



THE GREEN TRANSITION AND PEACE

Good Practices and Opportunities for Sustainable Outcomes

Meeting Report

Civil Society Dialogue Network

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In the context of the EU's efforts to pursue and promote a green transition and to support climate adaptation as part of its external action and international partnerships, the overall aim of the meeting was to gather input and recommendations on how the EU may ensure that these efforts are conflict-sensitive and that they actively contribute to peace.

The meeting brought together 37 participants – 25 civil society experts and 12 officials from the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Commission (EC) and the European Defence Agency (EDA). The discussions were held under the Chatham House Rule. There was no attempt to reach a consensus during the meeting or through this report, which presents the key points and recommendations put forward by the civil society participants.

Civil Society Dialogue Network

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a mechanism for dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers on issues related to peace and conflict. It is co-financed by the European Union (Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe). It is managed by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), a civil society network, in cooperation with the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The fifth phase of the CSDN will last from 2023 to 2026. For more information, please visit the [EPLO website](#).



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1. Connect climate adaptation & environmental protection with peacebuilding

Climate adaptation and environmental protection may serve as entry points for peacebuilding, particularly for dialogue and mediation, in different ways. When other avenues for dialogue are limited, including due to constraints from state actors, climate adaptation and environmental protection efforts can make it easier for stakeholders to hold discussions and reach broader agreements. Indeed, they are usually not considered as sensitive or threatening as conflict resolution efforts, including by local or national authorities, and as a result they provide spaces for dialogue that are safer than those relating explicitly to peace and conflict. For example, opportunities relating to renewable energy and critical raw materials (CRMs) can provide concrete entry points for peace interventions (see sections 4 and 5); climate adaptation and natural resource management projects can provide space to work on peace and resilience with communities in situations of conflict;¹ and connecting investments in nature conservation and restoration projects with additional goals such as job creation, youth involvement, women's empowerment, and natural resource management, can help to generate buy-in from local communities and can foster cooperation by bringing together actors from different sectors.²

Pursuing climate finance and peace in fragile and conflict-affected contexts

The EU should **support and elevate local initiatives** addressing the connections between climate adaptation, environmental protection and peacebuilding in fragile and conflict-affected contexts (FCACs), and it should **increase its financial support** to civil society organisations working on these connections in these contexts.³ Calls for proposals are not often designed with peacebuilding CSOs in mind, making it difficult for them to apply in highly-competitive funding environments. Calls for proposals should more often embrace a cross-sectoral approach, they should recognise that peace and dialogue require time, and as a result they should put more emphasis on process and on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) than short-term outcomes. As climate adaptation efforts are comparatively better-funded than climate mitigation and integrated actions, the EU should also increase its investments in the latter.

Climate finance provides entry points to bridge and respond to the common challenges faced by peacebuilders and climate adaptation actors. To pursue these opportunities, climate finance needs to be accessible and inclusive to local civil society in FCACs, conflict-sensitive by design, flexible to changing contexts, adapted to different levels of work, and extend far beyond 18-month thresholds (see also section 6).⁴ It should be provided to FCACs to a greater extent, as donors often prioritise less fragile countries, where they see fewer risks for the

¹ (a) The European Institute of Peace (EIP), in partnership with adelphi, is carrying out the project "[Environmental Pathways for Reconciliation in Yemen](#)" (EPfR), which builds on an inclusive and locally led approach to open up environmental opportunities for peacemaking by engaging the agency of Yemenis from the bottom up. [EIP's recently published report](#), which presents the findings of consultations with over 2,400 Yemenis, provides insights on environmental elements and entry points to peace in Yemen that the EPfR project seeks to identify. (b) Conciliation Resources helped facilitate a [joint environmental cooperation platform for dialogue in South Asia](#), bringing together technical experts on pollution reduction and resource management and business leaders. This dialogue helped to generate cross-sectoral ideas, for example pollution reduction with agricultural techniques or water management. (c) International Alert '[The impact of climate change on the dynamics of conflicts in the transboundary river basins of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan](#)', January 2022. (d) adelphi co-organised [two pilot projects in Nepal and Sudan](#) with the EU and the UN which illustrate how to use natural resource management as an entry point for peace. In Nepal, natural resource management was used to bring together people from different communities, focusing in particular on the engagement of the most marginalised groups. The project studied the impact of this joint process on the prevention of further conflict. In Sudan, a consultative process was carried out, including conflict and stakeholder mapping, to determine which organisations to include in a similar process. (e) PAX examines how nature-positive approaches can minimize and mitigate the harmful impacts of war on the environment, and how it can be an instrument for conflict prevention, based on a number of case studies from PAX's field work in Colombia, DRC, and Kenya (PAX '[UNEP Perspectives – Nature in Action for Peace](#)', February 2024). This publication contains a list of key lessons to successfully implement nature-based solutions (NbS) in FCACs.

² Wetlands International is working on a call to action called '[EU Wetland Partnerships Initiative](#)' which will be demand-driven by governments and tailor-made to the objectives and needs of each country. For instance, Wetlands International works on an EU-Wetland Partnership for a secure Sahel, with strong links to conflict sensitivity, mediation and peacebuilding. In the project, the aim is to channel EU investment towards large scale wetland conservation and restoration projects and connect them to other goals, including peacebuilding.

³ "Countries affected by both climate change and conflict receive, on average, only one third of the amount of climate financing on a per capita basis collected by countries that suffer from climate change but are free of conflict." (International Crisis Group '[Giving Countries in Conflict Their Fair Share of Climate Finance](#)', 2022)

⁴ Mercy Corps '[Overcoming the Fragility Barrier. Policy Solutions for Unlocking Climate Finance in Fragile States](#)', October 2023.

implementation of large-scale green transition infrastructure projects – and this need for the prioritisation of FCACs also applies to EU investments through its Global Gateway.

