

## THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) AND THE CLIMATE-SECURITY NEXUS: CSDP MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS

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Research Article

### **Abstract**

*Since the mid-2000s, the climate-security nexus has come to the forefront of scholarly debates. For some scholars, the linkages between climate change and security should be analyzed from the national security perspective, whereas others from a human security perspective. Taking into consideration the implications of climate change on national and human security, international organizations worldwide started to develop policies in this field. The EU acknowledges climate-related security risks and searches for new policies and tools to respond to them. Yet, the EU's efforts remain mainly at the discursive level. On the practical level, the EU's various policy tools have not yet incorporated climate-security nexus in their agenda. This paper aims to analyze the impact of the climate-security nexus on the EU's CSDP missions and operations.*

**Keywords:** *the EU, CSDP, Climate Change, Security, Missions and Operations*

**Avrupa Birliği (AB) ve İklim-Güvenlik Bağlantısı: Ortak Güvenlik ve Savunma Politikası (OGSP) Misyon ve Operasyonları Örneği**

### **Öz**

*2000'li yılların ortalarından itibaren, iklim-güvenlik bağlantısı akademik tartışmaların ön saflarına yerleşmiştir. Bazı araştırmacılar iklim değişikliği ve güvenlik bağlantısını ulusal güvenlik perspektifinden incelerken, diğer araştırmacılar insan güvenliği perspektifine odaklanmıştır. İklim değişikliğinin ulusal güvenlik ve insan güvenliğine dair etkilerini dikkate alan uluslararası örgütler de iklim değişikliği ile ilişkili risklere yönelik politikalar geliştirmeye başlamıştır. AB, iklim ile ilişkili*

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Makalenin Gönderilme Tarihi: 21/11/2021 Kabul Edilme Tarihi: 13/09/2022

güvenlik risklerini kabul etmiş ve bu risklere cevaben çeşitli politika ve araç arayışına girmiştir. Ancak, AB'nin çabalarının büyük ölçüde söylemsel düzeyde kaldığı söylenebilir. Uygulama düzeyinde, AB'nin çeşitli politika araçlarının ajandaları hala iklim-güvenlik bağıntısını içermiş değildir. Bu çalışma, iklim-güvenlik bağıntısının AB'nin OGSP misyon ve operasyonlarına yönelik etkisini analiz etmek niyetindedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** AB, OGSP, İklim Değişikliği, Güvenlik, Misyon ve Operasyonlar

### Introduction

Security implications of environmental issues have been discussed since the 1970s.<sup>1</sup> The concept of environmental security became a crucial part of the post-Cold war security landscape.<sup>2</sup> Climate change has increasingly been recognized as a critical theme for global security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today, the link between climate change and security is well-established. Yet, the nature of this relationship is still undetermined. In general, climate change is acknowledged as a threat multiplier, exacerbating existing risks to security in both direct and indirect ways. In other words, the threat does not directly come from climate change but from how it interacts with existing security or insecurity conditions.

While climate-related security risks are transforming the security landscape, the EU has declared itself as a global actor in the struggle against climate change. It claimed that climate change can no longer be considered solely an environmental issue as it has far-reaching consequences for global security.<sup>3</sup> The EU has preferred to use an “environmental security” discourse<sup>4</sup> by emphasizing the human security perspective without neglecting the security implications of climate change on the national security of member states. Put differently, one can observe a fusion of state and human dimensions

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<sup>1</sup> *This Endangered Planet* and *Redefining National Security* were early examples of scholarly studies emphasizing the relationship between climate change and security. See Richard A. Falk, *This Endangered Planet: Prospects and Proposals for Human Survival* (Random House: New York, 1971) Lester Brown, “Redefining National Security”, *Worldwatch Paper No 14* (1977).

<sup>2</sup> Rita Floyd, “The environmental security debate and its significance for climate change”, *International Spectator* 45, no. 3 (2008): 51-65

<sup>3</sup> The High Representative and the European Commission, “Climate Change and International Security”, S113/08, 14 March 2008, [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/reports/99387.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/reports/99387.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Nicole Detraz & Michele M. Betsill, “Climate Change and Environmental Security, For Whom the Discourse Shifts”, *International Studies Perspectives* 10, no 3 (2009): 303-320.

in the EU's climate strategy. Subsequently, the EU has put significant effort to create institutional mechanisms to practice its environmental security policies. However, the existing institutional mechanisms have not incorporated climate-security policies into their agendas.<sup>5</sup> The critical instruments to put forward climate-security policies are the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations. However, both EEAS and CSDP's attention towards climate change has remained limited so far. On the ground, none of the missions and operations have incorporated climate-related security policies into their mandates.

This article analyzes the EU as an international actor by concentrating on its actorness in the field of climate security. To do so, it demonstrates how the EU has discursively framed climate change as a transboundary security issue and how it has integrated climate security into its conflict prevention mechanisms. The article analyzes the impacts and potential implications of the climate-security nexus on CSDP missions and operations. CSDP missions and operations are conducted chiefly in fragile and conflict-torn environments and climate change as threat multiplier will further deepen the crisis in these regions.<sup>6</sup> The CSDP missions and operations must get prepared in the face of the impacts of climate change.

This article relies on both primary and secondary resources. It examines the EU's climate discourse through official documents, particularly the European Parliament's official reports and Council Conclusions. The article explores the EEAS' and particular missions' official websites and utilizes content analysis to assess the reaction of current missions/operations against climate change and its security implications. The article also relies on secondary resources such as policy papers and reports prepared by non-profit organizations such as SIPRI and Adelphi.

