

ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AS POLICY: WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FORWARD?

Wednesday 19 June 2019, at 09:00 – 11:00
Auditorium of the Annex Building of the Parliament,
Arkadiankatu 3, Helsinki

In recent years, the security impacts of environmental change have increasingly been noted in policy discussion. In particular, the threat that climate change poses to the society, or its role in conflicts and their prevention, has featured in the speeches of politicians and military officers alike. Yet this acknowledgement has not widely been channelled into concrete actions to address environmental threats through foreign and security policy. In addition, the variety of geopolitical implications of environmental change and the measures to mitigate it have yet to be fully understood.

This seminar, which marks the end of a series of workshops held at FIIA, explores the role of environmental security as a part of foreign and security policy. How could the diverse impacts of environmental change be taken into account in policy-making, and is there a need for a comprehensive approach? What should be the main points of focus for a European country like Finland? Has research succeeded at adequately supporting decision-making with relevant knowledge?

The seminar is co-organised by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA), BIOS Research Unit, University of Helsinki and the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI).

Opening remarks and presentation of the Environmental security workshop project:

Emma Hakala, Senior Research Fellow, Finnish Institute of International Affairs

Keynote speaker:

Reimagining Climate Security:

Jan Selby, Professor, University of Sussex

Panelists:

Laura Lindgren, Counsellor, Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Niina Tenhio, Adviser, Development Policy, Fingo

Atte Harjanne, Member of Parliament

Jussi T. Eronen, Associate Professor, University of Helsinki

Speakers' biographies



Emma Hakala is a Senior Research Fellow at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. She defended her doctoral dissertation in political history in 2018 under the title “International Organisations and the Securitisation of the Environment in post-Conflict Western Balkans”. Hakala’s broader research interest is on environmental and climate security. She has also done research and published on sustainable energy issues, environmental citizenship in the Balkans and local water sustainability cooperation in Nepal. Hakala’s current research explores new practices to respond and adapt to environmental security threats in the context of Finland. She is a member of the BIOS Research Unit and the WISE project (Creative adaptation to wicked socio-environmental disruptions).



Jan Selby is Professor of International Relations at the University of Sussex, UK. His research focuses principally on political ecology and environmental security, but also addresses issues of conflict, peace-building and development, International Relations theory, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He is the author of a 2003 monograph, *Water, Power and Politics in the Middle East*, of edited volumes on global governance, militarism and International Relations theory, and of various articles on water politics and climate security including recent work examining the role of climate change in the Syrian civil war. Professor Selby studied at the universities of Durham and Lancaster, and received his PhD in Sociology from Lancaster in 2000. He subsequently taught in the Department of Politics and International Relations at Lancaster, and the Department of International Politics, Aberystwyth, before joining Sussex in 2005. He was Head of Department at Sussex from 2007-2009, and is currently the Department’s Research Director.



Laura Lindgren is Counsellor at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. She has several years of work experience at the Ministry, and has previously worked, among others, at the Embassy of Finland in Sweden and the Finnish Permanent Representation to the European Union. In her current role, she is the Mediation Coordinator and teamleader for the mediation team at the Political Department of the Ministry.



Niina Tenhio is an Adviser on Development Policy at Fingo, a Finnish NGO platform on global development. She specializes on development finance and the area of development and security. She has previously worked on a variety of issues linked to peace and development at the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and UN Women in Afghanistan and UNDP in Kosovo, among others.



Atte Harjanne is a member of parliament and Helsinki city council, representing the Green party. Previously he worked as a researcher at the Finnish Meteorological Institute, where he focused on studying climate risk management and socio-economic impacts of climate change.



Jussi T. Eronen is Associate Professor of Sustainability Science, Ecosystems and Environment Research Programme and Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science (HELSUS) at the University of Helsinki. His research focuses on understanding the ecological and climate related interlinkages with human activities in the present and in the long-term historic past. Eronen is also a founding member of the BIOS Research Unit and in the core team of the Scientific Consensus on Maintaining Humanity’s Life Support Systems in the 21st Century.