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EPICENTERS OF CLIMATE AND SECURITY: THE NEW GEOSTRATEGIC LANDSCAPE OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

4th Interdisciplinary Deserts Conference

School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford

South Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3QY, UK

9 June, 2017

15:30 – 15:33 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO REPORT & SESSION: This event explores a new multi-author volume by the Center for Climate and Security titled: “Epicenters of Climate and Security: The New Geostrategic Landscape of the Anthropocene.” These epicenters are “nodes of systemic risks” in the global security environment that share similar characteristics, and are driven by a changing climate. Authors of the various articles in the volume will discuss this concept in detail, focusing on both the geographies explored in their respective articles, and the connections between them.

Shiloh Fetzek, Senior Fellow for International Affairs
The Center for Climate and Security (CCS)

15:33-15:38 (exact length TBD) EPICENTERS OF CLIMATE AND SECURITY VIDEO

15:38 – 16:05 REPORT AUTHOR DISCUSSION – EPICENTERS OF THE NEW GEOSTRATEGIC LANDSCAPE AND TOOLS FOR MANAGING SYSTEMIC RISKS

Report authors will discuss the concept of “epicenters of climate and security,” including looking at how climate change interacts with the existing geostrategic landscape, how it will generate new stresses - some potentially unprecedented, and how climate-exacerbated stress to one geographic location can have impacts thousands of miles away, and can spill over into higher order security scenarios. Report authors will also examine the need for better managing these systemic risks.

Dr Troy Sternberg, University of Oxford, CCS Advisory Board

Sinead O’Sullivan, Harvard Business School, CCS Research Fellow

Shiloh Fetzek, The Center for Climate and Security, Senior Fellow for International Affairs

Kaleem Hawa, University of Oxford, CCS Research Fellow

Dr Chad Briggs, GlobalInt LLC



16:05 – 16:50 SYSTEMIC RISK MANAGEMENT TOOLS EXERCISE

The complexity of how epicenters of climate and security intersect with the geostrategic landscape creates a need for new tools for policy-makers in order to prepare for and mitigate these risks. As such, this exercise will bring together practitioners and regional experts to explore scenario and vulnerability assessments tools available for managing systemic risks and invite input into how they can be improved. This exercise is part of an ongoing initiative by the workshop hosts to refine the tools needed to manage systemic risks.

The exercise will be a three-phase interactive process:

- 1) Exploring trends, shocks and cascading consequences – what trends will impact participants' sectors (e.g. on 10-year and/or longer horizons), how might these intersect, what are the potential cascading consequences. These trends and shocks will be centred on, but not limited to, desert-related themes.
- 2) Revisions based on discussions of the Anthropocene - An exploration of how trends from Phase 1 may be impacted by climatic changes, drawing from authors' and practitioners' expertise on how climate can interact with other trends, e.g. nonlinearities, black swans etc.
- 3) Building scenarios and vulnerability assessments - Participants evaluate/rank which trends they believe are most likely to occur or may have the greatest potential impacts. These can form the building blocks of vulnerability assessments and scenarios that incorporate multiple items from the ranked list of probable/impactful consequences and trends. These wouldn't be formally fleshed out into narratives, but explored through discussion.