Climate Change: Implications for Defence

Key Findings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report

June 2014
Climate change impacts are projected to raise **global average surface temperature** 2.6–4.8°C by 2100.

Climate change poses an increasing threat to peace and security in the world.

Armed forces globally will need to **adapt to the changing environment** and **consider climate change impacts on infrastructure and military installations**.

**Climate change impacts can:**
- Undermine **livelihoods**
- Increase **involuntary migration**
- Reduce the **ability of states to provide security**
Climate change acts as a ‘threat multiplier’, amplifying existing vulnerabilities among populations and existing threats to security, and can indirectly increase risks of violent conflict.

Climate change risks are *highest in countries with weak or failing governments* and/or with existing conflict.

Climate impacts are likely to disproportionately affect these more vulnerable societies.

### ‘Threat Multiplier’
A factor that exacerbates the negative effects of other drivers of change.
Societies’ responses to climate impacts may exceed the global or regional capacity to manage those responses peacefully.

Issues of most concern include:
- Populations displaced by extreme weather or sea-level rise
- Spread of infectious disease
- Lack of food and water

The need for major humanitarian support is likely to increase.
Military forces will be directly affected by climate change.

Sea-level rise and other climate impacts will directly affect facilities, requiring a response.

As major fossil fuel users, military forces may have to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.
Climate Change: Key Findings

Climate change will bring new challenges to states’ **ability to share resources and provide human security.**

Changing resource availability **may increase rivalry between states**, while sea-level rise **could raise disputes over national boundaries.**

Accordingly, climate change will increasingly shape **national security policies.**

Further erosion of security can be mitigated by the presence of **robust institutions.**

Security breakdowns and **conflict** generally emerge from the interactions of multiple factors.
For more information

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