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The State of World Fisheries - Challenges Ahead and the Need for Improved Governance

Ichiro Nomura, Assistant Director-General at the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department

A milestone may be near. After growing steadily, particularly in the last four decades, aquaculture is now set to contribute half of the fish consumed by the human population worldwide. This reflects not only the vitality of the aquaculture sector but also global economic growth and continuing developments in fish processing and trade.

Until about a year ago, the production trends in aquaculture and capture fisheries were continuing without any drastic modification to those already in place at the start of this decade. The capture fisheries sector was regularly producing between 90 and 95 million tonnes per year, and aquaculture production was growing rapidly, albeit at a gradually declining rate.

However, the substantial increases in energy and food prices, which started in 2007 and have continued into 2008, as well as the threat of climate change, mean that the conditions for capture fisheries and aquaculture are changing. That said, the combined effects of rising prices and climate change are complex, and they affect a very large number of fisheries and aquaculture operations in a mosaic of natural, social and economic contexts. Hence, it is too early to have a clear understanding of the cumulative impact worldwide on fisheries and aquaculture.

Nonetheless, it is clear that there will be both winners and losers among fishers, aquaculturists and those employed in ancillary industries. On the one hand, rising prices for staple foods will also cause an increase in the price of many fish and fish products, and this will stimulate all in the sector to produce more. However, those who capture or culture fish, or other aquatic animals, using energy-intensive forms of production may find recent cost increases prohibitive. They may well face difficulties in continuing their work, at least in the immediate future. On the other hand, low-intensity aquaculture and most small-scale and artisanal fisheries will attempt to expand production. This will increase the importance of improved governance in both aquaculture and low-energy-consuming fisheries (some near-shore fisheries, passive fishing gear, etc.).

The current issue of The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture report features some of the aspects of fisheries and aquaculture that may receive increasing attention. Among these aspects are climate change, the use of marine genetic resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and the proliferation of private standards and certification schemes in the international fish trade. The report also highlights a few of FAO's special studies. These include the use of wild-fishery resources as seed and feed in aquaculture, and reviews of the world's shrimp fisheries and of the management of marine capture fisheries in the Pacific Ocean.

Ichiro Nomura is Assistant Director-General at the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.

The FAO Report on the "State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture" is available here: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/i0250e/i0250e.pdf>

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POLICY & RESEARCH

A Free-for-All: Global Land Grab in Times of Crisis

Agricultural land is fast becoming a hot commodity in the global competition for resources. The trend of acquiring cheap arable land worldwide to meet domestic food needs has only been exacerbated by the food and financial crisis. Its impacts on the environment and on small local farmers have been dramatic. According to a study by GRAIN, governments in countries with little cultivable area, and therefore dependent on food imports, are attempting to use this route to secure their food supply. But they are not the only ones. Food companies and private investors, too, are turning to arable land as a lucrative source of income.

A glaring example of this kind of "neo-colonialism" can be seen in Madagascar, which was recently shaken by a bloody power struggle between the government and the opposition. The shutting down of the opposition-owned television network VIVA TV in January triggered riots that left hundreds dead and wounded. This was followed by the disclosure of a deal between President Marc Ravalomanana and the South Korean company Daewoo. Under the deal, Daewoo was to acquire 1.3 million hectares of cultivable land on a 99-year lease for the intensive farming of forage maize and palm oil for biodiesel production – destined for its domestic market. "We want to plant corn there [in Madagascar] to ensure our food security. Food can be a weapon in this world," Daewoo Manager Hong Jong-wan told the Financial Times. The subsequent violent protests by Malagasy reeling under food scarcity demonstrated just how closely food and violence are interrelated.

The lease project has currently been put on hold due to declining commodity prices and the unstable political situation. After the president's resignation, his rival Andry Rajoelina proclaimed himself the new head of state. The circumstances of his coming to power are putting the country under growing pressure. Germany discontinued its development assistance to Madagascar, and the country's membership in the African Union has been suspended. The brunt of this conflict's ramifications however, will be borne by the Malagasy, as efforts towards sustainable development and conserving the country's unique natural and cultural heritage are set back by years. (*Christiane Röttger*)

The GRAIN report "Seized: The 2008 landgrab for food and financial security" is available here <http://www.grain.org/briefings/?id=212>

For more information on the current situation in Madagascar, please see <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=83954>

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New Pathways for avoiding Blood Diamonds?

