

Addressing the Role of Natural Resources in Conflict and Peacebuilding

Executive Summary of Progress from UNEP's Environmental
Cooperation for Peacebuilding Programme

2008-2015



ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION FOR PEACEBUILDING

About This Summary Report

The Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding (ECP) programme is one of the four work streams under UNEP's Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch (PCDMB). The overall aim of the ECP programme is to strengthen the capacity of countries, regional organizations, UN entities and civil society to understand and respond to the conflict risks and peacebuilding opportunities presented by natural resources and environment. This report is a summary of a more detailed progress report that highlights the results that the ECP programme has achieved in the field of environmental peacebuilding from 2008 to 2015. The detailed report can be found at:

http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/ECP/ECP_progress_report_2015.pdf

Further information on the ECP programme can be found on www.unep.org/ecp

All of the publications mentioned in this report can be found on www.unep.org/ecp/publications

The knowledge platform and community of practice can be accessed on www.environmentalpeacebuilding.org

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Introduction

Resolving natural resource conflicts is a defining peace and security challenge of the 21st century. The geopolitical stakes are high as the survival or authority of states may depend on securing access to key natural resources. A range of national, multinational and state-backed companies seek to capitalize on emerging demand and supply dynamics. In some cases, elite actors monopolize control over resource revenues, concentrating their personal wealth at the expense of local citizens.

At the same time, many communities are becoming hostile to resource investments and may revoke companies' social license to operate. This is the case especially if benefits and burdens are not shared equitably, human rights are violated, environmental damage is significant, or expectations are not met. Armed groups and criminal networks increasingly use revenues from illicit resource exploitation and trade to finance their activities. A wide range of natural resources are affected, from land and water to minerals.

For countries recovering from violent conflict, natural resources often offer the first opportunity to help stabilize and revive livelihoods and other economic activity. When governments manage their environment and resources well and integrate them across a range of peacebuilding activities, natural resources can provide a sustainable pathway to a lasting peace and poverty reduction.

However, at the turn of the millennium, the UN's evolving peacebuilding architecture did not reflect the broad and complex role of natural resources across the peace and security continuum, depicted in Figure 1. As a result, the UN was insufficiently prepared to support lasting resolutions to resource conflicts or capitalize on the peacebuilding potential of natural resources and the environment.

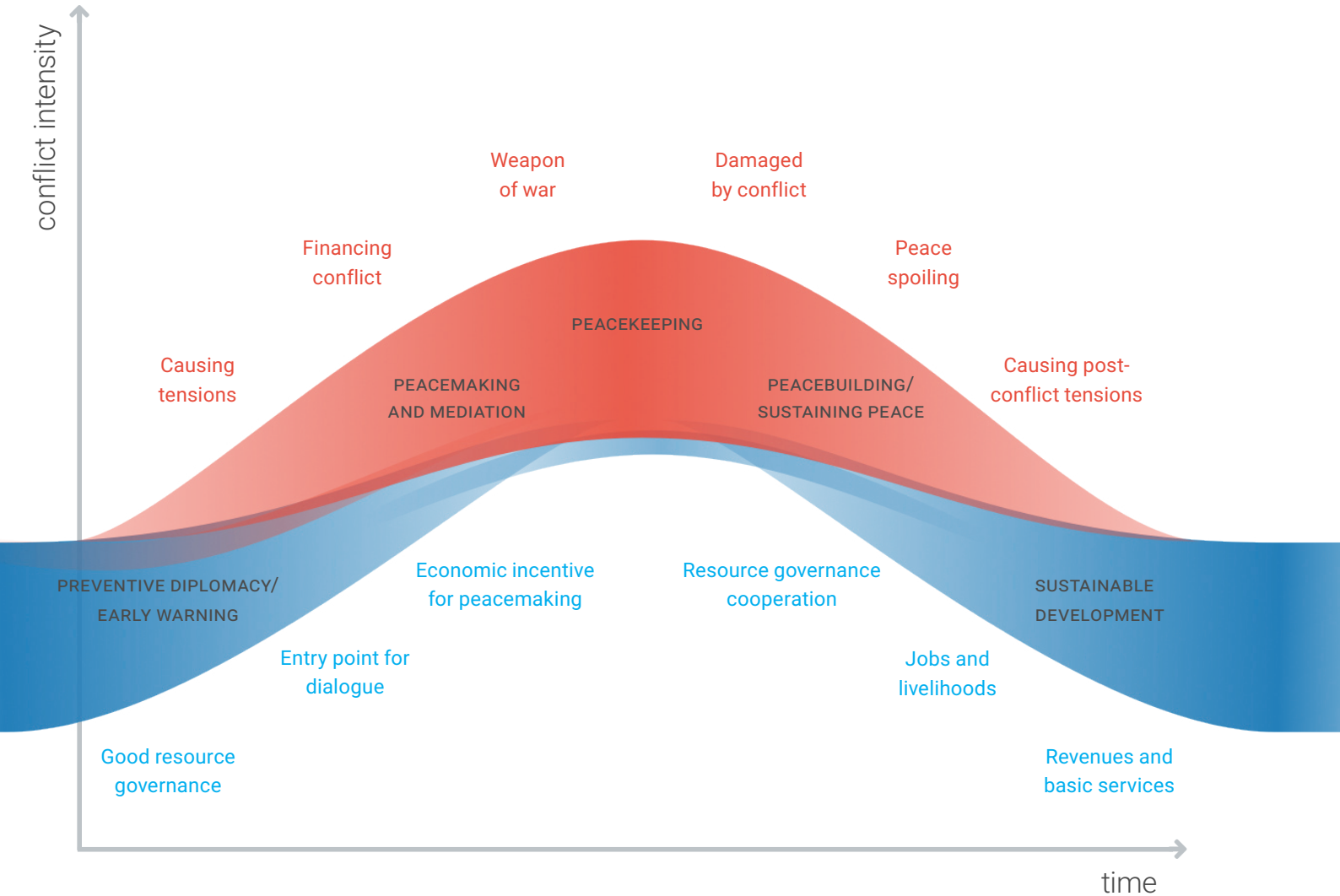
In 2005, Finland's President Tarja Halonen wrote to the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, noting this shortcoming. She offered to partner with UNEP to enhance understanding and capacity across the UN system to address conflict risks and peacebuilding opportunities from natural resources and the environment. Pekka Haavisto, former Finnish Minister for Environment and Development, also lent his political support, arguing that UNEP's extensive field assessment experience from 20 conflict-affected countries needed to be systematically shared with the wider UN system as the foundation for a more comprehensive international response.

