

RSIS Non-Traditional Security (NTS)

Year In Review 2013



CENTRE FOR NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY STUDIES



**S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL
OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

A Graduate School of Nanyang Technological University

RSIS NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY (NTS) *YEAR IN REVIEW 2013*

CENTRE FOR NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY (NTS) STUDIES
S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (RSIS)
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The devastation visited upon Leyte, the Philippines, by Super Typhoon Haiyan, November 2013.

UNHCR / R. Rocamora

Message from the Dean

Dear Readers,

The year drew to a close with Super Typhoon Haiyan devastating the Philippines. Extreme weather events are not only becoming more frequent. They are increasing in magnitude around the world. Yet, action at the global level on climate change remains anaemic. Concerted global and regional action on such cross-cutting issues remains difficult, partly because they impinge on issues of sovereignty and responsibility, and also because of the multitude of interests that clamour for a voice.

The way forward rests with countries being willing to cooperate with each other for the common regional and global good. The study of non-traditional security (NTS) contributes to this by framing the range of issues that require collective action that goes beyond narrow national interests. Work on NTS also serves to foreground the frameworks and processes that could help to impel such action.

RSIS is pleased to be at the forefront of this effort, and we hope that this RSIS NTS Year in Review goes some way towards teasing out the complexities and challenges, so as to provide you with an idea of where the region and the world are at on these issues. It is my hope that you will find this RSIS NTS Year in Review useful.

Ambassador Barry Desker

Dean

S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

Message from Head of Centre

Dear Readers,

As ASEAN forges ahead with regional integration and the ambitious goal of creating an ASEAN community of nations and peoples, it is more important than ever before to understand the common challenges faced by states and populations in the region.

This year alone, several issues made headlines in the region. The emergence of a new coronavirus similar to SARS in the Middle East and bird flu in China prompted warnings of possible pandemic spread. A serious case of haze led to a regional blame game among Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. Continuing leaks at the Fukushima nuclear power plant again raised worries of safety and the need for preventive action. The Rohingya issue in Myanmar also escalated.

That is not to say that there has been no progress. Countries are increasingly recognising that transnational issues, which threaten security, and thus stability and development, cannot be tackled in isolation. There are also a growing number of platforms for regional dialogues on food, water, energy, health and environmental issues.

In focusing on the common threads and threats that bind the region, this RSIS NTS Year in Review hopes to weave relevant insights from both theory and practice, and thus contribute to raising the level of discussion.

Associate Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony

Head

Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies

S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

Key NTS Events 2013

JAN

Protests against sexual violence following the gang rape of a 23-year old student spread from India to Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan – all countries with high levels of violence against women.

Food safety authorities in Ireland found horsemeat in beef burgers, sparking the 'Horsemeat Scandal' that unfolded across the world over the course of several months. [p. 13]

The President of Myanmar unilaterally declares a ceasefire with the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) ahead of an international donor conference. Within two days, the Myanmar army had attacked KIA strongholds, heralding false starts to the peace process. [p. 16]

A humanitarian crisis developed in South Sudan after a four-month drought and heavy rains wiped out crops and brought on a food crisis.

Riots broke out in Dhaka ahead of the verdict of the International Crimes Tribunal against Jamaat-e-Islami party leader Abdul Quader Molla, starting weeks of violence.

China issued its first ever Guidelines for Environmental Protection in Foreign Investment and Cooperation, which apply to the country's overseas investments. [p. 39]

FEB

The government-appointed Rakhine State Conflicts Investigation Commission failed to address the causes of the violence against the Rohingya and reinforced prejudice by referring to them as 'Bengalis'. [p. 17]

North Korea said it would restart a nuclear reactor capable of producing plutonium at the Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center, which had been closed in 2007. This escalated to become the 2013 Korean crisis.

Violence erupted in China's Xinjiang province, resulting in 21 deaths, including 15 government casualties of whom 10 were ethnic Uighurs, 3 Han Chinese and 2 ethnic Mongolians.

MAR

Malaysia declared the followers of Jamalul Kiram III, the pretender to the Sultanate of Sulu, 'terrorists', after a stand-off of nearly a month. The group had landed in the Malaysian state of Sabah in February. The situation was only resolved at the end of June, with a decisive Malaysian victory. [p. 18]

Japan became the first country to extract natural gas from frozen methane hydrate, the first successful example of such an effort.

A new pope was elected. Pope Francis' early statements indicate his intention to build inter-faith bridges and focus on the marginalised in society.

APR

MAY

Authorities in China arrested 900 people in connection to a fake meat scandal, which passed off fox, mink and rat as mutton.

Malaysia's ruling party secured 60 per cent of parliamentary seats in the country's general election with 47 per cent of the popular vote. Widespread protests challenging the election results were seen across Malaysia.

Chinese authorities revealed that they will begin work on what will be the world's tallest dam despite criticisms from scientists and environmental activists. [p. 37]

The Boston Marathon bombings took place in the US, killing 3 people and injuring an estimated 264 others.

JUN

The world experienced the hottest June ever recorded.

Flash floods and landslides in northern India and parts of Nepal and Tibet killed more than 5,700 people and trapped over 20,000.

Forest fires in Indonesia resulted in extremely high levels of air pollution in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. **[pp. 20, 31]**

JUL

Disputed elections in Cambodia saw Prime Minister Hun Sen returned to power and demonstrations supporting the return of Sam Rainsy, a leading opposition figure.

An emergency was declared at Fukushima as contaminated water breached an underground barrier meant to keep it out of the sea. Radiation levels reached a new high in September, up to 18 times higher than previously thought. **[p. 32]**

The number of Syrian child refugees forced to flee the war and violence reached 1 million, according to UN agencies.

AUG

SEP

India adopted the National Food Security Bill, which promises access to food for all.

At the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference in Vienna, China, India and South Korea announced that they are looking into building more nuclear power plants. **[p. 34]**

Australia launched Operation Sovereign Borders to stop boats carrying asylum seekers.

The Laotian government notified the Mekong River Commission (MRC) that it would proceed to construct the 260MW Don Sahong Dam, despite opposition. **[p. 37]**

OCT

Researchers at the University of Hawaii at Manoa caused a storm with the suggestion that the year 2047 will mark a climate 'tipping point'. The study was published in the peer-reviewed journal, *Nature*. **[p. 28]**

Tropical cyclone Phailin swept the Bay of Bengal before making landfall in the Indian state of Odisha, displacing over a million people.

Saudi Arabia was elected to the UN Security Council and immediately rejected its seat to become the first country to do so in protest at the body's ineffectiveness regarding the conflicts in the Middle East.

NOV

Carbon dioxide levels hit a new record high, according to the UN World Meteorological Organization's annual bulletin.

Super Typhoon Haiyan made landfall in the Philippines, killing thousands and displacing many more. The typhoon also led to loss of corn, rice and sugarcane crops. **[pp. 8, 29]**

At the UN climate talks in Warsaw (COP19), 132 poor countries walked out during talks on 'loss and damage' compensation. The conference, after over-stretching by more than a day, ended with a consensus 'to work towards curbing emissions as soon as possible'. **[p. 28]**

On Security and Governance: Bringing Institutions Back In

Mely Caballero-Anthony

The year 2013 saw Asia's benign security landscape buffeted on several fronts. Strong headwinds came from rising tensions between the major powers, particularly the US and China. The much-hyped US 'pivot' to Asia heightened competition between the two powers, and this was aggravated by Beijing's more aggressive stance towards her ASEAN neighbours over the territorial disputes in the South China Sea, and towards Japan over the Senkaku islands. Meanwhile, nuclear tensions in the Korean Peninsula remain, with no clear end in sight.

Also sweeping the region were human security issues brought on by the string of environmental and natural disasters that hit several communities in the region. Topping the list was the catastrophic Super Typhoon Haiyan that hit the Philippines in November. Unprecedented winds of 315km/h pummelled the country's coasts and islands, leaving a trail of devastation, and causing an estimated 1.8 million to be displaced and a death toll of over 5,000 and counting. So ferocious was the storm that at ground zero, disaster first-responders also became victims of the storm. Several months before that, several ASEAN states had

had to grapple with severe transboundary haze caused by forest fires in Indonesia, which exposed affected countries to heightened health risks and economic costs.

Many more can be added to the list, including the uncertainties surrounding the fragile global economic recovery. Asia has not been immune to the downside risks of the ongoing eurozone debt crisis and a weak US economic recovery, and according to the International Monetary Fund, the global economy may remain stuck in low gear for a prolonged period. For a developing Asia, these trends continue to cast a long shadow over the prospect of bringing more inclusive and sustainable growth to a region where inequality, unemployment and corruption are felt and need to be addressed. Concomitant with this pessimistic economic outlook are the risks of rising societal tensions as people feel alienated from their governments, with the latter losing their legitimacy as citizens lose confidence in their ability to govern.

And these are just the latest in a series of shocks and uncertainties over recent years. We live in a world of turbulence, of rising insecurity, and yes, *angst*.

Sources of Angst

Many of these sources of uncertainty are directly or indirectly the result of permanent structural changes, in global demographics and in the world economy. Rising populations and growing economies are resource-hungry. Such resource demands in turn create other

problems, such as environmental degradation and greenhouse gas emissions. These trends can only mean that the world now faces multiple, interconnected non-traditional threats. Chief among them are what I term the WEF trilogy: water, energy and food.

Water

Today, around 1.2 billion people, or almost one-fifth of the world's population, live in water-scarce areas. By 2025, just a little over a decade away, over

two-thirds of the world's population could be living under conditions of water stress. Driving this crisis are population growth, expanding cities and rising

energy production to meet consumption growth, all of which require more water. It is projected that global demand for water could increase by as much as 40 per cent over the next two decades. At the same time, supply of water is on the decline. Deforestation, pollution and unsustainable mining of groundwater, among others, have taken their toll. Climate change is another significant factor. In North Africa and Australia, climate-related changes have already reduced freshwater supply.

Energy

On the energy front, rising demand continues to be a challenge. The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that global energy demand will increase by at least 40 per cent by 2030. In Asia, energy consumption is expected to grow at an annual rate of 4.4 per cent, with Southeast Asia's own energy demand expected to rise by a tremendous 80 per cent between now and 2035. These trends are again fuelled by expanding populations and economies.

Meeting that demand will be a challenge. Traditional exporters of fossil fuels such as the Middle East are increasingly conflict-prone. Nuclear energy is an option, one that is now being enthusiastically

Such pressures, from the demand side as well as the supply side, are likely to also push transboundary waters into global focus. There is already growing speculation that Asia's shared waters could act as flashpoints for conflicts. With China and India projected to be among the countries most in need of more water, some have raised the spectre of 'water wars' over the rivers originating in the Hindu-Kush Himalaya Basin.

explored by some countries in Southeast Asia, but safety concerns remain. At the same time, renewable energy technologies have largely not reached the point where they can be implemented on the massive scale required to replace fossil fuels or nuclear energy.

Energy use is a critical global issue, not just because of demographic or economic factors, but also because of its link to climate change. Many emerging economies rely heavily of fossil fuels to drive their economic growth. China and India, for example, are among the top five carbon dioxide emitters in the world. As these economies grow, so will their share of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Food

Volatility in food prices continues to be at historically high levels, suggesting that the 2007–2008 food price crisis was not a one-time event. Long-term demand forces are projected to continue to exert upward pressure on prices. These trends will be particularly devastating for the poor. According to the World Bank, an additional 44 million people fell into extreme poverty and hunger when prices spiked in 2010.

