

Report: The Hague Roundtable on Climate and Security 3rd meeting at the Embassy of Germany to the Netherlands

Water scarcity, potential conflict, natural disasters and climate risk planning were among topics addressed at The Hague Roundtable on Climate and Security, hosted by H.E. Mr. Franz Josef Kremp, Ambassador of Germany, on 26 April 2016. This was the third meeting in an ongoing international dialogue, following meetings at the Embassy of France in October 2015 and the Embassy of the United States in May 2015.

Participants at this event included Ambassadors from [France](#), [Germany](#) and [Morocco](#) (from left in photo), representatives of [Algeria](#), [Australia](#), [Canada](#), [the Netherlands](#), [Sudan](#), [Tunisia](#), [the United Kingdom](#), and [the United States](#), as well as NGOs and educational institutions.



The Roundtable is a platform for embassy representatives and involved organisations to identify opportunities for positive global cooperation on climate and security issues. The meetings also serve as an ongoing dialogue and a contact point to increase engagement in global initiatives such as the COP Climate Change Conferences and the Planetary Security Conference in The Hague.

Selected Roundtable discussion highlights

- The [UN Security Council](#) could expand its area of action to include climate change risks to security, noting the position of the Netherlands on climate change policy as a potential non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2017-2018. There is no mention of climate change and security seen in the COP 21 agreement. Additionally, climate change risks should be increasingly integrated into strategic national and regional military policy.
- The growing urgency of water scarcity combined with population growth constitutes a growing risk to security. Transboundary water agreements should be further explored and implemented. [UNESCO-IHE](#) is working on initiatives in this area. Without urgent attention, the risk increases of armed conflicts over water resources. The current water crisis in India was mentioned as an example of a potential flash point.
- “Climate Change and Security in South Asia: Cooperating for Peace” is a document to be published in May 2016 by the [Institute for Environmental Security](#) and its initiative the Global Military Advisory Council on Climate Change (GMACCC).
- A solar-powered atmospheric water production prototype premiered in The Hague in April as a system that could be further developed as an off-grid water source. The [SunGlacier](#) project introduces the concept in a functioning sculpture at Museum Beelden aan Zee until Oct. 2016.

- The 2016 [Planetary Security Conference](#) in The Hague (5-6 Dec.) will be an opportunity to focus on integrated solutions and a platform for the international community to come together to broaden and deepen initiatives to take adaptation and mitigation to higher levels. Funding for the Conference has been committed for the next three years by the Government of the Netherlands. A consortium including the [Clingendael Institute of International Relations](#) in the NL and the Institute for Environmental Security has been chosen by the Dutch Government as organisers of the 2016 Planetary Security Conference, pending final approval.
- COP 22 in Marrakech needs to be an action-based conference to get non-state actors on board with a mobilisation of donors to ensure solid financial support for objectives. Credible action plans are needed for donor funding to be received. There is also a strong need for COP22 to acknowledge and give real support to working national mitigation strategies.
- The economic aspects of climate change will play an increasingly important role in mainstreaming mitigation policies. Opportunities to support such an evolution in a productive way should be mapped out and maximised in government and private institutions.

The significance was stated of an ongoing dialogue in The Hague about climate and security which is of tremendous importance for the future. Individual isolated policies are not only incapable of addressing global threats like terrorism, armed conflicts or climate change – but also global opportunities like more integrated markets, health and well-being, employment, sustainable production and clean energy.



