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THE GREEN TRANSITION AND PEACE

Existing Initiatives and Experiences

Civil Society Dialogue Network

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Background Paper

The Green Transition and Peace: Existing Initiatives and Experiences

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Civil Society Dialogue Network

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ACRONYMS

3T	Tin, Tungsten, Tantalum
ASM	Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
EurAC	European Network for Central Africa
FARDC	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
HDP	Humanitarian Development Peace
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPIS	International Peace Information Service
ITSCI	International Tin Supply Chain Initiative
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KEL	Kipeto Energy Limited
LSM	Large Scale Mining
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGP	L'Observatoire Gouvernance et Paix
REDD+	Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SLUS	Sustainable land-use systems
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WWF	The World Wide Fund for Nature

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INTRODUCTION

There is potential for peacebuilding within the green transition, climate and environmental action. Today's world needs structural transformation of all sectors and scaling up environmental action to tackle the growing impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. At the core of this "green transition" away from fossil fuels lies the transition to sustainable energy. With the race towards net zero combined with the rippling effects of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the investment in renewable sources of energy has never been as high. Renewable energy infrastructure deployment has outpaced that of all other fossil fuel energy sources.[1] Especially in fragile and conflict-affected countries, green energy projects hold potential for development. However, such projects can impact negatively on the communities in which they take place, with the potential to fuel human rights abuses and conflicts between communities, companies and governments. These risks to peace and security are also significant in contexts where the mining of minerals essential to the green transition takes place (such as copper, lithium and cobalt for electric car batteries and solar panels), in particular where mining occurs in already fragile contexts. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a country riven by decades of violent conflict, for example, holds more than 70 percent of global cobalt resources.[2] Another important aspect to curb carbon emissions is to preserve and restore ecosystems, especially those with large carbon sinks like forests and wetlands. Looking at practice of environmental protection and finance mechanisms like offsetting schemes, cases of impacts on communities and conflicts are evident. This paper illustrates how interventions in and around the green transition can contribute to social cohesion, livelihood development and inclusive governance, instead of fuelling inequalities and conflict.

The analysis and case studies seek to inform the discussion on how the European Union (EU) (and other actors) can address climate change and environmental degradation as part of its external action on peace and security. Conflict sensitivity[3] is mentioned as a requirement to prevent harmful consequences of interventions and boost positive impacts. The paper explores how green energy projects, environmental protection and interventions in the mining sector can address and transform causes and drivers of conflict, which include social and economic inequalities, political exclusion and injustice (including human rights violations), weak and unfair governance and institutions, and the lack of structures for cooperation and non-violent conflict management.

Case studies from existing initiatives exemplify how green energy projects, environmental protection or sustainable mining and supply chains can contribute to peacebuilding. For each case study, the approaches towards marrying climate and environmental action and peacebuilding, and the co-benefits in terms of peace outcomes, are highlighted. We understand peace outcomes as positive change regarding political, economic and societal participation and inclusion, with emphasis on economic benefits and livelihoods for marginalised groups, fair and effective governance and institutions, peaceful coexistence and social cohesion, cooperation and conflict management mechanisms as well as gender equality. Peace outcomes regarding cultures for peace were not considered as the reviewed literature and cases do not provide sufficient insights if the green transition or environmental protection can transform cultures of violence.

The paper is structured in four chapters. Chapter one dives into the risks and potentials for peace and cooperation of green energy projects. Chapter two explores the peace potential in sustainable land use, environmental protection, conservation and restoration. Lastly, chapter three identifies how the mining and supply of critical raw materials can benefit local populations and thereby contribute to peace. The concluding chapter provides reflections and lessons for the EU and others.

[1] Global Commission on the Geopolitics of Energy Transformation (2019). A new World: the geopolitics of renewable energy, p.18
[2] UNEP (2022). Can the Democratic Republic of the Congo's mineral resources provide a pathway to peace?
[3] Conflict Sensitivity Consortium 2012. How to guide to conflict sensitivity.

1. DESIGNING GREEN ENERGY INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE CO-OPERATION AND PEACE

With all climate change indicators breaking records around the globe, renewable energy sources provide an alternative path to fossil fuel extraction and represent an opportunity for building sustainable peace. In the UN Secretary General's words, "Renewables are the peace plan of the 21st century".[4] However, practice has shown that if these projects are not done well, they can cause substantial damage, to people and the environment, when interacting with local conflict dynamics.[5]

Literature on the impacts that energy projects have on conflict tend to highlight the risks these represent but rarely the opportunities and ways to promote peace. There have been more than 200 allegations of human rights abuse committed by renewable energy companies in the last 10 years.[6] These include land and water grabs, rights violations of local people, and the denial of the right to decent work and living wages. Nearly half (44%) of these allegations occurred in the wind and solar sectors, and violations can have repercussions on social cohesion and create conflicts between companies, government and affected communities.

There is growing concern about green energy projects exacerbating existing fragility.[7] These are places where socio-economic inequalities, weak governance and institutions, and food scarcity cause or drive conflict. Here, energy related-conflicts interact with existing structural violence and human rights violations and often there are limited means for effective and non-violent conflict resolution, for example due to restricted access for marginalised communities to justice and legal remedy in cases of land grabbing and expulsion/displacement. An example of this is the Grand Renaissance Dam in Ethiopia on the river Nile, where transboundary water governance has led to an increase in tensions in the region. This is an ongoing conflict between Ethiopia and downstream neighbours Sudan and Egypt, where discussions have turned into a political deadlock. It is a region experiencing several overlapping conflicts, with alliances forming across conflicts that are becoming hard to separate.[8] Beyond interstate tensions, such projects can also affect tensions within a country, such as the Agua Zarca hydropower project in Honduras,[9] or the Indus Waters project in Pakistan.[10] However, a balance needs to be found between achieving mitigation projects in such areas and maintaining positive relationships with local communities.

