



Berlin Climate and Security Conference 2023: Event Summary German Federal Foreign Office 6 October 2023

The fifth Berlin Climate and Security Conference (BCSC) 2023 promoted interlinkages between different approaches within the climate and security agenda to promote, coordinate and advance concrete initiatives to drive action and implementation efforts.

On 6 October, the climate security community of practice met in Berlin to examine the most urgent and **cutting-edge issues in climate and security today**, to critically interrogate complex new challenges like securing critical minerals for a conflict-sensitive energy transition and to discuss how high COP28 expectations on finance for fragile and vulnerable contexts and Loss and Damage can be realised.

To enable **broad and global participation**, as well as additional in-depth exploration of critical issues, the follow-up digital segment (on the following three Mondays throughout October) consisted of partner-run deep-dive sessions. The full programme is available [here](#).

The in-person conference

Highlights

-  470+ in person and digital session participants
-  12 state representatives as speakers
-  64 speakers from around the world
-  60% women speakers
-  18 partner organisations
-  11 in-person sessions
-  Followed by digital sessions throughout October

With 11 in-person sessions, the conference brought together a diverse range of political actors, climate security experts, international organisations and practitioners.

The BCSC 2023 programme aimed to focus on new and emerging issues and debates, with the three strategic goals of:

- Solutions for fragile contexts: Identifying ways to promote more accessible and conflict sensitive climate solutions (including finance) for fragile and conflict-affected communities in the lead up to COP 28 and beyond.
- Tools and knowledge: Spotlighting tools, resources, and capacities to advance integration of climate and conflict sensitive analysis and policies into operations and programming on the ground.
- Incentives: Connecting people, knowledge and ideas across sectors, regions and disciplines to strengthen synergies between mutual and multilateral approaches and initiatives.

“ *Listen with curiosity and include concrete examples of what the population is living already.* ”

Hisham Al-Omeisy

Senior Yemen Advisor and Head of PfR Steering Group, European Institute of Peace

Experts from across the globe examined best practice examples of locally informed risk analysis, policy-making and implementation to advance contextually informed climate security action in response to intensifying and interconnected global crises. Being motivated by the urgent need to promote, coordinate and advance concrete climate security approaches and initiatives, BCSC 2023 sought to showcase best practice of context specific, community driven and participatory climate- and conflict-sensitive policies and programming in order to build awareness of and capacity to use risk and foresight assessments and tools, translate it into peace building action and connect the dots between lived experiences of climate change, existing resources and needs, expertise and technical skills.

Capitalising on the value of convening **world class climate and security expertise** in person, BCSC 2023 also brought together member countries of the Climate for Peace Initiative, G7 Working Group on Climate Security and Weathering Risk donors and partners. On 5 October, a table top exercise on climate security in Iraq and an inclusion workshop were also held.



Multilateral solutions that resonate with local communities

Since BCSC 2022, deliberations on priorities for urgent action to adapt to and mitigate climate change induced challenges has taken centre stage at conferences including COP27, BCSC-Nairobi and high-level sessions at the Africa Climate Summit and UNGA78. The problems and objectives are clear. BCSC 2023 built upon these discussions and explored solutions for fragile and vulnerable contexts with the aim to help build resilience in climate vulnerable and fragile countries and ensure climate solutions are conflict-sensitive in the lead up to COP28 and beyond. Connecting the dots within the multilateral system and improving coordination will help catalyse action.

Climate finance for fragile and vulnerable contexts

70% of climate vulnerable countries are the most fragile. This should mean that these countries are prioritised by climate finance. The reality, however, is that these countries remain the most neglected. The current international global financial architecture is based off of challenges faced by the world at the end of World War II and was mainly designed to address the needs of Europe coming out of the war. Restructuring of the global financial architecture is needed to catalyse action on this front, increase funding and make it more accessible. Measures should include:

- Addressing structural changes like changing the assessment criteria of credit rating agencies to combat the high costs of borrowing and using project risk categorisation based on the PBF model to manage risks and improve flexibility;
- More involvement of funds and agencies working on DRR and humanitarian challenges, including a fast action window for local civil organisations;
- Increased engagement for local peacebuilding and community organisations to be involved in the disbursement of climate finance that is more predictable and prioritises long term projects and
- A hub for sharing lessons learnt, experience and project sharing, like the [Climate for Peace platform](#), should be used to build a pipeline of projects to advance climate and peacebuilding goals to streamline efforts and cooperation across funds and donors that better meet needs.

“ Security cannot be achieved through isolated projects. To truly ensure security and enhance climate resilience, it is imperative to scale up initiatives to a national level.

