



## 1.0 Introduction

Developments across Greater Eastern Africa in April 2026 reflected an increasingly interconnected regional security environment shaped by persistent conflict systems, geopolitical recalibration, and environmental-security pressures overlapping across governance vulnerabilities, strategic competition, climate variability, and external economic shocks, which continued to reinforce structural instability risks. Persistent armed conflict in Sudan and eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), renewed political tensions in Ethiopia, evolving maritime and diplomatic alignments across the Red Sea and Indian Ocean corridors, and increasing exposure to energy and infrastructure vulnerabilities collectively highlighted the multidimensional nature of regional insecurity (Al Jazeera, 2026; Reuters, 2026; Africanews, 2026).

At the geopolitical level, states increasingly pursued diversified external partnerships and regional economic diplomacy to secure investment, maritime access, and strategic leverage amid intensifying global competition. Simultaneously, climate- and energy-linked pressures, including supply-chain volatility, ecological stress in coastal infrastructure zones, and uneven adaptation capacity, continued to expose vulnerabilities across trade-dependent and energy-import-reliant economies. These dynamics reinforced the growing intersection between governance resilience, environmental stress, and long-term regional stability.

This outlook provides a concise, evidence-based security foresight assessment of developments in April 2026 across conflict trends, geopolitics, and environmental security, and their implications for future stability across Greater Eastern Africa.

## 2.0 Thematic Focus

### 2.1 Conflict Trends

Conflict dynamics in April 2026 remained concentrated in Sudan, eastern DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan, reflecting the persistence of fragmented authority structures, militarised political competition, and weak stabilisation capacity across several regional theatres. In Sudan, continued confrontation between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) sustained large-scale displacement, territorial fragmentation, and humanitarian deterioration, reinforcing the entrenchment of a protracted war system with widening regional implications (Al Jazeera, 2026).

In eastern DRC, the expansion of security structures linked to strategic mining zones intensified concerns regarding militarised resource governance, conflict-economy consolidation, and the persistence of armed-group influence in unstable eastern provinces (Reuters, 2026). Ethiopia experienced renewed political tensions linked to governance arrangements in Tigray, reflecting unresolved federal-regional fault lines despite ongoing post-conflict stabilisation frameworks (Africanews, 2026). Somalia continued to face insurgency-related insecurity despite externally supported stabilisation operations, while South Sudan's executive reshuffles reinforced perceptions of elite contestation and institutional fragility affecting governance continuity (Reuters, 2026).

Collectively, these developments demonstrate the persistence of conflict systems driven by governance fragmentation, militarised economic interests, displacement pressures, and uneven state authority across interconnected regional security corridors.

### Foresight Recommendations

- The African Union (AU) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) should operationalise integrated mediation-support platforms for Sudan and Ethiopia, combining early-warning analysis, ceasefire verification mechanisms, and structured diplomatic coordination between regional and international actors.
- Governments in the Great Lakes region, supported by the UN and AU, should establish joint civilian-protection and resource-monitoring mechanisms in mineral-rich conflict zones to reduce armed-group financing and improve local security oversight.
- Regional humanitarian agencies and border-management authorities should strengthen coordinated displacement-response systems through shared mobility tracking, contingency planning, and cross-border humanitarian access arrangements.
- International stabilisation partners should transition from short-cycle emergency assistance toward multi-year resilience and institutional recovery financing frameworks aligned with regional peacebuilding priorities.

**Forward-Looking Scenario:** Conflict conditions across Sudan, eastern DRC, and parts of the Horn of Africa are likely to remain structurally protracted, with episodic escalation risks linked to fragmented governance systems, armed-group adaptation, and competition over strategic resources. External stabilisation support may partially contain insecurity in selected areas, but unresolved political settlements, displacement pressures, and localised conflict economies are expected to continue shaping regional instability trajectories in the short-to-medium term.

## 2.2 Geopolitical Shifts

Geopolitical developments in April 2026 reflected intensified strategic competition across the Red Sea, Horn of Africa, and Western Indian Ocean corridors, as states recalibrated diplomatic and economic partnerships amid evolving global security dynamics. External actors continued to deepen engagement with strategically positioned states along maritime and logistics corridors, reinforcing the geopolitical significance of Red Sea access, maritime trade security, and regional shipping routes (Geeska, 2026; Al Jazeera, 2026). Djibouti's political continuity preserved its strategic role as a logistics and military-access hub hosting multiple foreign security actors, while Seychelles expanded bilateral engagement with Russia across energy, fisheries, and diplomatic cooperation sectors (Modern Diplomacy, 2026; Africanews, 2026).

Regional economic diplomacy also intensified during the reporting period. Kenya and Mauritius advanced trade and investment engagement within broader African integration frameworks, reflecting efforts to strengthen intra-African economic resilience and diversify strategic partnerships (The Star Kenya, 2026). Simultaneously, debates surrounding Uganda's proposed external funding regulations highlighted emerging tensions between sovereignty-driven governance approaches and external financial conditionalities associated with international development financing (The East African, 2026).

