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Issues:

- THE CONTROVERSIAL THREE GORGES DAM
- CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS
- ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY
- FOOD SECURITY
- HEALTH AND HUMAN SECURITY

Note: Please click on the respective titles or headers for the full report.

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MAIN HIGHLIGHT

The Controversial Three Gorges Dam

China's provinces along the middle and lower reaches of Yangtze River have experienced extreme weather conditions in the past few months. In April and May, Hubei, Hunan, Anhui and Jiangxi were hit by a severe drought which led the water level of lakes connected to the river to drop to a record low. However, since the beginning of June, these provinces together with other southern provinces, have witnessed excessive precipitation which caused flash floods.

Some people attribute the occurrence of extreme weather to the construction of the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River – the largest hydropower project in the world. The project cost over USD23 billion, and has a total installed capacity of 18,200 megawatts (MW) and an annual generation capacity of 84.7 billion kilowatt hours (kWh).

The government of China has high expectations of the dam; the project will help meet the country's ever growing energy demands and control flooding in the Yangtze valley. However, from the time the project was envisioned decades ago, it has been controversial.

Experts opposed to the dam argue that the artificial retention and release of water would disrupt the natural water cycle and replenishment in the lower parts of the Yangtze River, causing environmental pollution, soil erosion, landslide, flood and droughts. In addition to environmental and geologic impacts, the project has also caused social tensions, due to factors such as the displacement of indigenous communities and the submergence of archaeological sites. The recent admission by the government that some pressing problems are associated with the dam, and appropriate resolutions are urgently needed, seems to affirm these concerns.

In response to the deepening and widening criticism over its negative impacts, the operator of the dam – China Three Gorges Corporation – released a social responsibility report to defend the project. It claims that the dam is hugely beneficial to the country, providing clean energy, controlling floods, creating employment and alleviating poverty.

The Three Gorges Dam has surely benefited China in multiple ways. However, it is also important to consider whether the pursuit of clean energy and economic benefits outweighs the costs of such artificial manipulation of nature and how the negative impacts can be mitigated and reversed.

Additional Info:

- Highland, Lynn M., 2008, *Geographical Overview of the Three Gorges Dam and Reservoir, China – Geologic Hazards and Environmental Impacts*, US Geological Survey Open-File Report 2008–1241, Reston, VA: US Geological Survey.
- Watts, Jonathan, 'China Warns of "Urgent Problems" Facing Three Gorges Dam', *Guardian*, 20 May 2011.
- 'No Evidence that Dam Causes Drought: Experts', *Xinhua*, 25 May 2011.
- 'Choking on the Three Gorges', *The Economist*, 9 June 2011.
- Kurtenbach, Elaine, 'China's 3 Gorges Corp. Defends Huge Dam from Critics', *AP*, 19 June 2011.

CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



News & Commentaries

- Bapna, Manish, 'C40 Shows How Cities Can Lead on Climate Change Solutions', *World Resources Institute*, 13 June 2011.
- Mooney, Pat, 'Geo-engineering Does Not Deserve Serious Climate Policy Consideration', *Guardian*, 15 June 2011.
- Ur-Rahman, Javaid, 'Two Million May Suffer in Floods This Year: NDMA', *The Nation*, 16 June 2011.
- Abbasi, Tasneem and S.A. Abbasi, 'Small Hydro Could Add Up to Big Damage', *Science and Development Network*, 20 June 2011.
- 'More Rains Forecast for China after Floods Kill Dozens, Force Evacuations', *Bloomberg*, 20 June 2011.
- 'Philippines: Flood-hit Mindanao Battles Water Lilies', *IRIN*, 20 June 2011.
- Esmaque II, Paterno, 'Business Wants Govt Help in Measures on Climate Change – Think Tank', *GMA*, 21 June 2011.
- Khalid, Rasheed, 'Climate Change "Threat Multiplier to National, Human Security"', *The News International*, 21 June 2011.

Selected Publications

- Hellmuth, Molly E., Simon J. Mason, Catherine Vaughan et al. (eds), 2011, *A Better Climate for Disaster Risk Management*, New York: International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI), Columbia University.

This policy brief explores the nexus of climate-related disasters and development. It takes stock of the needs and capabilities of the humanitarian community and assesses the types of climate-related information products that may help inform decision-making processes. The document identifies the data and research requirements necessary to improve the use of climate information for disaster preparedness and response.

