

Climate Change and International Order (I)

Wednesday 3 June 2026 09:00 (1h 30m)

Today we are seeing significant challenges and shifts both in the overall structure, dynamics and norms of international politics, and in the world's climate and associated climate mitigation, adaptation and other responses. Thus on the one hand, contemporary international politics is characterised by, amongst other things, heightened great power and regional political rivalries, an increase in major armed conflicts and military spending, weakened multilateralism, widespread impunity, and a rising tide of authoritarian, nationalist and far-right political projects. And on the other hand, the current climate conjuncture is marked, somewhat contradictorily, by the breaching of the 1.5C warming threshold, continuing rises in fossil fuel production, the rapid if uneven development of low-carbon energy infrastructures and supply chains, and a widespread stalling if not reversal of climate measures and ambitions.

But what are the relationships between these two sets of shifts and challenges, and with what implications? How are global political shifts affecting or even determining climate change and climate action, and with what limits? In what ways, if at all, is climate action progressing independently from, or irrespective of, mounting international political challenges? How, conversely, are climate change and climate mitigation, adaptation and other measures affecting or even transforming international political structures and dynamics? How are such connections between climate change, climate action and international order likely to unfold in future? And what are the political, strategic and other implications of these linkages, however understood?

This panel, the first of two, will address these themes using a range of cases, scales, and theoretical and methodological approaches.

Track Classification: Environment and Climate Politics Working Group