"The 'blood diamond' scenario where soldiers force workers to mine at gunpoint is largely absent in Eastern DR Congo. Most miners choose to mine for lack of livelihood alternatives, so stopping or disrupting the trade in minerals will hit the most vulnerable the hardest, and in all likelihood exacerbate conflict dynamics and retard development." Nicholas Garrett, Co-Director of the London and Cambridge-based research,

investigations and consultancy firm *Resource Consulting Services Limited (RCS)*, thus summarizes one of the main results of his co-authored report "Trading Conflict for Development". The recently published report takes a different look at the conflict environment in DR Congo by challenging calls to ban or disrupt the trade in cassiterite, coltan, and wolframite. Instead, the authors argue that such measures may additionally endanger the livelihoods of about one million people in Eastern DR Congo and, hence, actually increase the insecure environment in this region.

The authors recognize the contribution of minerals trading to the conflict situation but argue that trade and security issues should be addressed separately. The reduction, and eventual end, of military gain from the minerals trade should be achieved without stopping or disrupting the trade. To this end, the real causes of insecurity in Eastern DR Congo should be tackled: the ubiquitous governance weaknesses and the inability of the Congolese state to maintain the monopoly on violence. Investing in the creation of an economic and political environment that enables legitimate cross-border trade to flourish pays dividends not just for the traders, but also for governments and communities throughout the region. In addition, the authors address the role of neighbouring states and developed countries – and here the recommendation is similar to reports presented on the ECC-Platform in the past: states that import minerals and products containing minerals should regulate their own private sector actors and require evidence that taxes have been paid on the minerals in the DR Congo. (*Dennis Taenzler*)

The report is available for download here:

<http://www.crisisstates.com/Publications/tradingConflict.htm>

For more information on Resource Consulting Services Limited (RCS), please see www.resourceglobal.co.uk

For more news on minerals, please visit the ECC-Platform.org [http://www.ecc-platform.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory§ionid=10&id=90&Itemid=176]

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Academia takes on 'Climate change and Security'

Starting in August 2009 Jürgen Scheffran will take on a professorship for "Climate Change and Security" as part of the Excellence Initiative "Integrated Climate System Analysis and Prediction" (ClISAP) at the KlimaCampus of the Universität Hamburg. Leaving his position as Assistant Director for Education at the Center for Advanced BioEnergy Research (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Jürgen Scheffran will hence lead the efforts to fill remaining research gaps in a field of increasingly political relevance. The editors of the ECC-platform took the chance to talk with him about his new position.

ECC: Mr. Scheffran, in the summer of 2009 you will take on a professorship at the University of Hamburg, on the topic of "Climate Change and Security". This is the first of its kind in Germany – is this a sign that the threat of climate change has finally made the agenda of foreign- and security policy and research, or will this position simply serve to uncover further facets of climate change research?

Jürgen Scheffran (JS): It would be surprising if a world shaking development such as global warming had no significant implications for security policy. This new field of research investigates the mutual connections between climate change and security, making an integrated approach indispensable. Security and climate research offer different perspectives, scientific methods and solution concepts that can complement each other. The term climate security is rather new and includes impacts on national and international security as well as the implications for human and ecological security, depending on who or what is affected. An extended and comprehensive understanding of security stands in contrast to a narrow meaning that would identify climate change primarily as a threat to national security and see military instruments as adequate for coping with the climate crisis.

In a climate that triggers a cycle of environmental degradation, economic decline, social unrest and political instability, violence may indeed become more likely. Conflicts may spread to neighbouring states, for example through refugee and resource flows or arms exports, which can destabilize regions and overstretch governance structures. However, researchers need to be careful not to oversimplify the climate-security nexus by drawing a direct path from climate change to war, as if this is unavoidable. While climate-related shocks may add stress to the world's existing conflicts, this impact will be hard to single out among a set of other conflict factors. There have been exaggerated statements in the past about water wars while in reality there have been more agreements on water than conflicts over it. It is also important to focus not only on threat analysis but to pay attention also to a possible positive coupling of constructive and solution-oriented climate and security policies, which would mutually enforce each other.

ECC: What are your research priority topics over the next few years? Where do we need more knowledge in order to define the risks of future violent conflicts or even wars?

JS: There is a great need for research because the link between climate change and security is far from being understood. Historical studies can provide some lessons of how human civilization was challenged by changing climatic conditions, which in some cases contributed to violent clashes and the disappearance or movement of human populations. We do not know what the global temperature change projected by the IPCC for the coming decades will do to our societies and how these will respond. Rather than waiting until it is too late, we need to understand in advance which climate risks we can still prevent and for which we have to be prepared. A better assessment now can save millions of lives and billions of Euros later.

The task however, is not easy since the world is facing a complex interaction between climate stress, environmental change, human responses and societal instability. There are many possible pathways to conflicts, and societal instability can appear in various forms, including famines, poverty and refugees, crime and corruption, irregular power transfers, institutional failure and governments lacking legitimacy, riots, civil unrest and violent clashes, armed rebellion and terrorist activity, civil war and interstate war. Finding conditions under which climate change leads to violent conflict or possibly to more cooperation is one research priority. A key challenge and priority for research is to find ways to slow down and stabilize the climate dynamics to levels that avoid the breakup of natural and social systems and allow these systems to adapt. Along the way there are many decision points that can be influenced by policies in several ways. Identifying these decision points and developing strategies that avoid risk escalation is an

important research priority. Different research tools can be applied here, including case-based narratives and causal path analysis, surveys and statistical methods, as well as computer modelling and GIS-based visualization.

While a better theoretical understanding can help to guide research questions, it will be essential to study and compare the potential security impacts of climate change on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the different vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities across the world's regions. How will increasing water scarcity in the Middle East affect conflict and cooperation in this region? How will draughts and food insecurity in the African Sahel zone affect the conflict in Darfur? Where will climate refugees from further flooding in Bangladesh move and what are the consequences? How will the melting of glaciers affect regional water distribution in Central Asia and Latin America? Analysis of these and other such cases can help develop an early warning system against climate-induced security risks and conflicts.

ECC: Over the last few years, you have taught and researched in the US. What significance does the question of climate and security have there – in the research and policy arenas?

JS: The United States has a long tradition of climate change research and many of the world's leading climate researchers are located here. The recent series of reports by the US Climate Change Science Program covers a wide range of issues. However, climate change has long been neglected in US politics and the public at large, and climate science was not always well received, in particular under the Bush Administration, which tried to pressure critical climate scientists and postponed progress both in national climate action and international climate negotiations. The situation began to change when hurricane Katrina hit the Southern coast of the US, the price of oil soared and Al Gore's documentary "An Inconvenient Truth" received wide attention throughout the country. Local and regional coalitions for climate protection and energy security emerged across the US.

In 2007, when the IPCC report appeared, the climate debate became increasingly securitized. The UN Security Council discussed climate security for the first time, and several reports on climate security appeared, for example by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. A blue-ribbon panel of retired admirals and generals characterized climate change as a "threat multiplier" in already fragile regions of the world, who could become breeding grounds for extremism and terrorism and thus an issue for US national security. Additionally, the Nobel Peace Prize to the IPCC and Al Gore was a major issue in the US media.

ECC: Is the topic of "Climate and Security" thus included in the transatlantic climate talks? With the new administration, there is a new dynamic on the horizon of the international climate policy debate – does that also apply for the debate on possible security implications of climate change?

The Obama administration pays more attention to avoiding climate change, which offers great promises for a breakthrough in the international climate negotiations in Copenhagen at the end of the year. It also offers opportunities for a new transatlantic dialogue and joint action with the European Union, which has developed a more progressive and proactive approach. Being among the world's largest emitters, the US and Europe have a special responsibility for tackling the common threat of global

warming. The devastating impacts of Katrina in 2005, which destabilized a whole region, as well as the 2003 heat wave in Europe demonstrated that not only poor countries are vulnerable to climate change but the world's richest nations as well. The latter are not protected against climate disasters and long-term environmental changes in other parts of the world, such as harvest losses, floods, droughts, sea-level rise and mass migrations. In addition, there is the risk that climate change could trigger an increasing struggle for the world's resources that could adversely affect relationships among the major powers. Such a possibility was brought up recently regarding Arctic resources, which are now made more easily accessible due to melting ice. As the recent economic crisis vividly demonstrates, large-scale disruptions in a globalized world affect everyone and require global responses. Developing new cooperative approaches and institutional structures to tackle these problems is a joint task for both climate and security policy.

ECC: Mr. Scheffran, thank you very much for the interview.

