



# HUMANITARIAN AID DONORS' DECLARATION ON CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

First reporting under the Declaration – 2023 Report



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# Humanitarian aid donors' declaration on climate and environment

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## INTRODUCTION

Disasters, the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation are increasing in frequency and intensity each year. Climate change is already affecting the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, leading to degradation of ecosystems, disruption to food production and water supplies, damage to infrastructure and human establishments, morbidity and mortality. In turn, environmental degradation is also driving displacement and compounding crises (e.g. through desertification, coastal erosion, pollution, prolonged or frequent droughts), caused by mis-managed natural resources and weakened ecosystems.

Climate change impacts, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss are increasing humanitarian needs worldwide, not only directly as climate-related disasters grow, but also indirectly, as climate and environment-related disasters are compounded with other factors like conflict and instability. Displacement and migration prompted by disasters, climate change and environmental degradation expose affected individuals and societies to high levels of risk. They erode fragile livelihoods and ecosystems, aggravate existing vulnerabilities and undermine resilience. The most affected are also those who contribute least to the problem. At the same time, efforts to respond to the humanitarian needs of populations very often have unintended consequences on the environment, also impacting the affected populations themselves.



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This calls for a shift in how humanitarian assistance is conceived and delivered, to a humanitarian system that prevents, prepares, anticipates and responds to climate and environmental risks and impacts.

In response to these growing problems, the [Humanitarian aid Donors' Declaration on Climate and Environment](#) was launched at the first European Humanitarian Forum in March 2022. It aims to galvanise governments and donors, and bring about collective action, as they have a key role to play in supporting this momentum. It was designed to mirror the [Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations](#), and provide concrete steps for donors to take.

The 4 commitments can be summarised as follows:

1. Encourage greater investment in work to **prevent, prepare for, anticipate** and **respond to disasters** within a systemic, multi-risk approach, particularly with and for the most vulnerable communities, by including civil society, the humanitarian sector and the private sector of developed and developing countries.
2. Contribute to **improving cooperation** and **partnerships** between governments, donors and aid actors. Strengthening such coordination could help limit the risk of aspects that worsen crises, including in terms of human mobility, and strengthen the implementation of appropriate responses in terms of disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and longer-term development.
3. Increase efforts to **reduce the greenhouse gas emissions and impact on biodiversity** of humanitarian activities to help achieve the Paris Agreement's global warming limitation goals.
4. Foster the creation of the conditions required for international humanitarian organisations and local partners to **adopt environmentally friendly practices and approaches**.

Implementing these commitments should not be seen only as a responsibility for humanitarian actors and the departments that provide humanitarian funding. The commitments have to be implemented across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and beyond, involving also environment and climate actors.

As such, this reporting looks not only at humanitarian funding, but also development and climate funding that is going to the most vulnerable.

Input to the report was received from 16 signatories<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Sweden.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall, most of the reporting Signatories have integrated climate action into the institutional framework of their humanitarian response, in particular disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA). The integration of climate-related considerations is often embedded in humanitarian-specific policy frameworks. This translates into cooperation and partnership building with humanitarian partners (local authorities, Non-Governmental Organisations, International Organisations), governments and other donors on these topics. However, specific reporting under the implementation of Signatories' strategies was often not available since a majority are recent and/or still being implemented over a specific timeframe. Most reporting Signatories<sup>2</sup> are also actively engaged in projects and programmes related to climate in their humanitarian action, including on anticipatory action.

Many of the signatories<sup>3</sup> have an overarching commitment to the localisation of aid, stemming from their Grand Bargain commitments. They are implementing this commitment either through own mechanisms to facilitate localisation or through requirements towards their Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) partners. Many of the signatories<sup>4</sup> also support initiatives that build the capacities of local authorities, communities, and organisations when it comes to holistic risk management.

There is a wide range of examples among the Signatories with regard to strategies on greening of their humanitarian action. Many Signatories<sup>5</sup> have developed greening strategies, while others are working on developing them. Many Signatories<sup>6</sup> are actively engaged in reducing the environmental impacts of humanitarian projects with concrete actions.

An area for collective improvement is the monitoring and measuring the environmental impacts of projects and programmes as only two Signatories explicitly reported doing so. The reporting demonstrated that more efforts are needed to support humanitarian organisations in their organisational-level change, which would help them measure or estimate the greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on biodiversity of humanitarian action.

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<sup>2</sup> Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Sweden.

<sup>3</sup> Czechia, Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden.

<sup>4</sup> Czechia, the European Commission, France, Germany, Lithuania, Spain, Sweden.

<sup>5</sup> Czechia, the European Commission, Finland, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden.

<sup>6</sup> Czechia, the European Commission, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Spain, Sweden.

# I. Climate change and humanitarian aid – adapting the response and mainstreaming

## Signatories' reporting under Commitments 1 and 2 of the Declaration

### A. *Relevant external aid strategies*

Overall, most of the reporting Signatories have integrated climate action into the institutional framework of their humanitarian response, and in particular disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA), as detailed below. Other Signatories are in the process of doing so, which will either take the form of a revised humanitarian strategy, as reported by France and Ireland, a mapping of relevant international obligations, as is the case of Czechia, or revised legislation, in Croatia. Importantly, the Donor Declaration was reported as a factor in these efforts, and the Netherlands for example plans on reviewing its humanitarian programming in light of it.

The integration of climate-related considerations is often embedded in humanitarian-specific policy frameworks. Luxembourg for instance has revised its humanitarian strategy in 2022, prioritising coordination with development actors and the integration of DRR and CCA in its programming. Similarly, Germany's 2019-2023 Federal Foreign Office Strategy for Humanitarian Assistance Abroad recognises the adverse impacts of climate change on humanitarian needs and puts emphasis on DRR and anticipatory action. This is also the case for Finland, with its 2019 humanitarian policy, and of Spain's Humanitarian Action Strategy 2019-2026. Likewise for Sweden, its environment, climate, and nexus approach are an integral part of the 2021-2025 Strategy for Sweden's humanitarian aid provided through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The 2021 Communication on the EU's humanitarian action ("New challenges, same principles") also emphasises the importance of ensuring that climate and environmental considerations (including risk awareness) are always taken into account in humanitarian action, with specific focus on supporting CCA and environmental resilience as part of humanitarian programming. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO) published the same year a [Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note](#), which includes a specific section on climate and environmental resilience.

In other instances, climate considerations were reported as included in broader external cooperation strategies such as Lithuania's "Development cooperation strategic directions for 2022-2025", Malta's Official Development and Humanitarian Assistance Policy, and Romania's "Multiannual Strategic Program on the International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance for the period 2020-2023". Similarly, the Italian Cooperation's 2021-2023 "Three-Year Programming and Policy Planning Document" prioritises climate change adaptation actions in order to prevent further destabilisation within the most fragile contexts. Denmark's development Strategy "The World We Share" outlines the need to connect humanitarian and development efforts on climate change in an integrated approach. In 2022, Ireland started the development of a climate-proofing strategy to strengthen the integration of climate action and resilience across all channels of Irish development finance, including humanitarian assistance. From 2023 onwards this strategy will continue to be developed and implemented with humanitarian and development partners.

Specific reporting under the implementation of Signatories' strategies was often not available, since a majority are recent and/or still being implemented over a specific timeframe. A wide variety of concrete outcomes was nonetheless reported, from spending targets (5% of Germany's humanitarian budget for anticipatory action in 2023) to a mainstreaming guide (Spain), as well as targeted partnerships with specialised organizations (e.g., UNDRRR in the case of Czechia) and specific reporting tools in projects (DG ECHO's [Resilience Marker](#)). More details on a number of these initiatives can be found below.

## B. Good practices – example of projects and programmes

Most reporting Signatories<sup>7</sup> reported being actively engaged in projects and programmes related to climate in their humanitarian action.

Multiple Signatories consider anticipatory action as a means to prepare for climate impacts. The German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) is supporting a large number of anticipatory action (pilot) projects across the globe that put an emphasis on improving local climate disaster risk analysis, building capacities of local communities and reaching “last mile” communities. Germany is, for example, contributing to a variety of anticipatory action financing mechanisms, including via the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), World Food Programme’s (WFP) corporate Trust Fund for Hunger-related Climate Change (THCC), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA), Start Fund and Start Ready – the latter two having a special focus on localised action.

Through its humanitarian budget, the European Commission currently supports around 30 ongoing projects with anticipatory action components, amounting to approx. EUR 50 million. This includes a Programmatic Partnership with FAO, specifically focused on anticipatory action and implemented in Bangladesh, Laos, Pakistan, the Philippines and Vietnam over three years (2021-2023). The European Commission is also supporting preparedness for disasters caused by natural hazards through its European Humanitarian Response Capacity (EHRC), for example in Latin America and the Caribbean through the regional humanitarian stockpile in Panama.

Denmark, among other initiatives, provides specific support to the Danish Red Cross’s work with Anticipatory Action and resilience to climate-related shocks, as well as supports Forests of the World working to strengthen drought resilience in Ethiopia through preservation of wetlands and soil.

Through its humanitarian budget, Sweden (Sida) supports anticipatory action in partnership with FAO (amounting to 47% of the SFERA allocation in 2022 with four interventions). In addition, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden supports the anticipatory action of the CERF. Anticipatory Action is also included in the country-based pooled funds, for which Sida is a major contributor. Sida also contributes to global Disaster Risk Reduction through its environment, climate change and biodiversity strategy with targeted funding towards this thematic. The total contributions from this strategy contributing to the DRR policy marker was in 2022 around EUR 47 million.

## Good Practice Examples



**Germany:** Since 2019, the support of the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) has allowed the German Red Cross together with the Lebanese Red Cross to develop an enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity assessment training package (consisting of a facilitator guide and toolbox) which includes fragile- and conflict-affected contexts considerations for disaster risk reduction projects and approaches in conflict-affected contexts. Additional support to the Lebanese Red Cross has allowed scale up of disaster risk reduction in schools and in conflict-affected and/or urban communities. Since 2021, the GFFO is supporting an Anticipatory Action project. This project is directly interlinked with the previous investments in preparedness and disaster risk reduction to further enhance early warning and early actions mechanisms in Lebanon. These projects are implemented through strong coordination and cooperation with authorities and other stakeholders such as civil defence, international NGOs and community-based organisations on preparedness at local, regional and national level.



**Luxembourg:** In Bangladesh, a country frequently hit by disasters caused by natural and climatic hazards, Luxembourg funded a community-based disaster risk reduction programme in the coastal region with the NGO Friendship. Through this programme, local disaster risk management committees were established in order to strengthen communities in preparing for natural disasters (e.g. develop strategies, designing risk reduction action plans, establishing guidelines on how to keep community safe). It was implemented within four districts in the north and south of Bangladesh; working with 30 communities, and 50% of beneficiaries were female. Activities under this project focused on: follow-up and coordination meetings to assure sound project implementation and to promote good project communication (incl. transparency and lessons learned) and capacity building in various areas for community members (e.g. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH); drowning prevention; search and rescue capacities; education in emergencies).

<sup>7</sup> Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Sweden.





**Czechia:** Czechia funded a project implemented by CARE ČR with the objective of Resilience and adaptability in the drought-affected Borana zone, Ethiopia. The aim of the project was to implement disaster risk management capacity of the zone and woreda DRM offices and target communities. The main outcomes were: Increasing the proportion of community members using early warning information, preparing and responding to climate change, improving the implementation capacity of government and community partners, and enhancing the productivity of degraded rangelands.



**France:** Through its voluntary contributions to the United Nations (UN), France finances the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) with EUR 1 million dedicated to two projects addressing the consequences of climate change on migration flows. EUR 500,000 are dedicated to a project in the Centre and West of Africa (including Sahel) and EUR 500,000 are allocated to a project in the Caribbean and Haiti.



