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Climate-Related Security Risks in IGAD Countries: Re-Envisioning National Adaptation Planning

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Introduction

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in eastern Africa was created in 1996 to supersede the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development, founded in 1986 to specifically deal with issues related to drought and desertification in the Horn of Africa. The IGAD region is considered one of the most vulnerable to climate change on the African continent. Drought trends in the region are worse now than they were during the 2010–2011 and 2016–2017 droughts. The March–May 2022 rainy season is the driest on record in the last 70 years, making the 2020–2022 drought worse than both the 2010–2011 and 2016–2017 droughts in duration and severity. Climate change and variability significantly impact economies and livelihoods in the region, as most activities are directly and highly dependent on the total seasonal rainfall and its distribution in both temporal and spatial domains.

This poses risks to peace and security through the displacement of people. In this regard, the drivers of conflict are linked to competing claims over scarce natural resources, as climate change serves as a threat multiplier that worsens the challenges and threats already being faced by people in the region. Some population groups are especially vulnerable to climate change, in particular those dependent on resource-based livelihoods and living in environmentally degraded areas with high disaster risks and low access to protection and assistance.[1] The emerging discourse on the topic of conflict and climate change suggests that new displacement, both internal and across international borders, is triggered by a mix of conflict and climate shocks. For these reasons, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan are priority countries for the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement.[2]

Promoting peace, security, and stability, eliminating sources of conflict, and preventing and resolving conflict are prioritised areas of concern for IGAD.[3] IGAD work on peace and security is guided by its Peace and Security Strategy (2010). Currently under review, it is set for roll out as the Peace and Security Sector Strategy 2025.[4] The sector strategy lays out IGAD priority areas of intervention that are geared towards tackling the complex and highly dynamic human security challenges in the region.[5]The regional body has been at the forefront of assessing climate-related peace and security risks led by the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) and the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN).[6]

1 United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Human Mobility and Climate Change in the IGAD Region: A Case Study in the Shared Border Regions of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. Joint programme for addressing drivers and facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration in the contexts of disasters and climate change in the IGAD region" (Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2023), accessed 5 July 2023, https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1411/files/documents/2023-06/human_mobility_and_climate_change_in_the_igad_region.pdf.

2 United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Global Report 2022" (Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2022), accessed 21 July 2023, https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/regions/east-and-horn-africa-and-great-lakes.

3 Intergovernmental Authority on Development, "Annual Report 2022" (Djibouti: Intergovernmental Authority on Development, 2022), accessed 21 July 2023, https://igad.int/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/IGAD-Annual-Report-2022.pdf.

4 Camilla Elowson and Adriana Lins de Albuquerque, "Challenges to Peace and Security in Eastern Africa: The role of IGAD, EAC and EASF", FOI Memo 5634 Studies in African Security (Stockholm: Swedish Research Agency, 2016), accessed 29 September 2023, https://www.foi.se/download/18.7fd35d7f166c56ebe0bb38e/1542369060243/Challenges-to-Peace-and-Security-in-Eastern-Africa_FOI-Memo-5634.pdf.

5 Intergovernmental Authority on Development, "IGAD to Roll out Peace and Security Sector Strategy 2025" (Djibouti: Intergovernmental Authority on Development, 18 June 2022), accessed 20 September 2023, https://igad.int/igad-to-roll-out-peace-and-security-sector-strategy-2025/.

6 IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre, "Policy Brief: Addressing Climate Change, Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa" (Kenya: IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre, November 2022), accessed 10 July 2023, https://www.icpac.net/documents/644/Policy_Brief_Clim_2022_final_print.pdf.

ICPAC has developed the IGAD Regional Climate Change Strategy (IRCCS), which provides a framework for integrated and coordinated mechanisms to address climate change issues. It aims to improve the resilience of livelihoods and the well-being of the people in the IGAD region to climate change and extreme weather events. Result 2 of the strategy is entitled "Climate change strategies and actions are strengthened and mainstreamed in key economic sectors". Its primary thrust is the overarching priority intervention areas being pursued by IGAD member states and the international community as enshrined in the agreement establishing IGAD, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Agreement, respectively.