Mana Farooghi
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development
Office (United Kingdom)

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Better coordination and cooperation

Multilateral approaches can help both ensure the conversation on climate, peace and security is no longer Eurocentric and make solutions more relevant where they are needed most. Improved coordination between global and regional bodies through multilateral efforts is also needed and can be driven through:

- Governments which can move beyond working in silos, by improving cooperation between climate, development, humanitarian and stabilisation, including common budgeting rules and shared portfolios and mandates and through mechanisms like interdisciplinary working groups;
- Informal working groups across governments which can help bypass bureaucratic red tape and enable quick exchange of challenges, lessons learnt and opportunities and align approaches and action;
- Increased transparency and visibility of programming and initiatives through building regional intergovernmental platforms that focus on climate and security;
- Improved engagement with informal networks to involve new actors and build trust through open and inclusive communication and dialogue and
- Responses that are translated to the language of affected populations to truly align with local realities and address their unique requirements. It is also essential to enable active participation at international fora and events and anticipate and address barriers like visas.

Tools and knowledge for decision making

Coordination and localisation of responses is key when it comes to tools, data-driven approaches and technology. Rather than calling solely for more data, strengthening qualitative data to inform responses and streamline analytical approaches and climate science can better inform decision making that resonates with the needs of communities:

- Impact tracking can be improved through monitoring and evaluation to make clear what the needed changes are and at what scale;
- Improving transparency through centralising and sharing data and research methods in connection with collecting data at the local level is key to ensure data is useful and can mobilise communities;
- Investments in data and information sharing can also help militaries and police institutions (amongst others) increase capacities and shift approaches from response to prevention and develop water maps, maps of crime hotspots and smuggling routes and longer-term climate projects and
- Increased international cooperation through diplomacy that focuses on technology and innovation can be an avenue to strengthen ties between countries without a strong track record of cooperation

The road from BCSC 2023 to COP28

At BCSC 2023, the UAE's Ambassador to Germany Ahmed Alattar made it clear that BCSC 2023 should feed directly into COP28. He reiterated that climate change will have drastic impacts on conflict, displacement and people's livelihoods, and at the upcoming COP, challenges faced by fragile and conflict affected states will not only be highlighted - but be at the forefront of the conversation. The **Relief, Recovery and Peace** day on 3 December will have two components: 1) a declaration that will highlight the linkages between climate and conflict and 2) a package of solutions.

These are promising steps. The declaration will aim to drive political support from countries around the world to get rid of barriers to climate action for countries, communities and people affected by climate change and fragility. All funds, including the Loss and Damage Fund, should have a dedicated policy or guidance on conflict sensitivity, planning, programming and impact evaluation. More recommendations have been outlined above and [here](#).

“Every single day, we see the value of local knowledge, which is also key for sustainability and ownership.”

Kadiatou Yacouba-Keita
Country Director Mali, International Alert



The wrap-up of BCSC 2023 by no means signifies the end of the conversation for another year. Over the coming year we will be actively monitoring the implementation of the principles of the Climate, Environment, Peace and Security declaration and assess substantive action around [Climate for Peace Initiative](#). Stay tuned for more information for BCSC 2024 and other conference outputs <https://berlin-climate-security-conference.de/en>.

Thank you to all of our partner organisations and participants who kept the conversation going. For more insights you can browse the hashtag **#BCSC2023** on Twitter and view more articles, news coverage and takeaways [here](#).

Our partners:



BCSC 2023 agenda

05 October

Next steps towards an inclusive climate, peace and security agenda: Experiences, lessons learnt and practical recommendations (workshop)

Fertile grounds for conflict: How to fight climate induced risks, hunger and conflict and sow the seeds of peace in Iraq (table-top exercise)

06 October

Conference opening and welcome

Setting the stage: Climate solutions for fragile and vulnerable contexts

Spotlight session: Climate for Peace

Advancing joint action on climate and food security

Water, Peace and Security: Data driven tools for fragile contexts

Securing impact: Insights from integrated climate, peace and security projects

Enlisting expertise: Exploring the climate security gap in peace operations

Climate and security: The defence perspective

Protecting people, planet and peace: Shaping the future of the security sector

State of play: Critical minerals and the renewable energy transition

Security implications of climate change: Perspectives from the Bay of Bengal

Multilateral responses to climate related security risks

Digital sessions

Ensuring conflict sensitivity in the Loss and Damage Fund

Beyond climate: How nature loss undermines peace and security

Rule of law solutions at the nexus of climate, conflict and food security