



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
The Secretariat**

**OSCE High-Level Conference on Climate Change  
(in-person)**

**Vienna, 7 July 2023**

Venue: Hofburg

*Concept Note*

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. It has given rise to more frequent and more severe weather events and disasters. It stokes increased competition over shared natural resources, and contributes to the loss of livelihoods, which in turn can force people to leave their homes and can also give rise to illegal activity. It impacts on food, water and energy supplies. In all these ways and more, climate change is undermining security, stability, and peace.

At the same time, conflicts and tensions contribute to climate change through increased emissions by military action, and damage to infrastructure. They increase vulnerability of the people to climate change, degrade adaptation and mitigation capacities and weaken climate governance and climate finance.

Tackling these challenges requires the broadest possible co-operation within and across borders and at the international level, which in turn can contribute to, conflict prevention, confidence building, and good neighborly relations.

The High-Level Conference on Climate Change that will be hosted by the OSCE Secretary General on 7 July 2023 in Vienna will bring together Ministers, Climate Envoys and other high-level political actors of the OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation along with representatives of international organizations and civil society, climate security experts and practitioners. It will provide an opportunity to discuss the implications of climate change for security and peace, as well as the consequences of tensions and conflicts for climate action. In view of the significance of the [2021 OSCE Ministerial Council Decision on Climate Change](#) for international peace and security, and taking stock of the OSCE's accomplishments in this field for over a decade, this OSCE-related Conference pursuant to the OSCE Rules of Procedure will examine the OSCE's contributions to tackling climate change through its comprehensive and co-operative security approach and explore prospects for further OSCE action. In doing so, it will also enable us to share experiences and best practices, and highlight areas for practical co-operation and partnership to strengthen climate resilience in support of prosperity, stability and security.

**Scope and Format:**

The Conference will feature contributions by high-level representatives of OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation as well as members of civil society, the research community, and regional and international organizations.

Building on the 2021 OSCE Ministerial Council Decision “*Strengthening Co-operation to Address the Challenges Caused by Climate Change*” (MC.DEC/3/21), we will address the following questions:

- What are the implications of climate change for security, stability and peace in the OSCE area and beyond and what is OSCE’s political as well as practical track record so far in addressing them?
- How does the war against Ukraine impact climate security and climate action, and what do we learn from it?
- What are the entry points and prospects for further OSCE action to tackle climate-related risks?

The Conference will also bring diverse stakeholders together for thematic discussions including on:

- Sustainable management of shared ecosystems in a changing climate
- Regional co-operation for early warning, preparedness and response to climate-induced extreme events
- Multi-stakeholder approaches to climate and security, including through engaging and empowering women and youth
- Scaling-up synergies and partnerships on climate and security among regional and international organizations

The Conference will include a mix of panel discussions and parallel thematic sessions for interaction and learning.