Climate finance is often approached and provided at the state level, which presents limitations to achieving a sustainable impact in FCACs.⁵ For example, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) do not take into account areas outside government control or that are not recognised internationally. Public and grant-based finance can play an important role for climate action, e.g. through sub-regional and sub-state level NDCs. When it comes to green energy projects, large international institutions struggle with fast decision-making and innovative financing while local renewable energy developers in FCACs can respond more swiftly to unmet demands. These actors often have high levels of technical capacity and expertise, however access to sustainable finance and wider capacity building can still be challenging for them.⁶ The EU should make sure to respond to these challenges moving forward, including at COP29 where important negotiations on new climate finance goals will take place.

Enabling cross-sectoral and multi-level cooperation

Climate adaptation, environmental protection, and peacebuilding actions and ways of working should be **integrated in interventions**. Different levels of engagement – local, regional, national, transboundary and international – entail different entry points for integrated interventions, and this must be analysed and pursued on a case-by-case basis. Peacebuilding tools and ways of working should be applied to climate and environmental protection projects to maximise their positive impact, including with regard to rooting interventions in local needs and taking into account the perspectives of local communities.⁷ Adopting a true cross-sectoral approach requires cooperating and making use of the expertise and creativity of these actors from the start of activities – none of the components can be added as a ‘bonus’ on top of already-designed interventions.

The EU may **foster cross-sectoral cooperation** both within its institutions and in its partnerships with governments, international organisations and civil society. This requires senior-level prioritisation and the mobilisation of all of the EU’s economic, diplomatic and political levers. As things stand, a significant number of EU departments work on the implementation of the European Green Deal, however inter-institutional communication and cooperation remains insufficient. In particular, coordination among climate experts, environmental experts, and staff working on peace and security and the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus in the European External Action Service (EEAS); the European Commission (EC)’s FPI, DG INTPA, DG ECHO, DG CLIMA, DG ENV, DG TRADE and DG GROW; and in EU delegations, should be enhanced in order to pursue a concerted whole-of-EU approach.

Analysing and addressing gendered power relations

To seize on opportunities for peace in the green transition, **the EU should approach gender equality and gender itself holistically**. The inclusion of diverse women in green transition decision-making and implementation should be seen as an end in itself. In addition to looking at the specific needs and priorities of ‘women, children and vulnerable groups’, and at interpersonal relations, adopting a holistic approach to gender means analysing gendered power relations and adopting a transformational approach to them. This requires identifying harmful gender norms; assessing how hegemonic masculinity relates to extractive industries, energy systems, militarisation, and certain consumption practices; and analysing how gender interplays with other categories of social power such as race, class, age and (dis)ability. Gendered power relations and hierarchies

⁵ Oxfam published a briefing note around COP28 showing that the majority of international climate finance to FCACs is authorised in loans, 10% is non-concessional loans: Oxfam [‘Forgotten frontlines: looking at the climate finance going to fragile and conflict affected states in 2019-20’](#), December 2023.

⁶ Energy Peace Partners developed an instrument to overcome the climate finance gap, called the [Peace Renewable Energy Credit](#). It looks at the connection between renewable energy worldwide and the connectivity to peace and conflict. The instrument connects private sector companies with net zero and climate justice commitments to renewable energy projects in fragile and conflict affected states.

⁷ PAX has partnered with UNEP and several NGOs to establish a digital catalogue of nature-based solutions (NbS) for peace to learn from past experiences worldwide and inspire decision-makers and programme managers when designing climate and environmental security interventions. The catalogue can be used as a good practice for conflict-sensitive or peace-positive environmental and climate initiatives in FCACs. The list of NbS projects also includes those related to the green transition. The catalogue is expected to be published online in June 2024.

are structural and pervasive, including in international relations and in humanity's relationship with nature and the planet.

Engaging in areas that are outside of state control

The EU can use high-level climate dialogues such as National Dialogues for bilateral holistic exchanges with partner countries and their civil societies. However, many areas in which climate adaptation and environmental protection are pressing priorities are not under state control and governed by non-state armed actors. The EU should develop further its strategies for responding to this challenge and ensuring that climate finance reaches communities in situations of disputed governance, for example by supporting the engagement of international NGOs with non-state actors and community structures in such areas.⁸

The green transition and militarisation

The EU [Joint Communication on the Climate-Security Nexus](#) (JC, 2023) includes some contradictions with regard to militarisation. The rise of authoritarianism, militarisation and violent conflict represent obstacles for the green transition. The deployment of military personnel in FCACs, including for peacekeeping missions, can involve high levels of waste production and energy consumption— energy that is often much needed by populations. EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions should seek to contribute to the development of local electrification and avoid making access to energy more difficult for local actors.⁹ In its approach to and use of the military, the EU should ensure that it does not engage in practices that are inconsistent with its agenda to address climate change and protect the environment.

⁸ One such initiative would be the [Salween Peace Park Program](#).

⁹ See for example, with regard to UN peacekeeping: The Powering Peace Initiative and Stimson Center '[Renewable Energy and the United Nations: A Green Spark for Peace in South Sudan](#)', February 2023. (b) The Powering Peace Initiative, Energy Peace Partners and Stimson Center '[Powering ahead: The United Nations and Somalia's Renewable Energy Opportunity](#)', March 2022

2. Adopt a cross-sectoral approach to conflict sensitivity, analysis and data

The combination of climate data and conflict analysis presents opportunities to identify human security risks and to devise the types of integrated actions outlined in the previous section.

Conflict sensitivity and conflict analysis

The JC gave important momentum to the objective of combining conflict analysis and climate risk assessments. The EU should **ensure that its climate actions and climate finance are conflict-sensitive**, so as to ensure that they do no harm and to maximise their positive contributions to peace and their sustainability.¹⁰ For this, they should be based on robust gender-responsive conflict analysis that involves participatory gender and climate analysis. Beyond applying conflict sensitivity to individual actions, the EU should become an intrinsically conflict-sensitive actor through the systemic prioritisation and embedding of conflict analysis processes for all of its engagements – including with regard to its trade policies and to the large infrastructure programmes that the EU is investing in through the Global Gateway.¹¹ This will contribute to the coherence of its policies, help develop cross-sectoral cooperation, and improve how the EU is perceived externally.

Conflict analysis should not be limited to the study of conflict dynamics: it should identify opportunities and existing initiatives to build peace, and it should provide recommendations on how to pursue and support them. The objective of the analysis, how it will be translated into action, and how the implementation of its recommendations will be monitored, need to be part of its design and planning from the start. In this light, carrying out a climate-sensitive conflict analysis should involve preparing operational guidelines for conflict-sensitive climate adaptation. Peacebuilding organisations have been working on the interlinkages between peacebuilding, climate adaptation and environmental protection for years and have expertise that can be helpful to the EU in its efforts to analyse contexts and to embed recommendations into its analyses.

Climate change is dynamic, and so is the evolution of conflict. For this reason, conflict analysis needs to be updated continuously throughout the project cycle. In addition, it should address the multiple levels that may be relevant to understanding the context, and the intervention's impact on it (including at the local, national, transboundary and regional levels). There is often an interplay between conflict drivers at different levels, and elites at the regional, national and local levels may have an interest in the continuation of conflict, which means that the EU should ensure that its green transition partnerships do not enable the entrenchment of problematic power hierarchies. Similarly, the impact of EU military operations should be explored in its conflict analysis. Overall, although it may seem challenging to combine numerous indicators and analysis frameworks relating to peace, conflict, the environment, climate change and gender equality, there exists an increasing number of frameworks that illustrate how to do so.¹²

It is important to recognise that pursuing the green transition will involve trade-offs – not everyone benefits and will benefit from the transformations that come with it. The EU should ensure that its conflict analyses identify (possible) trade-offs and include recommendations to prevent and mitigate negative outcomes for populations, particularly marginalised groups and indigenous peoples.

¹⁰ It is important to understand that climate adaptation efforts entail different risks at different stages of the peace and conflict cycle. To address this, PAX uses a 'conflict and life cycle' scheme for analysis.

¹¹ To overcome power dynamics in its project in Central Asia, International Alert has resorted to changing intermediaries and granting smaller grants or lump sums through different alleys of distribution to try to circumvent burdensome accreditation and reporting processes. International Alert asked farmers from different sides of the border to take part in a working group to talk about best practices. A change of intermediaries, smaller grants and fast track-access can be helpful. (International Alert '[Addressing the linkages between climate, conflict and natural resource management. Reflections from practice in Kenya and Central Asia](#)', March 2024)

¹² (a) For example, the [Peace Impact Framework](#) looks at lived realities of the peoples and aligns the measures that are comparable across states. This framework is compatible with the existing indicators of the European Commission. (b) Mercy Corps '[Adapting in Adversity](#)', November 2023.

Fostering the development and circulation of knowledge

The EU should support efforts **to develop and to share knowledge** about ways to build peace through climate adaptation, environmental protection and green transition initiatives, particularly in FCACs. There is already a degree of coordination between some international actors, particularly with regard to environmental and climate data collection and sharing, and in parallel, there is a wealth of existing local knowledge and initiatives, but these do not feed sufficiently into track I and track II conflict resolution efforts. Instead of funding new initiatives, the EU can support and use to a greater extent the knowledge and data sets of local partners, which in itself will help the EU to develop its toolkits and frameworks for integrated analysis. The EU needs to **establish open channels of communication with CSOs** to share insights and lessons learned from their activities. The EU should also ensure that the knowledge produced by its local partners and by its own services is not only as available as possible to its local partners and to populations, but also **useful** to them for their own activities and initiatives.¹³

The Climate and Environment Security Data and Analysis Hub referred to in the JC could be a useful entry point for such cooperation if civil society is included in its set up and implementation. **The EU should involve CSOs with relevant expertise and information in the operation of the hub** to contribute relevant data on environmental degradation, peace/conflict and climate security risks, and methodologies for data collection and analysis. This will help the EU to upscale promising existing initiatives and to provide targeted funding. Continuing to organise events similar to the Brussels Climate and Security Dialogue that took place in November 2023, involving peacebuilding, climate adaptation and environmental protection organisations based in Brussels (and elsewhere), could be a useful step – INGOs can play a helpful connecting role.¹⁴ The EU could also support the creation of, or strengthen, knowledge networks dedicated to the sharing of information and best practices for building peace through climate adaptation and environmental protection, and support further collaborative research between universities, research centres, and practitioners.¹⁵

Participatory analysis methods, public consultations and working with indigenous people

The interlinkages between climate change, climate actions the environment and peace and conflict dynamics are different across contexts. **Participatory, community-based approaches are essential in conflict analysis processes** to identify hazards and assess risks and vulnerabilities; to identify opportunities and initiatives for peace and capacities for resilience; to make early warning systems responsive; and to facilitate early action (otherwise, the translation of data into concrete recommendations for action is often challenging). Joint conflict analysis processes that allow for the development of shared understandings are particularly essential due to the different types of expertise and ways of working that should be involved in designing and implementing conflict-sensitive green transition efforts. Vulnerabilities and sources of resilience can rest on intersectional layers of identity that are specific to individual contexts, which means that nuanced understandings of local realities are necessary to ensure conflict sensitivity.¹⁶

Officials from across the EU institutions, diverse population groups, civil society experts from different fields of activity, national and local government representatives, and private sector actors should be brought together in

¹³ This was referred to as 'democratising knowledge and information'.

¹⁴ (a) Initiatives such as radio programmes can raise awareness around climate security and risks and are gaining momentum in conflict-affected communities. They not only increase the local knowledge but also convene a space to gather, discuss, and disseminate local knowledge and capacity building within the same community. (b) PAX, in cooperation with partner NGOs, is currently compiling an inventory of best and worst practices with regard to environmental projects that included peacebuilding or peace objectives. (c) The [Community of Practice on Environment, Climate, Conflict and Peace](#) (ECCP) is an example of an existing structure bringing together organisations in a multi-disciplinary way. Given the relevance of the community's discussions to the JC, the EU could connect with the platform for exchanges.

¹⁵ See also efforts to combine climate data and conflict analysis through the use of frameworks such as the [Human-Environmental-Climatic Security \(HECS\)](#) framework, which aims at integrating 'critiques of traditional security frameworks while offering a systematised method of process tracing'.

¹⁶ (a) Humanity & Inclusion works with community-based participatory exercises at the village level to assess the risk of natural hazards and violence (HI '[Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation](#)'). It is important not to conflate 'risk' with 'hazard' and to emphasise that it is precisely the notion of risk that can uncover underlying power dynamic and inequalities. (b) Conciliation Resources has piloted a participatory 'Gender, climate and conflict analysis' tool based on experiences in the Philippines, Uganda and Pakistan. (Conciliation Resources '[Gender, cultural identity, conflict and climate change](#)', September 2023).

public consultations to provide input and recommendations for holistic, sustainable interventions – including to ensure that actions involve and benefit marginalised groups in particular. The lack of transparency of some consultation processes (and of choices of consultants to carry them out) is a missed opportunity for the EU and local civil society. EU officials should themselves be involved in public consultations accessible to civil society before, during and after the implementation of green transition projects, as this can serve to avoid a lot of back and forth between consultants, local CSOs and Brussels-based EU officials. Public consultations and engagement with civil society should be meaningful, which can be facilitated by mechanisms to integrate and monitor the implementation of recommendations.¹⁷ Building relationships with civil society actors can also help to ensure continued consultation and cooperation.

Extracting resources on indigenous lands and seizing some of their land can often lead to conflict. EU green transition efforts should always respect the rights of indigenous people, including when considering the use of their land for the deployment of green transition infrastructure. The EU should identify whether there are indigenous people in the location of a proposed project; hold consultations with them to develop inclusive strategies and priorities for the use of their land and the resources on it; and encourage partner governments and private actors to consult and cooperate with them. In addition to being necessary to honour EU values and commitments, paying particular attention to this and in general to the needs of local communities in conflict analysis processes is not only cost-effective but also decreases the risks of maladaptation.¹⁸

Mobilising multiple types of data

Diverse tools may need to be used to collect and analyse data as part of climate-sensitive conflict analysis processes, as different tools may be adapted to different contexts, levels of analysis, conflict stages, and types of data – there is no one-size-fits-all. Different types of data should inform climate-sensitive conflict analysis: the types of quantitative indicators that are referred to in the JC would not be suited to capture all of the possible relevant information.¹⁹ Climate change vulnerabilities and resilience capacities are often highly segregated between and within ethnic communities, based on inequalities and drivers of marginalisation that may also contribute to conflict. Effective data collection should therefore consider qualitative methodologies that can help capture the roles of different intersecting identities and embrace a plurality of knowledges²⁰ – without romanticising or generalising local perspectives.

The collection of big data, such as satellite data, earth observation, and analysis of social media, has massively improved in scope and nuance in recent years. Such data provides a 'big picture' but faces a number of limitations (e.g. the renewable energy space tends to lack indicators for social impact, which has led organisations to merge SDG indicators with Positive-Peace indicators for data collection in renewable energy projects); it needs to be triangulated and combined with other types of data, including data gathered through participatory processes, as part of climate-sensitive conflict analysis and climate vulnerability assessments.²¹

¹⁷ (a) Conciliation Resources published a resource which "guides learning and action within a deep respect for community worldviews in order to ensure successful outcomes based on appropriateness and relevance within each context." (Conciliation Resources '[Peacebuilding Approaches to Climate Change in Fijian Communities](#)', July 2022). (b) Mercy Corps brought together activists and community leaders in Iraq to engage with government representatives on mitigating community tensions between environmental and climate change issues related to air and water pollution. Mercy Corps created a mobile app to report environmental concerns and violations to the environmental policy. This opened up dialogue, advocacy and information sharing. The app was piloted and will continue to run.

¹⁸ See Wetlands International '[Briefing on lithium mining in the Andes of South America: No to water mega-mining](#)', August 2023.

¹⁹ For example, the information shared in a [research project carried out by the University of Ghent](#) that involves discussions with people in South Kivu (DRC) who have been affected by flooding, could not have been captured through the indicators in the JC.

²⁰ This includes body, community and landscape mapping.

²¹ (a) The International Crisis Group (ICG) has been working on a blended methodology combining field data such as political dynamics with big data. ICG will launch the [Environmental Early Action and Risk Tracking Hub](#) (EEARTH) for South Sudan in 2024. EEARTH brings together different methodologies to inform an understanding of climate security risks more holistically. (b) The Oxfam WASH '[Community perception tracker](#)' (CPT) helps to keep track of communities' perceptions in a qualitative and quantitative way. (c) The PAX '[Flash Environmental Assessment Tool \(FEAT\)](#)' was developed for use in natural disasters and chemical incidents. It helps to map environmental risks and conflict. PAX developed a methodology using open-source investigation and satellite analysis to better identify and monitor conflict-linked damages to the environment and people depending on it. PAX has also been [leveraging emerging technologies](#) to produce reports on environmental and health risks in a number of conflict settings, including in Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Gaza and South Sudan.

This is particularly helpful to capture and to respond to compound risks (e.g. the multiple climate and conflict shocks faced by transhumance communities).