The first section discusses the climate-security nexus and locates the debate in the wider security studies literature. Here, the emphasis is put on the debate on the widening and deepening of the security concept. This section

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<sup>5</sup> Hannes Sonnsjö & Niklas Bremberg, "Climate Change in an EU Security Context: the Role of the European External Action Service", *Research Report 2016*. retrieved on 23.11.2021 [https://www.statsvet.su.se/polopoly\\_fs/1.295524.1473162984!/menu/standard/file/Sonnsjo%20CC%2088%20%26%20Bremberg%20%20Climate%20change%20in%20an%20EU%20security%20context%20202016.pdf](https://www.statsvet.su.se/polopoly_fs/1.295524.1473162984!/menu/standard/file/Sonnsjo%20CC%2088%20%26%20Bremberg%20%20Climate%20change%20in%20an%20EU%20security%20context%20202016.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Oli Brown, *Climate-Fragility Risk Brief, Afghanistan, Climate Security Expert Network* (Berlin, Adelphi Publication, 2019)

also refers to the “human security” and “state security” implications of climate change at the discourse level concerning the distinction between “environmental conflict” and “environmental security” suggested by Detraz & Betsill.<sup>7</sup> In the second section, the article demonstrates how the EU framed climate change as a transboundary security issue. The section analyzes how the EU’s official discourse has developed to link between climate and security. It further identifies that the EU defends an environmental security perspective and focuses primarily on human security implications of climate change without ignoring its potential impact on state security. Subsequently, the section evaluates the EU’s intention to reformulate and reshape its CSDP missions and operations with regard to their shortcomings in the climate-security nexus. It further explores primary domains in which CSDP missions can and must be amended to incorporate climate-security nexus. The article proposes that the EU should increase the numbers and variety of its missions and that the EU should restructure its missions and operations so that they become hybrid operations capable of incorporating both internal and external security dimensions.

### I. Climate-security nexus

Security is essentially a contested concept.<sup>8</sup> The traditional view defends a state-centric definition of security and refers mainly to threats in the military realm.<sup>9</sup> This understanding of security focuses predominantly on the survival of the state and its defense against external enemies. Some scholarly debates<sup>10</sup> during the Cold War period started to question this state-centric definition of

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<sup>7</sup> Nicole Detraz & Michele M. Betsill, “Climate Change and Environmental Security”, 305

<sup>8</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*. 2nd Edition (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1991); Ken Booth, *Security and Emancipation*, *Review of International Studies*, 17, no 4 (1991): 313-326, Matt McDonald, *Security, the Environment and Emancipation: Contestation over Environmental Change* (London: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “The Renaissance of Security Studies”, *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no 2 (1991): 211-239, 199 and John Mearsheimer, “Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War”, *The Atlantic Monthly* 226, no 2 (1990): 35-50.

<sup>10</sup> For example, Galtung, in his early study, defined violence as an act against human life and challenged the state-centric approach to peace. He later distinguished between positive and negative peace. According to him, negative peace is defined as the absence of violence whereas positive peace as the absence of both direct and indirect violence. See, Galtung, “A Structural Theory of Aggression”, *Journal of Peace Research* 1, no 2(1964): 95-119 and Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization* (London: Sage, 1996)

security<sup>11</sup> and proposed alternative ways of thinking by prioritizing individual and societal dimensions of security.<sup>12</sup> Subsequently, an immense effort was put into practice to include non-traditional threats in the definition of security.<sup>13</sup> The non-traditionalist and broadened understanding of the security perspective is divided into two sub-groups: wideners and deepeners. The term widening refers to the incorporation of novel issues into the scope of security studies whereas the term deepening refers to adding new referent objects other than states.”<sup>14</sup>

According to wideners, the threats to the state may be environmental, social, or economic rather than being solely military. Nye and Lynn Jones<sup>15</sup> proposed to include economic phenomena whereas other scholars<sup>16</sup> aimed to incorporate not only economic but also political and societal dimensions into the security realm. Matthews, for example, underscored the significance of environmental problems, such as ozone depletion and global warming, for security.<sup>17</sup> Yet, it must be noted that for early wideners, the emphasis was still on the state.<sup>18</sup> In other words, they were mainly concerned with the security implications of these newly emerging issues for states and their survival. Another “widening of security” thesis was put forward by the so-called “Copenhagen School” which “accepts the idea that non-military issues can be securitized<sup>19</sup> and that the referent object of this can be something other than a

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<sup>11</sup> Şevket Ovalı, “Ütopya ile Pratik Arasında, Uluslararası İlişkilerde İnsan Güvenliği Kavramsallaştırması”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 3, no 10(2006): 4.

<sup>12</sup> Pinar Bilgin, “Individual and Societal Dimensions of Security”, *International Studies Review* 5 (2003): 203.

<sup>13</sup> Jessica Tuchman Mathews, “Redefining security”, *Foreign Affairs* 68, no 2 (1989): 162-177; Ullman, “Redefining Security”, Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998)

<sup>14</sup> Keith Krause & Michael Williams, “Broadening the Agenda of Security Studies: Politics and Methods”, *Mershon International Studies Review* 40, no 2 (1996): 229-254.

<sup>15</sup> Joesph Nye & Sean M. Lynn Jones, “International Security Studies. A Report of a Conference on the State of the Field”, *International Security* 12, no 4 (1988): 5-27.

<sup>16</sup> Ian Rowlands, “The Security Challenges of Global Environmental Change”, *The Washington Quarterly* 14, No 1, 1991, 99-114, Dennis C. Pirages, “Environmental Security and Social Evolution”, *International Studies Notes* 16, no 1 (1991): 8-12.

<sup>17</sup> Matthews, “Redefining Security”,

<sup>18</sup> Peter Hough, “Who’s Securing Whom? The Need for International Relations to Embrace Human Security”, *St Anthony’s International Review* 1, no 2 (2005), 74

<sup>19</sup> Buzan et al, “Security”. The Copenhagen School escapes from a state-centric approach to security. Yet, it ended up with the argument that the main actor who will securitize issues remains the state. Only the state can be the securitising actor, Hough, “Who’s Securing Whom”, 75.

state, but maintains the logic that only the state remains to be the securitizing actor –i.e., decide whether the issue is acted upon as a matter of urgency.”<sup>20</sup>

The Copenhagen School and other early scholarly debates during the Cold War<sup>21</sup> contributed to the emergence of the human security perspective. The developments in the aftermath of the Cold War accelerated this process as a result of increasing internal conflicts, decreasing inter-state wars, and the rise of transnational threats.<sup>22</sup> Post-Cold War security studies preferred the concept of global or world security rather than international security as the term “international suggests an interstate framework.”<sup>23</sup> Significantly, the incorporation of environmental issues into the security realm strengthened the significance of human security<sup>24</sup> which gained ground in the mid-1990s and shifted the environmental security debate away from states to people.<sup>25</sup> With the emergence of human security, the referent object of security has become individuals, communities, and society.<sup>26</sup> In other words, security studies “took a sociological turn”<sup>27</sup> and scholars such as Booth questioned whose security

<sup>20</sup> Hough, *Who’s Securing Whom*, 75.

<sup>21</sup> The common security approach was proposed by Gorbachev and Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues in the 1980s. According to this approach, the security must be achieved through a joint effort instead of a mutual threat. See, Roy Allison, *New Thinking About Defence in the Soviet Union*. In *New Thinking on Strategy and International Security*, edited by Ken Booth, (London: Harper Collins, 1991) and Bilgin, “Individual and Societal Dimensions of Security”, 204. Moreover, many Third World scholars brought into attention the argument that security problems of developed and under-developed regions are not the same. In these regions, the state may become a source of insecurity for its own populations. In this regard, these scholars contributed to the development of alternative perceptions of security and paved the way towards the emergence of human security perspective. See, Raju G. C. Thomas, “What is World Security”, *Annual Reviews in Political Science* 6, (2003): 205-232. Caroline Thomas, “Southern Instability, Security, and Western Concepts, On an Unhappy Marriage and the Need for Divorce”, *The State and Instability in the South*, edited by Caroline Thomas and Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu (New York, St. Martins Press, 1989).

<sup>22</sup> Ovali, “Ütopya ile Pratik Arasında”,

<sup>23</sup> Bilgin, “Individual and Societal Dimensions”, 207.

<sup>24</sup> Sanjeev Khagram *et al*, “From the Environment and Human Security to Sustainable Security and Development”, *Journal of Human Development* 4, no 2 (2003).

<sup>25</sup> Following the publication of the 1994 UN Human Development Report, the meaning of security has been extended beyond protecting national territory from external threats. The Report defines human security as “safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease, and repression as well as protection from sudden and harmful disruptions in the patterns of daily life. The United Nation’s Development Programme’s 1994 Human Development Report, 3. [https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr\\_1994\\_en\\_complete\\_nostats.pdf](https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> Ovali, “Ütopya ile Pratik Arasında”, 19. Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London, 1977); Booth, “Security and Emancipation”, 319

<sup>27</sup> Bilgin, “Individual and Societal Dimensions”, 207

is being threatened and responded that individuals' security should come first.<sup>28</sup> In this regard, the so-called "deepeners" are interested in the question of whose security is being threatened. Their emphasis has been put on the concept of human rather than state security. As Booth claims, state-based understanding of security makes invisible the insecurities of individuals. He further argues that security must be redefined as the absence of war, but also the absence of other threats such as poverty and political oppression which have the potential to cause harm to human emancipation.<sup>29</sup> In a similar vein, Peterson's<sup>30</sup> world security concept deepened the concept's meaning and argued that the definition of security must include different referent objects. He argued that one of the fundamental components of the traditional security perspective is state sovereignty and its preeminence creates insecurity for women by promoting values such as patriarchy and masculinity. Shaw, in his turn, states that instead of choosing between state or individual security, our attention must focus on a "complex and multilayered" analysis of various referents of security such as social groups and the global society.<sup>31</sup>

The mentioned debates in security studies were later followed by other scholars who aimed to construct a link between climate and security.<sup>32</sup> Since the establishment of the "environmental security" concept after the publication of *Our Common Future* and the Toronto Conference<sup>33</sup> in 1988, the UN Security Council meeting on Climate Change in 2007 was a further step in the construction of a relationship between climate change and security and the securitization of climate change.<sup>34</sup> Since then, many political leaders worldwide have accentuated the relationship between climate change and security.

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<sup>28</sup> Booth, "Security and Emancipation"

<sup>29</sup> Booth, "Security and Emancipation", 319.

<sup>30</sup> Spike V. Peterson, *Feminist (Re)visions of International Relations Theory* (Boulder CO, Lynne Rienner. 1992).

<sup>31</sup> Martin Shaw, "There is No Such Thing as Society, Beyond Individualism and Statism in International Security Studies", *Review of International Studies* 19: 159-175; Bilgin, "Individual and Societal Dimensions", 209.

