

HUMANITARIAN AID DONORS' DECLARATION ON CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

Second reporting under the Declaration – 2024 Report



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Cover photo: Pakistan: EU humanitarian aid reaches survivors of devastating floods / European Union, 2022 (photographer: Abdul Majeed)

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Humanitarian aid donors' declaration on climate and environment

Second reporting under the Declaration – 2024 Report

INTRODUCTION

The climate and environmental crises are an existential challenge for humanity as a whole, but their effects are felt most acutely in countries and regions already impacted by conflict and fragility. Extreme weather and climate conditions, and degradation and loss of natural resources continued to trigger new, prolonged, and secondary displacement in 2023 and increased the vulnerability of many who were already uprooted by complex multi-causal situations of conflict and violence. According to UNHCR, today, 84% of refugees and asylum seekers originate from 15 highly climate-vulnerable countries.

A new report from the ICRC, “Weathering the Storm” highlights how climate change can exacerbate tensions and affect conflict dynamics through its impact on people’s livelihoods, patterns of migration and displacement, competition over scarce resources and the strategies of armed groups. Climate variability and extremes may contribute to or prolong armed conflict by weakening communities, institutions, systems and other coping mechanisms.

More than 27 million children were driven into hunger and malnutrition by extreme weather events in countries heavily impacted by the climate crisis in 2022, which was a 135% jump from the previous year, according to a new data analysis by Save the Children ahead of COP28. The 12 countries where weather extremes were the primary driver of hunger in 2022, according to the IPC, were Angola, Burundi, Ethiopia, Iraq, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Pakistan, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.



Mozambique: one year after cyclone Idai / ©2020 European Union

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. Governments, donors and humanitarian partners have a key role to play in helping create an environment more conducive to making this shift happen. And it is imperative that as donors we take action together.

Since the previous annual progress report on the implementation of the Donor Declaration on Climate and Environment, progress has been made in several fields: scaling up anticipatory action, and building climate resilience in fragile and conflict-affected areas.

2023 saw the first ever Climate, Relief Recovery and Peace Day at COP28, where three non-negotiation outcomes were tabled: the “Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace”, focusing on climate action in fragile and conflict-affected settings, the “Getting ahead of disasters: a Charter on finance for managing risks”, setting out principles for the future of finance for disasters, and the “Declaration on Climate and Health” which brings attention to the serious health implications of climate change.

In the area of reducing the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid, also called “greening” humanitarian aid, 2023 saw a strong advocacy push for the decarbonisation of the sector, and a series of initiatives across organisations, with particular attention paid to the issue of waste management and sustainable supply chains.

Almost 400 humanitarian organisations, from international to local ones, have become Signatories of the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations. The Secretariat for the Charter has also been established.

To recall, 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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises inputs gathered from 10 Signatories out of 25¹. In general, most reporting Signatories reported having incorporated climate action into their institutional framework for humanitarian response, focusing particularly on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA). The integration of climate considerations often occurs within specific policy frameworks tailored to humanitarian needs. This integration fosters cooperation and partnerships with various stakeholders, including local authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations, governments, and other donors.

All reporting Signatories are actively involved in climate-related projects and programmes within their humanitarian efforts, including anticipatory action. Many Signatories also demonstrate a commitment to localising aid, as outlined in their Grand Bargain commitments, by establishing mechanisms or requirements to support localisation among NGO partners. Additionally, many Signatories contribute to capacity-building initiatives for local authorities, communities, and organisations, in holistic risk management practices.

The majority of reporting Signatories have strategies to make humanitarian aid more environmentally sustainable. Nevertheless, as highlighted in the 2023 report, a collective area for improvement still lies in the monitoring and measurement of environmental impacts associated with projects and programmes. This year two more Signatories reported progress in such efforts, bringing the total number to four. Despite the slight improvement, however, this number highlights the need for greater support to enable humanitarian organisations to implement organisational-level changes that facilitate the measurement or estimation of greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity impacts resulting from humanitarian actions.

Another area for collective improvement is alignment with a set of common ambitions that would make the Donor Declaration commitments more concrete. In this report, Signatories were asked to report against a set of voluntary common ambitions in order to set a baseline, centring around an effort to reduce the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid. At present, very few Signatories reported being actively engaged in phasing out diesel generators in humanitarian action, banning single-use plastic, and agreeing to cover additional costs associated with greener solutions. However, waste management, ensuring energy needs for cooking, supporting local food production, and scaling up cash transfers are implemented more systematically among Signatories, even though there is still room for improvement.

¹ Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, the European Union, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden.

I. Update on relevant aid strategies

In 2023, all reporting Signatories have shared updates on the relevant aid strategies they are implementing to better address climate change and environmental degradation. In particular, in the past year, the Signatories have reported to either having revised or furthered their humanitarian aid/external aid strategies, policies, and/or safeguards, or having adopted new tools.

In particular, all of the reporting Signatories have reported that they have embedded Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), and/or environmental protection within their Humanitarian Aid and/or Development strategies. Germany, for instance, is in the process of finalising its new Humanitarian Assistance Strategy for 2024 – 2028, with a section on Greening of Humanitarian Assistance included in the draft of the new strategy. In order to give its humanitarian response to the multiple crises, a solid strategic basis with concrete aims and responsibilities, Austria has elaborated and finalised the new “Strategy for the Humanitarian Assistance of Austria” in October 2023. The Strategy contains a specific focus on Innovation, Quality and Implementation of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus to adequately respond to emerging challenges, and to strengthen efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance on the ground. Another Signatory which is furthering environmental protection and CCA is Romania. Following a comprehensive assessment carried out in 2023 regarding the overall impact of Romania’s Official Development Assistance (ODA) actions, the new Multiannual Strategic Program on International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance 2024-2027, has been developed to address climate-related concerns and issues. The Multiannual Strategic Program sets out “green transition, environment and climate change” as a thematic priority, while climate change adaptation will be pursued in Romania’s development and humanitarian actions. It is undergoing approval at the time of this reporting. In Croatia, a new law on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid has just been adopted, and one of the components is environmental protection. Furthermore, the goals of the Donors’ Declaration are also reflected in the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030, the Program of the Government of the Republic of Croatia 2021-2024, and the Implementation program of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs 2020-2024.

Some Signatories² focused on developing guidelines that intersect climate and environment protection with the cross-cutting humanitarian aid topics. One example of this is the Czech Republic, which, in 2023, developed new guidelines on humanitarian aid which, in addition to the topics of good governance, gender and social justice, focused on climate and environment while emphasising all its diverse variables and commitments. The new guidelines are aimed to consider all the intersections between the topics - for example, how the climate crisis impacts women and girls differently, leading to diverse adaptation and mitigation methods.

In December 2023, the Swedish Government presented a new strategic direction for development cooperation and humanitarian assistance (“Development Assistance for a new era – freedom, empowerment and sustainable growth”), in which “expanded and more effective climate aid” is included as 1 of 7 thematic priorities. According to the new strategic direction, climate aid should become more catalytical, e.g. by making use of technical innovations and increased mobilisation of private sector capital, as the global climate transition needs to be accelerated. To reduce humanitarian needs, the Government intends to strengthen efforts for development finance to be increasingly used for anticipatory action in climate-related humanitarian crises. The Government also intends to work to build resilience, not least in protracted humanitarian crises, through development-funded climate adaptation in vulnerable communities.

As part of the Green Deal, the European Union’s transformative growth strategy to tackle climate change by reducing carbon emissions, the EU engages extensively with partner countries to support the implementation of national and ultimately regional and global agreements, strategies and plans in the area of climate action and disaster risk reduction (DRR). The main vehicle for that is the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI), the EU’s operational arm outside its borders. It includes an increased spending target of 30% for climate action (raised from 20% in the previous programming period), and an additional EUR 4 billion pledged in 2021 by the Commission President. In practice this brings the EU climate finance target to approx. EUR 27.85 bn out of its total external action budget for 2021-2027 (which is EUR 79.5 bn). The Green Deal is now being reinforced by the Global Gateway, (worth EUR 300 bn, with EUR 150 bn in Africa alone) providing the framework for the EU’s external action in an evolving international context. The Global Gateway is the EU’s value-based offer to narrowing the global investment gap, supporting global economic recovery, and accompanying the twin green and digital transitions beyond Europe’s borders. The Global Gateway covers both hard infrastructure and connectivity and the enabling environment, regulatory frameworks and norms and standards, technology transfer, know-how. It covers five main themes – digital, climate and energy, transport, health, and education and research, and it’s been rolled out mainly through a Team Europe approach.

² Czech Republic, the European Union, Italy, Sweden

In 2023 the European Commission has also continued working on economic, environmental, and social sustainability with partner countries to tackle climate change, contributing to mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction. Building up on initiatives presented at the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27 UN Climate Conference), the EU, through its development cooperation, continued to support partner countries in their effort to respond to climate change, scaling up targeted support especially via a Team Europe Approach, increasing its contribution to international climate funds, as well as continuing to assist partner countries in designing, updating and implementing their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Long Term Strategies (LTSs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) in the context of the Paris Agreement and of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2030 Agenda, via dedicated technical assistance.

Some Signatories³ are also mainstreaming climate action and environment protection in their programming. For instance, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs has incorporated climate considerations into its Development Approach to Forced Displacement, notably through the PROSPECTS programme. Within the PROSPECTS initiative, climate change adaptation has been integrated into the Theory of Change and results framework. Additionally, various forms of climate change adaptation have been integrated into country programmes under PROSPECTS, encompassing climate-resilient technologies and infrastructure, environmentally sustainable water and sanitation solutions, climate-smart farming practices, social protection measures, green skills development, and ensuring a just transition. The implementation of PROSPECTS is slated to commence in 2024.

Slovenia has made commitments regarding its humanitarian aid, pledging to allocate at least 10% of it towards prevention, disaster risk reduction, and resilience strengthening by 2020, a commitment reiterated in the National Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Strategy by 2030. In alignment with this pledge, the country is funding various NGO projects focused on prevention and disaster risk reduction, particularly in areas such as sustainable farming and access to potable water. The annual public call for humanitarian and development projects mandates submissions to incorporate activities targeting climate change and environmental protection alongside other initiatives. Projects within the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus are designed with climate change and environmental considerations from their inception, including assessments of the environmental state in project areas, anticipated environmental effects, legislative frameworks, and community/stakeholder capacities to address environmental challenges. Environmental impact assessments encompass Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)-related subgoals and project contributions to their achievement.



Türkiye: responding to the needs of earthquake-affected people / © European Union, 2023 (photographer: Diego Cupolo)

³ Germany, the Netherlands, Slovenia.

II. Climate change and humanitarian aid – adapting the response and mainstreaming

Signatories’ reporting under Commitments 1 and 2 of the Declaration

A. Good practices – example of projects and programmes

All reporting Signatories reported being actively engaged in projects and programmes related to the impacts of climate change in their humanitarian action.

Climate change adaptation and resilience

Some Signatories⁴ focus on financing projects and programmes aimed at fostering climate change adaptation and building resilience. In 2023, the European Commission made further progress in the implementation of the Team Europe Initiative (TEI) on Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience in Africa, worth a total of EUR 1 billion and launched at the COP27 UN Climate Conference. The EU and 7 Member States currently take part in this TEI, with Germany, France, Denmark and the Netherlands from the start, and Czech Republic, Sweden and Spain joining in 2023. The initiative traces a way forward to mobilise additional finance and find new modalities between European and African institutions to promote resilience and adaptation and collaborate on important areas of work such as early warning systems and Climate and Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance, focusing on a comprehensive four-pillar framework by improving the understanding of risks, strengthening policy and governance, and leveraging public and private resources to that end. Indeed, the TEI on Adaptation and Resilience in Africa includes also a EUR 100 million contribution to the Adaptation Fund with the donation agreement between the EU and the World Bank signed in 2023.

Good Practice Examples



In 2023, the **European Commission** also committed EUR 4 million to the International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent's (IFRC) Global Climate Resilience Platform (GCRP). The GCRP was first launched in 2022 at COP27 and serves as a global initiative aiming to support the integration of climate activities in the humanitarian aid work of the IFRC. With the overall goal to raise CHF 1 billion, the GCRP aims to reach at least 500 million people through its focus on Early Warning and

Anticipatory Action, Safety Nets and Shock Responsive Social Protection, and Nature-based Solutions. The Commission announced its financial support to the GCRP at COP28, and as such complements support to the initiative previously announced by the Netherlands (EUR 21 million), Italy (EUR 5 million), Ireland (EUR 2 million), and Spain (EUR 1.5 million), bringing the EU's, and its Member States' total contribution to almost EUR 34 million. Reflecting the particular vulnerability of Small Island Developing States, the Commission's support to the GCRP will be focused on actions in the Caribbean and the Pacific.



Slovenia is currently financing a three-year project in South Sudan aimed at strengthening the resilience to crises caused by climate change and empowering women. The project is implemented by Caritas Slovenia and is focused on improving food and potable water security, as well as building resilience of local, internally displaced and refugee populations to future crises. The project's specific activities consist of provision of emergency food aid, up-skilling the population for better and

climate-smart farming techniques, provision of seeds, animal stock and farming tools and building of levees to prevent floods. Part of the project is also the establishment of mapping groups and preparation and implementation of a disaster risk reduction plan connected to environmental changes.



Austria contributes to building resilience to climate change through the programme "IOM Libya Storm Daniel Resilience, Recovery, and Response Plan 2023-2024". The programme aims to improve the humanitarian situation and support recovery and resilience of flood-affected populations in Northeastern Libya. Austria also provides the example of a project "[Gender-responsive support for improved resilience of women, men, girls, and boys affected by conflict, displacement and natural](#)

⁴ Austria, the European Union, Slovenia.

[disasters in Mozambique](#)” which aims at contributing to improved resilience of women, men, girls, and boys affected by conflict, displacement, and natural disasters in Mozambique. Austria is also supporting a project “[Strengthening the resilience](#) of the vulnerable population and internally displaced people’s communities in Burkina Faso (UrGard)” will improve the resilience of vulnerable populations who are prone to shocks, to enable them to cope and meet their needs in a time of crisis. WFP will develop the urban food production potential, green value-chains (energy and waste), and income opportunities. The project will improve the food and nutrition security of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and host communities in urban and peri-urban areas in Burkina Faso.



The **Czech Republic** shared an example of a project targeting climate resilience in the Western province of Zambia through technological solutions. The project supports the Government of Zambia in strengthening the capacity of farmers to plan for climate risks using innovative digital products. The project’s Specific Objectives are: to strengthen the capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture in 6 target districts of Western Province through capacity building on climate information, weather index insurance and virtual markets; to strengthen the climate resilience of 40 000 smallholder farmers through increased access to climate information, weather index insurance and virtual markets; to strengthen community disaster risk resilience and preparedness through building government capacities in Community-Based Participatory Planning. Following the objectives and priorities of the Czech MFA Humanitarian Aid (and European Union), proposed interventions focus on disaster risk reduction, building the resilience of Zambian farmers affected by climate change, and promoting environmentally friendly and sustainable practices. Relevant cross-cutting issues – gender equality, good governance, respect for human rights and climate change, and environmental protection and sustainability are mainstreamed throughout the project cycle.

Anticipatory Action

Some Signatories⁵ reported funding projects and programmes on Anticipatory Action, considered as a means to prepare for climate impacts. Italy, for instance, supports with a contribution of EUR 5.2 million, the IFRC in implementing the programme “Supporting the Red Cross Red Crescent Network to scale up Anticipatory Action”, which intends to strengthen the natural disaster preparedness capabilities of the national African Red Cross and Red Crescent societies with particular reference to Anticipatory Action (AA) interventions. A new contribution from the Italian Cooperation to the organisation is in the pipeline with a programme which aims at supporting communities in building resilience to hazards. Specifically, the initiative aims at ensuring that the levels of preparation and rapidity of the National Societies are adequate to promote effective anticipatory action and an adequate humanitarian response. The intervention also focuses on strengthening community disaster risk reduction as a continuum, aimed at resourcing communities to uphold resilience and protect development gains.

In 2023, the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) doubled its funding for anticipatory action from approximately 59 million EUR to 119 million EUR. This allocation encompasses both “build” funding, which supports capacity-building efforts to gather data and establish necessary systems, and “fuel” funding, comprising non-earmarked contributions to pooled funds that facilitate automated release of funds upon reaching predetermined triggers. One notable initiative in 2023 was the establishment of the “Welthungerhilfe Anticipatory Humanitarian Action Facility” (WAHAFA). This facility offers both “build” and “fuel” funding to German NGOs and their local partners, primarily focusing on Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, a new collaboration with PLAN International in the Philippines emphasizes gender-sensitive and inclusive anticipatory action. Furthermore, the GFFO significantly augmented its support for the Start Network, allocating 12.8 million EUR in 2023 to the Start Fund and Start Ready programs to facilitate anticipatory action measures.

The Netherlands support Anticipatory Action through OCHA’s Centre for Humanitarian Data in The Hague, which invests in predictive analytics. Twelve trigger mechanisms were developed for CERF anticipatory action pilots in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Nepal, Niger, the Philippines and South Sudan. From 2020 to 2022, CERF released \$89 million in funding based on trigger mechanisms developed by the Centre and OCHA offices.

Through its humanitarian budget, Sweden (Sida – the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) supports anticipatory action in partnership with the Disaster Response Emergency Fund of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (DREF), channelled through the Swedish Red Cross. Sida also supports the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO-SFERA) including its anticipatory work. In addition, through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden supports the anticipatory action of the CERF, as one of the largest donors of the fund. Anticipatory Action is also carried out in partnership with the UN

⁵ Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, the EU

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), through the Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPF), for which Sweden is a major contributor.

Following the various commitments made by the European Commission to scale up Anticipatory Action in the 2021 Communication on Humanitarian Aid, the 2022 G7 Statement on Anticipatory Action, and the 2023 'Getting Ahead of Disasters' Charter launched at COP28, among others, the European Commission's humanitarian department developed a Roadmap in 2023 to test several approaches to increase its investment in Anticipatory Action. This includes support of EUR 2 million in 2023 to the Start Ready initiative, a pooled fund focusing specifically on Anticipatory Action, managed by the Start Network, as well as piloting the use of Crisis Modifiers for Anticipatory Action in a more efficient and coherent way. The EU continues funding the 'build' component through its Disaster Preparedness Budget Line, a part of its humanitarian budget, to support capacity-building efforts to gather data and establish necessary systems. The EU also continues to support anticipatory action by financing the DREF from its humanitarian budget.



EU solidarity: helping Central America recover after hurricanes ETA and IOTA / © European Union, 2020 (photographer: D. Membreño)

Disaster Risk Reduction

Many Signatories⁶ reported investing in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation through their development and humanitarian funding. For instance, the Czech Republic has a dedicated Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Grant Program targeting the Least Developed Countries and, in particular, with their priority partner countries for Czech bilateral ODA with a focus on the nexus approach. Within the framework of this Grant Program, in 2023, Czechia supported the following initiatives: 1) Innovative technological solutions for climate resilience in the Western province of Zambia; 2) Resilience and adaptability in drought-affected Borana Zone, Ethiopia; 3) Adaptive Resilient Initiative for Sustainable DRR Engagement (ARISE), Cambodia; 4) Early Warning for Flood Prevention Systems in Cambodia.

Through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs' 2023 Annual Plan for international development cooperation and humanitarian aid, Romania has allocated ODA amounting to approximately 9% of the total ODA budget to projects that included, among others, transfer of expertise and support for capacity building in the field of disaster risk reduction, environment risks analysis, climate change adaptation, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as renewable energy. For instance, as part of Team Europe efforts in Asia, Romania financially supported the implementation of UNRCCA's

⁶ Czech Republic, the European Union, Romania, Sweden.

Strategy in support of cooperation between the states of Central Asia in the field of water, energy, environment and climate for 2022-2025. Romania also disbursed a voluntary contribution in support of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre)'s activities in the field of disaster prevention and disaster management in developing countries. Another voluntary contribution from Romania was allocated to the UNFCCC Green Climate Fund, which is meant to support developing countries in their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen their capacity to address the consequences of climate change.

The purpose of the Swedish contribution to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) (through Sida), is to support the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which aims to prevent and reduce hazard exposure and strengthen resilience through four priority/work areas: 1) understanding disaster risk 2) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk 3) Investing in DRR for resilience and 4) Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response to build back better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Sweden also supports the UNDRR-hosted *DesInventar* which is the official tool to report and calculate losses and damages. Sweden supported UNDRR with 95 million SEK.

The European Union implements programmes in the field of Disaster Risk Prevention and Reduction that contribute to the goals of the Donors' Declaration for a core of approximately EUR 160 million through its development budget. The main programmes are: CLIMSA - Intra-ACP Climate Services and Related Applications programme and the Intra-ACP Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Programme - NDRRP (through the 11th EDF). Through the humanitarian budget, the EU also supports targeted disaster preparedness actions, with a total envelope of EUR 76 million for 2023 and EUR 79 million for 2024. In line with its Disaster Preparedness approach, all EU-funded humanitarian projects should also be risk-informed to minimize the impact of current and future natural and man-made risks on the implementation of the project.



EU-coordinated response to earthquakes and flash floods in Albania / ©2019 European Union (photographer: Gent Onuzi)

Early Warning Systems

Most reporting signatories⁷ are currently supporting projects and programmes aimed at developing and implementing Early Warning Systems. Italy, for instance, continues its commitment in scaling up Early Warning and Early Action in Africa. As a matter of fact, through an EUR 5 million project, the Italian Cooperation together with UNDRR aims at: i) strengthening impact-based monitoring and forecasting capabilities, developing capacities for early and anticipatory action and enhancing availability of and access to multi-hazard risk knowledge at the continental and sub-regional levels; ii) establishing national situation rooms with multi-hazard early warning systems and setup with equipment and capacity support in three countries (two in East Africa and one in the Sahel region); strengthening resident capacity for

⁷ Austria, Czech Republic, Italy, Sweden, the European Union

early warning and early and anticipatory action through the Africa Network of Excellence for DRR; improve in countries in the Sahel the capacity of analysis of the vulnerability data and identification of user needs to enable more effective early and anticipatory action by governmental authorities and international partners.

Austria supports the UN Secretary-General's 2022 initiative on Early Warning for All with two concrete measures: 1) Contribution to Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF) 2022-2025: Austria supports SOFF with EUR 4 million, aiming to strengthen climate adaptation and resilient development. SOFF enhances weather forecasts, early warning systems, and climate information services to save lives, livelihoods, and protect property; 2) Austria announced support for the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems Initiative (CREWS) at UNFCCC COP28 in December 2023, pledging EUR 3 million. CREWS financially assists Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in establishing early warning services.

The European Union also supports the development of Early Warning Systems through both its development and humanitarian aid budgets. Through its development budget, it supports CREWS (Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems); the Global Monitoring for Environment & Security (GMES) & Africa programme, as well as the Space and Earth Observation in Africa flagship, as well as the UN's flagship initiative Early Warnings 4 All (EW4All). Through the humanitarian budget, the EU also supports different projects for data gathering and capacity building in relation to Early Warning Systems. For example, in Somalia, the EU is working with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) to develop a model that should be able to forecast displacement due both to hydrometeorological hazards and to conflict. This information will be useful for agencies to be able to prepare and better coordinate the aid provided to these newly displaced populations.

Sweden (through Sida) is supporting the Early Warnings 4 All United Nations' flagship initiative with 60 MSEK directing in partnership with UNDRR. The initiative co-lead by UNDRR and WMO, supports everyone on the planet covered by multi-hazard early warning systems in five years and is organised around four technical pillars 1) Disaster risk knowledge and management 2) Detection, observation, monitoring, analysis and forecasting 3) Warning dissemination and communication and 4) Preparedness and response capabilities. Swedish funding goes both to the global normative work as well as through earmarked funding to five countries (Mozambique Somalia, Bangladesh, Haiti and Liberia).

In addition, the Czech Republic has a long-term partnership with UNDRR, with financial and expert contributions in support of the implementation of Sendai Framework, in particular of multi-hazard Early Warning Systems in fragile countries, including the UNSG Initiative on Early Warnings 4 All.

Climate change, food security and water

Some reporting Signatories⁸ of the Donors' Declaration actively fund projects and programmes focused on food security and water in the context of climate change.

Sweden is financing a programme in Bangladesh targeting Climate Adaptation, Disaster preventions and Response. In 2023, Sweden agreed to finance the next phase of the Local Government Initiative on Climate II (LoGIC II) Programme (2023-2025, SEK 50 000 000): A government owned flagship climate adaptation programme designed to deliver climate finance to the most vulnerable households and local government institutions (adding the Chittagong Hill Tracts to the original 7 districts). The Ministry for Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives (MoLGRDC), central in the efforts, received an award from the Global Centre on Adaptation during COP28, as a global champion on locally led adaptation. MoLGRDC had decided to adopt the Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI) in the allocation of the Annual Development Program budgets to local governments across the country. Sweden (through Sida) also supported a project via Islamic Relief. The project focuses on strengthened resilience, reduce vulnerability, and enhanced adaptive capacity and attempts to provide strengthened capacity to communities to decrease their vulnerability to climate change impacts. The project received 2.8 million SEK in funding for 2023 and will continue in 2024 and 2025.

Slovenia is conducting a three-year project in Uganda, building on its presence in the country since 2017. The goal of the project is improving humanitarian situation faced by the refugees by providing a comprehensive solution in the areas of security, food supply and prevention of external violence to at least 400 vulnerable families. The project will provide the conditions for climate-smart agriculture and establish solutions for the food security of 5,251 people who will have the opportunity to grow fruits and vegetables and raise chickens.

Austria is funding the programme "Enhancing Drought Early Warning in Mozambique through Satellite Soil Moisture Data to support food security", which targets improved food security in Mozambique by enhancing drought early warning and agricultural efficiency. The Technical University of Vienna (TU Vienna), a leading institute in remote sensing of soil moisture and vegetation, collaborates with Eduardo Mondlane University, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADER), the Red Cross movement, and the World Food Programme (WFP) to develop soil moisture and

⁸ Austria, Croatia, the European Union, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden.

vegetation indicators for Mozambique.

On July 20, 2023, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted a decision on the allocation of development and humanitarian aid to the population of Ukraine in the amount of EUR 1.2 million, of which EUR 1 million is intended for the World Food Program project “Restoring livelihoods and revitalization of rural communities hit by mines and explosive devices left over from the war”. For this project, the World Food Program is working with the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Swiss Foundation for Demining to support the economic recovery of Ukraine, especially in the agricultural sector, through the implementation of a demining project. The goal of the project is to restore food systems and revive local sources of income in conflict-affected areas. The value of the project is approximately USD 100 million.

On water security, Germany engaged in another three-year project with Oxfam to produce drinking water through reverse osmosis desalination, powered by renewable energy in fragile contexts. The project was originally supposed to be implemented in the Lake Chad region, however, it faced challenges in achieving sustainability for desalination plants in that region due to unpredictable movements of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), which hindered the identification of suitable locations and a lack of suitable water sources. Additionally, there was a significant hurdle in engaging the private sector, as no apparent incentives existed for them to contribute to the development of a market for technical expertise and system components. The scarcity of expert personnel and the absence of recruitment incentives posed a risk to the proper operation and maintenance of the facilities. Security concerns, particularly the high risk of theft and vandalism, led to restricted site selection and increased the need for security measures requiring unsustainable financial resources. The project will be shifted to Somaliland. (Germany’s contribution amounts to EUR 990 000, over 3 years, starting in March 2023).

[Water at the Heart of Climate Action](#) is a new initiative of EUR 55 million, funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and implemented by IFRC and the Netherlands Red Cross, UNDRR and WMO. The initiative is geared towards mitigating the impacts of water-related risks and disasters and increasing the resilience of vulnerable communities in Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda. This initiative aims to enable different actors at global, national and local level to more effectively manage water-related risks. The Netherlands notes that global and national policies on climate, disaster risk reduction and water are often siloed and disconnected from, and not informed by the actors at, the local level. The Netherlands believes that to adapt to a changing climate, a combination of early warning and early action measures that support integrated water management is necessary to save lives and livelihoods in vulnerable communities. This initiative takes the local perspective as the starting point and includes vulnerable groups in the design of interventions aimed at reducing their vulnerabilities and strengthening their capacities. It focuses on long-term resilience strengthening measures and targeted action to improve the forecasting and early warning system capacity of regional and national actors.



Haiti: EU response to devastating earthquake / © European Union, 2021

B. Creating an enabling environment

All Signatories reported being involved in supporting the localisation of aid, particularly regarding building the capacities of local authorities, communities, and organizations when it comes to holistic risk management.

For instance, Czech Republic is committed to the do-no-harm principles, and strives to highlight the diverse context and realities on the ground. As there is no one-fit-all solution to climate and environmental issues, the Czech Republic aims to properly communicate with local actors while considering their experiences and expertise. When supporting projects to reduce the risk of disasters, emphasis is placed on the long-term operation of the implementers in the given area, the credibility of local partners, including administrative authorities, and connections with other humanitarian and development activities developed by the Czech Republic in the given country.

Italy reports that, in line with the Grand Bargain Commitment in localisation, local Partner Countries' Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) can apply for AICS Humanitarian Aid Call for Proposals in partnership with Italian CSOs. Moreover, if a humanitarian aid project is implemented by an Italian CSO, the Agency selects the projects that foresee capacity building in holistic risk management for the local implementing partners. A community-based approach must always be applied in projects funded by the Italian Cooperation Agency.

Croatia reported fostering aid localisation by financing local NGOs and investing in their capacity building through partnership with Croatian NGOs. 2023 is their third year in a row doing so.

Germany provides examples of aid localisation through capacity-building in its anticipatory action. The "build" components of the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO)'s anticipatory action funding, laid out above, includes capacity-building support for humanitarian organisations and local communities, as well as support for coordination with relevant government authorities (if applicable). For example, Germany's funding includes the development of so-called Early Action Protocols together with local government units (LGU) in the Philippines. This also includes, for example, the development of coordination mechanisms with communities, LGUs, local DRR offices and other relevant government units and humanitarian actors.

In the field of humanitarian aid, Austria works with qualified international humanitarian organisations (including UN organisations) and accredited Austrian civil society organisations that comply with international standards and provide needs-based humanitarian aid. A prerequisite for funding is that projects are implemented and led by local project partners. Projects are based on needs analyses with the involvement of local partners and beneficiaries.

Through Dutch support to the IFRC and contributions to the DREF, there continues to be a strong link between climate and localisation, ensuring that the voice of those most affected is heard.

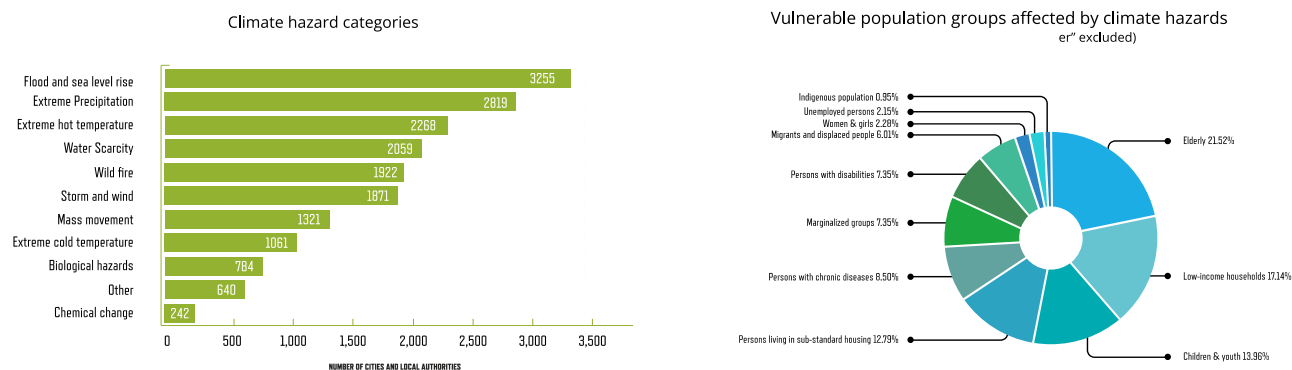
Romania highlights that it supports the localisation of aid, through the project on reforestation in Guyana and Ecuador, i.e. to support holistic national risk management processes and appropriate preparedness measures and mechanisms.

Slovenia reports that all projects are prepared in collaboration with local partners embedded in their local communities and thus knowledge about the local conditions and the needs of the constituents. The projects include close cooperation with local, regional, and national authorities, such as governments, local community leaders, other aid actors and the private sector (via meetings, and memoranda of understanding).

Slovenia supports localisation of aid through partnerships with Slovenian humanitarian organisations and their local partners as well as the Slovene private sector. Three examples were cited: the "More food, less violence" project in Uganda implemented by the Forum for Equitable Development in partnership with Hope of Children and Women Victims of Violence (HOCW); the "Strengthening resilience and empowering women in South Sudan" project implemented by Caritas Slovenia in partnership with Caritas South Sudan; and the "Water, food and protection against violence for the coexistence and dignity of Darfur communities" project carried out by Institute Circle in partnership with Hope and Friendship for Development (HOPE). Between 2021 and 2023, Slovenia entered a strategic partnership for emergency response with Caritas Slovenia, which bases its operations on cooperation and with local Caritas organisations. This strategic partnership helped improve the efficiency of Slovenia's emergency response and localisation efforts. A public call for a new strategic partnership is pending.

Regarding the localisation of aid, the European Commission supports the development of climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction capacities of local authorities, communities, and organizations through several initiatives such as the Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility (LoCAL), and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM). LoCAL helps local government authorities in Least Developed Countries and other developing countries access the climate finance, capacity-building and technical support needed to respond and adapt to climate change. At COP28, the European Commission confirmed its contribution to LoCAL as part of the wider EU and its Member States package of EUR 25 million, including over 8 million euros for Mozambique, 6 million for Solomon Islands, 4 million for Uganda and 2 million for Tanzania. The new commitments, for the first time, pushed the total amount mobilised for adaptation in communities by the LoCAL Facility to over US\$ 200 million. The initiative today brings together 13,000+ cities and local authorities from more than 140 countries committed to act on climate mitigation and adaptation. The

initiative provides capacity building and technical assistance support to cities and local authorities with the aim to support the development and implementation of local climate action plans. GCoM's climate adaptation focal area supports the development of local capacities related to risk management, including through the identification of local climate risks, vulnerabilities, and potential adaptation actions. In 2023, 2,627 cities and local governments worldwide reported through GCoM a total of 18,242 climate hazards, encompassing the identification of vulnerable groups that are affected (see below).



Through the GCoM capacity building and technical support, the same cities reported 21,577 adaptation actions aimed to minimize vulnerability and impacts, and enhance cities' overall resilience, with particular focus on safeguarding the vulnerable groups identified above. The implementation of GCoM Climate Action Plans has yielded various co-benefits and synergies, resulting in improvements across multiple facets of local communities' lives, particularly those belonging to vulnerable groups.

In 2023, the EU also contributed financially to the setup of the Secretariat for the Climate and Environment Charter, with an initial amount of EUR 200 000, support which was announced at COP28. The Secretariat will directly support the signatories of the Climate and Environment Charter, i.e. international and local humanitarian organisations, in the implementation of their targets and action plans.

Signatories have also reported improved cooperation and partnerships between governments, donors and aid actors to reinforce the issues of disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and longer-term development.

The Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Czech Development Agency are closely cooperating on developing new climate methodologies and standards and tackling how to most effectively move forward together. Internationally, the Czech Republic is hosting the annual Environmental Forum of OSCE, regularly participating in the European Humanitarian Forum (both in 2022, 2023 and 2024, where initiatives related to DRR and climate security in fragile settings were presented), the EU Green Diplomatic Network and EU Climate Ambassadors, further the International Climate Conference, the International Conference on Adaptation.

Slovenia regularly promotes its climate and environmental projects, including in UN Security Council and other high-level international fora. In 2023, Slovenia joined the Peaceful Skies Platform with the Institute Circle's project in Sudan. Slovenia was represented at 2023 international conference on climate and security in Berlin, where it showcased Slovenia's development cooperation in the field of water, peace and security with an emphasis on the Sudan project mentioned above. At COP28, Slovenia joined the Declaration on Climate, Aid, Reconstruction and Peace and various side events. At the side event organised by Germany and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), Slovenia presented its activities to strengthen the position of women in high climate risk situations and in armed conflicts. Slovenia also participated in a high-level event establishing the UN Center for Climate Security in the Horn of Africa and in a discussion on how climate changes affect the education and rights of children. Slovenia will continue to engage with its bilateral partners going forward.

In 2023, the Italian Cooperation for Development Agency together with CIMA Research Foundation started to implement a project aiming at enhancing the Early Warning capacities of Sudan in order to reduce the damage caused by floods and droughts events. The conflict in Sudan, started in April 2023, has profoundly changed the scenario in which the DRR partners operate, making it more complex while increasing the need and urgency to support civil protection and, above all, humanitarian operations in the country. Given the reduced national institutional capacity, the project provides support by creating tools and links with the international network to give continuity to the Early Warning services, supporting the humanitarian response and, through this, the population of Sudan. To provide support for the 2023 rainy season, an information bulletin, containing daily forecasts on the potential impact caused by extreme weather, has

been designed together with local partners (Sudan Meteorological Authority) and is disseminated daily, since August 2023, to humanitarian operators. On a longer term, to sustain the restoration of climate and civil protection services, the project fosters coordination between different partners, donors and initiatives. The consultations with national and international (AUC, WMO, ICPAC, RSMC Kenya, NORCAP, the European Commission) stakeholders have highlighted the crucial role of DRR in a fragile context, setting the direction for a joint effort among different actors to provide coordinated assistance and improved capacity of Sudan's Early Warning System.

Germany reports that through its anticipatory action, it is also improving the capacities of local authorities. As regards data and risk analysis for anticipatory action, the German Federal Foreign Office provided funding to two new projects in 2023. MapAction has been supported with 360 000 EUR to build an anticipatory action programme, focused on helping national and sub-national authorities to apply INFORM sub-national Risk Modelling, and analysis about vulnerability. ACAPS was supported with 250 000 EUR to provide analyses for anticipatory action.

Austria actively engages in the implementation of the 4 priorities of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. In preparation for the High-Level Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework in May 2023, Austria prepared an implementation report on its corresponding efforts, which confirmed Austria's strong commitment, marked by inter-institutional cooperation between international actors as well as science-based measures.

The EU fosters cooperation and partnerships in several ways. For instance, the EU supports the need to strengthen the international framework for responding to the climate risks of today and the future, and that there is an urgent need to scale up financing, particularly to support the most vulnerable to deal with loss and damages resulting from climate change. Therefore, the EU welcomed the COP28 decision on the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage new funding arrangements and the Fund, to address climate related loss and damage in particularly vulnerable developing countries, while also supporting both the achievement of international goals on sustainable development and the eradication of poverty. The Fund was successfully launched with the European Commission pledging EUR 25 million and individual pledges announced by EU Member States amounting to over EUR 350 million. Equally relevant is the adoption of the UAE Framework for Global Resilience at COP28 and its agreed targets, which provides leverage for enhanced coordination and collaboration between existing structures and climate adaptation processes within and outside the UNFCCC.



Canada: EU response to wildfires / ©European Union, 2023 (Photographer: P. McCabe)

III. The environmental impacts of humanitarian action

Signatories' reporting under Commitments 3 and 4 of the Declaration

A. *Measuring and mitigating the impacts of humanitarian projects*

Tools to estimate greenhouse gas emissions and impact on biodiversity

The Signatories were asked to report whether they have tools to estimate the greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on biodiversity of their humanitarian action, and in 2023 there has been an improvement in the number of Signatories in possession of such tools. As a matter of fact, this year four signatories⁹ replied affirmatively.

The Czech Republic is currently aiming for a new scoring system, which will allow to thoroughly evaluate each project based on its consideration of the impact on the environment, while striving to ensure that the majority of projects are climate-transformative or at least have the issue mainstreamed.

The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation is currently finalising a conflict, gender, environmental, and disaster-risk sensitive assessment tool. Moreover, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation developed a tool to assess the environmental and climate impact in terms of Environmental Strategic Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Climate Risk Assessment and Ecological Footprint (included Carbon Footprint, Water Footprint, Life Cycle Thinking, Life Cycle Assessment) to be used in designing and monitoring programmes and projects.

Germany has introduced the suggested use of Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT+) in the project application process and is currently working with a German NGO to examine applicability and costs of the Human Carbon Calculator in its project cooperations.

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has an increasing interest in supporting its partner organisations to better understand and measure their carbon and environmental footprint and encourages partners (voluntarily) to work on environmental sustainability in their projects.

The European Union has tools to estimate the greenhouse gas emissions of its humanitarian action not on impact but on financing: EU commitments are scored (through Rio markers) at the level of financing decisions for their contribution to the objectives of environmental and biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and combating desertification.

Monitoring of the implementation of 'greening' humanitarian action

In 2023, the European Commission's department for humanitarian aid and civil protection (DG ECHO) developed and published a set of voluntary environmental indicators for humanitarian projects. These correspond to the minimum environmental requirements for EU-funded humanitarian projects, requirements which have been mandatory since 2023. The indicators were developed to help partners monitor and evaluate the environmental outcomes of specific projects, and include both Key Outcome Indicators and Key Results Indicators.

Throughout 2023, the Commission has continued to make training courses available, on how to reduce the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid. These include both [self-led online courses](#), as well as virtual classroom trainings¹⁰, specifically on the minimum environmental requirements. The training courses are also available to non-ECHO partners, including local and national partners, in line with the European Commission's commitments to localisation.

Neither Italy nor the Czech Republic have "greening" of humanitarian aid as strategic priority, however both Signatories are engaged in monitoring the matter. Italy monitors the implementation of the Donor Declaration commitments through field visits, monitoring frameworks, and discussions with partners. This year, the Italian Cooperation started to ask its multilateral partners to integrate their environmental strategy, if available, or the Italian Cooperation one, if not available, in the project proposal and in the implementation phase. On the other hand, the Czech Republic is developing a new methodology with the goal of providing a mechanism seeking accountability and discussion with local actors.

⁹ Germany, Italy, the European Union, the Netherlands

¹⁰ The classroom courses are not yet available on the EU Academy site, but will be by end May 2024. Until then, they can be accessed through the ELSE platform, which is at [Docebo E-learning \(dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu\)](#).



Throwback: EU's response to forest fires in Bolivia / © European Union 2019 (photographer: Aizar Raldes)

Austria reported that in the accreditation process for humanitarian aid, relevant partner processes and mechanisms are reviewed to ensure corresponding quality standards are fulfilled. In particular, it has to be ensured that any negative impacts of interventions on the environment are avoided and that climate change, mitigation and adaptation measures are included in interventions (e.g. reduction of greenhouse gases, sustainable production/agriculture, sustainable resource management, disaster management, etc.). Austria's project applications and report forms include a section on environmental standards, potential risks and risk mitigation measures with regards to environmental impacts.

The Netherlands reported that the majority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' humanitarian funding supports large, multiyear assistance programmes implemented by its partners, which include UN agencies, the Dutch Relief Alliance, the Dutch Red Cross, and the ICRC. There is a level of expectation that these partners have suitable environmental or climate policies and strategies in place and will use indirect costs/overheads budget lines to work on reducing the environmental footprint of their actions. Furthermore, as part of its humanitarian partnership with the Dutch Red Cross (NRK), the Ministry has provided it with specific funds to cover staff costs related to green response and the implementation of NRK's own Climate and Environment Action Plan, which aims at concretely implementing its commitments under the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations. The Netherlands has had an internal sustainable development strategy (social, environment, economy) in place since 2021, which applies to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A carbon footprint assessment has been carried out and roadmaps have been developed for the head office and field offices to reduce travel, to green the supply chains, and introduce sustainable energy in offices. The remaining carbon footprint is being offset through the purchase of carbon credits.

B. Common ambitions

In this report, Signatories were asked to report against a set of voluntary common ambitions in order to set a baseline, centring around an effort to reduce the environmental footprint of humanitarian aid.

Phasing out diesel generators in humanitarian action

As far of this common ambition goes, the majority of the reporting Signatories have indicated that it is reasonable that in certain contexts this ambition will definitely be difficult to reach, especially in cases of complex emergencies. However, there is openness from some Signatories¹¹ in engaging in dialogues with partners to seek alternatives in the future, and the Signatories are also committed to increasing sustainable solutions. Italy and the EU are the only Signatories reporting current concrete actions to phase out diesel generators. The Italian Cooperation is phasing down diesel generators in humanitarian aid programmes, except for relief project, by asking its partners to give priority to renewable resources (i.e. solar panels) in fragile and conflicted affected countries. The EU, through its minimum environmental requirements for EU-funded humanitarian aid projects is doing the same.

Phasing out single-use plastics, and requiring waste management in humanitarian action

This common ambition has been difficult to reach for the Signatories too, because of the difficulty of providing humanitarian aid in certain emergencies. Some Signatories¹² focus their action in waste management, setting requirements for their partners or being keen in doing so. Italy, for instance, encourages partners not to use single use plastics. AICS always requires partners to pay particular attention to waste management particularly in refugee and Internally-Displaced Persons camps, in villages and in host communities. One example is the response to the floods that hit the city of N'Djamena and the province of Lake Chad. The Italian Cooperation financed a relief project implemented by the Italian CSO INTERSOS that foresaw, adopting community-based approach, the creation of waste management teams in refugee camps and in villages hosting refugees. The EU, through its minimum environmental requirements for EU-funded humanitarian aid projects requires an integrated approach to waste management, with partners needing to provide waste management strategies for their interventions, or at least link up to existing waste management processes where the assistance is being provided.

Ensuring energy needs for cooking are met when food assistance is provided

Some Signatories¹³ are engaged in ensuring energy needs for cooking are met. The Italian cooperation encourages that needs for cooking are met using fuel based on recycled material. An example of this is in Guilmey, Chad, where a humanitarian project, carried out by the Italian CSO ACRA, conducted a workshop on how to produce fuel based on recycled material, in order to support local food production (sustainable food systems) instead of internationally procured in-kind food assistance. Italy also implemented a programme in Mozambique which facilitated access to energy for local communities, and the livelihoods of affected persons have been improved. Energy needs for cooking have been ensured with about 4,000 improved cook stoves for households. The improved cook stoves utilise coal traditionally burnt for cooking in households, but its consumption has been reduced by about 65% per day, and the CO₂ emissions are reduced by about 80%. The improvement is linked not only to the gas emissions reduction, but also to the optimisation of the cooking of food with a decrease of the number of domestic accidents due to intoxication by smoke.

¹¹ Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Romania, Sweden.

¹² Austria, Czech Republic, the EU, Italy, Romania, Sweden.

¹³ Austria, Croatia, the EU, Czech Republic, Italy, Sweden.



Providing support to flood-stricken families in India / © 2019 European Union (photographer: Mallika Panorat)

Supporting local food production (sustainable food systems) instead of internationally procured in-kind food assistance

Some Signatories¹⁴ reported engagement in supporting local food production. The Czech Republic, in its previous programmes, focused on locally produced food aid.

Italy shared two projects aimed at food security and local production. One is implemented in the Bandiagara region, aiming at increasing the agro-ecological local production of horticultural products for self-consumption and sale at times of maximum production. So training, inputs and irrigation systems have been provided.

The other project is implemented in Mozambique, currently ongoing, and it supports agriculture, using climate-smart practices and technologies, participatory and sustainable management of natural resources and planning for risk management deriving from climate change. Through this, food security for the most vulnerable populations will be strengthened. Added to this, the programme aims at strengthening basic water, health and nutritional services. It does so through the distribution of agricultural inputs, rehabilitation of small irrigation infrastructures and sources of water supply for human, agricultural and animal use (wells, troughs, cisterns, etc.), promotion of nutrition and food security, support for livestock farming, creation of family/community gardens /schools, nurseries, greenhouses, technical assistance and training for producers, improvement of access to agricultural services, distribution of animals for family farming, and veterinary support. The use of low water consumption technologies and sustainable energy sources will be promoted and encouraged according to the conditions of the intervention sites.

Austria reported that in the guidance on the application process and templates, it explicitly calls applicant organisations to support local food production and only revert to internationally procured in-kind food assistance if no other option is available. The purchase of goods at the national and regional level is strongly encouraged.

Slovenia is a strong supporter of food security, including enabling and improving local food production. All Slovenia's humanitarian projects in Sub-Saharan Africa (in Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan, Rwanda) include this aspect, generally in the form of upskilling the local population and in the introduction of better and climate-smart farming practices.

SIDA reports that supporting local food production is generally done when possible and by making use of cash transfers as opposed to in-kind. However, internationally procured items, for example for nutrition solutions, is sometimes necessary when there is a lack of other alternatives of suitable quality and quantity on the local market.

The European Union, through its cash policy and preference for cash assistance over in-kind food assistance, also contributes to this endeavour.

¹⁴ Austria, Croatia, the EU, Czech Republic, Italy, Slovenia, Sweden.

Agreeing to cover additional costs associated with greener solutions, as long as these are justified

Only four Signatories¹⁵ agree on covering additional costs associated with greener solutions. Austria reports that all costs of interventions are covered if these are justified, and this also pertains to incremental costs caused by green solutions, while Czech Republic and Sweden assess the need of covering additional costs on a case-by-case basis. For the EU, the Guidance on outlines that the European Commission will accept higher costs in relation to its minimum environmental requirements, if they are justified, in particular in relation (e.g. investing in solar power solutions in humanitarian contexts).

Scaling up cash transfers

Some Signatories¹⁶ are actively scaling up cash transfers. Italy, as per the Grand Bargain workstream 3, is committed to increasing the use and coordination of cash-based programming and transfers. Austria's new Strategy on Humanitarian Assistance promotes the use of cash transfers. Slovenia, since 2022, has been supporting cash and voucher programs with regular contributions to CERF. Sweden reported that scaling up cash transfers is an ambition for Sida's work with humanitarian assistance, and many partners also see cash transfers as a preferred greener option when possible. Sida supports the CALP Network via Oxfam, which focuses on cash and voucher assistance policy and advocacy and annually publishes the State of the World's Cash report. The EU is committed to prioritising cash over in-kind assistance through its humanitarian aid budget, with dedicated Thematic Policy Document on Cash Transfers. In case cash is not chosen as the modality, partners are asked to justify this when submitting proposals.



EU response to floods in Kenya / ©2018 European Union (photographer: Anouk Delafortrie)

¹⁵ Austria, Czech Republic, the EU, Sweden.

¹⁶ Austria, Czech Republic, the EU, Italy, Sweden.



Indonesia: EU response to Sulawesi earthquake /© 2018 European Union (Photographer: Pierre Prakash)

C. Good practices – example of projects and programmes

Multiple Signatories¹⁷ reported examples of projects and programmes implemented in 2023 focusing on reducing the environmental footprint.

For instance, Romania assisted countries in South America to ensure sustainable forest management and preserve biodiversity (in Guyana), respectively to strengthen integrated management of river-sea systems and coastal zones (Ecuador). Additionally, experts from Romanian institutions contributed with their knowledge and know-how to strengthening the institutional capacity of partner countries (such as Montenegro) in the field of environment protection, energy efficiency and renewables. Similarly, transfer of expertise missions was also organized for the benefit of Kenya. Romania reported that most of its humanitarian assistance is channeled through its multilateral partners (i.e. UN Agencies), which signed the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations, therefore respecting commitments to integrate environmentally friendly practices in their operations. Regarding civil protection operations, the Romanian Department for Emergency Situations has been seeking to optimise the delivery of humanitarian goods and experts to crisis-affected areas, to reduce the impact on the environment. For instance, part of the assistance that Romania mobilised in support for the population in Türkiye, affected by the series of earthquakes of February 2023, was delivered by rail.

Good Practice Examples



Sweden is financing a programme in Bangladesh targeting Climate Adaptation, Disaster preventions and Response which targets reforestation too. In the Rohingya camps and host communities in Cox's Bazar, Sweden continued to support the multi-year UN joint programme "Safe Access to Fuel and Energy Plus - SAFE Plus" with SEK 79 000 000 between 2022 and 2025. In 2023, the programme revegetated 70 hectares of land inside the camps communities and provided training on plantation techniques, post-plantation care and maintenance to the partner organizations engaged in reforestation activities. Planting on steep slopes prevents soil erosion and limits landslide risks, thereby reducing disaster risks.

¹⁷ Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, the EU, Italy, Romania, Sweden.



Austria shared the project “[BIMYSAWA - Long-term safe WASH service coverage for BidiBidi, Imvepi and Yumbe Refugee Settlement](#)”. This project aims to contribute to safeguarding the lives, health and dignity of South Sudanese refugees and host communities in Northern Uganda. Living conditions of refugees and host community members (especially women and girls) with respect to access of safe reliable drinking water, sanitation services, integrated waste management and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) in Goboro, Imvepi and Bidi Bidi Zone 4 are improved.

The issue of waste management has also been targeted by a programme from the Italian Agency for Cooperation and Development (AICS). In 2023, AICS implemented a survey on the recycling of plastic waste in one of the most vulnerable areas on Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Recommendations have been made to strengthen the waste management system and to create new sources of employment through recycling.



Germany has started Greening project cooperation with two partners in 2023. The project with Arbeitersamariterbund aims to enhance awareness among humanitarian stakeholders at local and national levels regarding the importance of Green Humanitarian Assistance (GHuHi) in addressing climate and environmental crises. It seeks to reduce the environmental impact of humanitarian interventions by developing and implementing detailed GHuHi concepts, emphasizing the principle of “Do-No-Environmental-Harm.” It will conduct environmental risk assessments, provide training, and raise awareness about the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations to encourage humanitarian actors to sign and implement eco-friendly practices. Additionally, the project will foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the development of local Communities of Practice to promote WASH innovations and GHuHi in project countries. (Germany’s contribution amounts to EUR 11.4 Mio over 3 years, starting in November 2023).



Sweden (through Sida) supported a project targeting the environmental sustainability of its humanitarian actions via the Norwegian Refugee Council. The project focuses on access to safe energy for displacement-affected communities integrated into NRC programmes and operationalisation of environmental footprint reduction strategies. The project received 6 million SEK in funding for 2023 and will continue in 2024. In 2023, Sweden also supported a project via UNHCR. UNHCR’s Green Financing Facility is an innovative financing mechanism for solarizing UNHCR’s field operations, in which the same capital can support multiple solarisation projects over time through a return on investment. This dramatically improves the financial sustainability of solarisation efforts compared to traditional pure grant funding models. Sida contributed 40 million SEK in 2023. The Green Financing Facility is generating the following impacts: 1) carbon savings of 30-90% of current emissions of CO₂ avoided annually per UNHCR compound, dependent on the space available for the solar installation; 2) average annual financial savings of up to 25% compared to current diesel spend for powering UNHCR compounds; 3) creation of commercially viable opportunities for the private sector in humanitarian settings, which are often the most infrastructure-poor parts of developing countries.



The **European Union’s** research and innovation budget, Horizon Europe, also supported research and innovation projects in the area of “greening” humanitarian aid in 2023. Two projects were funded, both dealing with waste management and waste revalorisation in humanitarian. The first one, BIO4HUMAN (EUR 1.5 million), is identifying bio-based solutions for waste management applicable to the humanitarian sector. The second one, WORM (EUR 1.5 million), will tackle unsustainable waste management practices in the humanitarian sector, integrate bio-based technological solutions, leverage procurement for waste reduction, improve waste management methods and prioritise the sustainable livelihoods of waste pickers.

The European Union also reported that in 2023, the European Commission set up a Programmatic Partnership with UNHCR on environmental restoration in refugee camps in Uganda in the West Nile, with EUR 4.5 million secured over a period of 3 years. To mitigate the effect of deforestation, the project focuses on sustainable forest management practices within refugee settlements through the establishment and maintenance of wood lots, planting boundary trees and encouraging refugees to grow fruit trees within their homes. Furthermore, UNHCR, in partnership with the National Forestry Authority (NFA) will support nurseries to raise quality tree seedlings which will be used to restore and protect the Central Forest Reserves. Refugee households will have facilitated access to alternative cooking fuels (increased access to and adoption of briquettes) and energy-saving cookstoves to reduce the overall fuelwood consumption at both household and institutional levels. Setting up a Programmatic Partnership allows for more predictable funding which can facilitate innovative approaches and a potentially higher upfront investment. Such funding mechanisms are available for other partners of the European Commission to benefit from.

With its humanitarian innovation funding, through the Enhanced Response Capacity Humanitarian Implementation Plan (ERC HIP), the European Commission supported for the first time a pilot project on the restoration of humanitarian sites and their adjacent areas where humanitarian assistance unintentionally led to the degradation of the natural

environment and natural resources. Such restoration efforts should demonstrate the benefits that this brings to affected persons, by improving their living conditions, creating opportunities for income generation, and improving nutrition and water quality, and access to natural resources for which people rely on for their livelihoods. Countries or areas where little to no restoration efforts have taken place in humanitarian contexts were prioritised, and ultimately the informal settlements in Northern Iraq were selected for a pilot. The project will involve the displaced communities and the host populations as active agents.



EU response to cyclone Idai in Mozambique / © European Union 2019 (photographer: Christian Jepsen)

Open reporting

In this section, the reporting Signatories reported any other relevant priorities or initiatives during 2023.

The Czech Republic reported undertaking dialogues pertaining to strengthening the integration of the environment inside the EU on the level of Green Diplomatic Network and EU Climate Diplomats: among UN agencies in Geneva, on the national level in a dedicated coordination group on climate security.

Italy reported that in the framework of the DAC High-Level Roundtable at COP28, upon the request of Italy, a reference to the triple Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus has been inserted in the Outcome Document Climate Action and Finance in Fragile and Conflict-affected Contexts. Moreover Italy endorsed the document “Getting Ahead of Disasters: A Charter on Finance for Managing Risks”.

Germany reported that in 2023, a working sub-group of the German humanitarian assistance coordination committee was established and agreed to meet regularly to bring the subject of greening humanitarian assistance forward. For specific issues like the application of NEAT+, a technical working group will bring the matter forward.

The Netherlands reported that its humanitarian policy is based on unearmarked funding to key humanitarian organizations such as the UN, the Dutch Red Cross, IFRC, ICRC and the Dutch Relief Alliance. The Netherlands also supports various humanitarian country-based pooled funds. Through this funding policy, organisations are given the flexibility to respond quickly and based on humanitarian principles. The Netherlands’ contribution to the humanitarian response in the Horn of Africa has increased, mainly due to higher contributions to the Country Based Pooled Funds in the region. For Somalia, this contribution has increased to EUR 20 million by 2023. The Netherlands has also contributed to the Ethiopia Humanitarian Fund for the first time. Furthermore, the Dutch Relief Alliance, supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), has contributed to the drought response in Kenya and Somalia. The CERF, of which the Dutch MFA is one of the largest contributors, has been instrumental with allocations for the drought response in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. In 2023, cooperation on anticipatory assistance between OCHA, the Dutch Relief Alliance and the Dutch Red Cross has been intensified.

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