In general, the IRCCS provides a framework for integrated and coordinated mechanisms to guide IGAD member states in addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities associated with climate change in the region. The IRCCS is aware that climate change will only compound these threats as it acts as a "threat multiplier", given its potential to exacerbate many of the current challenges and threats already being faced in some countries. Security concerns linked to climate change include water stress, land use and food security, natural disasters, and environmental migration.[7]

This article adopts a document analysis approach to explore how climate-related security risks are represented in the NAPs from a comparative perspective. It is positioned in relation to discussion about the four climate–security pathways described in the IGAD conceptual framework; namely: 1) threats to food and water security; 2) climate-induced mobility; 3) historical grievances and cultural practices; and 4) governance and fragility.[8] This analysis specifically aims to understand how IGAD member states prioritise these plans and what gaps exist. The concluding remarks draw lessons learnt for policy implications and looking ahead.

Analysis of Security Risks in IGAD Region

Security concerns linked to climate change have now become the defining issue of the time. The range of threats to peace and security in the IGAD region are too numerous and too diverse. These threats emanate from both inter and intra-state conflicts. They have intensified because of transnational security threats such as terrorism, human and drug trafficking, and the illicit use of small arms and light weapons, among other causes.[9] There is suggestive evidence that climate shocks increase the likelihood of domestic conflicts by as much as 38%.[10] This is due to the fact that climate change impacts lead to an increase in forced migration. According to the United Nations World Food Programme, the number of forcibly displaced people in eastern Africa has nearly tripled, from 1.82 million in 2012 to almost 5 million in 2022, including 300,000 new refugees during the previous year alone.[11] Most of these displacements directly result from extreme weather events or conflicts associated with the knock-on and ripple effects of climate variability and extremes.[12]

7 Intergovernmental Authority on Development, "IGAD Regional Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2023–2030)" (Djibouti: Intergovernmental Authority on Development, 2022), accessed 15 July 2023, https://www.icpac.net/documents/619/IGAD_IRCCS_v_61.pdf.

8 IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre, "Policy Brief: Addressing Climate Change, Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa"

9 "The IGAD Region", Intergovernmental Authority on Development, accessed 21 July 2023, https://igad.int/the-igad-region/.

10 Yoro Diallo and René Tapsoba, "Climate Shocks and Domestic Conflicts in Africa", IMF Working Paper, Africa Department (Washington DC: International Monetary Fund, December 2022).

11 UNHCR, "Spiraling costs, surging conflict, and soaring climate disasters create a desperate future for millions of refugees across Eastern Africa", WFP and UNHCR Joint News Release, 13 April 2022, (UNHCR, 2022), accessed 10 October 2023, https://www.unhcr.org/news/news-releases/spiraling-costs-surging-conflict-and-soaring-climate-disasters-create-desperate.

12 IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre, "Report on State of Climate, Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa" (Kenya: IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre, November 2022), accessed 20 September 2023, https://www.icpac.net/documents/648/State_of_Climate_Peace_and_Security_in_the_Horn_of_Africa_2022_gttu3PO.pdf.

An analysis of conflict trends is useful for attempting to understand the connections between climate change and conflict risks. The data used in this analysis is from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), covering the past two decades, from 1990 to 2022.[13] The UCDP divides armed conflict into three categories: 1) state-based conflict; 2) non-state conflict; and 3) one-sided violence. This analysis is focused on category 2, non-state conflict. The UCDP defines a non-state conflict as "the use of armed force between two organised armed groups, neither of which is the government of a state, which results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a year".[14] A previous study found that the effects of climatic shocks on the risk of violent conflicts are found to hold only for intercommunal conflicts, not for government-involved conflicts.[15] Our interest here then is on intercommunal conflicts instead of state based violence or one-sided violence.

