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## FORUM

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- Strengthening Transboundary Water Cooperation. The African Experience

## POLICY & RESEARCH

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- Peace Troops Visited World Water Forum in Mexico City
- It's Energy, Stupid: a Rude Awakening for Europe?
- Nature Protection in the Caucasus: "Nature doesn't know borders"
- Vulnerable Areas in Africa: Political Reactions by the EU
- Nepal - a Candidate for Future Environmental Peacemaking Efforts?

## CONFERENCE REPORTS

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- Conflict Resources: In Search of an Internationally-Recognized Definition
- How to Raise the Political Standing of Civilian Crisis Prevention?
- Environment, Conflict, and Cooperation: A View from the Netherlands

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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- "Dual Master in Environmental Security and Peace" in Costa Rica and Canada
- "Symposium on Sustainable Development and Security" in Brussels (31 May)
- "Innovative Management of Scarce Resources in Semi-Arid Areas" in Berne (31 May)
- "KOFF-Training: Do no Harm" in Berne (26 - 27 June)
- "Living with Climate Variability and Change" in Espoo, Finland (17 - 21 July)

## FOCUS

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- Institute for Environmental Security (IES)

## IMPRINT/CONTACT

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### **Strengthening Transboundary Water Cooperation. The African Experience**

*By Waltina Scheumann, Consultant on International Water Issues*

There are 63 transboundary rivers and lakes, and 38 transboundary groundwater reserves in Africa. Their riparian countries have to agree on arrangements for sharing the water sources. Several countries today can be termed "water stress economies", since they are dependent on water resources that originate outside their territories for meeting their water needs. This situation has resulted in the emergence of 16 cooperative institutions in transboundary rivers and lakes regions, which are also supported by international donor organizations. German development cooperation too provides assistance to such initiatives in the African continent, for instance ORASECOM (Orange-Senqu), LIMCOM (Limpopo), the Nile Basin Initiative and the Lake Chad Basin Commission. It also funds initiatives such as the Water Unit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW). The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) commissioned five studies under its research and consultancy project entitled "Transboundary Water Management in Africa" to promote these initiatives and generate fresh ideas.

The studies focused on reviewing and evaluating past experiences in managing transboundary waters in Africa. How can international donors promote transboundary water management? What opportunities do benefit-sharing agreements offer? What is the role of information sharing in establishing transboundary water management? And last but not least, how can the extensive knowledge pool on the existing cooperative mechanisms in these regions be compiled and made accessible?

In response to especially this last question, the idea of a Sourcebook of Cooperation resonated particularly well with AMCOW. AMCOW, with assistance from the GTZ, has commissioned the African Network for Basin Organizations (ANBO) to take up this proposal. The Sourcebook will serve as an information tool by documenting and continuously updating the numerous regional initiatives for setting up new or stabilizing existing transboundary institutions in Africa. It is targeted at policy makers in national organizations and in river and lake basin organizations in Africa, regional stakeholders (e.g. African Union, SADC, Economic Commission for Africa), international funding agencies, international governmental and non governmental organizations, research institutes, research and training centres, and consultancy firms.

The Sourcebook is intended to enhance cooperation through information and knowledge, augment the efficacy of transboundary water management through a mutually beneficial learning process, and also create greater transparency in the cooperation processes. It will provide analyses of the status of transboundary cooperation over rivers and lakes - aquifers will also be included at a later date. At longer intervals, the Sourcebook will update on new developments, topical issues, and new information on existing river and lake basin organizations. Individual fact sheets on river and lake basin organizations will provide additional information, facilitating a broad overview of international initiatives. The Sourcebook is consequently an innovative instrument, which will enable national and international stakeholders to keep abreast of the numerous, frequently uncoordinated initiatives, and the status of negotiations on the African continent.