**Italy:** Since 2020, the Italian Cooperation contributes to the implementation of the “Africa Roadmap for Improving the Availability, Access and Use of Disaster Risk Information for Early Warning and Early Action, including in the Context of Transboundary Risk Management”, through an EUR 8 million project that supported the set-up of the AUC situation room and DRR capacity building activities in collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC) and UNDRR. The project aims to strengthen continental, regional, and national multi-hazard impact-based early warning systems across Africa and enhancing the vertical and horizontal coordination mechanism. The 24/7 situation room facilitates the exchange, monitoring and access to DRR data through a free open-source platform - MyDewetra - developed by the Italian Civil Protection in collaboration with the CIMA Research Foundation. Moreover, the AUC situation room is connected to other two situation rooms established by the project - so far - at the African Centre for Meteorological Application for Development (ACMAD) and at the IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) in Nairobi.



**The EU:** Examples from ongoing activities on Early Warning Systems funded through the EU's cooperation budget include the Intra-ACP Climate Services and Related Applications Programme (ClimSA) supporting e.g. access to climate information and capacity strengthening of Regional Climate Centres to ultimately improve the provision of early warnings, and climate and enhanced risk-informed decision making in ACP countries (EUR 85 million), a contribution to the Climate Risks and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) initiative (EUR 10 million) and the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa Programme (GMES&Africa) which focuses on improving access, processing and use of Earth observation data provided by Copernicus for sustainable development in Africa, including early warnings of fire, floods and coastal hazards (EUR 50 million).



Distribution of mobile phones and SIM-Cards to access „Mobile Money“. ©Haddad/Welthungerhilfe, DWHH



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Multiple Signatories also reported supporting the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) (Germany, Malta, the Netherlands, the EU, Spain, Sweden).

All of the reporting Signatories reported investing in both climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction through development and humanitarian funding.

Most of the organisations funded by the Netherlands have specific programmes focused on climate and environment related humanitarian interventions. This includes anticipatory action, early warning, and disaster preparedness.

Czechia has a dedicated DRR and resilience grant programme, targeting LDCs, particularly those being priority partner countries for Czech ODA (nexus approach).

Finland is supporting UNDRR with unearmarked core funding with a four-year agreement of EUR 1 million a year. Finland and UNDRR have specifically collaborated on integrating disability inclusion into UNDRR's work, including with an earmarked one-off contribution of EUR 500,000. Finland considers this as supporting some of the most vulnerable people being affected by climate change and changes to the environment.

Romania's MFA 2023 annual budget for development and humanitarian aid allocates nearly 10% of the total envelope for projects in the areas of climate change, environmental protection and renewable energy, mainly in countries of South America (such as Suriname, Guyana or the Republic of Ecuador), Central and South-East Asia. Similarly, Malta's 2023 budget for development and humanitarian assistance devotes nearly 10% of the total allocation to climate change initiatives, mainly in small island developing states (SIDS) and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Likewise, Sweden (Sida) allocated around 14% (EUR 380 million) of its total budget to environment and climate (principal objective), whereof a quarter went to adaptation and resilience to climate change, environmental degradation and natural disasters.

Further good practice examples can be found throughout this section.

## Good Practice Examples



**Spain:** Support through Intercoonecta Program to Iberoamerican networks dealing with meteorological (CIMHET), hydrological (CODIA) and climate change (RIOCC) institutions. The coordination of these three networks has allowed prioritisation of a list of projects focused on Early Warning Systems. An example from the project includes coordinated support to Early Warning Systems in Central America by Spanish Cooperation (Water and Sanitation Programme-FCAS), the Iberoamerican Network of Water (CODIA), and the Iberoamerican network of Meteorological services (CIMHET) and the UE (LAIF program).



**Ireland:** From 2022-2025, Ireland is providing funding for the Systemic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF), a World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-led programme which will help developing countries to improve their weather and climate observation systems, in order to better prepare for climate disasters and mitigate their humanitarian impact. The programme will be implemented through beneficiary country national meteorological services, enabling them to collect and share high quality climate observation data and sustain their national observation infrastructure. It will involve civil society and local community actors at all stages, including through its partnership with the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), to ensure that SOFF addresses the needs of diverse and vulnerable communities and integrates with last mile activities.



**Sweden:** Sida works through its development arm to improve the design of social protection programmes to make them more shock-responsive, enhancing national institutional capacity to Leave Nobody Behind when disasters strike. Examples of this include support to Ethiopia 's Productive Safety Net programme (PSNP), which includes adaptive and shock responsive social protection models to mitigate the risk for vulnerable households to fall into poverty when the country is hit by cyclical weather-related shocks. Sida has contributed with SEK 352 million over six years (2017 – 2022) to this programme.



