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UN Year of the Gorilla: Potential for Conservation, Nature Protection and Conflict Management

By Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

The UN Year of the Gorilla has given high profile to the plight of this endangered animal and the urgent need to protect these great apes. According to the IUCN Red List, all gorilla species are endangered or threatened with extinction due to hunting; habitat loss as a result of mining activities, logging and other exploitation of natural resources; diseases; and armed conflicts. Gorillas live in 10 African countries, sharing their habitat with millions of people in West, Central and East Africa. Most of these people live below the poverty line, which puts further strain on the gorillas, as poverty and lack of knowledge drive people to use wildlife and other natural resources unsustainably.

Since gorillas migrate across political borders, they benefit from conservation action under the UNEP Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). CMS, also called the Bonn Convention, provides the legal framework to conclude transboundary agreements and action plans for endangered migratory animals among its member states.

The Convention concluded a legally binding agreement with all 10 range states to protect their gorilla populations. It entered into force in 2008. Tailored action plans for each of the four subspecies were developed with the support of the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP), established by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The action plans concentrate on the development of networks of protected areas, data collection, analysis and diffusion. The Year of the Gorilla was launched to support the long-term survival of gorillas, their forest habitat and dependent human populations. It continues to support community-based projects that not only aim to restore gorilla populations, but also protect forests and the ecosystem services they provide as carbon sinks.

Controlled and sustainable ecotourism can help preserve gorillas in the wild by providing alternative livelihoods to people. Gorillas and their habitats have the potential to support post-conflict reconstruction efforts and advance long-term regional economic development through ecotourism. A gorilla can indirectly generate US$4 million during its lifetime. In Rwanda and Uganda, tourism has developed into the leading contributor to the national economy, exceeding tea and coffee exports. In addition to providing a boost to the national economy, gorilla tracking can even support wildlife conservation in other protected areas.

Second only to elephants in the amount of seeds dispersed, gorillas play a key role in maintaining the African rainforests, which are vital to the world’s climate. Conserving forests underpins efforts to mitigate climate change, reduces poverty and ensures a sustainable supply of energy. The protection of biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources are closely linked to climate change and poverty alleviation.

Under the title 'Gentle Giants in Need', government officials, experts, conservationists and corporate representatives from 20 countries attended a conference in Frankfurt in
June 2009 to mark the UN Year of the Gorilla. The conference was organised by the German Ministry for the Environment. In the resulting "Frankfurt Declaration," participants highlighted major threats to gorillas and their habitats, as well as the strategies available for the conservation of the second closest relative to humankind. The Declaration appeals to governments, the international community and industrial companies to enhance activities to reduce threats to the remaining gorilla populations in the wild, which can contribute to peace-making and prosperity in Central Africa. On the occasion of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010, the Convention on Biological Diversity has endorsed the Frankfurt Declaration.

Armed conflicts in Central Africa in the last 15 years have increased the exploitation of natural resources, especially when affected local people depend on them for food and shelter, or when armed factions use them to finance warfare. As a result, addressing mining activities and the extraction of coltan and other minerals such as gold, diamonds and uranium must be a crucial component of peace keeping missions and development in the region.

According to the new UNEP report "The Last Stand of the Gorilla - Environmental Crime and Conflict in the Congo Basin," the situation is especially critical in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where a great deal of the escalating damage is caused by militias operating in the region. Militias in the eastern part of the country are behind much of the illegal trade in timber, diamonds, gold and coltan, which may be worth hundreds of millions of dollars a year. The report, funded by France for the Year of the Gorilla, also recommends a greater role for MONUC, the UN peacekeeping operation in the DRC. Strengthening its mandate in terms of support for park rangers and control of border crossings, in collaboration with national customs and international bodies, could eventually reduce the revenue-raising activities of militias and their role in the illegal trade. This in turn would bring a peace dividend for the people of the region.

The good news is that the 350 Mountain Gorillas in the Virunga Mountains on the border between Rwanda, Uganda and the DRC have survived several periods of instability. This is the result of transboundary collaboration among the three countries, which has included better law enforcement and benefit sharing with the local communities.

