



NTS Bulletin February 2013

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## NTS VIEWPOINT

### January's weather extremes: Will it spur new action?

By J. Jackson Ewing and Sally Trethewie

January 2013 saw weather and environmental extremes across the globe pose severe threats to lives and livelihoods. Unprecedented hot weather and heavy flooding were seen in Australia. Abnormally cold weather hit China, western Russia and South Asia. Areas of North and South America battled some of the worst droughts of the past century.

While these events were all unique, there is an emerging consensus that such abrupt or unpredicted environmental conditions are likely to define the coming decades. Urgent attention should therefore be given to the systemic inadequacies in physical and social infrastructure revealed by January's events.

The resilience of built environments is paramount to dealing with the impacts of extreme weather. Russia's cold snap became deadly, for example, as subfreezing temperatures and heavy snowfall crippled infrastructure. Pipes that carry water and heat into homes, schools and businesses burst. Roads were closed and flights disrupted, isolating towns. Russia's government is now debating a host of questions about how to update or reinvent the ageing infrastructure that was so thoroughly overwhelmed this winter. Their level of success in this endeavour will dictate to a large extent how well the country fares in an era of weather extremes.

Jakarta, likewise, had little success in managing its floods. Streets were impassable and thousands driven from their homes in an impromptu housing crisis. The events have spurred the city to consider backing up drainage systems with new micro-tunnelling (also known as pipe jacking) infrastructure. The city is also exploring ground-based cloud seeding options. While some such approaches are largely unproven, it is essential that Jakarta and other vulnerable

metropolises continue to innovate and experiment their way to greater physical resilience.

Social tools that allow for cohesive response at the community level also proved essential during January's extreme weather, both through their presence and their absence. In cases of heat, cold and flooding, communities and individuals that were most isolated faced the most acute risk and dire impacts (including the majority of reported deaths).

Communication technologies such as mobile phones and social media platforms can open up avenues to mitigate such risks. In Jakarta, for example, tweets and Facebook posts relating to the floods rose along with the water. Some of these provided useful information about the situation and the response efforts in affected parts of the city.

Such emergent pathways for connectivity and attention gathering could be used to achieve a greater level of cooperation and communication between communities, governments and other responding actors. China's experience exemplifies such possibilities, as citizens continue to loudly call attention to the problems they faced during January's overwhelmingly cold weather.

These observations suggest that countries must look to systems-level solutions that integrate physical and social schemes. Further, adaptability must be an intrinsic feature of systems that are developed. With climate and weather conditions predicted to be even more challenging in the coming decades, governments and cities need to prepare quickly and strategically if they are to avoid catastrophic losses in the future.

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#### Additional Info:

- Trenberth, Kevin E., 2012, 'Framing the way to relate climate extremes to climate change', *Climatic Change*, Vol. 115, No. 2, pp. 283–90.
- '80 die in record Bangladesh cold snap', *AFP*, 10 January 2013.
- 'Beijing choked by 3rd day of hazardous smog', *AFP*, 13 January 2013.
- 'Indonesian capital Jakarta hit by deadly flooding', *BBC*, 17 January 2013.
- Marshall, Michael and Sara Reardon, 'Drought, fire, ice: World is gripped by extreme weather', *New Scientist*, 17 January 2013.
- Plummer, Neil, Blair Trewin, David Jones et al., 'What's causing Australia's heat wave', *The Conversation*, 18 January 2013.
- 'Wild weather: Extreme is the new normal', *New Scientist*, 18 January 2013.
- Hamilton, Clive, 'Climate change signals the end of the social sciences', *The Conversation*, 25 January 2013.
- Samenow, Jason, 'Smog pollution chokes Beijing, China air', *The Washington Post*, blog, 29 January 2013.

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## CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



### News & Commentaries

- Chestney, Nina, 'UK scientists to mimic plants to make zero-carbon fuel', *Reuters*, 21 January 2013.
- Biron, Carey L., 'Expanding coal exports tests Obama's inaugural climate pledges', *IPS*, 22 January 2013.
- Hirschler, Ben, 'Davos strives to make climate talk more than hot air', *Reuters*, 25 January 2013.
- Leahy, Stephen, 'Op-ed: Weird, and getting weirder', *IPS*, 29 January 2013.
- Wardell, Jane, 'Australian government pledges to protect Great Barrier Reef', *Reuters*, 31 January 2013.
- Sudoyo, Wahyu, 'Total losses for Jakarta flooding hit Rp 32 trillion', *Jakarta Globe*, 1 February 2013.
- Bauwens, Daan, 'Starting tsunami reconstruction now', *IPS*, 4 February 2013.
- Taylor, Michael, 'Paper firm says to stop cutting Indonesia's natural forests', *Reuters*, 5 February 2013.
- Biron, Carey L., 'World Bank unmoved on auditor's criticism of forest policy', *IPS*, 6 February 2013.
- Small-Lorenz, Stacy L., Leah A. Culp and T. Brandt Ryder et al., 2013, 'Commentary: A blind spot in climate change vulnerability assessments', *Nature Climate Change*, Vol. 3, pp. 91–3.

### Selected Publications

- Jamil, Sofiah, 2013, 'Connecting the dots: The urban informal sector and climate vulnerabilities in Southeast Asia's megacities', *NTS Alert*, No. AL13-01, Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies for NTS-Asia.

This article examines initiatives in the region that address the climate vulnerabilities of the urban informal sector, drawing lessons from the successes and failures of the various programmes. It argues that megacities must support efforts to improve the adaptive capacity and resilience of the informal sector. It concludes that a combination of technical, socioeconomic and political capabilities would be needed to address the various urban vulnerabilities.

- Barbier, Edward B., 2013, 'Wealth accounting, ecological capital and ecosystem services', *Environment and Development Economics*, e-publication ahead of print.

This paper describes a methodology for including ecological capital in wealth accounts. The framework would account for (1) the direct benefits provided by the current stock of ecosystems and (2) capital revaluation and risk of collapse as a result of conversion of ecosystems for economic development. The paper illustrates the framework using the case of mangroves in Thailand over the period 1970–2009.

- Mazmanian, Daniel A., John Jurewitz and Hal T. Nelson, 2013, 'The paradox of "acting globally while thinking locally": Discordance in climate change adaptation policy', *The Journal of Environment & Development*, e-publication ahead of print.

California has a comprehensive mitigation policy that tackles a global public good but not a commensurate adaptation policy aimed at protecting local interests. The paper identifies the differences, both substantive and political, between adaptation and mitigation that could explain this gap. The paper also looks at individual and institutional incentive structures and argues that these can explain and predict system resilience to climate change.

### Events & Announcements

- 'International Conference on Building Disaster-Resilient Societies – Lessons from Japan', 22–23 February 2013, New Delhi, India.
- 'Mekong Environmental Symposium', 5–7 March 2013, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

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## ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY



### News & Commentaries

- 'Energy security linked to firm borders', *Bangkok Post*, 11 January 2013.
- Abano, Imelda, 'Asia still global leader in clean energy', *Eco-business.com*, 16 January 2013.
- 'Energy and security task force launched at World Future Energy Summit', *AMEinfo.com*, 16 January 2013.
- 'India, Australia to start nuclear energy talks', *Channel NewsAsia*, 22 January 2013.
- Topfer, Klaus and Ulrich Mans, 'Energy policy post-Fukushima: Japan needs to show leadership', *The Asahi Shimbun*, 27 January 2013.
- 'Natural gas shipping route to Asia 10 years away', *Energy Tribune*, 28 January 2013.
- Daiss, Tim, 'Beijing masters the art of geopolitical posturing in Southeast Asia', *Energy Tribune*, 5 February 2013.
- Tasker, Sarah-Jane, 'Asia-Pacific switched on for energy deals', *The Australian*, 5 February 2013.

### Selected Publications

- RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, 2013, 'Risk and resilience: Securing energy in insecure spaces', *NTS Issues Brief*, No. IS13-01, Singapore.

This brief outlines key issues highlighted at a seminar on energy security in the Asia-Pacific. It notes that geopolitical factors are important for energy security but are sometimes over-emphasised. It is important to have a balance between energy security and other dimensions of human security such as food security and environmental protection.

- Keohane, Robert O. and David G. Victor, 2013, 'The transnational politics of energy', *Daedalus*, Vol. 142, No. 1, pp. 97–109.

To address energy security, countries must strategically engage in international cooperation. However, such cooperation can be immensely challenging, particularly in regards to emissions control and stockpiling of oil. The authors argue that countries should ideally work in small, relevant groups and find areas of commitment that align with national interests and produce joint gains. They find that such cooperation is likely to take place in decentralised institutional networks rather than larger, centralised treaties.

- Sovacool, Benjamin K., 2013, 'Assessing energy security performance in the Asia Pacific, 1990–2010', *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, Vol. 17, pp. 228–47.