Standardising data is important to allow diverse actors to work together across sectors (and sometimes across multiple contexts), however integrated analysis should include case-based analysis, and it should involve a degree of flexibility to adapt data sets and the analysis to the specific realities of individual contexts.²²

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

The EU has bolstered its focus on conflict sensitivity and analysis in its interventions, yet it has not made similar progress in monitoring and evaluating their impact on the environment, climate change, and peace. In line with previous points, the EU should combine qualitative assessments of community perceptions of their human security with quantitative indicators. Monitoring how EU green transition and climate actions impact peace and conflict dynamics, including diverse drivers of marginalisation and inequalities, requires flexible reporting.²³

The roles of EU delegations

EU delegations play an important role in facilitating partnerships with national and local actors, and in developing and managing knowledge. They are uniquely placed to pass on the knowledge gathered from, and produced by, local CSOs, which is why they should map and understand civil society perspectives on climate adaptation, environmental protection and peacebuilding, including through meaningful exchanges and consultations. This requires time and resources, but it is worth it and helps build EU delegations' own capacities for early action.²⁴

²² adelphi, EIP, the Berghof Foundation, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) and Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) carry out a joint initiative called [The Weathering Risk Peace Pillar](#). In Nigeria, the project notably documents and analyses where natural resource management was a successful entry point for peace. Scaling up and replicating the data resulting from this project could be useful for other contexts as well.

²³ (a) Oxfam is working on developing a global multi-country programme on the interactions between climate change, conflict and fragility in a consortium. The project includes MEL from the beginning and will test several impact evaluation methodologies to compare them. (b) In Somalia, the Berghof Foundation reports positive practices with MEL at the local level. A good practice that stood out in particular was the development of community-level action plans, providing a concrete outcome of dialogue sessions. In unstable environments, outcome harvesting, i.e. a qualitative, narrative assessment looking at changes in the broader context and linking them to the work in the project, has proven to be helpful.

²⁴ For example, in the Central Africa Republic (CAR), some of the national parks on which certain communities rely for their livelihoods were increasingly designated as conservation reserves. Framing conservation as a security matter may lead conservation efforts to become a driver of conflict, with risks of violence between security forces protecting reserves and local communities. The EU Delegation in CAR recognised this, and it used the leverage of EU funding to CAR national parks to exert pressure on the park managers and to get them to adopt an approach informed by community consultations.

3. Promote and strengthen inclusive governance for a just transition

There are multiple ways in which the EU may **deepen its support to inclusive, responsive and participatory governance**, including of land, natural resources and the environment, as part of its engagements with partner countries for the green transition. Inclusive and participatory governance should be rooted in ensuring that diverse population groups, including diverse women, young people and marginalised groups, have access to relevant information and knowledge, and have a robust understanding of decision-making processes and of their rights. To identify possible reforms, it is also helpful to analyse power relations in the context and how they relate to structures of formal and informal governance.

Conflict is often connected to poor governance, which may include unaccountable and unresponsive institutions, inequitable access to services and resources, a lack of inclusive participation in decision-making processes, and shrinking civic spaces. The interplay between climate change and conflict, and the challenges and opportunities that may arise out of the green transition, point to the necessity of strengthening good governance programming, with a focus on strengthening climate resilience, to respond to these challenges.²⁵

Climate change and environmental degradation are accelerating competition over shared natural resources, which support a range of livelihood activities and often hold a strong cultural significance for communities and their identities. Thus, competition can often be existential and lead to the use of violence. Real or perceived inequalities around access to and control over diverse resources – agricultural lands, waterpoints, rangelands, forests, mineral resources and other extracted materials – may exacerbate existing tensions within and between communities.

In response, natural resource management (NRM) initiatives and structures, including at the community level, help manage competition and reduce conflict. Through its programming, the EU should increase its support to sustainable NRM at different levels, including by (a) creating or capitalising on opportunities for intercommunal cooperation around natural resources, (b) developing capacities and connections between formal and non-formal institutions to facilitate and enforce intercommunal agreements around sustainable NRM, and (c) facilitating market linkages for natural resource products and improved technologies that can sustainably enhance resource-dependent livelihoods.²⁶ The diversification of livelihoods and pursuing climate-smart livelihoods can also reduce the intensity of competition over natural resources, and they can make individuals and communities more resilient to long-term climate change and immediate climate shocks and stresses.²⁷

²⁵ (a) Mercy Corps' Livestock Market Systems programme in Northern Kenya implemented [Ward Development Planning](#) (WDP) across five counties, all severely affected by drought. The WDP model is a participatory planning and development process that seeks to strengthen community capacities to assess their own needs, and to prioritise, plan, and implement their projects in conjunction with the local government. Mercy Corps' research indicates that the WDP model strengthened local capacity to de-escalate disputes over access to water resources, even in the midst of increased pressure on these resources during the drought. (b) Mercy Corps' ACTIVATE programme in [Iraq](#) brought together activists and community leaders to collectively engage government representatives to implement policies that mitigate community tensions related to environmental and climate change issues, including water pollution, air pollution, and heat waves. Under this project, community members developed and launched the Environment Platform (EnvP), a mobile application being used by Iraqi citizens to report environmental concerns and violations and facilitate advocacy and information sharing with local authorities and the Environmental Police.

²⁶ (a) Mercy Corps' EKISIL, in the Karamoja sub-region of Uganda, worked closely with national and local officials, civil society stakeholders and communities to implement a mutually-reinforcing portfolio of strategies to address conflict risks around access to water and grazing land critical to pastoral communities along the Kenya-Uganda border. These strategies included the development of cross-border natural resource sharing agreements, the coordination and funding of natural resource management strategies, and strengthening the governance capacity of local institutions. Mercy Corps collects community and structural level insights and builds a multisector linkage to break organisational silos. (b) In [Ethiopia](#), Mercy Corps worked to revitalise centuries-old Rangeland Councils that manage approximately four million hectares of critical land resources for pastoralists. Resource mapping, environmental restoration activities, enhanced coordination, and the establishment of dry seasons grazing reserves were undertaken by the councils. Women's participation in complementary natural resource management committees and the growth of Village-level Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) groups, whose members are mostly women, played a significant role in increasing women's participation in decision-making in their households. Building on this, Mercy Corps supported the Ministry of Peace to develop a pastoral development policy.