The "Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding programme" (ECP) was founded by UNEP in 2008, with support from Finland and Sweden. The overall aim of the ECP programme is to "strengthen the capacity of countries, regional organizations, UN entities and civil society to understand and respond to the conflict risks and peacebuilding opportunities presented by natural resources and environment."

The ECP programme adopted the peace and security continuum from Figure 1 as the basic conceptual framework for its work and sought to establish partnerships with the key UN peace and security actors responsible for interventions at different entry points. These included actors working on conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and international law. Partnerships were also established on the roles of women and ex-combatants in post-conflict natural resource management.

With each UN partner, UNEP sought to gather field evidence, analyze policy and operational responses and catalyze the uptake of good practices and innovative pilot projects in the field by UN actors, governments and other stakeholders.

Figure 1. Conceptualization of risks and opportunities from natural resources and the environment along the peace and security continuum



The goal of ECP was to help the UN adopt a more coordinated and systematic approach to addressing natural resource risks and opportunities across the full peace and security continuum. As most natural resource conflicts combine political and technical aspects that lie outside the mandate of any single agency, only a comprehensive and joint approach with member states could tackle the problem effectively.

The following sections of this report detail the progress made and results achieved in each of the three pillars of the ECP programme as illustrated in Figure 2. ECP's aim was to make strategic investments and catalyze new thinking, reforms and processes in each of these pillars that could become independently self-sustaining by the partners and beneficiaries.

Figure 2. Pillars of the ECP programme



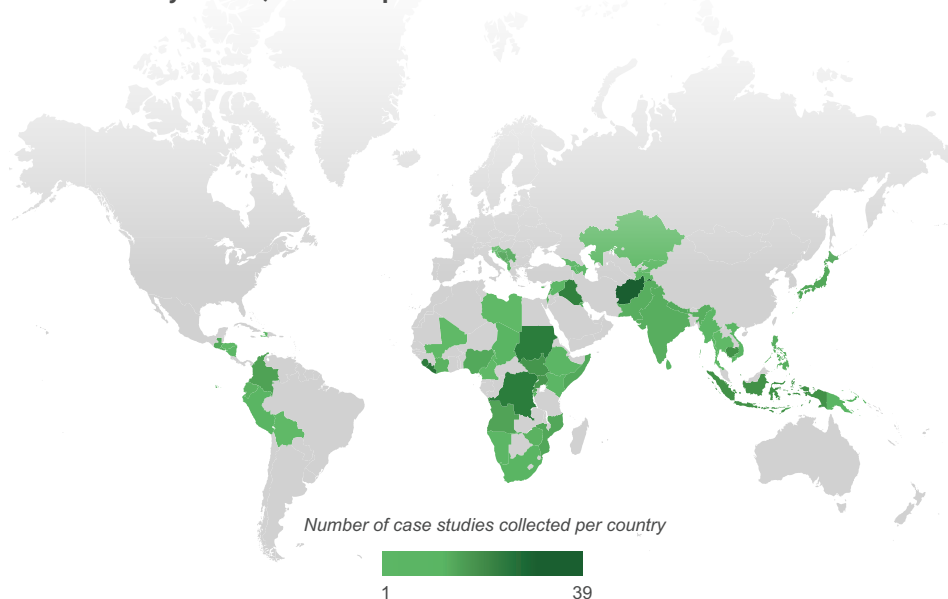
PILLAR 1

Global Thought Leadership and Building of Evidence Base

ECP's first objective was to collect case studies from field practitioners, experts and academics documenting how natural resources had successfully supported post-conflict peacebuilding, and illustrating how different risks along the conflict curve had been addressed. This evidence base was

used to inform the development of new policies, programmes and practices and to help establish a community of practitioners working on the topic. Using these materials, ECP also sought to lay the foundation for a new multidisciplinary field of study known as "Environmental Peacebuilding."

