

Course Syllabus

**Environment and Conflict**

COEX HS 226f, Module I, Spring 2018

Thursdays, 6:00 PM – 8:50 PM

Heller School 163

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**Course Description:** This course examines the role of natural resources in conflict and conflict resolution. It analyzes multiple relationships between conflict and the environment drawing on conflict theory, environmental security and scientific aspects of global environmental change. It analyzes intervention strategies in environmental conflicts. Topics include: resource wealth and resource scarcity as sources of conflict; role of environment in the conflict cycle and international security; impacts of natural disasters on conflict; climate change and conflict; business in fragile environments; environmental impacts of war; and, integrating environment concerns in conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding. Students participate in negotiation trainings and explore cases from different parts of the world.

**Course Objectives:** Having taken the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the linkages between conflict and the environment
2. Analyze a wide range of environmental conflicts, their drivers and characteristics
3. Understand multiple ways in which the environmental aspect of the conflict can be framed and how this affects conflict resolution
4. Explore environmental mediation both in terms of approaches and actors
5. Practice negotiation strategy development and problem-solving skills
6. Explore best practices in this field and critically examine future scenarios of environmental conflict

**Teaching Methods:** This is a highly interactive course, which combines lectures, case studies, role play simulations and small-group exercises. Lectures are used to introduce main concepts and data about environment and conflict. Case studies focus on specific, real-life conflicts from different parts of the world. In role play simulations students “play out” assigned roles as parties to an environmental conflict while learning negotiation skills and obtaining greater understanding of competing pressures on natural resources and their management. Small group exercises are used to debate contested concepts and practice team work.

**Grading:** There is a portfolio of assignments:

Participation (15% of the final grade). Class participation is based on several components. First, you are required to attend all classes and participate in two negotiation trainings. Second, your contribution to class discussions and your in-class assessment of the reading assignments is factored. Finally, your attention to your classmates and class discussions is also factored into this grade. The use of laptops is allowed for

class-related purposes. If you use social media during class, your participation grade goes down (for example, from an A- to B+).

Short Paper 1: Framing Memo (30% of the final grade, maximum 2 pages, single spaced, font Times New Roman 12). Choose an environmental conflict that interests you. Examine the parties, positions, interests, stage of conflict, identify various dimensions of this conflict (economic, environmental etc.). In order to complete this assignment you will need to familiarize yourself with the readings about framing and also conduct your own inquiry using any resources about your conflict that you can find. Memo is due at midnight on Sunday before class 3 and needs to be posted on Brandeis Latte. You will be asked to introduce your conflict in class, so be ready to offer 3-5 minute overview (note: memo is graded, your discussion of the memo in class is not graded so your class intervention can be informal, no need for extra preparation).

Short Paper 2: Environmental Conflict Resolution Practitioner in Action (25% of the final grade, maximum 2 pages, single spaced, font Times New Roman 12). Choose an actor or an institution that professionally intervenes in environmental conflict. You can choose anyone from a UN special representative or UN agency to a non-governmental organization specialized in environmental peacemaking. Study what the actor does and the area of his/her influence. How does the practitioner engage with environmental conflict – at what point of the conflict cycle, is (s)he invited by the parties; what sources of leverage does the practitioner bring to the negotiation table and how does (s)he use them to (re)establish social relationship? How do you evaluate whether the practitioner is successful? Paper is due at midnight before class 5 and needs to be posted on Brandeis Latte. You will be asked to discuss your paper in class, so be ready to offer 3-5 minute overview (note: paper is graded, your discussion of the memo in class is not graded so your class intervention can be informal, no need for extra preparation).

Final Exam (30% of the final grade). The final assessment will be based on the readings for the course and lectures. You will have three hours to answer three questions. The first question will be about one of the key concepts we mentioned in the course, and you will be asked to explain it. The second question will be an imaginary environmental conflict scenario and you will need to propose a solution. The third question will be based on class interests as revealed through topic choices and discussions. None of the answers should be longer than 1 page of single-spaced text.

**Late assignments.** You are expected to submit your assignments on time. If your assignment is up to five days late your grade will be lowered (for example, from an A- to B+). If you are more than five days late and want to be graded, I need to see that you have a medical excuse or receive an email from your advisor.

**Academic honesty.** You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty are subject to possible judicial action. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person without proper acknowledgement of the source. This means you must use footnotes and quotation marks to indicate the source of phrases, sentences, paragraphs or ideas found in published volumes, on the internet, or created by another student.

## Schedule of Classes and Readings

### Class 1. Environment and Conflict: Introduction (January 11)

#### Objectives:

- Introducing the class, readings and assignments
- Examining environment-conflict-security nexus
- Various types of environmental conflict

#### Readings:

Renner, Michael. 2006. Introduction to the Concepts of Environmental Security and Environmental Conflict. *Inventories of Environment and Security Policies and Practices*, Institute for Environmental Security I-C: 1-16. [http://www.envirosecurity.org/ges/inventory/IESPP\\_I-C\\_Introduction.pdf](http://www.envirosecurity.org/ges/inventory/IESPP_I-C_Introduction.pdf)

Ross, Michael. 2015. What Have We Learned about the Resource Curse? *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 18:239-259 <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/ross/papers/articles/Ross%20-%20What%20have%20we%20learned%20ARPS%202015.pdf>

UNEP 2009. From Conflict to Peacebuilding: The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment. [http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/pcdmb\\_policy\\_01.pdf](http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/pcdmb_policy_01.pdf) (important to study p. 30 Figure 1 for the first class, please read the full report and cases whenever you have time)

*Cases: Syria and Congo (short illustrative pieces)*

Murphy, Brian. 2017. Climate Change Played Key Role in Syrian Civil War and Helped Brexit, Al Gore says <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/national/article140523093.html>

Eklund, Lin and Darcy Thompson. 2017. Is Syria Really a ‘Climate War’? We Examined the Links between Drought, Migration and Conflict. <https://theconversation.com/is-syria-really-a-climate-war-we-examined-the-links-between-drought-migration-and-conflict-80110>

Enough Project. 2014. Conflict Minerals (case of Congo) [http://www.enoughproject.org/conflicts/eastern\\_congo/conflict-minerals](http://www.enoughproject.org/conflicts/eastern_congo/conflict-minerals)

### Class 2. Framing and Environmental Conflict (January 25)

#### Objectives:

- Defining problems and understanding multiple ways in which conflicts can be framed
- Analyzing environmental conflicts by identifying parties, interests and options for mutual gain
- Discussing the role of science in negotiations and conflict resolution
- Exploring how framing influences potential interventions

#### Readings:

Gray. 2003. Framing of Environmental Disputes. In Lewicki, Gray and Elliott, *Making Sense of Intractable Environmental Conflicts*, p. 11-34. Washington DC: Island Press.

Asah, Stanley T. et al. 2012. Diagnostic Reframing of Intractable Environmental Problems: Case of a Contested Multiparty Public Land-Use Conflict. *Journal of Environmental Management* 108 (October): 108 – 119.

*Case: The Arctic (prepare to discuss in class)*

Dobriansky, Paula J. 2018. A Cold War in the Arctic Circle. *Wall Street Journal*  
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-cold-war-in-the-arctic-circle-1514823379>

Holthaus, Eric. 2017. This Should Freak Everyone Out: The Arctic Will Never Be Frozen Again, *Mother Jones* <http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2017/12/this-should-freak-everyone-out-the-arctic-will-never-be-frozen-again/> (click on link in text that says annual report and find the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration report).

Ash, John. 2016. Cold Peace: Arctic Conflict in an Era of Climate Change. *Journal of Intelligence and Terrorism Studies*  
<https://www.veruscript.com/journals/journal-of-intelligence-and-terrorism-studies/arctic-security>

### **Class 3. Conflict Dynamics: Managing Competing Pressures on Natural Resources (February 1)**

#### Objectives:

- Experiencing conflict through a role play simulation
- Learning about the negotiation process, multistakeholder dynamics and strategy development
- Understanding common pool resources and their management

*Case for Negotiation Training: Lake Wasota Dispute over Fishing Rights*

Instructions to be distributed in class (Harvard Program on Negotiation simulation of negotiations among representatives of tribal, state, federal, recreation, and business interests over fishing rights in a large lake). (Prioritize this reading)

#### Readings:

Hardin. 1968. The Tragedy of the Commons. *Science* 162, 3859: 1243-1248.

Ostrom et al. 1999. Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons, Global Challenges. *Science* 248

Bradleya, Karin and Daniel Pargmanb. 2017. The Sharing Economy as the Commons of the 21st Century *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 10, 231–247

#### **Class 4. Climate Change, Natural Disasters and Water Crisis (February 8)**

##### Objectives:

- Overview of climate– related conflicts over mitigation, adaptation and liability for damage
- Natural disasters and conflict: understanding issues and challenges
- Water conflicts: management and trends

##### Readings:

Jaeger, Joel. 2014. Will Climate Change Lead to Conflict or Cooperation? Inter Press Service News, August 4, <http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/08/will-climate-change-lead-to-conflict-or-cooperation/>

IPCC Report 2014 [https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/AR5\\_SYR\\_FINAL\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/AR5_SYR_FINAL_SPM.pdf)  
(latest consensus report of climate scientists – browse, check maps, look for disaster-related data and water-related data, will not be on the final exam)

Kelman, Ilan. 2006. Acting on Disaster Diplomacy. *Journal of International Affairs* 59(2): 215-240.

Dinar, Shlomi. 2011. Conflict and Cooperation along International Rivers: Scarcity, Bargaining Strategies, and Negotiation. In *Beyond Resource Wars: Scarcity, Environmental Degradation, and International Cooperation*, ed. Shlomi Dinar, pages 165-201. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

*Case study: look at the two databases and choose a water conflict of interest, we'll cover China-India water disputes in class and Asia-Pacific region for disaster diplomacy*

Pacific Institute. 2014. The World's Water: Information on the World's Freshwater Resources, Water Conflict <http://worldwater.org/water-conflict/>

Aquapedia [http://aquapedia.waterdiplomacy.org/wiki/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://aquapedia.waterdiplomacy.org/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page)

#### **Class 5. Business Actors and Social and Environmental Impacts of Development Projects (February 15)**

##### Objectives:

- Development projects and environmental concerns: managing tensions
- Role of business in conflict prevention
- Dimensions of negotiation strategy
- Overview of hydropower-related conflicts and their management

*Case for Negotiation Training: Hydropower*

Instructions to be distributed in class - Harvard Program on Negotiation simulation Hydropower in Santales: Dealing with Social and Environmental Impacts of Energy Development (prioritize this reading)

##### Readings:

Ganson, Brian. 2014. Business in Fragile Environments: Capabilities for Conflict Prevention. *Negotiation & Conflict Management Research* 7(2).

Tahseen, Samiha and Bryan W. Karney. 2017. Reviewing and Critiquing Published Approaches to the Sustainability Assessment of Hydropower. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 67: 225–234. <http://hydratek.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Tahseen-Karney-Reviewing-and-critiquing-published-approaches.pdf>

Lax, David A. and James K. Sebenius. 2011. From Single Deals to Negotiation Campaigns. <http://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/12-046.pdf>

## **Class 6. Environmental Peacemaking and Peacebuilding (March 1)**

### Objectives:

- Environment in the service of peacebuilding and reconciliation in post-conflict settings
- Environmental footprint of war
- Best practices in environmental conflict resolution

### Readings:

Conca, Ken. 2002. The Case for Environmental Peacemaking. In *Environmental Peacemaking*, Ken Conca and Geoffrey D. Dabelko (eds.) Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. See Chapter 1.

UN. 2014. International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict 6 November <http://www.un.org/en/events/environmentconflictday/>

Environmental Peacebuilding Platform <http://www.environmentalpeacebuilding.org/>

See Policy Brief 8: Natural Resource Programming in Post-Conflict Situations  
<http://www.environmentalpeacebuilding.org/publications/policy-briefs/policy-brief-8/>

*Cases: OSCE and Peace Parks*

Environment and Security Initiative - <http://www.envsec.org/index.php?lang=en> – browse to understand how it works (matching environmental and security hotspots) and where it is applied.

Cordillera del Condor - Negotiating a Peace Park <http://www.uvm.edu/ieds/node/154>

## **Class 7. Date TBD. Final Exam. March 8**