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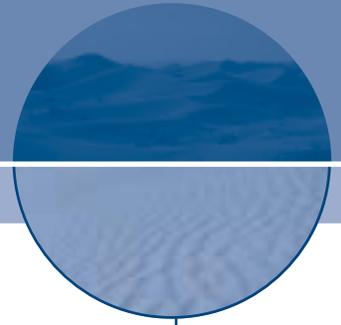
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environmental change & security program

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE AND SECURITY PROGRAM



Since 1994, the Environmental Change and Security Program (ECSP) has promoted dialogue on the connections among environmental, health, and population dynamics and their links to conflict, human insecurity, and foreign policy. ECSP brings international policymakers, practitioners, and scholars to Washington, D.C., to address the public and fellow experts on four specific initiatives: China Environment Forum; Environment and Security; Population, Health, and Environment; and Water: Navigating Peace.

The program distributes two annual journals, the *Environmental Change and Security Program Report* and the *China Environment Series*, to more than 7,000 people around the world. *ECSP News*, a monthly e-mail newsletter, links more than 3,000 subscribers to news, meeting summaries, and event announcements on the program's comprehensive website, <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/ecsp>. ECSP also publishes *Focus*, a series of papers on population, environment, and security (previously named *PECS News*), as well as original research and occasional reports. Visit our new blog, "The New Security Beat," for frequent posts linking you to the latest news and reports on environmental security: www.newsecuritybeat.blogspot.com.

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Submissions and Correspondence

The *Environmental Change and Security Program Report* is sent annually free of charge throughout the world. To subscribe, contact ECSP at ecsp@wilsoncenter.org or (202) 691-4000.

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FOREWORD



**GEOFFREY D.
DABELKO**

Editor

The vista of Ethiopia's ancient Rift Valley, speckled with shimmering lakes, stretches before me as our motorized caravan heads south from Lake Langano, part of a study tour on population-health-environment issues organized by the Packard Foundation. Sadly, the country's unrelenting poverty and insecurity are as breathtaking as the view—Ethiopia currently ranks 170 out of 177 countries on the UN Development Programme's Human Development Index. These numbers become quite personal when child after child sprints alongside the truck, looking for any morsel. Here, I don't need to read between the lines of endless reports to see the country's severe population, health, and environment challenges—they are visible in the protruding ribs of the cattle and the barren eroding terraces in the nation's rural highlands.

When analyzing environment, conflict, and cooperation, scholars and practitioners most often focus on organized violence where people die at the business end of a gun. We commonly set aside "little c" conflict where the violence is not organized. However, while the Ethiopian troops fighting the Islamic Courts in Somalia garner the most attention, we should not miss the quieter—yet often more lethal—conflicts. For example, Ethiopia, like much of the Horn of Africa, continues to be beset by pastoralist/farmer conflicts over its shrinking resource base—increasingly exacerbated by population growth, environmental degradation, and likely climate change. In today's globalized world, these local conflicts may also have larger "neighborhood" effects, contributing to wars and humanitarian disasters, as in Sudan's Darfur region.

Another classic example of local environmental conflict lies in Ethiopia's national parks,

which successive governments carved from inhabited land in the mid-1960s and 1970s.

Those disadvantaged by the parks often took their revenge on the state by burning buildings, cutting trees, and hunting wildlife. Some resettled the parks, bringing cattle and cultivating sorghum. This conflict presents a terrible dilemma, but also an opportunity: If the government and its partners can offer residents secure livelihoods tied to sound environmental practices—such as jobs as park rangers or in ecotourism—"parks versus people" might be transformed into "peace parks."

In this 12th issue of the *Environmental Change and Security Program Report*, eight African leaders and scholars write about their continent's struggle with resource conflict—and the possibilities for peace that population and environment initiatives may hold. According to 2004 Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai, poor governance and mismanagement of resources spur the violence that plagues many countries in Africa: "Below the thin layer of racial and ethnic chauvinism, religion, and politics, the real reason for many conflicts is the struggle for the access to and control of the limited resources on our planet." But she sees hope: "When we manage our resources sustainably and practice good governance we deliberately and consciously promote cultures of peace."

Another African leader, President Marc Ravalomanana of Madagascar, saw the devastation wrought by poverty and unsustainable population growth in his country, and dreamed of a different path: "We can build a strong economy, invest in our people, and maintain the nation's precious natural treasures. Family planning lies at the heart of all of these efforts." Innovative programs like the U.S. Agency for



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International Development's "champion communities" help lay the foundation for economic growth and stability in Madagascar's rural villages by integrating reproductive health services and sound environmental management at the local level. In a few years, the average number of children per woman has decreased to one of the lowest levels in Africa.

Rapid population growth is taking a toll on Tanzania, where migration, urbanization, and increasing demand have intensified local conflicts over water in the already-stressed Pangani River basin. "The squeezing of pastoralists into ecologically poor marginal lands has continued unabated since the 1930s, even as the population of pastoralists and their livestock has grown," says Milline Mbonile, who argues that resolving these conflicts requires understanding the socio-cultural context of the local communities—particularly the relationship between pastoralists and farmers—and increasing stakeholder involvement in water management.

The devastating civil conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, "Africa's world war," was fueled by global demand for the country's enormous stores of valuable minerals and extensive forests. Instead of being engines of growth, these resources "have largely been to blame for most of the past and current misfortunes visited on the Congolese people," says John Katunga, who warns that without the help of international institutions and the U.S. government to develop "stable institutions,

legitimate governance structures, and enforcement of regulations aimed at controlling natural resources, the country's forests and minerals will once again be prey for deadly predators, and the people of the DRC will be doomed to repeat their tragic cycle."