Another unintended negative impact is conflict over land use. Competition over land for renewable energy sources will only increase, leading to an increased risk of conflict, especially for economically and politically marginalised people living on that land. Installations provide energy to distant consumers through transmission lines, meaning the locations where electricity is produced and where it is consumed are far apart.[11] The need to transport power across multiple political jurisdictions can present an additional source for social conflict, particularly in terms of people protesting against the installation of large infrastructure.[12] Land acquisitions tend to disproportionally affect communities and people with less political and economic participation and power and therefore exacerbate exclusion and tensions, where there is ongoing armed conflict or where local communities are vulnerable to climate change impacts due to a low capacity to adapt.[13] A good example of this would be the Lake Turkana Wind Project which faced conflicts and court cases over the means by which is acquired land in a context impacted by conflict between pastoralists.[14]

[4] Gutierrez, A. (2022). 'Renewable energy is the guarantor of peace in the 21st century'. Le Monde, op ed.
[5] International Alert (2022). Fuelling conflict? The impact of the green energy transition on peace and security
[6] Business and Human Rights Resource Center (2022). Renewable Energy & Human Rights Benchmark: Key findings from the wind & solar sectors
[7] Froese, R., Schilling, J. (2019). The Nexus of Climate Change, Land Use, and Conflicts. Curr Clim Change Rep 5, 24–35.
[8] GIGA, (2021), The Political Deadlock on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam,
[9] Climate Diplomacy, Agua Zarca Dam Conflict in Honduras
[10] Climate Diplomacy, Conflict over the Indus Waters in Pakistan
[11] Avila, S. (2018). Environmental justice and the expanding geography of wind power conflicts. Sustainability Science, vol. 13, no. 68.
[12] SIPRI (2022). Navigating a just and peaceful transition: Environment of Peace Part 3
[13] Aminga, V. (2020). Renewable energy as an opportunity for peace?, SIPRI Write Peace blog, 2 Apr.
[14] International Alert (2022). Fuelling conflict? The impact of the green energy transition on peace and security

It is important to note the existence of international guidelines on the topic. The UN Guiding Principles (UNDPs) on Business & Human Rights, adopted in 2011, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (integrated into the OECD guidelines for Multinational Enterprises) do set out international expectations and norms. States that have ratified them have a duty to uphold these rights, and ensure those within their boundaries do the same, even if these remain not widely legally binding. In addition, the EU is about to adopt its own set of mandatory due diligence rules, following a spat of national laws emerging across the EU. Mandatory heightened due diligence for conflict-affected settings is called for in a recital to the agreed EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, although with this language only appearing as a recital, means that it is not binding.

In the green energy project case studies researched for this paper, "peace" was not explicitly included in theories of change[15], as a goal. However, peace outcomes can be achieved via different pathways in green energy projects. Indeed, when projects put communities at the centre to respect the human rights of local landowners and inhabitants, then energy projects can contribute to peace. Economic development, inclusion in decision-making and governance, and social cohesion are drivers for peace. Therefore, when investments in green energy projects look to impact and improve such drivers the project will help build sustainable peace. Regardless of the potential of using such investments for sustainable peacebuilding, this remains severely untapped. The following case studies explore how implicit peace outcomes are being pursued through initiatives in the renewables sectors in Kenya and Laos.

1.1. Kipeto Energy Limited's Wind Power Project in Kenya

Kenya has an ambitious plan for renewable energy, with 86% of the country's energy use already sourced from renewables,[16] and a plan to take this to 100% by 2030. The Kipeto Wind Power Project in Kajiado County is the second largest wind project after the Lake Turkana. These renewable energy developments are taking place amid recurrent clashes between nomadic/semi-nomadic pastoralists and sedentary farming communities. After a difficult start with conflict and community protest, the indigenous custodians of the land negotiated a 5% share in the company with the revenues going to a Community Trust and guarantees of land title security and minimal relocation. To overcome the conflicts, Kipeto Energy Limited (KEL) put in place a bottom-up grievance mechanism that starts at the household level, where members of household discuss an issue concerning the project. Should the issue fail to be resolved at the household level, a family meeting is called to resolve the issue.[17] The long-term revenue stream, and local electricity supply is already positively transforming the lives of communities, while building long-term value for investors.[18] In this project we can see when communities play an active and integral role in the development and governance of renewable energy projects, human rights violations and conflict risks can be mitigated, and prosperity shared, fostering participation and development of local communities. Even if peace was not an explicit, integral goal of the project, by involving and empowering the local community and strengthening their livelihoods, leadership and decision-making power, the project can contribute to positive peace.

1.2. Green energy for the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya

Refugee camps are in principle supposed to be set up for a determined and ephemeral time. However, many refugee camps have become a more permanent home, which in turn requires short-term humanitarian assistance to move to a more longer-term developmental approach. This includes the deployment and use of renewable

[15] A "theory of change" is a method to explain how an intervention(s) is expected to lead to a specific change or set of changes. It is commonly used in the design of peacebuilding and development programming to clarify the logic of an intervention and highlight the assumptions around how it will create change.
[16] Kenya Investment Authority, Jan 2023, https://www.invest.go.ke/2023/01/11/kenyas-renewable-power-generation-hits-86pct-total-output/
[17] Kanyinke Sena (2021). A case study on best practice in community engagement in energy projects
[18] Joan Carling, Phil Bloomer, Learning from success in renewable energy: Indigenous leadership & shared prosperity

energy sources within the camps. Within the Kakuma Refugee Camp in North-western Kenya, home to almost 200,000 people,[19] renewable energy sourcing pilot projects have been carried out by INGOs. With an impact on economic activities and community relationships, energy projects carry the potential to provoke conflict among residents who live in refugee camps, and to cause or exacerbate tensions with host communities, with whom relationships are often already fraught – primarily because energy is generally insufficient to meet demand in locations where refugee camps are located.[20] These projects in Kakuma did not build on a peacebuilding theory of change, but rather one of enhancing critically needed energy access within the camp. However, the increase of energy access decreased the chances of violence against women and girls, who might have experienced sexual violence when leaving camps to search for firewood and other natural resources,[21] increased food security, and access to education by allowing for students to be able to do their homework from home with electricity. This highlights the massive untapped potential of such energy projects contributing to security for women and girls and to enhance relations within refugee camp communities.