- Urban, Frauke and Tom Mitchell, 2011, *Climate Change, Disasters and Electricity Generation*, Strengthening Climate Resilience Discussion Paper 8, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.

This paper assesses the vulnerability of various electricity generation options – for example, fossil fuel, nuclear power, hydropower and renewable energy – to changes in disaster risks, and addresses the implications for energy policy and planning. The paper suggests that there is a need to improve the linkages between energy, climate and disasters ministries. Also, climate change adaptation strategies must take into account risks related to electricity generation.

- International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), 2011, 'Gender and Generation Matter', *Reflect and Act*, March.

This brief examines how the different experiences of men and women, as well as younger and older people, inform new ways to improve livelihoods and encourage sustainable development. It presents the results of a study which explores how to ensure that gender and generation are addressed more consistently.

Events & Announcements

- 'International Conference on Forest Tenure, Governance and Enterprise: Experiences and Opportunities for Asia in a Changing Context', 11–15 July 2011, Lombok, Indonesia.
- 'World Leadership Conference 2011 – Asia-Pacific: Towards Rio +20', 13–15 July 2011, Singapore.
- 'High-level Dialogue on the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development', 19–21 July 2011, Solo, Indonesia.

[^ To the top](#)

ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- Maeda, Risa, 'Japan PM to Unveil Push for Renewable Energy: Media', *Reuters*, 25 May 2011.
- 'Food, Energy Security on Table at Big Europe-Asia Meet', *AFP*, 6 June 2011.
- Vanderklippe, Nathan and Carrie Tait, 'The Asia-Canada LNG Connection', *The Globe and Mail*, 13 June 2011.
- Loftus, Louise, 'A Dimming Nuclear Future', *The New York Times*, 14 June 2011.
- Daly, John C.K., 'David and Goliath: Vietnam Confronts China over South China Sea Energy Riches', *Arab News*, 16 June 2011.
- Grigoriev, Leonid, 'Will Russia Reorient Its Energy Exports from Europe to Asia?', *RIA Novosti*, 17 June 2011.
- Jozwiak, Rikard, 'Poland's Shale-gas Dream Could Dramatically Change Continent's Energy Game', *Radio Free Europe*, 17 June 2011.

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- Soble, Jonathan, 'Japan Looks to Renewable Energy', *Financial Times*, 19 June 2011.
- Morgan, Jennifer and Athena Ronquillo-Ballesteros, 'Will the Shift to Clean Energy Lead to the Next Generation of Asian Tigers?', *Jakarta Globe*, 20 June 2011.
- LeVine, Steve, 'Will Shale Gas Be a Shake or a Mere Stir?', *Foreign Policy*, 20 June 2011.
- Sorman, Guy, 'The End of Green Ideology', *China Daily*, 20 June 2011.
- 'OECD Chief Says Nuclear Energy Still Important', *Jakarta Globe*, 20 June 2011.
- Blair, Gavin, 'Beginning of the End for Nuclear Power in Japan?', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 20 June 2011.

Selected Publications

- Wang, Yanjia and William Chandler, 2011, *Understanding Energy Intensity Data in China*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP) Policy Outlook, Washington, DC: CEIP.

In view of China's surging energy consumption and the consequent increase in greenhouse gas emissions, understanding the country's energy data is important for the global effort to curb climate change. However, China's official energy data have been criticised as unreliable. The government should thus improve its data collection and analysis. International institutions can contribute by interpreting the data, and disseminating it to the public.

- Xu, Xiaojie, 2011, 'Chinese Responses to Good Energy Governance', *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, Vol.17, No. 2, pp. 161–5.

This article examines China's effort to improve energy governance by focusing on three areas – global energy security, resource governance in host countries, and climate change. China has increased cooperation with other countries and international institutions in relation to the above-mentioned areas.

Events & Announcements

- 'Energy Infrastructure Security Asia 2011', 27–28 July 2011, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- '2011 International Conference on Power and Energy Engineering', 29–31 July, Bangkok, Thailand.
- '1st Philippine BioEnergy Conference', 18–19 August 2011, Manila, Philippines.

