# ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND SECURITY IN CIVILIAN CSDP MISSIONS: INSIGHTS FROM THE FIELD

EUROPEAN CENTRE
OF EXCELLENCE
FOR CIVILIAN
CRISIS MANAGEMENT

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# FOREWORD

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Illicit exploitation of natural resources, environmental degradation, and climate change influence the fragile security environments in which civilian CSDP missions operate. These phenomena exacerbate tensions and undermine human security. Criminal networks and other nefarious actors exploit environmental vulnerabilities and profit from the illegal extraction and trade of resources or the dumping of toxic waste. For our missions, understanding these dynamics is now an integral part of effective crisis management and security sector responses.

Over the past six years, our missions have made significant progress in translating this understanding into practice. The deployment of environmental advisors and environmental crime experts has strengthened our ability to identify environmental and climate-related risks and support our partners in developing practical responses on the ground. The experiences presented in this report, ranging from work on environmental crime, maritime security, climate risks as national security concerns, and confidence-building to the integration of environmental sustainability and energy efficiency measures into construction and infrastructure projects for partners, demonstrate the breadth of this work. Leading by example is equally important. Improving environmental performance and optimising resource use in our missions can reduce environmental impacts while also contributing to operational resilience and cost savings.

Looking ahead, demand for environmental action as part of the broader rule of law and crisis management response may expand in the future. We should continue to reflect these dynamics in conflict analysis, mission planning, and engagement with partners from the outset. I commend mission colleagues and partners who contribute to this work, both through the examples highlighted in this report and well beyond. I would also like to warmly thank the European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management and colleagues at our Civilian Operations Headquarters for bringing some of these experiences and good practices together through this publication.



*Photo 11: A sustainably designed building with passive construction technology features, such as a double-layered roof and cavity walls, in Somalia. Photo: EUCAP Somalia*

# EUCAP SAHEL MALI

EUCAP Sahel Mali assists with infrastructure and building projects to enhance the operational capacity of its partners within the internal security forces in Mali.

As fuel supply and distribution can be erratic in Mali, with several instances of severe fuel shortages occurring in recent years, the work of security forces can be impacted, particularly when their dependence on diesel generators is high. In 2025, EUCAP Sahel Mali thus supported the installation of solar panels at six partner premises, contributing to a reduced carbon footprint, enhanced energy security, and operational continuity for the internal security forces. By installing solar systems, the mission has helped these institutions continue to deliver important services and remain operational.



*Photo 12: Marika Malinen. Photo: EUCAP Sahel Mali*

## MARIKA MALINEN, ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISOR

Marika Malinen, Environmental Advisor at EUCAP Sahel Mali, notes that 'environmental degradation and climate change are directly linked to peace and security, which is the main reason for missions such as EUCAP Sahel Mali being here, and why these issues should be handled with care. As for the mission's own operability, serious fuel shortages have interrupted the mission twice in the past years. This is increasing the need to identify more sustainable and resilient solutions both for our partners and for our own use. **Several factors were key to the successful installation of solar panels [at the six premises] for our partners, including mission funding, close cooperation with local partners, and a clear understanding of beneficiaries' priorities'.**

‘While the demand for solar panels in partner organisations has skyrocketed lately, the mission now has one building fully powered by solar energy, which makes it easier for us to evaluate and share [this] as a good practice. **But providing new technology is only one part of the solution. We need to keep investigating our partners’ energy consumption and plan optimisation wherever we can. Awareness of usage patterns and electronic equipment is half of the job’.**

**Henning Fiedler, Project Manager, EUCAP Sahel Mali**

# SOME KEY INSIGHTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, SECURITY AND MAINSTREAMING IN CSDP MISSIONS’ EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

- **Environmental crime and degradation are governance issues**, not just ecological challenges. They cannot be addressed through technical or environmental measures alone. Instead, they require a coordinated approach linking communities, institutions, the police, environmental authorities, and the judiciary.

- **Civil society can be indispensable in detecting environmental crimes, raising awareness and finding solutions**. NGOs and local groups serve as the eyes and ears on the ground and bring specialised knowledge that public authorities and international organisations sometimes lack. Their inclusion in multi-stakeholder dialogue is essential.

- **A common voice multiplies impact**. In a context with multiple international missions, coordination and unified messaging can significantly strengthen the effectiveness of engagement with national counterparts.

- **Strengthening inter-institutional coordination**. The mission’s role is not only to share best practices, but also to support the authorities of partner countries in leveraging what they already have, including through enhanced collaboration across institutions.

- **Dedicated environmental expertise matters**. Having experts on-site in the missions makes it substantially easier to identify the core issues, engage the right interlocutors, and develop concrete recommendations.

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