These developments collectively indicate a regional geopolitical environment increasingly shaped by multi-vector diplomacy, maritime competition, strategic hedging, and differentiated external alignment strategies.

### Foresight Recommendations

- AU and IGAD member states should institutionalise coordinated Red Sea and Indian Ocean maritime-security dialogue mechanisms, integrating strategic-risk monitoring, maritime trade protection, and diplomatic coordination frameworks.
- East African Community (EAC) states should accelerate the implementation of integrated regional energy, transport, and logistics infrastructure coordination frameworks to reduce exposure to external geopolitical and supply-chain disruptions.
- Small island and coastal states should establish national geopolitical risk-assessment and strategic-forecasting units to strengthen external partnership evaluation, maritime-security planning, and long-term sovereignty protection.
- International financial and development partners should align regional financing instruments with locally defined integration and governance priorities through structured consultation frameworks with regional institutions.

**Forward-Looking Scenario:** Geopolitical competition across Greater Eastern Africa is expected to intensify as external powers expand strategic engagement in maritime corridors, infrastructure networks, and resource-access zones. States are likely to continue pursuing diversified diplomatic alignments to balance investment access, security cooperation, and strategic autonomy. The interaction between regional integration efforts, sovereignty-driven governance approaches, and external geopolitical competition will remain a defining factor shaping regional diplomatic stability and economic resilience.

## 2.3 Environmental Security

Environmental and climate-security conditions in April 2026 reflected increasing exposure to interconnected ecological, energy, and infrastructure pressures across Greater Eastern Africa. In Kenya, rising fuel prices linked to global crude oil disruptions generated secondary impacts on transport costs, food affordability, and urban livelihood resilience, illustrating the vulnerability of energy-import-dependent economies to external market shocks (Reuters, 2026).

At the same time, increased cargo throughput at Lamu Port highlighted the growing strategic importance of regional logistics corridors while raising concerns regarding coastal ecosystem stress, marine pollution exposure, and infrastructure pressure within environmentally sensitive coastal zones (Dawan Africa, 2026). Across several parts of the region, uneven climate adaptation capacity, environmental governance constraints, and dependence on imported refined petroleum products reinforced long-term exposure to supply volatility and ecological stress.

Broader regional concerns relating to climate variability, water-resource pressure, land degradation, and food-system vulnerability continued to intersect with urbanisation pressures and infrastructure expansion, particularly within fragile and trade-dependent economies. Collectively, these dynamics demonstrate how climate vulnerability, environmental stress, energy insecurity, and infrastructure expansion increasingly interact to shape human security, livelihood resilience, and long-term regional stability.

### Foresight Recommendations

- Regional governments should accelerate investment in renewable energy diversification, decentralised power infrastructure, and climate-resilient energy systems through coordinated national adaptation and energy-transition frameworks.
- National and municipal authorities should strengthen climate-resilient infrastructure standards for ports, transport corridors, and urban systems through integrated environmental-impact monitoring and coastal-risk management mechanisms.
- The East African Community should integrate environmental-risk safeguards and ecosystem-protection standards into regional trade, logistics, and infrastructure expansion frameworks to strengthen long-term ecological resilience.
- Development partners and regional governments should expand anticipatory climate-adaptation financing mechanisms supporting water security, ecosystem protection, food-system resilience, and climate-risk preparedness in vulnerable communities.

**Forward-Looking Scenario:** Environmental and climate-security pressures across Greater Eastern Africa are likely to intensify as climate variability, energy-market volatility, ecological stress, and uneven adaptation capacity continue to interact with rapid infrastructure expansion and urbanisation pressures. Environmental degradation and resource-management strain may increasingly amplify livelihood insecurity, governance pressure, and localised competition over strategic resources, particularly in fragile and trade-dependent areas. Without sustained resilience investment and coordinated environmental governance, interconnected ecological and economic vulnerabilities are expected to deepen across multiple regional systems.

## 3.0 Conclusion

Developments across Greater Eastern Africa in April 2026 demonstrate a regional security environment increasingly shaped by interconnected conflict persistence, geopolitical recalibration, and environmental-security vulnerability. Conflict systems in Sudan, eastern DRC, and parts of the Horn of Africa remain structurally entrenched, reinforcing displacement pressures, governance fragmentation, and localised insecurity. At the same time, intensifying geopolitical competition and diversified diplomatic alignments across maritime and strategic corridors continue to reshape regional political and economic dynamics.

Environmental and climate-security pressures further compound these risks through energy-market volatility, infrastructure stress, ecological vulnerability, climate variability, and uneven resilience capacity. Collectively, these overlapping dynamics indicate that regional stability will increasingly depend on the ability of states and institutions to manage interconnected security, governance, environmental, and strategic pressures within an increasingly complex and competitive regional landscape.

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