



NTS Bulletin February 2011 (Issue 1)

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MAIN HIGHLIGHT

Human Factors Determine Extreme Weather Impact

The beginning of 2011 was marked by a series of rain-related disasters in various parts of the globe. Australia experienced one of the most severe (and most probably the costliest) wave of floods in its history. In Sri Lanka and the Philippines, flooding has displaced thousands, while in Brazil, heavy rains have resulted in massive landslides that have caused over half a thousand deaths. Furthermore, with crops and large coal mines severely affected by the flooding, it is likely that these events will have negative long-term and global effects on food and energy prices.

Scientific evidence suggests that the dramatic situation in Australia and Southeast Asia is largely a result of La Niña – a periodic weather event in which strong South American trade winds barrel warm waters, moisture and rain to this part of the globe. This year, the usually potent La Niña event was aggravated by a strong annual monsoonal trough moving from the Indian Ocean, coupled with local weather systems. In the case of Brazil and Sri Lanka, it is possible that the floods are connected to La Niña, but the evidence is not strong enough to make a direct link.

In any case, the simultaneous occurrence of these disasters and their severity have led many observers to believe that the events are caused, at least partially, by global warming. While this might be true, many scientists argue that it is still too soon to draw a definite climate change link with the recent flooding events. According to Neville Nicholls, president of the Australian

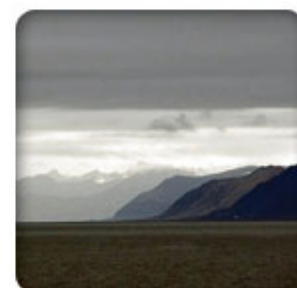
Meteorological and Oceanographic Society, 'It's [La Niña] a natural phenomenon. We have no strong reason at the moment for saying this La Niña is any stronger than it would be even without humans.' While it seems logical that the global increase in temperatures must have had an impact on La Niña, it is unclear whether this has made it stronger or weaker.

What becomes apparent however is that, while these disasters are labelled 'natural', their impact and consequences arise, to a great extent, from man-made factors. The perceived increase in the number of disasters is largely a result of population growth leading to more people coming in contact with disasters and better reporting. Nevertheless, the real consequences of these disasters very much depend on political and economic factors rather than geography. In Sri Lanka, flooding has made homeless a million people who were living in makeshift camps (which were vulnerable to even minor inundations) after years of repression and forced evictions by the government. Experts have noted that the stark difference in the death tolls in Brazil and Australia reveals a wide gap in disaster preparedness and flood management policies rather than a difference in disaster severity. Similarly, the losses in Queensland will be huge not only because many of its resources have been destroyed, but also because its economy is highly dependent on the export of raw materials and crops. After all, how wet we get does not only depend on how much it rains, but also (or even mostly) on how well we are prepared for it.

Additional Info:

- Bandyk, Matthew, 'Why Natural Disasters Are More Expensive – But Less Deadly', *USA Today*, 24 March 2010.
- Fogarty, David, 'Scientists See Climate Change Link to Australian Floods', *Reuters*, 12 January 2011.
- Barrionuevo, Alexei, 'After Deadly Mudslides in Brazil, Concern Turns to Preparedness', *The New York Times*, 16 January 2011.
- Grudgings, Stuart, 'Many Still Missing in Brazil Floods; Criticism Grows', *Reuters*, 16 January 2011.
- O'Connell, Brigid, 'Wild Spanish Girl Wreaking Havoc', *Herald Sun*, 16 January 2011.
- Plester, Jeremy, 'Weatherwatch: La Niña Causes Mayhem around the World', *Guardian*, 13 January 2011.
- 'Receding Flood Water Raises Threat of Unexploded Mines in SL', *Indian Express*, 16 January 2011.
- 'Rice Shortage Likely in the Wake of Sri Lankan Rains', *The Straits Times*, 16 January 2011.
- 'Australia Floods to Drive Up Coal Price', *Channel NewsAsia*, 17 January 2011.
- Whitley, Angus and Nichola Saminather, 'Flood-hit Victoria Towns Warned to Evacuate as Brisbane Mops Up', *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 17 January 2011.

CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



News & Commentaries

- Ardiansyah, Fitriani and Aditya Bayunanda, 'A Critical Year for REDD in Indonesia', *The Jakarta Post*, 10 January 2011.
- Kenny, Charles, 'Great Expectations', *Foreign Policy*, 10 January 2011.
- Doyle, Alister, 'Financial Firms Seek Better Climate Information', *Reuters*, 12 January 2011.
- 'Fire and Rain: The Lessons of Natural Disasters', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 January 2011.
- Acharya, Keya, 'Climate Change: "Water Towers of Asia" Show Cracks', *IPS*, 12 January 2011.
- Firger, Daniel, 'What Hu's Washington Visit Says about Climate Change', *The Huffington Post*, 14 January 2011.
- Nishimura, Matsuyoshi, 'In Search of a New Climate Change Paradigm', *East Asia Forum*, 15 January 2011.
- Fernandez, Rudy A., 'Climate Change to be Taught in SEA Schools', *The Philippine Star*, 16 January 2011.
- Ramos, Gloria, 'Building Resilient Communities', *Cebu Daily News*, 17 January 2011.

Selected Publications

- Reid, Hannah, Saleemul Huq and Laurel Murray, 2010, *Community Champions: Adapting to Climate Challenges*, London: International Institute for Environment and Development.

This publication contains abstracts from papers presented at the Fourth International Conference on Community-based Adaptation to Climate Change which was held on 21–27 February 2010 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Areas of discussion include agriculture, water resources, ecosystems, cross-cutting issues of policy and funding, and strengthening institutions related to various community-based projects.

- Pemberton, Miriam, 2010, *Military vs. Climate Security: The 2011 Budgets Compared*, Washington, D.C.: Institute for Policy Studies.

This report reveals that progress has been made in narrowing the gap between US government spending on defence and their spending on climate change. USD94 was budgeted for tools of traditional military force for every dollar spent on climate. That ratio will narrow to USD41 to USD1 in the 2011 fiscal year. However, it is further argued that this shift in the military budget does not come close to bringing climate security spending in line with the magnitude of the threat.

- Ballesteros, Athena, Smita Nakhooda, Jakob Werksman et al., 2010, *Power, Responsibility, and Accountability: Re-thinking the Legitimacy of Institutions for Climate Finance*, Washington, D.C.: World Resource Institute.

This report seeks to ground the debate on climate finance in an objective analysis of ongoing efforts to finance mitigation and adaptation in developing countries by identifying three crucial dimensions of legitimacy: power, responsibility and accountability. It concludes that a new global deal on climate finance is likely to significantly redistribute power, responsibility and accountability between traditional contributor and recipient countries.

Events and Announcements

- 'Pacific Climate Change Roundtable 2011', 14–18 March 2011, Alofi, Niue.
- 'CBD Asia-Pacific Workshop on REDD+', 15–18 March 2011, Singapore.
- '5th International Conference on Community-based Adaptation to Climate Change', 24–31 March 2011, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- Cohen, Tova, 'Israeli Gas Find Portends Security but Not Exports', *The Washington Post*, 31 December 2010.
- Rushe, Dominic, 'Oil Prices May Threaten Global Economic Recovery, Says Energy Agency', *Guardian*, 5 January 2011.
- 'Ireland Formally Funding Wave Energy Technology', *Hydro International*, 10 January 2011.
- '"Energy Security" Mythbusters', *The Wall Street Journal*, 12 January 2011.
- Kaos Jr, Joseph, 'Nuclear Energy to Take Place in Malaysia Soon', *The Malay Mail*, 13 January 2011.
- Wallop, Harry, 'Energy Companies Accused of "Profiteering"', *The Telegraph*, 13 January 2011.
- Inessa, Frolova, 'Russia Preparing New Energy Security Doctrine', *The Voice of Russia*, 17 January 2011.
- 'Salmond Hails Hydrogen Energy Facility in Fife', *BBC News*, 18 January 2011.
- Deshpande, Vinaya, 'IAEA Chief Hails Asia as the Nuclear Powerhouse of Future', *The Hindu*, 18 January 2011.
- Gleeson, Edward, 'New Green Energy Deal Brings Job Boost', *The New York Times*, 19 January 2011.

- Gaeser, Edward L., 'Why Green Energy Can't Power a Job Engine', *The New York Times*, 18 January 2011.

Selected Publications

- Moss, Todd, 2011, *Oil to Cash: Fighting the Resource Curse through Cash Transfers*, Working Paper 237, Washington, D.C.: Center for Global Development.

Many of the world's poorest and most fragile states are joining the ranks of oil and gas producers. These countries face critical policy questions about managing and spending new revenue in a way that is beneficial to their people. At the same time, a growing number of developing countries have initiated cash transfers as a response to poverty, and these programmes are showing some impressive results. In this paper, the author proposes putting these two trends together, i.e., countries seeking to manage new resource wealth should consider distributing income directly to citizens as cash transfers. Beyond serving as a powerful and proven intervention policy, cash transfers may also mitigate the corrosive effect natural resource revenue often has on governance.

