

BIGMUN 2024
Security Council (SC)

Research Report

Topic 1: Protecting global security from the effects of climate change



By Ruth Risso Ricci and Sophia Nørby Jensen

Introduction

In 2022 alone, 36.2 million people were displaced because of natural disasters brought about by climate change, and while many found refuge within their own country, somewhere forced to go abroad¹. In recent years the effects from these climate changes has seen in the floods in Pakistan and extreme heat and dryness in Spain and Italy has led to deaths and migration within their own country or to neighbouring countries. Furthermore, this calls for a global security crisis from these effects.

Key Terms

Climate change refers to long-term changes in the average weather patterns that have come to define Earth's local, regional, and global climates. It includes changes in temperature, precipitation, and other atmospheric conditions².

Global security is a concept that encompasses measures taken by nations and international organisations to ensure the safety and stability of the global community. It includes efforts to prevent conflicts, manage crises, and address transnational threats such as terrorism and climate change³.

The Paris Agreement is an international treaty adopted in 2015 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius. It includes commitments from participating countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance climate resilience⁴.

Refugee is defined as a person who has crossed an international border “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion”⁵

Background Information

In the research paper conducted by Haldén, Peter on the geopolitics of climate change the international conflict is rooted from “Differences between countries in how they adopt a less fossil-intense form of capitalism and adapt to climate change could alter regional balances of power⁶” On the international stage these differences can lead to different military and political actions upscaling the conflict. On the other hand, there is the domestic conflicts these were identified as “One way in which the legitimacy of political systems could be

¹ European Parliament “The concept of ‘climate refugee’ towards a possible definition” [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698753/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)698753_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698753/EPRS_BRI(2021)698753_EN.pdf) October 2022

² UN Climate Action “What is Climate Change?” <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/what-is-climate-change>

³ NATO “Countering Terrorism” https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_77646.htm July 2023

⁴ UNFCCC “What is the Paris Agreement?” <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement> 2015

⁵ UNHCR “Climate change and disaster displacement” <https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/build-better-futures/environment-disasters-and-climate-change/climate-change-and>

⁶ Swedish Defence Research Agency “The Geopolitics of Climate Change” <https://www.klimatilpasning.dk/media/1154179/The%20geopolitics%20of%20CC.pdf> December 2007

damaged is if the population perceives that they have been insufficiently warned and that previous generations of politicians should have taken more forceful action⁷”.

Major Countries and Organisations Involved

China and the United States: As the two largest greenhouse gas emitters, both countries have a significant impact on global climate change efforts. Their policies and commitments to reducing emissions can influence global strategies.

European Union: The EU has been proactive in promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. Member countries collectively contribute to international climate agreements.

India is a major emerging economy with a significant impact on global emissions.

The UN facilitates international cooperation on climate-related issues through agencies like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

World Meteorological Organization (WMO): Monitors and assesses climate trends and provides scientific input on climate issues.

Relevant UN Resolutions

Resolution 50/9 adopted by the Human rights council on July 7th 2022⁸. The council recognised that the adverse impact of climate change negatively affected the understanding of the right to food. It was followed by a panel discussion and interactive dialogues on the topic

Resolution 44/7 adopted by the Human rights council on July 16, 2020⁹. The council sees the negative impacts of climate change unevenly affects the older persons. It was therefore requested OHCHR to conduct a study on this issue and decided that at a later session there should be a panel session.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Kyoto Protocol (1997): The Kyoto Protocol¹⁰ was an international treaty that aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to combat climate change. While not universally adopted, it represented a significant early effort to address global warming.

Copenhagen Accord (2009): The Copenhagen Accord¹¹ emerged from the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2009. Although it faced criticism for not being legally binding, it marked a commitment by several countries to limit temperature increases and mobilize financial assistance for climate-related projects.

⁷ Swedish Defence Research Agency “The Geopolitics of Climate Change” <https://www.klimatilpasning.dk/media/1154179/The%20geopolitics%20of%20CC.pdf> December 2007

⁸ UN General Assembly “Resolution 50/9” <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G22/406/80/PDF/G2240680.pdf?OpenElement> July 2022

⁹ UN General Assembly “Resolution 44/7” <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G20/189/33/PDF/G2018933.pdf?OpenElement> 2020

¹⁰ UNFCCC “What is the Kyoto Protocol?” https://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol 1997

¹¹ UNFCCC “Draft Decision, Copenhagen Accord” <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/cop15/eng/107.pdf> December 2009

Paris Agreement (2015): The Paris Agreement¹² is a landmark accord with the goal of limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. It brought together nearly all nations in a collective effort to address climate change, with commitments to reduce emissions and enhance resilience.

Possible Solutions

- Strengthen and expand international climate agreements: Encourage nations to enhance their commitments under existing agreements like the Paris Agreement and work towards more ambitious targets for emission reductions.
- Foster global cooperation: Promote collaborative efforts among nations, encouraging the sharing of technology, knowledge, and resources to mitigate and adapt to climate change collectively.
- Integrate climate considerations into conflict prevention: Include climate change as a factor in conflict prevention strategies. This involves addressing resource scarcity, displacement, and other climate-related stressors to prevent conflicts from arising or escalating.
- Provide support for climate refugees: Develop international mechanisms for assisting and resettling populations displaced by climate change, minimising the potential for conflict over resources.
- Promote diplomatic cooperation over shared resources: Encourage nations to engage in diplomatic dialogues and cooperative agreements, especially in regions where transboundary water resources are a source of potential conflict.
- Strengthen international humanitarian efforts: Provide support and assistance to communities affected by climate-related disasters, fostering global solidarity and minimising the potential for conflict.

Bibliography

European Parliament “The concept of ‘climate refugee’ towards a possible definition”
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698753/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)698753_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698753/EPRS_BRI(2021)698753_EN.pdf) October 2022

NATO “Countering Terrorism” https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_77646.htm July 2023

Swedish Defence Research Agency “The Geopolitics of Climate Change”
<https://www.klimatilpasning.dk/media/1154179/The%20geopolitics%20of%20CC.pdf>
December 2007

UN Climate Action “What is Climate Change?” <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/what-is-climate-change>

UN General Assembly “Resolution 44/7” <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G20/189/33/PDF/G2018933.pdf?OpenElement> 2020

¹² UNFCCC “What is the Paris Agreement?” <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement> 2015

UN General Assembly “Resolution 50/9” <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G22/406/80/PDF/G2240680.pdf?OpenElement> July 2022

UNHCR “Climate change and disaster displacement” <https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/build-better-futures/environment-disasters-and-climate-change/climate-change-and>

UNFCCC “Draft Decision, Copenhagen Accord”

<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/cop15/eng/l07.pdf> December 2009

UNFCCC “What is the Kyoto Protocol?” https://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol 1997

UNFCCC “What is the Paris Agreement?” <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement> 2015