**Romania:** Continuation of funding for ASEAN's Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) activities in the field of disaster prevention and disaster management in developing countries, as well as for the implementation of The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) Strategy in support of cooperation between the states of Central Asia in the field of water, energy, environment and climate for 2022-2025 is envisaged for 2023.



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### C. *Creating an enabling environment*

Many of the signatories<sup>8</sup> have an overarching commitment to the localisation of aid, stemming from their Grand Bargain commitments.

They are implementing this commitment either through own mechanisms to facilitate localisation or through requirements towards their NGO partners. Mechanisms to facilitate localisation include programme-based approaches and multi-year funding, as in the case of Sweden, contribution to Country Based Pooled Funds, as in the case of Finland or the EU, or contribution to the DREF, as is the case for Germany, Malta, the Netherlands, the EU, Spain and Sweden.

Finland, as well as Malta and Spain, also work more directly with civil society organisations (CSOs) or religious communities / missionaries.

In terms of requirements for example, Denmark requires its NGO partners to allocate as high a percentage of development support as possible directly to local actors. In a similar vein, the European Commission is developing guidelines for its partners on promoting equal partnerships with local responders in humanitarian settings to increase the share of aid being delivered through local actors.

Many of the signatories<sup>9</sup> also support initiatives that build the capacities of local authorities, communities and organisations when it comes to holistic risk management.

Lithuania works with local authorities on climate change initiatives, mainly through its development cooperation.

The European Commission's humanitarian budget has a dedicated budget line for preparedness interventions in all geographical regions, notably by building the capacity of local actors (civil society, communities, governmental entities) and strengthening preparedness systems (such as Early Warning Systems), in line with the Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note. The budget has increased steadily every year, reaching EUR 78 million in 2023.

Germany's projects are implemented through strong coordination and cooperation with authorities and other stakeholders such as civil defence, (I)NGOs and community-based organisations on preparedness at local, regional and national level. Additionally, investment in preparedness and disaster risk reduction also enables a quick scale up of local capacities in emergencies. The German Federal Foreign Office is also supporting a number of anticipatory action (pilot) projects and contributing to a variety of anticipatory action financing mechanisms, with Start Fund and Start Ready having a special focus on localised action (see above).

Further examples of best practice can be found throughout this section.

### **Improved cooperation and partnerships between governments, donors and aid actors to reinforce DRR, climate change adaptation and longer-term development**

Denmark, Sweden and the EU are operationalising the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and promoting integrated approaches between humanitarian and development engagements. Sweden and the European Commission also have specific questions to this end in their reporting templates or guidelines for humanitarian partners. In its Humanitarian NGO Guidelines, Sweden has included references to disaster preparedness, resilience, environment, climate change adaptation and links with longer term development efforts. The European Commission's reporting template for its humanitarian Partners ("Single Form") includes a specific Resilience Marker, aiming to capture the extent to which disaster preparedness, resilience, climate change adaptation and links with longer term development efforts have been included in projects funded through the EU's humanitarian budget.

For Czechia, when supporting projects aimed at reducing the risk of disasters, emphasis is placed on the long-term operation of the implementers in the given area, on the credibility of local partners, including administrative authorities, and on connections with other humanitarian and development activities developed by Czechia in the given country.

Regarding engagement with partner organisations, the Netherlands plans to engage partner organisations to understand the measures they are taking to greening the humanitarian response, and to ensure programming is both climate smart and climate sensitive.

Denmark has strategic partnerships with several UN organisations and CSOs through which an integrated approach to efforts on e.g. climate change is promoted.

<sup>8</sup> Czechia, Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden.

<sup>9</sup> Czechia, the European Commission, France, Germany, Lithuania, Spain, Sweden.