Rapidly growing and more affluent populations will also put tremendous stress on food production. Global demand for food is projected to double by 2030, which would require food production to increase by 70 per cent. The world's ability to increase production

of food is however threatened by several factors. The thirst for energy has led to, for instance, grains such as corn being sold for production of biofuel. Also, approximately 25 per cent of the world's agricultural land is already highly degraded, and the sustainability of fishing systems is in question.

Added to these is again the significant threat posed by climate change. According to one UK-based research institution, with the impact of climate change kicking in, the risk of severe drought for China and India is only 10 years away. These two countries are the world's largest food producers. They also have the world's largest populations. All these dynamics combine make food insecurity a very real threat.

Whither Global Institutions?

Against these worrying trends, strong global and regional institutions are needed more than ever. As the ability of states to address many of these security issues on their own is reduced, global interdependence has increased. However, it also at precisely this time that action at the international level appears to have been hamstrung. Global institutions seem to have become mere bystanders on the global stage, held in paralysis by narrow national interests, and differing norms and values.



Luka Tomac.

Climate activists protesting the lack of ambition at the UN climate talks in Warsaw, November 2013.

The climate negotiations are a case in point. The annual UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meetings have been marked by partisan posturing and lack of legally binding decisions on key issues – this despite rising evidence that climate change is taking hold, and greenhouse gas emissions must be urgently dealt with.

Bringing Institutions Back In

Despite these setbacks, institutions remain critical in managing and mitigating the impact of global security challenges. And indeed, there are certainly small, but promising, developments at different levels.

The Group of 20 (G20), for example, has acted to address food price and demand pressures, creating in 2011 an Agricultural Market Information System and a forum to enable it to respond faster to volatile food price situations. The G8 launched a multibillion-dollar alliance for food security in partnership with various stakeholders in 2012. The three major international food agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organization

At the 19th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in Warsaw (COP19) held in November this year, there was a lack of progress in ironing out the elements of a new agreement on legally binding emissions targets slated for adoption in 2015 and scheduled to come into effect in 2020. Despite the fact that the meetings were held in the throes of the devastating typhoon in the Philippines and Vietnam, the meetings have not shown any remarkable shifts in the positions of many developed countries. Instead, countries like Australia, Canada and Japan backtracked on their pledges to cut emissions by 2020. Japan's move was apparently due to its inability to meet its commitment. Having had to shut down most of its nuclear reactors, Japan has had to turn to conventional fossil fuels.

On the energy front, in the wake of Fukushima, the shortcomings of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have come into sharp focus. The IAEA has drawn severe criticism for its ineffectiveness. Its standards and regulations are not legally binding, and the institution has limited oversight powers. Fukushima also highlighted its lack of capacity in the area of emergency response. Its response system is fragmented and incoherent, largely as a result of the lack of political will among member states to improve the organisation's institutional capacity.

of the UN (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) – all have a range of significant initiatives to address food and agriculture concerns.

In East Asia, ASEAN has moved to address a major source of food insecurity – volatility of rice prices. The ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) was launched in 2011, with major commitments from South Korea, Japan and China, as well as pledges to increase contributions from major ASEAN rice-producing countries. ASEAN has also adopted the ASEAN Integrated Food Security

(AIFS) Framework which focuses, among others, on promoting sustainable food production and encouraging investments in the agricultural sector, as well as addressing emerging challenges in food production and supply. Moreover, within the broader framework of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, members pledged to refrain from imposing new export bans.

Hence, despite frustrations at global inaction, there are some robust initiatives at the regional level which underscore the critical role of institutions. While there is an impasse at the UNFCCC climate change negotiations, regional coordination in addressing the impact of more frequent and intense weather events has been strengthened. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) has been a major agenda item for ASEAN and the wider East Asian region since 2010. In fact, within the frameworks of the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Plus and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), HADR exercises are held annually among the militaries in the region, with the participation of international humanitarian agencies.

To step up efforts in disaster preparedness and response, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) was launched in 2011. The ASEAN-Emergency Rapid

Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) was also formed, and tasked with conducting rapid assessments of a disaster and coordinating with the AHA Centre on the mobilisation and deployment of regional assets, capacities and humanitarian goods and assistance to affected areas.

The challenge for regional frameworks is now to strengthen current levels of cooperation to make them more effective. The ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution is a good case of a delay in one country's ratification of an agreement affecting accountability and enforcement of mechanisms to address transboundary environmental challenges.

The problems faced by institutions can also be addressed by promoting multi-stakeholder cooperation in addressing transnational challenges. The private sector and civil society groups must be made part of the conversations on finding solutions to emerging major issues facing the world today. The UN Global Compact (UNGC) and the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meetings both attract representation from a wide cross-section: governments, private sector and civil society. This is something that Asia, particularly Southeast Asia, may do well to consider soon. In facing the many cross-cutting issues challenging governance today, such multi-level engagement would raise the urgency to compel action on many fronts.

Institutions would benefit from the participation of diverse stakeholders – governments, the private sector and civil society – like that seen in the annual meetings of the World Economic Forum (WEF).



Sebastian Derungs

Binding Chains of ASEAN's Food Security

Belinda Chng

The last decades have seen the forces of globalisation sweep the world, increasing the degree of interconnectivity between sectors, countries and regions, and importantly, also increasing the interdependencies between them. The salience of these features for food security was however not fully appreciated until the 2007–2008 global food crisis, which saw not only prices of key food commodities soaring, but also riots in 47 countries as a result.

The crisis brought home to states that in a globalised economy, food shortages in one country could well precipitate disruptions in supply to another country due to competition for the same goods. This is especially so for major food commodities such as wheat, corn and soybean. The crisis, in underlining the risks engendered by agrifood interdependencies and their accompanying spillover effects, accentuated the need for policy designs that take into account international developments.

At the same time, the continuing migration of rural residents to urban areas, that is itself linked to globalisation, has also had ramifications for food security.



1-5 Design & Manufacture.

Food now has to be produced and transported efficiently to urban areas and made available at affordable prices, while ensuring the same for rural residents.

These new connections and dependencies, and their associated risks, are manifested through the tremendous shifts in the nature of agrifood supply chains, both at the global and at the regional and local levels. For Southeast Asia, whose phenomenal economic growth over recent decades has placed it at the centre of globalisation and urbanisation dynamics, such changes raise critical questions about food security risks and vulnerabilities, and increase the urgency of finding effective means of meeting those challenges.

Transformation of Supply Chains

Multiple and complex linkages now exist among numerous markets, as do thriving networks of supply chain actors. At the global level, exponential growth in economic linkages and interdependencies between countries since the 1990s has enabled producers and buyers to establish production bases in locations with low-cost inputs and labour. Concurrently, as a result of massive investments by the private sector, the way food is being produced, processed, packaged, transported

and distributed has changed dramatically. Rapid technological developments are increasing the efficiency of the processing sector. Large wholesalers are becoming agricultural providers, operating clusters of agricultural services such as farm management. The food industry is also witnessing greater participation by multinationals in logistics networks, and increased port, road and rail connectivity. At the consumer end, supermarkets are on the rise, particularly in urban areas.

Supply Chain Vulnerabilities

As the supply chain takes on global dimensions, several new risks come into play. First, there are now a larger number of firms involved, which also

increases the points of possible disruption. Second, the distance between the finished product and the different stages of production has increased. This

leads to lower discernibility and transparency, which impedes detection and response efforts in times of disruption. Third, local actions and developments in a supply chain may bring along global consequences, interlacing domestic and global interests that may sometimes be adversarial.

These risks were illustrated in February 2013 when Czech authorities discovered horsemeat in IKEA's meatballs, and the sale of meatballs was suspended worldwide. The tainted beef was traced a week later to a Swedish company that had supplied 10 per cent of the beef required for the production of the meatballs. That company had sourced its supply from two Polish slaughterhouses. Another example is the 2003 outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) on the Chinese mainland and in Hong Kong, which shut down major economic hubs and raised fears of a global epidemic after an initial cover-up by Chinese provincial authorities.

The changes in the nature of supply chains have also led to new vulnerabilities. In Asia, the increasing prevalence of supermarkets has immense implications for millions of smallholder farmers, for traditional shops and wet markets, as well for the food security of urban consumers. While

supermarkets may provide urban residents with higher quality, safer and cheaper produce, market participation by small farmers is lower. Also, while supermarkets offer those earning average incomes better economic and physical access to food, they often sell goods in larger packages than traditional shops or markets, and the poor may not have enough cash on hand to buy them.

In urban centres, market supply chains are now the main channels for the distribution of food, which means that their efficiency could affect availability and access to food, as well as how affordable food is for urban residents. For instance, according to a study by the International Food Policy Research Institute, as much as 50 to 57 per cent of food costs are the result of post-farm gate expenses, for example, at the processing and logistics stages.

At the same time, changes to Asia's food systems are having an impact on inputs to the supply chain. Land competition in rural zones is becoming more acute as biofuel and other non-food or partial-food production increases. These challenges are extending at a time when environmental stresses such as water scarcity, soil erosion, agricultural and industrial pollution and climatic changes threaten agricultural productivity.

Addressing the Challenges through ASEAN Initiatives

Food security constitutes an essential factor in achieving equitable development and a reduction of the development gap in the region under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). However,

the transformation of supply chains poses immense challenges to smallholder farmers and small-to medium-sized suppliers. Supply chains are becoming shorter as large food companies engage



*ST=Strategic Thrust

farmers directly, cutting out the role of the village trader or broker.

Within this context, the Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN Region (SPA-FS) could guide efforts to address the growing concern over supply vulnerabilities as well as the challenges faced by smallholder farmers and medium-sized intermediaries along the supply chain. Specifically, the region could leverage on the 'agricultural innovation' component of the ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework, a mechanism supported by the SPA-FS, which focuses

on promoting sustainable food production, encouraging investment in the agrifood sector, and identifying and addressing emerging food security issues.

Two key pathways towards sustainable food production and higher investment in the agrifood industries are first, mutually beneficial collaboration between smallholder farmers, medium-sized intermediaries and larger firms, and second, a 'meta-national' approach to ASEAN's food supply chain as the region begins to transform into an economically integrated market through the AEC.

Integrating SMEs into Supply Chains

Addressing supply vulnerabilities requires, to a large extent, resilience, which thrives on a diversity of roles and functions, decentralised distribution and retail points, an ability to self-organise based on demand, and adaptability in the face of change. Ultimately, a system is resilient when it is able to flex under stress and bounce back to its pre-existing condition when the stress is reduced or removed. Electronics giant Canon responded to a supply shortage of lithium battery chemicals and flash memory by diversifying production bases and input sources after eastern Japan, the epicentre of high-tech manufacturing, was hit by a tsunami. This ability to diversify, decentralise, self-organise and adapt was reflected in supply chains across the world as companies looked for alternate sources, with manufacturers of niche electronics components in mainland China, Taiwan, South Korea and Thailand reporting increased orders.

In Southeast Asia, integrating small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) into supply chains could be one way to increase the diversity of response, while strengthening the availability, quality and reliability of production inputs for larger agri-business firms and food manufacturers. According to a study by the Asian Development Bank Institute, SMEs in five ASEAN economies – Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam – currently have a rather low participation rate of 22 per cent in production networks as direct exporters or suppliers to multinationals, as compared to a rate of 72 per cent for large firms. This by no means suggests that SMEs play an insignificant role in the supply chain. They

provide inputs into the exports of large production firms, though the lack of firm-level data means such inputs are often under-recognised.