Like the DRC, Nigeria has also suffered the effects of global demand for its resources—the oil industry's history of spills, lax environmental regulations, rent-seeking, and government complicity has severely degraded the rich Niger Delta. Kenneth Omeje sees the residents' "formidable struggle of unrelenting violent protests, including oil theft, pipeline sabotage, and kidnappings" as an attempt to capture the spoils of the oil business from the corrupt elites. To stop the cycle, he calls for international efforts that would hold the oil industry to standards of social and environmental responsibility; and disarm and demobilize all Niger Delta militias and anti-oil combatants. But, he cautions, "it will require a great deal of international pressure not only to compel the state to participate in a consequential roundtable with oil-bearing communities, but also to secure its commitment to far-reaching, proactive concessions that help meet the aspirations of the Niger Delta's people."

Also in Nigeria, Anthony Nyong's study of the semi-arid northern region finds that as recurring droughts have become more intense and more destructive, "the line separating land that traditionally served the pastoralists and the sedentary farmers is no longer clear," leading to conflicts between these groups. He warns that global climate change may further change rainfall distribution and availability, thus "potentially further exacerbating conflict." As traditional methods of conflict resolution have been pushed aside in favor of the police and courts, conflicts between the farmers and the pastoralists have deepened. Nyong argues that indigenous methods of conflict resolution may offer contemporary policymakers "a bottom-up approach to conflict resolution and management."

Across sub-Saharan Africa, HIV/AIDS poses unique challenges to political stability, as Nana Poku reports: "The net effect of HIV/AIDS on the African state may be institutional fragility,



Lake Chamo, Nechisar National Park, Ethiopia (© Geoff Dabelko).

thus compromising its overall capacity to deal effectively with national emergencies, while increasing political instability.” In the face of this devastating disease—the worst of which is yet to come—how can African states remain functional and stable? Poku recommends that national governments and international organizations work together to increase access to antiretroviral treatment and proactively respond to the changes facing labor markets and human resources.

Finally, Patricia Kameri-Mbote ends our report from Africa on a hopeful note. The Great Lakes Region—Burundi, the DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia—has been torn apart by decades of wars exacerbated by resource and population pressures. However, she says that these same resources “should be considered vehicles for peacebuilding, rather than solely sources of conflict.” She proposes that the Great Lakes’ region-wide peace process and its wealth of transboundary ecosystems make it a promising model for a “future worldwide initiative in environmental peacemaking.”

But what are the conditions for a successful environmental peacemaking initiative? Alexander Carius points out that we know relatively little about how environmental cooperation could contribute to peacebuilding. Based

on his analysis of cases in southern Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and Central Asia, he pinpoints lessons learned, as well as shortcomings, and highlights areas for action and recommendations for development agencies. “To move forward, we need systematic assessments and a constructive dialogue with policymakers to make environmental peacemaking projects more effective.”

In a graphic illustration of the links between population and conflict, Richard Cincotta and Elizabeth Leahy chart what they dub the “60-percent-under-30” benchmark: about 86 percent of all countries that experienced a new outbreak of civil conflict had age structures with 60 percent or more of the population younger than 30 years of age. They conclude that this “60-percent-under-30” benchmark could “serve as a means to identify and track a state’s demographic risks of civil conflict.” Policymakers could thus reduce future risks “by supporting programs and policies that promote advancement along the path of the demographic transition in countries with young age structures.”

Young age structures were also the focus of the first meeting in a special series on population, health, and fragility convened by ECSP for the U.S. Agency for International



On the road south from Addis Ababa to Lake Langano, Ethiopia (© Geoff Dabelko).

Development. Speaking with Cincotta, Jack Goldstone urged Western development professionals to help countries achieve their “security demographic.” Speakers from RAND revealed the results of their study of post-conflict reconstruction in seven countries, arguing that nation-building cannot succeed without at least partial success in building public health. But this success requires investment: reviewing best practices, Ronald Waldman noted that unless funding levels are increased, health systems will not help stabilize fragile environments. In a meeting reviewing recent programs in Afghanistan, Sallie Craig Huber observed that progress made in the health sector will help foster stability and strengthen the relationship between Afghans and their government: “They’ll feel that the government is working for them and that they have hope for their future and their children’s future.” Frederick “Skip” Burkle, the final speaker in the series, drew on his decades of experience in public health in fragile states to call for better ways to measure the true human cost of war, so that the lives lost through indirect causes will not “remain unseen, uncounted, and unnoticed.”

As always, the *ECSP Report* includes reviews of recent publications on population, environment, and security. This edition’s “dotPop” sec-

tion gathers recent reports and data sources on the world’s water crisis. Formerly a monthly feature in our e-newsletter *ECSP News*, dotPop now appears in our new blog, <http://www.newsecuritybeat.blogspot.com>, where you will also find frequently updated links to the latest news and reports on environmental security.

The intertwined environment-population-security challenges examined on these pages are daunting and sometimes difficult to grasp. Driving past mile after mile of Ethiopia’s treeless “forests” gave me a dramatic snapshot of the scope of the problem. While no weapons were evident, I could see that the lack of sustainable livelihoods produces plenty of casualties without a single shot. Despite these sobering sights, the people I met gave me hope—particularly the energy and imagination of a small farmers’ cooperative outside Addis Ababa. With some initial technical assistance from an Ethiopian NGO and the Packard Foundation, this 32-member group is undertaking reforestation projects, producing honey as an alternative livelihood, providing health and family planning services, and employing a more sustainable farming strategy. More efforts like these—and better awareness and promotion of them—could help turn deadly environments into safe, sustainable neighborhoods.