

**Climate Change, Social Stress and Violent Conflict**  
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*Abstract*

**Audience; the weak link in the securitization process of the environment?**

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We are nowadays experiencing an increasing turn toward the environment and its protection, as well as our own from hazards stemming from its continuous degradation caused mainly by human industrial activity on the planet. During the past years, climate change has climbed up the international security agenda as the central and most important topic related to the environment, one indirectly affecting the entirety of the human race all over the globe. In the securitization process of the environment one can easily witness the institutionally strongest securitizing actors being involved, from internationally known figures and state leaders to numerous local administration representatives, and furthermore, the increasing use of bold language in those actors' attempt to promote environmental issues higher in the security agenda. The unarguably increased intensity and frequency of those actors use of speech acts on local, national or international level demonstrates the intensifying effort to securitize the environment and especially climate change. However, the whole process seems to be slightly off course as the outcomes are not proportional to the increase in the actors' efforts. It seems as if the recipe has a missing ingredient. This article stresses the importance of the audience as the 3rd pillar of the securitization process in general and in the case of the environment in particular. No matter how much effort is put by the most important and responsible actors in the utterance of the fittest and most sensitizing speech acts, it is the audience that will decide to accept the securitization of this issue or not. And in the case of the environment, it rests also in the audience's hands whether the securitized threat will be effectively addressed or not, as it is the public's massive responsive capability rather than national laws, environmental policies and international agreements that can do the difference in the struggle for environmental protection. This paper, promoting the advanced utility of the Copenhagen School of thought in the security discourse, is not just an effort to stress the importance of the audience in the securitization process of the environment, but above all, a call for action and a sensitizing move of every single individual in front of this great challenge of our time.