This paper rates the energy security of 18 countries in the Asia-Pacific based on data from 1990 to 2010. The author broadly conceptualises energy security to include issues of availability, affordability, sustainability and governance, as well as energy efficiency. The cases of Malaysia and Myanmar are used to illustrate factors contributing to larger and smaller improvements in energy security over the period.

### Events & Announcements

- '2nd Annual International Conference on Sustainable Energy and Environmental Sciences', 25–26 February 2013, Singapore.
- 'MIT Energy Conference', 1–2 March 2013, Cambridge, MA, US.
- 'Global Energy Security Conference', 4–6 March 2013, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

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## FOOD SECURITY



### News & Commentaries

- MacNeil, Marcia, 'The rise of wheat in Africa', *International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)*, 8 January 2013.
- Koba, Mark, 'Drought still plagues US: Food prices "going up"', *CNBC*, 11 January 2013.
- 'Will there be a global food crisis in 2013?', *IRIN*, 16 January 2013.
- 'Nothing to see here: China government assures surge in rice, cereal imports is normal', *Oryza*, 17 January 2013.

- Adriano, Joel D., 'Modern food supply technology "key to affordable food"', *SciDev.Net*, 18 January 2013.
- 'In brief: Staples, not export crops, key to tackling Africa's poverty – Report', *IRIN*, 18 January 2013.
- 'Analysis: Concern mounts over infant formula additives', *IRIN*, 25 January 2013.
- Yulisman, Linda, 'RI calls for engagement of farmers on food security', *The Jakarta Post*, 26 January 2013.
- 'Food fears for Mali's children', *AlertNet*, 2 February 2013.

### Selected Publications

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), 2013, *The State of Food and Agriculture 2012: Investing in agriculture for a better future*, Rome.

The FAO's latest report on agriculture and food security affirms investment in agriculture as one of the most effective ways of addressing global hunger, and also of reducing poverty and promoting sustainability. The report also finds that policies that support farmer-centric strategies for investment in agriculture are central to addressing food insecurity. It recommends that governments and donors actively ensure that smallholder farmers have access to microfinance and that large-scale investments are economically and socially responsible.

- The Crawford Fund, 2011, *The supermarket revolution in food: Good, bad or ugly for the world's farmers, consumers and retailers?*, Proceedings of the Crawford Fund 17th Annual Parliamentary Conference, 14–16 August, Canberra.

This report documents the outcomes of the 2011 Crawford Fund annual conference on food security which focused on the supermarket revolution and its impact on the operation of markets and food chains. A key finding was that governments need to act to minimise the disruption to the livelihoods of traditional food chain actors. Also, research on the efficiency of food chains is seemingly as important as research on yield improvements given that the supermarket revolution has resulted in significant productivity gains in post-harvest supply chains.

### Events & Announcements

- 'Seminar on Food Security in Asia – Policy Recommendations', 25 February 2013, Singapore.
- 'Meeting the Challenges of Food Security: Implementing the Green Food Project, Innovation, Biodiversity and Landuse', 5 March 2013, London, UK.
- 'Hidden Hunger – From Assessment to Solutions', 6–9 March 2013, Stuttgart, Germany.

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## HEALTH SECURITY

### News & Commentaries

- 'Air pollution and unhappiness correlated, study of Europeans shows', *ScienceDaily*, 18 January 2013.
- Thomasson, Emma, 'Davos divided on tackling the scourge of obesity', *Reuters*, 24 January 2013.
- 'Pandemic controversies: The global response to pandemic influenza must change', *ScienceDaily*, 28 January 2013.
- Beasley, David, 'More adults need vaccines, and not just for flu: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention', *Reuters*, 29 January 2013.
- Nebehay, Stephanie, 'WHO issues its first guidelines for sodium intake for children', *Reuters*, 31 January 2013.
- 'Beijing issues new smog warning', *Al Jazeera*, 1 February 2013.
- Arjunpuri, Chaitra, 'India's growing "rent-a-womb" industry', *Al Jazeera*, 3 February 2013.
- Kelland, Kate, 'Vaccine group funds cervical cancer immunizations for poor', *Reuters*, 3 February 2013.
- Steenhuisen, Julie, 'Key TB vaccine trial fails; more waiting in the wings', *Reuters*, 4 February 2013.
- Agazzi, Isolda, "'Tsunami" of diseases waiting to hit', *IPS*, 5 February 2013.



### Selected Publications

- Gaziano, Thomas A. and Neha Pagidipati, 2013, 'Scaling up chronic disease prevention interventions in lower- and middle-income countries', *Annual Review of Public Health*, Vol. 34, e-publication ahead of print.

