
Pentagon Report: U.S. Military Considers Climate Change a 'Threat Multiplier' That Could Exacerbate Terrorism

By Zoë Schlanger

A report released Monday indicates the Department of Defense has dramatically shifted its views towards climate change, and has already begun to treat the phenomenon as a significant threat to national security. Climate change, the Pentagon writes, requires immediate action on the part of the U.S. Military.

The report is a “roadmap” of the Department’s future needs and actions to effectively respond to climate change, including anticipating that climate change may require more frequent military intervention within the country to respond to natural disasters, as well as internationally to respond to “extremist ideologies” that may arise in regions where governments are destabilized due to climate-related stressors.

“The impacts of climate change may cause instability in other countries by impairing access to food and water, damaging infrastructure, spreading disease, uprooting and displacing large numbers of people, compelling mass migration, interrupting commercial activity, or restricting electricity availability,” the Pentagon writes. “These developments could undermine already-fragile governments that are unable to respond effectively or challenge currently-stable governments, as well as increasing competition and tension between countries vying for limited resources. These gaps in governance can create an avenue for extremist ideologies and conditions that foster terrorism.”

Newsweek Magazine is Back In Print

The military is integrating climate change considerations into all its operations, including in its training for war scenarios.

“We are considering the impacts of climate change in our war games and defense planning scenarios, and are working with our Combatant Commands to address impacts in their areas of responsibility.”

The military is already preparing and assessing its bases for conditions like sea level rise and increased flooding.

“We are almost done with a baseline survey to assess the vulnerability of our military’s more than 7,000 bases, installations, and other facilities. In places like the Hampton Roads region in Virginia, which houses the largest concentration of US military sites in the world, we see recurrent flooding today, and we are beginning work to address a projected sea-level rise of 1.5 feet over the next 20 to 50 years,” the report reads.

The New York Times notes that the report marks a significant departure from rhetoric previously used by the Department of Defense to talk about climate change. Prior mentions pertained mostly to preparing bases, especially coastal naval bases for rising sea levels.

“One of the differences from previous documents is that they’re really looking at the immediate threat,” Marcus King, an expert on climate change and international affairs at George Washington University, told the Times. “The other is that they’re not just looking at installations — they’re looking at a different level, the strategic impact across regions.”

For those who still doubt the science of climate change, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel says in the foreword to the report: "While scientists are converging toward consensus on future climate projections, uncertainty remains. But this cannot be an excuse for delaying action."

Related Articles

- [Leaked U.N. Report Warns of Irrevocable Climate Change](#)
-

Join the Discussion

19 comments

[Add a comment](#)**Phillip Noe** · Top Commenter

Currently there are too many climate change deniers in Congress. They block any legislation to reduce emissions. It's mostly about catering to the fossil fuel interests or some political agenda at the expense of our future generations. Sad but true. Please join the efforts to change course. We can start by getting the deniers OUT of Congress.
ExhaustingHabitability(dot)org

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · 1 · [Follow Post](#) · 15 hours ago**Paul Merrifield** · Top Commenter · Works at Actor/Comedian

IF, science is not willing to say; "proven" or "100% certain" or "will" be a "threat to the planet" is good enough for you to condemn billions of innocent children to your exaggerated greenhouse gas ovens of your exaggerated crisis then we can agree to disagree.
The only hoax committed here was you liberals exaggerating science's consensus of "could be" to WILL be a global CO2 crisis for our children.
Further support of the CO2 blunder is doing to progressivism what Bush and his false wars did for the neocons.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [Follow Post](#) · Edited · 6 hours ago**Kerry Penn** · Top Commenter · Jacksonville, Florida

This is a perfect example of the news media supporting the lying I, Me, My, No-fault Obama in his political agenda.
The article says: "The impacts of climate change may cause instability in other countries by impairing access to food and water, damaging infrastructure, spreading disease, uprooting and displacing large numbers of people, compelling mass migration, interrupting commercial activity, or restricting electricity availability,"
Notice "may cause" but today ISIS is doing the very thing and the lying, I, Me, My, No-fault Obama does not want to send military troops to stop them because of his political agenda.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [Follow Post](#) · Yesterday at 8:30am**Bryan Horen** · Intern at Allyson Schwartz

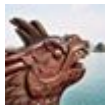
What is his political agenda?

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · Yesterday at 3:15pm**Vape Escape** · Top Commenter · Lakeville, Massachusetts

sigh Explain how Obama's political agenda requires ISIS to thrive.

You can't.

Talk about what you know and know what you're talking about.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · Yesterday at 3:16pm**Joe Connett** · Top Commenter

Yup, Republicans say f*ck the troops. DoD, NASA, NAS,. etc are frauds.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · Yesterday at 6:40pm**Paul Merrifield** · Top Commenter · Works at Actor/Comedian

Finger-pointing neocons for killing the planet by exaggerating science's consensus of "could be a CO2 crisis" is not progressive or civilized.
If science can't say; "100% proven" because their scientific method won't allow them to then find us one climate scientist that has ever said that.
Climate blame exaggeration is doing to the left what Bush and his false wars did for the neocons.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [Follow Post](#) · Yesterday at 12:46pm**Vape Escape** · Top Commenter · Lakeville, Massachusetts

