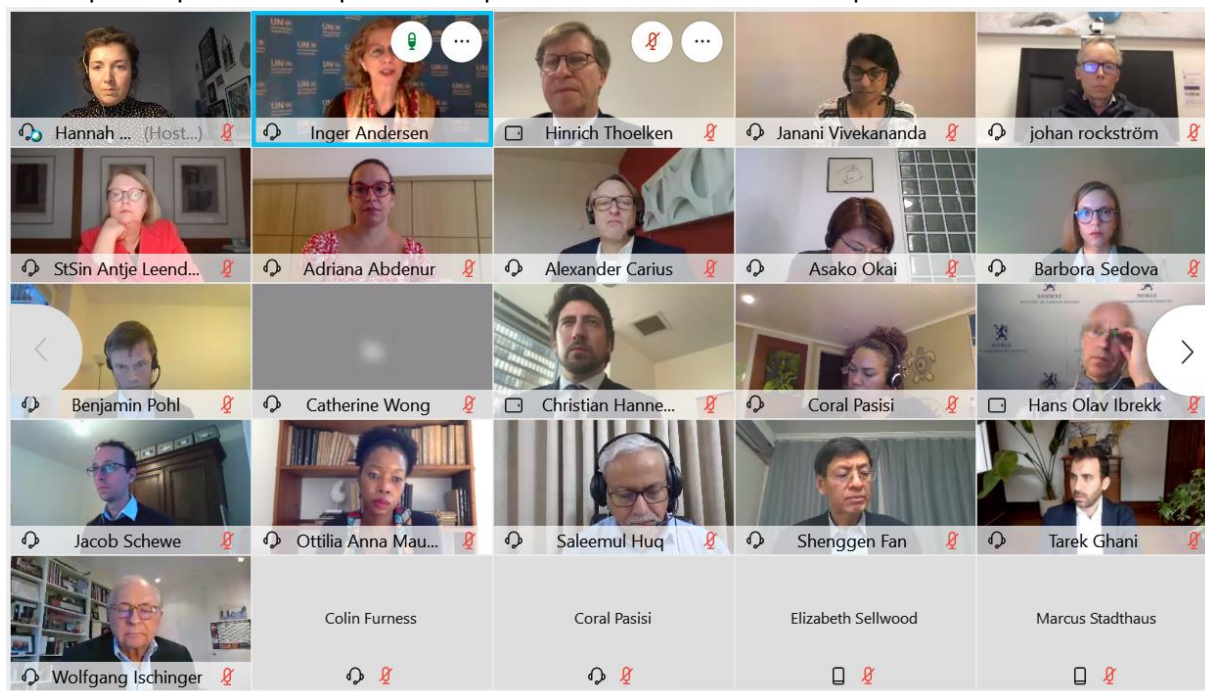


Weathering Risk Strategic Advisory Board Meeting Summary

The Strategic Advisory Board of [Weathering Risk](#), the climate and security risk and foresight assessment initiative, met for its inaugural session on **19th January 2021**.

Weathering Risk, a flagship multi-disciplinary, multilateral initiative, seeks to tackle the risks that climate change poses to human and international security. By addressing existing gaps in climate security risk and foresight analysis, the initiative aims to facilitate risk informed planning, enhance capacity for action and improve operational responses that promote climate resilience and peace.



Screenshot: First Meeting of the Weathering Risk Strategic Advisory Board

Hosted by adelphi and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), the meeting brought [leading figures](#) in development, environmental, foreign and security policy from around the world together to discuss the key objectives and strategic priorities of the initiative. Their insights outlined forthcoming challenges, strategic goals and the importance of collaborative, integrated and comprehensive approaches to tackling climate security risks.

“Most important to me is that the initiative is also aimed at identifying concrete entry points for political and preventive action such as improving early warning systems and our early response capabilities, as well as strengthening the resilience of vulnerable sectors and institutions”

Antje Leendertse, Germany

Discussion

State Secretary Antje Leendertse of the German Federal Foreign Office and PIK Director Prof. Dr. Johan Rockström opened the discussion, stressing the significance of better research on climate related risks to peace and security. Both emphasized the importance of science-based but people- and policy-oriented analysis, in order to develop methodologies and assessments that can be translated into concrete action points for governments and policy makers across different contexts around the world.

Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, underscored the significance of climate security to sustainable development, highlighting that when an environment can no longer sustain a society, it leads to societal implosion. She stressed the urgency of policy action on the ground, emphasising how taking an open-minded approach to risk assessments allows for valuable analyses of local and global dimensions that further undercut sustainability and climate security.

Asako Okai, Assistant Secretary General at UNDP, reflected on the power of cohesive and collective interaction for sustaining peace and maximising impact on the ground while maintaining a global perspective, and lauded Weathering Risk's contribution to this end. She emphasised the value of looking closely at pilot regions to inform effective conflict mitigation policies.