**Global distribution of the evidence base generated
by UNEP, ELI and partners across 67 countries**



Summary of Main ECP Outputs and Impacts of Pillar 1

FIVE KEY OUTPUTS:

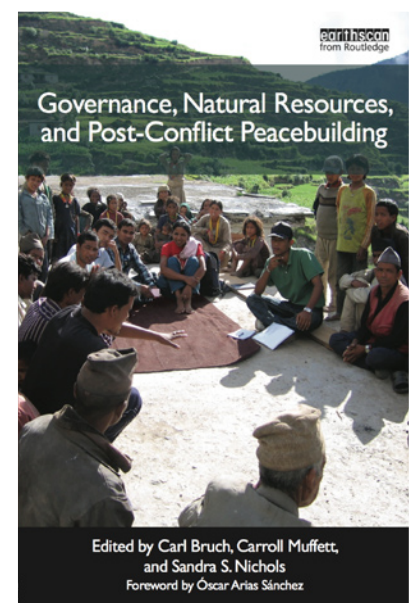
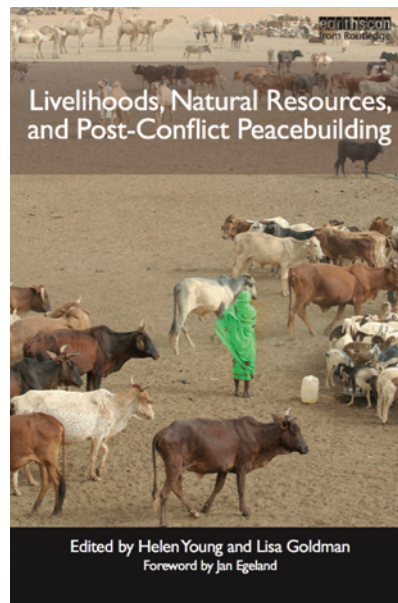
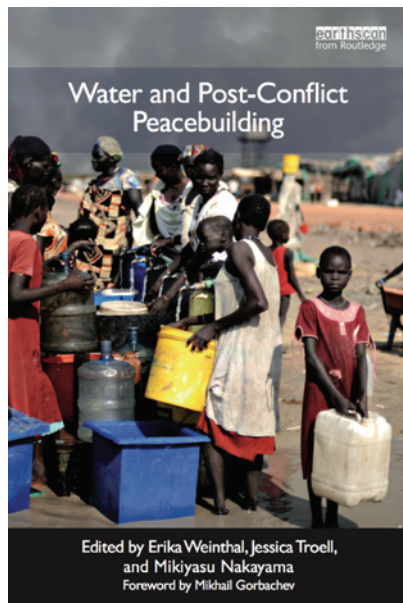
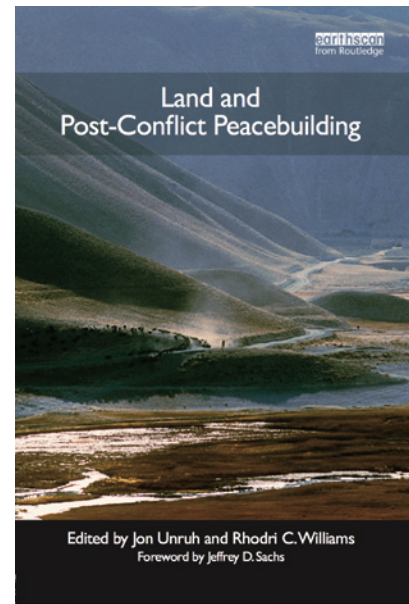
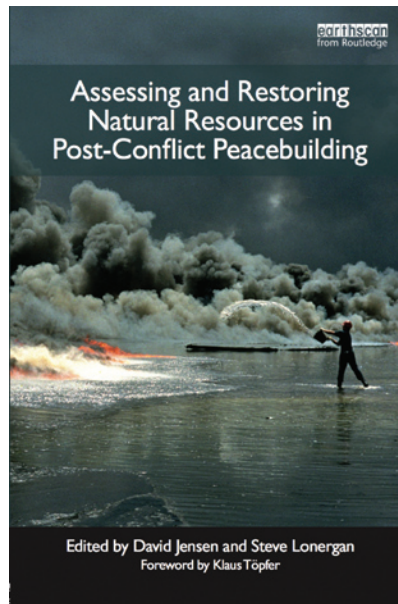
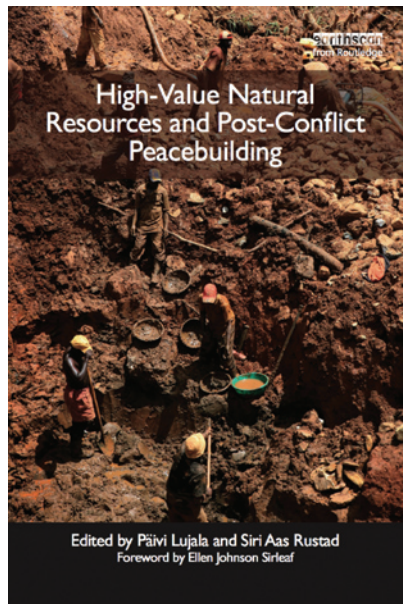
- **Case studies:** As part of the global research programme, ECP co-generated 150 original peer reviewed case studies by 225 experts and practitioners, covering 12 natural resource sectors across 67 conflict affected countries. All cases are freely available online. The process also led to a TEDx Talk on natural resources and peace.
- **Books:** The case studies have been published in a series of six thematic books on post-conflict peacebuilding and natural resources published by Earthscan/Routledge. Each book includes a summary of key lessons learned covering high-value natural resources, land, water, livelihoods, governance, assessment and restoration.
- **Knowledge platform:** An environmental peacebuilding knowledge platform has been built and is being used by visitors from 185 countries. It also supports a virtual Community of Practice with over 2,500 people from 90 countries that have signed up to regular updates.
- **Al-Moumin Distinguished Lecture and Award:** This annual lecture and award recognizes leading thinkers in the field of environmental peacebuilding. The lecture series is co-sponsored by the Environmental Law Institute, American University, and UNEP, and is named in honor of Dr. Mishkat Al-Moumin, Iraq's first Minister of Environment.
- **Academic courses and training:** ECP designed and delivered a module on environment, conflict and peacebuilding for the University of Eastern Finland's training on multilateral environmental agreements and diplomacy, and for the NATO school in Oberammergau, Germany. ECP also supported the development of one