<sup>32</sup> Baysal & Karakaş, "Climate Change and Security", 23;

<sup>33</sup> Toronto Conference is the first international meeting of scientists and policy makers to bring into attention the dangers of increasing climate change. The conference reached the conclusion that "humanity is conducting an unintended, uncontrolled, globally pervasive experiment whose ultimate consequences could be second only to a global nuclear war." Barnett, "Security and Climate Change", 8-9.

<sup>34</sup> Detraz & Betsill, "Climate Change and Environmental Security", 303.

Security implications of climate change are various. In many parts of the world, extreme weather events such as heat waves and floods cause direct harm to military bases. In some cases, climate change weakens already fragile states as these countries fall short of coping with climate change's negative impacts, such as famine. Land degradation and the need for people to leave their lands can trigger migration flows and create risks for host countries as there may appear ethnic division. Furthermore, as it is well-known, any instability in a country has the potential to create instability for other countries in the context of a more interconnected world. Moreover, climate change as a threat multiplier may trigger extant violent conflict and contribute to increasing terrorist activities in many conflict-torn societies. Finally, when local communities are faced with climate related threats, internal conflict becomes almost inevitable.<sup>35</sup>

An analysis of the literature on the linkage between climate and security demonstrates that there are two distinct discourses that analyze the relationship between security and the environment from different perspectives.<sup>36</sup> Detraz and Betsill established a distinction between “environmental conflict” and “environmental security.” The discourse on environmental conflict argues that people who are subject to environmental degradation would engage in violent conflict.<sup>37</sup> For example, Barnett claims that environment-related conflicts seem to increase as a result of resource scarcity.<sup>38</sup> The main concern is that when these violent conflicts occur, they will cause harm to the survival of the state.<sup>39</sup> Thus, this literature emphasizes “the security of the state rather than the human populations engaging in conflict.”<sup>40</sup> This perspective gained ground in the late 1990s and particularly in the aftermath of September 11, 2001 as the significance of the term “failed states” has been accentuated and climate change began to be considered as susceptible to create new failed states which have the potential to create national security risks for developed countries. All these debates brought into

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<sup>35</sup> Joshua W. Busby, *States and Nature: The Effects of Climate Change and on Security* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

<sup>36</sup> Nicole Detraz & Michele M. Betsill, “Climate Change and Environmental Security”, 305.

<sup>37</sup> Jon Barnett, *The Meaning of Environmental Security: Ecological Politics and Policy in the New Security Era* (New York: Zed Books, 2001).

<sup>38</sup> Jon Barnett, *The Meaning of Environmental Security: Ecological Politics and Policy in the New Security Era* (New York: Zed Books, 2001), Jon Barnett, “Security and Climate Change”, *Global Environmental Change* 13 (2003): 7-17

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Homer-Dixon, *Environment Security and Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999)

<sup>40</sup> Detraz & Betsill, *Climate Change and Environmental Security*, 305.



attention the relationship between climate change and national security.<sup>41</sup> For example, in their study, Schwartz and Randall explored the security implications of climate change on U.S. national security.<sup>42</sup> The then President of the U.S. Barack Obama, in his Presidential Memorandum in 2016, cited climate change as a threat to the national security of the U.S.<sup>43</sup>

Climate change may impact the national security of a country directly or indirectly. Some military bases, for example, are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. According to a report by CNA, some military bases on the eastern coast are vulnerable to extreme weather events.<sup>44</sup> Besides direct security implications of climate change, many indirect impacts are of concern. Climate change appears as a trigger of conflict.<sup>45</sup> Environmental degradation may cause migration and this has the potential to create instability for states as irregular migration may create tensions within societies.<sup>46</sup> For example, land degradation and the need for these people to leave their lands may create migration and create risks for the host countries<sup>47</sup> as there will appear ethnic division. Consequently, concerning with reference to potential conflicts triggered by increasing climate change many countries worldwide started to take it as a threat to their national security.<sup>48</sup>

The environmental security discourse, in turn, focuses on the negative impacts of environmental degradation on people rather than the state.<sup>49</sup> The

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<sup>41</sup> Delf Rothe, *Securitizing Global Warming, A Climate of Complexity*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016)

<sup>42</sup> Peter Schwartz and Doug Randall, *An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and its Implications for United States National Security* (Washington D.C., Global Business Network, 2003).

<sup>43</sup> Presidential Memorandum, 21 September 2016, Retrieved from <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/09/21/presidential-memorandum-climate-change-and-national-security> on 26.9.2021.

<sup>44</sup> The CNA Corporation, "National Security and the Threat of Climate Change", 2007, Retrieved on 2 November 2021 from [https://www.cna.org/cna\\_files/pdf/national%20security%20and%20the%20threat%20of%20climate%20change.pdf](https://www.cna.org/cna_files/pdf/national%20security%20and%20the%20threat%20of%20climate%20change.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Thomas F. Homer. Dixon, "On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as the cause of acute conflict", *International Security* 16, no 2, 1991, 90.

<sup>46</sup> Dixon, "On the threshold", 109.

<sup>47</sup> "The Climate - Security Nexus: Interview with Louise Van Schaik", *IPI Global Observatory*, 2019, 12 September, Retrieved on 7,10.2021 from <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2019/09/the-climate-security-nexus-interview-with-louise-van-schaik/>

<sup>48</sup> Brown, *Climate-Fragility Risk Brief, Afghanistan*.