Wolfgang Ischinger, Chairman of the Munich Security Conference, underlined the importance of public attention and pressure in driving policy makers to catalyse action. To this end, he invited Weathering Risk to present its findings at the forthcoming Munich Security Conference, to ensure that a broader international community of foreign policy and security decision makers are better able to act upon climate and security risks.

“It is absolutely critical that the conversation is not Western dominated. ... Weathering Risk includes the work of researchers from all around the world, including from non-northern countries and we need to ensure that those voices are heard.”

Inger Andersen, UNEP

“The reality is that on the ground, the various climate-related security risks are inextricably linked and we need to ensure that our foresight and analysis reflect how complex and interconnected these issues are.”

Ottilia Maunganidze, South Africa

Ottilia Anna Maunganidze, Head of Special Projects in the Office of the Executive Director of the Institute for Security Studies, described the forthcoming challenges for Africa, especially African cities, in building resilience vis-à-vis climate-related displacement and migration. She reminded the board that it was imperative to consider potential blind-spots when conducting scientific analyses. She and **Shenggen Fan, Former Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute**, highlighted the manifold causal linkages between food (in)security, conflict and societal stability – a priority theme for Weathering Risk.

Tarek Ghani, Chief Economist at the International Crisis Group, addressed the over-militarisation of climate security risks and advocated in favour of balancing military awareness-raising with interdisciplinary approaches from the wider

diplomatic, humanitarian and economic community. This was echoed by **Adriana Abdenur, Executive Director of Plataforma CIPÓ**, who highlighted that the security risks associated with climate change in Latin America are complex and manifold, ranging from gender-based violence to organised and environmental crime. She drew attention to the difficulty of national sovereignty and underlined the importance of more inclusive region-specific agendas when assessing the broader concept of climate-related human security. **Coral Pasisi, Senior Advisor to the Director General of the Pacific Community (SPC) and Director of Sustainable Pacific Consultancy**, echoed this by outlining the impact of climate change on food security, local communities, and the economy in the Pacific Islands.

“It is critical that we have a fine-grained analysis and build resilience profiles into our approaches. Every community has a different ability to cope with different stresses, and it is imperative that local knowledge is built into the system.”

Coral Pasisi, Nui

In his final remarks, **Hans Olav Ibrekk, Policy Director in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, praised German leadership on the issue before outlining Norway's objectives in mainstreaming and institutionalising climate security. He stressed the intersection between climate security and gender, and commended the inclusive and intersectional methodology adopted by the Weathering Risk research team.



“It will be difficult to raise the profile of climate and security in the Security Council as there are strong actors working against us. The only way to broaden the agenda is to build on high quality analytical work.”

Hans Olav Ibrekk, Norway

Closing the meeting, **Michael Klor-Berchtold, Director-General for Economic Affairs and Sustainable Development at the German Federal Foreign Office**, highlighted the importance of specific and multilateral action under the umbrella of Weathering Risk. He reiterated that environmental implosion could lead to social implosion and called for an integrated and comprehensive risk assessment approach, taking into account food and water insecurity.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The discussion underlined the value of Weathering Risk’s coordinated action across different regions, sectors and institutions to address the impacts of climate change on international peace and security. The Strategic Advisory Board members stressed that a localised approach with contextual sensitivity, including diverse voices from beyond the northern hemisphere, was essential to achieving any meaningful climate and security risk and foresight assessment. Members appreciated that this was well embedded in the Weathering Risk methodological approach, partnerships and board representation.

The board confirmed its commitment to steering the policy relevance and supporting the take-up of the initiative as well as to promoting the issue of climate change and security within their own lines of work. As next steps, the Weathering Risk team will continue to develop the innovative risk assessment methodology based on the board’s input, and to start piloting the initiative in the field, likely in Mali.



Weathering Risk
A Climate and Security Risk and Foresight Assessment
- Strategic Advisory Board -

- Adriana Abdenur**
Executive Director
Plataforma CIPÓ
- Inger Andersen**
Executive Director
UNEP
- Shenggen Fan**
Former Director General
International Food Policy
Research Institute
- Tom Middendorp**
Chair – International Military Council
on Climate and Security
Former Chief of Defence –Netherlands
- Federica Mogherini**
Rector – College of Europe
Former EU High
Representative
- Wolfgang Ischinger**
Chairman
Munich Security
Conference
- Saleemul Huq**
Director
International Center for Climate
Change and Development
- Coral Pasisi**
Senior Advisor to Director General SPC
and Director of Sustainable
Pacific Consultancy
- Robert Malley**
President and CEO
International
Crisis Group
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