



FEBRUARY 2019

## Progress on implementing the Hague Declaration on Climate and Security

### What is the Hague Declaration?

The Hague Declaration is:

- A six-point plan covering a call for an institutional mechanism on climate and security within the UN system, for a process to develop a climate security risk assessment in Lake Chad, and for concrete action in two of the most vulnerable post-conflict countries: Mali and Iraq.
- A commitment by a growing community of practice to systematically address security risks related to climate change – from analysis to action.
- Built on the conviction that everyone must work together to address and manage risks and threats before they arise.

### 1 Overview: What were we aiming for? And where have we got to?

#### What was the Planetary Security Initiative aiming to achieve with the Hague Declaration?

In the lead-up to the second Planetary Security Conference (PSC) in December 2017, the Planetary Security Initiative sensed the need for some impetus, a catalyst, a call to action on tackling climate change and security risks. There had been many discussions, back and forth since 2007, around the links between climate and security, but progress seemed to be stalled in analysis. The 2017 PSC called for a move from 'analysis to action'. The Hague Declaration on Planetary Security, a statement issued in advance of the conference, and endorsed by over 100 high-

level global signatories, signified strong and serious support for concrete steps to advance six action areas:

- 1 Creating an Institutional Home for Climate Security
- 2 Coordinating Migration and Climate Change Responses
- 3 Promoting Urban Resilience
- 4 Supporting Joint Risk Assessment in Lake Chad
- 5 Strengthening Climate- and Conflict-Sensitive Development in Mali
- 6 Supporting Sustainable Water Strategies in Iraq

While the declaration itself was non-binding, one year on we are delighted to report that substantive and significant progress has been made in relation to these action areas. Activities contributing to this progress have not necessarily been initiated because of the Hague Declaration but the progress

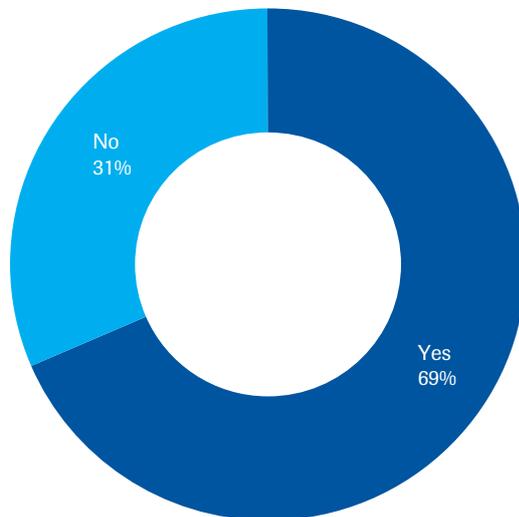
underlines the relevance of the Hague Declaration's action areas, and proves the commitment by signatories of the Declaration as well as other members of the Planetary Security community of practice. Progress has been stronger in some areas than others, and while there is still a long way to go, 2018 has, overall, been a catalyst year for action on climate change and security. Progress on the Hague Declaration action areas is indicative of this.

### What has been achieved?<sup>1</sup>

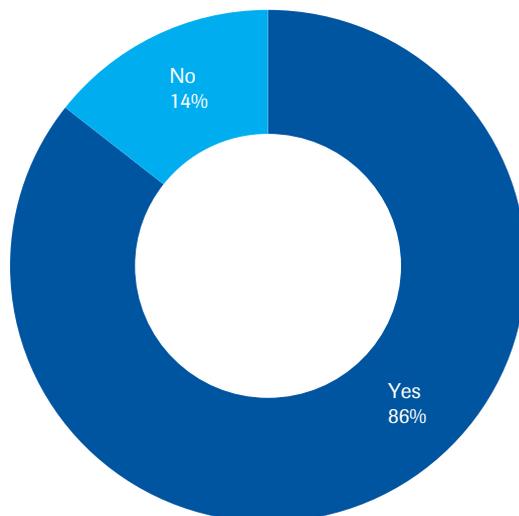
- More than two-thirds of survey participants (69%) said that the Declaration has affected their work on climate and security and 86 percent have contributed to the action areas set out in the Hague Declaration.
- The goals of two of the six action areas (Creating an Institutional Home for Climate Security and Supporting Joint Risk Assessment in Lake Chad) have been achieved outright. A joint risk assessment in Lake Chad has been conducted and although no institutional home for climate security within the UN system has yet been created, significant progress has been made towards this goal. Even though processes leading up to this have been ongoing since before the Declaration was launched, signatories of the Hague Declaration and the Planetary Security Community strongly contributed to progress in both action areas during the last year. This can certainly be heralded as an unmitigated success.

