

Climate change and the military

In China, Russia, the UK and the USA

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Climate change as a security issue

- Great prominence 2007/2008
 - Nobel Peace Prize for IPCC and Al Gore
- But has this translated into security policy?
 - Assumptions, perceptions, understandings, beliefs
 - Behaviour, practices
- Effects of securitization moves

Earlier analysis of climate change securitization moves

- **Detraz and Betsil (2009)**
 - 23 major documents emerging from the policy debate on climate change between the late 1990s and 2008
 - UN Security Council Debate April 2007
 - Predominance of 'environmental security'
 - Few references to 'environmental conflict'
- **Gleditsch and Nordas (2009)**
 - IPCC Reports AR3, AR4
 - Several instances of claims to 'environmental conflict', with little substantiation

Brzoska (2009)

- Five widely received policy reports on security implications of climate change
- Ambiguous mixture of security concepts
- Some references to an ‚environmental threat‘
- Emphasis on mitigation strategies

Oels (2009, 2011)

- Selected academic and policy literature on climate change and security
- Major discursive shift after 2006 away from causes of climate change to consequences
- Greater emphasis on adaptation and consequence management

Hartmann (2010)

- Diverse set of documents on climate change and security
- Shift towards a “neo-Malthusian degradation narrative”
- Serving the interests of the military

- Brzoska (2012)

- Analysis of 24 national security doctrines and similar

 - Dominance of „environmental security“ perspective
 - Minority (7 cases) of „environmental conflict“ or „environmental threat“ perspective
 - Few suggestions for future role of armed forces
 - Few concrete measures

- Analysis of 27 defense planning documents

 - Dominant measure: disaster management (15 cases)
 - 4 cases of planning for mitigation

- **Case studies of US, UK, Russia, China**
 - Major military powers
 - Major political players in climate change policies

- **Five core issue areas:**
 - Mitigation efforts
 - Dangers for military installations
 - Potential conflict in the Arctic
 - Military operations in crisis situations
 - Disaster relief

• United States

- Mitigation efforts
 - Detailed planning
 - Leading role of the US Naty
 - Recent shift in justification: energy security
- Dangers for military installations
 - Studies perticularly by the US Naty
- Potential conflict in the Arctic
 - Embedded in larger Arctic policy
 - National security important element but military component unclear
 - Stress on cooperation
- Military operations in crisis situations
 - General understanding of the importance
 - Studies
 - No concrete planning
- Disaster relief
 - General understanding of the importance
 - Studies
 - No concrete planning

- **United Kingdom**

- Mitigation efforts

- Detailed planning
- Recent deemphasis

- Dangers for military installations

- Studies with low priority

- Potential conflict in the Arctic

- No specific policy

- Military operations in crisis situations

- General understanding of the importance
- Studies with other UK government departments
- No concrete planning

- Disaster relief

- General understanding of the importance
- Studies with other government departments
- No concrete planning

■ Russia

- Mitigation efforts
- Dangers for military installations
- Potential conflict in the Arctic
 - Embedded in broader arctic policy emphasising economic and political interests
 - Planning for increased military presence
- Military operations in crisis situations
- Disaster relief
 - Generally accepted as major role for the armed forces

■ China

- Mitigation efforts
 - Some activities by PLA (tree planting)
- Dangers for military installations
 - Some internal discussion in the PLA
- Potential conflict in the Arctic
- Military operations in crisis situations
 - Some internal discussion in the PLA
- Disaster relief
 - Generally accepted as major role for the armed forces

■ United States

- Opposition to Bush-Administration view of climate change
- Leading role of US Navy
- Changed emphasis under Obama
- Mostly studies and trials

■ United Kingdom

- Following aggressive climate change policy by the Blair/Brown administrations

■ Russia

- Priority of military modernization

■ China

- Emphasis on non-controversial activities
- Internal discussion in the PLA suppressed by the government?