

PA 388K/ANT 391:  
Climate Change,  
Migration, and  
Development

Jason Cons  
Sid Richardson Hall 3.358  
[jasoncons@utexas.edu](mailto:jasoncons@utexas.edu)  
512.471.8938

Thursday 2:00-5:00  
SRH 3.219

Office hours: Wednesdays  
1:30-4:30



### Course Description and Goals

Much discussion about climate change in the contemporary moment focuses on the scientific debate over climate change and its projected effects, the social movements struggling to bring about climate justice, the public debate whether climate change exists, and the wranglings over international agreements to curb global warming (particularly those associated with the United Nations Environment Programme and its annual Conference of Parties meetings). These are all crucial to understanding climate change today. However, they do not tell the whole story of climate politics in the contemporary moment.

This course looks beyond these debates to explore the politics, policies, and programs of climate oriented development. Over the past decade, the development industry has undergone rapid transformations, evolving new policy and program frameworks to anticipate and address the effects of global warming in the Global South. The course focuses especially, though not exclusively, on approaches seeking to enhance adaptive capacities in order to prevent seemingly inevitable migration and on strategies to address present and future migration from various climate hotspots around the globe.

We will work from the premise that climate change is at once a set of real and material transformations in global and local environments *and* a range of imaginations and anxieties about the future that are enormously productive of interventions in the present. In other words, we will approach climate change as at once a set of empirical *ecological* realities that pose pressing policy challenges and as a set of profoundly *social* relations that are deeply bound up in questions of governance, security, and control. We will explore new paradigms that have emerged to address climate change—mitigation, adaptation, resilience, etc.—and investigate the question of mass-displacement in the face of climatological disaster. Along the way, we will look at policy documents, central arguments, and critical voices in the climate/development/migration debate.

Upon completing this class, students should be able to interpret and engage with the vast and rapidly unfolding set of debates over management, adaptation, vulnerability, and security in the face of climate change. To this end, the goals of this class are:

- To introduce a set of core concepts in current discussion of climate, development, and migration
- To explore the framings of both policies and projects seeking to address the ecological outcomes of global warming
- To provide a set of critical tools to analyze current and emerging framings of climate development and migration

#### **Course expectations:**

- This is a reading and writing intensive course. I expect students to arrive in class having done the readings and prepared to engage in active class discussion.
- This is a seminar course. The bulk of the class will be devoted to class discussion, not lectures. I expect everyone to be an active and regular participant of course discussion.
- There are a number of readings on the syllabus. These should be regarded as provisional. I reserve the right to move certain readings from “required” to “suggested” (or vice versa) and to add new readings as the course develops. In general, expect there to be between 3 and 5 articles assigned in any given week. These numbers will vary with length, topic, and complexity of readings. Readings will be available in the “Modules” section of Canvas by start of class the previous week. Grading, work expectations, and other policies outlined in this syllabus will *not* change.
- I ask everyone to complete ten reading responses over the course of the semester. I will provide more information about how to complete these in class, but I find that these are enormously helpful at pushing class discussion forward. In order for everyone to have an opportunity to read these in advance, I ask that the reading responses be posted by 10pm Wednesday before class.
- Everyone will have an opportunity to lead class and present a case (on separate days). Your case presentation will be done in collaboration with another class member and will consist of a briefing paper, any supplementary materials you wish the class to read in preparation, an in-class presentation, and a class discussion.
- Your final paper will be a research paper on a course-related topic of your choosing. Climate change, migration, and development are, collectively, huge fields and I have had to be selective in choosing what we cover in class. If you wish to tackle a topic that we have not addressed directly in course discussions and readings, you are welcome to. I do expect that readings from class will help to inform your analysis.

#### **Grading**

- Course participation: 15%
- Reading Responses: 20%
- Case Briefing Paper: 20%
- Case Presentation: 15%
- Final Research Paper: 30%

## Course Introduction and Methodological Frameworks

### Week 1, January 21—Course Introduction

- Cop 21 Agreement.

### Week 2, January 28— Opening Salvos: Climate, Capitalism, and Crisis

- McKenzie Funk. 2014. *Windfall: The Booming Business of Global Warming*. Penguin. Introduction and Chapters 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and Epilogue.
- Michael Watts. 2015. "Now and Then: The Origins of Political Ecology and the Rebirth of Adaptation as a form of Thought." In *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Routledge.

