# The EEAS’s Climate Change and Defence Roadmap

2021/2102(INI) - 04/04/2022 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted an own-initiative report by Thomas WAITZ (Greens/EFA, AT) on the EEAS climate change and defence roadmap.

Climate change is an increasingly dominant risk multiplier and a new security challenge that needs to be adequately resourced, together with hybrid and cyber threats.

***Strategy and concept***

Members are convinced that **military activities and technology must contribute to the achievement of the EU's carbon neutrality objectives** in order to help combat climate change without compromising mission security or the operational capabilities of the armed forces. In this respect, they stressed that the EU's external action and Member States' armed forces should work to reduce their own carbon footprint and their negative effects on natural resources and biodiversity.

The report urged the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to ensure that environmental protection and the fight against climate change and its effects are **integrated into the Union's external action**. It called for the development of concrete benchmarks to assess progress on the links between climate change and conflict.

***Climate change and defence roadmap***

Members welcomed the roadmap on climate change and defence and called on the EEAS to ensure full implementation of the three work strands, namely the operational dimension, capability development and partnerships. They urged the VP/HR to propose to Member States an immediate programme of action including priority measures outlined in the roadmap that can be implemented in the short term.

In particular, the report welcomed the adoption of immediate and short-term impact measures in the roadmap for the period 2020-2021, including the development of a light-touch reporting process, linked with the development of measurement capabilities, based on progress indicators related to the environmental footprint, including energy, water, waste management, etc., of CSDP missions and operations.

Members called on the VP/HR to **present, by mid-2023**, an assessment of the carbon footprint and environmental impact of the Union's external action and stressed the need to develop by 2023 an effective method for quantifying greenhouse gas emissions from all EU security and defence activities. They called for voluntary targets to reduce the greenhouse gas emission intensity of military missions and operations, as well as a commitment to climate neutrality by 2050.

***A comprehensive and consistent approach***

Members called for **coordinated action** to rapidly limit both the scale and scope of climate change by substantially reducing emissions. All elements of security, including infrastructure, institutions and policies, should be climate-proofed.

The report stressed the need to boost the Union's strategic foresight, early-warning, situational awareness and conflict-analysis capacities using **qualitative and quantitative data** and innovative methods from various sources. They welcomed the key role played by European space programmes, such as Copernicus, in understanding climate change and monitoring greenhouse gas emissions. The principle of data-driven policy and programmes must be central to climate security programmes.

Members also stressed that **environment-related peacebuilding** should be reinforced, as it is one of the overall sustainable and fair solutions addressing the effects of climate change and can also present opportunities to build peace, while fostering dialogue and cooperation at the local, national and international level (e.g. on natural resource management, access to land and water, environmental protection, disaster risk reduction, welcoming climate refugees, etc.).

***Addressing the operational dimension***

Members support the integration of a **climate-sensitive approach** and strongly believes that it is urgent for Member States to mandate all missions and operations and all European Peace Facility (EPF) actions to contribute more to the integrated approach for addressing climate security challenges, in particular in the Sahel and Horn of Africa regions. This would reduce the costs of operations, while improving the missions' operational effectiveness.

The report stressed the need to **integrate climate security and environment-related peacebuilding** into the updated EU concepts on Security Sector Reform and Disarmament. It urged the EEAS to ensure that civilian missions and military operations take climate change into account from the outset. It also stressed the imperative need to ensure that EU activities in fragile third countries do not contribute to resource scarcity, rising prices for vital resources or environmental degradation and pollution.

***Integrating climate change into military capability development***

Members called for an assessment of the effects of climate change-induced changes in weather patterns and the increased frequency of extreme weather events on the operational effectiveness of armed forces. They stressed that increased defence spending should not lead to increased emissions.

The report stressed the need to **increase investment in 'green' defence**, including by devoting a greater share of military R&D and dual-use technological innovations (materials, energy, etc.) funded by the EU budget to carbon-neutral fuels and propulsion systems for aircraft, ships and other military vehicles.

***Increasing international cooperation and multilateralism***

Members reiterated the importance of cooperation as a corner stone of the EU's leadership role in the fight against climate change. They called for the climate-security nexus to be included as a **new priority area for the UN-EU Strategic Partnership** on Peace Operations and Crisis Management. They stressed that the lack of climate finance is a major barrier to meaningfully addressing climate change and building climate security.