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Reconceptualizing Security: Global Environmental and Climate Change as new Security Dangers and Concerns

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Abstract

This paper will assess the manifold efforts to securitize *global environmental change* (GEC) as security dangers and concerns for national and human security what poses a new ‘survival dilemma’ for those who are highly socially vulnerable due to the impact of natural hydro meteorological hazards whose number and intensity has increased and are predicted to increase further due to the anthropogenic climate change.

In the U.S. nearly as many people died due to the impact of Hurricane Katrina in August 2006 as of the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001. But the perception of these two cases as security concerns has differed not only between many governments within NATO but also among the people in Europe and in North America. The ‘securitization’ (Waeber 1995, 2008, 2008a) of GEC has fundamentally differed and prevented so far effective global counter measures to adapt to and mitigate against the consequences of this new security threat where the enemy is us: our production and consumption patters as well as our way of life.

Climate change as a new human and national security danger and concern poses new global equity problems between those countries and people that have contributed most to GEC and the survival of those poor people – especially in the South – whose livelihood and survival is directly threatened and who lack the resources for counter measures. The key thesis of this paper is that the turn towards the anthropocene requires a fundamental reconceptualizing of security as a result of a multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary process where natural and social scientists cooperate contributing to an anticipatory learning to prevent that the business as usual scenarios on climate change become reality with all its impact on global security policy.