### Week 3, February 4—Methodological Tools 1: Political Ecology and Epistemologies of Climate Change

- Mike Davis. 2004. "The Political Ecology of Famine: The Origins of the Third-World." In *Liberation Ecologies*. Routledge.
- Marcus Taylor. 2014. "Climate Change and the Frontiers of Political Ecology." *The Political Ecology of Climate Change Adaptation: Livelihoods, Agrarian Change and the Conflicts of Development*. Routledge Press.
- Diana Liverman. 2015. "Reading Climate Change and Climate Governance as Political Ecology." In *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. Routledge.
- Jessica Barnes *et al.* 2013. "Contributions of Anthropology to the Study of Climate Change." *Nature Climate Change*. 3 (June).
- Noel Castree *et al.* 2014. "Changing the Intellectual Climate." *Nature Climate Change*. 4 (September).

#### *Suggested:*

- Emily Yeh. 2015. "'How Can Experiences of Local Residents Be 'Knowledge'?' Challenges in Interdisciplinary Climate Change Research." *Area*. 1-7.
- Erik Swyngedouw. 2013. "The Non-Political Politics of Climate Change." *Acme*. 1-8.
- Elizabeth Hall and Todd Sanders. 2015. "Accountability and the Academy: Producing Knowledge about the Human Dimensions of Climate Change." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. 21.

### Week 4, February 11—Methodological Tools 2: The Politics of Global Risk

- Ulrich Beck. 2005. "World Risk Society as Cosmopolitan Society? Ecological Questions in a Framework of Manufactured Uncertainties." *Theory, Culture, and Society*. 13 (4).
- Sheila Jasanoff. 2010. "Beyond Calculation: A Democratic Response to Risk." In *Disaster and the Politics of Intervention*. Columbia University Press.
- Sheila Jasanoff. 2011. "Cosmopolitan Knowledge: Climate Science and Global Civic Epistemology." In *The Oxford Handbook of Climate Change and Society*. Oxford University Press.
- Leigh Johnson. 2011. "Climate Change and the Risk Industry: The Multiplication of Fear and Value." In *Global Political Ecology*. Routledge.
- Timothy Snyder. 2015. "Conclusion: Our World." In *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning*. Duggan Books.

#### *Suggested:*

- James Painter. 2015. "Taking a Bet on Risk." *Nature Climate Change*. 5 (April).
- Paul Edwards. 2010. Introduction and "Thinking Globally." In *A Vast Machine: Computer Models, Climate Data, and the Politics of Global Warming*. MIT Press.

- Ulrich Beck. 2010. "Climate for Change, or How to Create a Green Modernity." *Theory, Culture, and Society*. 27 (2-3).
- Stephen Collier. 2008. "Enacting Catastrophe: Preparedness, Insurance, Budgetary Rationalization." *Economy and Society*. 37(2).
- *LIMN 1*: Systemic Risk.

### Climate Change and Development: Various Paradigms

#### Week 5, February 18— Unpacking the Climate-Development Nexus

Guest Lecture: Kasia Paprocki, Doctoral Candidate, Development Sociology, Cornell University

- IPCC. 2014. "Summary for Policy Makers. *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report*.
- IPCC. 2014. "Human Security." In *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*.
- Kasia Paprocki. 2015. "The Anti-Politics of Climate Change." *Himal South Asia*. 28(3).
- Clark Miller. 2004. "Climate Science and the Making of a Global Political Order." In *States of Knowledge: The Co-Production of Science and Social Order*. Routledge.
- Mark Duffield. 2010. "The Liberal Way of Development and the Development-Security Impasse: Exploring the Global Life-Chance Divide." *Security Dialogue*. 41(1).

Suggested:

- "The Global Sustainable Development Report (Briefs): 2015 Edition." United Nations.
- Philip McMichael. 2009. "Contemporary Contradictions of the Global Development Project: Geopolitics, Global Ecology and the 'Development Climate'." *Third World Quarterly*. 30 (1).
- Andrew Mathews. 2015. "Imagining Forest Futures and Climate Change: The Mexican State as Insurance Broker and Storyteller." In *Climate Cultures: Anthropological Perspectives on Climate Change*. Yale.
- Various. 2012. "What Next Volume III: Climate, Development, and Equity." *Development Dialogue*. No. 61.
- Jason Moore. 2015. "Cheap Food & Bad Climate: From Surplus Value to Negative-Value in the Capitalist World-Ecology." *Critical Historical Studies*. Spring.

#### Week 6, February 25—Mitigation: REDD+

Guest Lecture: Michael Eilenberg, Associate Professor of Culture and Society, Director of the Human Security Program, Aarhus University, Denmark.

- Pamela McElwee. 2015. "From Conservation and Development to Climate Change: Anthropological Engagements with REDD+ in Vietnam." In *Climate Cultures: Anthropological Perspectives on Climate Change*. Yale.
- Michael Eilenberg. 2015. "Shades of Green and REDD: Local and Global Contestations Over the Value of Forest Versus Plantation Development on the Indonesian Forest Frontier." *Asian Pacific Viewpoint*. 56 (1).
- Astuti, R. and McGregor, A. (2015), Governing carbon, transforming forest politics: A case study of Indonesia's REDD+ Task Force. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 56(1).
- Pasgaard, M. (2015), Lost in translation? How project actors shape REDD+ policy and outcomes in Cambodia. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 56 (1).
- Lounela, A. (2015), Climate change disputes and justice in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 56(1).

Suggested:

- Donald MacKenzie. 2010. "Constructing Carbon Markets: Learning from Experiments in the Technopolitics of Emissions Trading Schemes." In *Disaster and the Politics of Intervention*. Columbia University Press.

Week 7, March 3—Development Beyond Mitigation 1: Disaster Risk Reduction

STUDENT CASE PRESENTATION 1

- "The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030."
- Geoff O'Brien *et al.* 2006. "Climate Change and Disaster Management." *Disasters*. 30(1).
- John Hannigan. 2012. "The Disaster Politics Nexus" and "Climate of Concern." In *Disasters without Borders: The International Politics of Natural Disasters*. Polity Press.
- Ilan Kelman, JC Gaillard, and Jessica Mercer. 2015. "Climate Change's Role in Disasters Risk Reduction's Future: Beyond Vulnerability and Resilience." *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science*. 6.

Suggested:

- Stephen Collier and Andrew Lakoff. 2015. "Vital Systems Security: Reflexive Biopolitics and the Government of Emergency." *Theory, Culture, and Society*. 32(2).
- Peter Adey and Ben Anderson. 2012. "Anticipating Emergencies: Technologies of Preparedness and the Matter of Security." *Security Dialogue*. 43(2).
- Ben Anderson. 2010. "Preemption, Precaution, Preparedness: Anticipatory Action and Future Geographies." *Progress in Human Geography*. 34(6).

Week 8, March 10—Development Beyond Mitigation 2: Adaptation

STUDENT CASE PRESENTATION 2

- Ben Orlove. 2009. "The Past, the Present and Some Possible Futures of Adaptation." *Adapting to Climate Change: Thresholds, Values, Governance*. Cambridge University Press.
- W. Neil Adger. 2013. "Changing Social Contracts in Climate-Change Adaptation." *Nature Climate Change*. 3 (April).
- Jesse Ribot. 2014. "Cause and Response: Vulnerability and Climate in the Anthropocene." *Journal of Peasant Studies*. 41 (5).

Suggested:

- Ben Orlove. 2005. "Human Adaptation to Climate Change: A Review of Three Historical Cases and Some General Perspectives." *Environmental Science & Policy*. 8.
- Florian Weisser, et al. 2014. "Translating the 'Adaptation to Climate Change' Paradigm: The Politics of a Traveling Idea in Africa." *The Geographical Journal*. 180 (2).

Week 9, March 24—Development Beyond Mitigation 3: Resilience

STUDENT CASE PRESENTATION 3:

- Jeremy Walker and Melinda Cooper. 2011. "Genealogies of Resilience: From Systems Adaptation to the Political Economy of Crisis Adaptation." *Security Dialogue*. 42 (2).
- W. Neil Adger *et al.* 2011. "Resilience." *The Oxford Handbook of Climate Change and Society*. Oxford Press.
- Aditya Bahadur, et. al. 2010. "The Resilience Renaissance? Unpacking of Resilience for Tackling Climate Change and Disasters." Institute for Development Studies (Sussex).
- Thomas Tanner. 2015. "Livelihood Resilience in the Face of Climate Change." *Nature Climate Change*. 1.

Suggested:

- “World Resources Report 2008: Roots of Resilience—Growing the Wealth of the Poor.” *World Resources*.
- Michael Watts. 2014. “Resilience as a Way of Life: Biopolitical Security, Catastrophism, and the Food-Climate Change Question.” In *Bioinsecurity and Vulnerability*. SAR Press.
- Norwegian Refugee Council. 2015. “Community Resilience and Disaster-Related Displacement in South Asia.”
- Jurgen Weichselgarten and Ilan Kellman. 2014. “Geographies of Resilience: Challenges and Opportunities of a Descriptive Concept.” *Progress in Human Geography*. 2015. 39(3).