In the food sector, there are a number of entry points for participation by smallholder farmers and medium-sized intermediaries along the food supply chain, where opportunities exist to build specialisation, capacity and competitiveness. However, a key impediment for these firms may be difficulty in gaining access to credit and in achieving the level of innovation competence often necessary for participation in regional supply chains.



Source: Paul Teng (RSIS/NTU)

Collaboration with large firms to mutual benefit could be a means to facilitate the participation of smallholder farmers and medium-sized intermediaries. The case of Nestlé could be instructive. Nestlé recognised that its status as the world's leading food company was being challenged by the complexity of the supply chain and the quality of input materials. In an effort to secure reliable sources of raw materials while keeping an eye on quality, it worked directly with farmer cooperatives, providing training on agricultural sustainability and high-yielding seeds to farmers-turned-suppliers.

Besides benefiting from an increase in overall yields and income, opportunities could open up for farmers to move up the value chain, and gradually, towards farm



Patsy Lynch / FEMA

specialisation. Likewise, investments by large companies in post-harvest technologies and cold chain facilities could help support medium-sized intermediaries in the storage and transportation of perishable food across the region. In the context of Southeast Asia, large companies with the capacity for similar collaborations include Sime Darby (Malaysia), CP Foods (Thailand), and Wilmar and Olam (Singapore).

The Meta-national Concept for ASEAN Food Security

On a strategic level, ASEAN could consider adopting a meta-national approach to supply chains, which is already seen in global supply chains but still not widely adopted in this region. Under this approach, supply chains would be commodity-based rather than country-based. They would be organised around the principle of comparative advantage, in which the location of any part of the supply chain is determined by the efficiency at a specific location. In other words, corporations may source for inputs into their food products from various countries, either within the region or globally, and harness returns beyond their own firms or home countries. Under this approach, there is scope for harmonised food production, processing and quality standards to become an accepted part of a comprehensive system for quality equivalency and transportability of foods across countries.

Under the AEC, ASEAN member states have committed to transforming 12 priority sectors, including agriculture

and fisheries, into an economically integrated market. As part of that integration, there are proposals to harmonise regulatory standards, remove non-tariff barriers to trade, liberalise tariffs, enhance connectivity and promote freer trade. Within this context, a meta-national approach towards supply chains could enable ASEAN to act as a single trade block when dealing with extra-ASEAN exporters and importers.

This approach would allow ASEAN countries, as global suppliers of key commodities, to better coordinate trade outflows. ASEAN countries, which are important importers of major commodities, would also be better placed to collectively tackle issues of stability of supply for key crops such as corn and soybean, and to become price-setters rather than price-takers for such crops, particularly if they also have the support of the Plus Three countries (China, Japan, South Korea).

Conclusion

The interdependent nature of food security, the dynamism of supply chains and the space offered by ASEAN's own institutional changes are creating both challenges and opportunities for the region. It is important that ASEAN countries recognise the shifting environment and position themselves to maximise the advantages and reap the full benefits of the AEC

as it comes into fruition. The role of SMEs in the food sector will be crucial in laying the foundation for food security and equitable development under the AEC. On a strategic level, the meta-national approach towards food supply chains should be explored, as it could help reinforce Southeast Asia's comparative advantage vis-à-vis other parts of the world.

Clashes and Compromise – Common Challenges for Peace in Southeast Asia

Alistair D.B. Cook

The year 2013 began with renewed attempts to resolve the many internal conflicts across Southeast Asia. Several rounds of talks between the Myanmar government and ethnic groups were held to bring the decades-long conflicts in the country to an end. Next door, the Thai government engaged in talks with a major Muslim group in southern Thailand to restart the peace process. Further south in Indonesia,

the Papuan Governor announced a new initiative called Special Autonomy Plus, a form of devolved administration intended to bring resolution to the protracted conflict in the area. In the southern Philippines, negotiations continued over the Moro autonomous area. Despite the hype, however, have the dynamics changed and reconciliation processes moved forward?

In The Thick of It

Optimism abounded in January that significant strides could be achieved on many of the domestic and regional challenges in Southeast Asia. Ahead of an international donor conference, the Myanmar government unilaterally declared a ceasefire with the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). However, within two days, the Myanmar army launched an assault against KIA positions, vividly illustrating that the policy pronouncements of the central government did not reflect the realities on the ground.

Yet this and subsequent rounds of ceasefire talks with the KIA did not affect the warming of ties between the Myanmar government and Western nations. Indeed, the lure of trade and investment opportunities overrode human security concerns. By April, the European Union (EU) had lifted sanctions against the country in an effort to increase its leverage. This is despite, as many civil society groups were quick to point out, the failure of Myanmar to meet the EU's own benchmarks for sanctions removal.

No less significant, but largely flying under the radar, is the return of an Asian middle power, namely Japan, to Myanmar. During the sanctions years, Japan had limited its involvement to low-level interactions such as humanitarian assistance. However, as the West began



IRIN Photos / flickr.

A camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Mindanao, southern Philippines. In July 2013, there were an estimated 15,746 people displaced by conflict and violence in the region.

to engage the Myanmar government, the Japanese reignited their extensive networks in the country, which had lain dormant for a decade or more. The Japanese involvement in the Thilawa special economic zone and as a facilitator in the national reconciliation process between the government and ethnic groups through the Nippon Foundation are two prominent examples. In a year when Myanmar headlines were largely dominated by individual ceasefire negotiations as well as a nationwide ceasefire by November, the emergence of Japan as a significant political and economic actor remains the untold story of the year.

Fear and Loathing

Whether mediation comes from Japan or actors closer to home, the persecution of minority groups and the need for representative governance solutions remain a common driver of internal conflicts in the region. While each internal conflict has multiple layers, the basic characteristics are plain to see. These conflicts are mainly found along but within international borders, with religious differences thrown into the mix. They involve Christianity and Islam in Indonesia's Papua province; Buddhism, Christianity and Islam in Myanmar; Christianity and Islam in the southern Philippines; and Buddhism and Islam in southern Thailand, which was a particularly pronounced layer throughout 2013.

While Myanmar's national reconciliation process engages with recognised 'national races', there remains community insecurity outside of this box. This was brought into sharp focus when the ethno-religious violence that originated in Rakhine state escalated and spread throughout the country, disproportionately affecting the minority Muslim population. The absence of fair legal systems coupled with ineffective implementation played a role in the continuing violence. Populist politics and ethno-nationalist sentiments also fed the tensions, as they target the fears of the dominant population that minority groups within the country or neighbouring states pose a security threat. Such strands mirror those seen elsewhere in the region. Lack of legal protection or recourse remains a major barrier to conflict resolution in Southeast Asia, and in the 2013 Cambodian and Malaysian general elections, populist and ethnic-based positions took centre stage.

Effective Governance in Sight?

With environmental management and natural resources gaining noticeable traction, policy developments, while remaining varied, overwhelmingly focused on broad commitments such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which prompts disclosure of revenues from the extraction of natural resources. Essentially, companies disclose what they have paid



Mathias Eck / EU ECHO

This Rohingya community in Myanmar live in tents provided by the government after having their dwellings and belongings burnt. They are afraid to return to their homes less than 100 metres away fearing a violent reaction from their Rakhine neighbours.

Separatist movements are another source of internal conflicts in the region, and have been framed as national security threats for decades. What is new in 2013, however, is the increasing salience given to governance of natural resources as a key variable in resolving such conflicts. The June meeting of the World Economic Forum on East Asia in Naypyidaw, Myanmar, included discussions on environmental management and natural resources. The meeting highlighted that exploitation of natural resources was an under-recognised driver of conflict in the region, and worldwide. Policy responses thus need to revisit the causes of conflict and re-evaluate the ways in which ownership and access to natural resources are determined. An assessment of the role these processes play in the protracted conflicts across the region provides a window of opportunity (but no panacea) in the push for peace and stability.

and governments disclose what they have received, and the two figures are reconciled. Myanmar announced its intention to sign the EITI by the end of 2013, joining Indonesia and the Philippines as signatories to the standard.

EITI commitments support the pursuit of peace across the region, and are to be welcomed. However, it



2013 World Economic Forum on East Asia in Naypyidaw, Myanmar. The staff of the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies contributed to the debate through an article on 'Community engagement and environmental management'.

must be recognised that a sole focus on economic imperatives without corresponding political discussions will limit the effectiveness and lifespan of the impacts of any initiative. This is attested by developments in Kachin, Myanmar, where a 17-year ceasefire that allowed for the development of natural resources broke down in 2011 primarily because the political negotiations needed to address fundamental governance issues had not been pursued. There is little doubt that the EITI, as a standard that recognises the importance of natural resource governance, will guide policy discussion in the region for the next few years. Nevertheless, if it is to have a long-lasting impact, EITI efforts must be part and parcel of a comprehensive approach that takes into account community concerns.

An additional development to peace negotiations in the region is the involvement of external parties. This has been gaining noticeable although not universal traction in the region. While external mediation is no guarantee of success and has the potential to fuel tensions, this mechanism serves as a transparency check for the negotiating parties. Within Southeast Asia, the mediation or facilitation function has been played by a variety of actors. Malaysia has been involved in the southern Philippines and southern Thailand. China and Japan have helped facilitate national reconciliation talks in Myanmar.

Indonesia plays a role as chair of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Peace Committee for Southern Philippines (OIC-PCSP).

Only the Papua conflict in Indonesia remains an outlier. To date, the Indonesian government maintains its own policies to resolve the issue, with external mediation being noticeable by its absence. However, given the protracted nature of the conflict, and the mediation efforts by itself and other ASEAN member states in similar situations elsewhere, external mediation offers an opening towards a comprehensive and sustainable solution to the conflict.

Oftentimes, the mediating state seeks to draw on its shared history with its neighbours as a bridging point between the conflicting parties. This can be both a blessing and a curse as there are notable limits to intra-ASEAN member state mediation. The Sulu insurgency in Sabah earlier this year illustrates this, as Malaysia was both a mediator in the southern Philippine conflict and a direct party involved as the problem spilled over into its territory.

While external mediation or facilitation has been used between national governments and separatist movements, it is absent from efforts to address inter-communal violence. Indeed, a move by the OIC to offer its 'good offices' to mediate and facilitate talks between the majority Buddhists and minority Muslims in Myanmar was rejected. The suggestion that the OIC take any role or establish a presence in Myanmar sparked nationwide protests led by a Buddhist monk, Wirantu, a sign of the deep-rooted suspicion that exists between the two communities.

In these different cases, there are common themes that emerge: the absence of an independent rule of law, the prevalence of personality politics in consolidating political systems as a result of slow or embryonic institutional development, and the potential for conflicts to spill over into other areas. As a result, the region will remain susceptible to extreme nationalism and populist politics, which will ensure that human insecurity in the region continues to be on the minds of many.

Forward Thinking

Southeast Asia remains a region of contradictions, where you have a state using diplomacy to mediate or facilitate other conflicts in the region, yet unable to resolve its own, to name but one instance. Added to this, the year 2013 offered some fundamental challenges to economic and political progress for a region in search of sustainable peace. These serve as a reminder that states in transition must commit to comprehensive reform and protect its citizens from fear and want. As we move forward into 2014, the trends visible in 2013 point us towards several emerging scenarios.

First, with the international community turning their eye to the region, particularly over economic opportunities, there will be a greater focus on transparency in the region's developing economies. This offers an opportunity to address some of the grievances that fuel internal conflict, particularly around the issues of ownership and access to natural resources. It also suggests that negotiating mechanisms to govern natural resources fairly will develop further

into the new year. Second, protest politics looks set to become more pronounced as a new generation of young people push the boundaries of established order in the region. This will result in ever greater shifts towards more representative political systems.

Alongside these generational shifts and mass protest movements will be the politics of division and the stoking of populist politics and nationalism, which will likely push states in different directions. As the region moves forward, the trends suggest that institutions will remain relatively weak, leaving room for the continuation of personality politics which feeds the re-emergent populism. With these opportunities and constraints in mind, there is a need over the coming year for voices of tolerance to be heard and leadership of conscience to be followed. It is through recognition of the importance of community involvement in decision-making and consensus-building as well as a commitment to the alleviation of fear and want that human security can be increased in Southeast Asia.

The Myitsone Dam on the Irrawaddy would affect traditional livelihoods such as gold panning. Opposition to the dam was a rallying point for the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) against the Myanmar central government and armed forces.



Severe Transboundary Haze Reminds the Region of Shared Environmental Challenges

J. Jackson Ewing

From mid- to late-June of 2013, fires burning in Indonesia cloaked Singapore and parts of Malaysia in a smoky haze. The fires, lit in efforts to clear land for profitable enterprises, combined with dry temperatures and south-westerly winds to create the most conspicuous transboundary environmental challenge to affect Southeast Asia in over a decade.

The haze exemplifies ways in which shared ecosystems can converge with intertwined political and economic forces to create challenges that defy clear responsibility or apparent solutions. Regional responses to the haze may therefore be a barometer of regional resolve and capacities to face a range of shared environmental challenges.

Indonesia's Tinder-box

Economic interests have spurred land clearance in Indonesia for decades. The two large islands of Sumatra and Kalimantan have lost nearly half of their forest cover since 1990, and the rate of forest clearance only appears to be increasing. Burning, traditionally used in slash-and-burn agriculture, is the approach favoured by small farmers and larger entities alike. It is quick and efficient, requires minimal labour, enriches soils in the short term and acts as a default strategy in lieu of affordable alternatives. With demand for products such as palm oil and pulpwood (for paper) on the rise, these processes are accelerating, fuelling transboundary haze as a result.

Indonesia's efforts to control forest clearance have often proved ineffectual in the face of strong economic drivers. The financial benefits offer powerful motivations to local actors to proceed with land clearance – no matter what policies emerge from Indonesia's national government, and no matter what the impacts of burning on the country and the region. These actors can include local government officials who have been known to collude with companies for economic and political gain. Meanwhile, deficient enforcement and prosecution capacities, pervasive corruption, expanding political decentralisation and the sprawling nature of the Indonesian archipelago magnify the challenges of reining in such activities.



Singapore and parts of Malaysia experienced highly hazy conditions for a more than a week in June 2013.

Changing environmental trends represent a further potential driver of haze. Past haze events have coincided with the El Niño phenomenon, which contributes to dry conditions and decreases in rainfall. There is a need now to also factor in climate change, which is expected to lead to higher temperatures and more pronounced dry periods in parts of Indonesia and Southeast Asia. It is still unclear exactly how El Niño will interact with the global warming trends, but if warmer and dryer conditions become more prevalent in haze-producing regions, the frequency and magnitude of haze events will likely increase.

Shared Problem, Shared Culpability

Haze originating in Indonesia costs Singapore and Malaysia millions of dollars in health expenses, lowered productivity, absenteeism and reduced consumer activity. This combines with less quantifiable impacts on quality of life to create a disruptive situation for the countries receiving haze pollution from abroad. The acute haze periods of June 2013 saw widespread complaints by affected citizenries along with calls to censure Indonesia. However, the sources of the haze problem – like the implications – extend beyond Indonesia's borders.

The expansion of pulpwood and oil palm production in Indonesia comes in response to global demand. Demand for paper has increased alongside economic growth throughout much of Asia, and emerging Asian markets have the most dynamic growth trajectories of any in the world. Palm oil is found in products from shampoos and cosmetics to candy bars and chewing gum. It can be used as a biofuel that produces energy more efficiently than many of its peers such as corn and sugarcane. It has also emerged as the most popular cooking oil in many developing countries around the world. Markets for palm oil are booming, and Indonesia and Malaysia have positioned themselves as global leaders in production – accounting for roughly 90 per cent of global supply between them. Indonesia has responded with national goals to rapidly expand the amount of land under oil palm cultivation, and firms operating in the archipelago are more than ready to make these goals a reality.

Many such firms have connections to Singapore and Malaysia, further complicating attempts to assign culpability for the haze. Land clearing activities occur on small, medium and large scales, with the lines dividing them becoming increasingly blurry. For example, satellite imagery suggests that roughly half of the fires causing the 2013 haze were on large land concessions held by corporate firms. The remaining fires were found on smaller concessions held largely by individuals and local conglomerates. However, these smaller actors often enter into contracts with powerful firms, which provide start-



Waks / flickr

Fires have been used to clear land in Indonesia for centuries, but the scale of these now-illegal burning activities has been expanding.

up loans, seeds, fertiliser and other inputs and collect the harvested products. Many of these firms have complex ownership structures, including investment sources in Malaysia and Singapore as well as listings on stock exchanges in those countries. Some processing of Indonesia's raw pulpwood and oil palm products likewise takes place outside of its borders, along with shipping, wealth management, business administration and other flow-on effects of producing land-intensive products.

The countries suffering the most acute impacts of the haze, Singapore and Malaysia, are therefore home to actors that benefit from its drivers. This situation has led some Indonesian officials to push back against criticisms during the 2013 haze events, and to argue that responsibility for the problem extends into the very countries experiencing the smoky fallout of land clearance. Being a quintessential shared environmental problem, haze has social, political and economic drivers that transcend national borders.

ASEAN to Clear the Air?

As such, it is unsurprising that haze has been on the ASEAN agenda since the early 1990s. Haze events in 1997–1998 saw the issue move up ASEAN’s list of priorities and led to the Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution in 2002. It has remained a part of regional conversations in the years hence, and is listed as a ‘priority area’ for environmental cooperation in the Blueprint for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community 2009–2015.

However, tangible success at mitigating haze has been fleeting at the ASEAN level. First, Indonesia has yet to ratify the 2002 agreement, likely because of a perception that it is being singled out as a culprit in what is in fact a shared problem and also fears of extending legal precedents that could lead to future adjudication. Indonesia has responded to the 2013 haze event with a pledge to ratify the agreement, but a firm timetable for this is yet to be seen. Second, there is little scope for accountability or enforceability in the

2002 agreement or subsequent ASEAN efforts. There are no mechanisms for sanctions or dispute settlement and limited monitoring capabilities in place. The latter was partially addressed in the 2013 meetings on the heels of the June haze event, but the actuation of new monitoring protocols remains a work in progress.

ASEAN is unlikely to shift towards a focus on enforcement, however, as this would be outside the bounds of the organisation’s character. The practical import of trying to legally censure haze-source countries appears anathema to the consensus-oriented approach favoured by ASEAN and its members. Efforts have rather focused on cooperation and developing accepted norms of behaviour throughout regional haze mitigation and response initiatives. While the 2013 events reveal the persistence of the haze problem in the face of these efforts, cooperation remains the only viable pathway forward to addressing haze and other transboundary environmental challenges in the region.



Haze brings with it significant economic, social and health costs.

Looking Forward

Reducing the threat of haze requires recognising and responding to the drivers of land clearance both within and beyond Indonesia's borders. For Indonesia, it is essential that it improve its spatial planning and land concession management practices. At present, different national ministries, local governments and private-sector actors can all operate with differing land concession maps. There are initiatives to produce one map accepted and used by all of these actors, and these efforts need to be supported by the necessary resources and political buy-in in order to succeed.

Indonesia could also expand both the carrots and sticks in place to encourage responsible land clearing practices. Incentives include tax breaks for meeting land management standards, performance rewards for local governors based on environmental track records and more effective certification of environmentally responsible products. Censure options could expand to greater use of permit cancellations, the transparent naming of companies found guilty of burning and further restrictions on the lands available for expanding pulpwood and oil palm cultivation. All of these efforts depend upon improvements in Indonesia's regulatory and enforcement capabilities as they relate to the haze, which will only result from actors at multiple levels and spheres of the government prioritising the issue.

Singapore and Malaysia can more proactively regulate the activities of companies operating in the relevant commodities sectors in Indonesia. However, the complex and at times opaque nature of these organisations, and the difficulty of ascertaining what actors are responsible for what burning in Indonesia,

makes this task difficult. More impactful actions are possible, however, through effective forensic strategies for illuminating burning activities and levels of political buy-in that make clear the seriousness of the issue. These countries can also continue to offer assistance to Indonesia in its promotion of no-burn land management practices, and contribute to efforts to preserve forests and peatland in Indonesia in the name of climate change mitigation.

More broadly, however, the challenges wrought by the haze require shifts in thinking among Southeast Asian countries that respect increasing ecological and economic interconnectedness. International and domestic firms operating in Indonesia engage in forest clearing practices to meet global market demand and in the process create pollution that travels well beyond Indonesian shores. This phenomenon is not dissimilar from upstream dams on the Mekong River creating problems for downstream communities in other countries, or the degradation of fishery habitats in one country's waters affecting the catches enjoyed by its neighbours.

Such challenges are accelerating as the region develops, and are often brushed aside in the quest for sustainable economic growth and the social benefits that it can bring. This is a mistake. The future trajectory of communities throughout Southeast Asia depends not just on their ability to attract investment, develop infrastructure or create new economic activities, but also on their ability to manage natural endowments and prevent damaging pollutive activities. This is especially true when those activities impact their neighbours as well.

Non-Traditional Security in the 21st Century

J. Jackson Ewing and Mely Caballero-Anthony

The expansion of security studies that accelerated after the fall of the Soviet Union has proven to be more than a passing fad. Contemporary trends and events in the environmental, food, energy, health, development and other sectors that have traditionally fallen outside the purview of 'security' have propelled these issue areas up the policy strata of many states, international organisations and civil society agendas. These shifts have led to the language and conceptual underpinnings of 'security' being applied in novel ways and in new areas as tools for understanding and addressing contemporary challenges.

NTS responds to challenges in the food, energy, environmental and health sectors, among others, which threaten the lives of countless vulnerable communities and the future progress upon which societies across the world depend.

Such 'securitisation' is on one level unsurprising, as emergent challenges in 'non-traditional' sectors have a clear capacity to affect the lives of individuals and the progress of societies, and can potentially foment geopolitical competition, instability and violent conflict. Moreover, tenable arguments suggest that threats of inter-state conflict have waned in recent

decades, while conflicts within states have gained in relevance alongside a range of non-military threats to stability and prosperity. As a result, non-traditional security (NTS) issues have been increasingly salient parts of policymaking and dialogue in the Asia-Pacific.

Despite the maturation of scholarship and policy attention on NTS issues, however, pervasive questions remain about the relationship between non-traditional and traditional security sectors, what or whom is being secured, and the conceptual and practical value of 'securitising' more generally.

- Should NTS issues relating to health, the environment, food and the like be assessed for their direct effects or for their capacity to contribute to conflict and instability?
- Are such explorations mutually exclusive or can they be complementary?
- Who has the ability to securitise an issue and what are their intentions in doing so?
- Does securitisation bring issues a needed sense of urgency, or simply place them in a convoluted milieu of ministries and organisations with differing strategic outlooks?