of the world's first certificate programme on environment, peace and security with Columbia University. An Environmental Peacebuilding Academy has also been established to engage professors and educators in cultivating the next generation of practitioners, researchers, and decision makers.

THREE MAJOR IMPACTS:

- **Evidence base generated by ECP is influencing both the research community as well as international policy and practice:** ECP's case studies have been indispensable for increasing global awareness, influencing the content of academic courses and the priorities of the research community as well as shaping the international policies and practices of both the UN system and key development partners. They have been referenced in a number of high profile publications by the UN, the World Bank, the IPCC and the OECD, as well as in specific guidance by a number of donors including EU, USAID, DFID, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and AusAID.
- **Many lessons learned are being adopted by conflict-affected countries and supporting institutions:** The lessons learned are being used as the basis for policy development in a number of conflict-affected countries by different stakeholders, including the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and members of the g7+ group.
- **Vibrant community of practice and new multidisciplinary field of Environmental Peacebuilding established:** The ECP programme has helped establish a new community of practice in "environmental peacebuilding." The knowledge platform provides a repository of state-of-the-art resources for public and academic use.

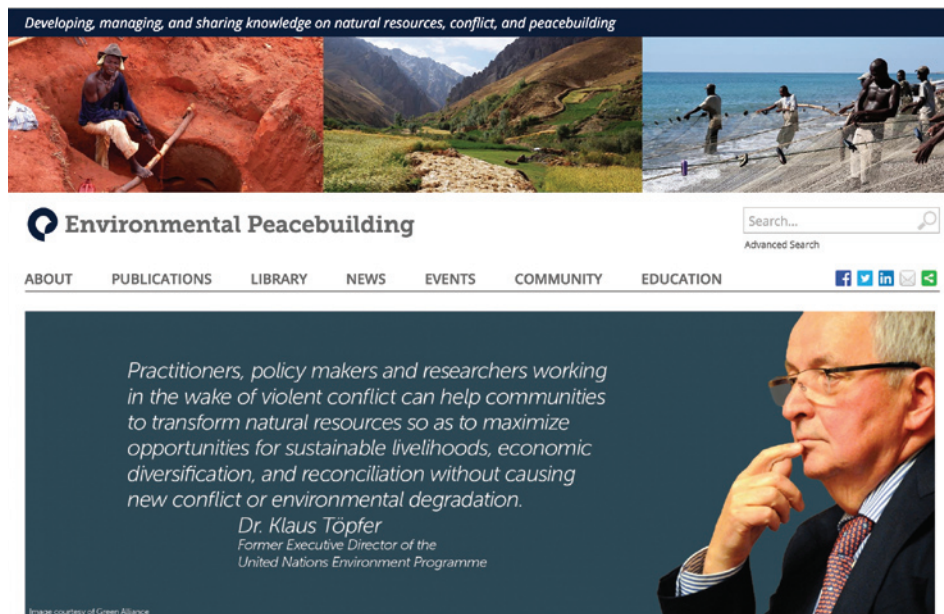
Global Research Programme: Books and Case Studies from the Field



Environmental Peacebuilding Knowledge Platform

The Environmental Peacebuilding Knowledge Platform was launched on 6 November 2013, on the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment During War and Armed Conflict. Developed by UNEP, the Environmental Law Institute and other partners, the website serves as a

global platform for sharing information, experiences and learning on addressing the linkages between natural resources, conflict and peace. The most discussed topics on the platform include extractive resources, renewable resources, land issues, governance and different conflict causes.