This paper looks at effective prevention interventions in high-income countries, and assesses the feasibility of, as well as the costs and benefits of, using these interventions in lower- and middle-income countries. The interventions include smoking reduction, dietary restrictions, physical activity promotion, risk control, treatment and prevention. This paper also discusses implementation challenges

such as access to drugs, intellectual property issues, generic drug production and human resource constraints.

- Lee, Seow Ting and Iccha Basnyat, 2013, 'From press release to news: Mapping the framing of the 2009 H1N1 A influenza pandemic', *Health Communication*, Vol. 28, No. 2, pp. 119–32.

This study seeks to understand the interaction of public relations, health communication and journalism during a pandemic using the case of Singapore during the 2009 H1N1 A influenza pandemic. It analyses the press releases from Singapore's public health agency, examining the frames used to shape public understanding of H1N1 and to secure public support for and participation in prevention and containment. It then looks at the evolution of information from press release to news coverage.

### **Events & Announcements**

- 'Fourth Annual Conference of the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH): "Global Health: Innovation, Implementation, Impact"', 14–16 March 2013, Washington, DC, US.
- 'Healthcare in Asia 2013: Adding value in care', 21–22 March 2013, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- 'World TB Day', 24 March 2013.

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## **INTERNAL AND CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT**

### **News & Commentaries**

- 'A wave of brutal murders in the deep south, but also some glimmers of hope', *The Economist*, 19 January 2013.
- 'Briefing: Sri Lanka's Muslim IDPs 25 years on', *IRIN*, 21 January 2013.
- Dean, Karin, 'Peace means surrender in Myanmar', *Asia Times*, 24 January 2013.
- Hamer, Alexander, "'Silent diplomacy" needed in Asian conflict resolution', *The Jakarta Post*, 25 January 2013.
- Jackson, Joe, 'Rohingya find welcome in Thailand's conflict-hit deep south', *The Irrawaddy*, 26 January 2013.
- Ding, Gang, 'China needs stronger role in Kachin conflict', *Global Times*, 30 January 2013.
- 'Cambodia: Escalating violence, misuse of courts', *Human Rights Watch*, 1 February 2013.
- Fuller, Thomas, 'Peace talks start between Myanmar and rebels', *The New York Times*, 4 February 2013.
- 'Bangladesh Islamist jailing prompts protests', *BBC*, 6 February 2013.
- Lefevre, Amy Sawitta, 'After Myanmar violence, almost 6,000 Rohingyas arrive in Thailand', *Reuters*, 7 February 2013.
- Lin, Phyo Wai and Jethro Mullen, 'Myanmar says it will set up panel to look into political prisoner releases', *CNN*, 9 February 2013.



### **Selected Publications**

- Stensland, Andreas, Walter Lotze and Joel Ng, 2012, *Regional security and human rights interventions: A global governance perspective on the AU and ASEAN*, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) Report, Oslo: NUPI.

This report explores how regional security architectures respond to tensions arising from human rights-related issues. An examination of cases in the African Union (AU) and ASEAN shows that differences in historical and cultural backgrounds as well as political dynamics influence how regional institutions deal with human rights-related civil conflicts and external calls for intervention.

- Lilly, Damian, 2012, 'The changing nature of the protection of civilians in international peace operations', *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 19, No. 5, pp. 628–39.

This paper points out that it is important to recognise the distinction between protection of civilians (POC) in different types of peace operations and in operations undertaken by different organisations. Such recognition is essential for policy decisions on, and planning of, operations that have the POC mandate.

### **Events & Announcements**

- '6th Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for Refugee and Forced Migration Studies (CARFMS)', 7–10 March 2013, Halifax, Canada.
- 'International Conference on Development-induced Displacement and Resettlement', 22–23 March 2013, Oxford, UK.

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# TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

## News & Commentaries

- Nossiter, Adam, 'Millions in ransoms fuel militants' clout in West Africa', *The New York Times*, 12 December 2012.
- Saul, Jonathan, 2013, 'Sea piracy falls to 5-year low as Somali gangs retreat', *Reuters*, 16 January 2013.
- Moses, Asher, 'Identities for sale: Fake documentation on the rise', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 January 2013.
- '70% of governments fail to protect against corruption in the defence sector', *Transparency International*, 29 January 2013.
- Beckhusen, Robert, '7 big defense companies with big transparency problems', *Wired*, 31 January 2013.
- Borst, Barbara, 'Indian women seek exit from prostitution', *Huffington Post*, 31 January 2013.
- 'Further action in Singapore vital in combating global ivory trade', *WWF*, 1 February 2013.
- 'Europol: Investigators identify 380 fixed football matches', *Guardian*, 4 February 2013.
- Fuller, Thomas, 'A burden of care over seized exotic wildlife in Thailand', *The New York Times*, 4 February 2013.



