



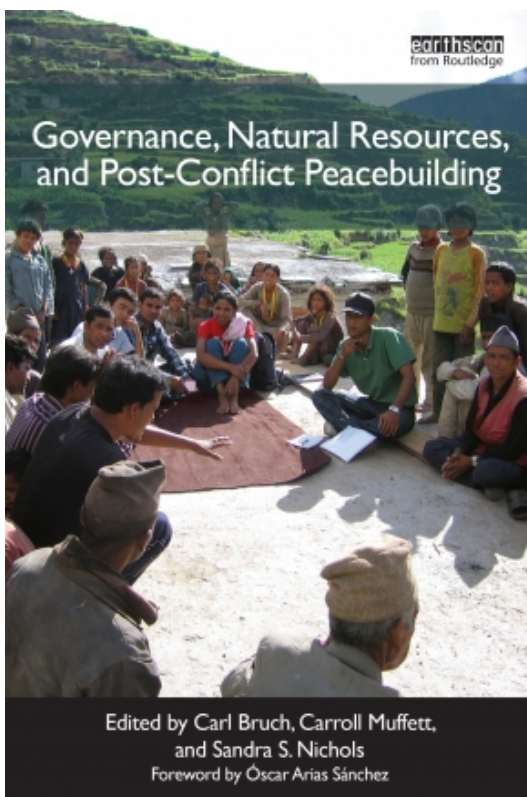
東京大学
THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO



McGill

This chapter first appeared in *Governance, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding* edited by Carl Bruch, Carroll Muffett, and Sandra S. Nichols. It is one of six edited books on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Natural Resource Management. (For more information, see www.environmentalpeacebuilding.org.) The full book can be purchased at <http://environmentalpeacebuilding.org/publications/books/governance-natural-resources-and-post-conflict-peacebuilding/>.

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Part 2: Peacekeepers, the Military, and Natural Resources

Carl Bruch^a, Carroll Muffett^b, and Sandra S. Nichols^c

^a Environmental Law Institute (ELI)

^b Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)

^c European Forest Institute (EFI)

Online publication date: 30 November 2016

Suggested citation: C. Bruch, C. Muffett, and S. S. Nichols. 2016. Part 2: Peacekeepers, the Military, and Natural Resources, *Governance, Natural Resources, and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding*, ed. C. Bruch, C. Muffett, and S. S. Nichols. London: Earthscan.

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PART 2

Peacekeepers, the security sector, and natural resources

Introduction

Reestablishing security is often the first step in ensuring a lasting peace following conflict. International, regional, and bilateral foreign peacekeeping and military operations can play an important role in reestablishing security by assisting with disarmament, monitoring and facilitating implementation of the peace agreement, and providing policing services while helping post-conflict governments rebuild their security capacity.

Peacekeeping operations often take place in countries where degradation and contamination of natural resources exacerbate poverty and food insecurity, where natural resources are the target of armed violence, or where exploitation and trade in natural resources provide revenues to finance armed groups. Reestablishing security in such circumstances accordingly requires consideration of natural resource management.

Peacekeeping mandates have historically failed to address natural resources, limiting peacekeepers' ability to deal with natural resource-related issues. Moreover, peacekeepers themselves have, on occasion, aggravated natural resource-related problems—for example, by failing to consider the environmental impacts of peacekeeping operations or by engaging in illicit trade in conflict resources. Such actions can undermine the legitimacy and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, while directly or indirectly worsening the security situation.

Actively working to ensure that natural resource-related issues are addressed in post-conflict peacekeeping and military operations can strengthen their effectiveness by promoting trust, opening lines of communication, and building local capacity. Addressing natural resource-related problems can also directly support peacekeepers' security goals by removing illicit sources of conflict funding and defusing conflict fueled by competition over natural resources.

The chapters in this part address (1) the ways in which peacekeeping and military operations affect—and are affected by—natural resources and (2) the resulting implications for the effectiveness of peacekeeping and military operations in general, as well as for the restoration of security in post-conflict situations. Peacekeeping operations have the potential to support rehabilitation and management of natural resources in post-conflict situations, but they also have the potential to cause significant harm to such resources, both directly and indirectly. Peacekeeping operations require natural resource inputs—such as fresh water, energy, and building materials, which must be sourced sustainably to avoid depletion or degradation of the resource and potential competition with local communities. Peacekeeping operations also generate large quantities of waste, some of which is hazardous or toxic, creating a risk of natural resource contamination and pollution.

In “Environmental Experiences and Developments in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations,” Sophie Ravier, Anne-Cecile Vialle, Russ Doran, and

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John Stokes explore policy developments designed to address many of these environmental concerns. These include guidelines incorporating environmental considerations into peacekeeping operations, the inclusion of environmental experts in field mission staff, and the use of environmental assessments to establish baselines and monitor impacts. Such policy developments are promising, and the challenge now lies in implementation.

In some cases, the impact of peacekeeping operations on natural resources goes beyond the incidental—when, for example, peacekeepers are involved in unsustainable and even illegal exploitation of natural resources, to the detriment of both security and the environment. In “Crime, Credibility, and Effective Peacekeeping: Lessons from the Field,” Annica Waleij explores the challenges associated with peacekeeper misconduct, including instances in which peacekeepers allegedly bought conflict diamonds in Sierra Leone, traded small arms for gold in the DRC, and purchased souvenirs derived from endangered species, such as illegal ivory and furs. Even though such actions can be regarded as environmental crimes that damage natural resources, harm peacebuilding efforts, and undermine the legitimacy of the peacekeeping mission, they often go unprosecuted—first because of political considerations, and second because of differing environmental standards among the countries that provide peacekeeping troops. Waleij suggests that such issues could be addressed through (1) agreements with troop-contributing countries that are designed to increase transparency and accountability, (2) the establishment of independent monitoring mechanisms, and (3) training and awareness-raising programs.

The potential natural resource impact of a peacekeeping mission is not limited to UN operations. In “Environmental Stewardship in Peace Operations: The Role of the Military,” Annica Waleij, Timothy Bosetti, Russ Doran, and Birgitta Liljedahl describe ways in which military operations can minimize their environmental “footprint” in every stage of the mission, from planning to post-deployment. They discuss emerging approaches to improving the sustainability of military operations—from training military personnel in environmental awareness to designing sustainable infrastructure and water supply systems for military operations. The authors conclude by considering the suggestion that militaries might extend their goals beyond reducing environmental impact to include affirmatively supporting environmental protection and sustainable natural resource management.

Post-conflict countries often struggle with conflict resources, which in many cases provided a revenue stream that helped to sustain the conflict. Establishing lasting security in such situations depends on breaking the link between natural resources and conflict. In “Taking the Gun out of Extraction: UN Responses to the Role of Natural Resources in Conflicts,” Mark B. Taylor and Mike Davis review the ways in which the UN has approached conflict resources—including sanctions, peace agreements, peacebuilding policies, and peacekeeping mandates—and the limitations of each approach. Taylor and Davis argue that attempts to address conflict resources have met with limited success for two reasons: lack

of international institutional capacity and lack of political will. They suggest that responding to these challenges will require concrete reforms in international policy, including (1) the creation of a third-party mechanism for monitoring the implementation of UN sanctions and (2) the explicit incorporation of natural resources, as a matter of course, in mandates for peacekeeping missions. The authors conclude that the UN should develop a comprehensive strategy that would address all phases of UN involvement, and that would be designed to sever the connection between natural resources and conflict.

The final two chapters in this part address cooperation between the various entities involved in natural resources and peace operations. In “Military-to-Military Cooperation on the Environment and Natural Disasters: Engagement for Peacebuilding,” Geoffrey D. Dabelko and Will Rogers consider ways in which national militaries engage with other militaries to manage natural resource-related problems or respond to natural disasters. In some situations, environmental issues can be less politically contentious than other issues, and can thus provide a good starting point for military cooperation between otherwise antagonistic countries. In other cases, environmental problems can be so strategically important (as in some cases of water management) or so urgent (as in the case of natural disasters) that cooperation becomes a necessity. In either instance, cooperation between militaries over natural resources and environmental issues can build trust, transparency, and goodwill that will foster cooperation in other areas.

In “An Enabling Framework for Civilian-Military Coordination and Cooperation in Peacebuilding and Natural Resource Management: Challenges and Incremental Progress,” Melanne A. Civic examines civilian-military cooperation in U.S. foreign policy in the context of post-conflict natural resource management. Civic notes that despite a trend toward increasing integration of civilian and military programs, problems persist, including a lack of shared vision, uncoordinated funding, and failure to take advantage of opportunities to use natural resource management as an entry point for cooperation.

Natural resources provide both challenges and opportunities for peace and security operations in post-conflict countries. Mismanagement of natural resources can undermine the legitimacy of a foreign or international military presence, while fueling ongoing security problems and conflict. At the same time, working to address problems such as conflict resources, natural disasters, and resource degradation and allocation can improve the overall security situation while providing opportunities to build cooperative relationships and establish trust.