

War and Nature II: On the Eco-Social Costs of Warfare and Military Build-Up [Panel 2]

Thursday, 19 June 2025 09:00 (1h 30m)

How do war and military build-up wound socio-environmental relations and landscapes? What are the consequences of war – its making and preparation – for nature, ecologies, and environmental inequalities and vulnerabilities? What histories, memories and knowledges of environmental issues and changes are produced along the before- and aftermaths of armed violence? And what are the political implications thereof for seriously tackling contemporary ecological crises? For this session, split across three related panels, we hear from contributors that recognise and expand upon growing scholarly interest in these questions, exploring the multiple entanglements between militarisation, practices/ rationalities of warfare, and the environment. Special attention is dedicated to the multi-scalar politics of militarisation, extractivism and socio-environmental destruction, from local ecologies to global climate breakdown. The panels aim to explore how International Relations, and critical security/military studies in particular, can build on emerging studies in (geo)political ecology, environmental anthropology and critical geography addressing war and the Earth.

We depart from a refutation of the tendency among scholars and practitioners to promote apolitical, atheoretical and non-empirically driven distinctions between war's human and environmental costs, such as the 'climate security' and 'threat multiplier' narratives so favoured by contemporary policymakers and military actors. Further, the panels aim to expand critical scholarly knowledge of the emergence of 'net zero militaries', 'green war' and 'sustainable arms', inquiring into the socio-environmental wounds of military 'greening'. Two closely linked sides of scholarly inquiry emerge here: on the one hand, the panels inquire into the socio-environmental costs of late-modern war, rising militarism and geopolitical contestation; on the other, they dig into the encroachment of military actors, infrastructures, technologies and interests into climate action spaces and green transition trajectories. What are the implications of a 'military green transition' for the pursuit of eco-socially just global futures?

The panels approach the war and nature nexus through a great range of angles, including (not limited to):

- Geographies and ecologies of war and militarism
- Green war, green violence and the militarisation of conservation
- Carbon footprint of war and militarism
- The before- and aftermaths of technologies of violence (e.g. extractivism, environmental damage, public health etc.)
- Green and military sacrifice zones
- 'Green Militarism' and military responses to climate change
- Climate securitisation and/or climate change and geopolitics
- Militarisation of green transition supply chains and new extractive frontiers
- Ecocide and/ as a weapon of war
- Future war and the climate (AI, automation, digitalisation, human enhancement, etc.)
- Socio-environmental struggles and resistance in the wake of/against militarism and extractivism
- War, militarism and eco-social justice/just transitions
- Organising, activism and art on the military-ecological nexus
- Peace-making and anti-militarism for climate and eco-social justice

Track Classification: Environment and Climate Politics Working Group