

# Climate change and European foreign policy after COP21

Discussion Note

**Adaptation and Finance Panel:** *How can we enhance development, adaptation, and climate finance policies with a view to tempering climate change and managing its impacts?*

As the earth continues to heat, it will become ever more important to anticipate the adverse effects, improving resilience and making adaptation part of a "well-done-development-process". Climate impacts will also have implications in terms of EU security and foreign policies, beyond the development perspective, requiring different readings and actions for different sectoral or geographical aspects. Scarce resources need to be marshalled and directed, and economic development processes will need to be re-worked to adjust for climate impacts.

Potential questions to address:

- What has COP21 changed for how Europe will partner with developing countries that have now developed their own INDCs?
- What priority areas for action will need more focus and resources in the next five years?
- How can public finance ensure proper adaptation? How can Europe provide adequate financial support to the most vulnerable?
- How can European action on climate adaptation and finance better connect with other essential development processes, notably the new Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals?
- Is Europe resilient to local and global climate change impacts? What type of preventive understanding mechanism we need to build?

**Security and Migration panel -** *How can we assess and manage international security, migration and fragility risks related to climate change?*

Climate change has been described as a "threat multiplier" that will aggravate fragile situations and may contribute to social upheaval, forced migration and even violent conflict. The best way to diminish the threat posed by these climate-fragility risks is to mitigate climate change. However, changes to the climate are already underway, so action will be required to manage and minimize these risks today. Key sectors for action have been identified to help strengthen resilience to climate-fragility risks: climate change adaptation, development and humanitarian aid, and peacebuilding.

Potential questions to address:

- What are the most prominent risks that European policymakers should take into account? What regions are most vulnerable to these risks?
- How can governments embed support for climate resilience throughout their development programmes and encourage others to do the same?
- Are existing crisis management processes sufficient for understanding and managing climate-fragility risks?
- Will climate change be a major factor affecting how Europe and the world manage migration issues?
- How can climate policy help to shape Europe's response to manage migration issues?

**Mitigation Panel:** *What were the COP21 outcomes and what should be the next steps to increase the overall ambition of climate mitigation activities?*

The Paris Agreement obliges Parties to take mitigation measures, but there is no legally binding obligation to achieve their contributions. Although the contributions outlined in the INDCs mean a meaningful reduction of emissions compared to "business as usual" pathways, even in case of full implementation, the mean global temperature is likely to increase by more than 3°C. This raises important questions about the path ahead for European international action.

Potential questions to address:

- The Paris Agreement marks a shift to an open architecture for climate negotiations, enhancing national ownership of the climate challenge – what opportunities does this present for Europe in post-COP21 mitigation discussions?
- What steps are needed to foster a process of strengthening national contributions – especially with a view to 2018 and the new mechanism of regular stocktaking? What does the aim of climate neutrality mean in this respect?
- What are the main challenges in establishing the transparency framework for implementing the Paris Agreement?
- Who are the key partners for the EU and what are effective ways to involve them?

**Climate Diplomacy Panel:** *How can European climate diplomacy support a successful implementation of the Paris Agreement together with its partners?*

The EU and its member states have increasingly developed common messages and methods for diplomatic cooperation for working with international partners on climate issues. As concluded by the European Foreign Affairs Council in June 2013, EU climate diplomacy has been aimed at (1) achieving a successful Paris outcome, (2) developing meaningful partnerships to implement climate actions and (3) increased efforts to address security risks linked to climate change. Following the Paris Agreement, the objectives and approaches to European climate diplomacy will continue to evolve.

Potential questions to address:

- What can EU climate diplomacy learn from the successful coalition building efforts before and during COP21? How can future coalitions between ambitious developing nations and the EU be promoted, whether inside or outside of the UNFCCC?
- How can European lessons on integrating climate and energy action be used to encourage sustainable transformations in partner countries?
- How do we avoid a 'climate diplomacy fatigue' and ensure climate action remains a political priority?
- How can the EU and its member states mobilize their external action instruments (trade, development, energy partnerships, R&D cooperation, etc.) at the service of implementing Paris/moving to climate neutral economy?
- What diplomatic priorities can be highlighted from the first three panels on Mitigation, Adaptation and Finance, and Security and Migration?