



Climate Change (SDG13) and a Green Energy Transition (SDG7) and Governance

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In the formulation of the 2030 Agenda, it is recognized that the greatest global challenge facing our world today is to eradicate the substantial gaps in access to resources – at economic, social and environmental dimensions....which to a large extent contribute to sustainable development.

Conflict, insecurity, limited access to justice and weak institutions remain a great threat to achieving this.

Respecting human rights is key in shaping the pandemic responses. By respecting human rights in this time of crisis, more effective and inclusive solutions for the emergency of today and the recovery for tomorrow are built.



A Governance that puts human rights and people at centre-stage results in better outcomes in beating the pandemic, ensuring healthcare for everyone and preserving human dignity.

The UN Secretary General urged governments to be transparent, responsive and accountable in their COVID-19 response and ensure that any emergency measures are legal, proportionate, necessary and non-discriminatory. “The best response is one that responds proportionately to immediate threats while protecting human rights and the rule of law”, he said.



Some of the assessments of interactions among SDGs that were reviewed, applied an influence matrix to assess pairwise interactions between all SDGs, and indicated how viewing these from the perspective of environment–human linkages can influence the outcome. Environment, and environment–human linkages, influence most interactions between SDGs.

The assessment enables decision makers to focus environmental management to have the greatest impacts and to identify opportunities to build on synergies and reduce trade-offs between particular SDGs. It may enable sectoral decision makers to seek support from environment managers for achieving their goals.

The 17 SDGs, and their targets, present a new and coherent way of thinking about diverse issues related to development, such as hunger, gender and climate change, and were conceived as “integrated and indivisible to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental” (UN [2015](#)).



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The SDGs aim to stimulate action over the 15 years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet (UN [2015](#)). Progress towards the SDGs depends on action by national governments and a wide range of actors, including the private sector, civil society organizations and millions of individuals. Coordinated governance that recognizes and provides importance to all these stakeholders becomes critical in achieving the SDGs.

Commonly, decisions and actions (including research, innovation, policy, and management) are mostly focused on a single SDG, or small subsets of SDGs, because institutions, governance, and research funders are commonly fragmented or siloed (e.g. separate agriculture and climate change departments; water resources management and energy, etc) Governments may also prioritize those SDGs that can in principle be met at the national scale, especially goals related to human wellbeing (e.g. SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 16; Waage et al. [2015](#)). However, because decisions and actions to advance any one SDG will likely affect the achievement of the others, we need a better understanding of the interactions between SDGs, in particular trade-offs, synergies and unintended consequences.



Climate Change does not respect borders. Isolated national efforts may remain limited in outcomes if cross-border concerted efforts and initiatives are ignored. Governance based on regional understanding and integration is key in this case.

The Kingdom of Lesotho exports water to South Africa through the **Orange River**. The river is the longest within the borders of South Africa and the Orange River Basin extending extensively from Lesotho into South Africa and Namibia to the north. It rises in the Drakensberg mountains in Lesotho.

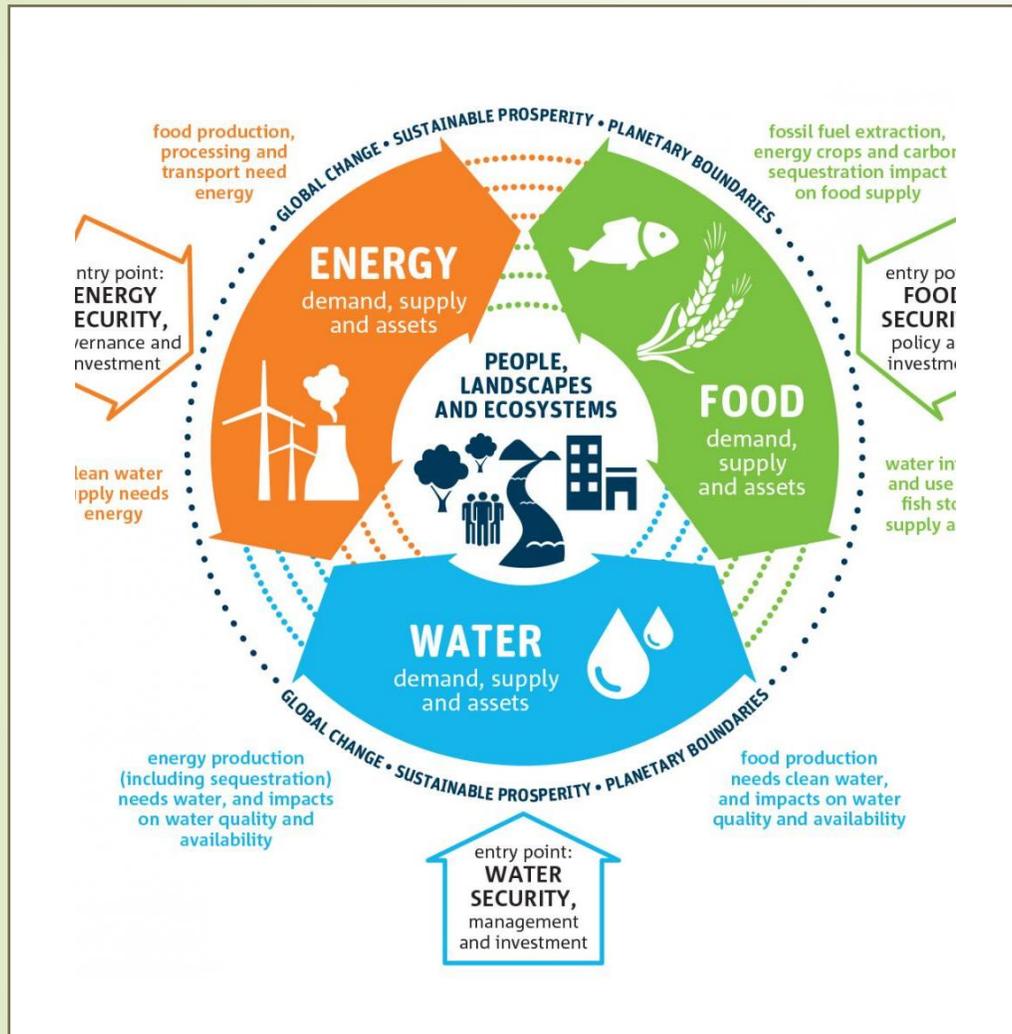
The river forms part of the international borders between South Africa and Lesotho and between South Africa and Namibia as well as several provincial borders within South Africa.