The Year of the Gorilla 2009—actively supported by the member states of the Bonn Convention, as well as the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums and GRASP as partners of the campaign—generated €100,000 for gorilla conservation projects. Improved protection due to involvement by local communities and training staff as well as enforcement of wildlife law in Nigeria and Cameroon has helped save the critically endangered Cross River Gorilla. Although gorillas are legally protected in all 10 range states, illegal hunting continues. In order to fight commercial poaching and trade in endangered species, government authorities in Gabon and Congo are striving to fight wildlife trafficking. The Year of the Gorilla is supporting a project to apply the law on wildlife to reduce the overall level of illegal hunting and trade in the Republic of Congo.

Funds raised during a lecture tour in the United States by the UN Ambassador of the Year of the Gorilla, Ian Redmond, will substantially reduce the use of firewood and charcoal taken from Virunga National Park in DRC. In addition, illegal charcoal trafficking is being reduced significantly by use of aerial monitoring of camps for internally displaced people in eastern DRC. Emergency aid enabled park rangers to continue daily monitoring of gorillas in Kahuzi-Biega National Park, ensure their protection and remove snares in
gorilla habitat. The project is being implemented by the Frankfurt Zoological Society and ICCN, the Congolese park authority.

The Year of the Gorilla and future projects implemented under the Convention’s Gorilla Agreement enhance transboundary conservation to promote the long-term survival of gorillas, the forests they live in and the people who depend on them. This will not only contribute towards reducing the current rate of biodiversity loss during the International Year of Biodiversity, but also enhance nature protection, species conservation and sustainable economic development in this part of Africa.

More information on the CMS Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and Their Habitats is available at http://www.cms.int/species/gorillas/index.htm

For a comprehensive overview on the activities during the Year of the Gorilla 2009, please see http://www.yog2009.org/

The report "The Last Stand of the Gorilla - Environmental Crime and Conflict in the Congo Basin" is available for download at http://www.grida.no/publications/rr/gorilla/

POLICY & RESEARCH

Fishing for Conflict or for Peace?
The recent developments at the eastern and western border of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) illustrate the close links among the environment, conflict and peacebuilding. The country’s wealth in natural resources and their illegal exploitation and trade have played a central role in the various conflicts, both within the DRC and at the transboundary level. The eastern part of the DRC, in particular, struggles with corruption, fraud and overall insecurity. Recent oil discoveries around Lake Albert—the shores of which are shared by the DRC and Uganda—have increased both the pressure on the environment and the tensions between the two countries. However, the potential of natural resource management to build peace by facilitating trust-building and benefit sharing still exists.

A new study published by the Initiative for Peacebuilding (IfP) investigates the peacebuilding opportunities around the lake in the domains of environment and protected area management, water and fisheries, as well as energy and oil. The study concludes that peacebuilding opportunities exist when initiatives are integrated and rely on local stakeholders and ownership, even in cases lacking high-level political agreements. Local initiatives that work on resource governance and at the same time address inter-communal relationships might offer efficient ways to address tensions across communities and regions.

Early action at Lake Albert might prevent violent conflict, but in the northwestern Equateur province, increasing competition and tension around resources came to a head in July 2009. Since then, at least 100 people have been killed and about 200,000 displaced. The clashes between two ethnic clans erupted over fishing rights at the Iwandi pool, which is part of the River Ubangui that runs along the border between the DRC and
Congo. These disputes, which are entirely separate from the unrest in eastern DRC, illustrate how the failure of effective mechanisms to share natural resources can directly contribute to the escalation of a latent conflict. (Christiane Roettger)


Behind the Scenes: Negotiating Water

Water issues have always played a major role in the Middle East and are an important driver of tension between countries in the region. The recently proposed Jordan River Peace Park between Jordan and Israel brings a new perspective to regional water debates, as it addresses tensions by developing solutions for common benefit sharing of both riparians. Jon Martin Trondalen, a well-known facilitator who has chaired numerous multilateral negotiations on water disputes with a special focus on the Middle East, also adopts this view that water is an area for cooperation rather than division.

