



## NTS Bulletin November 2011 (Issue 1)

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- CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS
- ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY
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## MAIN HIGHLIGHT

### Thai Floods – What Effect on Rice?

Thailand's worst floods in decades have caused over 350 deaths, and are inflicting extensive damage to much of the country's land, crops, livestock, infrastructure, housing and industrial areas. An estimated 12.5 per cent of Thailand's cropland or 7 million tons of crops across 81 provinces have been damaged, and many tons more have been destroyed in flooded warehouses. Regionally, flooding in Laos, Cambodia, the Philippines, and to a lesser extent, Vietnam, has damaged significant stretches of arable land. A high percentage of the destroyed croplands have been rice fields – particularly in Thailand, which supplies 31 per cent of the world's rice exports and was, before the floods, expected to produce a record 25.1 million tons of rice this year.

Securing food supplies for small-holder farmers whose crops have been destroyed and for urban populations is a most urgent food security issue resulting from the floods, and is contingent upon efficient coordination between the government and aid agencies. A compensation programme for farmers who have suffered losses has commenced with the view to encourage replanting as soon as possible. Looking ahead, what might be the medium- to

long-term impact on the region's rice output and global rice prices?

Thailand's October rice exports are comparable to levels in recent years, but are half that of the record output experienced in the first nine months of 2011. Despite the extensive damage to crops, and losses from land that will be used as water storage to relieve floodwaters, the Thai Rice Exporters Association predicts that historically high output from unaffected northern provinces this year will largely compensate for losses elsewhere in Thailand, keeping supplies relatively strong.

The price of Thai rice – a regional benchmark – has fallen 0.5 per cent in late October due to the weakening baht, but it is likely that there will be at least a temporary rise in the coming months due to factors resulting from the floods. Rice-importing governments must therefore be prepared to absorb and make provisions for this price rise, on top of this year's already-high food prices.

### Additional Info:

- Fernquest, John, 'Floods Reduce Rice Supply', *Bangkok Post*, 17 October 2011.
- 'Southeast Asia Flood Update', *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)*, 21 October 2011.
- Javier, Luzi Ann and Supunnabul Suwannakij, 'Floods Ruining 14% of Thai Rice May Erase Global Export Glut: Commodities', *Bloomberg*, 26 October 2011.
- Montlake, Simon, 'Rice Crops Take a Pounding from Southeast Asian Floods', *Forbes*, 26 October 2011.
- 'Floods Likely to Push Up Benchmark Rice Prices', *The Wall Street Journal*, 26 October 2011.
- Keeratipatpong, Walailak, 'Northern Rice Harvest Will Make Amends', *Bangkok Post*, 27 October 2011.

# CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



## News and Commentaries

- Scott, Lucy, 'Climate Change and the Post-2015 Poverty Agenda', *Climate & Development Knowledge Network Global*, 6 September 2011.
- 'Many Children Dying and Jobs Being Lost in Asian Floods Says UNISDR', *United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) Secretariat*, 21 October 2011.
- Kirby, Alex, 'Will the Kyoto Protocol Survive the Durban Climate Talks?', *Guardian*, 24 October 2011.
- Black, Richard, 'China "Won't Follow US" on Carbon', *BBC*, 25 October 2011.
- Rosner, Hillary, 'For Climate Scientists, a Dive into Alphabet Soup', *The New York Times*, 26 October 2011.
- 'Durban Talks Come at Bad Time: UN Climate Chief', *AFP*, 27 October 2011.

## Selected Publications

- Elliott, Lorraine, 2011, *Climate Change, Migration and Human Security in Southeast Asia*, Policy Brief No. 13, Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies.

A human security approach seeks to ensure that people are placed at the centre of concerns about mobility and migration in response to climate change. This policy brief gives an overview of pressures relating to climate change, migration and displacement in Southeast Asia, and provides recommendations that consider equity concerns, community experience and resettlement planning.

- World Resources Institute (WRI), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Bank, 2011, *Decision Making in a Changing Climate*, Washington, DC.

This report draws on input from more than 100 experts in over 35 countries, and includes 12 case studies of innovative, real-world responses to climate change, such as wildfire management in Brazil, information sharing on agriculture in Mali and glacial flood management in Nepal. In light of recent extreme weather events, as well as long-term disruptions related to climate change, the report calls for different approaches to decision-making by national leaders.

- Moncel, Remi, Paul Joffe, Kevin McCall et al., 2011, *Building the Climate Change Regime: Survey and Analysis of Approaches*, Working Paper, Washington, DC: World Resources Institute (WRI), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Bank.

The pledges made in aggregate at the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun are insufficient to realise the goal of achieving 'stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system'. This working paper seeks to identify concrete pathways for building an international climate-change regime by surveying and analysing the academic literature as well as proposals by non-governmental organisations and governments.

- Stoddart, Hannah, Sue Riddlestone and Mirian Vilela, 2011, *Principles for the Green Economy*, London: Stakeholder Forum, BioRegional and The Earth Charter Initiative.

The Stakeholder Forum, in collaboration with BioRegional and The Earth Charter Initiative, has published a set of principles for sustainable development and the green economy, in recognition of the need for the international community to agree on a common ethical framework of shared values and principles in order to enhance political will to achieve an ambitious outcome at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20). The document contains 15 principles which represent a consolidation of existing international agreements and more forward-thinking proposals. It offers an overview of the kinds of principles that might constitute a common ethical framework.

## Events and Announcements

- '10th Asia Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production (APRSCP)', 9–11 November 2011, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
- '17th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 17) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change', 28 November – 9 December 2011, Durban, South Africa.
- '7th Session of the Conference of the Parties Serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol', 28 November – 9 December 2011, Durban, South Africa.

# ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY



## News & Commentaries

- Cutler, Robert M., 'China Expands Energy Ties in Central Asia', *Asia Times*, 29 September 2011.
- Walsh, Bryan, 'The Worst Kind of Poverty: Energy Poverty', *Time*, 11 October 2011.
- Mills, Robin, 'Asia and Gulf States Need to Deepen Energy Relationship', *The National*, 18 October 2011.
- Kan, Francis and Nidhi Verma, 'Analysis: Asian Gas Oil Will Rely on Europe for Support in Winter', *Reuters*, 18 October 2011.
- 'Offshore Energy Claims Open Divisions in Southeast Asia', *Forbes*, 18 October 2011.
- 'Asia Installed Wind Capacity to Surpass Europe's, Council Says', *Bloomberg*, 19 October 2011.
- Marusiak, Jenny, 'Tackling Energy Challenges the Singapore Way', *Eco-Business.com*, 20 October 2011.
- 'Meralco Development Center Tops 2011 ASEAN Energy Awards', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 21 October 2011.

## Selected Publications

- Bazilian, Morgan, Holger Rogner, Mark Howells et al., 2011, 'Considering the Energy, Water and Food Nexus: Towards an Integrated Modelling Approach', *Energy Policy*, 21 October, In Press.

This article applies a modelling framework to examine the interwoven concerns in the areas of energy, water and food policy primarily from a developing country perspective. These concerns range from ensuring access to services, to environmental impacts and price volatility. It aims to provide information and recommendations for policymaking in these areas.

- Fishedick, Manfred, Sylvia Borbonus and Hanna Scheck, 2011, *Towards Global Energy Governance: Strategies for Equitable Access to Sustainable Energy*, Policy Paper No. 34, Bonn: Development and Peace Foundation.

This paper asserts that in view of growing energy challenges facing the international community, improvements in energy governance are needed. With regard to the institutional aspect, further developments in the existing framework and rules are important, while renewable energies and energy efficiency are key technological options. In addition to the activities at the international level, regional and local energy cooperation is also crucial for sustainable energy governance.

- International Energy Agency (IEA), 2011, *CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from Fuel Combustion 2011 – Highlights*, France.

In anticipation of the forthcoming UN climate negotiations in Durban, the IEA has released a publication containing the latest estimates on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by country, emissions from international marine and aviation bunkers, as well as selected indicators such as CO<sub>2</sub>/GDP and CO<sub>2</sub>/capita. This edition finds that China and the US emitted 41 per cent of the world's emissions in 2009.

## Events & Announcements

- 'Singapore International Energy Week', 31 October – 4 November 2011, Singapore.
- 'International Congress on Renewable Energy (ICORE)', 2–4 November 2011, Assam, India.
- '4th Algae World Asia', 15–16 November 2011, Beijing, China.

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# FOOD SECURITY



## News & Commentaries

- 'Asian Plant Breeding Academy Launches in 2012', *Seedquest*, 29 September 2011.
- 'Rice Breeding Brings Billions to SE Asia', *International Rice Research Institute*, 29 September 2011.
- Eichler, Alexander, 'Hunger, Food Insecurity Cost the Country \$167 Billion Every Year', *The Huffington Post*, 6 October 2011.
- Stebbins, Christine, 'Pace of Global Farm Productivity Must Increase – Ag Group', *Reuters*, 12 October 2011.
- 'On World Food Day, UN Agencies Urge Concerted Effort against Global Hunger', *UN News Centre*, 14 October 2011.
- 'Food Price Swings Threaten to Push Millions More People into Hunger, UN Warns', *UN News Centre*, 17 October 2011.
- 'DPR Korea: UN Expert Warns of Dwindling Aid while Food Crisis Remains Critical', *UN News Centre*, 20 October 2011.
- 'Experts Call for Boosting Regional Demand, Coop, Integration', *Pakistan Observer*, 23 October 2011.
- 'Buffett, Gates Honoured for Supporting Small Farmers', *AlertNet*, 25 October 2011.
- 'Forests, Potential Solution in the Fight against Hunger', *FAO Media Centre*, 26 October 2011.

## Selected Publications

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2011, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011*, Rome.

*The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011* highlights the differential impacts that the world food crisis of 2006–2008 had on different countries, with the poorest being the most affected. While some large countries were able to deal with the worst of the crisis, people in many small import-dependent countries experienced large price increases that, even when only temporary, could have permanent effects on their future earning capacity and ability to escape poverty.

- International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), 2011, *2011 Global Hunger Index*, Washington, DC.

This year's Global Hunger Index (GHI) shows that global hunger has declined since 1990, but not dramatically, and remains at a level characterised as 'serious'. Across regions and countries, GHI scores vary greatly. The highest GHI scores occur in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. South Asia as a whole reduced its GHI score substantially between 1990 and 1996, but this fast progress could not be maintained. Though sub-Saharan Africa as a region made overall less progress than South Asia after 1990, it has managed to catch up with the latter since the turn of the millennium.

## Events & Announcements

- 'International Conference on Climate Change and Food Security (ICCCFS)', 6–8 November 2011, Beijing, China.
- 'FAO Council 143rd Session', 28 November – 3 December 2011, Rome, Italy.

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## About the Centre:

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](http://www.rsis.edu.sg/nts).