



About the Conflict and Environment Observatory

www.ceobs.org | contact@ceobs.org | [@detoxconflict](https://twitter.com/detoxconflict)

Armed conflicts can be highly destructive for the environment. Making the environmental consequences of wars and military activities visible is vital for informing policies that increase the protection of people and ecosystems. CEOBS works on all stages of this process, from data collection to awareness-raising, to policy and norm development.

What we do

We are a UK charity and work with a range of stakeholders to research and publicise environmental data, develop methodologies to improve data collection and analysis, and scrutinise and contribute to developments in law and policy intended to reduce the environmental harm caused by conflicts and military activities.

By using satellite images and other innovative monitoring techniques, we track incidents and trends, publishing accessible and robust analyses to tell the story of how the environment has been affected by war. Doing so also allows us to monitor the environmental conduct of militaries and armed groups, helping inform our work to strengthen and increase compliance with the laws protecting the environment in relation to armed conflicts.

We share our research with everyone from policy-makers to the public, and use our technical knowledge to help other NGOs and the media tell stories too. We regularly engage with international and UN-level processes to highlight the environmental dimensions of conflicts. These have recently included initiatives on biodiversity and conservation, the legal framework, and the legacy of explosive weapons, cluster munitions and nuclear weapons. We also convene or co-convene live and virtual events, and our staff frequently contribute to expert panels, many of which are available on our YouTube channel. We host stories, analyses and resources on a range of conflict and thematic issues on www.ceobs.org.

Our team, partnerships and networks

Our team at CEOBS include specialists in environmental science, international law, monitoring, governance, and environmental risk assessment. We collaborate with a range of partners and organisations that share our aims and work with academic institutions on research and to provide opportunities for students to engage with the field.

We also maintain our Friends of CEOBS community, a network of individual researchers and technical experts from a range of disciplines. The community provides us with a diverse pool of resources and gives volunteers the opportunity to actively contribute to our work.

CEOBS is accredited to the UN Environment Assembly and is a member of the following networks:



How we are funded

Our income comes primarily from grants, and we are particularly grateful to our core donors. We also act as an environmental consultancy on armed conflicts and military activities.

Core donors



Recent clients



Recent projects

Our outputs cover a broad range of environmental topics linked to conflicts and military activities. Here are a few examples of our recent and ongoing projects:

Topic	Overview	Explore our work
Monitoring environmental threats in Yemen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Using remote sensing and open source data to monitor conflict-linked damage to water, energy, and agriculture; and threats to public health, water security and biodiversity caused by the collapse of environmental governance.In 2018, we raised the alarm over the FSO SAFER oil tanker, and have published regularly on it since, providing technical support for governments, NGOs and the media.	<p>Groundwater depletion clouds Yemen's solar energy revolution www.ceobs.org/groundwater-depletion-clouds-yemens-solar-energy-revolution</p> <p>Yemen's agriculture in distress www.ceobs.org/yemens-agriculture-in-distress</p> <p>There's no military solution to Yemen's SAFER oil tanker crisis www.ceobs.org/theres-no-military-solution-to-yemens-safer-oil-tanker-crisis</p>
Deforestation in conflict-affected areas for 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We used remote sensing to assess the state of forest loss in conflict-affected areas, surveying changes and hotspots during the COVID-19 pandemic.The study focused on countries with ongoing conflicts (Myanmar, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Syria), as well as post-conflict countries (Colombia, Senegal and Vietnam).	<p>Deforestation in conflict areas in 2020 www.ceobs.org/assessment-of-recent-forest-loss-in-conflict-areas</p>
Nagorno-Karabakh environmental assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Following the fighting in late 2020, CEOBS produced an initial environmental assessment for Nagorno-Karabakh.We analysed conflict-linked forest fires and the use of incendiary weapons, water and resource issues, toxic remnants of war, and the role and proliferation of online environmental disinformation.	<p>Investigating the environmental dimensions of the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict www.ceobs.org/investigating-the-environmental-dimensions-of-the-nagorno-karabakh-conflict</p>
Corporate environmental responsibility in fragile and conflict-affected settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We studied the link between corporate environmental harm during conflicts, with security and the rule of law, examining the rules that should govern the environmental conduct of states and corporations in fragile and conflict-affected settings.Outputs included policy recommendations and questionnaires (in three languages), designed to encourage the environmentally sound behaviour of states and corporations. Partner: Dr Taygeti Michalakea (EUI Florence).	<p>Enhancing corporate environmental responsibility in conflict-affected settings www.ceobs.org/report-enhancing-corporate-environmental-responsibility-in-conflict-affected-settings</p>
Mine action and the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Norwegian People's Aid operate humanitarian demining programmes in 21 countries, this includes the clearance of land mines and other explosive remnants, surplus weapon and stockpile management, and explosive ordnance risk education.We are working together, and across the sector, to reduce the environmental impacts of mine action and to increase awareness of environmental issues. Partner: Norwegian People's Aid.	<p>Environment in humanitarian disarmament www.ceobs.org/projects/project-one</p>