Table 1 presents the spatial distribution of conflict across IGAD countries. Note that South Sudan figures are based on data available from 2011 onward. Analysing the data, IGAD member states collectively experienced a total of 2,485 non-state conflict events between 1990 and 2022, and ordered from left to right according to the conflict events. Somalia stands out as the most affected by conflicts, accounting for just less than one-third (29%) of total events. The least affected countries are Eritrea, with no conflicts reported, and Djibouti, with only 5 conflicts reported. It is however not certain to what extent what is reported for Eritrean can be deemed to represent an accurate count of occurrence of conflicts. Conflict intensity is reflected in the number of conflict-related deaths, with estimates suggesting at least 53,692 deaths. Data shows that 40% of all fatalities are linked to Sudan. Although it can be difficult to attribute insecurities to drought, the general trend suggests that climate change and drought have become an existential security threat in the IGAD region. The risk of local conflicts does appear to be increasing with increasing drought shocks. There is a peak in the incidence of conflicts between 2008 and 2010, as an upward trend occurred, seemingly attributable to the three drought periods of 2010–2011, 2016–2017, and 2020–2022.

13 Uppsala Conflict Data Program, "UCDP Dataset Download Center", Yearly Datasets covering 1989 – 2022 - UCDP Non-State Conflict Dataset version 23.1, (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2022), accessed 10 July 2023, https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/nsos/ucdp-nonstate-231-xlsx.zip.

14 Therése Pettersson, "UCDP Non-State Conflict Codebook" Version 2.5-2016, (Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 2014), accessed 10 October 2023, https://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/replication_data/2016_c_666956-l_1-k_ucdp-non-state-conflict-dataset-codebook-v2.5-2016.pdf.

15 Yoro Diallo and René Tapsoba, "Climate Shocks and Domestic Conflicts in Africa", IMF Working Paper, Africa Department (International Monetary Fund, 2022). Accessed 18August 2023.
https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Publications/WP/2022/English/wpiea2022250-print-pdf.ashx.

Table 1. Intercommunal conflict trends, by country (1990–2022)

	Total	Somalia	Ethiopia	Kenya	Sudan	South Sudan	Uganda	Djibouti	Eritrea	Deaths
1990–92	61	9	17	24	8	N/A	2	1	-	7,035
1993–95	144	77	8	31	26	N/A	-	2	-	6,921
1996–98	177	102	6	31	34	N/A	4	-	-	4,167
1999–01	205	79	46	36	17	N/A	27	-	-	4,544
2002–04	262	150	58	10	12	N/A	32	-	-	4,069
2005–07	235	78	46	48	44	N/A	19	-	-	3,985
2008–10	373	141	46	107	68	N/A	11	-	-	5,554
2011–13	247	28	6	90	70	53	-	-	-	5,282
2014–16	218	6	5	89	96	20	2	-	-	3,400
2017–19	305	43	70	73	55	63	-	1	-	3,677
2020–22	258	18	47	20	90	82	-	1	-	5,058
Total conflicts	2,485	731	355	559	520	218	97	5	0	
Deaths		11,654	8,331	4,334	21,639	5,713	1,980	41	0	53,692

Source: Author compilation based on UCDP county specific data[16]

Analysis undertaken by Stockholm University on the most common pathways from climate-related environmental damage to local or intrastate violent conflict in East Africa found that climate change or climate variability can contribute to conflict in any of three ways: (1) by worsening livelihood; (2) by increasing migration, thus triggering in-migration tensions with the host communities; or (3) by pushing pastoralists to move beyond their traditional routes, bringing them into conflict with other pastoralists or farmers.[17]

Regional Climate Change Strategy: Dynamics of Climate-Related Security Risks

Climate vulnerabilities in the IGAD region are among the highest in Africa. In efforts to promote peace and security, IGAD has made efforts to refocus attention on climatic drivers of human insecurity. Climate change and environmental stressors are identified in the IRCCS as one of the threats to peace and security in the region. Ministerial-level meetings on the food crisis and land conflict in the Horn of Africa, held in Kampala in July 2022, voice concerns over the adverse effects of climate change and its impact on displacement, food security, and conflict. The ensuing policy paper provides a conceptual framework for the climate–security nexus. The framework is based on four inter-related pathways and focuses

16 Uppsala Conflict Data Program, "UCDP Dataset Download Center" Sagal Abshir, "Climate Change And Security In The Horn Of Africa: Can Europe Help To Reduce The Risks?", Climate-Fragility Policy Paper, (European Institute of Peace & Climate Security Expert Knowledge, 2020), accessed 10 October 2023, https://www.eip.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/csen_policy_paper_climate_change_and_security_in_the_horn_of_africa.pdf.

