issue in foreign and security strategy planning. This is illustrated by the generous support extended by the German Federal Foreign Office for an upgrade of the **Environment, Conflict and Cooperation (ECC) platform** and its newsletter.

The most important changes are:

- A special **emphasis on the prospects of climate diplomacy** to address the severe risks climate change poses to peace and stability.
- An enhanced **focus on specific regional challenges** for environmental security including case studies on the conflict potential of environmental degradation and initiatives to deal with this in a peaceful way.
- A **stronger involvement of regional partners and experts** to provide local insights and first-hand information.

Doing so, we want to further promote a vibrant discussion on issues of the environment and natural resources at the global and regional level. To this end we have implemented the following features:

- A **new layout** for the ECC platform and the newsletter to ensure easy access to different topics and regions;
- A **restructured newsletter** organized along regional sub-sections highlighting current trends in different parts of the world;
- A **video section** presenting face-to-face conversations with outstanding experts on environment, conflict and cooperation;
- A direct link to the **ECC exhibition** that has been expanded during the last year to illustrate the challenges of climate change in different regions of the world.

Visit also our new **Facebook presence** to learn about the most recent highlights related to environment, conflict and cooperation and to share them easily with interested friends and colleagues.

We wish you insightful reading, and welcome your feedback.

The Editorial Team (October 2012)



Beyond New York - Globalizing Climate Diplomacy

By Dennis Taenzler, adelphi

More than one year after the United Nations Security Council discussed the challenge of climate change to peace and security, it may be appropriate to ask what kind of follow up, if any, can be observed. The presidential statement, adopted by the participants on 20th July at the Security Council, asks for further contextual information on possible security implications of climate change, especially when the respective impacts are endangering processes of peace consolidation. The New York event has so far been followed by two international conferences: one in Berlin in October 2011 and one in London in March 2012. They took different perspectives but shared a joint intention: to give guidance to urgently needed geopolitical change management in the light of a changing climate.



© UN Photo/Mark Garten

The participants at the Berlin Conference “**Climate Diplomacy in Perspective**” in the Federal Foreign Office asked decision makers to reach beyond their traditional, thematic and even geographic focus. Based on discussions on the distinct challenges of water resource management, food security and coastal stability, the relevance of informal diplomacy, e.g. via Track II initiatives, was emphasized. In addition, the conference participants called for a conflict-sensitive design of climate policies to create peace-positive environments.

The London Conference, “**A Climate and Resource Security Dialogue for the 21st Century**”, reconfirmed that the climate change threat requires a “new diplomacy” approach involving the whole of society. Existing institutions should be the focus of restructuring processes to enable a transformation towards resilient societies. This institutional dimension was further elaborated by making more concrete recommendations on institutional innovations as a response to a more insecure climate. According to the participants, the UN should establish a Special Representative on Climate and Security. His or her mandate would be to advocate and assess the implications of climate and security in developing nations. In addition, foreign ministries should play a key role by coordinating the integration of different policy areas affected by climate change, such as development and security. Better coordination may also be needed to implement another set of recommendations at the national level: the creation of national platforms for dialogue and regular climate security impact assessments.

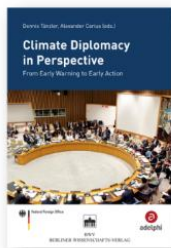
With the two conferences, the Foreign Ministries of Germany and the UK showed a strong commitment to take this non-traditional foreign policy challenge seriously.



FOCUS ON CLIMATE DIPLOMACY / ASIA

With a high-level side event during the UN Week at the end of September, the Federal Foreign Office also brought the topic back to New York. In the months to come, further regional dialogues are planned. In London, South Korea indicated its willingness to invite diplomats for another round. In sum, these efforts may help to ensure that the Security Council debate is not an isolated event but the starting signal for a new era of diplomacy.

In Brief: Focus on Climate Diplomacy



The changing climate has severe implications, locally, regionally and globally. adelphi's latest publication **"Climate Diplomacy in Perspective – From Early Warning to Early Action"** highlights the key positions in the debate on the security risks of climate change and the prospects of climate diplomacy.