www.environmentalpeacebuilding.org

Environmental Peacebuilding Knowledge Platform in numbers

4,300

knowledge
products

2,500

active members
since 2013

8,000

page views
per month

43,000

case studies
downloaded

PILLAR 2

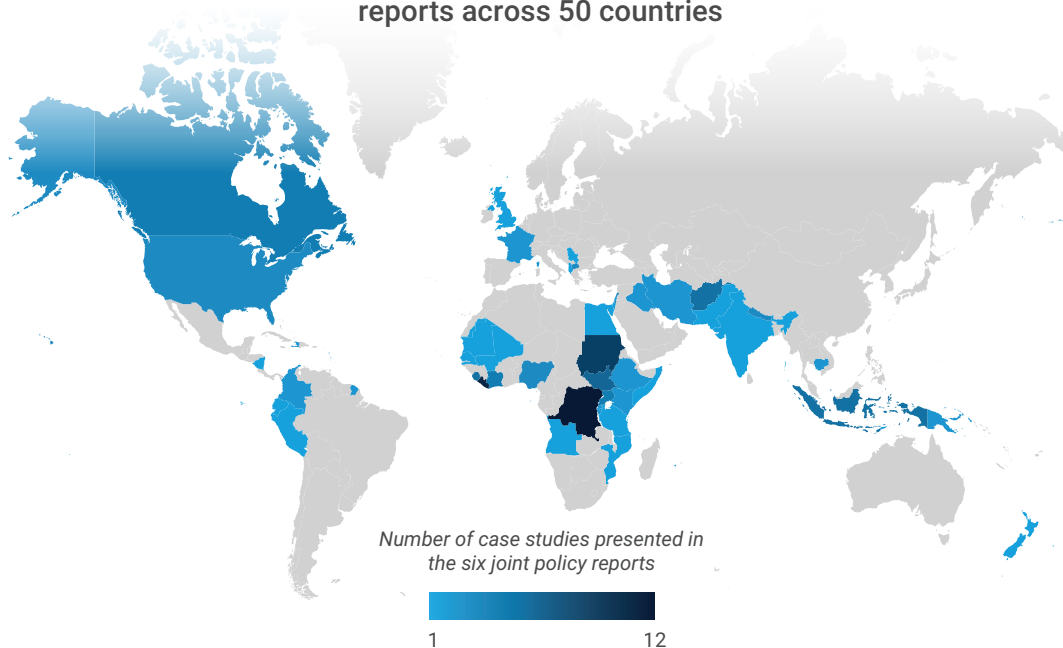
Strategic Advocacy and Joint Policy Analysis Within the UN System

ECP's second objective was to establish partnerships with key UN agencies to jointly analyze the evidence base and identify more effective response measures to address conflict risks and peacebuilding opportunities from natural resources. Key topics ranged from conflict prevention and mediation to international law, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The gender dynamics of post-conflict natural resource management were also explored, as were the linkages between

natural resources and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

The joint policy reports feature a combination of case studies, lessons learned and recommendations for improving policies, programmes and practices in the field. In each case, the underlying process was also used to conduct strategic advocacy within the UN system, raise awareness, and generate the political momentum for action.

Range of case studies presented in the six joint policy reports across 50 countries



Summary of Main ECP Outputs and Impacts of Pillar 2

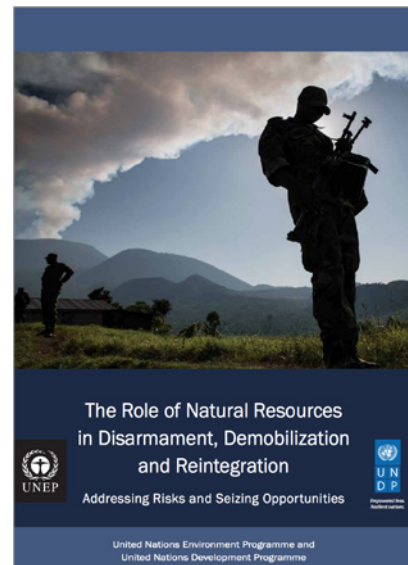
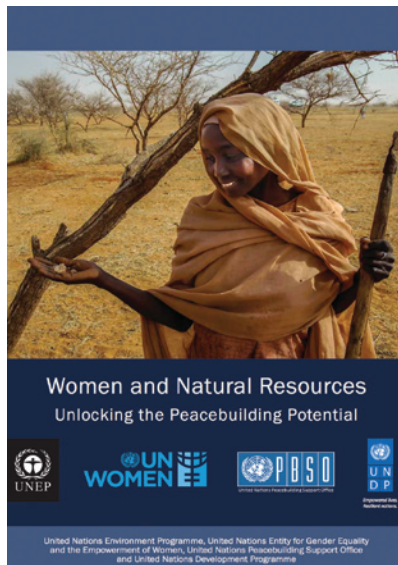
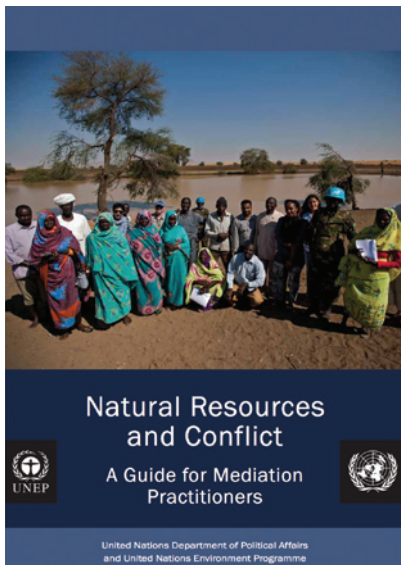
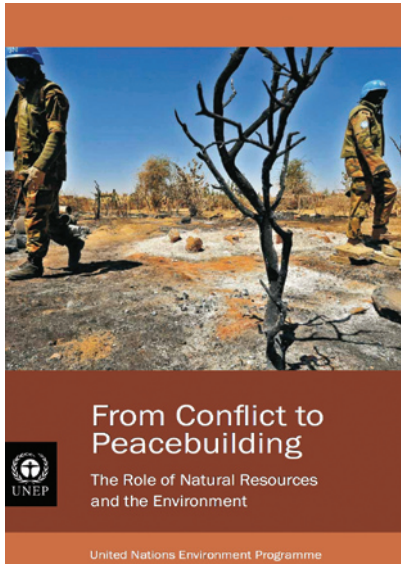
FOUR KEY OUTPUTS:

- **UN policy reports:** Joint policy reports and UN partnerships to address natural resources across the peace and security continuum were published, ranging from peacebuilding, peacekeeping and mediation, to international law, women and gender, and ex-combatants. Each report has generated further field guidance, policy, and training materials.
- **UN-EU Partnership:** ECP catalyzed a partnership between the EU and the UN that developed six guidance notes on conflict prevention linked to extractive industries, land, water and other renewable resources. The EU-UN Partnership on Land, Natural Resources and Conflict Prevention has also combined and deployed the economic, social, political and environmental expertise of the partner agencies into joint assessments and integrated field programs in different countries.
- **UN guidance:** ECP initiated and supported the adoption of a UN-wide guidance note on natural resources in post-conflict peacebuilding, endorsed by 38 UN entities. The guidance helps UN Country Teams and missions to understand the negative and positive roles that natural resources can play in peace consolidation.
- **Collaboration with the World Bank and g7+:** ECP is working with the World Bank to conflict-sensitize the extractive industry value chain and develop an open data resource concession platform called MAP-X for the disclosure and compliance monitoring for the g7+ group of fragile states.

THREE MAJOR IMPACTS:

- **Natural resources, conflict and peace linkages are recognized at the highest international political level:** The sustained advocacy and outreach of ECP has strongly contributed to ensuring that the complex role of natural resources across the peace and security continuum is recognized in high-level independent reviews on the Peacebuilding Architecture and Peace Operations, in a range of reports by the UN Secretary-General and in debates of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council and the General Assembly. The process of translating these higher level policy statements and commitments into new field programmes on the ground has started.
- **New international norms and guidelines are emerging:** ECP's work triggered the International Law Commission (ILC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to review the international legal frameworks protecting the environment during armed conflict and to establish new normative principles and guidelines of good practice.
- **Multi-donor trust funds for peacebuilding increasingly encourage and finance projects on natural resources:** The UN Peacebuilding Fund, the European Union's Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, and the World Bank-United Nations Fragility and Conflict Partnership Trust Fund have each made natural resources, conflict and peacebuilding projects eligible for funding and support.

Evidence-based UN Policy Reports on Natural Resources and Post-conflict Peacebuilding



