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The Climate Dimensions of the UK's National Security Strategy 2025

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The UK's 2025 National Security Strategy positions climate and nature as central to national security and economic resilience, pledging to "restore the UK's position as a climate leader on the world stage." At the same time, the strategy also foregrounds state-based threats, especially Russia, and announces a significant increase in defence and security spending. This dual positioning raises critical questions about how climate and environmental concerns are (or are not) embedded in Britain's short and long-term concept of national security.

This panel brings together researchers and civil society experts to examine the climate dimensions of the 2025 Strategy across multiple levels: the strategic (how climate risks are framed in relation to geopolitical and economic priorities), the institutional (how spending and capabilities align, or fail to align, with climate goals), and the societal (how security policies will affect communities and intergenerational fairness).

In keeping with the conference theme, "Is International Studies Ready for What Comes Next?", we interrogate what kinds of methods and interdisciplinary thinking are needed to understand national security in the Anthropocene. Does the strategy's framing represent a genuine shift, or a rhetorical adaptation? How can International Studies scholars bring climate science and environmental justice into mainstream debates about UK security? And what new pedagogies or research approaches can move us beyond siloed understandings of 'security' and 'sustainability'? By examining climate security through lenses including gender, conflict impact, civil society accountability, and military emissions, this panel will challenge traditional security orthodoxies and demonstrate the importance of interdisciplinary, justice-centred approaches to governing collective security in a warming world.

Track Classification: Security Policy and Practice