For more information on the research agenda of the Excellence Initiative "Integrated Climate System Analysis and Prediction" (ClISAP) in Hamburg, please see <http://www.clisap.de/index.php?id=151&L=1>

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CONFERENCE REPORTS

Opportunities and Responsibilities – On the Path to Arctic Governance

"This is one of the greatest strategic challenges of the 21st century. It concerns us all." With these words Minister of State Gloser opened the international conference on the Arctic at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany. From March 11 to 13 public officials and scientists met in Berlin to discuss "New Challenges and New Responsibilities" stemming from an increasingly ice-free Arctic. The conference was jointly organized with the Norwegian and the Danish foreign ministries. In three separate thematic fora participants discussed aspects of international law, challenges for arctic research and sustainability issues, as well as economical questions.

Participants agreed that important cornerstones for an Arctic governance structure already exist. In his introductory remarks, Professor Wolfrum, a judge at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, pointed out that the Arctic is not a legal black hole. Indeed, the UN Convention for the Law of the Sea, regulations from the International Maritime Organization, and a number of additional agreements provide sufficient basis for settling legal issues in the Arctic region today. On the other side, Aqqaluk Lyngø, president of the *Inuit Circumpolar Conference*, highlighted the shortcomings of the current system regarding the protection of the indigenous Inuit population. He stressed that any governance structure in the Arctic should always be measured according to its inclusiveness of the Inuit. A successful case in this context has been the Arctic Council. The intergovernmental body was founded in 1996 and brought together the Arctic Nations and representatives of the major Inuit organizations. Participants at the conference agreed in large that the Council will, in future, play an increasingly important role as agenda setter. Moreover, the Council will serve as coordinator of national measures for its members, as well as a forum for the exchange of knowledge. Wide scepticism, however, was expressed regarding its ability to actually fulfill a governing role. Some discussants therefore stressed the potential of ecosystem-

based management strategies. Such a holistic approach could at least partially help overcome the currently fragmented governance structure. (*Joeran Altenberg*)

Additional information about the event, as well as background materials are available on the official conference website: <http://arctic-governance.org/>

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Re-Inventing Regional Cooperation? Insights from South Caucasus

'Regional cooperation' is a buzzword often heard in the context of the South Caucasus conflicts. Such endeavours are said to have the potential to lessen existing tensions, yet establishing functional regional cooperation formats has proven extremely difficult due to the challenging political situation. Recent research by the Initiative for Peacebuilding (IfP) on the South Caucasus now suggest that a pragmatic, technical approach to cooperation, including building up the necessary human and technical infrastructure, may be instrumental to initiating cooperation.

On March 6, 2009, Adelphi Research, as member of the IfP, and in cooperation with the Heinrich Böll Foundation, organized a workshop in Tbilisi to take stock of past experiences in the light of current political developments. The aim of the workshop was to highlight existing and potential threats for regional cooperation in the area of environment, economy and natural resource management in the South Caucasus context.

Participants from regional civil society and academic institutes, as well as from donor organizations, stressed that external actors can play an important role in providing and widely distributing objective and impartial information. At the same time, it is crucial that these external actors act as partners, take a long-term approach and become more ambitious in their activities. Therefore, initiating and facilitating dialogues between stakeholders with similar interests and priorities is necessary. Representatives of various constituencies, such as the business community and green organizations, should be involved to successfully combine economic priorities and environmental needs.

The workshop concluded that activities should ultimately aim at changing attitudes, bringing about a spirit of cooperation instead of confrontation. Agents of change, such as youth groups, will be instrumental in achieving this. (*Anja Wittich and Achim Maas*)

For further information on IfP and the work in the South Caucasus, please visit www.initiativeforpeacebuilding.eu

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How Political Should Germany's Foreign Water Policy Be?

The 22nd Forum on Global Issues organized by the German Foreign Office under the theme "Water: Resource, Source of Conflict, Human Right" was held on March 6, 2009. The topic drew an audience of almost 400. During the three panel discussions – on transboundary water management for conflict prevention, access to water and sanitation, and regional water cooperation in Central Asia – it became amply clear that the politicization of resource distribution and socio-economic factors play a critical role alongside geographic and technical aspects.