[^ To the top](#)

FOOD SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Teng, Paul S., J. Jackson Ewing and Margarita Escaler, 'Food (Security) for Thought in Asia', *Jakarta Globe*, 2 June 2011.
- Sulthani, Lenita, 'Ageing Farmers Threaten Indonesian Food Security', *Reuters*, 10 June 2011.
- Muhammad, Jamaluddin, 'Food Security for ASEAN', *Bernama*, 17 June 2011.
- Casert, Raf, 'AP Interview: UN Warns of More Food Crises', *AP*, 18 June 2011.
- Goetz, Gretchen, 'Germany's E. coli Outbreak: A Global Lesson', *Food Safety News*, 18 June 2011.
- 'Food Insecurity No Longer Poses Threat', *VietnamNet Bridge*, 19 June 2011.
- 'Green Growth Critical to Asia-Pacific Food and Energy Security, UN Says', *UN News Centre*, 20 June 2011.
- Marusiak, Jenny, 'Sustainable Fish Farming Can Ensure Global Food Security', *Eco-Business.com*, 20 June 2011.
- Dunmore, Charlie, 'Farm Groups Say Trade Rules Threaten Food Security', *Reuters*, 20 June 2011.
- Muchoki, Lucy, 'Investment in Agriculture and Access to Markets Will Help to Feed the World', *Guardian*, 20 June 2011.
- Fielding, Richard, 'Asia's Food Security Conundrum: More Apparent than Real?', *The Jakarta Post*, 21 June 2011.



Selected Publications

- Escaler, Margarita and Paul Teng, 2011, "'Mind the Gap": Reducing Waste and Losses in the Food Supply Chain', *NTS Insight*, June, Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies.

This article contends that food waste should be reduced across the food supply chain, as this would improve food availability, thus moderating the amount of increase in food production that is needed to meet growing food demand. It argues that inefficiencies across the supply chain result in significant food losses, and examines the differences between developing and developed countries with respect to how food waste or loss occurs.

- Ewing, J. Jackson and Ong Suan Ee, 2011, 'Food and Health in the Asia-Pacific: The Economics of Access and Its Implications for

This article explores the intersection between food security and health issues in the Asia-Pacific by highlighting health problems stemming from the challenge of maintaining adequate levels of food across different populations living in diverse conditions. The authors argue that shortcomings in food access still plague many areas in the region, creating pervasive and wide-ranging problems for public health.

- Ong, Suan Ee and J. Jackson Ewing, 2011, 'Brave New World? Assessing the Health Risks of Modern Food Systems in Asia', *NTS Alert*, June (Issue 2), Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies for NTS-Asia.

This article argues that food systems have evolved in response to changes in food demands, and the growing interlinkages that define both global and regional economies. Emerging issues include nutrition-related diseases, food safety and genetically modified (GM) foods. This article examines these trends and their potential health implications.

- Shepherd, Ben, 2011, *Redefining Food Security in the Face of Foreign Land Investors: The Philippine Case*, NTS-Asia Research Paper No. 6, Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies.

This paper examines acquisitions of land in the Philippines by foreign investors, arguing that food security should be couched in terms of protecting vulnerable populations from the structural violence of involuntary hunger (rather than in economic terms of supply, demand and competition). By defining food security thus, it becomes clear that such land deals are more likely to worsen, rather than improve, the situation of the Filipino rural poor.

- Teng, Paul, Margarita Escaler and Mely Caballero-Anthony, 2011, 'Urban Food Security: Feeding Tomorrow's Cities', *Significance*, June, pp. 57–60.

This article argues that, given the expected scale and pace of migration to urban areas in the coming years, food insecurity will become a major challenge. Supplying urban centres with sufficient and affordable food will put enormous strain on the food supply and distribution chain. The authors suggest that urban and peri-urban agriculture could contribute towards resilience in the face of potential food shortages or price spikes.

Events & Announcements

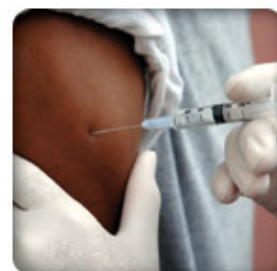
- 'SCI BioResources Young Researchers 2011: Science and Technology for Innovation in Agriculture', 8 July 2011, Reading, UK.
- '37th Session of the Committee on World Food Security', 17–22 October 2011, Rome, Italy.