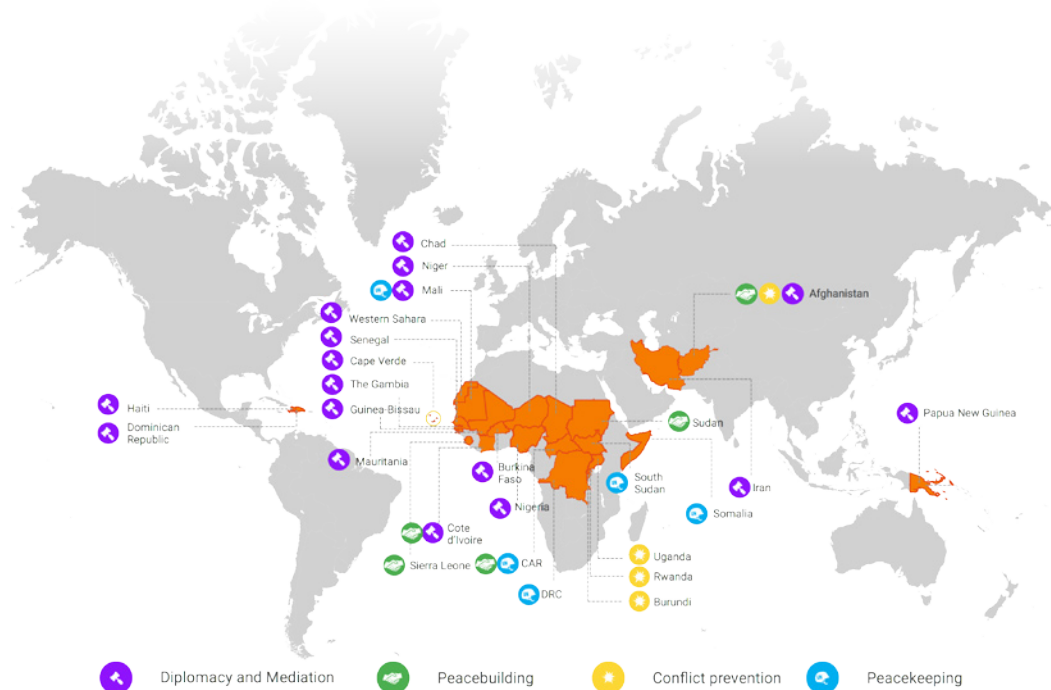
PILLAR 3

Catalyzing Uptake of Good Practices and Pilot Projects in the Field

The third main objective of ECP was to help catalyze the use and uptake of lessons learned and good practices on natural resources, conflict and peacebuilding in the field by the UN system, member states and other stakeholders. The field support delivered by ECP was divided into three main areas. First, analysing and advising on the conflict risks and peacebuilding potential of different resource sectors as well as developing pilot projects

and joint programmes aiming to tackle specific resource-driven conflicts. Second, providing impartial technical assessments on a "rapid response" basis to UN partners and national stakeholders, as well as environmental diplomacy support to the mediation and resolution of natural resource conflicts. Finally, helping UN peacekeeping missions manage their environmental impact as well as tackle illicit trade of natural resources.

Impartial technical expertise provided to stakeholders in the field across 26 countries



Summary of Main ECP Outputs and Impacts of Pillar 3

THREE KEY OUTPUTS:

- **Technical assistance to UN peacekeeping missions:** ECP conducted assessments on mitigating environmental impacts of peacekeeping missions or on threat financing from conflict resources and environmental crime in DR Congo, Mali, South Sudan, Somalia and Central African Republic.
- **Environmental diplomacy and mediation support:** ECP provided technical analysis and environmental diplomacy support to Western Sahara, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Bougainville, the Sahel region, Sudan and Nigeria to address ongoing or potential resource disputes.
- **Assessments and capacity building on conflict prevention and peacebuilding:** ECP conducted rapid field assessments and provided inputs on conflict prevention or peacebuilding programmes in CAR, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, DR Congo and Somalia.

FOUR MAJOR IMPACTS:

- **Increasing level of technical analysis and UN response coordination in the field of peacebuilding:** ECP has promoted joint technical analysis between UN agencies and improved UN coordination on addressing natural resources in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The best examples can be found within the work of the UN Country Teams for Afghanistan,

Haiti and Sierra Leone.

- **ECP's analysis and technical support has been successfully used in resource conflict resolution and reconciliation processes:** UNEP notably applied lessons learned and good practices generated by ECP in the mediation and environmental diplomacy support provided in the Ogoniland region of the Niger Delta. Other important work focused on supporting transboundary collaboration between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, as well as helping assess potential livelihood and security risks from climate change in the Sahel region.
- **Increasing application of good environmental practices in peacekeeping missions:** The idea of "greening the blue helmets" has become an accepted need and operational requirement for all UN peacekeeping missions globally. A Special Advisor on Environment and Peace Operations has been appointed to oversee this work.
- **ECP is successfully institutionalized within UNEP with a rapid reaction capacity to provide short-term technical assistance:** 15 technical missions have been undertaken, and there is growing demand for UNEP's assistance from the UN system, the European Union, the g7+ secretariat and the World Bank. These efforts are supported by ECP participation in HQ coordination mechanisms such as the UN Working Group on Transitions as well as links to DPA and DPKO desks. ECP is a flagship area of work for UNEP that has been successfully institutionalized within PCDMB as one of four work streams. Further internal investments in the ECP programme in terms of staff and resources are warranted.



Afghanistan: Harnessing the Peacebuilding Potential of Natural Resource Sectors

In Afghanistan, UNEP assessed interactions between natural resources and social conflicts. Following up on the recommendations of the report, UNEP helped to integrate key resource risks and opportunities into UN planning processes and capacity building programmes, as well as within the programmes of key development partners.



Haiti and the Dominican Republic: Assessing Options for Cross-Border Environmental Cooperation

UNEP worked together with the governments of Haiti and the Dominican Republic to address tensions created by a degraded environment and increasing resource depletion along the border zone. The recommendations, supported by both governments, were largely integrated into the new bi-national peace and development programme.



Sierra Leone: Environmental Compliance in the Mining Sector

In Sierra Leone, UNEP identified urgent policy priorities related to natural resources, including the need for environmental safeguards in the extractive industries and peacebuilding. An Environmental Affairs Officer was positioned in the UN Country Team to help build the local institutional capacity and support environmental monitoring and compliance in the extractives sector.



Central African Republic: Natural Resources as Peace Spoilers

UNEP worked in the Central African Republic to assess conflict risks and peace-building opportunities related to natural resources, feeding into the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding during 2009-2011. UNEP also advised the peace-keeping mission to install a range of energy efficiency measures and waste management technologies in order to reduce its overall environmental footprint.



DR Congo: Assessing the Extent of Environmental Crime and Threat Financing

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, UNEP conducted a ground-breaking study on illegal exploitation and trade in natural resources by a combination of militia groups and transnational organized criminal networks. Recommendations focused on measures to tackle a range of environmental crime as one of the conflict drivers in order to help stabilize the eastern part of the country.