1.3. Gender Perspectives in Green Energy Projects - NamTeum 2 Hydropower Dam in Laos

The green energy transition needs to be seen as an opportunity to transform the energy model to one that fosters social justice and gender equality by being designed gender-responsive, fair and equitable.[22] Research has shown that large scale energy projects have had adverse impacts on women and their livelihoods.[23] Women enjoy weak rights of land ownership and tenure compared to men which can entail the exclusion of women from the processes of negotiation, consultation and compensation in energy projects since companies and project leaders will typically approach landowners and community leaders, who tend to be men.

A good illustration of how an energy project can be designed to be gender responsive, fair and equitable is the NamTeum 2 Dam project in Laos. Land titles were issued jointly to men and women, and joint compensation was provided to resettled households. The resettlement that occurred during the construction of the NamTeum 2 Dam in Laos affected 6,300 people in 17 communities. The power company hired gender specialists led by the Laos Women's Union to ensure the effective participation of women in all phases of the project. As a result, the Social Development Plan and the Resettlement Action Plan included important gender considerations —such as land titles being issued jointly to women and men, as well as joint compensation for those who were resettled. In addition, alternative livelihoods were created for the most vulnerable resettled households, including livelihood activities traditionally carried out by women, such as raising chickens and producing handicrafts.[24] The inclusion of gender sensitivity at the design phase of a project led to better inclusion and enhance decision-making power that will in turn positively impact peace outcomes.

[19] UNHCR Kenya Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement
[20] SEI (2022). Conflict sensitivity and renewable energy: a case study from Kenya's Kakuma Refugee Camp.
[21] Johanna Lehne, William Blyth, Glada Lahn, Morgan Bazilian, Owen Grafham (2016). Energy services for refugees and displaced people, Energy Strategy Reviews, Volumes 13–14.
[22] Shannon Elizabeth Bell, Cara Daggett, Christine Labuski (2020). Toward feminist energy systems: Why adding women and solar panels is not enough. Energy Research & Social Science, Volume 68.
[23] WoMin African Alliance (2020). Renewable Energy in Africa: An Opportunity in a Time of Crisis.
[24] USAID (2018). Advancing gender in the environment: making the case for gender equality in large-scale renewable energy infrastructure development

2. CONNECTING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, INCLUSION AND PEACEBUILDING

In this chapter, we review three forms of environmental protection and how they can contribute to peacebuilding. We look at programmes for:

- Conservation, for example by declaring areas protected for the preservation of biodiversity, ecosystems or natural resources against threats;[25]
- restoration, meaning the recovery of damaged or destroyed ecosystems such as wetlands, forests and grasslands;[26]
- sustainable and low-emission land use and livelihoods, for example in agriculture and forestry.

There is peace potential in environmental protection. However, practice has shown that conflict and security risks are often not sufficiently accounted for. One challenge lies in the financial mechanisms for environmental action. A common form for financing is carbon and biodiversity offsetting.[27] It is a largely unregulated industry and has met with heavy criticism regarding its effectiveness to reduce emissions and environmental damage. Offsetting has shown to drive inequalities and the violation of rights of indigenous and local communities, for instance in Colombia, Kenya, Indonesia, Peru, DRC and Brazil.[28] Other research shows how reforestation and forest conservation (for example under REDD+[29]) can fuel and cause conflicts, including by introducing unfair governance structures, excluding groups from decision-making, changing land tenure systems, and increasing injustices over access and control of forests.[30] A study on REDD+ projects in Kenya shows that if land tenure systems and unequal land distribution are not addressed in the programmes, inequality is reinforced.[31] There are other examples illustrating how conflict-insensitive protection and compensation schemes failed in achieving climate goals,[32] and caused harm to communities.[33]

The militarisation of conservation presents another risky and counterproductive development in conservation.[34] Although there is a role and potential for the security sector to support environmental protection effectively and sensitively,[35] there are many cases, especially in conflict-affected settings, where the deployment of armed park guards, soldiers and military surveillance technologies has resulted in human rights abuses and escalation of conflicts. Research in the DRC shows that armed guards in protected areas are perceived by some people as a stabilising factor due to the absence of the government. Others, however, are threatened by them, like in the case when armed park guards sought to expel indigenous people from their land in Congo's Kahusi-Biega National Park.[36] In Colombia in 2019, 22,000 security officers were deployed, "often helicoptered into legally protected

[25] WWF (2023). What are Nature-Based Solutions and How Can they help us address the Climate Crisis? On Nature-based Solutions.
[26] UNEP (2021). A beginner's guide to ecosystem restoration.
[27] Offsetting is a trading mechanism for private entities, governments, or individuals to pay for their greenhouse gas emissions or environmental damages. They compensate by supporting projects to avoid, cut or remove emissions or prevent, reduce or restore environmental damage, mostly in form of forest-protection or restauration schemes. https://interactive.carbonbrief.org/carbon-offsets-2023/biodiversity.html
[28] The Carbon Brief Analysis from September 2023 shows that "m*ore than 70% of the reports examined by Carbon Brief found evidence of carbon-offset projects causing harm to Indigenous people and local communities*."
[29] UNFCCC. As part of the Paris Agreement, the REDD+ framework was established to protect forests. It stands for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries.
[30] Dunne et al (2023). Mapped: The impacts of carbon-offset projects around the world
and Alusiola, R.A., Schilling, J. & Klar, P. (2021). REDD+ Conflict: Understanding the Pathways between Forest Projects and Social Conflict. Forests 12(6).
[31] Chomba,S., Kariuki, J., Friis Lund, J. & Sinclair, F. (2016). Roots of inequity: How the implementation of REDD+ reinforces past injustices. Land Use Policy Volume 50
[32] For example Chevron's Carbon Offsetting in The Guardian (2023). 'Worthless': Chevron's carbon offsets are mostly junk and some may harm, research says. https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/may/24/chevron-carbon-offset-climate-crisis
[33] For example, the REDD+ Project in Peru in The Guardian (2023). 'Nowhere else to go': forest communities of Alto Mayo, Peru, at centre of offsetting row.
[34] Duffy, R., Masse, F., Smidt, E., Marijnen, E., Buscher, B., Verweijen, J., Ramutsindela, M., Simlai, T., Joanny, L., Lunstrum, E. (2019). Why we must question the militarisation of conservation. Biological Conservation. Volume 232, Pages 66-73.
[35] Robinson, A., Csordas, V. Wallin, F. (2023). Protecting People, Planet and Peace: Shaping the Future of the Security Sector. Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance DCAF
[36] O'Leary Simpson, F. & Pellegrini, L. (2023). Militarized conservation: Insecurity for some, security for others? Mongabay.