*For further information on the Sourcebook, please contact Waltina Scheumann (<mailto:scheumann@imup.tu-berlin.de>)*

*For further information, case study reports and events on the above mentioned project "Transboundary Water Management", please see the homepage of the German Development Institute:*

[http://www.die-gdi.de/die\\_homepage.nsf/0/c9ffe4c0c64dd0bdc125707e002be18d?OpenDocument](http://www.die-gdi.de/die_homepage.nsf/0/c9ffe4c0c64dd0bdc125707e002be18d?OpenDocument)

▲Top

## **POLICY & RESEARCH**

### **Peace Troops Visited World Water Forum in Mexico City**

It might been taken as a sign of helplessness that some participants of the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico City proposed a peacekeeping force to solve future water conflicts around the world. However, there is some reason to agree to Loic Fauchon, President of the World Water Council, who emphasized during the opening ceremony: "*Unacceptable* is the lack of water or its poor quality which, last year, caused ten times more deaths than all the wars waged on the planet together." This statement derives from the conclusions of the 2nd World Water Development Report entitled "Water: A Shared Responsibility," presented in Mexico City. The report found that water quality is declining in most regions, affecting the diversity of freshwater species and ecosystems. It shows that poor water quality is a key cause of poverty: Around 3.1 million people died in 2002 as a result of diarrhoeal diseases and malaria, 90 percent of whom were children.

The report further underlines that water governance, including institutional capacity, legal frameworks, and resource distribution, need to be improved. It points out that only a few countries have met the 2005 target to establish Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) plans and strategies, despite a general agreement that IWRM is the best approach to holistically address problems. Against the backdrop of these findings, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared in Mexico that access to water is a fundamental human right. However, this claim, supported by various Non-Governmental Organisations and three Governments (Bolivia, Venezuela, and Cuba), did not find its way into the ministerial declaration. Delegates argued that it was not feasible to include it, since it could generate legal problems at the national and international level. Irrespective of the question whether to refer to water as a human right in the non binding declaration or not: the ministerial declaration should have been much more forceful, especially regarding practical measures for access to water. This would have been a more important step in fighting water conflicts than ideas about military solutions. (DT)

For more information on the 4<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, please see <http://www.worldwaterforum4.org.mx/>

For more information on the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Water Development Report, please see <http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr2/index.shtml>

▲Top

## **It's Energy, Stupid: a Rude Awakening for Europe?**

After numerous studies, future scenarios, and many warnings: decision makers in the EU have now understood the urgent need to start thinking about the energy future. This might have been caused by the recent explosive mix of crises and policy developments in sectors related to energy, environment, and security: Europe's increasing dependency on a few external suppliers, the Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute, concerns relating to long-term availability of fossil fuels, high oil prices, new alarming insights about the impacts of global warming – and the list can be continued. Two policy initiatives during March were dedicated to energy security and futures:

The European Commission issued a Green Paper listing a number of options to achieve "sustainable, competitive and secure" energy supplies for the EU. Six priority areas are proposed, which are to form the basis for further discussions among member states over the shape and direction of the EU's future energy policy. These are: completing the internal energy market for gas and electricity, the set up of an European Energy Observatory to strengthen solidarity among EU member states in case of supply disruptions, diversifying of the EU's energy mix respecting diverging national choices on energy policy, a new road map for renewable energy and energy efficiency, the development of a strategic energy technology plan, and last but not least a common external energy policy to coordinate relations with external suppliers, such as Russia and the OPEC countries. The Spring European Council backed this approach of a new 'Energy Policy for Europe' in general. However, it clearly underlines that action at EU level should fully respect member states sovereignty over primary energy sources. On the one hand, this might re-open the door to discuss nuclear energy options including its significant security implications. On the other hand the commitment to increase the share of renewable energy, as a strong pillar of the European energy supply, was reinforced: The Council suggests a 15 percent share for renewable energy and an eight percent share for biofuels by 2015 – probably a good start to discuss long-term targets during the next meetings - the Commission's White Paper on the future energy policy is due in December. (DT)

For the Green Paper of the Commission, please see

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy/green-paper-energy/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy/green-paper-energy/index_en.htm)

For the European Council Presidency Conclusions, please see

[http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/89013.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/89013.pdf)

▲Top

## **Nature Protection in the Caucasus: "Nature doesn't know borders"**

Transboundary cooperation in the Caucasus region plays a key role in promoting biodiversity conservation and sustainable development, and can contribute to peace and understanding in this ethnically diverse region. Further steps in this direction are the commitment towards the implementation of an Ecoregional Conservation Plan (ECP) announced during a conference held in Berlin in March. Organized by KfW Development Bank and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Germany, this event under the auspices of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) brought together the Ministries of Environment from the Caucasus countries, as well as representatives of international conservation and donor organisations.

As German Development Minister Heidmarie Wieczorek-Zeul announced at the beginning of the conference, the German government has pledged €5 million to support the establishment of a transboundary nature conservation fund in the southern Caucasus

region. Additional aid for the fund from international donors is expected to see the amount rise to €40 million. "Nature doesn't know borders," the Minister said "that's why cross-border cooperation is crucial for the national parks in the Caucasus to be viable." The development of the ECP from 2001 to 2005 was coordinated by WWF in order to address overarching challenges and threats to the extraordinary biodiversity of the eco-region. The ECP is a blueprint for biodiversity conservation and regional development in the Caucasus – a comprehensive strategy for action to conserve and restore the biodiversity of the eco-region over the span of several decades. It is a guiding document for governments, aid agencies, and donor organisations, and is an effective planning instrument for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The ECP is part of the Caucasus Initiative launched by the BMZ in 2001. This initiative focuses particularly on the field of nature protection and biodiversity conservation to promote regional cooperation through cross-border projects. (DT/WWF)

For more information on the conference, please see [www.caucasus-conference.org](http://www.caucasus-conference.org)

For more information on the WWF's work in the Caucasus, please see [http://www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/where\\_we\\_work/europe/what\\_we\\_do/caucasus/index.cfm](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/europe/what_we_do/caucasus/index.cfm)

▲Top

### **Vulnerable Areas in Africa: Political Reactions by the EU**

A predicted drop in rainfall caused by global warming threaten rivers and other local sources of fresh water in Africa, according to a new study published by Science magazine in early March. Already suffering periodic droughts, further declines in rainfall could have "devastating implications" for people who depend on local water supplies. This is what the two authors, Maarten de Wit and Jacek Stankiewicz of the Africa Earth Observatory Network (AEON) at the University of Cape Town, told IPS News Agency. Particularly vulnerable areas include a narrow band of territory that stretches from Senegal eastward to Sudan and crosses several important water bodies that supply populations downriver, such as the Sudd swamps in the Nile Basin and the Niger River. They also include parts of East Africa south of Somalia.

European decision makers apparently seem to take those developments seriously – for example with respect to the Horn of Africa, a region affected by a chronic cycle of drought, poverty, and instability. At the end of March, Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, set out the EU's strategy for peace, security, and development in this region. The new strategy is to focus, in particular, on regional governance, food security, border control and non-proliferation of small arms, as well as on natural resources management. The centrepiece of this strategy is a regional pact, building on mutual interdependency that could serve as a catalyst for peace. It builds on the actions taken by the IGAD and the Nile Basin Initiative. IGAD, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, a grouping of seven countries (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda), has become a central part of the political and security architecture of the Horn of Africa according to the Commissioner. Besides some of the key cross border issues to be addressed in this region – as the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons – water cooperation was identified as a key source for regional stability. In this regard, the importance of the Nile Basin initiative as a good basis for regional cooperation on natural resources was emphasized. (DT)

For more information on the AEON study in Science Magazine, please see <http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/1119929v1> and "Warming Threatens Key Water Sources" by Jim Lobe <http://www.ipsnews.org/news.asp?idnews=32358>

For more information on the Africa Earth Observatory Network (AEON), please see <http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/cigces/>

For more information on the EU Strategy and the activities of the European Commission in this region, please see [http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/index_en.htm)

▲Top

### **Nepal - a Candidate for Environmental Peacemaking Efforts?**

According to some experts, protecting natural resources and stabilizing population growth must be part of long-term solutions to today's violent conflicts. Others say the evidence does not support this strategy. But all agree that more research will lead to a more nuanced understanding of the links connecting environment, population, and security. Bringing together a diverse group of authors - from Nepal to Norway, from universities to the military - the 11th edition of the *Environmental Change and Security Program Report* explores how powerful underlying forces may engender war—or lay a foundation for peace. The report leads with a set of commentaries that explores links between population factors and conflict uncovered by recent research. Five scholars in the rapidly developing field of demographic security are asked to distil their findings into brief articles on the role played by four key population dynamics: density, age structure, sex ratio, and ethnicity. The subject of this year's case study on environment, population, and conflict – is Nepal - a country that might be a candidate for future environmental peacemaking efforts. Richard Matthew and Bishnu Raj Upreti analyze the underlying and often ignored forces contributing to Nepal's deadly Maoist insurgency. As in previous issues of ECSP Report - which examined key states including Brazil, Nigeria, and Ethiopia - the authors demonstrate that even though environmental and population factors are not the primary causes of instability, they are essential pieces of the puzzle. (Geoffrey D. Dabelko)

To download the ECSP Report No. 11, please follow this link  
<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/ECSP%20report%20111.pdf>

For more information on the Environmental Change and Security Program, please see <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/ecsp>

▲Top

## **CONFERENCE REPORTS**

### **Conflict Resources: In Search of an Internationally-Recognized Definition**

The International Crisis Group hosted the forum for action on Security, Development, and Forest Conflict in Brussels, 8-9 February 2006. The Forum brought around 60 representatives from the security and defence, diplomatic and development communities together to discuss various aspects of conflict in forest areas, present current work in this area, and identify follow-up actions. Conflict resources do not only include wars, but also



oppression, abuse of human and economic rights, land rights, corruption – different kinds of low-level conflict that can lead to full-blown wars. Against this background it is deemed necessary that there is a need to address the entire issue of conflict resources, rather than addressing each commodity separately. An internationally-recognized definition of conflict resources, probably housed at the UN Security Council, intends to ensure that wars such as those in Cambodia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the DRC and, topically, Cote d'Ivoire, cannot feed off the trade in natural resources. Participants agreed to support Global Witness' campaign to develop an internationally-recognized definition of conflict resources and to integrate natural resource conflicts in the UN security and peace building systems.

As a starting point to define 'conflict resources', the following explanation was suggested: 'natural resources whose systematic exploitation and trade in a context of violent conflict contribute to, benefit from, or result in the commission of serious violations of human rights, international humanitarian law, or violations amounting to crimes under international law.'

The forum participants agreed to establish an interagency group or similar mechanism to continue the work of the Forum. This process should be supported by regular interagency meetings, multistakeholder dialogues, and a website. The conference organizers are currently in the process of planning the next steps. (AC)

For the conference proceedings including a summary report, presentations, and web links on the topic of the forum, please see <http://www.etfrn.org/etfrn/sdfc/index.htm>

For more information on the International Crisis Group, please see

<http://www.intl-crisis-group.org>

▲Top

### **How to Raise the Political Standing of Civilian Crisis Prevention?**

The Action Plan 'Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building' constitutes the most comprehensive framework for the German Federal Government's policy in this area to date. It aims at establishing civilian crisis prevention as a cross-sectional task for the entire Federal Government's (foreign) policy. The German Bundestag has obliged the Federal Government to report after two years on the implementation of the Plan's 161 actions. Reason enough for the Development and Peace Foundation and the Institute for Development and Peace to organize an expert workshop on the "Status quo and Perspectives in European Comparison" in Berlin in February. The participants agreed that clearly defined criteria will be necessary to enable a realistic assessment of the Plan's implementation and political impact. However, the debate about benchmarks and criteria posed the important question whether we are looking at individual projects or at behavioural changes - and how to measure them accordingly. A raised political standing can be achieved through papers accompanying the original plan, which give more details on objectives, sub-goals, and individual measures. Participants suggested that the Advisory Board to the Interministerial Steering Group could produce some papers that explicitly outline some of these practical challenges.