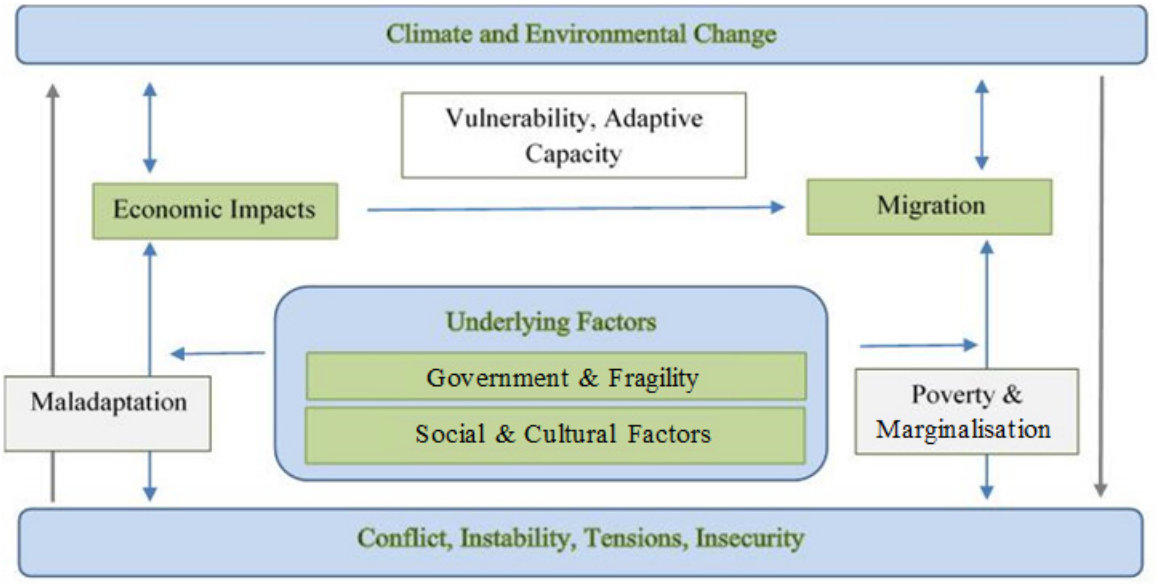
17 agal Abshir, "Climate Change And Security In The Horn Of Africa: Can Europe Help To Reduce The Risks?", Climate-Fragility Policy Paper, (European Institute of Peace & Climate Security Expert Knowledge, 2020), accessed 10 October 2023, https://www.eip.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/csen_policy_paper_climate_change_and_security_in_the_horn_of_africa.pdf

on the effect of climate change on conflict, mediated through economic impacts and migration. The pathways include:

1. Threats to food and water security: This pathway considers the role of climate extremes and environmental degradation in generating food and water insecurity that make it difficult for vulnerable populations to break the cycle of poverty.
2. Climate-induced mobility: This pathway notes the role of and how climate-related hazards are contributing to the displacement of people and loss of assets across the region, including wildfires, drought, floods, cyclones, rising lake levels, and rising sea levels.
3. Historical grievances and cultural practices: This pathway considers the role of climate extremes in creating conditions that can trigger historical grievances and mistrust among bordering communities and countries when shared natural resources are affected.
4. Governance and fragility: This pathway considers the role of weak governance and fragility in exacerbating drivers of conflict and insecurity. The climate crisis has been exploited by actors, including political actors, extremist groups, commercial groups, and organised criminal groups, among others, to incite conflict and insecurity for their personal gain, particularly in the context of weak governance and fragility. Land access and land rights are also identified as critical underlying factors that can contribute to mistrust of governments, conflict over boundaries, and pastoral and wildlife conflict.

These pathways illustrate: the relationship between short and long-term environmental changes linked to climate change; their impact on the causes and dynamics of conflict; and the critical role of human action in conflict outcomes. Figure 1 presents the IGAD conceptual framework for climate security. The conceptual framework provides an overview of key concepts and perspectives around regional strategic approaches to adaptation to address the security concerns of climate change.

Figure 1. IGAD conceptual framework for climate security



Source: Adapted from IGAD conceptual framework for climate security[18]

National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Climate Security: Risk and Response Analysis

The NAP is an important way that countries can integrate a climate security lens into planning processes that address many core and overlapping vulnerabilities to both conflict and climate change.[19] Before examining the range of risks and response in IGAD member state NAPs, it is useful to describe the approach employed to review the NAPs.

The NAPs are sourced from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change website.[20] This analysis follows the approach outlined by the United Nations Development Programme for examining the extent to which climate, peace, and security intersections are addressed in an NAP.[21] The following three steps are described:

1. Scanning the NAP documents to determine the presence or references to selected security-related terms. This is performed by typing the search terms into the text box inside the "Find dialog" box. Table 2 lists the keywords used for this analysis.
2. Performing a detailed context review of each reference in order to obtain a

18 IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre, "Policy Brief: Addressing Climate Change, Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa"

19 Alec Crawford and Clare Church, "The NAP Process and Peacebuilding", Briefing Note (Winnipeg, Canada: NAP Global Network, February 2022), accessed 1September 2023, https://napglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/napgn-en-2020-the-nap-process-and-peacebuilding.pdf.

20 "Submitted NAPs", United Nations Climate Change, accessed 10 July 2023, https://napcentral.org/submitted-naps. Note: Because Djibouti is on its first generation NAP, an alternative data source is utilized; i.e. National Adaptation Plan-Global Support Programme, "National Adaptation Plans in focus: Lessons from Djibouti" (New York: National Adaptation Plan-Global Support Programme, n.d.), accessed 10 July 2023. https://www.adaptation-undp.org/sites/default/files/resources/nap_in_focus_lessons_from_djibouti_eng_final_web.pdf.

21 United Nations Development Programme, "Re-envisioning Climate Change Adaptation Policy to Sustain Peace: A Typology and Analysis of the National Adaptation Plans" (New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2023), accessed 10 July 2023, https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-05/Re-envisioning%20Climate%20Change%20Adaptation%20to%20Sustain%20Peace%20-%20UNDP.pdf.

clearer indication of how the security-related issues are presented in relation to adaptation efforts, andanalysinghow the adaptation priorities identified in the NAP respond to these security threats.

3. Classifying each of the vetted climate–security mentions according to the typology of the four climate–security pathways described in the IGAD conceptual framework.

This then leads to synthesis of the major climate, peace and security related themes as identified in the NAPs. The specific associated with each of the typological classifications for each category are presented.

Table 2. Distribution of reference to the term "conflict" in IGAD member states' NAPs

	Total	Somalia	Ethiopia	Kenya	Sudan	South Sudan	Uganda	Djibouti	Eritrea
Total	230	108	7	7	54	32	22	0	0
Conflict	118	40	7	2	31	20	18		
Peace	45	34		2		9			
Stability/ Instability	17	13			2	1	1		
Security	17	11		3	1	2			
War	14				13		1		
Reconciliation	5	5							
Dispute	5	1			3		1		
Violence	4	4							
Strife	3				2		1		
Friction	2				2				
Feud									
Combat									
Attack									

Source: Author compilation based on key word searches (IGAD member states' NAPs and Djibouti documentation)

Table 2 shows the number and distribution of the references made to conflict in IGAD member states NAPs, ordered from left to right according to the the number of conflict events reported (see table 1). Keyword searches of terms in the seven submitted IGAD member state NAPs, along with a key word search in the main document for Djibouti, reveal a total of 230 references. This mapping finds varying references to conflict themes. Percentages based on column totals show that the highest number of references were made to the term "conflict", distantly followed by the term "peace". The analysis surfaces two key observations. The first point to note is the striking variation in distribution of the references across the IGAD member states. Somalia stands out in this regard, in terms of integrating conflict considerations into its adaptation planning process. This is followed by Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda, in the order cited. A second key point is the limited attention to the security dimension of existing efforts on climate action in Kenya and Ethiopia, in spite of the elevated levels of threat to human security in these two countries.