### **Climate, Conflict, and Environmental Securities**

Week 10, March 31—Climate and Conflict: The Specter of Chaos

STUDENT CASE PRESENTATION 4:

- Simon Dalby. 2009. Introduction, Chapter 1, and Chapter 2. *Security and Environmental Change*. Polity Press.
- Emily Gilbert. 2012. “The Militarization of Climate Change.” *ACME*.
- Jon Barnett and W. Neil Adger. 2007. “Climate Change, Human Security and Violent Conflict.” *Political Geography*. 26.
- Sanjay Chaturvedi and Timothy Doyle. 2015. “‘Climate Borders’ in the Anthropocene: Securitizing Displacements, Migration and Refugees.” In *Climate Terror: A Critical Geopolitics of Climate Change*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Suggested:

- Nils Gilman *et al.* 2011. “Climate Change and ‘Security’.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Climate Change and Society*. Oxford University Press.
- Christian Parenti. 2014. “The Environment Making State: Territory, Nature, and Value.” *Antipode*.
- Kevin Grove. 2010. “Insuring ‘Our Common Future?’ Dangerous Climate Change and the Biopolitics of Environmental Security.” *Geopolitics*. 15.

Week 11, April 7—Climate and Conflict 2: On-the-ground realities

Guest Lecture: Joshua Busby, Associate Professor, LBJ School of Public Affairs and Principle Investigator—Complex Emergencies and Political Stability in Asia.

- Josh Busby *et al.* 2014. “Climate Security Vulnerability in Africa Mapping 3.0.” *Political Geography*. 43.
- Other readings tbd

### **Climate and Migration**

Week 12, April 14—Climate and Displacement 1: Anticipating Migration

STUDENT CASE PRESENTATION 5

- Saskia Sassen. 2014. “Dead Land, Dead Water.” *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy*. Harvard University Press.
- Betsy Hartmann. 2010. “Rethinking Climate Refugees and Climate Conflict: Rhetoric, Reality and the Politics of Policy Discourse.” *Journal of International Development*. 22.
- White, G. 2011. Chapter 1 and Chapter 3. *Climate Change and Migration: Security and Borders in a Warming World*. Oxford.

- Richard Black, et. al. 2011. "The Effect of Environmental Change on Human Migration." *Global Environmental Change*. 21S.
- Susan Martin. 2013. "Environmental Change and Migration: What we Know." *Migration Policy Institute*.

Suggested:

- Thematic Working Group on Environmental Change and Migration. "Environmental Change and Migration: State of the Evidence." *KNOMAD*.
- Giovanni Bettini. 2013. "Climate Barbarians at the Gate? A Critique of Apocalyptic Narratives of 'Climate Refugees'." *Geoforum*.
- Frank Biermann and Ingrid Boas. 2010. "Preparing for a Warmer World: Towards a Global Governance System to Protect Climate Refugees." *Global Environmental Politics*. 10:1.
- Carol Farbotko. 2010. "Wishful Sinking: Disappearing Islands, Climate Refugees and Cosmopolitan Experimentation." *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*. 51(1).
- Chris Methman and Angela Oels. 2015. "From 'Fearing' to 'Empowering' Climate Refugees: Governing Climate-Induced Migration in the Name of Resilience." *Security Dialogue*. 46(1).
- Susan Martin. 2010. "Climate Change, Migration, and Governance." *Global Governance*. 16(3).

Week 13, April 21—Climate and Displacement 2: Migration as Adaptation

STUDENT CASE PRESENTATION 6:

- Alex Betts. 2013. "Introduction" and "Survival Migration." In *Survival Migration: Failed Governance and the Crisis of Displacement*. Cornell University Press.
- Richard Black, et al. 2011. "Migration as Adaptation." *Nature*. 478.
- Jon Barnett and Michael Webber. 2010. "Migration as Adaptation: Opportunities and Limits." In *Climate Change and Displacement: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Hart Publishing.

Week 14: Climate Change as Complex Emergency

Guest Lecture: Paula Newberg, Clinical Professor of Government//Asian Studies, University of Texas at Austin

- Readings tbd

Week 15, May 5: Climate and Displacement 3: Frameworks for Managing Migration

STUDENT CASE PRESENTATION 7:

- McAdam, Jane. 2012. Chapter 1 and 6. In *Climate Change, Forced Migration, and International Law*. Oxford.
- MacAdam and Marc Limon. 2015. "Human Rights, Climate Change, and Cross-Border Displacement: The Role of International Human Rights Community in Contributing to Effective and Just Solutions." Universal Human Rights Group.
- Roger Zetter. 2010. "Protecting People displaced by Climate Change: Some Conceptual Challenges." In *Climate Change and Displacement: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Hart Publishing.