The Orange River plays an important role in the South African economy by providing water for irrigation and hydroelectric power.

This works well due to the good bilateral understanding between the two countries but also the good water catchments management and the Governance of the resource in general.

Another reason for considering interactions between SDGs is the growing evidence that substantial economic, social and environmental benefits can be obtained from well-coordinated actions that capitalize on synergies between multiple SDGs. For example, targeting energy security (SDG 7), climate change (SDG 13) and air pollution (SDG 3, 11, 12) simultaneously in energy systems could achieve all three goals for only slightly greater cost than achieving the climate change goal alone (c. 1% of global GDP vs c. 1.6%; McCollum et al. [2011](#)).

Phasing out solid fuel cooking stoves could reduce global warming by 0.08 °C by 2050 at the same time as avoiding 260,000 premature deaths per year from local pollution (Lacey et al. [2017](#)) progressing SDGs 13 and 3.



Several assessments have focused on one SDG or subsets of SDGs. Examples include interlinkages between human health and environment showing SDG 3 as the only goal in the inner circle, with the remaining 16 goals in an outer layer, directly interacting with SDG 3 and not with each other (UNEP [2016](#));

Assessments of various nexus approaches including the water-energy-food nexus, and the interactions among these subsets (Ritz [2015](#); Weitz et al. [2015](#); Liu et al. [2018](#); McCollum et al. [2018](#)); or the land resource-food price nexus using a dynamic partial equilibrium model of agriculture and forest sectors (Obersteiner et al. [2016](#)).



As Florian Krampe puts it, building peace is never straightforward but there is an increasing awareness that the challenge will become exponentially more difficult in countries where climate change is amplifying social and political instability.

Eight of the ten countries hosting the most multilateral peace operations personnel in 2018 are located in areas highly exposed to climate change. Nonetheless, international efforts to build and maintain peace are not yet taking these emerging challenges systematically into account. This is concerning because the interactions between climate change and violent conflict prolong the latter, inhibit peacebuilding and increase the human costs of war.



Climate-related changes compound social, economic and political challenges, especially in regions in which agriculture is an important source of livelihoods. This results in climate-related security risks, which also means an increased likelihood of violent conflict. However, the impacts are temporally and spatially diverse, because different social, political and economic contexts and processes are exacerbated by different climate-related changes.



CLIMATE-RELATED SECURITY RISKS TO BUILDING PEACE

Climate change affects peacebuilding in a number of ways. The compound character of climate change is a strong exogenous factor that reshapes the local context for building peace and is likely to amplify local grievances and marginalization.

At the same time, the impacts of climate change inhibit economic development in the many conflict-affected countries in which the majority of the population depends on agriculture for its livelihood. Extreme weather events in particular weaken already fragile institutions that are unable to respond to the impacts of either slow- or rapid-onset disasters. The impacts of climate change therefore actively erode the capacity of states to prevent conflict.

CLIMATE-RELATED SECURITY RISKS TO BUILDING PEACE Cont...