²⁷ (a) Mercy Corps' programming fosters opportunities for climate-smart livelihoods and encourages sustainable and productive economic growth. The [Ben-ni-Baara programme](#) in Mali supported livelihood diversification interventions that aimed at addressing the underlying drivers of land- and resource-based conflict. These included training for pastoralists and agropastoralists on climate-resilient herding and farming practices, providing agricultural cooperatives with seeds to improve animal fodder production, and supporting access to finance for entrepreneurship activities. (b) In North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mercy Corps implemented an integrated, resilience-building

Other community-level activities that may be pursued include visualisation and simulations for NRM and climate security decision-making practice, participatory budgeting and planning, environmental civic service, and the development of relevant education programmes.²⁸

Land governance is mostly driven at the capital level, not at the local level. However, knowledge of and experience with informal, traditional and customary governance systems in rural areas (e.g. local agricultural codes) often rests with local communities and authorities but is crucial for conflict resolution.²⁹ The EU should expand its support to information exchanges and dialogues between local actors and national authorities to ensure that national, formal land governance, and the use of land for green transition projects, do not contribute to conflict and instead foster peace. Mapping out existing local conflict-management techniques, including land rotation and nature-based solutions, and learning from previous initiatives, may help to respond to land ownership tensions and to reform governance structures to make them more inclusive. The EU may also encourage sustainable land use systems that integrate climate mitigation and peacebuilding objectives, such as cocoa agroforestry.

Borderlands

Borderlands present specific challenges and opportunities with regard to how green transition efforts and climate adaptation may interplay with peace and conflict dynamics. The EU should encourage partner governments to reach pragmatic agreements allowing communities across national borders to cross them as part of land rotation systems, to access the pasture their livelihoods may depend on, and to cooperate, exchange and engage in joint natural resource management with other communities. Involving local stakeholders in processes to negotiate such agreements is helpful to adequately address their needs and to build on cross-border governance structures that may exist at the local level.³⁰ Effective negotiation of cross-border transhumance and the inclusive protection of natural resources along transhumance routes can foster adaptation to climate shocks and create livelihood opportunities, enhancing governance and conflict prevention.³¹

and conflict-transformative program focusing on improving access to land and improved market functioning through peace-positive value chain development as a holistic strategy for building peace and improving food security. Climate change adaptation support, in the form of climate-smart agricultural improvements, was included as a tool to further reduce land conflict issues by promoting the sustainability and productivity of available land.

²⁸ For example, Spong's [BENKADI Project](#) in West Africa works on the effectiveness of public policies for adapting to climate change and mitigating its effects in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali. The project involves a focus on greater citizen participation, including that of young people, women and people with disabilities.

²⁹ Humanity & Inclusion (HI) is working on the conflict between herders and farmers in North [Togo](#).

³⁰ Mercy Corps carries out a good-governance programme on access to water and grazing land for pastoral communities on the borders of [Kenya](#) and [Uganda](#). The lack of water and land has sparked tensions. With a multi-pronged approach, Mercy Corps encouraged the establishment of cross-border resource sharing agreements that included conditions on gun restrictions, dispute resolution, elements on environmental protection and the creation of a reservoir. The programme also includes a long-term management plan, strengthening the institutional environment and working with local government and authorities.

³¹ Concordis International has negotiated bilateral agreements along borders at the prefectural level, e.g. at the border between the Central African Republic (CAR) and Chad as well as between CAR and the Darfur region of Sudan (Peter Marsden et al. '[Promoting peaceful and safe seasonal migration in Northern Central African Republic](#)', December 2020). Concordis used a multi-disciplinary approach (including vaccination programmes, water and sanitation programmes and education programmes). There are many levers that need to be joint up to encourage transhumance groups to cross at appropriate non-clandestine crossings and take taxation in exchange for provision of goods and services, accountability and good governance.

4. Pursue green energy generation as a vector for peace

The EU should deepen its efforts to connect green energy projects to peacebuilding and social cohesion.³² The least electrified countries in the world are at the highest risk of conflict and among the most vulnerable to climate change, yet they receive very limited flows of climate finance and renewable energy investments. Providing populations with improved electrification, better access to energy and more control over their power supply can help address structural exclusion and power imbalances, remove levers of oppression, and provide social, peace and economic dividends (e.g. enhancing living conditions and contributing to poverty reduction), particularly when this is enshrined in peace agreements.³³

On the other hand, (access to) energy may also be used as a tool for oppression, for example by switching off energy grids upon which certain groups depend in situations of conflict. The EU needs to be mindful of how its renewable energy policies may inadvertently fuel conflict dynamics, including by facilitating the exclusion or exploitation of certain groups – for example, the dividends of energy projects often do not benefit women and marginalised groups to the same extent (or at all). For the green transition to be truly sustainable, it is also important to consider the current and future implications of renewable energy usage, for example lithium waste. Similarly, whilst green hydrogen has significant potential, the development of systems that enable scaling should be sensitive to local dynamics and energy monopolies should be avoided.

The EU may identify and support renewable energy projects that foster cooperation at different levels. It may support projects through direct funding and technical assistance, but also develop incentive structures for investments and innovation, and contribute to transforming energy market rules, emphasising energy as a human right – this can serve to spur development and increase access whilst mitigating conflict risks. Such incentive structures may create opportunities for cooperation on the ground, and build demand for private sector actors to invest in FCACs (this may require an approach that is sensitive to how wealth is generated and distributed across the energy sector). The EU may also draw attention across EU Member States (MS) to investment opportunities in FCACs. However, the EU should provide incentives for private sector actors to work with local civil society and community actors to maximise the positive impact of projects, ensuring that private sector actors carry out environmental and social impact assessments (which should involve consulting communities, establishing a grievance mechanism, and working with the local or national government). Consultations should aim at bringing together communities, energy developers, local authorities and the national government, and they can provide opportunities for improving collaboration between them.³⁴

Water management and hydropower

Particular attention should be paid to water management due to its importance for resilience, prosperity and peacebuilding, particularly in regions such as the Middle East. While water resources such as wetlands can be used as a weapon during conflicts, their integrated management can contribute to peace between communities and between authorities and communities – particularly when water ecosystems at large are considered, and not only individual water sources. In addition to water itself, hydropower can serve as an entry point for dialogue

³² (a) Through the West Africa Competitiveness Support Program, Burkina Faso component, in collaboration with the chamber of commerce, the EU has supported ANEREE (L'Agence Nationale des Énergies Renouvelables et de l'Efficacité) in developing five training benchmarks in solar installation and energy efficiency. Consequently, 415 youths from ten regions have acquired necessary skills, including 269 trained in BQP and 146 certified providers in solar installation. This has met the triple objective of addressing employability, combating youth radicalization, and achieving energy efficiency. (b) Energy Peace Partners' [Renewable energy and peace: Empirical analysis of global data](#), 2023.