This mapping then probes deeper into the regional synergy in the planning for adaptation. A detailed evaluation of the references made to the term "conflict" was performed to gain an understanding of the pathways for integrating security considerations into adaptation planning processes. The pathways are the areas in which the physical and human impacts of climate change interact with local political or socio-economic factors. There

is significant disparity in how these pathways are conceived by each NAP.

Table 3 shows the number and distribution of direct connections to pathways in the NAPs. Based on the analysis of the references made to conflict, there are strong interlinkages between the country NAPs and the IGAD regional climate change adaptation framework. The results indicate that 206 out of the 228 references identified make a direct connection to a pathway.

Table 3.Pathways for integration of security considerations in the NAPs of IGAD member states

Pathways	Total	Somalia	Sudan	South Sudan	Uganda	Kenya	Ethiopia	Djibouti	Eritrea
Total	206	93	53	28	22	3	7	-	-
Threats to food and water security	105	29	37	16	14	2	7		
Governance and fragility	67	48	11	7	1				
Historical grievances and cultural practices	21	14	1	3	3				
Climate-induced mobility	13	2	4	2	4	1			
Not connected	22	15	1	4		2			

Source: Author compilation based on deep analysis of connections to pathways (IGAD member state NAPs and Djibouti documentation)

The largest number of direct connections to a pathway is found in Somalia, pointing to the salience of these pathways in Somali climate–security nexus. Djibouti and Eritrea fail to make any clear connection to pathways for integration of security considerations into adaptation planning processes. In these two cases, lack of political ambition to integrate or mainstream security into climate action planning seems to be an important explanation.

It is apparent that the pathways IGAD member states follow are geared foremost towards actions to reduce threats to food and water security. Whereas the IGAD regional strategy underscores the critical role that climate-related migration plays in insecurity, the results of this analysis show limited (and in the case of Ethiopia, no) elaboration of this pathway or solutions needed to address climate-induced displacement and migration.

At the same time, the NAPs for both Kenya and Ethiopia do not respond explicitly to or take into account risks associated with governance and fragility, and historical grievances and cultural practices.

Conclusion

The drive to connect climate change with security issues is gaining ground in the IGAD region, as evidenced by the number of member states that make reference to conflict themes in their NAPs. At the same time, however, it is clear that more can be done to mainstream climate-related security risks into adaptation planning, especially among those states that give little attention to conflict considerations in the NAP process. Against a backdrop of diverse threats to human security, and the need to enhance preparedness for identifying, preventing, and responding to climate-related security risks, IGAD member states must address issues that go beyond the customary focus area of threats to food and water security. Hence, addressing the multifaceted security risks posed by climate change requires that the economic, social, and environmental-related risks arising from climate change are all taken into account. Importantly, considering the role that climate-induced displacement and migration can play in the risk and intensification of conflict, strengthening actions to reduce the risks associated with climate-induced mobility is a key policy option.

As IGAD continues to consider opportunities in climate-conflict interventions, it seems obvious that the way that climate security challenges will be addressed will be by focusing on the longer term and less noticeable climate change effects on conflict drivers. This analysis outlines two important implications for climate security in the IGAD region. First, for IGAD to be effective in its mandate of maintaining regional peace and security, the organisation should strongly encourage all member states to fulfil their commitments to the IRCCS. Understanding vulnerabilities to climate change is useful for informing action plans and developing strategies to address these vulnerabilities. An opportunity exists—through the NAPs and related planning processes—to enhance the robustness of climate action in the region. Moreover, this can happen in a manner that is consistent with African Union and IGAD climate change policies, strategies, and frameworks, as well as the Paris Agreement and the anticipated discussions at COP28 (30 November–12 December 2023, hosted in Dubai).[22]It is also imperative that the IRCCS increase collaboration with national and regional initiatives to support a multidimensional regional approach to climate security.

22 Commonly referred to as COP, officially this is the United Nations Climate Change Conference, or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC.

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