Luxembourg's cooperation ensures links with multilateral organisations in order to foster the promotion of synergies between the activities financed by Luxembourg and multilateral organisations (e.g. WFP) in the fields of environment and climate change. So far, partnerships regarding climate change were mainly based on dialogues and exchanges of views with the relevant stakeholders/partners. In 2022, Luxembourg launched a process to establish a consolidated toolkit to operationalise the climate strategy based on its various indicators and to harmonize analysis and reporting in this matter. Additionally, in collaboration with the civil society of Luxembourg (i.e. NGOs), the Luxembourg Cooperation will support partner NGOs in gradually taking climate cross-cutting themes into account by integrating them into their programming.

## Good Practice Examples



**Sweden:** From its development budget Sida supports locally led adaptation, for example in Bangladesh, supporting the Local Government Initiative in Climate Change with EUR 2 million, integrating climate change adaptation measures and disaster risk management in local development plans. Through the programme more than 17 000 households have adopted practices for climate adaptation.



**France:** Through its innovative fund, France is funding the NGO ADRA with EUR 750,000 for a project to strengthen resilience to natural disasters, including for the most vulnerable, in the Pacific (Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands). The overall goal is that community-based evacuation centres in Fiji, Vanuatu, and Solomon Islands provide safe and inclusive shelter to local populations, including persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, and are locally managed in a well-coordinated, sustainable and accountable manner. The project supports efforts for disaster risk reduction and to strengthen local aid actors in the context of increasing climate and environmental crises in the region.



**Spain:** The Spanish EMT-2 team (START) gives support to specific national teams through training/mentoring in the health, logistics and WASH areas.

The IFRC project in Central America "Gender Equity in the Leadership of Emergency Operations in America - Phase III" has been supported by Spain since phase 1 and has clear gender and localisation components, with the objective of training communities in rapid response and disaster risk prevention.



**The EU:** The European Commission is funding WFP (EUR 1 million contribution from the EU for two years) in Mozambique, to work on the strengthening of the institutional capacities to effectively anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and support recovery from shocks. WFP will also continue to strengthen national institutional capacity to effectively assist vulnerable populations by adjusting the design of social protection programmes in order to make them more shock-responsive.



**Germany:** As part of the "Global-projekt" between the GFFO and the German Red Cross, an emphasis is put on humanitarian disaster risk reduction and anticipatory action. As part of the project, the capacities of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies will be strengthened, with a focus on preparing for future disasters.



**Czechia:** The project of the Nepalese NGO Community Self Reliance Centre was supported by Czechia and the EU, which was implemented by the Czech NGO People in Need. It is an example of a partnership between donors, implementers, local authorities and an international entity (the European Commission). The project built two evacuation shelters to support households threatened by landslides and floods with better access to safe evacuation. Activities related to landslide forecasting and Early Warning Systems were also supported. The project contributed to the broader themes of preparedness, early warning and emergency response to build the capacities of local authorities.

## II. The environmental impacts of humanitarian action

### Signatories' reporting under Commitments 3 and 4 of the Declaration

#### A. *Relevant external aid strategies and initiatives*

There is a wide spread of examples among the Signatories with regards to strategies on greening of their humanitarian action. Many reporting Signatories have greening strategies<sup>10</sup>, and the remainder are working on developing some. Among the Signatories who are implementing greening strategies, for instance, Germany has engaged with state and non-state actors in the Humanitarian Assistance Coordinating Committee to find adequate answers and actions to address environmental issues, and they are committed to integrate environment and climate into GFFO's forthcoming strategy.

Finland is considering becoming a supporter of the Climate and Environment Charter and taking part in the coordination under the Humanitarian aid Donors' Declaration on Climate and Environment.

The European Commission has been working to integrate environmentally friendly practices in humanitarian action since the end of 2020. At the beginning of 2022, minimum environmental requirements were published in March 2022, a key deliverable of DG ECHO's approach to reducing the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid. These were further developed in August 2022 through the [Guidance on the operationalisation of the Minimum Environmental Requirements and Recommendations for EU-funded humanitarian aid operations](#), which contains the requirements. These requirements aim to minimise environmental degradation unintentionally caused by humanitarian responses, as well as promote rehabilitation of already degraded areas. Throughout 2022, capacity building efforts were undertaken to prepare the humanitarian sector for the requirements to become mandatory at the beginning of 2023. As far as its plan to promote an environmental strategy among its partners goes, the European Commission conducted trainings, webinars and bilateral exchanges over the last year. Overall, about 600 people from partner organisations attended the information sessions organised by the Commission in each region it works in at the beginning of 2022. The online self-led trainings were completed by almost 1000 people while the virtual classroom trainings on the minimum environmental requirements reached almost 200 people (which was the maximum capacity) in the second half of 2022.

Spain mainly works through humanitarian organisations for the implementation of humanitarian actions, but also implements a limited number of emergency responses through its START team (Spanish Technical Aid Response Team, Emergency Department). Several actions have been undertaken towards the greening of team deployments as part of emergency response operations, mainly through the use of reusable wooden frame pallets, solar lighting, solar-based chargers for small devices (such as computers, smart phones, etc.), solar powered devices to produce sodium hypochlorite from salt and solar heated shower bags. Spain also monitors the implementation of greening actions by its partners in the following ways: i) Designation of focal points in the Humanitarian & Emergencies team who coordinate with the environmental unit in AECID; ii) Coordination between the humanitarian focal point and the development expert on environmental issues; and iii) Environment and Humanitarian Action Network (EHAN) attendance and following up of issues and Road Map.

Romania is also integrating the climate change dimension into humanitarian aid, with climate change and environmental protection being cross-cutting themes in the funded projects. In developing the next Multiannual Strategic Programme, the commitments of the Donor's Declaration on Climate and Environment will be considered to align the humanitarian action better to its commitments.

Climate action is not yet integrated into the French humanitarian strategy, but it is an objective for the 2023-2027 strategy. However, environmental and climate issues were mentioned for the first time in the call for projects for the first instalment of the 2023 French Food Assistance Programme (including from the perspective of the impact of humanitarian operations on climate and environment), with a link to the Donor Declaration on Climate and Environment.

Sweden (Sida) requires all its partners to assess environment and climate in its programming. It does not have a specific measurable goal set for greening in humanitarian aid, but it supports for example United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in their greening priorities. Follow-up is done at site visits, annual consultations, annual reporting etc. In 2022 a portfolio analysis of Sweden's (Sida's) 15 strategic humanitarian partners and their work to integrate environment and climate in humanitarian action was undertaken. The objective was to be a baseline and inform on possible actions to strengthen integration, but also quality assurance of OECD/DAC statistical markers on DRR, Environment and Rio markers.

<sup>10</sup> Czechia, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden.



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Among the signatories that are not yet implementing greening strategies, Czechia holds regular dialogues with UNDRR, UNHCR, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and WFP and is taking its first steps in dialogue with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), WMO and the World Bank. Italy regularly requests its humanitarian partners to integrate a climate and environmental risk analysis of proposed actions. Malta’s own humanitarian policy does not yet integrate the greening of humanitarian action as a priority but is considering including the integration of environmentally friendly practices in its new strategy.

The Netherlands plans to engage partner organisations to understand the measures they are taking to green the humanitarian response, and to ensure programming is both climate smart and climate sensitive.

Ireland is increasing its focus on the good practices being adopted by partners, and this includes requesting additional information on use of the Rio Markers in humanitarian contexts.

Through a number of voluntary contributions, Romania implemented green technology in refugee camps or transit centres, in order to relieve the pressure that the management of such structures exerts on resources in the host communities.

### ***B. Measuring and mitigating the impacts of humanitarian projects***

Regarding the initiatives aimed at measuring or estimating the greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on biodiversity of humanitarian action, two signatories have reported having such tools.

The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation is finalising an operational tool in cooperation with offices in charge of development cooperation and climate and environment to quantify the environmental impact and carbon footprint of the Italian Public Aid. This tool will be used in designing projects with a results-based approach, both in the monitoring phase and evaluation phase.

The European Commission is also working in this direction. However, as the European Commission does not directly implement humanitarian actions, but rather works through humanitarian partners, it must rely on calculations done by its partners. To this end, the European Commission was involved in the work on the Humanitarian Carbon Calculator, led by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The EU is also a Supporter of the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations, which calls on Signatories to measure and transparently report on the impact of their work on the climate and environment. To fulfil its role as Supporter, the European Commission is funding a study to map existing expertise and resources that can help humanitarian organisations meet their commitments under the Climate and Environment Charter. Work has also started at the end of 2022 to develop monitoring indicators for EU-funded humanitarian projects which reflect the minimum environmental requirements. As regards its own offices and staff, the carbon footprint of the buildings and staff in Headquarters has also been calculated as part of the wider calculation of the carbon footprint of the entire European Commission<sup>11</sup>. As a complement, the European Commission developed a methodology to calculate the carbon footprint of its humanitarian field offices, which is being piloted.

<sup>11</sup> [https://climate.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-09/climate\\_neutral\\_commission\\_study\\_en.pdf](https://climate.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-09/climate_neutral_commission_study_en.pdf)

### C. Good practices – example of projects and programmes

Many Signatories<sup>12</sup> are actively engaged in reducing the environmental impacts of humanitarian projects with concrete actions.

Some are related to energy supply in the field. For example, the German Federal Foreign Office is funding the solarisation of refugee camps across the Sahel (replacing diesel generators with solar panels) with a EUR 21 million budget. With this project, Germany has successfully managed to integrate climate funds into humanitarian aid.

Ireland will provide EUR 5 million to UNHCR in 2023 to build on energy-environment interventions and address the long-term challenges faced by refugees and their host communities in line with the UNHCR Global Strategy for Sustainable Energy (2019–2025). This includes using solar portable kits and renewable energy based minigrids for household use, the solarisation of community and public facilities, solar streetlights, and tree plantation to combat desertification.

The Shire Alliance (Alianza Shire) programme, funded by Spain, is providing solar energy to refugee camps in a public-private partnership. Alianza Shire promotes innovative energy access solutions that improve the services and quality of life of the inhabitants in refugee camps, working in collaboration with partners and implementers (private energy companies, research universities, UNHCR, NGOs and the Ethiopian government).

Others meanwhile relate to the sustainable use of natural resources. For example, support by Czechia is given to nature-based solutions in its humanitarian and humanitarian-development nexus activities in its Overseas Development Aid (ODA) priority countries, in particular Cambodia, Ethiopia and Zambia. The solutions usually combine sustainable use of natural resources for the use of local communities and displaced people (in/out of camps) with targeted resilience building at a communal level.

Italy is supporting via a EUR 1 million contribution WFP activities in Niger. This humanitarian-development nexus project provides training sessions on more efficient farming techniques to some of the beneficiaries: better water management, together with the provision of appropriate seeds, to enable communities to increase food production and income from the land. Environmentally friendly practices provided in the projects also include the use of the Half Moons technique, considered a good soil and water conservation technique.

Sweden (Sida) produced the document “Greening the office – information and inspiration for Sida partners” in 2022. For 2023, Sida will support four of its humanitarian partners with environment and climate focused method support, for example Climate Smart Programming and Community Driven Green Response. The initiative should support development of tools to ensure that policies are operationalized at field level.

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<sup>12</sup> Czechia, the European Commission, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Spain, Sweden.



France is providing EUR 250,000 to the Climate Action Accelerator with the NGO ALIMA, for an initiative to transform the environmental and climate practices of partner NGOs. The adaptation plans developed and piloted in six sub-Saharan African countries would aim to shift the humanitarian aid sector towards the target of -50% greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

The European Commission has been working to integrate environmentally friendly practices in humanitarian action since the end of 2020. At the beginning of 2022, minimum environmental requirements were published which cover waste management, green procurement and circular economy approaches, environmentally sustainable water and sanitation, land management, pollution reduction, use of nature-based solutions and aim to mainstream environmental considerations across EU-funded humanitarian assistance. Throughout 2022, capacity building efforts were undertaken to prepare the humanitarian sector for the requirements to become mandatory at the beginning of 2023. As the minimum environmental requirements only became mandatory from the beginning of 2023, it is too early to draw lessons learned from the mainstreaming efforts.

The EU is funding capacity building projects in greening humanitarian aid across various thematic areas. These are: Greening shelter; Greening logistics; Solar power; Environmental screenings; Waste management; Clean energy; and Reforestation.

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