Contributions in the first panel were focused primarily on transboundary water cooperation in the Middle East. The debate turned even more political when it came to Germany's responsibility regarding various water-related issues. Can a water sector dialogue between Israel and Palestine, for instance, be restricted to supposedly non-political topics? As Prof. Martin Trondalen proposed, Germany should leverage its position as a recognized mediator in the Middle East to more actively shape water policy in the region and mediate in the relevant conflicts. The important role played by Germany in the transfer of water-related technology and know-how was also highlighted and an appeal was made to use these activities proactively, as political instruments for conflict prevention and the stabilization of the region.

Regional water cooperation in Central Asia was another focus area. With the "Berlin Process", the German Foreign Office kick started an initiative using water as a means of intensified cross-border cooperation in Central Asia. It includes specific projects such as building irrigation facilities, but also training programmes, advisory inputs and the development and implementation of general guidelines for regional water management. The Forum demonstrated here too, that if stability and security in the region should be promoted time needs to be taken in an initiative's planning stage to consider how cooperation in the field of water can be transferred to other aspects and to higher political levels. (*Annabelle Houdret and Annika Kramer*)

For more information on the conference, please see <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/Aussenpolitik/ForumGF/22-GF/Wasser.html>

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming events are also regularly published at <http://www.ecc-platform.org/>

"The Security Implications of Europe's Energy Thirst" in Brussels (25 May)

This event focuses on energy security in the context of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Topics on the agenda include Russia's emergence as the primary purveyor of natural gas for the European market; strategic relations with Russia over the proposed Nabucco Pipeline and the South Stream Pipeline; and in light of the fact that Iranian resources are economically best suited to source the Nabucco Pipeline how the West should respond to Iranian threats who want to use energy for political gain. The second session addresses security's role in the race to the Arctic in opening potential new trading routes between Asia and North America.

Further information about the event is available at: <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Events/Detail/?ord633=grp1&lng=en&id=98242>

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"International Conference on Water Resources" in Langkawi, Malaysia (26-27 May)

The International Conference on Water Resources (ICWR-09) is organized by the Technical University of Malaysia. Its main focus is how to cope with and adapt to the impacts of climate change. It seeks to offer a platform to bring forward research findings, case studies, success stories, recent advances in planning and design methodologies and examples of improved water management policies, institutions, strategies and practices.

For more information, please see <http://seminar.spaceutm.edu.my/icwr2009/>

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"Air Power and the Environment - The Ecological Implications of Modern Air Warfare" in Cranwell, UK (26 - 27 August)

This conference addresses the concepts and practices of modern air power and their environmental implications. It specifically discusses strategies to prevent the environmental ramifications of war, alternative fuel sources for air forces as well as targeting strategies for oil and industrial infrastructure. The conference is designed for practitioners, policymakers, academics as well as university students.

Further information about the event is available at:

<http://www.airpowerstudies.co.uk/august09conference.htm>

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IN BRIEF

Humanitarian aid system at risk, case studies on peacebuilding and water governance published

A recent report by the international agency Oxfam projects that in six years the number of **people affected by climatic crises will increase by 54 percent** to 375 million people. This threatens to drastically overwhelm the humanitarian aid system. The expected rise is due to a combination of entrenched poverty and people migrating to densely populated slums, which are prone to the increasing number of climatic events. This is compounded by the political failure to address these risks and a humanitarian aid system that is unprepared.

Further information about the report, please click here:

<http://www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/pressrelease/2009-04-21/increase-number-people-affected-climate-disasters>

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The first phase of the EU-financed **Initiative for Peacebuilding** was completed in April. Consisting of ten partners, led by British NGO International Alert, one main topic of the consortium is the role of regional cooperation on environment, economy and natural resources for peacebuilding. The four case studies cover the African Great Lakes, Andes, Middle East and South Caucasus. A Synthesis Report summarizes the main conclusions.

The material can be found here:

http://www.initiativeforpeacebuilding.eu/Environment_Natural_Resources_Economy.php

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In the recently published book, "**Transboundary Water Governance in Southern Africa**", edited by Larry A. Swatuk and Lars Wirkus, authors analyze how a framework of rules, norms and procedures for the management of all 'international rivers' emerged and discuss the issue in the context of a number of case studies. They conclude that while the world's states seem to be moving steadily toward an accepted framework, the de facto use of much of the world's shared freshwater resources remains outside this mostly ideal-typical framework.

Further information on the book and an order form are available here:

<http://www.nomos-shop.de/productview.aspx?product=10923>

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