Mali: Helping to Protect Fragile Environments During Peace Operations

The peacekeeping mission in Mali was the first one to receive an official mandate from the UN Security Council to manage its environmental impact. UNEP provided technical advice on range of issues, from waste management to water use, which were integrated into an environmental action plan. Actions to mitigate priority environmental risks are underway.



Ogoniland, Nigeria: Application of Environmental Diplomacy in Practice

In 2011, UNEP released a major independent technical assessment of the oil contamination in the Ogoniland region in Nigeria. Using a range of environmental diplomacy techniques, UNEP helped the negotiating parties to establish a one billion USD roadmap for the clean-up programme.



Sahel Region: Assessing Security Risks from Climate Change

In 2009, UNEP identified 19 hotspots in the Sahel region, where the most severe climatic changes could be detected over the past 20 years. Recommendations of the assessment have had a significant impact in development and security planning in the region. The work also contributed in developing a methodology to analyse the interplay between climate, migration and conflict.



Somalia: Supporting Sanctions Against the Charcoal Trade

In response to charcoal being used as a conflict resource by the militant group Al-Shabaab among others, the UN Security Council banned export and import of charcoal from Somalia. In 2013, UNEP provided options for the utilization or destruction of Somali charcoal, taking into consideration cost and environmental implications. These recommendations were further translated by the Security Council into a formal guidance note for countries.

Future Outlook

The UN is undergoing profound shifts in the way it integrates and coordinates its work across the main operational areas of peace and security, sustainable development, humanitarian assistance, human rights and international law. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is shifting from a donor and recipient-based development paradigm to universal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Key global agendas, such as the expert reviews of Peace Operations and Peacebuilding Architecture, also highlight the need for focused investments in conflict prevention and coherent responses to armed violence and peacebuilding.

The ECP programme was the first comprehensive and sustained effort to catalyze new approaches for the UN system to respond to the peace and security challenges posed by natural resources in a more coordinated and comprehensive manner. As the initial global investments made by the ECP programme become self-sustaining and are scaled-up by the partners and beneficiaries, UNEP can refocus its own efforts on providing targeted technical assistance to member states at the field level.

The ECP programme proposes six priority areas whereby UNEP's comparative advantage and technical orientation can be leveraged to help address specific conflict risks and peacebuilding opportunities linked to natural resources and the environment. These include:

- Supporting the emerging field of Environmental Peacebuilding
- Providing technical support to resource conflict mediation and environmental diplomacy
- Improving environmental management and monitoring of the extractive industries

- Addressing climate change and security risks
- Empowering women in peacebuilding through natural resources
- Combatting illicit trade of natural resources and environmental crime

Where possible, this work will be oriented to support SDG 16 on peaceful societies, access to justice and inclusive institutions. Within this goal, UNEP will focus on the environmental and natural resource dimensions of four key targets:

- 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and ensure equal access to justice for all
- 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
- 16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements

UNEP views these four targets as essential requirements for governing natural resources in a manner which maximizes peace dividends and minimizes the risk of social grievances and violent conflict. This work will complement and inform other planned UNEP support to SDGs that have a stronger environmental orientation. The need to adopt a sensitive approach for all environment and natural resource management projects and capacity building efforts will be paramount.

As these six focus areas are further designed and refined, UNEP looks forward to building on existing partnerships, and expert networks as well as establishing new ones. Strengthening support from a range of development partners will also be a priority.

Recognizing Our Partners

Over the years, UNEP has worked with numerous partners from a range of sectors, including UN actors, universities and other research institutes, non-governmental organizations, and governments. This has enabled UNEP to efficiently address the often multi-disciplinary and complex relationships between natural resources, conflict and peacebuilding. Support from partners has also allowed various field operations to be carried out in difficult environments. UNEP duly thanks the partners and partnerships that have played an indispensable role in the delivery of the ECP programme.

The government of Finland deserves special thanks for the vision, political leadership and sustained anchor funding for ECP during 2008-2015. Other development partners such as Norway, Sweden, Italy, the United States and the European Union also provided key support to different ECP outputs. The Environmental Law Institute, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, the EU-UN Partnership on Land, Natural Resources and Conflict Prevention, and the UNEP Expert Group on Conflict and Peacebuilding have also played critical roles in the implementation of the different pillars and merit special thanks.

UN Collaborators



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Resilient nations.*



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“ We must use all of the tools at our disposal, including dialogue, mediation and other forms of preventive diplomacy, to help prevent natural resources from fueling and financing armed conflict, as well as destabilizing the fragile foundations of peace. ”

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL, BAN KI-MOON

“ When access to resources and their benefits is equitable, then resources can be a catalyst for cooperation. We have to work to make scarcity of resources a reason for cooperation, not for conflict. We have to prove the win-win proposition in sharing resources and negotiated solutions. ”

UN DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL, JAN ELIASSON

“ We aim for United Nations peacekeeping operations to lead by example in managing environmental impact. Our partnership with UNEP is key to continuing to improve our performance, as we work together to translate our environmental policy into action on the ground. ”

UN UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS, HERVÉ LADSOUS
& UN UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR FIELD SUPPORT, SUSANA MALCORRA