- Garver, John W., 2011, 'Is China Playing a Dual Game in Iran?', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 75–88.

This article examines Chinese foreign policy on Iran with regard to energy security and the balance of power in Eurasia. It touches upon such themes as access to the Persian Gulf's energy resources, Sino-American competition and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

- Ummel, Kevin, *Global Prospects for Utility-scale Solar Power: Toward Spatially Explicit Modeling of Renewable Energy Systems*, Working Paper 235, Washington D.C.: Center for Global Development.

This paper provides high-resolution estimates of the global potential and cost of solar power technologies while identifying deployment patterns that minimise the cost of greenhouse gas abatement. The findings are based on a global simulation of providing 2,000 terawatt hours of solar power (about 7 per cent of total consumption) in 2030, taking into account least-cost siting of facilities and transmission lines and the effect of diurnal variation on profitability and required subsidies. The American Southwest, the Tibetan Plateau, the Sahel, and the Middle East are identified as major supply areas.

Events and Announcements

- 'National Conference on Power, Instrumentation, Energy and Control', 12–13 February 2011, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India.
- '4th UGas Summit (Unconventional Gas)', 17–18 February 2011, Singapore.
- 'Strategic Metals for National Security and Clean Energy', 22–23 March 2011, Washington, D.C., US.

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FOOD SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Neuman, William, 'U.N. Data Notes Sharp Rise in World Food Prices', *The New York Times*, 5 January 2011.
- 'Worldwatch Institute's State of the World 2011 Shows Agricultural Innovation Now Key to Reducing Poverty, Stabilizing Climate', *Worldwatch Institute*, 12 January 2011.
- Subejo, 'New Challenges for Agricultural Development', *The Jakarta Post*, 13 January 2011.
- Bunting, Madeleine, 'Food Prices Can't Just Be Swept under the Table', *Guardian*, 13 January 2011.
- Jubak, Jim, 'Profit from Soaring Food Prices', *Money Show*, 14 January 2011.
- 'Human Resources – Important Factor in Industrialising Rural Areas', *VOV News*, 15 January 2011.
- Deutsch, Anthony, 'Indonesian Crop Failures Add to Food Fears', *Financial Times*, 16 January 2011.
- 'Sri Lanka Prepares to Tackle Impending Food Crisis', *The Sunday Times*, 16 January 2011.
- Walker, Martin, 'Walker's World: The U.S., China and Food', *UPI*, 17 January 2011.
- Brown, Lester, 'Plan B Updates: The Great Food Crisis of 2011', *Mother Earth News*, 17 January 2011.
- Berthelsen, John, 'A New Rice Revolution on the Way?', *Asia Sentinel*, 17 January 2011.
- 'Agricultural Efficiency Crucial for Food Security', *China Daily*, 18 January 2011.
- 'The Route to Food Security', *Business Standard*, 19 January 2011.



Selected Publications

- Spielman, David J. and Rajul Pandya-Lorch (eds), 2010, *Millions Fed: Proven Successes in Agricultural Development*, Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

This book examines various interventions in agricultural development and analyses them to see where, why and how they have succeeded. It reviews the policies, programmes and investments in agricultural development that have reduced hunger and poverty across Africa, Asia and Latin America over the past half century. The case studies synthesise the evidence on the interventions' impact on agricultural productivity and food security, evaluate the rigour with which the evidence was collected and assess the tradeoffs inherent in each act of intervention.

- Nelson, Gerald C., Mark W. Rosegrant, Amanda Palazzo et al., 2010, *Food Security, Farming, and Climate Change to 2050*, Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

This study examines the impact of climate change on food security and suggests some steps policymakers can take to remedy a situation deemed problematic. Using various modelling techniques, the authors project 15 different future scenarios for food security until the year 2050. They conclude that the negative effects of climate change on food security can be counteracted by broad-based economic growth – particularly improved agricultural productivity – and robust international trade in agricultural products to offset regional shortages.

- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), 2010, *Rural Poverty Report 2011*, Rome, Italy.

The report examines the global impact of rural poverty and the outlook for its eradication. It notes that a number of factors would complicate further attempts to reduce rural poverty, one of which is the instability of food prices. It highlights how significant changes in agricultural markets offer new opportunities for smallholder farmers to boost their productivity. The report emphasises the need to invest more in smallholder agriculture in order to provide greater food security to the world in the long run.

