

Pathways from climate change to conflict in U.S. Central Command

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Résumé ou extrait : An analysis of how climate change could lead to conflict is presented in this report. Although climate-related conflict can occur anywhere in the world, the focus of this report is on how this process has occurred and continues to evolve in the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility (AOR). Much of the CENTCOM AOR is already coping with environmental stress caused by climate change and environmental management practices. Many of the factors associated with conflict (such as weak institutions and hybrid regimes) are present in the AOR, leaving the region vulnerable to the phenomenon of climate-related conflict. The authors begin by presenting an examination of what the academic literature identifies as causal pathways that lead from climate hazards to different types of conflict: intrastate conflict (also known as civil conflict) and interstate conflict. After identifying the causal pathways, the authors analyze three cases of climate-related conflict in the CENTCOM AOR. The purpose of this research is to support CENTCOM leadership, planners, and intelligence officers to prepare for a future security environment that is affected by climate change. Understanding the causal pathways from climate change to conflict should enable CENTCOM to anticipate how changes in the physical environment may reverberate in the security environment and when an area may be on a path to conflict or full-blown war that could lead to CENTCOM intervention. The report is the second in a series focused on climate change and the security environment.

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