

**Climate Change, Social Stress and Violent Conflict**  
**State of the Art and Research Needs**  
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*Abstract*

**“Protected” areas as potential violent conflicts theatre**

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Protected areas constitute from experts approach one of the most successful strategies for biodiversity conservation in the world. The extension of protected areas at global scale is considered in 19.6 millions represented in 117.905 places under different categories imposing occupation and land use restrictions (World Database on Protected Areas 2006). These areas and its targets, have also considered as strategic spaces for development of nations, a matter of national security and a clear answer for mitigation and adaptation to potential climatic change effects. 168 signatory countries of the Convention on Biological Diversity have assumed the commitment of emitting politicians focused to biodiversity conservation and among other things, declare and guarantee protected areas management.

However, biophysical and social characteristics of many protected areas in the world can offer an ideal theatre to actor's interests participating in violent conflicts as a strategic geopolitical position. Beyond an explicit interest for the control and exclusive access to valuable natural resources as water or forests, protected areas are important from war point view because they constitute optimal refuge conditions in the mark of disputes for territorial domain. In this sense, protected areas and their social agents are involved in strong situations of change and risk. What happens with protected areas and conservation agents (both local people and institutional agents) in countries or regions with violent conflicts? How social agents adapt its intervention strategies when protected areas are scenarios of war?

Through Colombian case study, this paper presents first, a contextual framework of National Parks System and the main incidence points of armed conflict in conservation strategies; secondly, an analysis approach to understand direct armed conflict impacts on protected areas management and the kind of institutional adaptations to accomplish conservation goals in such situation. Finally, two preliminary questions to discussion: which monitoring strategies we have to know the effects of climatic change in relation with potential violent conflicts in protected areas? How protected areas can contribute effectively to prevention or resolution of violent conflicts in the context of the climatic change?