Events and Announcements

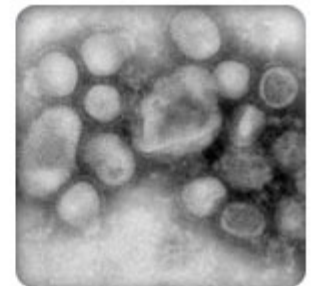
- 'Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health', 10–12 February 2011, New Delhi, India.
- 'Global Good Agricultural Practice Tour 2011', 1–2 March 2011, New Delhi, India.
- 'China Bio-agriculture Industry Summit', 30–31 March 2011, Shanghai, China.

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HEALTH AND HUMAN SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- 'Health: Life Expectancy Improving, Spending Rising in Asia-Pacific', *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*, 21 December 2010.
- 'South Korea to Vaccinate All Livestock to Curb Foot-and-mouth', *AsiaOne*, 12 January 2011.
- Khattak, Tariq, 'MDGs Missed Target in Asia', *Pakistan Observer*, 13 January 2011.
- 'WHO Launches Action Plan to Save Malaria Treatments', *Xinhua*, 13 January 2011.
- Sinha, Kounteya, 'Drug-resistant Malaria Strain Is New Threat from the East', *The Times of India*, 14 January 2011.
- Warraich, Haider, 'The Mounting Public Health Crisis in Pakistan', *Foreign Policy*, 14 January 2011.
- 'Taiwan Diagnoses First Superbug Case', *AsiaOne*, 16 January 2011.
- 'Seoul to Hike Milk Output Quota to Tackle Foot-and-mouth Disease', *Bernama*, 18 January 2011.
- Boseley, Sarah, 'Health Worker Shortage Is a Truly Global Crisis', *Guardian*, 18 January 2011.
- Lee, Samson, 'Warning as Deadly Flu Season Hits', *The Standard*, 18 January 2011.
- Rose, Danny, 'Floods: Experts Warn of Disease and Mental Health Risks', *Herald Sun*, 18 January 2011.
- Willacy, Mark, 'Disease Threatens Dwindling N Korea Food Stocks', *ABC News*, 18 January 2011.
- '3 Die in Country's First "Congo Fever" Outbreak', *Hindustan Times*, 19 January 2011.



Selected Publications

- Hopkins, Sandra, 2010, 'Health Expenditure Comparisons: Low, Middle and High Income Countries', *Open Health Services and Policy Journal*, Vol. 3, pp. 111–7.

This article examines and compares health expenditure across low, middle and high income countries. It finds that low and middle income countries, on the whole, rely more heavily on private funding especially household out-of-pocket payments. Public funding is more prevalent for funding of curative care than for funding of pharmaceuticals in high, middle and low income countries.

- Bornemisza, Olga, Jamie Bridge, Michael Olszak-Olszewski et al., 2010, 'Health Aid Governance in Fragile States: The Global Fund Experience', *Global Health Governance*, Vol. 4, No.1.

This study analyses the impact of health aid provided by the Global Fund with particular attention to how well these grants are performing in fragile states as compared to other countries. Since 2002, the Global Fund has invested nearly USD5 billion in 41 fragile states, and most grants have been assessed as performing well. Nonetheless, statistically significant differences in performance exist between fragile states, particularly those with humanitarian crises, and other countries. This indicates that further investigation is warranted. Variations in performance may be unavoidable given the complexities of health governance in fragile states, but may also have implications for how the Global Fund and others provide aid.

- Garrett, Laurie and El'Haum Alavian, 2010, 'Global Health Governance in a G20 World', *Global Health Governance*, Vol. 4, No.1.

This article examines the emerging role of the G20 in global health governance and its implications for international health, especially in combating HIV/AIDS. The authors argue that the implications for global health governance and mobilising resources for HIV/AIDS remain unclear as major players of the G20 such as China, India and South Africa still rely on foreign assistance for their domestic HIV

and other disease-specific programmes. Whether such nations will also act as significant donors for global health is debatable. The challenge ahead is to assist emerging economies in their transition to self-reliance in obtaining public goods, and to find solutions that guarantee equitable access to health for all.

Events

- 'World Cancer Day', 4 February 2011.

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The Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies was inaugurated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan in May 2008. The Centre maintains research in the fields of Food Security, Climate Change, Energy Security, Health Security as well as Internal and Cross-Border Conflict. It produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. The Centre also provides a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for the MacArthur Asia Security Initiative, to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific.

The Centre is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia). More information on the Centre can be found at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts