

United Nations Security Council: Topic B Primary Sources

Understanding the Security Impacts of Climate Change

Here are the primary sources that your moderator or legal chair thought would be helpful in gaining an understanding of the topic. These are by no means all of the sources available, just sources we wanted to highlight.

Source #1: The National Security Impacts of Climate Change: Issue Brief, December 2017, by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute

This report was developed by the US Environmental and Energy Study Institute. It provides a detailed explanation of climate change as a ‘threat multiplier’ and an overview of how climate change poses international threats. Some topics considered in this report include arctic access, water conflict, and environmental refugees.

https://www.eesi.org/files/IssueBrief_Climate_Change_Security_Implications.pdf

Source #2: Paris Agreement, 2015

The Paris Agreement, also called the Paris Climate Accords or Paris Accords, was adopted in 2015 by most of the international community. As stated in Article 2 of the agreement, the aim of this treaty is for the world to better respond to the dangers of climate change through (1) limiting the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels, (2) improving the adaptability of the international community in the face of climate change, and (3) ensuring consistency between finances and sustainability efforts. Notably, Iran, Libya, Eritrea, and Yemen have not signed the treaty.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/frameworks/parisagreement>

Source #3: A New Climate for Peace: Taking Action on Climate and Fragility Risks, Executive Summary, 2015

This is an independent report commissioned by G7 nations in 2015. The report starts with summarizing risks faced by the international community as climate change continues. Some of the topics discussed are competition over local resources, natural disasters, and rising food prices. The report continues with a policy analysis and recommendations for G7 nations. While this report is specifically advising certain nations, the analysis and recommendations provided can serve as a useful reference for all nations.

https://climate-diplomacy.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/NewClimateforPeace_ExecutiveSummary_0.pdf

Source #4: Climate change and its possible security implications, Report of the Secretary-General, September 2009, UN General Assembly

This 2009 report identifies the following as the primary ways climate change poses a security risk to the international community: vulnerability, development, coping and security, statelessness, and international conflict. The report then acknowledges several ‘threat minimizers’ including mitigation and adaptation efforts, economic growth, and effective governance. The report ends by stressing the need for nations to begin preparing for these challenges and work together as a global community to face climate change.

https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/64/350

Source #5: Security Council, in Statement, Says ‘Contextual Information’ on Possible Security Implications of Climate Change Important When Climate Impacts Drive Conflict, July 2011, Security Council SC/10332

This 2011 press release summarizes a meeting of the Security Council titled “Maintenance of international peace and security: the impact of climate change.” One important note from the meeting was that Asia and Africa would suffer disproportionately from food insecurity and subsequent security issues. Additionally, the release stresses the fact that the topic of climate change and security only started in 2007. Finally, this release offers insight into the concerns and stances of numerous countries through their statements on this topic.

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10332.doc.htm>

Source #7: EU contribution to the UN Secretary General’s report on Climate Change and International Security, September 2009

This document, submitted to the United Nations, spells out the European Union’s contribution to combating climate change. According to this document, the EU has a comprehensive plan for its own member nations and several recommendations for the international community. Among other things, the EU is committed to funding more research to identify European regions most at risk of climate change and developing strategies to mitigate the effects of climate change in these areas. Additionally, the EU greatly stresses the need for collective efforts (i.e. in research sharing, disaster management, etc.) by the United Nations.

https://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res_pdfs/ga-64/cc-inputs/EU_CCIS.pdf

Source #8: Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 1987

The Montreal Protocol is a global agreement that sought to prevent the depletion of the ozone layer by phasing out the production and use of ozone-depleting substances, such as chlorofluorocarbons and halons. The ozone helps filter out harmful radiation from the sun and this agreement has been largely successful in helping reduce damage to the ozone.

<https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%201522/volume-1522-i-26369-english.pdf>

Source #9: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) went into effect in 1994. Today, 197 countries have ratified the UNFCCC. One key aspect of this agreement is that developed/industrialized countries must be held more responsible for curbing greenhouse gas emissions compared to developing and industrializing countries. Similarly, the agreement directs developed countries to financially support developing countries’ attempts to combat climate change. Finally, the UNFCCC holds countries accountable by requiring them to report their climate change policies and funding, greenhouse gas emissions, and more data.

https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/background_publications_htmlpdf/application/pdf/conveng.pdf

Source #10: Kyoto Protocol, 1997

While being adopted in 1997, the Kyoto Protocol did not go into effect until 2005. This international treaty is widely regarded as a success. One important aspect of the treaty is that only developed countries are responsible for lowering greenhouse gas emissions and other mitigation efforts. The treaty acknowledges several ways for countries to meet their individual emission targets including natural processes like planting more trees, technology and

infrastructure investment from developed nations to developing nations, and emissions trading between countries.

<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.pdf>

Source #11: Climate Change, 2014 Summary for Policymakers

This document, developed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, contains meaningful data, graphics, and charts showing the various climate change risks faced at the regional level. For example, these findings show that Central and South America will face decreased food production and quality, an increase in the spread of diseases, flooding, and landslides. Additionally, this report offers specific adaptation strategies for each region and each climate change issue.

https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/ar5_wgII_spm_en.pdf

Auxiliary Resources:

<https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/disasters-conflicts/what-we-do/disaster-risk-reduction/climate-change-and-security>

<https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/greatest-threat-global-security-climate-change-not-merely-environmental-problem#:~:text=It%20has%20become%20increasingly%20clear,for%20food%2C%20water%20and%20energy>

<https://media.defense.gov/2021/Oct/21/2002877353/-1/-1/0/DOD-CLIMATE-RISK-ANALYSIS-FINAL.PDF>

https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/National_Security_Implications_of_Changing_Climate_Final_051915.pdf

<https://carnegieeurope.eu/2021/07/12/eu-and-climate-security-toward-ecological-diplomacy-pub-84873>

https://carnegiendowment.org/files/climate_change_eu_security.pdf

https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/sipriinsight2102_ccr_eu.pdf

<http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/Memorandums/CSCAP%20Memorandum%20No%2015%20-%20The%20security%20implications%20of%20climate%20change.pdf>

<https://www.cfr.org/background/paris-global-climate-change-agreements> has links to primary sources

https://dppa.un.org/sites/default/files/csm_toolbox-1-briefing_note.pdf

https://climate-diplomacy.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/CD%20Report_Insurgency_170724_web.pdf