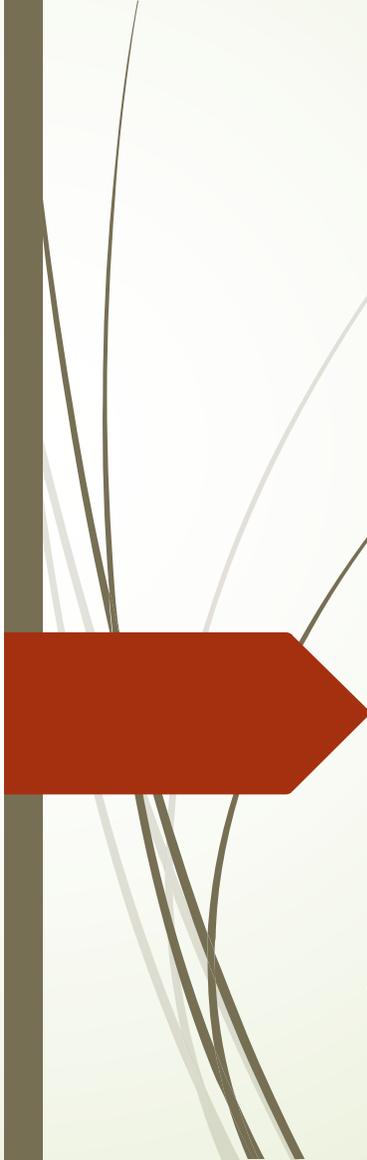
The work of peace operations to build and sustain peace is becoming increasingly difficult because climate change is directly affecting the dynamics of ongoing conflicts and increasing the likelihood of violent conflict. This interaction has been seen in recent years, for example, in Somalia, but can also be found across the broader Sahel region and in other states such as Afghanistan.

Somali society's double exposure to decades of violent conflict and recurring droughts and floods has generated over 2.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). Increasingly, climate-related impacts are driving displacement through land degradation linked to the greater frequency of droughts and floods. In April 2018, for instance, flash floods in Somalia affected more than 695, 000 people, displacing nearly 215, 000.

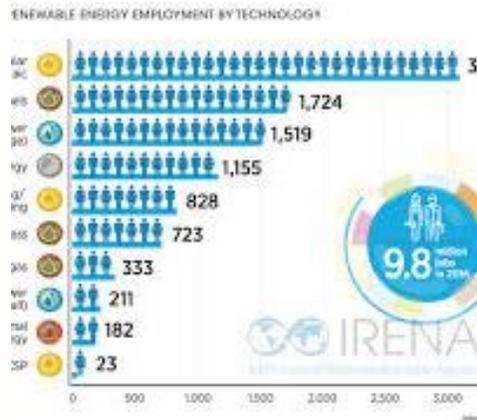


GREEN ENERGY TRANSITION

The 2015 Paris Climate Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) both underline the necessity of a transition toward a sustainable, zero-carbon future for all. Since it is responsible for most of the carbon emissions, clearly the energy sector must be at the center of such an extensive shift. The question is neither whether we need this transition, nor whether it will happen, but rather whether we will achieve it fast enough to meet the 1.5°C temperature goal set by the Paris Agreement.



The global energy transition away from fossil fuels toward 100 per cent Renewable Energy (RE) faces numerous challenges. Speed will be essential to avoid irreversible damage. Further challenges such as energy access, energy storage, technology transfer, enabling investment, the vested interests of the fossil industry and the effects on the labor market must be addressed quickly. In order to be successful, the transition has to be socially inclusive and just, leaving no one behind.



GREEN ENERGY TRANSITION Cont..

Even though the global energy transition represents an enormous challenge, calling for efforts from all of us, we should not only focus on the difficulties and risks, but more importantly also on the manifold opportunities it brings with it. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), RE have a huge potential for creating jobs.

Jobs in the RE sector are created directly and indirectly along the entire value chain. If we ensure that these jobs have decent working conditions in terms of health, salaries and benefits, then they can be clearly preferable to jobs in the traditional energy sector. Because Renewable Energy sources can be installed and used in a decentralized way, they can bring access to energy to everybody, especially also in rural areas, which is important for sustainable development from which everyone can profit.

In addition, they create cleaner air and are healthier, so that they not only save lives but also potentially thousands of dollars in public health care costs. A 100 per cent RE future is our only chance to achieve both the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and the SDGs.

GREEN ENERGY TRANSITION

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The global energy transition is affecting everybody. We should thus all be involved in shaping it. But how exactly can we all shape it? The principle that unites every movement and every stakeholder active in this process is justice. But what does justice mean in the context of the energy transition away from fossil fuels toward Renewable Energy sources? How can we unite the different approaches to justice from trade unions that rightfully insist that workers' rights be respected, to development groups that rightfully stress the importance of rapidly eradicating poverty, to environmental groups that rightfully underline the importance of respecting planetary boundaries?

The key – and this quickly becomes very clear – is to build bridges, not walls. Different groups must combine their efforts to support a just global energy transition that is already well under way. 2016 marked the first year in which global investments in RE were higher than those in fossil fuels—especially in the Global South. The Climate Vulnerable Forum's (CVF) announcement during COP22 in Marrakesh on wanting to achieve 100 percent RE by 2050 at the latest is a positive sign regarding where the world is and should be heading. This path needs to be accelerated and strengthened by an alliance of developing countries, developed countries, civil society, trade unions, scientists and business.