- With effective advocacy, climate diplomacy and donor leadership by Hague Declaration signatories, such as the Swedish government, a Climate and Security mechanism has been established within the UN system. While still nascent, the mechanism has huge potential to support the strategic and operational integration of climate change and security into the workings of relevant programmes across the UN system.

### Has the Hague Declaration affected the way you work on climate change and security issues?

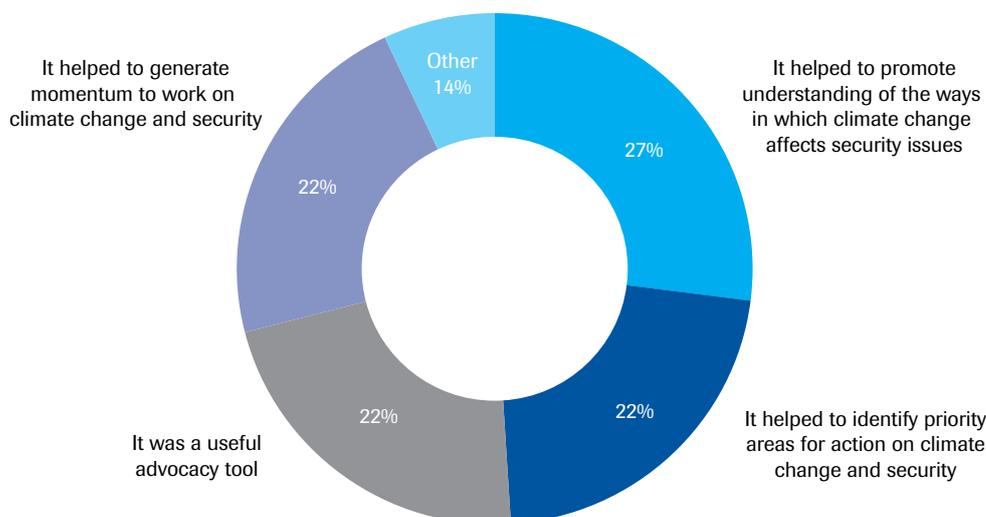


### Have you addressed any of the Hague Declaration Action Areas in your work?



<sup>1</sup> The information provided is based on the results of a survey shared among the signatories of the Hague Declaration and interviews with 28 signatories and members of the Planetary Security community drawn from attendees of previous Planetary Security Conferences, ranging from donor governments, implementing organisations, think tanks, private sector organisations, academia, international organisations and non-governmental organisations.

## How has the Hague Declaration supported your work on climate and security?



- A [Joint Risk Assessment in Lake Chad](#) has been undertaken, supported by UN Development Programme (UNDP), and by the Netherlands and German governments. The assessment report is due to be validated at the forthcoming PSC 2019. This risk assessment will be used to inform ground interventions in the region to promote resilience to linked climate and security risks. It will also serve as a model for future geographic climate fragility risk assessments.
- Efforts towards Strengthening Climate- and Conflict-Sensitive Development in Mali have also progressed – both at policy level and on the ground. At strategic level, in its 2018 mandate renewal, the UN Security Council called on [MINUSMA](#), the UN mission to Mali, to consider the security impact of climate change and other environmental factors, for example in risk analysis.
- In addition, [projects and initiatives in Mali](#) have been implemented that aim to address climate-related resource management and conflict risks. Acknowledging the lack of discourse on climate and security in the region, despite the pertinence of the matter, the Planetary Security Initiative has enabled a [process with local stakeholders](#) from Central Mali to co-create a plan to reduce tensions.
- On migration, progress has been less significant. The interaction between climate and environmental factors and the drivers of refugee and migration movements is increasingly recognised at international level, for example in the [Global Compact on Migration](#). While the challenge now will be to translate this recognition into action, there has been invaluable progress in research and analysis. This progress, while seemingly only on paper, is a crucial step to better enable, or indeed push for, the link to be included more regularly in migration policy and programming in the future.
- Supporting Sustainable Water Strategies in Iraq has been challenging due to the political context in the region. Nevertheless, [there have been some achievements](#): for example, the Ministry of Water Resources of Iraq requested an assessment of Iraq's Strategy for Water and Land Resources. Despite the political standstill, the climate and security community continued the discussion and initiated several opportunities for exchange on the links between climate and security in Iraq.
- Promoting Urban Resilience has perhaps seen the least progress within the climate security community. Increased awareness among actors of climate-related security risks in urban areas is needed. One

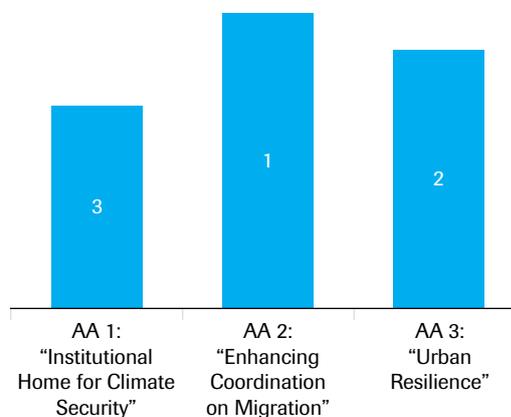
of the reasons for the relatively weak progress in this action area is that the Hague Declaration signatories and PSC community of practice are not strongly connected to the urban development sphere, nor is the urban community necessarily plugged into the climate security discourse. Although [there have been positive examples of action](#), they have been stand-alone projects rather than strategic efforts or specific policies to bolster urban resilience to climate-related security risks. This highlights the need for climate change and security discourse to continue to cross-fertilise into all relevant sectors, rather than become an entrenched discipline in its own right. This also underscores the importance and value of the Planetary Security Initiative to act as a connector that can join up the relevant dots to ensure these gaps are filled in the future.

## 2 Successes, gaps and challenges

### Success factors for actions on climate and security

- Much of the success came about through high-level political leadership. This was clear in looking at the [signatories of the Hague Declaration](#) – including representatives from the governments of Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and the EU. [Sweden](#), [the Netherlands](#) and [Germany](#) all used their membership of the UN Security Council (UNSC) to push the climate and security agenda. The EU also showed serious political leadership in convening a high-level event on climate and security in the summer of 2018. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union held an open session in which its members underscored the links between climate change and peace and security in Africa and [called for an AU Special Envoy for climate change and security](#). International organisations, including UNDP and UN Environment also provided impetus and substance to the progress we saw.

**In your view, which of the action areas requires more action/knowledge/funding (please select up to two and rank your choices)?**



- Progress has not been solely at policy and strategic levels. As well as leadership, there are numerous examples of successful operationalisation of policy processes. For example, in the Lake Chad region, led by local regional partners, the [Lake Chad Climate Fragility Risk Assessment](#) has set a new precedent and established a benchmark for climate-fragility risk assessments. The development of the Climate and Security Guidance Tool is another practical step towards enhancing capacity to assess and programme around climate-related security risks.
- The strength of many of these initiatives often builds off each other. Here, it must be noted that an important, but often invisible, success of the Hague Declaration is the level of collaboration, knowledge sharing and harmonisation it represents across the Planetary Security community of practice. This is an unmitigated success and proud legacy of three years' work by the Planetary Security Initiative.
- The increase in climate change training and capacity-building efforts in particular is a strong indication of the continued growth in and operationalisation of the increased knowledge and awareness of climate security risks among policy makers in national governments and international institutions such as the UN and the EU.

## Gaps in and challenges to progress<sup>2</sup>

- The majority of interviewees across all sectors stated that one of the major challenges for implementing concrete actions addressing climate-related security risks has been the siloed approaches taken by many organisations. This lack of cooperation across sectors is still prevalent among most development programmes but also within national and local governments. Approaches addressing the impacts of climate and security in an integrated manner – for example, designing adaptation measures in a conflict-sensitive way – are still often the exception rather than the norm. Facilitating integrated activities requires changes in programming, for example donors allowing more flexible project timeframes but also promoting the mainstreaming of climate and security into projects.