These issues, and others like them, were present throughout the phases of reconceptualising security that preceded NTS, and they challenge the emergent paradigm as they did its predecessors. This section looks back briefly on the history of the widening of security thinking, and looks forward towards the future place of NTS within security discourses and policies.

Cold War Priorities Ebb

During the heightened tension of the Cold War, threat calculations and great power rivalries led a majority of scholarship and policymaking to equate security

studies with military strategy. Resulting ideas and policy approaches focused on threat manipulations, force projections and strategic balances, and understood

security largely in terms of external threats coming from spaces outside of a state's sovereign control. In turn, military policies and contingencies were formed to counter such threats and these approaches dominated the security policies of the day.

The realignment of international security priorities during the early 1990s expanded this security scope substantially. The fall of the Soviet Union reduced considerably the threat of nuclear confrontation involving major global powers, which had underpinned the strategic competition between the world's two great powers since World War II, and created a bipolar structure that affected the security priorities of states around the world. The break-up of the Soviet Union,

by removing a primary player, unambiguously ended the need for such calculations. This fundamental change in international security dynamics created a

The end of the Cold War brought a fundamental change in security dynamics, and created conditions conducive to a widening of security thinking.

setting conducive for expanding the security discourse by allowing for greater attention and resources to be allocated towards a wider range of security concerns.

The Tide Turns for NTS

The emergence of a broader category of issues was already apparent by the early 1990s, and the end of the Cold War provided them oxygen even in traditional security communities. Individuals and organisations typically concerned with military affairs began widening their scope of enquiry. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary of the time, for example, stated that issues of demography, climate change, wealth differentials and the like must be included in NATO's security calculations. Other scholars and practitioners likewise began to trumpet environmental stresses and resource scarcity in particular as being salient to the future of the security field. This formative period marked the beginning of a litany of conflict-oriented literature and policy

prescriptions aimed at addressing instability arising from NTS challenges.

It is important to note, however, that in the developing parts of Asia – particularly Southeast Asia – such expansive security orientation and practices were not new. Concepts like 'comprehensive security' and 'cooperative security' defined the security practices and policies of states even before the end of the Cold War and reflected the security concerns of states in the region. Security, to these states, has been comprehensively defined to include not just state and military security, but also political, economic and socio-cultural issues that could threaten and destabilise the state and its people.

NTS Arrives at the Mainstream

In a rapidly changing international environment that has become more connected with globalisation, security challenges brought on by changing demographics, climate change, and increasing food and energy demands have bolstered these arguments and led to a burgeoning of NTS-conflict work during the late 2000s and early 2010s.

Conflict and instability, however, are only part of the NTS picture. Also in the wake of bipolarity's death knell were voices arguing that the everyday dangers facing individuals, communities and societies represented acute security threats that were often lost in the state-centric security shuffle. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) was influential in this regard, and

its contribution of human security concepts in 1993–1994 altered the expansionary security landscape in profound ways. Human security arguments suggest

Human security arguments suggest that stresses arising from environmental declines, lack of adequate food or sanitation, acute poverty and the like are security concerns in and of themselves, regardless of whether they foment conflict or instability.

that the types of stresses arising from environmental declines, lack of adequate food or sanitation, acute poverty and the like are security concerns in and of themselves, regardless of whether or not they foment conflict or instability. Moreover, human security challenged state-oriented paradigms by pointing out that security threats often play out at sub-state levels and that state apparatuses themselves can create the

acute security threats faced by their people. These UNDP concepts fundamentally reframed questions about who or what should be secured, and in doing so contributed to maturing ideas on ‘comprehensive’ and ‘non-traditional’ security that have since gained in policy relevance and overall influence.

Critical security studies further addressed elemental concerns about the appropriate subjects of security thinking and the processes by which issues are securitised. The Welsh and Paris schools both called upon Western philosophical traditions to largely reject the statist assumptions of more mainstream security arguments. They also empirically explored how securitisation practices affected conditions on the ground, questioning their efficacy both implicitly and overtly. In combination with the UNDP’s human security offering, such critical security work revealed important questions about the place of security within larger political, socioeconomic, environmental and developmental contexts, and helped form the more encompassing security agenda that NTS is now taking forward.

Institutionalising NTS in the Asia-Pacific

NTS is no longer on the fringe of security thinking at international, regional, state or sub-state levels. The UN has provided an international platform for expansionary security thinking and policy formulation, not only through the aforementioned efforts of the UNDP, but also via UN Security Council meetings on health and climate change, and advocacy from the UN Secretariat for greater attention and resources for issues under the NTS umbrella.

Regional efforts to institutionalise NTS thinking are also readily apparent, with ASEAN – and the track-two dialogues of the ASEAN-Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) – explicitly including expansionary security concerns in their deliberations and policy recommendations for regional policy communities.

At the state level, the past decade has seen Indonesia, Singapore and other Southeast Asian nations paying even greater attention to NTS issues, while Japan locates human security as a key pillar of its foreign policy. China, meanwhile, readily and publicly accepts that issues such as air and water pollution, pandemics and food and energy demands represent security challenges to the state. Many sub-state actors such as provincial and local governments and non-state actors from civil society likewise call for the primacy of NTS issues in policy formulation and resource allocation.

Despite these strides, NTS still faces conceptual and practical challenges that warrant further attention. Since the influential post-Cold War security expansions, there have been critical voices arguing that broadening security concepts erodes their conceptual coherence and applicability for policymaking. If security can

cover so many issues, the thinking goes: 'what does it *not* include, and how can policymakers find value in its principles?' Other challenges arise from what resources are brought to bear in the face of security threats. If issues in environmental, food or health sectors become securitised, for example, does that automatically compel or necessitate that security (and

in many cases military) bodies become involved? If so, this risks dedicating inappropriate resources to critical problems. Finally, there are questions about how such issues come to be under the umbrella of security in the first place, who or what put them there and why. If the intentions of securitising actors are problematic, it is often the case that so too will be the results.

Conclusion

Despite these critiques, mainstreaming NTS remains appropriate for the 21st century because it responds to emergent realities that are backed up by increasingly disquieting evidence. Challenges in the food, energy, environmental and health sectors, among others, threaten the lives of countless vulnerable communities and the future progress

The fundamental goal of NTS should be to overcome the dichotomy between traditional and non-traditional security paradigms.

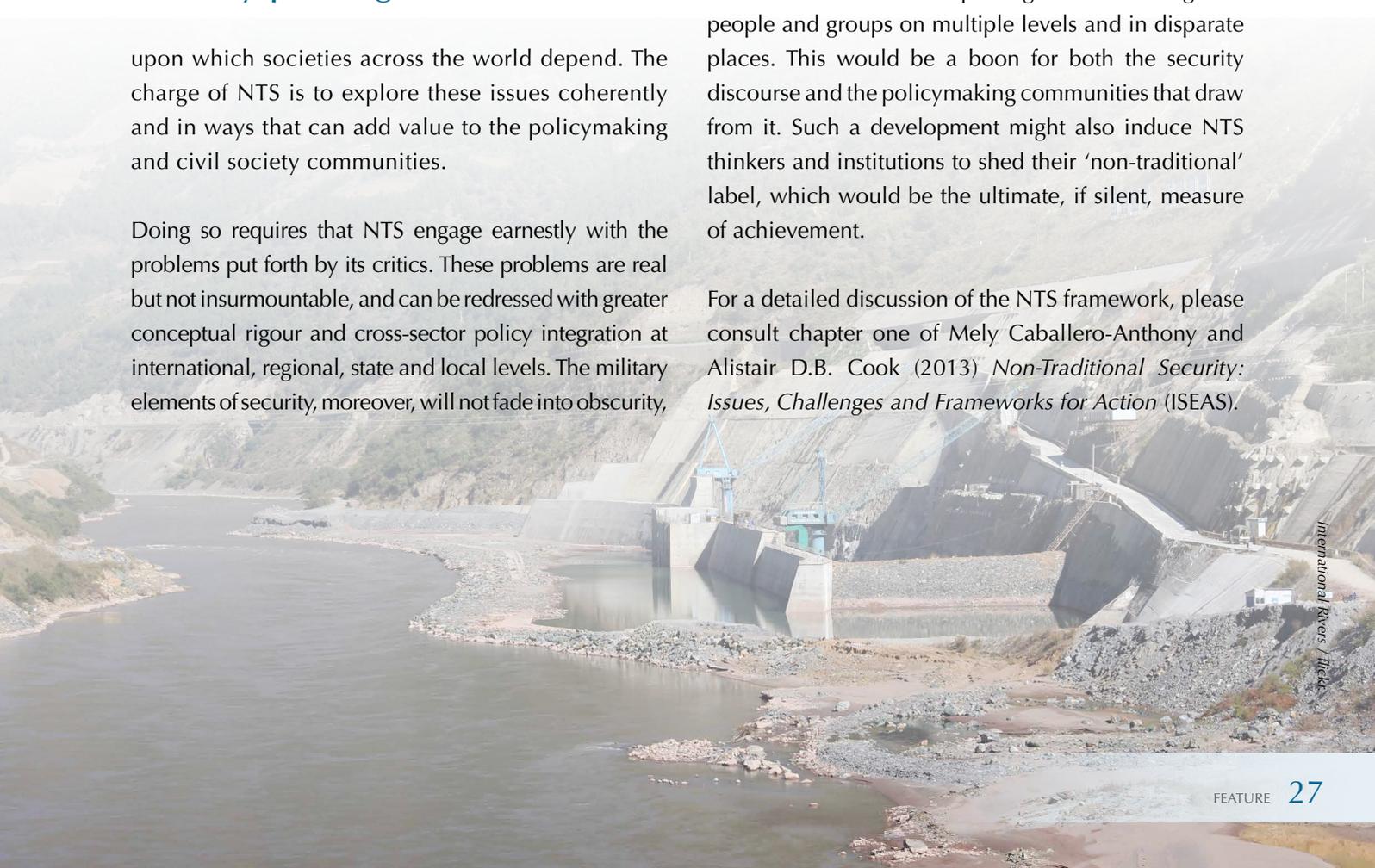
upon which societies across the world depend. The charge of NTS is to explore these issues coherently and in ways that can add value to the policymaking and civil society communities.

Doing so requires that NTS engage earnestly with the problems put forth by its critics. These problems are real but not insurmountable, and can be redressed with greater conceptual rigour and cross-sector policy integration at international, regional, state and local levels. The military elements of security, moreover, will not fade into obscurity,

as the geopolitical rivalries and military posturing in the South China Sea have shown. However, addressing the critical challenges facing individuals, communities and societies require policy and resource prioritisation past what they often receive today. Such prioritisation may have to come, in some cases, at the expense of resources and policy focus given to traditional military issues. In other cases, it will necessitate that militaries broaden their agendas to contribute in areas such as disaster relief and aid distribution.

The fundamental goal of NTS should be to overcome the dichotomy between traditional and non-traditional security paradigms. Security may come to be widely understood as an encompassing set of challenges to people and groups on multiple levels and in disparate places. This would be a boon for both the security discourse and the policymaking communities that draw from it. Such a development might also induce NTS thinkers and institutions to shed their 'non-traditional' label, which would be the ultimate, if silent, measure of achievement.

For a detailed discussion of the NTS framework, please consult chapter one of Mely Caballero-Anthony and Alistair D.B. Cook (2013) *Non-Traditional Security: Issues, Challenges and Frameworks for Action* (ISEAS).



Climate Change (In)action, Shifting Goalposts

Developments in 2013 have shown that sustaining awareness and action on climate change remains an uphill battle. Despite growing studies linking the rising incidence of weather-related disasters to climate change, political leadership to address climate change continues to be hampered by the financial cost of mitigation and adaptation initiatives and the complexities of meeting the socioeconomic concerns and political interests of various stakeholders. As such, sections of some policy circles preferred to avoid the term 'climate change', while approaching the issue through the lens of other more palatable terms such as sustainable development and disaster management.

Global Studies and Local Realities

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its fifth assessment of the current state of scientific knowledge relevant to climate change in September 2013. The report, dubbed AR5, further underscored the reality of climate change, with 95 per cent certainty that human activity is responsible for most of the climate change effects on a global scale seen since the 1950s.

This is complemented by research on the social, political and economic impacts of climate change. Studies observe that extreme weather conditions would adversely affect agriculture and sources of livelihood. These impacts of climate change in turn trigger competition for resources, and in some cases, conflict, as seen in North African countries such as Sudan. A recent study by the University of California in Berkeley, which combined historical data with findings from psychology to better understand the links between higher temperatures and violence, even suggested that the risk of intergroup conflict worldwide would rise by 50 per cent by 2050.

There is however, according to AR5, less certainty about climate change impacts at the local level, due to the poor modelling systems currently available or in use, and also

Issue Fatigue?

While the studies largely affirm what is already known, many of them, and particularly the AR5, are attempts to put more pressure on states to muster the political will to act on climate change and its related issues. However, there appears to be increasing issue fatigue. According



Jeff Proquinto, SI / flickr.

Flooding now occurs in areas not usually devastated by heavy rains or typhoons.

to local circumstances such as haphazard urban planning and environmental degradation. While this may be true, there are continuing efforts to generate local-level data. According to a new study by the University of Hawaii, tropical areas are likely to experience in the near future temperatures beyond the minimum and maximum of the past 150 years. This would have immense implications for Asia. Manokwari in eastern Indonesia would experience historically unprecedented temperatures as early as 2020, while Jakarta would feel them in 2029, Mumbai in 2034 and Bangkok in 2046. These projections reinforce the findings of vulnerability studies conducted in these urban areas by UN agencies and academics.

to a recent survey of over 22,800 people in 22 countries, only 49 per cent considered climate change a 'very serious' issue, less than at the start of the global financial crisis in 2009. In addition, fewer people than at any time in the last 20 years consider climate change-related

issues – such as carbon dioxide emissions, air and water pollution, animal species loss, and water shortages – to be ‘very serious’.

Lack of concrete steps forward on climate change is likely one of the main reasons behind the fatigue, and this is associated with several factors. First, global attention to efforts to address climate change has plummeted since the failure to establish a new binding framework at the 2009 climate change summit in Copenhagen. The financial outlay that would be required is another barrier. According to a study by the Green Growth Action Alliance on behalf of the World Economic Forum in January 2013, an estimated USD700 billion is needed each year to wean countries off conventional fuels and turn them towards clean energy sources. This is in addition to the projected USD5 trillion per year for the required supporting infrastructure. This is a steep bill, but many have argued, with some justification, that it could turn out to be considerably more expensive to address the problems later.

Nevertheless, faced with the high long-term commitments required, governments are likely to instead focus their investments on areas that require immediate action (disaster relief and humanitarian aid) or initiatives that generate immediate but not necessarily sustainable results (building physical structures such as sea walls). These options require less

commitment than long-term mitigation and adaptation projects, whose effectiveness are also less assured. Moreover, long-term projects that could have adverse impacts on economic development and businesses would have limited buy-in from most countries. It would appear then that, while scientific knowledge on climate change has matured, policymakers’ thinking and perspectives on it have not.

Issue fatigue notwithstanding, states and communities will continue experience more frequent and serious weather-related disasters and developments, and these will serve as a reality check at the local level. Developing countries face increasingly intense monsoon rains, accompanied by floods and landslides. The disastrous effects of Super Typhoon Haiyan, which hit the Philippines in November 2013, offer yet another reminder of the challenges in ensuring security for communities, particularly those in remote areas. Developed countries have also not been spared. Australia experienced its hottest summer month on record in January 2013, while the US experienced major snowstorms at around the same time. In March, New Zealand experienced its worst drought in 30 years, affecting its agricultural productivity. Furthermore, a recent survey by the World Bank noted that of the ten coastal cities worldwide with the highest risk of flooding, five are in the US.

Climate Change Action by a Different Name

In a bid to overcome the lack of movement on climate change itself, there has been a shift in how the issue is addressed. Elements of climate change action are now incorporated into issues such as energy security, disaster management and sustainable development. Doing so allows policymakers to formulate more realistic – although not necessarily ambitious – goals in addressing climate challenges.

The use of sustainable development as an entry point has been seen at both global and regional levels. The newly elected president of the UN General Assembly, HE Ambassador John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda, has pushed for sustainable development to address climate change to be



The Philippine negotiator ‘fasts’ for climate action at the UN climate talks in Warsaw (COP19) in the wake of Super Typhoon Haiyan.

part of the post-2015 development agenda. At the regional level, the ASEAN Environment Ministers released a Joint Statement on the Implementation of Sustainable Consumption and Production in ASEAN in September 2013, as a follow-up to a framework

on the same issue introduced at the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

Urban vulnerabilities, including risks from climate change impacts, also continue to be high on the agenda of policymakers in the Asia-Pacific. In early 2013, Australia, Indonesia, Japan and Vietnam co-organised the East Asia Summit's High Level Seminar on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (ESC). The seminar focused on the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme, addressing, among other issues, low-carbon cities and climate change adaptation.

With the region facing more frequent and intense weather- and climate-related events, disaster management is also vital, and this is an area that Southeast Asia continues to strengthen. In May 2013, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) launched a project to establish information and communications technology (ICT) connectivity between all national disaster

management offices so as to facilitate the exchange of data, both during disaster and non-disaster situations.

Addressing climate change through the lens of disaster management also helps to increase buy-in from a wider range of stakeholders, including the business sector. On this front, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum noted that small businesses are the 'backbone of economies in the Asia-Pacific yet are particularly vulnerable to disruptions caused by natural disasters'. At its August 2013 meeting, APEC's Emergency Preparedness Working Group focused on reducing disaster risks within the public and private sectors through risk awareness and business continuity planning. It also raised the importance of collaboration between disaster management agencies and customs and immigration agencies for the efficient delivery of international assistance to disaster-affected areas. These APEC initiatives complement efforts by other regional organisations. ASEAN, for instance, has already begun discussions on creating more effective mechanisms for disaster insurance.

Prospects for 2014

There remains a need to ensure that small businesses in informal sectors are given a level playing field, as these businesses make up a substantial proportion of the labour force in developing countries. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has taken steps to address this by including guidelines for greater equity in its climate funding mechanisms. For instance, entities that are financed by the Adaptation Fund are now required to identify and manage the environmental and social risks that result from their activities. They have to consider issues of access and equity; marginalised and vulnerable

groups; human rights; gender equality and women's empowerment; indigenous people; core labour rights; involuntary resettlement; protection of natural habitats; and conservation of biological diversity.

While some sections of civil society are highly critical of these efforts, seeing them as merely delaying progress on and avoiding political responsibility for the environment, there is continuing momentum to encourage the participation of various stakeholders. It is undeniable that accommodating different interests can potentially result in solutions that are of the lowest common denominator, but the process itself provides a means of building trust among stakeholders. Slow as it may seem to some observers, steady and consistent efforts would still be more palatable to policymakers and business entities than sudden changes. Accommodation of different perspectives and perseverance are therefore key to ensuring sustained progress in addressing climate change in years to come.

Contributed by Sofiah Jamil and Gianna Gayle Amul.



Nick Hobgood / flickr.

Stilt communities are among the most vulnerable to climate change-related sea-level rise.

Hazy Relations in Southeast Asia

The intensity of the haze in June 2013 came as a shock to many in Singapore and Malaysia. Pollution levels in Singapore and in Johor, Malaysia's southernmost state, reached all-time highs – to more than twice the standard hazardous reading. Governments and civil society noticeably differed in how they responded to the intense haze (see table), and there are several lessons we can take away from this.

First, there are different sides to the issue, and it is important that this is communicated clearly to the public. Second, governments and civil society play complementary roles. Civil society can fill the gaps left by governments, while government support is necessary to upscale worthy civil society-led initiatives. There is also scope for civil society in



David Ford / flickr

different countries to work together, in addressing root causes such as poverty in haze hotspots, and in strengthening technical capabilities to address forest fires. Finally, there must be the will to address issues that are more long term in nature. Building trust among the different stakeholders, a time-consuming and delicate process, is one such area. Long-term actions such as follow-up assessments on the efficacy of training workshops are also needed.

Responses from Governments and Civil Society to the 2013 Haze

	Top-down	Bottom-up
Responses via mass media	<p>Immediate reactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Indonesian minister called Singaporean reactions to the haze 'childish'. • Singapore's Prime Minister responded by saying that it would be better to 'work towards solving the problem rather than exchanging harsh words'. • Indonesia criticised Singapore- and Malaysia-based palm oil companies for contributing to the haze. For the first time, the Singapore government said that it would take action against the Singapore-based companies responsible. 	<p>'Keyboard warriors' vs 'awareness builders'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critics on social media continually attacked the governments on their lack of action on the haze issue. • Others on social media took the opportunity to raise awareness of the socioeconomic, political and cultural challenges surrounding the haze that have developed over the past 30 years.
Domestic action	<p>Public health: A priority?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaysia declares a state of emergency in Johor and closes schools temporarily. • Singapore decides not to close schools, nor did it issue a stop-work order despite 'hazardous' pollution levels. • The Singapore government set up an inter-ministerial committee that will 'focus on protecting public health and safety' and 'co-operate with Indonesia in handling the fallout from the haze'. • Indonesia struggles to address the haze given its limited capacity to wipe out fires. 	<p>Health vs economics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society in Singapore questioned the government's decision not to issue a stop-work order for labourers working outdoors. The Singapore government noted the need to consider carefully the economic implications, and also which sectors require it most, before making any such move. • Members of the public helped vulnerable sections of society (such as labourers, the poor and the elderly) by distributing masks and drinks to keep hydrated during the haze.
Regional action	<p>Intergovernmental cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ASEAN Sub-Regional Haze Monitoring System was launched at the ASEAN Summit in October 2013. The Singapore-made system will allow authorities to identify those responsible for starting fires. • Both Singapore and Malaysia continue to pressure Indonesia to ratify the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze. 	<p>People-to-people cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-border civil society efforts have thus far been limited, but this is an area that holds high potential given that civil society may be better placed in some cases to tackle the specific technical and humanitarian needs of local communities.

Stirring Nuclear into Asia's Energy Mix?

Two years after the Great East Japan earthquake and tsunami, we are still seeing the residual effects of the Fukushima nuclear crisis. The operator of the Fukushima nuclear power plant, Tokyo Electric Power Company, admitted in August that hundreds of tons of radioactive water have leaked out and reached the sea. This has however not deterred countries in Asia from reviving nuclear energy plans shelved in the immediate aftermath of Fukushima or from considering new projects – a resurgence primarily driven by Southeast Asia's thirst for energy. The need to curb carbon dioxide emissions in the face of climate change concerns is also driving the search for clean energy sources.

Surging Energy Demand

Asia's economic growth has outpaced the global average in the past decade, and by 2035, the region is projected to account for 44 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP). With the world economy facing a downturn, Southeast Asia was the only subregion in Asia that saw its economy grow at a faster rate in 2012 (5.5 per cent) than 2011 (4.7 per cent). For sustained economic growth, energy supply is critical, and Southeast Asia, along with China and India, are projected to substantially increase their influence on the global energy market in the next two decades.

According to a recent report by the International Energy Agency (IEA), energy demand in ASEAN countries would grow by 80 per cent between 2013 and 2035. Currently, fossil fuels dominate the energy mix, accounting for 90 per cent of the total consumption in 2012. The share of renewables is 10 per cent, despite the region's rich renewable energy resources. As the shift to a more sustainable pattern of consumption is a long-term process, the region will remain reliant on fossil fuels in the next two decades. Given this, demand for oil is expected to increase by 55 per cent by 2035, natural gas by 80 per cent and coal by 300 per cent.

Sufficient electricity is critical to economic growth in Southeast Asia.



Insecurities Arising from An Unbalanced Mix

Energy security consists of three elements: availability, affordability and accessibility. In Southeast Asia, the dominance of fossil fuels gives rise to challenges in terms of availability and affordability. Currently, most countries in Southeast Asia are net oil importers, except for Malaysia and Brunei. According to IEA projections, the region's dependence on oil imports would continue to rise, and imports would represent 75 per cent of its oil supply by 2035.

The high dependence on oil renders economies vulnerable to price shocks. Spending on oil imports is projected to amount to 4 per cent of the region's GDP in 2035, greater than the global record high of 3.4 per cent reached in 2012. According to a report by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), 48 per cent of the oil imported by developing countries in Asia in 2010 was from the Middle East, largely due to the fact that most refineries in Asia are suited to processing light crude oil from the Middle East. Hence, any disruption in flow of oil from the Middle East, as a result of political unrest for example, has serious consequences for the oil importing countries of Asia.

With regard to coal and gas, Southeast Asia is endowed with rich reserves. Indonesia has been the world's largest exporter of steam coal since 2005, and was the fifth largest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in 2012. Malaysia is the second largest LNG exporter in

the world and its proven natural gas reserves ranks 15th worldwide. Myanmar has high potential as a producer and exporter of natural gas as its reserves are under-explored.

These resources are distributed unevenly among the various countries of Southeast Asia. To address this and optimise the use of the region's resources, ASEAN leaders have mandated interconnectivity initiatives such as the Trans ASEAN Gas Pipeline (TAGP) project. Under the TAGP, 11 bilateral connections have been established to transmit natural gas from producers (Indonesia, Malaysia and Myanmar) to importers (such as Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam).

However, as domestic demand rises in Indonesia and Malaysia, governments there will prioritise their own markets, and reduce their exports to other countries. The IEA projects that net gas exports from countries in Southeast Asia would decline from 62 billion cubic metres to 14 billion cubic metres between now and 2035. This raises the issue of availability of energy for countries such as Singapore and Thailand, which import a substantial share of their gas supply from their neighbours. To meet their energy needs, these countries would have to source from outside the region, incurring higher costs as a result.

Besides threats to availability and affordability, continued fossil fuel consumption has serious implications for the environment and health. According to a recent IEA report on energy and the climate, the world has yet to meet the objective set in the effort to curb climate change, to limit the increase of global temperature to below 2 degrees Celsius. Yet, carbon dioxide emissions in Southeast Asia are projected to double in the period through to 2035. Higher fossil fuel consumption also results in pollution, which raises health concerns.



Bo Nielsen / flickr.

Asia will rely on oil and gas for years to come.

Nuclear Energy, A Controversial Choice

To address the region's energy dilemmas, countries have tried to diversify their energy mix, increase their use of clean energy and advanced technologies, and promote

energy efficiency, among others. Of the options, nuclear energy is the most controversial, due to the serious consequences of a nuclear accident. Continuing reports

of residual problems from the Fukushima meltdown further heighten opposition to nuclear energy.

Prior to the Fukushima nuclear crisis in 2011, there was in fact a high degree of enthusiasm for nuclear energy in Southeast Asia. Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand had set timelines for deploying nuclear energy. Malaysia and the Philippines had been considering the option. The Fukushima crisis put a halt to most of those plans. Only Vietnam's projects remained largely unaffected by the crisis.



Despite worries over safety, several countries in Southeast Asia continue to pursue nuclear energy.

Today, however, there is again high interest in nuclear energy in Southeast Asia. Vietnam, while continuing to engage with Russia and Japan on the construction of its first two nuclear power plants,

pursued several agreements in 2013. South Korea is bidding for Vietnam's reactor projects and Hungary will train Vietnamese professionals. Vietnam also signed a pact with the US that will allow US companies to tap Vietnam's fledgling nuclear energy market. Thailand plans to introduce nuclear energy to its energy mix from 2026. In July 2013, Malaysia's Prime Minister said that the government is studying proposals for two nuclear power plants, and Indonesia's Research and Technology Minister noted the need for Indonesia to harness nuclear energy.

In addition to energy demand and climate change imperatives, interest in the nuclear option is also being fuelled by regional dynamics and economic benefits. At an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) meeting in September 2013, China, South Korea and India announced that they would build more nuclear reactors; and Japan has said that it will review its decision to phase out nuclear power by 2030. With quite a few countries pursuing nuclear energy, this has emboldened nuclear power proponents in other countries to lobby for the inclusion of nuclear energy into their countries' energy mix. Moreover, nuclear power plants create employment opportunities, ease power shortages and attract foreign investment. These economic incentives help make nuclear energy more attractive, as seen in Vietnam, where local communities are generally positive towards the development of nuclear energy.

Prospects for 2014

Fossil fuels would remain the dominant source of energy for electricity generation for years to come. According to projections, fossil fuels would still account for around 80 per cent of the electricity generated in Southeast Asia in 2035, and use of coal would rise to account for half of the total electricity generated in 2035. Against this, the impact of fossil fuels on climate change has to be considered, and it is important for Southeast Asia to explore affordable and clean sources of energy. Nuclear energy is projected to join the electricity generation mix of Southeast Asia from the mid-2020s. Although the share of nuclear energy in the mix will be relatively small in the near to medium term, even that slight change seems attractive

to countries struggling to meet ever-growing energy demand while curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

The use of nuclear energy still faces public opposition in Southeast Asia, and safety remains central to the discussion. In addition to strengthening safety standards, bilateral and multilateral cooperation and coordination on various aspects of nuclear power plant design and operations are essential. Vietnam is collaborating with different countries on nuclear energy development. Various mechanisms also provide platforms for countries to share information and experience, including the ASEAN Plus Three Nuclear Safety Forum, the Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia, and the

Asian Nuclear Safety Network. In 2008, China, Japan and South Korea launched the Top Regulators Meeting. This mechanism could be developed into a platform for ASEAN Plus Three to coordinate on issues related

to nuclear energy, particularly if more countries in Southeast Asia turn to nuclear energy.

Contributed by Lina Gong.

Electricity Shortages Threaten Southeast Asia's Economic Growth

Power supply is the lifeline of Southeast Asia's economic boom. With the region's economies experiencing rapid growth, demand for electricity would accelerate. Indeed, power generation is expected to account for more than half of the increase in the region's energy demand in the next decades. The tremendous rise in demand will strain the electricity generation capacity of many countries.

Already, the Philippines suffers frequent blackouts and brownouts. In May 2013, factories and shops had to be shut during the country's national elections, so as to avoid power interruption during voting. Power failure is also proving to be a big barrier to Mindanao's efforts to attract high-value investments. Jericho Petilla, Energy Secretary of the Philippines, expressed concern that the country's economic growth is outpacing the construction of electricity infrastructure.

Also in May, Thailand's southern provinces were hit by a massive power outage that affected important business centres and tourist destinations, including Phuket island and Hat Yai district in Songkhla. The estimated economic loss in Songkhla alone was around USD17 million. Myanmar's fledgling economic transformation is also threatened by lack of electricity. Indonesia and Vietnam also face this challenge, albeit to different degrees.

To relieve electricity shortages, governments are building more power plants. The Philippines aims to increase generation capacity from 16 gigawatts in 2011 to 29 gigawatts in 2030, and Vietnam and Thailand have set similar targets. Diversification of energy resources is another solution, which explains some countries' interest in nuclear energy. Electricity supply interruptions are also sometimes caused by infrastructure failure, therefore improving electricity transmission and distribution is also important. While ensuring availability is important, governments would need to also ensure that electricity remains affordable and accessible to all.

Rising demand for electricity is already testing the capacity of many cities in the region, with several experiencing frequent blackouts.

Cracks in Governance of Transboundary Waters

The year 2013 saw an escalation of tensions among riparian countries over the construction of hydroelectric dams on the Mekong mainstream. This has raised doubts over the relevance of the Mekong River Commission (MRC), the region's basin management institution, at a time when effective governance of the river basin is more needed than ever. While it is undeniable that dams bring with them immense potential socioeconomic benefits, they also increase environmental, human and state insecurities, which, if not handled delicately, could lead to regional instability.

Governing the Mekong

The Mekong River originates in China where it is known as the Lancang, and flows through Myanmar, Lao PDR, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. Over 60 million people depend on the river and its tributaries for food, water, transport and many other aspects of their daily lives. Sharing this vital resource is proving to be a challenging task, however, as countries rush to build dams. Already, the Lower Mekong River mainstream has 11 dams at various stages of development. Reportedly, there are another 41 projects planned for the river's tributaries, by Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam. Meanwhile, China's dams on the Lancang – planned, under construction and completed – number nearly 30.

If this trend continues unchecked, the negative effects of the dams on neighbouring countries could escalate regional tensions. If all the proposed mainstream dams come to fruition, it would turn more than half of the free-flowing Lower Mekong River into stagnant

reservoirs, blocking fish migration and changing their natural habitats. This could reduce fish species by an estimated 26 to 42 per cent, or more than 100 fish species, resulting in losses of up to USD500 million per year. Millions of people would suffer impacts to their food, sources of income, and ways of life.

It is to prevent such eventualities that the MRC was established in 1995 by Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam. The stated mission of the MRC is to promote and coordinate sustainable management and development of water and related resources for the mutual benefit of its member countries and the people's well-being. Today, however, its ability to fulfil that mission is in question. Lao PDR has gone ahead to construct dams on its section of the river without the approval of the MRC. The effectiveness of the MRC is also undermined by the fact that the two uppermost riparian countries, China and Myanmar, remain mere dialogue partners of the institution rather than full members.

Dangerous Precedents

In an effort to become the 'battery of Southeast Asia', Lao PDR is building the first ever Lower Mekong River mainstream dam, the USD3.5 billion, 1,285 megawatt (MW) Xayaburi Dam in the northern part of the country. Cambodia and Vietnam, both downstream countries, raised strong objections and demanded that the project be delayed so as to allow



International Rivers / Mekong

Thai villagers protesting the construction of the Xayaburi Dam in Lao PDR.

detailed assessments of potential environmental and social impacts. Civil society in the two countries also registered protests and concerns, and organisations in Thailand questioned their government on the involvement of Thai companies in Lao PDR's dams.

Notwithstanding these objections, Lao PDR proceeded to begin construction. As of June 2013, 10 per cent of the Xayaburi Dam has already been completed. This case illustrates the growing tension between a country's sovereign right to exploit its water resources and its obligation to do so in a cooperative and consultative manner as a member of a regional river basin management organisation such as the MRC.

The China Factor

Even as MRC member states continue to lock horns over the projects in Lao PDR, a more potent threat looms. As of 21 May 2013, China has built seven dams on the Lancang mainstream, the first of which, the 1,350MW Manwan Dam, was completed in 1995. Another 5 dams are undergoing construction, 11 more are being planned and 5 have undergone site preparation.

With 18 per cent of the Lower Mekong River's mean annual water discharge coming from the Lancang, the number and size of the planned projects could have serious consequences for the countries downstream of China. While the extent of such impacts is yet to be fully ascertained, declining fish stocks and unpredictable water levels have already been reported all across the Lower Mekong River basin.

Although China, as a dialogue partner of the MRC, shares hydrological data with its neighbours, similar cooperation has not been seen on the dam-building front. As China is not likely to become a full-fledged member of the MRC anytime soon, and thus subject to obligations to engage in prior consultation, an option is to include information sharing on dams into the existing framework of cooperation on hydrological data sharing. In the near term, China could give prior notification of its dam-building plans and also share

The MRC requires member countries wishing to build dams on the Lower Mekong River mainstream to first go through a prior consultation process known as Procedures for Notification, Prior Consultation and Agreement (PNPCA). PNPCA requires joint review of any mainstream development project, with the aim of reaching a consensus on whether the project should proceed, and if so, under what conditions.

Although Lao PDR did notify the MRC of the Xayaburi Dam, it did not wait for approval. It is doing the same with its second dam, the 260MW Don Sahong Dam. It has already notified the MRC that it intends to begin construction in November 2013. Such moves could set a dangerous precedent.



International Rivers / Flickr

Xiaowan Dam on the Lancang River in China, one of the world's tallest dams.

the result of its environmental impact assessments (EIAs). This would incrementally extend cooperation and build confidence among the stakeholders in the Mekong River Basin.

Prospects for 2014

Lao PDR's dams took the spotlight in 2013, as objections and protests over the construction of the Xayaburi Dam made headlines. While such campaigns have not substantially altered the status quo, they did succeed in highlighting the environmental threats posed by dams. As a result, dams and their impacts featured prominently on the agenda of various multilateral forums such as the ASEAN Summit and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). With the large number of dam projects coming on stream, the issue is expected to remain a priority in 2014.

The recent controversies also highlight the pressing need for regional institutional arrangements that both have teeth and have buy-in from all states in a river basin. The MRC would thus need to seriously review its aims, and how to boost its capacity to achieve them. A key area would be to strengthen the legal status of the 1995 Mekong Agreement so as to make sidestepping key provisions such as the PNPCA, as Lao PDR did, much harder. China and Myanmar must also be encouraged to deepen their ties with the MRC. The signing of an agreement between China and the MRC in August 2013 to expand sharing of hydrological data shows that China is not completely averse to cooperation. Myanmar's ongoing political reforms also offer an opportunity for the MRC to engage the country on river management issues, and to encourage it to cooperate with, and possibly join, the MRC.

First, however, the member states of the MRC must sort out their differences. The divisions within the MRC – between the governments that are pro-dams (Thailand and Lao PDR) and those that advocate caution (Cambodia and Vietnam) – are weakening the organisation, a situation which could herald a



International Rivers / Flickr

Xayaburi Dam in Lao PDR under construction in 2013.

free-for-all on the Mekong River to the detriment of all. The continued bickering also hinders the MRC's ability to collectively address concerns over the impacts of China's Lancang River dams, and could affect its capacity to entice Myanmar. Also, with MRC member states being members of ASEAN, the schisms, if allowed to persist, could undermine ASEAN's much-prized spirit of cooperation and consensus-building.

Contributed by Pau Khan Khup Hangzo.

China's New Environmental Guidelines for Investment: A Game Changer?

China-based companies and banks are now the biggest builders and funders of dams around the world. They are involved in more than 300 dam projects in 70 countries. Of these, approximately 40 per cent are located in Southeast Asia, with 15 per cent in Africa.

Many of these projects have however not paid much attention to environmental issues, with in some cases negative ramifications for the various parties involved. The China Power Investment Corporation's USD3.6 billion Myitsone Dam in Myanmar is a case in point. It was widely criticised by local communities for its potential to cause large-scale environmental destruction and displacement. The militarisation of the dam site to protect the project from attacks also led to renewed fighting between the Myanmar government and armed rebels. In the end, Myanmar suspended construction on the dam in 2011.

Such events prompted China to rethink its investment strategies; and it issued its first ever Guidelines for Environmental Protection in Foreign Investment and Cooperation on 18 February 2013. The document provides companies with basic principles for integrating environmental protection into corporate governance strategies and addressing the concerns of host countries' governments and communities.

For the moment, however, companies are free to decide if they wish to abide by those guidelines, and there are no penalties in cases of non-compliance. With China's environmental footprint expected to expand in tandem with its growing overseas investments, mandatory enforcement becomes vital, both to mitigate the negative environmental and social impacts of China's overseas investments and to enable China to build mutually beneficial relationships with host countries.

China-based companies are financing Cambodia's plans to build dams on the Sesan River.



Ethan Crowley / flickr

Activities and Publications 2013

The Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies continues to lead research in the areas of (1) internal and cross-border conflict; (2) climate change, environmental security and natural disasters; (3) energy and human security; (4) food security; and (5) health and human security.

In 2013, the Centre focused on projects related to the themes of food security, urban resilience, Johor and the Singapore environment and energy security, and pursued activities under the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership. It published over 60 books and articles in connection with these projects, both via external channels and through its in-house publications – *NTS Bulletin*, *NTS Alert*, *NTS Insight*, *NTS Policy Brief*, *NTS Working Paper*

Series, *Asia Security Initiative Working Paper Series*, *NTS conference reports* and *NTS Blog Series*. The Centre also launched a new series known as the *NTS Issues Brief* that aims to highlight key themes emerging from conference discussions. All Centre publications continue to be well-received in academic and policy circles.

The Centre held 17 conferences and seminars during this period. Of notable mention was the Roundtable on ‘Enhancing Global and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Management and Resolution’ in April which featured Professor Ibrahim Gambari, former Joint Special Representative of the Africa Union/UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), as key speaker.

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Non-Traditional Security in Asia:
Issues, Challenges and Framework for Action
ISEAS, 2013
Mely Caballero-Anthony and Alistair D.B. Cook (eds)

ARTICLE

‘Community engagement and environmental management’, in
Natural Riches? Perspectives on Responsible Natural Resource
Management in Conflict-affected Countries
World Economic Forum, 2013
*Mely Caballero-Anthony, J. Jackson Ewing, Alistair D.B. Cook and
P.K. Hangzo*

NTS BULLETIN

Is 2015 the new Copenhagen? How the UNFCCC process risks
falling into faulty patterns
J. Jackson Ewing and Gianna Gayle Amul

January’s weather extremes: Will it spur new action?
J. Jackson Ewing and Sally Trethewie

Justice for war crimes: Retribution, or reconciliation?
Lina Gong

Re-emerging infectious diseases: Time for renewed vigilance
Mely Caballero-Anthony and Gianna Gayle Amul

The world’s first ever Arms Trade Treaty:
Implications for Southeast Asia
Pau Khan Khup Hangzo

Should Asian cities be climbing on the ‘resilience’ bandwagon?
J. Jackson Ewing

Alternative opportunities to cut through the haze
Sofiah Jamil

Post-Arab Spring: Political transitions in retreat?
Mely Caballero-Anthony

‘Stock’ solution to regional food security: Which way forward?
Belinda Chng

Can Indonesia advance the peace process in Mindanao?
Margareth Sembiring

Planning for Asian food security towards 2025
Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies

NTS ALERT

Connecting the dots: The urban informal sector and climate
vulnerabilities in Southeast Asia’s megacities
Sofiah Jamil

Is the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) the
answer to Southeast Asia’s food security challenges?
Sally Trethewie

Porous borders in a changing world:
What does this mean for security in Southeast Asia?
Carolina G. Hernandez

In conversation with Ibrahim Gambari:
The practice of peacemaking
J. Jackson Ewing and Lina Gong

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Implications for Singapore
Sofiah Jamil and Lina Gong

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Financing climate adaptation in the Asia-Pacific:
Avoiding flawed aid paradigms
J. Jackson Ewing and Gianna Gayle Amul

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Integrating judicial and non-judicial measures
Lina Gong

Cyberwarfare: Logged and loaded, but wither Asia?
Elna Noor

Will rapid development in Johor impact water access, quality or price in Singapore?

Pau Khan Khup Hangzo and J. Jackson Ewing

Community resilience and critical urban infrastructure:

Where adaptive capacities meet vulnerabilities

Sofiah Jamil and Gianna Gayle Amul

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Managing cross-border movements of people in Southeast Asia:

Promoting capacity and response for irregular migration in Southeast Asia

Pau Khan Khup Hangzo and Mely Caballero-Anthony

Advancing urban resilience in the face of environmental change

J. Jackson Ewing and Gianna Gayle Amul

Impact of climate change on ASEAN food security: Downscaling analysis and response

J. Jackson Ewing and Maria C.S. Morales

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A case study of Bangladesh

Major General A.N.M. Muniruzzaman (Retd)

Multilevel approaches to human security and conflict management: The Rohingya case

C.R. Abrar

ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) 2015:

Opportunities and challenges for food security

Mely Caballero-Anthony, Paul Teng and Belinda Chng

A new paradigm for food security: Robustness as an end goal

Paul Teng and Maria C.S. Morales

NTS CONFERENCE REPORT

Roundtable on Managing Cross-border Movements of People:

Promoting Capacity and Response for Irregular Migration

(19–20 November 2012)

Expert Working Group Meeting on Advancing Urban Resilience in the Face of Environmental Change (22–23 April 2013)

Expert Group Meeting on the ASEAN Economic Community

2015: Opportunities and Challenges for Food Security

(3–4 June 2013)

Expert Group Meeting on the Impact of Climate Change on

ASEAN Food Security (6–7 June 2013)

NTS WORKING PAPER

The ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR):

Cooperation, commitment and contradictions

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About the RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies

The **RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies** conducts research and produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

To fulfil this mission, the Centre aims to:

- Advance the understanding of NTS issues and challenges in the Asia-Pacific by highlighting gaps in knowledge and policy, and identifying best practices among state and non-state actors in responding to these challenges.
- Provide a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.
- Network with institutions and organisations worldwide to exchange information, insights and experiences in the area of NTS.
- Engage policymakers on the importance of NTS in guiding political responses to NTS emergencies and developing strategies to mitigate the risks to state and human security.
- Contribute to building the institutional capacity of governments, and regional and international organisations to respond to NTS challenges.

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The Centre is the Coordinator of the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership (2012–2015) supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. It also serves as the Secretariat of the initiative.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for its three-year Asia Security Initiative (2009–2012), to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific. It is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia).

More information on our Centre is available at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts

About the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

The **S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)** was inaugurated on 1 January 2007 as an autonomous School within **Nanyang Technological University (NTU)**, upgraded from its previous incarnation as the **Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)**, which was established in 1996.

The School exists to develop a community of scholars and policy analysts at the forefront of Asia-Pacific security studies and international affairs. Its three core functions are research, graduate teaching and networking activities in the Asia-Pacific region. It produces cutting-edge security related research in Asia-Pacific Security, Conflict and Non-Traditional Security, International Political Economy, and Country and Area Studies.

The School's activities are aimed at assisting policymakers to develop comprehensive approaches to strategic thinking on issues related to security and stability in the Asia-Pacific and their implications for Singapore.

For more information about RSIS, please visit www.rsis.edu.sg.

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