

World Conservation Congress

Beyond Zoonoses: One World - One Health, The Threat of Emerging Diseases to Human Security and Conservation, and the Implications for Public Policy

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Security in the 21st Century: The Challenge of Transnational Threat Systems

Dr. Richard A. Matthew, Director

Center for Unconventional Security Affairs

University of California, Irvine

www.cusa.uci.edu

Presentation Outline

1. Changing Security Landscape
2. Overview of Environmental Security Research
3. Conclusions

1. Changing Security Landscape

Conventional Security

- For much of the 20th Century, the study of security was dominated by two concerns:
 - Great power war
 - Military use of nuclear weapons
- Ironically, perhaps, the field focused on very rare events and largely ignored more common ones

A Change in Perspective

- The field of security studies began to change in the late 20th Century due to three factors:
 - A sense that great power war and the military use of nuclear weapons, while potentially devastating, were low probability events
 - Mounting evidence that the security of people and states around the world was routinely challenged by other, transnational threats
 - A sense that processes of global change were amplifying transnational threats and reducing the likelihood of conventional threats

Drivers of Global Change

- There is no consensus on what exactly is transforming the security landscape but researchers tend to emphasize several related factors:
 - Technological innovation
 - Democratization
 - Economic globalization
 - Urbanization
 - Population growth

Transnational Security Issues

- The net result is less emphasis on great power war, and more attention on a set of *interactive* and *transnational* security issues such as:
 - Environmental change
 - Infectious disease
 - Economic, political and cultural inequality
 - Global terrorism
 - Transnational crime
 - Civil conflict

The New Security Dilemma

- Our world is organized into some 200 sovereign states, but many of the urgent security challenges we face are transnational in terms of both their structure and their impact



Why this Matters to the Conservation Community

1. What conservationists do, can directly and indirectly affect many factors that determine vulnerability and threat at the human and country levels
2. Awareness of these complex linkages may lead to more effective conservation programs supported by larger constituencies and also provide valuable input into the policy arena
3. The conservation community has a long history of transnational cooperation to build on and to share with others

Why this Matters to the Public Health Community

- Many public health concerns are associated with transnational phenomena such as world trade, climate change, air and water pollution, and the global food system
- Bringing together different sectors may lead to more effective health programs and policies
- The public health community has a tradition of transnational cooperation upon which to build

2. Overview of Environmental Security Research

Historical Milestones

Environmental researchers and practitioners pioneered in linking their concerns to security:

■ 1970s

- First tentative suggestions that security and environmental degradation might be linked in significant ways, e.g.:
 - Resource Wars scenarios linked to OPEC crisis
 - Neo-Malthusianism ideas of Population Bomb

■ 1987

- “Our Common Future” suggests links among environmental change, population dynamics, urbanization, and conflict

■ 1989

- End of the Cold War leads to rapid growth in research on the relationship between the environment and security

Major Research Directions

- In the 1990s, research on environmental change and security became widespread, well-funded, and influential. It can be organized into two broad areas:
 - Environmental change and violent conflict
 - Environmental change and vulnerability

Environmental Change and Violent Conflict

- Resource scarcity leads to civil conflict
 - E.g. Homer-Dixon; Baechler; King
- Resource abundance leads to civil conflict
 - E.g. Gleditsch; Collier; De Soysa
- Urbanization and economic development, processes that affect natural resources, lead to civil conflict
 - E.g. Dalby
- Conservation practices can lead to civil conflict
 - E.g. Matthew, Halle and Switzer

Environmental Change and Violent Conflict (cont'd)

- Each of the above factors can lead to conflict, but conflict is not always bad: it can lead to cooperation
 - E.g Conca and Dabelko; Matthew, McDonald and Gaulin
- Environmental impacts of the military
 - E.g. Westing
- Potential of the military to contribute to the conservation agenda
 - E.g. Butts
- Challenges of conservation efforts in conflict or post-conflict areas
 - E.g Oglethorpe et al.

Environmental Change and Vulnerability

Environmental changes can increase vulnerability:

- through a gradual decline of resources and gradual spread of health problems
- to shocks like natural disasters by reducing buffer zones
- through displacement such as movement to urban or peri-urban areas

General Concerns

- There is a recognition that conservation practices can unintentionally lead to declines in human security or to the triggering or amplification of violent conflict
- There is a general sense that burdens are disproportionately placed on women, children and the poor in the developing world
- There is also a widespread sentiment that conservation can be a force of stability and human security

Highlights of this Research

- Focused enormous attention on the security implications of climate change, biodiversity loss, etc.
- Brief, but energetic, period of policy making under President Clinton
- Engagement with this research by academics, policy makers and environmental NGOs around the world

3. Conclusions