The second part of the workshop focussed on how German activities are interlinked with similar European endeavours. The European level, while guiding Germany's development, foreign and security policy, remains rather underdeveloped in the Action Plan. György Tatár, Head of Task Force, Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit in the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, stressed that Germany alone cannot be effective in implementing the Action Plan. Its activities need coherence with and support

of the EU, other member states, and the international community. A reminder to also take a closer look at new EU member states' initiatives comes from representatives of the Macedonian foreign ministry, who asked the representatives of Switzerland, Sweden, and Germany for many details about Action Plans and similar initiatives. (DT/ Development and Peace Foundation)

For the workshop documentation and further information, please see <http://www.sef-bonn.org/inc/sef.events.inhalt.php?txt=91&lang=de&rfs=1>

For more information on the German Action Plan "Civilian Crisis Prevention", please see [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/en/aussenpolitik/friedenspolitik/ziv\\_km](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/www/en/aussenpolitik/friedenspolitik/ziv_km)

▲Top

### **Environment, Conflict, and Cooperation: A View from the Netherlands**

Governments and aid organizations have to give climate change, environment, and energy a much more important role in their foreign policies. This was one of the key messages from the panel discussion on 'Environment, Conflict, and Cooperation' that took place at the Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM) on 7 March 2006.

The panellists – mainly Dutch scientists, researchers and policy makers – also discussed the role of the environment in conflict prevention and post-conflict peace building. Georg Frerks, Professor for Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management at Utrecht University, stated: "I am not an unrealistic idealist, but in many cases the environment can be used as a constructive instrument to bring peace." The suggestion to involve environmental experts on peace missions was considered "a good idea". Natural disasters can bring groups in conflict closer together, as for example in the Indonesian province of Aceh, but they can also increase conflicts, as in Sri Lanka – depending largely on how the aftermath of the disaster is managed. The State Secretary for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment Mr. van Geel, who opened the discussion, pointed to numerous Dutch activities that already highlight the "clear and highly complex role of natural resources in areas of conflict and crisis".

The event at VROM marked the opening of the exhibition on 'Environment, Conflict and Cooperation' in The Hague. The exhibition came straight from London, where it was hosted by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and accompanied by a similar discussion among representatives from the ministries of the Environment, Development, Defence as well as FCO staff (MF).

The speech by State Secretary State Secretary for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment Pieter van Geel can be found here:

<http://www.vrom.nl/pagina.html?id=22944>

A summary of the discussion will be published shortly on the websites of the organisers, the Institute for Environmental Security (<http://www.envirosecurity.net/>) and Adelphi Research ([www.adelphi-research.de](http://www.adelphi-research.de))

For more information on the Exhibition on Environment, Conflict and Cooperation, please see: <http://www.ecc-exhibition.org>

▲Top



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **"Dual Master in Environmental Security and Peace" in Costa Rica and Canada**

The University for Peace (UPEACE), affiliated to the United Nations, is pleased to announce that applications are now invited for the Dual-Campus MA programme in Environmental Security and Peace, for the 2006 – 2007 academic year. The MA in Environmental Security and Peace focuses on the interface between peace, development, and environmental security. In particular, it concentrates on the links between several factors of insecurity: environmental stress and degradation, threats to livelihoods, harms to the resilience of fragile ecosystems, intensified competition over natural resources and, in certain volatile situations, escalating violence and conflict. The MA in Environmental Security and Peace is delivered in a dual mode between the UPEACE Campus in Costa Rica and the UPEACE Toronto Centre in Canada

For more information on the structure and content of the MA in Environmental Security and Peace, as well as application instructions and scholarship information, please visit

<http://www.upeace.org/programmes/esp.cfm>

▲Top

### **"Symposium on Sustainable Development and Security" in Brussels (31 May)**

The "Symposium on Sustainable Development and Security: Challenges and Opportunities", which will be convened by Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE-EU) and Institute for Environmental Security (IES), is intended to raise the political issues with interested Members of the European Parliament relating to the improved integration of environmental and development concerns, notably climate change, into the EU's existing Common Foreign & Security Policy (CFSP).

For further information and the programme, please see

<http://www.envirosecurity.net/conference>

▲Top

### **"Innovative Management of Scarce Resources in Semi-Arid Areas" in Berne (31 May)**

Within the framework of the International Year of Deserts and Desertification (YDD), this "Symposium on Desertification and Global Change" by the National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) North-South will present an opportunity for an open debate involving researchers and development practitioners. It aims to capitalize on the recent experience from development and research in order to identify novel, promising approaches to better manage scarce resources and improve livelihoods in arid and semi-arid areas. Furthermore the Symposium will contribute towards creating a better understanding of mechanisms, hindrances, and potentials for appropriate societal responses to on-going processes of global change affecting development.

For further information and the programme, please see

<http://www.nccr-north-south.unibe.ch/>

▲Top

### **"KOFF-Training: Do no Harm" in Berne (26 - 27 June)**

'Do no Harm' is a planning tool developed by the Local Capacities for Peace Project of the Collaborative for Development Action with broad involvement of international NGOs, donors, and field-level practitioners. The tool helps to systematically identify the ways in which humanitarian and development assistance given in conflict settings may be provided so that, rather than inadvertently contributing to the tensions, they help strengthen local capacities for peace. In the course of the two-day training, organized by the KOFF Center for Peacebuilding at swisspeace, the participants will become acquainted with patterns of interaction between assistance and conflict, the "Do no Harm"-tool and its application in practice.

For further information and the programme, please see

<http://www.swisspeace.org/training/default.htm>

▲Top

### **"Living with Climate Variability and Change" in Espoo, Finland (17 - 21 July)**

The conference "Living with Climate Variability and Change: Understanding the Uncertainties and Managing the Risks" in Espoo (Finland) will review opportunities and constraints in integrating climate risks and uncertainties into the mainstreams of decision-making, where sensitivity to climate variability and change is but one among many factors to consider. It will draw on the experiences of public and private organizations worldwide that have been engaged in managing risks, including those of a climatic origin.

For further information and the programme, please see <http://www.livingwithclimate.fi/>

▲Top

## **FOCUS**

This section serves as a platform for Institutions and Initiatives to present their activities on Environment, Conflict, and Cooperation.

### **Institute for Environmental Security (IES)**

The Institute for Environmental Security (IES) is an international non-profit non-governmental organisation established in 2002 in The Hague, The Netherlands with liaison offices in Brussels and Washington, D.C. The Institute's mission is: "To advance global environmental security by promoting the maintenance of the regenerative capacity of life-supporting eco-systems." The need to draw the necessary political attention to environmental security to prevent conflict, instability, and unrest prompted the design in 2002 of the Horizon 21 programme. This is an integrated programme encompassing the disciplines of science, diplomacy, international law, finance and education. It aims to provide policy-makers with a methodology and the policy tools to tackle environmental security risks in time in order to safeguard essential conditions for sustainable developments.

Key objectives of the *Horizon 21* programme are:

- Science: Create enhanced decision tools for foreign policy makers, donors, and their target groups on regional, national, and local levels;

- Diplomacy: Promote effective linkages between environment, security, and sustainable development policies.
- Law & Governance: Contribute to the development of a more effective system of international law and governance;
- Finance: Introduce new and innovative financial mechanisms for the maintenance of the globe's life supporting ecosystems; and
- Education: Build the environmental knowledge capital of people and organisations.

Further information: <http://www.envirosecurity.net/>

▲Top

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▲Top