In some thematic areas, such as for example urban resilience and migration, there is a distinct lack of connection between policy and programming – despite the clear links in real-world risks and responses – and climate change and security. Part of the reason for this is that the climate-security community does not at present cross-fertilise into these thematic communities very well. While the importance of urban areas is increasingly addressed in peacebuilding activities, the broader security sector is often not aware yet of the link. This highlights the need for the climate-security community to further enhance dialogue with all relevant actors, to mainstream climate and security into more sectors, and to continuously act as a platform not only for the existing community and topics but also as an interface to other actors and thematic areas.

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2 The information provided is based on the results of a survey shared among the signatories of the Hague Declaration and interviews with 28 signatories and members of the Planetary Security community drawn from attendees of previous Planetary Security Conferences, ranging from donor governments, implementing organisations, think tanks, private sector, academia, international organisations and non-governmental organisations.

- Related to the lack of integrated approaches on climate and security is the often short-term programming cycle, in particular for humanitarian aid, while climate impacts are felt over a long timescale. More awareness and action by humanitarian actors to address the needs of vulnerable groups in contexts affected by conflict and long-term climate impacts is still required. Since humanitarian actors are often among the first to respond to the impacts of a disaster they need to be much better equipped with knowledge and awareness of climate- and conflict-sensitive actions.
- The review of progress since the Hague Declaration was signed has shown that current action on climate and security at policy and programming levels is predominantly focusing on the African continent. The climate-security community and national policy makers in the Middle East and South/South-east Asia are not addressing the issue sufficiently despite the devastating impact climate-related events such as floods and droughts have each year on human security in these regions. One reason is the lack of institutional capacity. National and regional actors in the Middle East and Asia need to strengthen their efforts to improve disaster response mechanisms. The (long-term) impacts of climate change and climate-related disasters on regional, national and local security need to feature more prominently, for example in local disaster response plans, national security strategies or regional cooperation agreements.
- While international donors mostly focus their activities on regions with political relevance or where an aid structure already exists, fragile regions prone to climate impacts are often not well covered by donor activities. This focus by many donors on the same regions may actually increase the impact of climate-related security risks, particularly as in fragile contexts donor activities often focus solely on peacebuilding while the impacts of climate change are mostly not addressed. Changing this requires greater willingness by donor governments to take risks and to assess the feasibility of working in otherwise underfunded regions.

- Since the need for projects that address climate and security is of particular relevance in fragile countries and high-risk contexts, the lack of financial tools suitable to operate in these high-risk environments presents an additional obstacle to implementation. Projects related to climate and security demand a high level of flexibility and the inclusion of a diverse range of actors. A combination of public and private funding through different entities could lower the risks and help to create the flexibility needed when operating in conflict-affected regions. However, particular focus must also be placed on the ethical aspects of financing in fragile contexts.

It is perhaps too much to expect such impact within just one year of the Hague Declaration being signed, but ambitions must remain high. Progress so far has been good, but is not sufficient. The foundations for action have been laid, but a shift to operationalisation is now needed and cannot be taken for granted. Ideally, future reports will be able to reflect on the action which transpires, not only from Hague Declaration signatories, but also from an increasingly broad community of practice, reflecting actors from new regions and thematic sectors. This is not just necessary, but also #doable.

### 3 Where to go from here: from analysis to action

In a nutshell, from here, the need is to move from analysis to action. In addition to the significant progress on a joint risk assessment in the Lake Chad basin region and towards an institutional home for climate and security within the UN system, activities on the action areas of the Declaration have been promising, particularly in deepening knowledge (for example, on the links between climate change, conflict and migration), and in establishing policy and processes to begin integrating climate change and security into actions on the ground. But rapid progress on action needs to follow: on more pilot projects testing approaches to addressing climate-fragility risks, on better integration of peacebuilding into adaptation and of climate change into stabilisation and post-conflict processes, and on training and capacity building to ensure institutional capacity to act on newly available knowledge of climate and security risks.

## About the Planetary Security Initiative

The Planetary Security Initiative aims to help increase awareness, to deepen knowledge, and to develop and promote policies and good practice guidance to help governments, the private sector and international institutions better secure peace and cooperation in times of climate change and global environmental challenges. The Initiative was launched by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2015 and is currently operated by a consortium of leading think tanks headed by the Clingendael Institute.

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