³³ (a) See the [2015 peace agreement in Mali](#). (b) Stimson 'Understanding the Energy-Climate-Security Relationship' (June 2023). (c) EcoPeace Middle East looked into [how Jordan may produce more and low-priced renewable energy and export it to Israel and Palestine, and how Israel and Palestine may build large scale dissemination plans and provide the region with water in return](#). This would open an opportunity for dialogue and provide economic opportunity and stability through 'healthy interdependence' among these actors. (d) After the military coup in Myanmar, solar panels have played a role in allowing certain groups that would otherwise have been cut off from electricity to charge their phones and to organise themselves in the face of oppression.

³⁴ The [Yeelen programme](#) aims at making Burkina Faso a champion of solar energy in West Africa. The project reinforces the grids, increases the country's photovoltaic capacity and focuses on innovation by installing the first electricity storage system in West Africa. The programme is funded by the French Development Agency (AFD) and has a twenty-years financing period.

and cooperation. In particular, local initiatives such as micro-hydropower solutions can be easier to decide on and can have a more positive local impact than large-scale investments. In its political dialogue with partner governments, the EU should ensure that the needs of local communities are adequately addressed as part of hydropower projects and that strategies for economic development that is beneficial to them are embedded into projects; it should help to prevent or minimise displacements resulting from the construction of dams; and it should help support the communities that are displaced.³⁵

Support to partner governments

The EU can support partner governments in diverse ways to pursue decentralised and diversified renewable energy production, and to develop systems that enable scaling and ensure the security of supply, including by helping build capacities and by fostering knowledge and information sharing among stakeholders. Decentralised renewable energy systems present a number of advantages for the resilience of rural communities and for their energy security, including in situations of conflict. The EU may help local authorities and communities to develop the capacities needed for the maintenance of local renewable energy structures. In addition to its technical support, the EU should invest in raising awareness about, and responding to, cultural, social and environmental impacts and considerations around renewable and non-renewable energy – including with partner governments and in EU MS.³⁶

Even though the EU should promote and support a renewable energy transition in FCACs, it is important to be sensitive to the fact that some of their economies and state revenues rely to a significant extent on fossil fuels, and that transitioning to renewable energy may itself be conducive to conflict if not pursued in a conflict-sensitive manner. A just green energy transition involves developing gradual plans for phasing out fossil fuels, working with partner governments to foster regional cooperation around renewable energy and natural resources, and leaving no one behind. Conditionality can in some cases be a helpful incentive.³⁷

Conflict analysis integrating political economy analysis with an energy component can be useful to understand the complex interplay between energy generation and distribution and conflict. For example, in Somalia, Al Shabaab taxes the diesel supply chain which is a critical source of revenue to fund their insurgency. The EU should work with partner governments to expand access to energy whilst addressing such illicit forms of financing for conflict actors, and combine the expansion of the electrical grid with off-grid electrification programmes for efficient and sustainable electricity supply.

³⁵ In Myanmar, the Irrawaddy River is a source of water but also a spiritual and cultural being. Twenty years ago, the then military government decided to build a mid-zone dam. This was hugely controversial and eventually stopped by the community, but there had already been displacements as a result of the project. The displaced communities asked for a greater voice for communities in these large projects.

³⁶ (a) For example, in Iraq, [the extraction of one barrel of oil requires one and a half barrels of water](#) – and water resources in Iraq are dropping rapidly. Explaining the effects of oil production in schools and universities is important. (b) In Kenya, solar-powered water pumping systems have helped local communities withstand climate shocks and water shortages. This was facilitated by awareness-raising campaigns about the benefits of green energy from an economic perspective and on an environmental level, as well as by the use of hybrid systems combining solar power and conventional energy sources.

³⁷ For example, the [EU has directly funded solid waste management projects in Jordan](#), including a conditionality component that helped close down many illegal dump sites in the country.

5. Apply a human security lens to critical raw materials

The increasing global demand for critical raw materials (CRMs) has led to their growing significance for both economic development and political stability, prompting an examination of their intersection with peace and security dynamics – particularly at the local level. Diverse human security risks and human rights violations can arise from the mining of CRMs, however there are various examples of due diligence frameworks that can help reduce such risks.

The EU should mandate and provide incentives for private sector actors to adopt and follow human rights due diligence processes.³⁸ These processes must include identifying and assessing potential impacts on human rights, integrating findings into risk management processes, monitoring the effectiveness of the measures taken, and communicating transparently about how impacts are managed. Due diligence processes should themselves be conflict-sensitive. In addition to expanding its mandatory frameworks for due diligence, the EU should promote voluntary principles, including for providing social benefits for populations living in FCACs and/or for implementing corresponding legal frameworks by partner governments.³⁹

In the implementation of the proposed EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, human rights and environmental considerations should be embedded into corporate operations and governance, and transparency and traceability should be strengthened. This should go hand-in-hand with the full implementation of the European Critical Raw Materials Act and with securing sustainable supplies and reducing the EU's dependence on imports from single suppliers. This could be pursued through measures such as coordinating stress tests across supply chains, establishing strategic stockpiles, and promoting sustainable investments and trade. It should also entail the production and dissemination of information on governance in the mining sector, making this information accessible to citizens, local elected officials, CSOs, media, parliamentarians, state control structures, etc. Transparency should be heavily increased, including by analysing and applying the lessons learned from the progress achieved with agricultural transparency to the sourcing of CRMs and their supply chains. Consumers should be able to understand where the resources in their electronic and technological products come from, and there should be guarantees about the lack of human rights violations to produce them.

