

**Linda Wallbott**



TECHNISCHE  
UNIVERSITÄT  
DARMSTADT

***International policies of climate change and disaster prevention as tools of sustainable peacebuilding – suitable concept of Western paternalism?***



- Main argument
  
- Background assumptions
  - relevance of the issue
  - vulnerability approach
  
- International policies on climate change/ disaster risk reduction
  - formal ,evolution‘
  - implementation
  
- ,Character‘ of the international climate change regime
  
- Conclusions

International policies of climate change and disaster risk reduction have the potential of being important elements of sustainable peacebuilding/ international security governance.

However, this potential has not been realized so far due to

- inadequate consideration of adaptation issues and
- inadequate implementation of mitigation approaches.

# Background assumptions\_ relevance

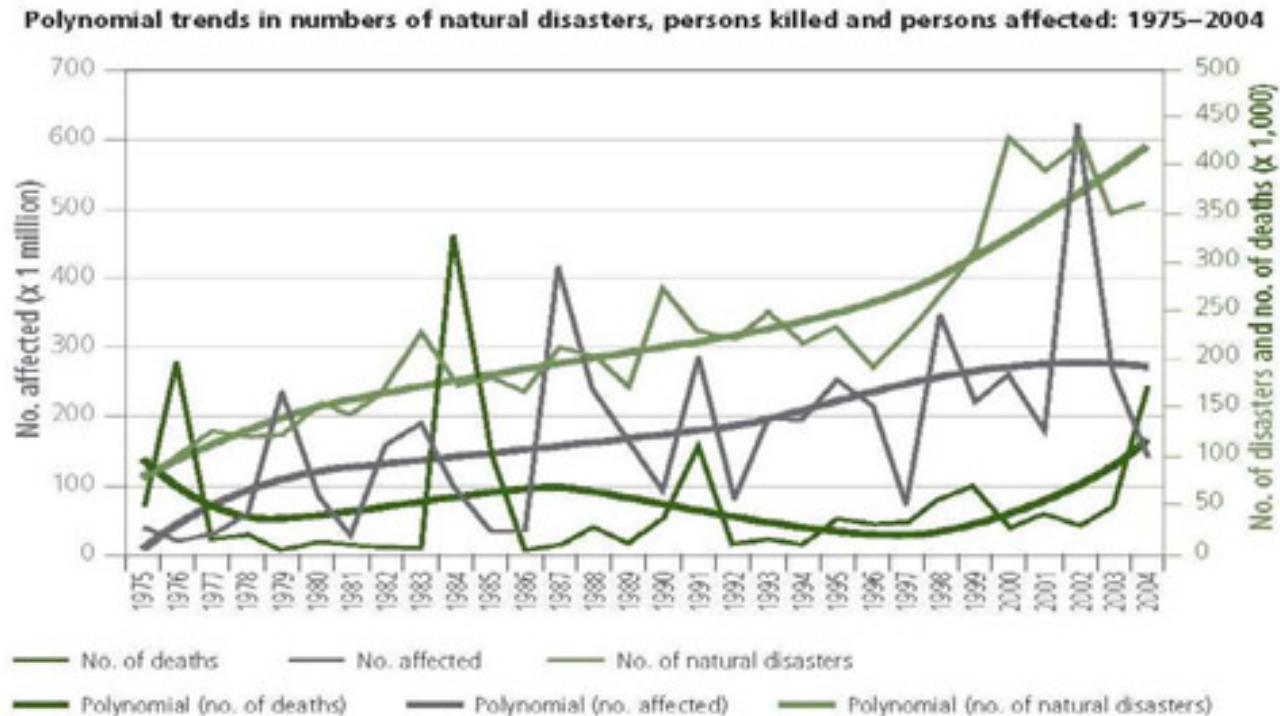
---

- climate change is happening, however is not a sole environmental issue
- three processes as conflict-fuelling knock on-effects of climate change:
  1. resource scarcity
  2. sea-level rise
  3. intensification of natural disasters
- 46 countries likely to explain violent conflict
- 56 will have great difficulties in coping with climate change challenges

# Occurrence of natural disasters 1975-2004 (www.em-dat.net)



Fig. 1. Trend in disaster occurrence and impact 1975–2004



Source: EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database.  
<http://www.em-dat.net>, Université Catholique de Louvain, Brussels, Belgium.

WHO 05.165

# Risk of conflict due to climate change (Smith/ Vivekananda 2007)



## THE DOUBLE-HEADED RISK

The consequences of consequences of climate change include a high risk of armed conflict in 46 countries with a total population of 2.7 billion people, and a high risk of political instability in a further 56 countries with a total population of 1.2 billion.

### Map key:

- A: States facing a high risk of armed conflict as a knock-on consequence of climate change
- B: States facing a high risk of political instability as a knock-on consequence of climate change
- C: Other states

### Technical note

The IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report of 2007 shows that global warming will have global effects, varying in both kind and degree.

- Research for this report identified 102 countries\* as being at risk of significant negative knock-on socio-political effects, using three criteria for selection:
1. Their presence on a variety of international watch lists: the UK Department for International Development's 'prony list' of Fragile States, the Global Peace Index (ranking of 121 states [bottom 50 positions]), the International Crisis Group 'crisiswatch' list, the World Bank's list of Low Income Countries Under Stress;
  2. The presence of an operational UN peacekeeping force;
  3. The prospect of, or their engagement in, economic or political transition (e.g., from autocracy towards democracy or leadership succession).

Within this group of 102, 46 countries were identified as facing a high risk of armed conflict. Primarily these are countries with current or recent experience of armed conflict, because this is a reliable indicator of propensity to further violence. In addition, particularly weak institutions of government and very poor economic performance were used as guides to the selection.

The larger map does not make predictions but indicates risk. It should be borne in mind that armed conflicts vary widely in their levels of severity and in whether they occur at a local, national or regional level.

The smaller map shows countries' exposure to climate change, based on the A1 scenario [approximately 'business as usual'] used by the IPCC.

\*A full listing of these countries can be found at the end of the references on page 44.

MAP © INTERNATIONAL ALERT  
DESIGN: G.S. IRE



Global exposure to climate change



### Map key:

- Serious-extreme
- Moderate-significant

# Conflict-promoting factors in the context of climate change and a natural disaster

- undemocratic regime and governance structures
  - political instability/ brevity of peace
  - sluggish economic growth
  - weak functional capabilities of the government in relation to other groups of actors
  - strong migration and urbanization
  - male youth bulge
  - food insecurity
- human security: all those „social and economic entitlements that are necessary to reduce an individual’s vulnerability (or increase their ability to adapt to environmental changes“ (Barnett/ Adger 2005: 4)
- horizontal inequality

# Discourses on nature-society-relations

	<b>Biophysical approach</b>	<b>Vulnerability approach</b>
Basic assumption/ object of analysis	physical hazards as external forces	coupling of social-ecological system
Problem perception	distracted ecology	socio-economic and political processes put people at risk
Natural disasters	... as violent forces of nature	... as a result of disadvantageous conditions
Solution	predictability of ‚trends‘: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ better science and technology</li><li>▪ mathematic models</li><li>▪ quantitative risk assessment</li></ul>	adaptation (‚entitlements‘) plus technological innovations → human security



# Tasks for the international community

- to capture climate change and its negative effects
  - task: slow down climate change (mitigation)
  - task: enhance development and reduce vulnerability (adaptation)
  
- to reduce the risk for violent conflict
  - task: reduce horizontal inequality
  
- 
- to implement development policies
- to implement policies of adaptation/ disaster risk reduction
- to consider side- effects on horizontal inequality in this context

# However...

International policies traditionally characterized by

- focus on mitigation → biophysical approach
- to the disadvantage of adaptation issues → vulnerability approach
- furthermore: inadequate implementation of formal commitments in both areas



## International politics and policies on climate change/ DRR

- 1972: Conference on Earth and Development
- 1979: World Climate Conference

### 1990-99: International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

- 1992: Conference on Environment and Development → UNFCCC
- 1994: Yokohama Strategy – Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation
- 1997: Kyoto-Protocol → CDM, JI, emission trading
- 2000: Millenium Declaration
- 2005: Conference on Disaster Reduction (Kobe) → Hyogo Framework: Building Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters
- 2007: Bali Road Map/ Action Plan

## Mitigation

- 1990-2007: increase of CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions 38%
- since 2000: growth of anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions with 4-time pace in comparison with previous decade

## Adaptation (self-evaluation of donors):

- mainstreaming of DRR practices ,elusive‘
- ODA centred in areas with more ,immediate‘ results
- focus on recovery and reconstruction ≠ vulnerability reduction
- inadequate participation/ contextualization of policies

# Climate change policies - hegemonic project?

---

Approach: naturalization/ technocratization of the problem:

- objective and ‚true‘ issues, promoted by experts (IPCC)
- „numerical objectifications“/ „quantitative vision of the world“ → simulate and process average data to govern (regulate) the world
- manageable issues → neoliberal instruments
- West: global risk manager
- ‚common sense‘ → status quo orientation
- ‚successful‘ implementation: statistical values are reached

# Conclusion

To become an effective element of an agenda of sustainable peace, international policies on climate change and disaster risk reduction shall put forward an intergrated problem-solving approach:

- implement mitigation goals
- address the social, political and economic aspects of vulnerability (→ find common language)
- include assessments of horizontal inequality
- institutional ,clarity‘
- provide adequate financial means



Thank you for your attention