

## PROJECTING RESILIENCE – CLIMATE SECURITY IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

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### **Abstract – Practitioner talk.**

Every “Worldwide Threat Assessment” report from the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency since 2013 has addressed climate threats<sup>1</sup>. Dozens of reports have been issued by the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard addressing both the vulnerability of military assets and bases to climate change and the regional climate challenges the U.S. military may face in the Middle East, Africa, the Arctic, the Pacific, and elsewhere. These assessments go up through June 2019, updated from January 2019, when the most recent National Intelligence Strategy of the United States, from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, was released, stating: “Other powerful trends are likely to add complexity to the security environment. Rising demand for resources, rapid urbanization of littoral regions, the effects of climate change, the emergence of new strains of disease, and profound cultural and demographic tensions in several regions are just some of the trends whose complex interplay may spark or exacerbate future conflicts.” While NATO Allies and more advanced nations are preparing internally for resilience when faced with climate security challenges, we also acknowledge that climate change knows no boundaries. We speak often of building more resilient societies, but we are at times adversely impacted by climate security issues beyond our borders. The challenge therefore is not only to develop our national platforms and build resilient communities, but to project resilience in terms of sharing knowledge, best practices, and conditioning our neighbors and more vulnerable states to adapt to new threats and hazards. While NATO resilience baselines provide a method to measure national resilience, they are meant for the individual nation, the NATO member states, and not for nations on the periphery. Or should they be? One question we must ask is how we project resilience our national periphery and into the partners, contact countries, and even the operational environment. Two real experiences of conflict in Ukraine and mass migration from the Syrian conflict, with links to or at least attempted links to climate security, are real and recent events that nations have experienced and should prompt the need to build resilience internally, within nations, but to also extend that resilience into the periphery. This would include getting comfortable with the idea of using even more of a comprehensive approach and whole of government response to create or reinforce stability.

**Keywords:** climate security, national security, resilience, capacity building, international security.

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