

**Geneva Dialogue on Environment,  
Climate, Conflict, and Peace:  
Meeting 12**

*9 February, Zoom*

*Participants: 23 participants from organizations in and around Geneva*

**Presentation from CGIAR Climate Security: Diego Osorio, Senior Advisor for Climate Security**

Background Materials from CGIAR:

- [Link to presentation](#)
- [climatesecurity.cgiar.org](https://climatesecurity.cgiar.org)
- [A document with links](#) to all of CGIAR Climate Security's webinars + policy briefs on a range of related topics
- [LinkedIn SciencePO Post](#)
- [LinkedIn CS Security Council Post](#)
- [PhD Information](#)

Presentation Notes:

- Bottom line: CGIAR has a wealth of data and analysis on food systems, agriculture, and climate security. They are hoping to broaden their collaborations with the peace & security sectors.
- What is CGIAR?
  - CGIAR is a global network of scientists working on food, food systems, and agriculture
  - CGIAR's mission: Ending hunger by 2030 through science to transform food, land and water systems in a climate crisis.
- Why should a major food and agriculture research group focus on climate security?
  - There is a clear interrelation between climate, food systems, and conflict. Food systems must be smart vis-a-vis climate change.
  - Research, scholarship, and policy progress at this intersection should continue to gain momentum. Peace is essential to ending hunger.
- What does CGIAR do?
  - Resources and webinars
    - CGIAR Climate Security invited scientists to contribute to a series of 8 webinars policy briefs, outlining the state of knowledge in these subjects ([linked here](#))
    - Trying to expand understanding of the complexity of climate and conflict to support decision making
  - Research inputs and evidence
    - Climate security profiles
      - Country profiles looking at food, water, agricultural systems, and their relationships between conflict & climate change
    - Climate security crisis observatory
      - Processes all of this information into one single framework
    - Climate security simulations

- Research outputs
  - Policy for peace
  - Programming for peace
  - Sustainable financing for peace
- Some examples of the research portfolio
  - Opened a PhD programme on quantifying the climate-conflict nexus in the Sahel, Mekong, and Ganges Deltas
  - The “African Climate Security Crisis Observatory”
  - Analyses of the climate-gender-migration-inequality-security nexus
  - Linking land, water, and food systems to the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
- Resources of CGIAR that you can access
  - Real-time monitoring of conflict events
  - Food-climate-conflict prediction tools using social media and machine learning techniques
  - Quantification of the climate-food-security-conflict nexus
  - Mapped hotspots of climate-food-security-conflict nexus
- Folks interested in connecting with CGIAR can email Diego Osorio ([D.Osorio@cgiar.org](mailto:D.Osorio@cgiar.org)), Sabrina Schulz ([S.Schulz@cgiar.org](mailto:S.Schulz@cgiar.org)), or Frans Schapendonk ([F.Schapendonk@cgiar.org](mailto:F.Schapendonk@cgiar.org))

## Discussion

(note: the answers here are paraphrased and summarised from the discussion)

**Q: What is your sense of how best to channel the science that you generate through to influence policies?**

A: The core operational framework of CGIAR is built to do this, particularly when it relates to food and agriculture. On climate security, the CGIAR science-policy connections are still being built. They tend to tailor the communication strategies to the actors and policy-makers with whom they work.

**Q: What do you consider to be the strongest UN precedents on climate security? I’m thinking, for example, about Security Council Resolution 2349 on Lake Chad (2017), which cited climate change and its effects in fostering ‘water scarcity, drought, desertification, land degradation, and food insecurity’, and linked these factors to the rise of violent extremism. Do you think that the UN’s concept of sustaining peace will provoke the UN to more systematically consider how climate change affects security?**

A: The UN has clearly shown through different frameworks that this is a relevant issue, but on the other hand, the UN security council only goes as far as the member states will allow them to go. UN actors like UNEP and UNDP are making a lot of progress on climate security, while the Security Council does not go as far. This goes back to the essence of science communication - if science and policy are not well merged, Security Council resolutions will reflect a limited understanding. The structures are there, but the political will is still growing.

**Q: It’s clear that there is a need for better “peace and security communication,” as there is already a thriving world of “science communication.” Do you have any ideas of how best to pursue that agenda?**

A: Policymakers often want a simple explanation, justification, and instruction on what the problem is and how it should be tackled. The issue with climate security is that the connection between climate change and security/peace is not always simply articulated, and the links remain somewhat elusive. If policymakers do not receive black & white explanations, policy change can be more difficult to pursue.

Another element is that, even if you are able to bridge the communication gap, it does not always translate to action within the UN system. Communication must be specific and tailored to actionable change, not just a broad concept. One example: Sounding the alarm for climate change 12 years ago led to increased awareness, but not really increased policy action at the time. It was only when communicators started focusing on the “2 degrees” concept that policymakers could concretize the problem and understand what their scope of action could be.

**Q: These issues are complex. It's not just climate change alone, but a complex set of factors that seem to not always translate well in the policy landscape. Perhaps we mustn't solely focus on the correlations (food systems, inequality, climate change, migration), but also examples of successful change management. Do you have examples of success stories that can be illustrative?**

A: Claudia Sathov (??)'s study with David Gray (??) from the WorldBank with many of the environmental, socioeconomic, and political benefits on water [insert word]. Clingendael Institute will also soon be coming out with a best practices roundup in climate security.

**Q: We've been talking about science communication and the need for a distinct call to action. What is the most effective national message to governments? (i.e., Meeting the Paris Agreement? The SDGs?) Similarly, if UN agencies are constricted by their national members, what role can they play in encouraging member states?**

In reality, UNEP and UNDP have made a lot of progress on climate security programming in the past 5 years. The UN peacebuilding fund has started actively engaging climate security actors, so we've actually seen a lot more integrated programming. Funding is indeed following the evidence base and translating into programming. Some examples include the UNDP in Sahel, and a lot of other countries kicking off climate security programs on the ground. Even if there are some member states who aren't prioritizing climate security, there is a lot happening on the ground.

Moving to the state level, one issue in translating policy into action is that in most places, it's no one department's job in the government to address climate security. There is a disconnect between Foreign/development ministries and Agricultural ministries. It takes leadership from the top of the government to instruct these ministries to meaningfully collaborate.

We've noticed, however, that *conflict prevention* and resilience are growing priorities for states. Diplomatic and security communities are better understanding it and why it should be implemented, compared to the past when it was not a popular topic. We also see actors really understanding that it matters what you do in *post-conflict situations* with regard to agricultural systems. People need to be able to stay where they are, and to grow or access the food that they need to stay where they are.

Finally, back at the global scale, we've seen the climate security agenda advanced primarily by western countries. The more the agenda continues to be owned by the countries most impacted by climate security challenges, the better off we will be as a system.