

Climate Change, Social Stress and Violent Conflict
State of the Art and Research Needs
International Conference, KlimaCampus, Hamburg University, 19/20. November 2009

Abstract

**Climate change, resource competition and conflict
amongst pastoral communities of Kenya**

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Increasing global temperatures has caused havoc in many part of the world and especially in developing countries. The Northern region of Kenya has been worse hit by the continuous climate change with no rainfall or drastic rainfall if any for a prolonged period of time. There has been an increase on the rate of dryness and heat that has led to mass migration of the pastoral communities in search of fodder and water for their animals. Traditionally, pastoral communities move from one place to another in search of water and pasture however climate change and environmental degradation have exacerbated this situation leading to resource competition. The most empirical consequence of climate change among the pastoral communities is mass migration that has caused three underlying movements namely; movement from one pastoral community to another, movement from a pastoral community to a farming community and movement from a pastoral community to a neighbouring country. The prospective effect of this mass migration is inter-ethnic conflict, intra-ethnic conflict and international conflict. This movement puts pressure on the little available resources that have to be shared by two or more communities. As a result of this movement there have been frequent violent conflicts which in many cases result to death, cattle rustling, social stress, disruptions of social settings and most importantly economic set back in reaction to resource scarcity. Based on this background the question that needs to be addressed in this paper is the role played by climate change in mass migration and conflict among the pastoral communities in Kenya. Predominantly this paper seeks to address the extent to which continuous climate change has led to violent conflict.