Topic	Overview	Explore our work
<p>The carbon footprint of the military</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We undertook the first analysis of the carbon footprint of the military and defence industry of the six largest EU countries by military expenditure, and the EU as a whole. The report also reviewed policies currently being pursued to reduce emissions. We have also developed criteria for military emissions reduction commitments, and published studies on military emissions and on how conflicts influence emissions. Partner: Scientists for Global Responsibility. 	<p>Under the radar: The carbon footprint of the EU's military sectors www.ceobs.org/under-the-radar-the-carbon-footprint-of-the-eus-military-sectors</p> <p>The military's contribution to climate change www.ceobs.org/the-militarys-contribution-to-climate-change</p> <p>How does war contribute to climate change? www.ceobs.org/how-does-war-contribute-to-climate-change</p>
<p>Principles for assisting victims of toxic remnants of war</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We collaborated on developing a legal framework designed to support people affected by the toxic remnants of war. The foundation of the framework's principles are human rights and environmental law, as well as the norms established by humanitarian disarmament agreements and practice. Partner: Harvard Law School's International Human Rights Clinic. 	<p>Confronting Conflict Pollution – Principles for assisting victims of toxic remnants of war www.ceobs.org/harvard-ceobs-confronting-conflict-pollution-principles-for-assisting-victims-of-toxic-remnants-of-war</p>
<p>Legal protection for the environment in relation to armed conflicts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We undertook the first ever reviews of Canada and the UK's practice on the protection of the environment in relation to armed conflicts, or PERAC, using legal principles developed by the UN's International Law Commission as benchmarks. We coordinated a joint civil society commentary on the Commission's principles after being invited to submit our views, and have worked with the International Committee of the Red Cross to highlight the legal framework. Partners: Al-Haq, Amnesty, Geneva Water Hub, Harvard Law School and the International Committee of the Red Cross. 	<p>Joint submission to the ILC's PERAC study www.ceobs.org/joint-civil-society-submission-to-the-international-law-commissions-perac-study</p> <p>Canada's PERAC practice www.ceobs.org/canadas-practice-on-the-protection-of-the-environment-in-relation-to-armed-conflicts</p> <p>The UK's PERAC practice www.ceobs.org/report-the-united-kingdoms-practice-on-the-protection-of-the-environment-in-relation-to-armed-conflicts</p> <p>ICRC blog: War, law and the environment www.blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/category/special-themes/war-law-environment</p>
<p>Russia's approach to the environment, peace and security</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We examined Russia's perception and interpretation of the concept of environmental security, and its approach to environmental protection before, during and after armed conflicts. The report provided recommendations for future stakeholder engagement with Russia on the environment, peace and security. Partner: Central European University (internship). 	<p>How Russia approaches the environment, peace and security www.ceobs.org/report-how-russia-approaches-the-environment-peace-and-security</p>