Memorandums of Understanding with partner governments

The EU's policies and actions on CRMs are informed and shaped by a series of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with partner governments. When negotiating MoUs, the EU needs to ensure that conflict sensitivity is embedded from the beginning, that local populations benefit from partnerships, and that concrete indicators to monitor these benefits are agreed upon for roadmaps and MoU implementation. The EU should also meaningfully involve civil society actors in the negotiations and in the drafting of MoUs and roadmaps, and promote transparent communication about their drafting and implementation. Such actions for transparency and the involvement of civil society help the EU appear as a credible and trustworthy partner to populations. In the implementation of MoUs, monitoring the impact of adopted regulations and policies helps to further reduce human security risks and to improve regulatory frameworks.

Engaging with local authorities and communities for peace dividends

Efforts to ensure due diligence should involve deepening the EU's support to civil society actors with resources, tools and capacities for monitoring mining activities, including to carry out independent studies, and raise awareness and advocate for increased transparency. Establishing and funding monitoring mechanisms involving the cooperation of authorities, private sector actors and civil society can enhance transparency throughout the entire mining process and supply chains.

³⁸ As recommended, inter alia, by the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) in its due diligence guide.

³⁹ The [Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights](#) initiative is one such example.

Beyond doing no harm, the EU should collaborate with local authorities, businesses, civil society and communities to identify and support opportunities for CRM mining to benefit local populations and their well-being, and to promote peace.⁴⁰ Capacity building and technical support can empower local and national authorities to hold mining companies accountable and to ensure economic and peace dividends for communities. This may take more discreet or more public forms depending on the context, particularly in conflict-affected areas where private armed groups sometimes take over security provision.

⁴⁰ (a) This [project led by Canada in the Sahel](#) aims at strengthening the economic autonomy and the capacities of local authorities, relying on local knowledge, and increasing social cohesion to reinforce peace and conflict resolution in areas where unregulated mining attracts armed groups and fuels local conflicts. (b) Wetlands International and its partners published the [guidelines for the implementation of the EU critical raw materials regulation](#). Wetlands International is part of the EU raw materials coalition which is led by the European Environmental Bureau.

6. Partner with civil society actors and with the private sector

The EU should increase its financial support to civil society actors pursuing activities that combine peacebuilding, climate adaptation and environmental protection. This is particularly urgent in the current context of significant official development assistance (ODA) cuts across several EU MS. Civil society actors are diverse, dynamic and often a source of innovation for cross-sectoral initiatives. Funding micro-projects can serve to make support more accessible to local CSOs. Although risk reduction is essential for EU, private sector and civil society actions (with regard to human security outcomes), there should be a degree of tolerance in the design and funding of civil society projects for the risk of project failure, especially in FCACs, recognising that it is to be expected that some initiatives fail to achieve expected outcomes (whilst still being conflict-sensitive).

Long-term support, such as over five to ten years, can provide enormous benefits for the deep integration of activities and the achievement of sustainable, collective outcomes. At the same time, funding should be **flexible** in the sense of allowing organisations to shift their activities in response to the evolution of the context, as climate shocks and conflict situations may require adaptation and the shifting of funds between budget lines.

In some cases, support may be provided by funding **consortia** – sometimes involving only CSOs, sometimes with multi-stakeholder consortia that include CSOs, private sector actors and public institutions. In its calls for proposals and in funding frameworks, the EU should ensure that the partners working together in consortia have enough time to build trust, relationships and ways of working together (including across sectors and between local CSOs and INGOs), and to co-create their integrated engagements from the start. Importantly, there should be incentives for consortia to be led by local civil society actors, including grassroots organisations and local universities. Existing (local) civil society platforms for cooperation should receive particular attention.⁴¹

In addition to the due diligence frameworks outlined in relation to CRMs, the EU should strengthen its frameworks to ensure that its partnerships with, and support to, private sector actors as part of the green transition are responsive to peace and environmental considerations. This should notably be done through incentives encouraging companies to adopt sustainable practices and to actively contribute to peace and environmental protection.⁴²

Promoting climate justice

The EU's engagement for a green transition needs to include a **climate justice** dimension and address the imbalances between the responsibilities and effects of climate change, and between who benefits from and who faces difficult trade-offs relating to the green transition itself. Countries in the Global North are largely responsible for climate change, and the negative social impacts of the extraction of natural resources (including of CRMs) that are needed to pursue the green transition are particularly felt in Global South countries. In addition, legacies of colonialism still contribute to inequalities and exclusion today. The EU should make clear that it recognises this and the need for countries in the Global North to do much more to reduce their own CO₂ emissions, and it should work with partners in the Global South for a green transition that does not prevent them from pursuing (sustainable) economic development. In doing so, it should make sure to place the diverse needs and priorities of populations and civil society in the Global South at the core of its approach, including at the international level and in its climate diplomacy.

⁴¹ Oxfam, International Alert, the Planetary Security Initiative and Innovations for Poverty Action are currently setting up an international consortium on climate, peace and security issues, for which working with local organisations and existing networks will be key for its implementation.

⁴² (a) Search for Common Ground implements programmes to bridge the green transition and peace, e.g. through carrying out conflict sensitivity trainings, research, conservation work and by offering capacity building to extractive companies and transposing their work to the local and national governments while taking into consideration the needs of the local population. (b) Energy Peace Partners (EPP) engages with the private sector through local developers and multinational companies. EPP has created a credits instrument which they can support and which unlocks funding for environmental projects in fragile states. The EU may draw the attention of companies to such instruments.