- Europeans have to make sure that the COP 21 Paris agreement intentions are implemented into EU policies in a timely and sustainable manner. In terms of the external dimension, the EU has to balance carefully considerations of security threats with global sustainable development challenges and opportunities. The recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels and the ongoing conflicts in the EU's immediate neighbourhood should lead to a holistic view on peace and security. Challenging problems like poverty, inequality and oppression, environmental degradation and climate change must be addressed by common efforts of all Member States of the EU.
- The success of COP 21 Paris provided increased responsibilities, as important commitments were made also by private companies, local governments and civil society. Declarations need to be turned into actions, in particular through the Ambition Mechanism that will have the parties revise every five years their contributions to the fight against climate change.
- Commitments by developed countries to jointly raise \$100 billion per year by 2020 to help developing countries cope with climate change must be respected. France will raise its annual contribution from EUR 3 to 5 billion by 2020. Civil society also needs to maintain its mobilisation through the implementation of the Solutions Agenda, in which 70 coalitions and 10,000 actors are involved. The [International Solar Alliance](#), the [Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa](#), and the [Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition](#) are examples of what can be done when governments, private companies, local governments and citizens come together.
- Specifically in the Sahel Region, those undertaking adaptation and mitigation projects need to be sensitive to local contexts in order to be successful and sustainable.

Excerpts from the Roundtable presentation “Climatic challenges and options in Sudan” by Nagi J. A. Masoud of the Embassy of Sudan to the NL

Food security in the country of 40.6 million is mainly determined by rainfall, particularly in rural areas where more than 65% of the population lives. This rainfall has become more erratic, increasing the stress on pastoralist and farming communities particularly in West Sudan (Darfur and Kurdufan). In the Kurdufan Region, models predict that millet production and sorghum yield will decline between 15% – 71%. In Darfur, armed conflict and rapid population growth in the past few decades have added to the region's environmental and economic woes.

Following the COP 21 Paris Agreement, UNEP partnered with the UK Government on a £10 million, four-year program called Adapt for Environment and Climate Resilience in Sudan ([ADAPT](#)), which aims to enhance climate resilience and environmental management in Sudan.

Further recommendations on mainstreaming climate adaptation policy:

1. A national land use plan and reform of land tenure
2. Policies and strategies that guarantee food security and provision of potable water
3. Strategies that enhance agricultural productivity and a national early warning system
4. Provision of credit for farmers and pastoralists
5. More research and extension with emphasis on traditional sectors

Excerpts from the Roundtable presentation “Assessing climate change driven coastal flooding and erosion” by Dr. Roshanka Ranasinghe, Professor of Climate Change impacts and Coastal Risk at UNESCO-IHE Water Education Institute

Coastline position is governed by sea level, wave conditions and river flows – all of which will be modified by climate change relative sea level rise and extreme sea level scenarios. Current study was highlighted in Cauvery Delta, Tamil Nadu, India. Ongoing and planned coastal risk assessments are in Sri Lanka, France and California.

Global average sea level rise and extreme sea level projection models were presented. Such models can be applied in policy adaptation planning to help protect homes and economic activity. UNESCO-IHE is researching these types of models and other climate programmes that can benefit government leaders in adapting response and mitigation policies to increase security and sustainability.

Related climate publications

- UNESCO-IHE Special issue on Climate Change – Finding solutions through adaptation and mitigation: <https://www.unesco-ihe.org/climate-change>
- Climate Change and Security in South Asia (*late May 2016*): <http://www.gmaccc.org/>
- U.S. Department of Defense Directive on Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience: <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/471521p.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Defense Climate Change Adaptation Roadmap 2014 http://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/Downloads/CCARprint_wForward_e.pdf
- USAID – Climate Change and Conflict: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00KJWQ.pdf
- Overseas Development Institute (ODI) – Gender, agriculture and water insecurity: <https://www.odi.org/publications/10355-gender-agriculture-and-water-insecurity>
- ODI – Mobilising private finance for climate compatible development: <https://www.odi.org/publications/10400-mobilising-private-finance-climate-compatible-development-diagnostic-tool-mapping-incentives-and>

Looking ahead to joint action: Watch for an announcement on the next Roundtable to be held at an embassy in The Hague in 2016. Until then, thank you for your participation, and further contributions are welcome. Contact Matt Luna, IES Communication Officer, for more information and with proposals for the meeting agenda. (mluna@envirosecurity.org)