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A publication of the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

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*This year is the 20th anniversary of the release of the 1994 United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Report, which defined the concept of human security and brought it to international attention. It is thus timely to ask: where is human security today? The following is the **third part** of a series exploring the evolution of the concept and its impact on security thinking and practice.*

20 Years of Human Security: A special focus on environmental security

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Environmental security first entered the mainstream policy agenda in the 1980s via the UN-initiated World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission, 1983–1987), which urged countries to work together on what it called 'sustainable development'.

The evolution of environmental security

In 1994, the UNDP's Human Development Report included environmental security as one of the seven components of human security. According to the Report, 'environmental security aims to protect people from the short- and long-term ravages of nature, man-made threats in nature, and deterioration of the natural environment'.

Within the human security framework, environmental security is seen as essential for ensuring the survival and well-being of societies, groups and individuals. This approach takes into account how humans can have an impact on the environment as well as how the environment affects humans, both within and beyond international borders.

Over the past two decades, as governments and institutions respond to natural disasters and environmental changes, various environmental issues have climbed up policy agendas. Of the different concerns, climate change has arguably had the greatest traction at the global level. So prominent is it that it has come to overshadow other environmental threats, and keeping a more comprehensive notion of environmental security relevant has become a challenge.

Moving ahead

While the prominence of climate change and its impacts has to some extent hindered the development of a broader approach to environmental issues, interest in climate change has also lifted environmental security up the policy agenda. For example, reforestation efforts in Indonesia under the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) programme, which is essentially a climate change mitigation project, is also indirectly contributing to ecological conservation and ecosystem services.

The post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) could serve as another entry point for more comprehensive notions of environmental security, to bring the conceptualisation of environmental security full circle to the initial focus of the Brundtland Commission on 'sustainable development'.

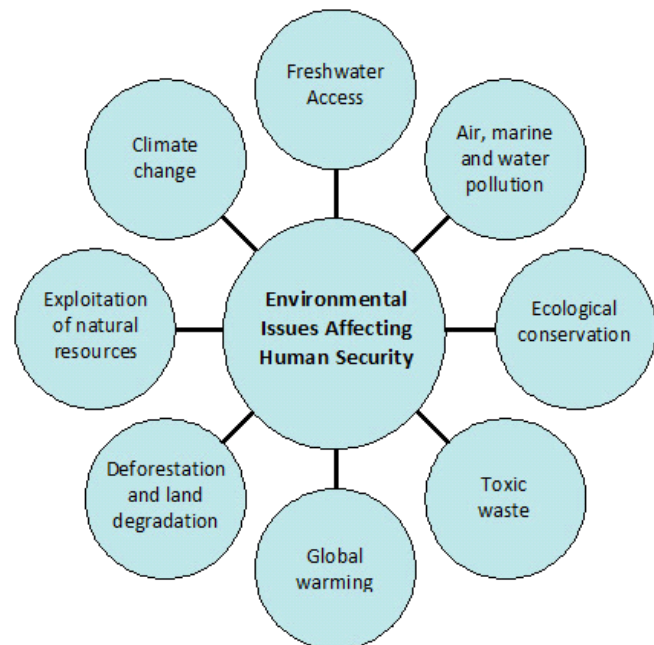
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Also from the '20 Years of Human Security' series

- Evolution of human security, NTS Bulletin, Jan 2014.
- A special focus on food security, NTS Bulletin, Feb 2014.

Environmental security



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CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



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- Megan Rowling, Heat, not floods, pushes Pakistanis to migrate – study, Thomson Reuters Foundation, 4 February 2014.
- Saket S, World's largest solar park may face environmental hurdle, Thomson Reuters Foundation, 11 February 2014.
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Events & Announcements

- Call for Applications for SEED Awards 2014, Deadline: 8 April 2014.
- E-Course on Introduction to a Green Economy: Concepts and Applications, 14 April – 6 June 2014, Worldwide.

ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY

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- Nader Habibi, How will OPEC respond to a rise in Iran's oil output, Harvard's Belfer Center, 24 January 2014.
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- Ankit Panda, US disputes Indian solar power policy WTO, Diplomat, 12 February 2014.
- Paul Stevens, Why shale gas won't conquer Britain, The New York Times, 15 February 2014.
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- Michael Levi, Could tight oil mean the end of big oil price spikes?, CFR, 18 February 2014.
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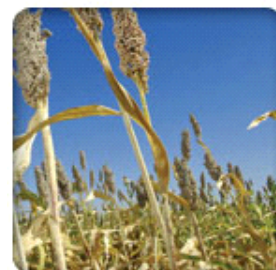
Events & Announcements

- 4th Edition of Mozambique Mining, Oil & Gas and Energy, Conference & Exhibition, 26–28 March 2014, Maputo, Mozambique.
- Babson Energy & Environmental Conference, 27 March 2014, Massachusetts, USA.

FOOD SECURITY

News & Commentaries

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- Indigenous diets can help fight modern illnesses, say health experts, The Guardian, 3 February 2014.
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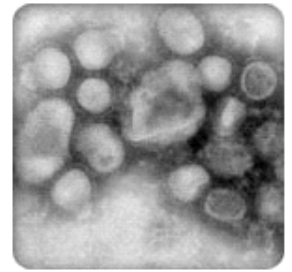
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- Building Resilience for Food and Nutrition Security, 15–17 May 2014, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

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Events & Announcements

- World Health Day: Small Bite, Big Threat, 7 April 2014.
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INTERNAL AND CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT



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- Kate Hodal, Four killed as Thai police clash with protesters in Bangkok, The Guardian, 18 February 2014.
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- Joseph Franco, Peace in Mindanao: The challenge of disarming rebels, RSIS Commentaries, No.41, 27 February 2014.
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Events & Announcements

- Mapping the Southern Thailand Conflict, 28 March 2014, Bangkok, Thailand.
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TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

News & Commentaries

- Rishja Cota-Larson, Pangolins roll into the wildlife trafficking spotlight, National Geographic, 18 February 2014.
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- KPMG International, 2014, Global anti-money laundering survey, Geneva, Switzerland.
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Events & Announcements

- ACAMS 6th Annual AML & Financial Crime Conference, 7–8 April 2014, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- 3rd Annual Training Conference for Human Trafficking Practitioners, 28–30 May 2014, Florida, USA.

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WATER SECURITY

News & Commentaries

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- After AGC nod, Johor to review water price for Singapore, The Malay Mail, 17 February 2014.
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- Lim Chia Ying, In search of water, The Star, 3 March 2014.
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- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 2014, Global freshwater biodiversity atlas.
- Ram C. Bastakoti et al., 2014, Climate risks and adaptation strategies in the Lower Mekong River Basin, Regional Environmental Change, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 207–19.

Events & Announcements

- Global Water Summit 2014: Water for Growth, 7–8 April 2014, Paris, France.
- AIDF Water Security Summit, 23–24 April 2014, Putrajaya, Malaysia.

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About the Centre:

The Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, based in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), was inaugurated by 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 Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia).

More information on the Centre can be found at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts.

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