forestland, burning homes and confiscating crops or cattle of people who had cleared land there."[37] The operation mostly affected poor farmers and labourers and did not and cannot address the root causes of deforestation, which are found in "a deep disconnect between the socioeconomic models shaped by Colombia's state and elites, and the survival strategies of local, often marginalised, communities."[38] Against this backdrop, projects like USAID's "Amazon Alive" involve critical risks, despite the important contributions to conservation and sustainable livelihoods for marginalised communities. The project has a focus on security and law enforcement, strengthening the government's capacities to prevent and prosecute environmental crimes, including working with the military to tackle illegal activities causing deforestation.[39] For project implementers this requires extra care for conflict sensitivity as well as promoting due diligence, transparency and compliance with human rights and humanitarian law standards.

On the positive side, in recent years we have seen a paradigm shift in global conservation approaches, after the post-2020 UN Global Biodiversity Framework was criticised for failing to deliver on communities' rights and their agency in biodiversity governance.[40] The sector has moved equity and human-wellbeing to the centre of conservation efforts. If this is translated into practice, it can boost the peacebuilding potential of environmental protection.

The environmental and climate sector is increasingly pursuing inclusion,[41] rights-based approaches[42] and benefit-sharing as co-objectives in environmental protection interventions. Justice regarding the equitable sharing of benefits and burdens of the ecosystem usage, and participatory, accountable and transparent governance of natural resources and nature, are the goal of inclusive conservation.[43] Local and indigenous communities, women, youth or other disadvantaged groups are getting a say in decision-making and receive a fair share of benefits. Initiatives such as "indigenous REDD+"[44] and the Dedicated Grant Mechanisms for Indigenous and Local Communities of the Climate Investment Fund[45] exemplify this trend.

Research shows the co-benefits of coordinating climate action and peacebuilding, which often comes in form of better conflict management structures, resource governance and socio-economic benefits for excluded groups.[46] A meta study on protected areas illustrates that conservation and socio-economic benefits are mutually dependant: in those protected areas which recorded socio-economic benefits for the communities, positive conservation outcomes were also more likely.[47] A crucial element to achieve socio-economic benefits in protected areas was the political empowerment of communities, and importantly these benefits were more likely when sustainable resource governance was promoted instead of a strict protection rule. This is important as it shows that if people's livelihoods (dependant on natural resources) are put at the centre of protection initiatives, conservation is more successful.

Inclusion is key in conflict-affected settings, where economic, political and social exclusion, weak natural resource governance and unequal land tenure systems are driving (violent) conflict. Inclusion and justice approaches within environmental action can change structural violence and unequal power relations and thereby contribute to

[37] Moore, J. & Mpingo, J. (2023). Armed Force Isn't Saving Colombia's Forests, But a New Effort Might. USIP.
[38] ibid.
[39] USAID. Amazon Alive Factsheet.
[40] Raymond, C.M. et al (2022). Inclusive conservation and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework: Tensions and prospects. One Earth, Volume 5, Issue 3.
[41] See for example WWF or the Inclusion Initiative by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Conservation International, launched in 2022.
[42] See for example Conservation Initiative on Human Rights
[43] Raymond, C.M. et al (2022). Inclusive conservation and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework: Tensions and prospects. One Earth, Volume 5, Issue 3.
[44] FSC Indigenous Foundation (2023). https://www.fscindigenousfoundation.org/global-south-voices-in-support-of-redd/
[45] DGM Global (2020). About the Dedicated Grant Mechanism
[46] Morales- Muñoz, H., Bailey, A., Löhr, K., Caroli, G., Villarino, M.E.J., Lobo Guerrero, A.M., Bonatti, M., Siebert, S., & Castro-Nuñez, A. (2022). Co-Benefits Through Coordination of Climate Action and Peacebuilding: A System Dynamics Model. Journal of Peacebuilding & Development, Volume 17, Issue 3.
[47] Oldekop, J.A. & Holmes, G. (2015). A global assessment of the social and conservation outcomes of protected areas. Conservation Biology, Volume 30, Issue 1.

"positive peace". The following case studies provide examples of how programmes on conservation, restoration and sustainable land-use can contribute to peace outcomes.

2.1. Inclusive conservation and sustainable forest management in the DRC

The people living in the Congo Basin have seen many conflicts over the past decades. For its biodiversity and carbon reservoir, the Kahuzi-Biega National Park has been on the protection agenda for decades. This Park has protected status since the 1970s, but international organisations and government agencies had long been criticised to follow an outdated conservation paradigm not addressing the systematic exclusion of local and indigenous communities from governance.[48]

The peacebuilding NGO International Alert, funded by USAID,[49] currently implements a programme for advancing the rights of indigenous peoples in Kahuzi-Biega National Park (South Kivu) and Okapi Wildlife Reserve (Ituri). The project seeks to address the numerous conflicts related to the park around land rights, expulsion, access and usage for local communities, crop destruction and livestock theft, and illegal mining.[50] The project does that in three ways: indigenous people's governance structures and leadership capacities are strengthened through professional training and other capacity supporting activities, to foster and promote their voices with a special focus on youth and women. To address the tensions around resource management and land, Alert facilitates dialogue processes and provides grants for activities that build cooperation between authorities and divided communities for peaceful and effective resource management. The last pillar of the project focuses on improving people's living conditions regarding access to clean energy and healthcare, as well as legal and educational services, also implemented through providing grants for civil society organisations. Although it is a peacebuilding project, not having explicit environmental protection outcomes, its objective implicitly addresses the protected areas, as its core goal is the inclusion of indigenous populations in resource/park management and the managing of conflict arising from the protected areas (between communities and with park authorities), as well as contributing to sustainable living conditions. The project seeks sustainable and climate-sensitive development and conflict management solutions, and is an example illustrating the co-benefits for environmental protection of a peacebuilding project.

2.2. Sustainable agricultural and livestock systems contributing to rural peacebuilding in Colombia

The project "Implementing sustainable agricultural and livestock systems for simultaneous targeting of forest conservation for climate change mitigation (REDD+) and peace-building in Colombia" aims to achieve various peace outcomes in the areas of alternative livelihoods, local inclusion, and participation in decision-making and governance. [51] Sustainable land-use systems are a nature-based solution to mitigate climate change, address desertification and safeguard biodiversity, and in conflict settings their implementation "has potential impacts on peacebuilding because they affect socioeconomic inclusion (for example by generating alternative livelihoods and fostering community participation, inclusive governance structures for inclusion and participation in decision-making)."[52] This livelihood dimension is particularly relevant in Colombia, where rural communities have been historically excluded from market and decision-making spaces. The project has fostered dialogue spaces for inclusive governance and addressing socio-ecological conflicts, and contributed to economic opportunities for local communities. It has also contributed to social cohesion within communities. Part of its peacebuilding approach is the policy integration to create synergies with authorities on land use, land tenure and land restitution processes. In Colombia's Peace Process, with substantial focus on rural development and land restitution, marrying

[48] Rogers, D. (2022). What went wrong with conservation at Kahuzi-Biega National Park and how to transform it. Mongabay.
[49] This programme builds on USAID prior projects and a programme on Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
[50] USAID (2021). Analysis of Conflict Dynamics around Kahuzi-Biega National Park
[51] Alliance Biodiversity & CIAT (2023). Sustainable Land Uses for Low Emissions Food Systems in Conflict-Affected Settings.
[52] Bonatti M; Del Río M; Rodríguez T; Morales Muñoz H; Eufemia L; Löhr K; Vanegas M; Chará J; Sieber S; Castro-Nunez A. (2021). Key factors for effective design and implementation of sustainable land use systems to reduce deforestation and enhance peacebuilding in Colombia. Policy Brief No. 55. International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT).

peacebuilding approaches with sustainable land-use systems is more than pertinent. The synergies between peace actors and policies with REDD+ and sustainable agriculture is consequently a necessary move.

2.3. Grassland restoration to improve human security and peace in Kenya

In south-eastern Kenya, Conservation International is implementing an ecosystem-based adaptation project, aiming to generate income for pastoralists and assess how to improve peace and human security by addressing human-human and human-wildlife conflicts over shrinking fodder and water.[53] This project is interesting as it does not intend to start new restoration activities but seeks to fill a gap in an existing adaptation project by monitoring conflicts and violence that are fuelled by drought. The focus of this project was to pilot a methodology within ecosystem-based adaptation projects for monitoring and enhancing understanding of conflicts and security risks in communities. The work included close engagement with local civil society organisations, traditional authorities as well as national decision-makers. The prior ecosystem-based adaptation had been hindered by conflicts, hence a peacebuilding angle was added, to better understand how the restoration and sustainable land management can support conflict resolution and prevention of violence. From this example we can learn that active conflicts can inhibit environmental protection initiatives, and hence interventions should not just be sensitive to conflict contexts but should actively seek to include peacebuilding activities in their logic and activities.

2.4. Gender perspectives in environmental protection initiatives

One of the main challenges regarding environmental protection and gender equality is to address land tenure systems and the systematic exclusion of women from decision-making as well as their restricted access to natural resources, which in turn affects their livelihoods and food security.

Many approaches and funding schemes for environmental protection do not sufficiently address gender equality: a study presents evidence from Papua New Guinea and Uganda on how market-based solutions, like offsetting, are perpetuating the global and local systems of power imbalance and exclusion. It found that offsetting programmes "primarily benefit men, especially rich and powerful men in high income countries, whilst ignoring and minimising rights, interests, and lives of women, primarily those in low-income countries".[54] Environmental protection must place gender equality at its heart, otherwise it will perpetuate systemic and cultural violence, failing to contribute to peacebuilding.

There are many organisations that mainstream gender, or even go beyond this by adopting a transformative approach to break cycles of inequality around access and decision-making of women in environmental matters. WWF Colombia, for example, seeks to strengthen political and citizens capacities for environmental protection with a focus on gender equity in participation and decision-making. Within collective natural resource or park management, WWF also seeks to promote peacebuilding by facilitating dialogue spaces for the management of socio-environmental and territorial conflicts that arise between communities, private companies and government institutions, with a gender-responsive approach to their work.[55] Conservation International and IUCN also address gender inequalities in environmental protection. They promote gender equality by i) creating benefits for women and men alike, ii) increasing women's access to and control over resources as well as iii) supporting women's leadership in governance and decision-making.[56]

Environmental protection in conflict-affected settings often presents a danger to those depending on the environment and advocating for their rights. More research and preventive action is needed regarding the

[53] Global EbA Fund (2023). Restoring Nature & Peace Threatened by Climate Change.
[54] James, R., Lyons, K., McKay, P., Konia, R., Lionata, H., Butt, N., (2023). When solutions to the climate and biodiversity crises ignore gender, they harm society and the planet. Biological Conservation, Volume 287.
[55] WWF (2023). Comunidades
[56] Conservation International Gender Equality and IUCN Women's rights and conservation

(physical) violence against women environmental defenders in conflict-affected settings.[57] Even though more male environmental defenders than women environmental defenders are murdered each year, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in form of sexual abuse, threats, obstacles to justice for female environmental activists is widespread, as it is rooted in misogynistic norms.[58] Regarding gender equality and environmental protection an intersectional approach is necessary: more than 36% of all environmental activists murdered were indigenous.[59]

[57] Conflict and Environment Observatory (2023). IWD23 Protecting women environmental defenders in conflict.
[58] Global Witness (2022). Standing Firm - The Land and Environmental Defenders on the frontlines of the climate crisis.
[59] Ibid.

