

Reducing vulnerability to climate change by establishing early warning systems in conflict prone areas in Argentina



Partners Argentina / Fundación Cambio Democrático conducted a workshop on “Climate Change and Conflicts” at the Latin-American Climate Change Forum, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on June 16, 2010. The eleven attendees included representatives from civil society and the Argentinean government, i.e. Greenpeace Argentina, Caritas, Argentine Foundation to the Nations Path to the Truth (FANCV) and the Secretariat for Environment and Sustainable Development (SAyDS).

The event was held in the process of preparing the Argentina report of the Early Warning Project’s climate change cluster under the Initiative for Peacebuilding. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss local conflict potentials in relation to climate change and to devise recommendations for public policy makers and stakeholders in the development of an Early Warning System. The feedback was incorporated into the final Argentina report.

The preliminary conclusions and recommendations of the workshops were aimed at giving an input for the development of an appropriate climate change adaptation policy including a conflict-sensitive approach. This approach focuses in particular on conflicts arising from water resource management and the country’s most vulnerable groups.

- The importance of promoting early warning systems and policies for adapting to climate change through a conflict-sensitive approach to environmental conflicts was discussed. The adequate measures to reach this promotion were pointed out as being the strengthening of information systems in order to increase public access to information on climate change, as well as raising awareness among the population, both before and after the upcoming of a severe climate event.
- It was also stressed that climate change policies should be designed in a participatory and coordinated way, so that different stakeholders are involved in the decision making at all levels of the society.
- The promotion of land-use environmental planning schemes adapted to the contingencies of climate change is needed to prevent a variety of conflicts. They can foment a proper settlement of the population in regions where climate change impacts are minor and can ensure the provision of water resources in regions where it is scarce.
- It is necessary to include climate change in the legal framework in Argentina by promoting a legislative reform and establishing a policy framework for climate change.
- As water is a key strategic resource for the prosperity of the country, the current shortcomings of water resource management frameworks should be addressed with respect to efficient resource use and adaptation to new conditions of scarcity and abundance of water.
- As there is a strong relationship between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, it is imperative to strengthen both prevention and disaster risk reduction systems by creating a comprehensive legal framework for disaster management.
- It is important to strengthen the role of the media as a powerful actor to promote greater awareness at the citizen and the political level on the need to develop climate change policies.
- The most important actor in addressing climate change is the State. The government should coordinate actions within its own branches and should liaise with a diversity of stakeholders by focusing on building consensus amongst these. This initiative should also be expanded to non-state actors.

