

# Executive Summary

Climate change, overexploitation and 10 years of civil war are leading to the degradation of natural resources in Yemen. Impacts on social cohesion and conflict are widespread at the local level, but are poorly reflected in conflict analysis, programming and high-level peace efforts. This assessment outlines the relationship between conflict, climate change, and the environment in Yemen, spotlighting dynamics around water and arable land. Key findings include:

## Water



- **Climate change is likely to exacerbate long-standing water scarcity problems, while the civil war is reducing water access. Women and girls are bearing the brunt of impacts.**
- **Civil war actors on both sides are weaponizing water resources, aggravating insecurity and conflict dynamics.**
- **Conflicts over available water resources lead to thousands of deaths each year.**

## Land



- **Climate-induced desertification and flooding are reducing arable land, leading to competition and conflict between farmers.**
- **Insufficient management of the interconnected issues of extreme weather events, war and displacement is causing these issues to grow.**
- **War and land seizures exacerbate the scarcity of arable land, which in turn fuels conflict.**

Faced with some of the most hostile environmental and security conditions on the planet, Yemenis and supporting international organisations are undertaking a variety of efforts to address these challenges. However, their efforts face significant challenges, including:

- **Tribal and community structures lack the reach to address the root causes of environmental problems and have been weakened by the civil war, even though they remain the most effective and accepted means of conflict resolution.**
- **Yemeni administrations face a lack of authority, capacity shortfalls and critically low funding, which limits their ability to develop and implement policy.**
- **The judicial system, already weak, has been further undermined by the civil war and is overwhelmed by water and land dispute cases.**
- **International organisations and donors are increasingly integrating climate change and peace programming, but a holistic approach is missing, risking long-term adverse impacts on Yemenis.**

The challenges associated with climate change, natural resources and conflict in Yemen are set to exponentially increase as the climate crisis advances. To mitigate these critical threats and support sustainable peace, the following actions are recommended:

### International organisations and donors should:

- Incorporate climate considerations into Yemen's national peace process.
- Support climate- and environmentally resilient livelihoods.
- Remove barriers to accessing climate finance.

### Yemeni authorities should:

- End the weaponisation of natural resources.
- Integrate climate adaptation into recovery and reconstruction plans.
- Increase capacity to respond to climate change, environmental degradation and related conflicts.

### Civil society organisations should:

- Prioritise measures to prevent conflict over natural resources.
- Support research on climate change, the environment and conflict.
- Raise awareness of climate change and its impacts at the local level.