3. HOW THE MINING AND SUPPLY OF CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS MAY BENEFIT LOCAL POPULATIONS

The extraction of minerals and other critical raw materials is key to the success of the green transition. Both rare earth minerals and base metals are required for electric car batteries, wind turbines, photovoltaic solar panels and other green infrastructure. The mining of these minerals involves both large scale industrial mining (LSM) as well as many artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) operations – mining with little or no mechanisation. ASM forms part of the supply chain of multiple critical raw materials (such as cobalt,[60] which is critical in battery manufacture, and 3T metals (tin, tungsten and tantalum). However, ASM operations are often informal and unregulated (or even illegal) and affected by exploitation, human rights abuses, issues of child labour and serious safety concerns. Where mining operations (whether LSM or ASM) take place in areas affected by violent conflict or where latent tensions and grievances exist (for example, around 70% of the global proven reserves of cobalt are found in the DRC[61]), there is evidence that these issues interact negatively with conflict dynamics, or even create new drivers of conflict.[62] This chapter explores how mining of critical raw materials interacts with conflict and the ways in which interventions can, and are, contributing to peace outcomes for local populations.

Mining interacts with conflict dynamics in multiple ways. Large scale mining companies often face conflict with the communities around their operations, particularly where there are grievances over revenue/benefit sharing, impacts such as environmental pollution, destruction, and water scarcity, or (forceful) population displacement. For example, a lithium mining operation in the Potosi region of Bolivia faced shutdown in early 2023 as communities demanded more public works projects and a greater share of royalties.[63] LSM operations can also find themselves in conflict with ASM miners and their dependent communities, who have been displaced or attracted to the mining potential. In conflict-affected settings, mining operations (both LSM and ASM) may be exploited by armed groups who use the revenues from control or illegal taxation of these resources to fund the perpetuation of conflicts. One of the most well-known case studies is the Eastern DRC where multiple non-state, armed groups, as well as the Congolese Army, are involved in the control of mining areas for minerals like cassiterite (tin ore) and, to a lesser extent, coltan.[64] The role of armed groups in mining is complex in the DRC, as it far from being the only driver of conflict or the only source of revenue for armed groups.

As global attention on “conflict minerals”, particularly in the DRC, has increased, governments in the Global North have sought to break the connection between minerals and conflict, primarily through a lens of removing the ability of armed groups to use mining as a source of revenue. In the USA, the Dodd Frank Act was passed in 2010, and it included a provision that required companies to trace minerals (specifically the 3T metals and gold) and declare whether they were sourced from conflict zones. In practice this led to a *de facto* embargo on minerals from Eastern DRC.[65] Studies have asserted that such compliance-first approaches have not reduced conflicts, as armed groups have shifted to other resources,[66] and have negatively impacted the livelihoods of those reliant on mining, particularly ASM.[67] While there are serious harms in ASM to the environment, local communities, and the miners

[60] ASM supplies about 18-30 % of the cobalt globally. World Bank (2024). World Bank Urges Action for Gender Equality in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining.
[61] Levin Sources Ltd. (2021). Madini Project: Advocating for an improved enabling environment for the production, trade and export of OECD Due Diligence Guidance (DDG)-conformant minerals from eastern DRC.
[62] International Alert (2005). Conflict-sensitive business practice: Guidance for extractive industries.
[63] Reuters (2023). In Bolivia's heartland, protests rattle lithium development push.
[64] De Koning, R. (2011). Conflict Minerals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Aligning Trade and Security Interventions. SIPRI Policy Paper 27; The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS) (2013). Coltan, Congo & Conflict. Rapport No 21 | 05 |13.
[65] Stoop, N., Verpoorten, M. & Van der Windt, P. (2020). More Legislation, More Violence? The Impact of Dodd-Frank in the DRC. PLoS ONE 13(8): e0201783.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Levin Sources Ltd. (2021). Madini Project: Advocating for an improved enabling environment for the production, trade and export of OECD Due Diligence Guidance (DDG)-conformant minerals from eastern DRC.

themselves, artisanal mining is economically important for many in the Global South – it is estimated that around 150 million people worldwide are dependent on ASM.[68]

Trends have shifted away from compliance-first approaches towards responsible sourcing in conflict-affected areas. A key example of this is the due diligence guidance provided by the OECD on Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas.[69] This approach avoids embargos by focusing on understanding and mitigating the risks in supply chains of human rights abuses, and the involvement of armed groups, as well as increasing transparency. It has now been adopted into legal frameworks of the EU, US, as well as the DRC, Burundi and Rwanda.[70] This complements a wider discourse around conflict-sensitive business practice[71] that seeks to highlight how companies (particularly multinational corporations) can avoid exacerbating conflicts when operating in fragile settings. The focus is often placed on the 3T metals considered as "conflict minerals" – for example, the EU's Conflict Minerals Regulation (2021) focuses only on 3T and gold[72] – but other minerals, such as lithium, cobalt and coltan, are mined in areas affected by violent conflict or in areas of weak governance, where resource extraction can create new grievances.

These due diligence approaches often focus on how to mitigate conflict-related security and human rights risks. While this is an important step, some organisations are also examining how peace outcomes could be realised from interventions, particularly in small-scale mining. Many organisations promote the formalisation of ASM, bringing informal mining operations under legal frameworks where permits can be obtained and, in theory, conditions for miners can be improved as they access new markets and potentially access better prices.[73] Given the scale of ASM and the number of people who would be impacted by spillover effects, there are arguments for this from a poverty reduction and human rights perspective. In terms of how formalisation could contribute to peacebuilding, one theory of change focuses on the 'opportunity cost' of engaging in violent or armed groups, in that men will not join armed groups if more income opportunities are available in artisanal mining.[74] Post-conflict Sierra Leone provides an example where conflict drivers linked to frustrations over economic exclusion were mitigated as the ASM sector provided ex-combatants with a livelihood.[75] In this case, formalisation of the ASM sector is desirable as a means to continue to further reduce the financial attractiveness of re-joining armed groups.

Another theory of change linking ASM formalisation and peacebuilding focuses on strengthening governance – asserting that as the sector is formalised, more revenues flow to the local government who can respond to public demands for services.[76] Formalisation of the ASM sector also has the potential to provide mechanisms for addressing grievances and concerns that might otherwise result in violence, particularly in contexts where corruption and a lack of transparency are prevalent. This would require institutional strengthening and the creation of effective oversight mechanisms to enable this to happen. For example, the organisation Pact has been supporting the formalisation of artisanal mining in DRC and the wider Great Lakes region for several years and has integrated a peacebuilding lens to their work. Their Mine Site Validation Project in North and South Kivu project aims to reduce conflict that builds off the illegal mining and trade of 3TG through a process of Mine Site Qualification and Validation (Q&V).[77] Part of the project builds the capacity of DRC Mining Inspectors who help verify that mines are free from control by armed groups.[78] Another Pact project is the International Tin Supply

[68] F.W. Schwartz, S. Lee, T.H. Darrah (2021). A review of the scope of artisanal and small-scale mining worldwide, poverty, and the associated health impacts. GeoHealth, 5 (1)
[69] OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas.
[70] Crawford, A. & Ledwell, C. (2017). Digging Out of Conflict: Can Artisanal Mining Support Peacebuilding? International Institute for Sustainable Development.
[71] International Alert (2005). Conflict-sensitive business practice: Guidance for extractive industries.
[72] EU (2021). Conflict Minerals Regulation: The regulation explained.
[73] Pact (2022). Artisanal and small-scale cobalt mining and the importance of formalization: An explainer with Pact's Mickaël Daudin
[74] De Haan, J. (2020) Reversing Conflict Minerals: Let's Formalize Artisanal Mining for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies. IISD's SDG Knowledge Hub.
[75] De Haan, J. (2020) Mining, Formalization and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. Chapter 16 in Mining, Materials, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 2030 and Beyond. Routledge/CRC Press.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Pact (2019). Voluntary Principles on Security & Human Rights - Report for the Calendar Year 2019
[78] USAID (2019). USAID Awards a New Artisanal Mine Site Validation Project.

Chain Initiative (ITSCI) which monitors 3T mineral supply chains across the Great Lakes region to ensure that the supply chains are conflict-free.[79] The initiative seeks to resolve conflict risks in the supply chains and has had success in removing and preventing armed groups from controlling mine sites.[80]

3.1. *Madini kwa Amani na Maendeleo* (Minerals for Peace and Development) in the DRC

This project was implemented with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands between 2019 and 2024 in the Eastern Democratic of Congo. It used a consortium approach led by the peacebuilding NGO International Alert, along with Congolese and international partners.[81] This project works with artisanal 3T and gold mines in South Kivu and Ituri. The project has explicit peacebuilding goals around reducing levels of violence and improving security around mine sites, as well as contributing towards regional stability. Part of the approach involved bringing together different stakeholders around the mine sites to develop security plans, which form the basis of strategic initiatives to resolve conflicts and address issues around mine sites – an approach that is common in community security programming.[82] These strategic initiatives have involved rehabilitating roads and bridges, building water systems at mine sites and building "peace huts" which can used for customary conflict resolution. The project also works with provincial and national authorities on improving governance of artisanal mineral supply chains to reduce economic incentives that perpetuate insecurity, including recognising the transboundary nature of the trade.

To this end, a key success has been the introduction of the Blue Mine status into DRC mining regulations and the implementation of the blue status at a pilot gold mining site in South Kivu Province. In the DRC, mines are classified as green, which allows for the certified export of minerals, as red, which does not, or as yellow, which is an intermediate status during the transition from red to green sites. The existing certification process, which assesses the security situation at the site and its surroundings, as well as socio-economic risks such as child labour, depth of pits, presence of pregnant women and environmental issues, requires the deployment of a large teams of government, private sector, and international experts. It is slow and costly. The project advocated for a new status (Blue), proposed by the new Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM) of the International Conference on the Great Lakes, a regional international standard setting body for natural resource extraction. The Blue status would allow mines to export minerals while waiting for validation status, which avoids mines being de facto illegal while waiting.[83]

The project has had success in resolving conflicts around mine sites through it support to local and provincial multi-stakeholder structures. For example, a conflict occurred between inhabitants of a village in Ituri and a mining cooperative over land occupation.[84] The village chief had sold plots of land in the area mined by the cooperative to people displaced by the war. However, once gold was discovered, miners sought to evict the new inhabitants by force. The project supported mediation through multi-stakeholder structures that monitor mining activity. A memorandum of understanding was signed by the antagonists, in which they agreed that the inhabitants whose houses had been destroyed would be compensated in proportion to the value of the building materials used in their houses; the village chief had to stop selling the other remaining areas in the mining zone so that further evictions would be avoided so as not to inflame the conflict.[85]

The project has also been successful in advocating for the removal of armed groups including the FARDC (Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo) from controlling mine sites, though this has been subject to

[79] International Tin Supply Chain Initiative (ITSCI) - https://www.itsci.org/
[80] De Haan, J. (2020) Mining, Formalization and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. Chapter 16 in Mining, Materials, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 2030 and Beyond. Routledge/CRC Press.
[81] Congolese partners OGP (Observatoire Gouvernance et Paix) and Justice Plus and international partners - IPIS (International Peace Information Service) and, EurAC, OGP and Justice Plus
[82] Saferworld (2014) Community Security Handbook.
[83] IPIS (2021). "The Blue Mine" as a new status for qualifying mine sites in DRC. The result of successful advocacy by the Madini Project
[84] Improving security, social cohesion and human rights in the mineral-rich conflict regions of eastern DRC (Madini kwa Amani na Maendeleo) – Semi-annual report 2023 – *unpublished*.
[85] Ibid.

reversals as personnel changes and units are rotated to different areas.[86] Overall, the project has had impact in select mine sites, but the limited resources available prevent it from truly operating at scale.