## Selected Publications

- Bangerter, Olivier, 2012, *Internal control: Codes of conduct within insurgent armed groups*, Occasional Paper No. 31, Geneva: Small Arms Survey.

When an armed group has firm control over the behaviour of its fighters, that control can be used to humanitarian ends such as the protection of civilians, but it can also be used to perpetrate unlawful acts. This paper sets out to define methodically what constitutes a code of conduct, and how it compares to other types of internal regulations known to have been used by armed groups. Using case study analysis, it then reflects on the conditions under which codes of conduct are effective.

- Milliken, Tom and Jo Shaw, 2012, *The South Africa-Viet Nam rhino horn trade nexus: A deadly combination of institutional lapses, corrupt wildlife industry professionals and Asian crime syndicates*, Johannesburg: TRAFFIC.

This document provides an overview of the dynamics behind the escalating illicit trade in rhino horns from South Africa to Vietnam. It aims to provide an understanding of the salient factors in the source country and the end-use market that support this trend. This knowledge should lead to remedial strategies, actions and interventions that serve to mitigate and prevent further losses of Africa's threatened rhino species.

## Events & Announcements

- 'Ensure Justice Conference: Cyberexploitation', 8–9 March 2013, Costa Mesa, CA, US.
- '7th Global Congress on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy', 24–26 April 2013, Istanbul, Turkey.
- 'Job: American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA-ROLI) – Project Director, Southeast Asia', Deadline: 31 July 2013.

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# WATER SECURITY

## News & Commentaries

- Bhattacharjee, Urmi, 'Seat of ancient Buddhism threatened by fifteen proposed dams', *International Rivers*, 15 January 2013.
- Trandem, Ame, 'Xayaburi dam left off MRC Council agenda', *International Rivers*, 15 January 2013.
- Schneider, Keith, 'On water and energy, India is different', *Circle of Blue*, 16 January 2013.
- Ivanova, Nadya, 'Toxic water: Across much of China, huge harvests irrigated with industrial and agricultural runoff', *Circle of Blue*, 18 January 2013.
- Md. Izwan, 'Cheap water cause of crisis in Selangor, says minister', *The Malaysian Insider*, 31 January 2013.
- Woods Hole Research Centre, 'Amazon freshwater ecosystems are vulnerable to degradation', *ScienceDaily*, 1 February 2013.
- 'Japan's Sumitomo buys British water-supply firm', *AFP*, 5 February 2013.
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 'Water purification on the cheap: System cleans "produced water" from natural gas wells', *ScienceDaily*, 5 February 2013.



## Selected Publications

- National Research Council, 2012, *Alternatives for managing the nation's complex contaminated groundwater sites*, Washington, DC:

Some 126,000 groundwater sites in the US have not met pollution standards. Remediation has however reached a plateau at many complex sites and, with currently available technology, such sites will not see contaminant levels drop below national standards in the next 50 to 100 years. In these cases, the report argues, government officials should decide whether it is better to manage contamination – and make sure it does not foul drinking water supply – than to remove it.

- National Research Council, 2012, *Himalayan glaciers: Climate change, water resources, and water security*, Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

The glaciers in South Asia's Hindu Kush Himalayan region are retreating. Changes in water availability that may result from that may play an increasing role in heightening political tensions, especially if existing water management institutions do not better account for the region's social, economic and ecological complexities. It will be important to expand research and monitoring programmes to gather more detailed, consistent and accurate data on demographics, water supply, demand and scarcity.

### **Events & Announcements**

- 'River Basin Management', 22–24 May 2013, New Forest, UK.
- 'Third Annual Asian Conference on Sustainability, Energy and the Environment (ACSEE)', 6–9 June 2013, Osaka, Japan.
- 'International Society for River Science: 3rd Biennial Symposium', 5–9 August 2013, Beijing, China.

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### **About the Centre:**

The Centre for NTS Studies, based in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), 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 Climate Change, Food Security, 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.

The Centre is the Coordinator of the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership (2012–2015) supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. It also serves as the Secretariat of the initiative.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for its three-year Asia Security Initiative (2009–2012), to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific. It 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](http://www.rsis.edu.sg/nts).