<sup>49</sup> Coleen Vogel & Karen O'Brien, Vulnerability and Global Environmental Change: Rhetoric and Reality, AVISO 13, 1-8, 2004. Kamil Zwolski & Christian Kaunert, "The EU and Climate Security: A Case of Successful Norm Entrepreneurship?", *European Security* 20, no 1 (2011): 21-43

literature prioritizes the human security perspective rather than state security. The environmental security discourse emphasizes human vulnerability to environmental degradation<sup>50</sup> and criticizes the emphasis on environmental threats to national security as it reinforces and legitimizes a militaristic mindset that contributes to environmental degradation. This discourse claims that such perspective obstructs the pursuit of effective solutions to environmental decline.”<sup>51</sup> As a solution, the environmental security discourse refers to the human security concept.<sup>52</sup> Concerned with human life and dignity, the human security discourse directed attention to “the rights, needs and coping capacity of people most exposed and vulnerable to environmental stress.”<sup>53</sup> Climate change aggravates human security risks both in direct and indirect ways. Food and water insecurity directly endanger human life. Yet, the environmental security discourse does not exclude environmental conflict discourse. Instead, the former encompasses the latter. Accordingly, climate change has the potential to increase conflicts and cause harm to human life in an indirect way by putting them in danger.<sup>54</sup>

As suggested by Detraz & Betsill<sup>55</sup>, different understandings of the relationship between climate change and security would bring different policy responses. The EU’s approach to the relationship between climate change and security seems to be described as belonging to the environmental security perspective. In this regard, an analysis of the EU’s discourse on security will demonstrate that the EU does not limit its security perspective with necessarily military issues. Instead, it accepts a broadened perspective on security and its main concern is human life. Yet, at the same time, mainly relying on the linkage between the climate and security, the EU is well aware that the vulnerabilities of people in the Global South would have the potential to

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<sup>50</sup> W. Neil Adger, “Vulnerability”, *Global Environmental Change* 16 (2006): 268-281. Hallie Eakin & Amy L. Luers, “Assessing the Vulnerability of Social-Environmental Systems”, *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 31(2006): 365-394.

<sup>51</sup> Lorraine Elliott, Environmental Conflict: Reviewing the Arguments, *The Journal of Environment & Development* 5, no 2 (1996): 149-167.

<sup>52</sup> Nicole Detraz & Michele Betsill, “Climate Change and Environmental Security, For whom the discourse shifts”, *International Studies Perspectives* 10, no 3, 2009: 303-320.

<sup>53</sup> Eva Lövbrand, Malin Mobjörk, Rickard Söder, One Earth Multiple Worlds: Securing collective survival on a human-dominated planet, in *Anthropocene (In)Securities, Reflections on Collective Survival 50 Years after the Stockholm Conference* Ed. Eva Lövbrand and Malin Mobjörk, *SIPRI Research Report* 26, Oxford University Press, 2021, 8.

<sup>54</sup> Rebecca Froese & Janpeter Schilling, “The Nexus of Climate Change, Land use, and Conflicts”, *Current Climate Change Reports* 5, 2019: 24-65.

<sup>55</sup> Detraz & Betsill, “Climate Change and Environmental Security”,

increase extant conflicts and create national security issues for European countries. This is why the EU's approach to the climate-security nexus and its ambition to reform CSDP missions and operations can best be defined with reference to a widened approach to security and climate security discourse. As its security perspective is not limited to the military realm, its policy responses will concentrate on wider policy tools such as CSDP missions and operations that focus on crisis management in general.

## II. The EU's Global Security Approach and Its CSDP Missions and Operations

Similar to the evolution of the security concept in the literature, the EU's security conception has also widened and deepened in time. The European Commission addressed many times that "the scope of security has widened from the purely military to include broader political, economic, social, and environmental aspects." On the one hand, the EU included climate change as a security issue in its agenda; on the other hand, it brought the effects of climate change on human security into focus, predominantly in the vulnerable regions of the world, such as Africa.

The European Commission was one of the first international bodies to mention climate change as a security threat.<sup>56</sup> For the first time, the European Security Strategy in 2003 identified climate change as a security issue.<sup>57</sup> The document stated that "global warming would exacerbate competition for natural resources and potentially spur instability in vulnerable regions."<sup>58</sup> Moreover, it is noted that the EU is "the institutional cradle of the climate security debate" in a global context.<sup>59</sup> The High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Commission emphasized the security implications of climate change in their joint paper entitled *Climate Change and International Security*.<sup>60</sup> This report identified

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<sup>56</sup> Richard Youngs, the EU's Indirect and Defensive Approach to Climate Security in *The EU and Climate Security: Toward Ecological Diplomacy* ed. Olivia Lazard & Richard Youngs (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2021), 5.

<sup>57</sup> Council of the European Union, "European Security Strategy", 15895/03, 8 December 2003 Retrieved from <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15895-2003-INIT/en/pdf> on 27.10.2021.

<sup>58</sup> Council of the EU, *European Security Strategy: A Secure Europe in a Better World*, 2009,

<sup>59</sup> Zwolski & Kaunert, "The EU and Climate Security", 21-43.

<sup>60</sup> High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council, *Climate Change and International Security*, S113/08, 14 March 2008, [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/reports/99387.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/reports/99387.pdf)

climate change as a “threat multiplier.” The EU aimed to bring into attention direct and indirect linkages between security and climate change. Accordingly, it is acknowledged that climate change can aggravate already existing tensions and threats. The EU cited seven different threats posed by climate change: conflict over resources, economic damage and risk to coastal cities and critical infrastructure, loss of territory and border disputes, migration, radicalization and fragility, tensions over energy supplies, pressure on international governance.<sup>61</sup> During the Global Strategy in 2016, the EU declared its integrated approach to conflict and cited climate change as its primary component. The document recited climate change as a threat multiplier “that catalyzes water and food scarcity, pandemics and displacement.”<sup>62</sup> Very recently, in 2019, the Council reaffirmed its position in the face of climate security by declaring climate change as an existential issue of international security.<sup>63</sup> Council Conclusions on Climate Change in January 2020 stated that “climate change multiplies threats to international stability and security, in particular affecting those in most fragile and vulnerable situations.”<sup>64</sup> Thus, the topic of the climate-security nexus has been on the EU’s political agenda. When considering climate change as a security risk, the EU’s official documents and discourse make frequent references to the human security approach. The EU has invested funding for populations in climate-stressed regions.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the IPCC 2014 report brought into focus climate change’s impact on human security.<sup>66</sup> However, this focus does not entirely ignore traditional threats such as terrorism or illegal immigration that climate change may trigger. Therefore, one can observe a combination of state and human logic in the EU’s climate security strategy. Thus, the EU uses the environmental security discourse instead of environmental conflict. This discourse prioritizes the human security perspective, yet does not exclude traditional security implications of climate for the security of member states.

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<sup>61</sup> High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council, Climate Change and International Security, S113/08, 14 March 2008,

<sup>62</sup> Beatriz Pérez de las Heras, “Climate Security in the European Union’s Foreign Policy: addressing the responsibility to prepare for conflict prevention”, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 28, no 3 (2020): 335-347

<sup>63</sup> Council of the European Union, Council Conclusions on Climate Diplomacy, February 18 2019 <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6153-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.

<sup>64</sup> EEAS, Climate Change and Defence Roadmap, Working Document of the EEAS, EEAS(2020)1251, 6 NOVEMBER 2020, p.3 Retrieved on 20.10.2021 from <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12741-2020-INIT/en/pdf>

<sup>65</sup> Meyer, Vantaggiato & Youngs, “Preparing the CSDP”, 23

<sup>66</sup> Meyer, Vantaggiato & Youngs, “Preparing the CSDP”, 7

After framing climate change as a transboundary threat to the security of the state and of human beings, the EU has also integrated climate security into its crisis management and conflict prevention mechanisms. In its conclusions on Security and Defence, the EU Global Strategy of June 2019 declared the relevance of climate change for the CSDP Mission and operations.<sup>67</sup> Subsequently, the ongoing discursive developments have been recently accompanied by the submission of a Climate Change and Defence Roadmap in 2020. The EEAS proposes to integrate climate change into the defense actions of the EU while contributing to the broader climate-security nexus.<sup>68</sup> In this regard, the Roadmap declared its intention to incorporate climate-security nexus into the CSDP.

As stated by the former High-Representative on CFSP Javier Solana, “The EU is in a unique position to respond to the impacts of climate change on international security, given its leading role in development, global climate policy, and the wide array of tools and instruments.”<sup>69</sup> One of the most effective tools of the EU at the operational level is CSDP.<sup>70</sup> Through civilian missions and military operations realized under the jurisdiction of the CSDP, the EU conducts an active civilian crisis management policy.<sup>71</sup> Subsequently, for the EU to implement effective climate diplomacy and international crisis management,<sup>72</sup> CSDP missions must incorporate climate issues into their agendas.

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<sup>67</sup> Council of the European Union, Council Conclusions on Security and Defence in the context of the EU Global Strategy, 17 June 2019 retrieved from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/39786/st10048-en19.pdf> on 21.10.2021.

<sup>68</sup> EEAS, Climate Change and Defence Roadmap, 12741/20, 9 November 2020, Retrieved from <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12741-2020-INIT/en/pdf> on 23.10.2021.

<sup>69</sup> Javier Solana, “Climate Change and International Security”, *Paper from the High Representative and the European Commission to the European Council* (Brussels, 2008), 3

<sup>70</sup> UNEP, Greening the Blue Helmets. 2012. [https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/legacy\\_files/UNEP\\_greening\\_blue\\_helmets.pdf](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/legacy_files/UNEP_greening_blue_helmets.pdf)

<sup>71</sup> Agnieszka Nowak, “Civilian Crisis Management within ESDP, Civilian Crisis Management, the EU Way”, Ed. Agnieszka Nowak (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2006), 15-35.

<sup>72</sup> The implementation of the CSDP is controlled by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR). The European External Action Service (EEAS) was founded in 2010 and it is intended to provide coherence in the domain of foreign policy and defence. Is the administrative body that assists the HR in performing his/her duties..Andreja Bogdanovski & Uros Zivkovic, The future of International Police Missions in the New Global Security Environment - Contribution of Western Balkans Police Forces

As the Roadmap cites it, CSDP must be restructured and remodeled to consider the threats caused by climate change and take care of climate-related security issues. In this regard, CSDP must be prepared in the face of natural disasters, border security and large-scale migration, environmental crimes<sup>73</sup> and enforcement of climate-related laws.<sup>74</sup> However, the EU has not engaged to restructure and remodel its CSDP missions and operations. A closer analysis of ongoing CSDP operations and missions demonstrate that climate-security-related conflicts are absent from the mandates of the EU's CSDP missions.<sup>75</sup> Yet, many member states have already started to train their armies to engage with climate-security issues and reconfigure their capacities. Significantly, the UN-led MINUSMA mission was the first UN Peacekeeping mission that included climate-security aspects.<sup>76</sup>

An examination of missions/operations realized under the jurisdiction of CSDP demonstrates that a significant number of these missions/operations have been deployed to climate-stressed areas.<sup>77</sup> Climate-related security risks emerged geographically in already conflict-torn countries in Africa and the Middle East. On the African continent, mainly the Sahel region and the Horn of Africa receive much attention regarding climate-related security risks. For the EU's CSDP operations and missions, the growing number of climate risks across Africa (e.g. food insecurity and a higher incidence of malnutrition) are of particular concern as 75% of its military operations were conducted -or are ongoing- on the continent since 2003. Concerning civilian missions, the corresponding number is 41%.<sup>78</sup> Currently, in the Sahel and Horn of Africa,

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to EU's International Policing. Elise Remling & Anniek Barnhoorn, A Reassessment of the European Union's Response to Climate -Related Security Risks, SIPRI Insights on Peace and Security, No 2021/2 (March 2021), 5.

<sup>73</sup> Europol officially defined environmental crime as "the gamut of activities that breach environmental legislation and cause significant harm or risk the environment, human health, or both." <https://www.europol.europa.eu/crime-areas-and-statistics/crime-areas/environmental-crime>

<sup>74</sup> EEAS, Climate Change and Defence Roadmap, 12741/20, 9 November 2020, Retrieved on 1 November 2020 from <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12741-2020-INIT/en/pdf>

<sup>75</sup> David Michel, Climate security, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding, in O. Lazard & R. Youngs (Eds.) *The EU and Climate Security: Toward Ecological Diplomacy*, 2021 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 27

<sup>76</sup> Vervisch, T., Mudinga, E., & Muzalia, GG. Policy Brief MONUSCO's Mandate and the Climate Security Nexus, <https://www.gicnetwork.be/policy-brief-monuscoc-mandate-and-the-climate-security-nexus/>

<sup>77</sup> Youngs, "the EU's Indirect and Defensive Approach to Climate Security", 8.

<sup>78</sup> Gustav Lindstrom, "Emerging security challenges" in *The CSDP in 2020, The EU's legacy and ambition in security and defence* ed. Daniel Fiott (European Union Institute for Security Studies: Paris, 2020), 89.

nine of the current seventeen CSDP civilian and military missions operate in countries that have been classified as among the most vulnerable in the world to climate change. As cited by General Daniel Grammatico, the Head of the EU Regional Coordination and Advisory Cell for the Sahel (RACC):

“Crises are interconnected. As Europeans we are impacted by developments in the Sahel. The long-term stability of the region will increase European security and reduce the pressure of migration flows in our direction.”<sup>79</sup> In other words, the EU is well aware of the fact that fragile environments contributed to increasing threats such as organized crime and terrorism. Despite being cited as one of the most significant problems that caused internal conflicts and created instability in the Sahel region, climate change was not mentioned. Despite the relationship between climate change and instability, CSDP missions in these regions still focus on counter-terrorism and state-building instead of climate security risks.

In Mali, there is an ongoing internal conflict that is related to climate-related problems. Currently, the EU is conducting one civilian (EU Capacity Building Mission in Mali, EUCAP)<sup>80</sup> and one military mission (EU Training Mission in Mali, EUTM). The former is responsible for the training of internal security forces, whereas the latter is for military forces). Moreover, the EU has another ongoing mission in Niger (EUCAP Sahel Niger). The European Parliament’s EU Strategy for the Sahel cited that the Sahel region is affected by climate change.<sup>81</sup> Today, operations and missions of the EU, particularly in the Sahel, are already actively seeking ways to address the climate-related security risks they encounter at the field level.<sup>82</sup> The EU must reformulate the ongoing operations in these regions to incorporate the climate-security nexus as a distinct field to find better solutions.

The EU emerges as a security actor through a narrative on security nexuses such as civilian/military and internal-external. Subsequently, security implications of climate change will further be strengthened and CSDP

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<sup>79</sup> “Organised Crime and terrorism find fertile ground in fragile environments like in the Sahel. Our task is not an easy one”. EEAS Homepage, [https://eeas.europa.eu/csdp-missions-operations/eu-racc-sahel/109599/organised-crime-and-terrorism-find-fertile-ground-fragile-environments-sahel-our-task-not\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/csdp-missions-operations/eu-racc-sahel/109599/organised-crime-and-terrorism-find-fertile-ground-fragile-environments-sahel-our-task-not_en)

<sup>80</sup> EUCAP Sahel Mali is a civilian mission and it was launched on 15.1.2015

<sup>81</sup> David Michel, Climate Security, Conflict Prevention, and Peacebuilding in *The EU and Climate Security: Toward Ecological Diplomacy*, 28.

<sup>82</sup> Jürgen Scheffran, Peter Michael link, and Janpeter Schilling, “Climate and Conflict in Africa”, In *Oxford Research Encyclopedias: Climate Science* Ed. Hans von Storch (Oxford University Press, 2019)

missions and operations will appear as a field of application for the EU's comprehensive approach. The EU suggests complementarity between military and civilian aspects of European security. As the security implications of climate change are both direct and indirect, the EU emerges as a distinctive actor since it holds both civilian missions and military operations at its disposal through the existence of CSDP. Remarkably, the EU's comprehensive approach to crisis management has the potential to empower its capacity in the face of the security implications of climate change. Yet, Janus-faced characteristics of climate change and security will impact the nature of CSDP missions and operations, which may be redesigned as hybrid operations, or the cooperation between military and civilian instruments may be increased. For example, member states started to train their militaries to make them more aware of climate change which directly threatens military infrastructure. The European Organisation of Military Associations and Trade Unions is an example. Trained officers may contribute to civilian missions or for law enforcement missions to be effective, some military contribution may become necessary.

In 2003, the European Council stated that the first line of defense would be abroad. In 2008, the EU declared its aim to reconcile the internal and external dimensions of security. Internal and external security started to be perceived as interdependent, predominantly with law enforcement actors in exterior instability areas.<sup>83</sup> Now, the climate-security nexus seems to strengthen the internal-external security nexus narrative. On the level of individual member states, armed forces are recruited inside state borders to encounter the security implications of climate change. Or EUROPOL-law enforcement agency of the EU- in its officially declared war against environmental crimes emphasized its international operations extending beyond European borders.<sup>84</sup> In this regard, the EU needs to reorganize its internal/external security mechanisms. For instance, civilian-military cooperation will become necessary in the context of the reorganization of security institutions.

As the impacts of climate change may appear as additional stressors which may exacerbate unstable regions and ongoing conflicts, climate-related

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<sup>83</sup> Ana Paula Brandao, The Internal-External Security Nexus in the security narrative of the European Union, *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations* 6, no 1 (2015): 1-19.

<sup>84</sup> Julie Gaubert, "Why the EU needs a green prosecutor", Retrieved on 22 October 2021 from <https://www.euronews.com/green/2021/06/24/extremists-and-populists-on-the-rise-why-we-need-an-eu-green-prosecutor>.



security issues will increase the demand for CSDP missions and operations. As claimed on the discursive level by the EU, climate change appears as a threat multiplier and has the potential to aggravate current fragile situations and contribute to violent conflicts. In other words, different numbers and kinds of CSDP operations and missions will become necessary for the EU to intervene in situations of deepening crisis. Additionally, disaster relief or humanitarian assistance deployments will be in demand as climate change hits different parts of the world in an unprecedented way.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, member states' armies may be called-out for disaster relief. In other words, the number of personnel ready to be deployed in CSDP operations must be increased in the near future. The climate-conflict nexus will create additional elements of insecurity for mandate implementation.

Despite the absence of a clear climate-security nexus at the operational level, there are still some efforts led by the EU on the ground, such as the increasing awareness directed towards climate change for personnel deployed in ongoing operations and missions. In the EU's discourse on climate diplomacy, climate change is used broadly and includes environmental degradation.<sup>86</sup> Based on this, the European Union Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support (EUPOL COPPS)<sup>87</sup> supports the Palestinian Civil Police and pays special attention to environmental issues to assist Palestinian counterparts in maintaining a clean environment.<sup>88</sup> In the medium term, the deployment of an environmental advisor as a standard position in CSDP missions and operations seems to be a priority for the EU's climate strategy.

### Conclusion

The concept of security is a highly contested one. The future of the relationship between climate change and security seems to impact on the ongoing debate between different perceptions of security. Currently, there is an agreement on the indirect character of the link between climate change and security. Climate change has been recognized as a threat multiplier with its significant implications for international security on the global level.

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<sup>85</sup> Meyer, Vantaggiato & Youngs, "Preparing the CSDP", 19- 22.

<sup>86</sup> EEAS, Climate Change and Defence Roadmap, 12741/20, 9 November 2020, 2. <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12741-2020-INIT/en/pdf>

<sup>87</sup> EUPOL COPPS was established on 1 January 2006. Initially the missions emerged as a police mission. Yet, in 2008 a rule of law section was added. For further information, see the official web page <https://eupolcopps.eu/page/mission/en>

<sup>88</sup> EUPOL COPPS urges protection of the environment, 8 September 2021, EUPOL COPPS <https://eupolcopps.eu/single-news/712/en>

Declaring itself as a global security actor, the EU approaches the relationship between climate change and security from a climate security perspective that emphasizes the human dimension of climate security, without neglecting its security implications for states. As its official discourse demonstrates, the EU does not necessarily limit its security perspective to military threats. Instead, it adopts a broadened perspective on security. Mainly relying on the link between climate and security, the EU identifies that the vulnerabilities of people in the Global South would potentially increase extant conflicts and create national security issues for European countries.

As the EU's security perception is not limited to the military realm, its policy responses will concentrate on broader policy tools such as CSDP missions and operations focusing on crisis management in general. In this regard, the EU's policy towards climate change can best be explored through an analysis of its aim to reform CSDP missions and operations already implemented in the Global South. As the Roadmap indicated, CSDP operations and missions need to adapt to a recently designed security environment that multiplies the existing security threats. The EU will soon need more climate-related operations and missions. Establishing some missions and operations that solely focus on climate change may become necessary. Moreover, considering the climate-security nexus, the EU may need to make some operational changes in the CSDP missions. The EU should also reconsider an already ongoing debate over the internal/external security nexus to appropriately respond to climate-related missions and operations.

To sum up, the roles and functions of security institutions will be redesigned with the increasing security impact of climate change. In the context of widespread ecological disruption, the EU needs to rethink what security entails. In short, the EU should reformulate its CSDP missions and operations to prevent a potential shortfall between strategies on the discursive level and their implementation on the ground. It can reformulate CSDP missions and operations especially in sensitive regions such as Afghanistan and Sahel to deal with the security implications of climate change.

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