In his new book "Water and Peace for the People," Trondalen combines his academic knowledge on water conflict issues and their political contexts with his own lessons learned from mediation processes. He takes a closer look at four specific cases: the Golan Heights, the Upper Jordan River basin, the contested waters between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and the Euphrates-Tigris basin. According to Trondalen's experiences from behind the scenes of water conflict negotiations, common errors include a focus on positions rather than on interests, lacking knowledge on the particular subject to be negotiated—which may lead to false agreements, and limiting options for trade-offs because of lacking knowledge or creativity of the negotiator.

In spite of the highly politicized context, Trondalen allows the reader to develop an unbiased view of the issues by presenting each party’s concerns and positions behind their political rhetoric and by examining the parties’ perceptions of each other’s positions. The author proposes concrete solutions including cost calculation, compensation principles and documentation of the views of the conflicting parties on these options. From his own experience he identifies key factors that could change a gridlocked situation between conflicting water neighbors: the emergence of new substantive information or of new trade-offs between the parties, a changed general political climate and new external power brokers. (Annabelle Houdret)

The publication by Jon Martin Trondalen can be purchased at http://www.earthprint.com/productfocus.php?id=UNESCO0031

Further information on the proposed Jordan River Peace Park is available at http://www.foeme.org/projects.php?ind=123
Climate Changes and Nobody is Prepared

Nations around the world find themselves in the awkward situation of having developed institutions and strategies under the premise of a stable climate. This list of ill-prepared nations includes the industrial nations in Northern America and Europe, including Russia, all of which are barely prepared for changing climatic conditions. However, in the debate on the security implications of climate change, priority is most often given to the developing countries and fragile states. The geo-political and geo-economic consequences of climate change have now been addressed in the publication "Global Warring: How Environmental, Economic and Political Crisis Will Redraw the World Map," by Cleo Paskal, Associate Fellow at Chatham House.

The author’s analysis of the potential developments for the Pacific Island states offers some interesting new perspectives. While these states are almost exclusively recognized as places with future "climate refugees," Paskal emphasizes the political implications of climate change for the region: currently, countries like China, Australia and Taiwan compete for the island states’ favour by providing financial and economic support. Thereby, the author argues, they hope to obtain the support of the island states in international organizations or secure access to the region’s vast maritime territories, which not only include rich fishing grounds but would also open up new opportunities for further economic exploitation, such as seabed mining.

Besides the Pacific, Paskal also highlights the importance of monsoons to Southern Asia and the climate-related changes in the Arctic. What becomes clear is an urgent need for all nations to change the ways they perceive the environment. According to Paskal, this perception should be based on the awareness that predictable absolute terms – such as stable regional climatic conditions – through climate change will become variable. (Achim Maas)


More information on the Energy, Environment and Development Programme at Chatham House is available at http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/about/directory/view/-/id/87/

A Never Ending Story: Lake Baikal and the Paper Plant

Lake Baikal, situated in southern Siberia, is not only the world’s oldest and deepest lake, but also its largest reservoir of freshwater, home to unique biodiversity and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In 1966 the Baikalsk Pulp and Paper Mill (BPPM) was built on the southern shore of the lake and since then it has discharged waste products into the air and the lake’s ecosystem. While the plant has been closed since 2008 because of its economic unprofitability, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin decided to restart it at the beginning of this year. The enterprise faces strong public opposition, and has been the source of heavy protests and demonstrations. ECC editors talked about recent developments with Marina Rikhvanova, co-director of the Baikal Environmental Wave, a local NGO based in Irkutsk.
ECC: Ms. Rikhvanova, the pulp mill initially closed in 2008. Its reopening in January 2010 caused strong public opposition and demonstrations. Could you shortly explain what are the main problems associated with this factory?

Marina Rikhvanova (MR): A first problem is its old technology that requires the use of a large amount of water to flush the pulp. As a result of the outdated equipment, polluted waste waters leak onto the shop floor and seep into ground waters below the mill. Although part of this is pumped out and into the waste water treatment facility, the untreated remainder enters Baikal. The waste from pulp production contains toxic compounds that are fatal for Baikal's endemic species, such as the Baikal seal. Chlorine bleaching and the incineration of the waste lignin produce organochlorine by-products, some of which—like dioxins—are alien to nature and accumulate in the food chain, weakening mammalian immune systems. These toxins are not covered by official monitoring. But they have been found in the breast milk of women living near the lake and having a high fish diet.

Highly toxic chloroform, methanol, phenol and formaldehyde are found in the mill's waste waters. As a result some 80 percent of Baikal's main cleaner, the tiny shrimp Epishura, perish in the area around the discharge pipe. The mill's emissions are causing drying of the surrounding forest. Scientists have come to the conclusion that, if this is to continue another 10 years, as a result of these processes Baikal's endemic species could disappear altogether. At present, their numbers are already falling. The consequences for Baikal's ecosystem are well documented in scientific reports and research. Questions relating to the health of the local population are not very well known as data is kept secret. We have applied for information but have received none.

Over the period of mill operations, 6 million tonnes of industrial waste – lignin sludge – have been accumulated along the shores of the lake. This sludge could contain dioxins. Some of the large sludge ponds have been covered in municipal waste and others with ash from the combined heat and power plant. This means that there could be radioactive pollution too. There are also separate ash landfills with very high alkalinity. And all this is near the lake (at times some 20 metres away). Baikal is the symbol of naturally pure water, but this symbol is suffering because of an old mill with old technology.

The question of pollution has been the reason for a number of decisions regarding the mill’s conversion and closure of pulp production. But they were never implemented. After perestroika the mill was privatised. Today, the company Kontinenta Management (KM), which belongs to the Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska, owns 51 percent of the pulp mill with the Russian government owning the rest. However, Deripaska has now swapped 25 percent of his shares with his close business partner.

ECC: What are the circumstances that led to its closure in 2008 and its recent reopening? What are the social and ecological consequences of this decision?

MR: Since 2001, cellulose production on Baikal without a closed wastewater cycle is prohibited by a federal law called "The List of Activities Banned in the Central Ecological Zone of the Baikal Natural Territory." However, the BPPM has never operated within the pollution limits officially set for its emissions and discharges. Instead, special standards were established for it that allowed for higher emissions than for other industries. It was supposed to discontinue chlorine bleaching and convert to a closed loop water system, and other enterprises were supposed to be developed in Baikalsk. It was given three
years to close its loop, but even now it doesn't work. In 2008 it became evident that the mill's so-called closed-loop system in fact did not work. The mill closed as a result of the economic crisis and not because of environmentalists, as KM likes to say. KM itself took the decision to shut down. Even before the crisis its production was not being bought and was stacked up in storage. After the mill's closure in October 2008, the factory laid off the majority of its 2,000 workers, which caused tensions in the town of Baikalsk as workers demanded their unpaid wages and unemployment benefits.

Then, on January 13th, Russian Prime Minister Putin signed a decree amending the list of banned activities on Baikal, allowing the production of cellulose on the lake's shores without the requirement of a closed wastewater system. The BPPM resumed production. We continued our anti-mill campaign and a few weeks later, Irkutsk police raided our offices on a "citizen's tip" that we had pirate software on our computers. However, when I wanted to show them our licenses, they said they had no need for them. This happened two and a half months ago and we still haven't got our computers back.

Apart from all the above, people protest against the Baikalsk Mill because its owners enjoy a privileged position, by comparison with other local businesses, and it is protected by the government. People are indignant at this lack of fairness. Many locals consider the enormous lake, the "Pearl of Siberia," sacred, and a national pride and treasure. Seeing it put at risk again caused more than 1,500 people to protest on the streets of Irkutsk one month after Putin signed his decree. The flop of Putin's party "Russia United" in the regional election in Irkutsk on 14 March also reflects the people's discontent with Putin’s decision.

Why BPPM was opened right now is a mystery. In an official letter from the government of Irkutsk Oblast it is stated that the aim of re-launching the mill is to "process" dangerous chemical substances situated on the territory of the mill. One can suppose that it is profitable for the owners to re-open the mill in that they can receive some government funding and new loans. But at a regional and local level it is far from profitable. It is a threat to the development of tourism and to the production of environmentally sound products, for example, bottled water. It is a threat to the future.

In a word, the consequences of the BPPM operations are: extinction of Baikal's endemic species, change in water quality, degradation in people's quality of life (contaminated fish and water), health problems amongst local inhabitants, depletion of natural resources, decline in income for the local budget, economic crisis and social unrest – much greater than what happened in Baikalsk after the shut-down of the mill.

**ECC: In your opinion, what is needed in order to solve the problem and to improve the situation?**

**MR:** In order to overcome this problem a programme for closure of the mill, restoration of polluted areas and rehabilitation of the local inhabitants is required. There are local people who have ideas about what can be done there to create jobs – more than 100 business projects. Additional resources are needed at the regional level and conditions attractive to investors in tourism and environmentally sound activities should be created. There should be an international assessment of the mill's condition and that of the sludge ponds so as to design a suitable programme for the future. Different experts and NGOs should take part in such an assessment.
The problem of unemployment can be dealt with using local and regional resources and by creating the conditions for the development of small and medium businesses. The Employment Agency can give subsidies. If suitable conditions for investment are set up and there are places where new projects can be developed (first and foremost the site where the mill now stands), then jobs will be created, even more than the mill can offer.

The establishment of a special zone for the development of tourism and recreation could help overcome the problems by stimulating the local economy. But it should be ensured that priority is given to local initiatives, so that this attractive area is not dominated by large Moscow companies. Rehabilitation of Baikalsk would be cheaper than building ice palaces in Sochi that won’t work after the winter Olympics, because people don’t skate in the tropics.

ECC: Ms. Rikhvanova, thank you very much for this interview.

Marina Rikhvanova received the Goldman Environment Prize in 2008 for her work with the Baikal Environmental Wave. Her greatest success has been a national campaign against the plans to build a petroleum pipeline through the Lake Baikal basin. Due to these efforts, in April 2006, then-President Vladimir Putin ordered the pipeline to be rerouted away from the lake’s watershed.

More information on the work of the Baikal Environmental Wave is available at http://baikalwave.blogspot.com/ and http://www.goldmanprize.org/2008/asia

For further news coverage on the topic, please see http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2010/04/07/91779/putin-about-face-on-paper-mill.html

The official statement (Russian language) of the Irkutsk Department of the Interior on the police operation concerning the Baikal Environmental Wave is available at http://guvd38.ru/?rubr=3&doc=1796 and http://guvd38.ru/?rubr=3&doc=1855

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CONFERENCE REPORTS

At the Forefront: The Maldives in Climate Change

At a lecture by Mohamed Nasheed, President of the Maldives, at Free University Berlin on 11 March 2010, the centre stage topics included the latest developments in climate change negotiations and the repercussions of climate change on his own country.

A group of low-lying islands, the Maldives are particularly threatened by climate change. Rising sea levels and increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events are already forcing the inhabitants of a dozen of the 1200 islands to move. Nasheed emphasized the high social costs of these relocations: There is a growing opposition within the affected population against the loss of their homes and parts of their cultural identity. He also highlighted the massive ecological damage of climate change: "Of course we can relocate people, but where will the butterflies go?" These problems are likely to increase as climate change intensifies. Purchasing land outside the country’s national borders is likely to become a last resort for future survival, said Nasheed.
Yet, relocations have to be avoided as much as possible. The country’s economic development plays a key role in its ability to finance costly adaptation measures. In the long term, the restoration of coral reefs offers great potential and would be the country’s ‘first line of defence’ against extreme weather events. However, also the utilization of concrete continues to be indispensable in order to protect the island’s coastlines.

Against this background, Nasheed expressed his concern about the slow progress made in climate change negotiations. He judged the current framework to be ineffective, as it allows only for agreements based on the lowest common denominator. This hinders any future progress. Nasheed identified yet another obstacle for an effective agreement: The mistrust of the older generations in developing countries towards the industrial world as a result of imperialism and colonialism. This has led to an exaggerated focus on compensation payments for past emissions, which hampers the achievement of a common agreement. Yet, much more ambitious emissions reductions are needed than are currently being discussed. After all, every country would benefit from effective mitigation—the Maldives might be the first victim of climate change, but it certainly will not be the last. (Stephan Wolters)

The keynote speech of President Nasheed at the Free University in Berlin is available at http://www.fu-berlin.de/campusleben/videos/2010/100311_malediven_vortrag/index.html

For more information on the demands of small island states in the context of climate change, please see http://www.sidsnet.org/aosis/index.html

More Women for Peace

Ten years ago, the Security Council of the United Nations adopted Resolution 1325, "Women, Peace, and Security," in order to improve women’s involvement in political processes to negotiate peace agreements and to increase their representation in peace missions. At the 25th Forum on Global Issues organized by the German Foreign Office under the theme "Women as Players in Peace Processes," participants discussed the progress made in implementing the resolution and the experiences of women in peace processes, as well as the opportunities to strengthen their involvement.

The fact that women play a decisive role—but still have insufficient rights—in peace processes has been highlighted by Luz Mendez from the National Union of Guatemalan Women and by Leymah Gbowee from the Women Peace and Security Network Africa. Being the only woman in the peace negotiations in Guatemala, Luz Mendez has contributed significantly to the inclusion of gender equality in peace agreements. She emphasized the important role women play in the transition of a country from war to peace. Likewise, Gbowee has initiated and led the female peace activist movement in Liberia, which has been instrumental in building peace and stability in the country.

In order for women to seize their rights and play an active role in political (peace) processes, they need to be financed and represented appropriately in peace delegations of the parties. According to Gbowee, this would be the only way to ensure that gender aspects are actually enshrined in the agreements. Peace agreements that make no
explicit reference to gender equality are per definition discriminating against women, affirmed Joyce Neu, Head of the UN Standby Team of Mediation. The panelists agreed that in negotiations, women put greater emphasis on topics relevant to society such as water scarcity, land degradation and access to public services, as women are often the ones most affected by environmental changes. (Christiane Roettger)

Comprehensive information on the conference, including presentations and background documents, are available at http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Aussenpolitik/ForumGF/25-GF/FrauenInFriedensprozessen.html

Numerous Paths towards Sustainable Water Cooperation

How can we improve cooperation and knowledge transfer between Germany and the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region on issues of environmental protection and water management? What are the challenges and opportunities in addressing the water crisis in this region? These questions were discussed at the recent Water Forum, which was organized by the Euro Mediterranean Association for Cooperation and Development (EMA) on 11 and 12 March in Hamburg.

Representatives of the German water industry sat down with delegates from local water ministries to exchange their experiences with public-private partnerships in the sector. Broad topics of discussion included technical and financial opportunities and challenges. New technologies for desalination, water efficiency and water treatment developed by German companies can provide solutions to water problems in the Arab World.

Other topics, however, were largely ignored. Technical issues are clearly important—tourism sectors in water scarce regions, as on the Egyptian coast for example, already benefit from small desalination plants. Yet the water crisis—in the Arab region as in many other places—is today more a problem of water governance at the national and local levels than a technical crisis. The water resources available could be used in a much more efficient way, as up to 50 percent of the water mobilized is currently lost due to leakages and lacking maintenance of the infrastructure. Furthermore, governments need to make strategic decisions as to which economic sector should benefit from the available water. In addition, governments need to compensate those people like small farmers, who are both marginalized from water supply but also dependent on the resource.

Corruption is another key issue in the water sector, as it is rampant and impedes efficient and equitable distribution of the often scarce resource. Corruption is another example of a problem that is largely political, not technical. At the transboundary level, water management is also embedded into a sensitive political setting in the region including far reaching transboundary implications. The cases of Israel and Palestine, the tension along the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and along the Jordan Valley illustrate these dilemmas. Unfortunately, the conference did not raise these problems and thereby failed to address crucial issues of water management in the Arab world. (Annabelle Houdret)

The documentation of the conference including the presentations of the different panels is available online at http://ema-hamburg.org/pages/de/wasserforum/wasserforum-2010/dokumentation.php
**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Upcoming events are also regularly published at [http://www.ecc-platform.org/](http://www.ecc-platform.org/).

"Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution – Evolving to Meet New Opportunities" in Tucson, USA (25-27 May)

This conference, organized by the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, seeks to provide a forum of exchange between the different stakeholders within the field of environmental conflict resolution (ECR) and is directed at professionals from governments, businesses and NGOs alike. The event includes workshops, panel sessions, and roundtable and plenary discussions on three main topics: policy challenges of the next decade and the role of ECR; engaging governments; and new tools and technology and their application to ECR.