3.2. Gender perspectives in mining

Women play a key role in many artisanal mining operations, from digging and processing to trading.[87] The economic role of mining in women's lives is considerable in places like the DRC and can make up a high percentage of household income.[88] However, women face discrimination and other challenges in how they participate in a sector that already faces issues around recognition and legitimacy.[89] Roles in mine sites can be highly gendered with functions performed by women, for example in processing minerals, often less paid as well as sometime more hazardous.[90] This is linked to cultural beliefs around whether/how women should engage in mining, as well as gender norms that dictate how women access and control resources.[91] Mining legislation can enshrine gender discrimination. For example, protective legislation relating to working while pregnant can exclude women from the mining labour force or make women vulnerable to sexual exploitation to be able to work in mine sites.[92] In addition to this, there is a link between mining (both LSM and ASM) and sexual and gender based violence (SGBV).[93] In the Eastern DRC, studies have found a strong correlation between experience of sexual violence, artisanal mining and the presence of armed groups.[94] This is attributed to the strategic use of sexual violence by armed groups to control or access mineral resources, as well as to the hyper-masculine culture around mining itself.[95]

In countering these issues, the interventions identified in this study focus on combining approaches to strengthening economic and human/physical security. For example, Pact's Mine Site Validation programme seeks to address SGBV through creation of women's cooperatives as well as sensitising communities on SGBV.[96] In another example from the DRC, the Women of Peace project supported an association of female artisanal miners in Ituri province to set up community-based Peace Hubs.[97] These hubs provided voluntary mediation services to communities as well as to customary authorities, mining cooperatives and mine site operators, to address conflicts in the community. This project also provided support services to survivors to enable access to healthcare and legal redress. Initiatives to support empowerment through forming women's networks and associations can challenge the male dominance of the sector – though there is a risk that they just support elite women who can access them.[98]

[86] Ibid.
[87] IMPACT. Women in Artisanal & Small-Scale Mining in Central and East Africa.
[88] IMPACT (2017). Women in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining in Democratic Republic of Congo - Recommendations to address challenges and increase opportunities for empowerment.
[89] Buss, D. & Rutherford, B. (2020) Gendering women's livelihoods in artisanal and small-scale mining: an introduction, Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue canadienne des études africaines, 54:1, 1-16, DOI: 10.1080/00083968.2019.1691028
[90] IMPACT (2017). Women in Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining in Democratic Republic of Congo - Recommendations to address challenges and increase opportunities for empowerment.
[91] Atim, L., Mwangoka, M., Martins, L. & Rickard, S. (2020). Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in the Mining Sector in Africa. Evidence and reflections from the DRC, South Africa, Tanzania & Uganda. Giz.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Rustad, S. & Østby, G. & Nordås, R. (2016). Artisanal mining, conflict, and sexual violence in Eastern DRC. The Extractive Industries and Society.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Pact (2019). Voluntary Principles on Security & Human Rights - Report for the Calendar Year 2019
[97] IMPACT (2023). How Peace Hubs can Improve Women's Security in Mining Communities
[98] Atim, L., Mwangoka, M., Martins, L. & Rickard, S. (2020). Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in the Mining Sector in Africa. Evidence and reflections from the DRC, South Africa, Tanzania & Uganda. Giz.

CONCLUSION AND LESSONS LEARNED

This paper explored where and how different actors and organisations are designing interventions that integrate a peacebuilding lens to supporting the green transition and environmental protection. Much analysis exists on how interventions around environmental protection, renewable energy projects or the mining of critical minerals can exacerbate existing conflicts and grievances, for example over land, or create new conflicts, particularly with local communities. In looking at how these interventions could create peace outcomes, there is a need to build a wider evidence base. However, from the case studies presented it is possible to draw some commonalities in how actors are approaching this challenge.

An initial insight is that interventions are often seeking to address conflicts arising from grievances related to exclusion or inequality. This applies to both exclusion from decision-making, for example around how energy projects or protected areas are managed, and economic exclusion, for example pushing individuals to engage in criminal activity. Responding to this, interventions should seek to promote greater participation in decision-making and economic life, for example through supporting cooperatives in the ASM sector or strengthening transparency to improve working conditions. This approach requires building theories of change to explain the relationship between conflict dynamics and changing peoples' economic or developmental circumstances.

Governance and how people can address concerns or grievances with those in power in a peaceful way is another emphasis of cases reviewed. We witness the move towards more rights-based, inclusive and local participation in natural resource and land governance in the environmental protection sector. This also includes ensuring peoples' security, including in the removal of armed groups from mining areas, but it is evident that securitised approaches can be detrimental to peace if they are used to exclude people from a resource, such as a protected area.

All these sectors have highly gendered dimensions to how men and women engage with and work within them, and how they are differently impacted by green transition interventions. Efforts to address this focus on how gender norms perpetuate exclusion, identify interventions to address barriers to participation and decision-making, and increase economic and political empowerment. However, a gap may still exist with regard to integrating a justice lens, particularly where there is gendered discrimination related to land and natural resource rights.

In this study we identified three ways of integrating peacebuilding approaches in the green transition and environmental protection programmes. Firstly, we see the use of a **do no harm / "conflict sensitivity"** approach, which is risk-oriented involving analysis and mitigation of risks associated with the project. Secondly, we have seen the opportunity for a **conflict sensitivity "plus"** approach. This is where a programme's main objective is focused on environmental protection or green energy, or sustainable raw materials extraction, but the programming approach recognises the conflict context and goes beyond mitigating conflict risks by integrating a peacebuilding perspective and corresponding activities into the initiative. For example, this may involve integrating dialogue facilitation for conflict management among the stakeholders. The case study on grassland restoration in Kenya outlined in chapter two illustrates such as approach. Finally, some projects and programmes use a **peace-promoting approach.** This approach puts "peace" as a main objective (or one of the main objectives) in a project that seeks to address conflict drivers and dynamics in and around the green transition or environment protection. In practice, this means that interventions are trying to address the power imbalances and relationships between conflict parties and structural causes of conflict and drivers – which often overlap and interlink with environmental factors or natural resource management governance.

The cases included in this paper present the EU with examples that can inspire what engagement with a peace-promoting green transition engagement agenda could look like. The EU has the power to further explore, support and finance a "conflict sensitivity plus" approach and, where possible, we invite the EU to shift their paradigm to a peace-promoting approach which could truly integrate environmental protection and the green transition with peacebuilding objectives.