[^ To the top](#)

HEALTH AND HUMAN SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Kotwani, Monica, 'New H1N1 Strain Can Be Treated with Mainstay Drugs, Say MOH, A*Star', *Channel NewsAsia*, 11 June 2011.
- 'Asia, Europe "Not Ready for New Diseases"', *Bangkok Post*, 14 June 2011.
- Faizal, Elly Burhaini, 'RI Loses Rp 3.1 Trillion Annually to Dengue Fever', *The Jakarta Post*, 15 June 2011.
- 'ASEAN, WHO Urges Unity in Fight against Dengue', *Xinhua*, 15 June 2011.
- 'Diabetes Medicine "May Cause Cancer"', *AsiaOne*, 18 June 2011.
- Yeo, Paul, 'A Common Cancer', *The Star*, 19 June 2011.
- 'Hong Kong Warning over Scarlet Fever Outbreak', *Global Post*, 20 June 2011.
- Ornish, Dean, 'Why Health Care Works Better than Disease Care', *The Atlantic*, 20 June 2011.
- Osborne, Alistair, 'GSK Launches Inquiry after China Bans Augmentin Antibiotic', *The Telegraph*, 20 June 2011.
- 'Thai Disease Control Department Dismisses Person-to-person E. coli Transmission', *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, 21 June 2011.
- Kotwani, Monica, 'Gastric Cancer Vaccine Trial in Singapore', *Channel NewsAsia*, 21 June 2011.



Selected Publications

- Durodié, Bill, 2011, 'H1N1 – The Social Costs of Cultural Confusion', *Global Health Governance*, Vol. 4, No. 2.

This article argues that the effectiveness of risk communication during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic was determined not only by the information relayed to the public, but more so by the socio-cultural context in which this information is conveyed. Risk and communication are argued to be socially mediated cultural products and not objective facts. Due to perceptions of risk being socially

constructed, oftentimes overly cautious approaches to risk during a crisis situation are adopted, resulting in serious cost implications for both governments and societies.

- Gostin, Lawrence O., Eric A. Friedman, Gorik Ooms et al., 2011, 'The Joint Action and Learning Initiative: Towards a Global Agreement on National and Global Responsibilities for Health', *PLoS Medicine*, Vol. 8, No. 5.

This article discusses the Joint Action and Learning Initiative on National and Global Responsibilities for Health (JALI). It suggests that the JALI needs to take advantage of broad partnerships and inclusive consultation processes in order to clarify the health services to which everyone is entitled under the right to health; the national and global responsibilities for securing this right; and global governance structures for realising those responsibilities and closing major health inequities.

- Vu, Tuong, 2011, 'Epidemics as Politics with Case Studies from Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam', *Global Health Governance*, Vol. 4, No. 2.

This article examines government responses to epidemics using an analytical framework that treats epidemics as political processes divided into four phases: pre-political, announcement, mitigation and rebuilding. The framework is applied to Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. The analysis suggests that global health governance should not ignore politics at the national level and the redistributive impact of epidemics originating from, or transmissible through, livestock.

- Zimmerman, Cathy, Ligia Kiss and Mazedra Hossain, 2011, 'Migration and Health: A Framework for 21st Century Policy-making', *PLoS Medicine*, Vol. 8, No. 5.

This article examines how migration influences the health of individuals and populations. It argues that population mobility is wholly compatible with health-promoting strategies for migrants if decision-makers make an effort to coordinate across borders and policy sectors. Finally, it suggests that, to protect migrant and public health, health interventions need to occur at all phases of the migration process, from pre-departure, to travel, destination, interception and return.

Events & Announcements

- 'World Breastfeeding Week', 1–7 August 2011.
- '19th International Epidemiology Association (IEA) World Congress of Epidemiology', 7–11 August 2011, Edinburgh, UK.
- 'World Humanitarian Day', 19 August 2011.
- 'International Congress of Legal Medicine: Child Abuse and Neglect', 22–24 August 2011, Putrajaya, Malaysia.
- 'Sixty-first Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Africa', 29 August – 2 September 2011, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

[^ To the top](#)

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About the Centre:

The Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies was inaugurated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan in May 2008. The Centre maintains research in the fields of Food Security, Climate Change, Energy Security, Health Security as well as Internal and Cross-Border Conflict. It produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. The Centre also provides a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for the MacArthur Asia Security Initiative, to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific.

The Centre is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia). More information on the Centre can be found at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts.