

**BALSILLIE SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS/WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY**

Course Outline, **IP613**, Winter Semester 2021

**Special Topics in Environmental Policy: “Rethinking Environmental Security”**

**Professor Simon Dalby**

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**Zoom “class” 13:00-15:50, Tuesdays.**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The first United Nations conference on environmental themes occurred in Stockholm in June 1972. The unofficial report to the Stockholm conference specified matters in terms of “Only One Earth” suggesting that maintaining it in habitable condition was a primary concern of global governance. The contradictions between growth and environment were palpable in this discussion, and have shaped global environmental thinking ever since. What is often forgotten in this discussion is that nuclear war was a major concern in the conference declaration.

Fifteen years later, the World Commission on Environment and Development, established in part to try to resolve the environment vs growth tensions, formulated environmental security as the necessary condition for successful policies of “sustainable development”. Fears that conflict related to environmental change, would prevent sustainable development linked security to environment directly, and spun off a policy and scholarly discourse on environmental security that continues to the present. There too fears of nuclear warfare linked matters of environment and development directly to international security.

The fiftieth anniversary of the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment looms in the middle distance next year, so it is timely to consider the legacy of that conference and the security policy discussions that have followed from it. The Stockholm Peace Research institute has initiated a new project called “Environment of Peace” under the chairpersonship of Margot Wallström, (see <https://www.sipri.org/research/peace-and-development/environment-peace>) which will generate a major report in 2022 to mark the anniversary and provide an up to date “state of the art” on environment, peace and security.

Much has changed since the 1970s, but the central concerns with conflict, injustice development and sustainability have been very persistent. In recent decades as the scale of industrial transformations become clear in the new age of the Anthropocene, they have become high profile matters of international politics. A diverse set of course readings will cover some of the key themes of this ongoing discussion, posing questions about the science and politics of global change and security, as well as how all this is communicated to wider publics.

Students will write weekly commentaries on the assigned readings, participate in weekly seminar discussions, make a presentation on some aspect of environmental security of their choosing that is relevant to the deliberations of the “Environment of Peace” project, and prepare a background policy paper on their selected theme.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### 12 January: Introductions, logistics etc.

#### 19 January: History 1: Then and Now: Stockholm 1972 to New York 2020.

Iris Boroway (2019) "Before UNEP: who was in charge of the global environment? The struggle for institutional responsibility 1968-72" *Journal of Global History* 14(1). 87-106.

"Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment." 1972.

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/29567/ELGP1StockD.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Pamela Chasek *Stockholm and the Birth of Environmental Diplomacy* IISD, 2020.

<https://www.iisd.org/articles/stockholm-and-birth-environmental-diplomacy>

"The Rio Declaration" 1992

[https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_CONF.151\\_26\\_Vol.I\\_Declaration.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_CONF.151_26_Vol.I_Declaration.pdf)

United Nations Secretary General, December 2020 statement on "The State of the Planet".

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-12-02/secretary-generals-address-columbia-university-the-state-of-the-planet-scroll-down-for-language-versions>

#### 26 January: History 2: *Our Common Future* and Environmental Security

*Our Common Future* (1987) Chapter 11 "Peace, Security, Development, and the Environment"

<http://www.ask-force.org/web/Sustainability/Brundtland-Our-Common-Future-1987-2008.pdf>

Jessica T. Mathews, (1989) "Redefining Security." *Foreign Affairs* 68(2): 162–77.

Daniel Deudney, (1990) "The Case against Linking Environmental Degradation and National Security." *Millennium* 19: 461–76.

#### 2 February: History 3: Does Environmental Change Cause Conflict? The 1990s Debate

Thomas Homer-Dixon (1994) "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases," *International Security* 19(1): 5–40.

Gunther Baechler (1998) "Why Environmental Transformation causes Violence: A Synthesis" *Environmental Change and Security Project Report* 4: 24-44.

Jon Barnett (2000) "Destabilizing the environment-conflict thesis" *Review of International Studies*, 26: 271-288.

#### 9 February: Climate Geopolitics

Rob White (2014) "Environmental insecurity and fortress mentality" *International Affairs* 90(4). 835-851.

Jan Selby, Omar S. Dahi, Christiane J. Fröhlich & Mike Hulme (2017) Climate change and the Syrian civil war revisited. *Political Geography* 60. 232–244.

Adrien Detges (2017) *Climate and Conflict: Reviewing the Statistical Evidence* Berlin Adelphi. <https://www.adelphi.de/en/publication/climate-and-conflict-reviewing-statistical-evidence>

Eva Lovbrand, Malin Mobjork and Rickard Soder (2020) "The Anthropocene and the geopolitical imagination: Rewriting Earth as political space" *Earth System Governance* 4. 100051

## **16 February: NO CLASS MEETING ... READING BREAK**

### **23 February: Catastrophic futures?**

Michael Albert (2020) "Beyond continuationism: Climate change, economic growth and the future of world (dis)order" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* Latest articles.

T. Yokohata et al. (2019) "Visualizing the Interconnections Among Climate Risks" *Earth's Future* 7. 85-100.

David Wallace-Wells, (2017) "The Uninhabitable Earth" *New York Magazine* (9 July).  
<http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2017/07/climate-change-earth-too-hot-for-humans.html>

Ann-Kathrin Benner et al (2019) *Violent Climate Imaginaries: Science-Fiction-Politics* Hamburg: University of Hamburg Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy.  
[https://ifsh.de/file/publication/Research\\_Report/191218\\_IFSH\\_Research\\_Report\\_Web.pdf](https://ifsh.de/file/publication/Research_Report/191218_IFSH_Research_Report_Web.pdf)

### **2 March: Earth System Thinking and Planetary Boundaries (Paper proposals due)**

Gerado Ceballas et al (2015) "Accelerated modern human-induced species losses: Entering the sixth mass extinction" *Science Advances* 1(5): e1400253.

Chi Xu et al (2019) "Future of the Human Climate Niche" *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117(21): 11350-11355.

Will Steffen, et.al (2018) Trajectories of the Earth System in the Anthropocene. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115(33): 8252-8259.

Frank Biermann and Rakhyun Kim (2020) "The Boundaries of the Planetary Boundary Framework: A Critical Appraisal of Approaches to Define a "Safe Operating Space" for Humanity" *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 45: 497-521.

### **9 March: Global Security: Sustainable Futures?**

Katherine J. Mach et al (2020) "Directions for Research on Climate and Conflict" *Earth's Future* 8 e2020EF001532.

Roman Vakulchuk, Indra Overland and Sanjel Scholten (2020) "Renewable energy and geopolitics: A review" *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 122: 109547.

Kevin Surprise (2020) "Geopolitical Ecology of Solar Geoengineering: From a 'Logic of Multilateralism' to Logics of Militarization" *Journal of Political Ecology* 27: 213-235.

### **16 March: Environmental peacebuilding?**

Ken Conca (2019) Is There a Role for the UN Security Council on Climate Change? *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 61(1): 4-15.

Ronald B. Mitchell and Charli Carpenter (2019) "Norms for the Earth: Changing the Climate on "Climate Change" " *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4(4): 413-429.

Joshua W. Busby (2020) "Beyond internal conflict: The emergent practice of climate security" *Journal of Peace Research* Early view 10pp.

Tobias Ide (2020) "The dark side of environmental peace-building" *World Development* 127: 104777.

**23 March: Student Presentations**

**30 March: Student Presentations**

**6 April: Student Presentations**

**13 April: Final meeting, course wrap up, Policy Paper deadline.**

### REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Students will be required to prepare a one page commentary on the week's assigned readings, (due on MLS "dropbox" prior to the beginning of each class zoom session) (20%), actively participate in seminar discussions (10%), prepare a paper proposal for their term paper (2 March deadline) (10%) make a presentation of a draft of their paper in a "zoom class" in March or April (20%) and prepare a final research paper (**13 April deadline**) on some aspect of globalization related to the course themes (40%).

**Weekly commentaries:** The required weekly single sheet commentary on the readings is designed to focus attention on the key issues and to provide a vehicle for clarifying questions and comments to be raised in the seminar. It must engage each of the assigned readings each week. It will not be formally graded but students will be notified if their contributions are not adequately coming to terms with the literature. (There is no need to provide full bibliographic citations to the week's readings in the commentary, but other literature, if it is mentioned, should be properly cited.)

**Participation:** This is an important component of this course, the seminar will only work as a venue to explore the difficult issues raised by contemporary literature on globalization if there is sustained dialogue among all students.

**Paper Proposals: (Due 2 March)** should outline the key argument to be explored and be approximately two pages accompanied with a page long bibliography of key sources.

**Seminar presentations: (23, 30 March, 6 April)** A single page outline of the presentation should be prepared prior to the presentation and uploaded to the MLS dropbox before the class on the day of the presentation. Presentations must be focused and to the point; they ought to be **ten** minutes long. They will be strictly limited to **twelve** minutes to allow plenty of discussion time.

**Papers:** Papers may be an elaborated version of the seminar presentation. They will draw on the scholarly analyses of environmental security and be written as though they were a submission to the Environment of Peace project dealing with some aspect of either the historical or contemporary discussions, be fully footnoted or referenced to the appropriate academic and policy sources. Papers must be original, in that they will be written specifically for this course. They will be clearly organized, well written and coherently articulate a single argument. They will be approximately 4,000 words in length (excluding references, illustrations or notes), correctly and completely referenced, using any one of the standard academic reference or footnoting styles. Each of these factors will be taken into consideration in evaluating the paper. **Deadline: April 13 (Late paper submissions will be deducted 5% per day, weekends included.)**

## FINAL NOTES

**Academic and Research Misconduct** *You are reminded that the University will levy sanctions on students who are found to have committed, or have attempted to commit, acts of academic or research misconduct. You are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing such offenses, and to take responsibility for your academic actions. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalty, please consult the relevant section of the Undergraduate Academic Calendar. If you need clarification of aspects of University policy on Academic and Research Misconduct, please consult your instructor. Wilfrid Laurier University uses software that can check for plagiarism. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form and have it checked for plagiarism.* **Accessible Learning** *Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact Laurier's Accessible Learning Office for information regarding its services and resources. Students are encouraged to review the Graduate Calendar and University announcements for information regarding all available services.*

In thinking about security and the relationships between conquest, dispossession, and environmental change, please bear in mind that Laurier and the Balsillie School are located on traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnawbe, and Haudenosaunee peoples.

**Simon Dalby** is Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, where he teaches in the Balsillie School of International Affairs. He is coeditor of *Reframing Climate Change* (Routledge 2016) and *Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals* (Routledge 2019) and author of *Environmental Security* (University of Minnesota Press 2002), *Security and Environmental Change* (Polity 2009) and *Anthropocene Geopolitics: Globalization, Security, Sustainability* (University of Ottawa Press 2020). His profile includes a link to his scholarly publications: <http://www.balsillieschool.ca/people/simon-dalby>

His most recent online publications are on Climate Change and Environmental Security here: <https://oxfordre.com/internationalstudies/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-168> and on Rethinking Security in a Rapidly Changing World here: <https://balsilliepapers.ca/bsia-paper/national-security-in-a-rapidly-changing-world/>