

Climate & Security: When the Planet Heats Up, So Do Conflicts

The consequences of climate change illustrate how non-military factors can alter global power relations. Rising seas, droughts, and extreme weather place pressure on fragile states and create new sources of instability. NATO and the UN now identify climate change as a “threat multiplier” that accelerates global risks. This working group examines how environmental changes intersect with shifting power dynamics and what this means for future security policy.

Summary of the Discussion in the Working Group

Across the two days, we explored European energy dependence on Russian gas and Chinese green technologies and their potential security risks, as well as the root causes of forced migration and its solutions during the experts’ workshops. Beyond these themes, however, the students’ discussions broadened to address the Global North’s responsibility for climate change, the unequal distribution of its costs worldwide, and the growing influence of far-right propaganda on the future of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Key Questions Emerging from the Discussion

- How can the EU limit energy dependence from China focusing on resources and technologies needed to develop and implement renewable energies?
- How can the global north, through a smarter resource management system, assist the global south’s increasing rate of forced migration without becoming paternalistic?

Summary of the Discussion at the Closing Panel

The panellists acknowledged the diverse angles that we had approached the topic and reiterated that human issues arise due to climate issues. They expressed that it is time to increase development cooperation to mitigate these problems, for example by having European countries work more together on renewable energy, especially on wind power, where we have already made quite a lot of progress. They also claimed that we are finding ourselves at a tipping point, hence it is important to shift the resources to climate adaptation, to better prepare and support the communities finding themselves at a higher risk. To our first question, the panellists claimed that although it is important to keep a strong stance towards China’s reliance, what is also problematic is that Member States themselves have been making deals with the country, making the Union look, in its entirety, weaker. They also highlighted EU’s dependence on the USA and Saudi Arabia.