Security as a Weapon
How Cataclysm-Discourses Frame International Climate Negotiations

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Despite diverging scientific facts, climate change becomes more and more publicly perceived as a security threat.

The discursive securitization does not come along with the adoption of exceptional measures.
Securitization of Climate Change is a manifold and inconsistent process of discursive change:

- Different Actors
- Different Argumentations
- Different Security-Concepts
Problematizing Securitization
Argumentative Discourse Analysis

3 layers of political analysis

- Institutional Practices and Settings
- Discourse-Coalition
- Conceptual Vocabulary: Story-Lines, Metaphors, Subject-Positions
Methodical Issues

• Explorative Study
  – 60 German print-media/online articles
  – Recent speeches and documents
  – No systematic sampling

• Metahaphor-based discourse analysis
  1. Metaphors at Macro-Level
  2. Subjects and Story-Lines at Micro-Level
  3. Discursive/Political Effects
The Metaphorical Construction of Climate Change

- Climate Change is a Biblical Apocalypse
- Climate Change is a Disease
- Climate Change is Sports
- Climate Change is a Challenge

- A Threat
- An Enemy
- A Criminal

- Climate Change is War

- Climate Politics is a Struggle

- Climate Politics is a Race

- Climate Politics is a Journey

- The World/Nations are Vehicles
### Factions of a climate-security discourse-coalition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factions and Story-Lines</th>
<th>Subject-positions</th>
<th>Arguments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Globalist</strong> = Climate change threatens the whole world and is thus a test for humanity (CLIMATE CHANGE IS AN ENEMY/CLIMATE CHANGE IS A CHALLENGE)</td>
<td>political (“polluters”) Climate Celebrities</td>
<td>Developing countries have to contribute a share; We need a global agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alarmist</strong> = Dangerous climate change (above 2.0 Degrees Celsius) is causing apocalyptic and incalculable effects (CC AS WAR or CHALLENGE and CLIMATE POLITICS IS A RACE).</td>
<td>All but especially NGOs and Climate Scientists;</td>
<td>Immediate response → Copenhagen! We need to keep climate change below 2.0 °C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental</strong> = Climate change is threatening the survival and the development of developing countries (CC IS A THREAT TO HUMAN SECURITY)</td>
<td>political (“sufferers”) NGOs Businesses</td>
<td>Support with funds and technology; Industrialized countries must act now!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrow Securitization</strong>: CC fuels conflicts over ressources and migration which threatens international security (CC AS THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY)</td>
<td>Security Officials and Professionals</td>
<td>A global early warning system for conflicts; The Establishment of a networked security</td>
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Discursive effects

Dangerous Climate Change
Externalized and vague enemy

Climate Discourse
Chain of Equivalence

A dangerous consensus

Sources

Impacts

Above 2.0°C

Dangerous
= incalculable

Below 2.0°C

manageable

CO₂e

Growth

Production

Consumption
Political consequences

- Silencing of alternative framings → justice, growth-criticism etc.
- Competence and responsibility shifted to international levels
- Technocratic management
- A consent which does not exist
- De-democratization and de-politization
Conclusions

• Securitization of Climate Change as an inconsistent process of discursive change
  – Many different actors with different intentions

• Overall political effect is not a militarization but a de-politization of climate governance

• Lessons:
  – Re-politization: Develop different visions of socio-ecological futures
  – We need to be extremely careful with our conceptual vocabulary
    → Statements may have unintended effects at the structural level