With insightful contributions from politicians, experts and leading scholars, the publication gives particular emphasis to water resource management, global food security, and rising sea levels that threaten coastal areas and low-lying island states. The authors explore ways to further develop regional cooperation and dialogue in light of a changing climate and provide strong arguments for urgent action that complements international climate negotiations.

On a side event on climate change and its impact on foreign and security policy, in New York, 28 September, **UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson argues that "the only viable answer to energy security, food security and water security and long-term geo-political security is a sustainable, low-emissions economy"**. The side event was organized by Germany and Morocco.



The publication **"Climate Diplomacy: Reducing Risks for Security"** documents the initiative of the German Federal Foreign Office on climate change and security. In particular, it details the series of regional dialogues and climate security dialogues, as well as activities that took place in the context of the United Nations Security Council.



Tensions over Fishing Rights in the South China Sea

By Louisa Loesing and Stephan Wolters, adelphi

This April, the Philippines had one of their warships locked in a stand-off over fishing rights with two Chinese surveillance vessels at Scarborough Shoal, in waters claimed both by China and the Philippines. In May, an impressive fleet of 70 Chinese vessels was deployed there to protect four Chinese fishing boats. These latest incidents exemplify the intensifying territorial and resource-related tensions in the South China Sea.



Regional fish resources account for as much as one tenth of the global catch and hence make up a multi-billion-dollar industry, which is of vital interest for neighboring economies such as Vietnam and the Philippines. The dispute is not just about fish, of course; it is also and foremost a question of sovereignty over what constitutes one of the most important shipping lanes worldwide and what is regarded as waters rich in deep-sea fossil fuels and seabed minerals. In this context, fishermen are increasingly being used as “civilian instruments of power that help stake out legal claims and establish national maritime rights”, Patrick Cronin concluded in his [testimony before the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission](#) this January. China avoids military presence at sea, but pushes its claims with actions such as a recently instituted fishing ban that conflicts with the fishing rights of neighboring countries. Despite these tensions, most neighboring countries have been reluctant to raise open criticism because they do not wish to jeopardize economic relations with China. This notion also set the stage for the last IISS Asia Security Summit (“Shangri-La Dialogue”) in June, where, remarkably, China's Defense Minister was absent.



Read the related report
„Cooperation from
Strength: The United
States, China and the
South China Sea“

A recent report by the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) advocates U.S. neutrality, while emphasizing the need for increased military and technological involvement. China has repeatedly rebuffed U.S. involvement in the dispute, while politicians from Vietnam and the Philippines demand increased U.S. engagement to counter what they perceive as an ever more assertive China. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has recently proclaimed “[America’s Pacific Century](#)”. Following this strategic focus, the U.S. has supported efforts to resolve the dispute and to ensure freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, urging states to settle disputes through means of multilateral diplomacy, for which the Association of Southeast Asian States (ASEAN) would provide a good forum for dialogue, and in accordance with international law, particularly the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Indeed, this could be a pathway towards resolving the conflicts of interest in the South China Sea, and one that might hence also ensure more sustainable fishing with an equitable distribution of benefits.



Indigenous Rights are Key to Resolving Forest Conflicts in Indonesia

By Stefanie Schaefer, adelphi

Conflicts around natural resources have a long history in Indonesia. Current observations confirm an alarming increase in conflicts, mainly at the local level. These are not only increasing in frequency, but also in terms of intensity, leading to violent and sometimes fatal incidents. Socioeconomic developments such as economic and demographic growth are exacerbating the pressure on scarce but essential resources. Other contributing factors



Forest in Indonesia



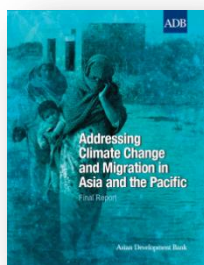
such as ethnicity, migration or corruption further aggravate conflicts. However, some positive developments in regard to the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights give hope that the present situation will improve.

Due to its social, economic, ecological and political importance, Indonesia's forest sector is particularly prone to conflicts. These conflicts are multilayered and occur at different levels and scales. At the national level, different ministries struggle for control over this sector, while different administrative bodies from the national, provincial and local level contest the allocation of concessions or the implementation of law. At the local level, conflicts over unclear territorial boundaries and the use of forest resources among different communities or between local communities and operators of mining or palm oil concessions are common.

The recognition of indigenous peoples' rights both at the local and national level is promoting efforts to resolve such conflicts. In Malinau, East Kalimantan, the director of Kayan Mentarang National Park, for instance, confirms a paradigm shift in traditional park management from exclusion towards an active inclusion of indigenous groups living within the forest and on the forest periphery. For example, a forum for the communication of indigenous groups' rights had been established in the district. Besides discussions about conflict resolution and challenges resulting from ethnic tensions, the organization achieved changing the status of a local protected area into a national park. Based on a broad civil society initiative, the Ministry of Forests recently approved a **national roadmap for strengthening community rights**. It not only foresees the exact mapping of the country's entire forest area, but also the establishment of standard procedures for conflict resolution as well as the expansion of community forest areas and social forestry.

Despite such positive examples, district authorities and local communities still often lack skills in conflict resolution and communication. Another worrying development is the growing disappointment and uncertainty created by countless Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) pilot projects that have not yet generated the promised and expected benefits for the communities involved.

In Brief: Asia



What are the impacts of climate change on migration in Asia and the Pacific? And how does migration represent a potential tool for human adaptation? These are the questions the Asian Development Bank answers in the report "**Addressing Climate Change and Migration in Asia and the Pacific**", by adding policy recommendations for national governments and the international community.



Digging for Conflict? Gold Mining Project in Romania

*Interview with Alina Banu, activist for the campaign “**Salvați Roșia Montană**” (Save Roșia Montană), a civil society network that has been founded in response to a gold mine project in Roșia Montană, Romania.*

The remote mountain area in the region of Transylvania in Romania, called Roșia Montană, offers gold and silver reserves worth at least 14 billion Euros. The predominantly Canadian investor group “Roșia Montană Gold Corporation” wants to extract the precious metals using cyanide extraction methods. The company faces huge protests for more than a decade now that have stalled the development of the project to a large extent.



© Alina Banu

Environment, Conflict and Cooperation (ECC): What are the main problems associated with the mining project?

Alina Banu (AB): The problems associated with this project are extremely complex and it is hard to say which aspects are more important than others. We have primarily the environmental aspect and the immense destruction that this project would bring if it is approved: Four mountains will be erased from the earth’s surface, a village will be resettled and the Corna Valley and Corna village will be “replaced” by a huge toxic waste-dump. The entire area will be destroyed and all we will be left with is a lunar landscape. Furthermore, we have the social aspect: there are families, mostly farmers that were born here, who do not want to sell their houses and land and who do not want to move away. The mining project has split the community in opponents and supporters of the project and even relationships between family members have turned increasingly tense. Roșia Montană is the oldest Romanian mining settlement and it hides archeological treasures of inestimable value, kilometers of ancient Dacian and Roman galleries, as well as other types of mining galleries. Alburnus Maior, a non-governmental organization based in Roșia Montană, and the leader of the „Save Rosia Montana“ Campaign are opposing the resettlement plan that will affect 740 farms and 140 apartments, the destruction of valuable historical and archaeological heritage, the use of cyanide leaching technology and the large-scale extraction of gold via open cast mining.

ECC: How are you working for change? Please tell us about a campaign your organization has conducted.

AB: There are a large number of actions that we have organized throughout the years in order to sound the alarm about the dangers that this mining project would bring and about the illegalities committed. Our activities reach from petitions to open letters, from flash-mobs to demonstrations or the boycott of persons or companies involved. Over time, Alburnus Maior has won over 50 court cases against the Gold Mining Company and different authorities. The most visible event of the campaign is FânFest (the literal translation of fân is hay), an alternative festival that we organize every summer in Roșia Montană since 2004, reuniting the most active voices from Romania concerned with ecology.



The invited artists perform for free in order to show their support and to protest against the possible destruction of the region. This year, the FânFest took place between 15-19 August to celebrate the unique archeological and natural landscape of Roșia Montană. The festival also aims at supporting the local community that has kept resisting for more than 14 years, as well as to demonstrate that Roșia Montană is a place which could live from tourism and other alternative activities.



View of Roșia Montana Valley
© Sebastian Florian.

ECC: How do you judge the recent debate about a Romanian law that would empower private companies to evict people from their properties?

AB: It is actually a proposed change of the actual mining law that would allow companies to assume the role of authorities and to evict people from their properties, even for projects that are private and not in the public interest. It is common sense that such proposals are incompatible with the property rights guaranteed by the constitution and that they are against the basic principles of democracy.

ECC: The conflict has already been flaring for roughly a decade. How can this stalemate be overcome? In this regard, do you view the debate in the European Parliament over prohibiting cyanide extraction methods as a promising avenue?

AB: All we demand from the Romanian authorities is to respect the existing laws and to think first in terms of sustainable, long-term development instead of easy profits for their own sake. Hungary, Bulgaria and other European countries have enacted legislation that bans cyanide-based technologies for mineral extraction, as it is known as an extremely polluting method. A European law that prohibits this method would be a guarantee that this area will remain as it is – also for our children.

ECC: Alina Banu, thank you very much for this interview.

In Brief: Europe



The Initiative for Peacebuilding – Early Warning (IfP-EW) has published the synthesis report **“Climate Change and Conflict”**. The report explores the linkages between climate change, conflict and fragility and it outlines key recommendations on how these complex and interlinked issues could be addressed and integrated into the policy and response mechanisms of local, national, regional and international institutions. It also draws on the findings of a number of case studies, published in previous **policy briefs**.



Shifting U.S. Policy Responses to Complex Crises

By Michael Werz and Max Hoffman, Center for American Progress

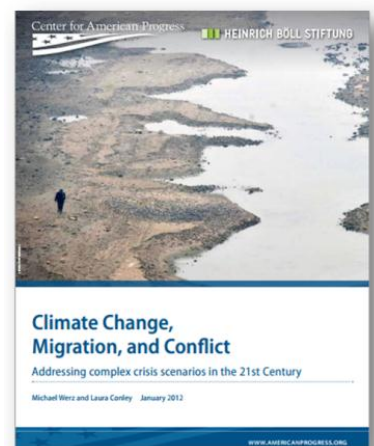
The first decade of the 21st century has offered ample evidence that narrow definitions of national security, focused on hard security and state-level interaction, are no longer adequate tools with which to understand the world. While nation-states remain the central actors on the world stage, many of the most pressing problems facing the global community—from climate change and migration to terrorism, trafficking to disease, and resource conflicts to food security—transcend international borders and resist one-dimensional, military solutions.

Tom Daschle, a former Majority Leader in the U.S. Senate and leading Democratic politician, captured this new environment in an April 2012 speech at the Center for American Progress. Daschle argued that, “We are increasingly not only connected, but integrated. Catastrophic events or the effects of climate change far from home can disrupt farming, cause famine and scarcity, and present consequences—through spikes in food prices, famine, and political unrest—which reverberate through the international system.”

In the coming decades, the nexus of climate change, human migration, and conflict or insecurity will increasingly threaten humanity’s shared interests and collective security in many parts of the world, disproportionately affecting the globe’s least developed countries. Changing environmental conditions will render traditional livelihoods unsustainable in some areas.

These cumulative effects will have serious implications for the stability of nations that lack the resources, good governance, and resilience needed to respond to the many adverse consequences of climate change and human mobility. Given the integration Senator Daschle and many others have identified, it will fall to the United States and other responsible global stakeholders to construct effective multilateral structures with which to avoid conflict, mitigate the worst impacts, and react to disasters.

Unfortunately, the United States’ national security and foreign policy apparatus is not adequately prepared to address these new challenges. The tools used to execute this policy (hard power, military assistance, diplomatic exchange, and development aid, to name a few) are still poorly integrated and separated by long-standing institutional barriers. Additionally, these tools are largely organized based on bilateral relationships, while regional strategies—crucial to solving transnational problems—are lacking. Finally, the United States continues to place far too much emphasis on hard power and military force, driven in large part by deeply entrenched domestic political constituencies which protect Pentagon resources and shortchange other forms of foreign interaction.



Read the related report „Climate Change, Migration, and Conflict“ by Michael Werz and Laura Conley.



NORTH AMERICA & CARIBBEAN / SOUTH AMERICA

To its credit, the Obama administration has begun adapting to this reality by pushing a series of policy reviews and institutional adjustments designed to establish a more progressive definition of security. These processes focus on tearing down outdated institutional divides, targeting assistance to improve human security and protect livelihoods, and strengthening the United States' ability to compel collective action to address fundamental problems through multilateral systems.

But transforming the structure and emphasis of U.S. foreign interactions is no easy task, and these efforts are still in their infancy. More and broader effort is needed to reckon with the nexus of climate change, human migration, and conflict or insecurity. These intersecting trends will present the United States and its allies with a primary challenge in the coming decades, but also offer an opportunity - a test case - for the United States and responsible partners to fashion a more progressive system of international governance.

Michael Werz is a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress. Max Hoffman is a Research Assistant at the Center. For more on the complex crises outlined above and the U.S. and international response, visit the [Center for American Progress' new website](#) - featuring a framing paper and first regional study, along with interactive maps and expert video interviews.

In Brief: North America & Caribbean



The U.S. National Intelligence Community has released a [report on global water security](#). The paper assesses how water challenges such as water scarcity or floods can impact U.S. national security in the coming years and decades. Experts discussed the findings at an [event hosted by the Wilson Center](#).



Energy and Mining Conflicts Loom over Communities in Colombia

By Paola Adriázola, adelphi

Traveling through the northern Colombian Department of Cesar, on the horizon one can see mountains to the east and to the west of the road. “Those mountains on the right are part of the Sierra de Perijá range,” explains the local driver, “but not those on the left.”



SOUTH AMERICA

Those are new mountains that were not there a few years ago.” These ‘new mountains’ are the accumulation of enormous volumes of waste rock, the by-product of the large open-pit coal mining operations that have been growing in the region in the past years.

Driven by global demand for energy resources and the government’s policies to attract foreign investment and to base economic growth on the mining industry, Colombia has doubled its coal production since 2000 and has become the fifth biggest coal exporter in the world. The government has fostered the exploitation of Colombia’s abundant natural resources with the hopes to be able to redistribute royalties more equally among regions and to pull more people out of poverty. The picture in mining communities, however, presents many challenges for development. These challenges were one of the focal points of field research conducted by adelphi this August in an effort to shed light on the linkages between natural resources, environment and conflict in the country, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.



Coal mines outside Samaca, Colombia.
© Scott Wallace / World Bank Photo Collection on flickr.

Colombia has a long history of armed conflict in which illegal groups have taken advantage of natural resources to finance their activities. Now, although the conflict situation has improved in many areas of the country in the past years, some armed groups have proven resilient and continue their strategy to attack and intimidate rural communities in order to advance their own interests. Illegal armed groups still operate in large extensions where mining concessions exist. Seeking to expand profit sources, some of them have realized the potential of the mining boom and have become directly involved in mining operations or in the extortion of small and mid-sized mining companies.

Additional challenges, however, arise also from the plans of legitimate companies to resettle communities in order to pave the way for mining explorations and operations. The land question around mining is controversial, as some of the strategic mining areas declared by the government are zones of small-scale farming, indigenous territories and cattle ranching areas. Some communities being re-settled belong to some of the most marginalized groups in the country, including Afro-Colombians. And although many express their high expectations and hopes of finding a new place to settle their communities, some communities remain in limbo as a result of unfinished resettlement plans. Increasingly, members of civil society are voicing their disappointment with the limited benefits that the local level sees from the mining developments in their regions and their distrust with companies and the government.

When asked about the potential results of these developments, an expert in the capital states his somber verdict: “The future of the economy is going in the direction of extractive industries, and so is the future of conflict in Colombia.” At the local and regional levels, however, civil society organizations, local and regional government, supported by partners like the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), have begun **efforts to raise awareness of the potential problems and engage in a comprehensive participatory approach to promote cooperation** and foster trust between communities, the governments and the private sector. Though much work remains to be done, the first steps to protect certain areas from indiscriminate operations and to transform socio-environmental conflicts in Colombia have been taken.



In Brief: South America



AQUASEC, the new inter-American center of excellence on water security and policy outreach, has been launched by researchers at the University of Arizona and research and policy partners from Mexico and Chile. Adaptive water management and scientific knowledge production are the objectives of the network which covers Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Mexico and United States.

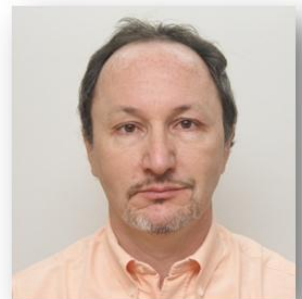


The Sahel Food Crisis Response: Bridging the Gap between Emergency Assistance and Longer-Term Development

In early June, ECC editors interviewed Rémi Dourlot from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) for West and Central Africa, based in Dakar, Senegal, on the Sahel food crisis.

The Sahel is characterized by long-standing chronic food insecurity and malnutrition, poverty and extreme vulnerability to droughts. After the drought and a resulting decrease in harvests in 2011, a deteriorating food crisis is looming over the region – and already affecting livelihoods.

ECC: Dear Rémi Dourlot, could you please briefly explain why the situation in the Sahel is so dire and what is different to previous food crises in the region, such as the one in 2010?



© Rémi Dourlot

Rémi Dourlot (RD): There are currently several “layers” of crises in the Sahel region. Most of the countries here suffer from chronic vulnerabilities and are at the very bottom of the UNDP Human Development Index. This is related to governance, desertification linked to poor agricultural management or climate change, rapid demography, etc.

A second layer is last year’s drought, which has resulted in an insufficient harvest - only two years after the previous drought and in a context that did not allow households to rebuild their assets after the 2010 crisis. The loss of remittances from migrant workers forced to return from Côte d’Ivoire and Libya contributed to this inability to rebuild assets.

On top of this came the Mali conflict, which has affected not only Malian, but also host communities in the neighbouring countries where dozens of thousands of refugees have arrived. Refugees have settled in those areas which are among the most affected by the drought, putting additional stress on



SUB-SAHARA AFRICA

local host communities who have to share their meager resources, including water and depleted pastures for cattle.

However, except for Mali itself, the impact of the Malian conflict remains limited in scope compared to the impact of the food crisis. For example, in Niger, the number of people affected by the drought is about 6.4 million while the number of registered refugees is less than 42,000. Even if one has to add the host populations impacted by the refugees' arrival, it is still a small percentage of the total population affected by the food crisis.

ECC: What scope is there for assistance, and what actions are you taking to support livelihoods in the region? What steps can be taken to improve long-term food security, and how can climate change be factored into the response?

RD: The response came early and a Sahel Strategy was issued by mid-December 2011. However, the crisis has deepened and the need for assistance has risen. The conflict in Mali has contributed to this. OCHA is promoting a kind of emergency relief that is not limited to emergency life-saving activities but can also help strengthen household resilience. The idea is to bridge the gap between emergency assistance and longer-term development. Such an approach includes setting up nutrition centres and food production initiatives that empower women to support their families, or community structures where women can learn how to identify early signs of malnutrition and how to better feed their children. A lot can also be done in the field of water conservation and management. The exact role of climate change is difficult to assess – as humanitarians we do not have the expertise for that - but from observing the last 30 years it seems clear that the cycle of droughts in the Sahel region is accelerating.

OCHA has allocated more than US\$ 83 million from its Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to UN agencies and regional offices in the various Sahel countries to quick-start emergency projects and it has supported the preparations of the Consolidated Appeals in Niger, Chad, and, more recently, in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Mali.

ECC: What are the funding needs and other capacities required for a sufficient response? Where do you currently see gaps and the biggest bottlenecks?

RD: As of 12 June 2012, the funding requirement for the Sahel region has reached US\$ 1.5 billion, with just 39 per cent covered to-date. Funding levels vary heavily from one country to another: As of 12 June, 48 per cent of the funding requirements for Chad have been met as compared to only 4 per cent for the more recent funding appeal for Mauritania. There are also differences between sectors. Agriculture is generally very much under-funded. This is a serious problem as in some regions the rainy season is about to start and FAO does not have enough money to buy seeds for local peasants.

ECC: Thank you very much for this interview.

In Brief: Sub-Sahara Africa



The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) organised a seminar on '[Mapping Climate Change, Displacement and Conflict in Africa](#)' on 2 October 2012 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Diplomats, civil servants as well as members of civil society came together to share information and engage in policy debates and dialogue.



Bridging the Gap: Disaster Relief and Climate Policies in Fragile Contexts

By Dennis Taenzler, *adelphi*

International disaster relief is confronted with tremendous challenges such as ongoing political instability in many regions of the world as well as the negative consequences of climate change. The Development and Peace Foundation, based in Bonn, invited a number of German and international experts from the field of disaster relief to the Berlin Summer Dialogue to discuss how to deal with these challenges and outline the specific responsibilities within the international community in the light of changing framework conditions.



Photo of the conference "International Disaster Relief. The challenges posed by fragile states and climate change"
© Development and Peace Foundation (SEF)

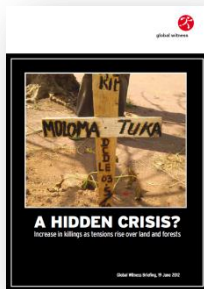
The discussions revealed still existing gaps between the international disaster and climate change discourses. However, experiences from practitioners on the ground also suggest that processes of integrating these two areas are already underway, linking the short and long term priorities in preparing for the consequences of weather extremes. Marcus Oxley, Executive Director of the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction, stressed that such a development is urgently needed to move away from an approach that is mainly focused on single events to a process of building resilient structures ([watch our interview](#)). One step in this direction can be tools such as the **Climate Change and Environmental Degradation Risk and Adaptation Assessment** developed by the organisation Tearfund.

Another remaining challenge is to bridge the gap between local knowledge resources and international policy making. As outlined by Mo Hamza, Director of **Global Climate Adaptation Partnership (GCAP)**, there is the need to regionalize adaptation efforts to address the specific context of transboundary shared natural resources, such as water ([watch our interview](#)). Taking a regional perspective can strengthen dialogue and confidence building. However, such regional cooperation requires strong relations both between the government and civil society as well as between different governments and is likely to require the facilitating role of the international community. Here, the current discussion on **"loss and damages"** related to climate change as part of the international climate negotiations may offer promising entry points in the years to come.



In Brief: Global Issues

With competition for clean water growing, some of the world's largest companies have joined forces and created maps of water availability in the largest river basins. **The Water Risk Atlas**, an Aqueduct project, can be a valuable asset for the sustainable use of water resources, if it is used by companies to prevent water scarcity and is accessible to **the local communities**.



The scramble for natural resources and the related killings of activists, journalists and community rights activists who had defended their rights to land and forests in vain are the focus of a new **Global Witness briefing**. The NGO has analyzed the timeframe of 2001-2011, concluding that tensions are massively on the rise, particularly in Brazil, Colombia, the Philippines and Peru.

Upcoming Events

Illegal Logging and Legality Verification in Copenhagen, Denmark (6-7 December)

The conference on **Illegal Logging and Legality Verification – FLEGT / VPA as New Modes of Governance** is hosted by the University of Copenhagen in cooperation with the European Forest Institute. Based on the Action Plan on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and the Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) it deals with new legal documentation requirements for timber imported as of 2013. The aim of this international conference is to provide a platform for researchers and practitioners to exchange knowledge concerning illegal logging, trade in illegal tropical timber and discuss possible measures to combat this.

ESF-ZiF-Bielefeld University Research Conference 2012: Tracing Social Inequalities in Environmentally-Induced Migration in Bielefeld, Germany (9-13 December)

The conference held at the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF) in Bielefeld sets a focus on **tracing social inequalities in environmentally-induced migration**. Emphasizing the existence of inequalities between world regions and categories of people involved in climate-induced migration, it investigates different capabilities of coping with environmental change. It will address questions concerning the relationship between social inequality and social vulnerability, social justice and the role of state and non-state actors (**see preliminary program**).



UPCOMING EVENTS / LEGAL NOTICE / CONTACT

Conference: EWACC 2012- Building Bridges in Nicosia, Cyprus (10-12 December)

The **EWACC 2012 - Building Bridges conference on Energy, Water and Climate Change** aims to facilitate a European-MENA partnership on science and technology. Stressing the impacts of climate change on the region of the Mediterranean, the Middle East and North Africa, it highlights the necessity of close cooperation between European international research and educational institutions to foster economic growth and to ensure sustainable development. By bringing together scientists, the private (energy) sector, stakeholders, policy makers and high-level officials, the conference is aimed at developing recommendations on how to implement effective collaboration.

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