*For further information, please see [http://www.ecr.gov/AnnouncementsEvents/Conference/ECR2010/Home.aspx](http://www.ecr.gov/AnnouncementsEvents/Conference/ECR2010/Home.aspx)*

"Climate Induced Migration in the Middle East and North Africa" in Marseille (15-16 June)

Organized jointly by the World Bank and the Agence Française de Développement, this workshop aims at enhancing knowledge sharing and network creation among researchers in the field of climate induced migration and displacement. It is directed at researchers, academics and practitioners who work with a regional focus on the Middle East and North Africa region. Topics will include methodological issues, the quantification of climate change impacts, rural-urban migration and its impact on rural and urban development, as well as gender-related issues.

*For further information, please go to [http://www.semide.net/thematicdirs/events/first-workshop-climate-induced-migration-middle](http://www.semide.net/thematicdirs/events/first-workshop-climate-induced-migration-middle)*

"Regional Environmental Governance: Interdisciplinary Approaches, Theoretical Issues, Comparative Designs" in Geneva (16-18 June)

This workshop on regional environmental governance, which will take place at the University of Geneva, seeks to foster exchange and discussion between scientists and practitioners. It comprises six different thematic plenary sessions, one of which will examine the connections between regional security and the environment. The workshop will commence with an inaugural public lecture and conclude with a roundtable discussion.

*For further information, please go to [http://www.reg-observatory.org/index.html](http://www.reg-observatory.org/index.html)*
"Climate Change and Security" in Trondheim (21-24 June)
This research conference, organized by the International Peace Research Institute and a number of other renowned academic institutions, aims to examine the broad security implications of climate change. The conference will first review physical and economic effects of climate change in order to subsequently shed light on implications not only for different kinds of violent armed conflicts, but also for human livelihoods and overall human security.

For further information on the conference, including a detailed program, please visit http://climsec.prio.no/Default.aspx

IN BRIEF

Land Grabbing, and Gender, Social and Security Dimensions of Climate Change
The international NGO GRAIN, which works to support small farmers and social movements in their struggle to build community-controlled and biodiversity-based food systems, has launched the blog "Food Crisis and the Global Land Grab". It contains comprehensive information about the global rush to buy up or lease farmlands abroad as a strategy to secure basic food supplies or simply turn a profit. The blog serves as a resource for those monitoring or researching the issue.

To expand the body of literature on the gender differentiated impacts of climate change, the Heinrich Böll Foundation commissioned four case studies examining the connections between Climate Change and Gender. The conclusions and recommendations of these case studies—conducted in South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia—are part of a regional summary.

In February, a new European research project called "CLICO – Climate Change, Water Conflict and Human Security" was launched to study climate change and its social dimensions. Researchers from 14 institutes are analysing the effects that drought, flooding and rising sea level have on social tension and conflicts in 11 regions of the Mediterranean, Maghreb, Middle East and Sahel. They will then recommend actions to promote peace and security.

The study "Shifting Bases, Shifting Perils - A Scoping Study on Security Implications of Climate in the OSCE Region and Beyond", published by Adelphi Research in cooperation with Chatham House and CIMERA aims at reviewing the state of debate in research on climate change and security, identifying potential security implications, assessing current activities, and outlining initial recommendations to the OSCE.
The newsletter "Environment, Conflict, and Cooperation" is published every two months.

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Publisher:
Alexander Carius
Adelphi Research gGmbH
Caspar-Theyss-Strasse 14a
D - 14193 Berlin

Phone +49-30-89 000 68 0
Fax +49-30-89 000 68 10
www.adelphi-research.de

Editorial team:
Contact: editor@ecc-platform.org
Alexander Carius, Irina Comardicea, Moira Feil, Kerstin Fritzshe, Annabelle Houdret, Annika Kramer, Achim Maas, Christiane Röttger, Dennis Tänzler, Stephan Wolters
Translation support by Anya Malhotra
Editing by Alison Williams

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