Environmental Security Assessment
Focus, Issues, Lessons
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Defining Environmental Security

- Effective governance and sustainable use of natural resources to take tangible steps toward creating social, economic, and political stability and ensuring the welfare of the population.

- FESS’s focus is on affected populations.
Environmental Security Assessments and Related Work

- **Africa**
  - Uganda
  - Sierra Leone/Artisanal Diamond Mining Lands
  - Ethiopia/Lake Tana Watershed
  - Climate Change/Conflict in Cattle Corridor/Karamoja
  - Rwanda (ESA integrated into SEA)

- **Asia**
  - Nepal
  - Philippines

- **Latin America**
  - Dominican Republic
Environmental Security Assessment Framework (ESAF)

- Phase I: Profile of the Study Area
- Phase II: Analysis of Environmentally Linked Data
- Phase III: Analysis of Critical Concerns
- Phase IV: Identification of Environmental Security Factors
- Phase V: Test Hypotheses
- Phase VI: Complete Stakeholder Profile and Analysis
- Phase VII: Generate Scenarios
- Phase VIII: Review of Local/National Programs and International Development Assistance
- Phase IX: Complete Final Report and Recommendations
Environmental Security Assessment Framework (ESAF)

- **Caveats:**
  - It’s a toolkit, not a recipe.
  - It looks linear, but it isn’t.
  - It’s a methodology, not a straitjacket.

- **The goal of the ESAF is to:**
  - Inform not just policymakers but all other stakeholders as well
  - Facilitate the establishment of clear priorities
  - Contribute to the development of effective and sustainable actions
The Basic Security Problematic Remains

- Security for whom?
- Security for which values?
- How much security?
- From what threats?
- By what means?
- At what cost?
- In what time period?
Many Points of Entry: Level/Scope and Intensity of Environmental Insecurity

Level and Scope
- Individual/Community
  - Identity Group (Human Security)
- Nation-State
- Regional (EAC, ANDEAN, ASEAN)
- Global

Intensity
- Environmental Problems
- Grievances
- Protests
- Instability
- Crisis of Legitimacy (Ineffective Response)
- Localized Sporadic Conflict
- Violent Conflict

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Touchstone Questions for ESA

- When is an environmental problem an ES problem? When is it not? And who says? (What if it is transboundary?)
- ESA requires thinking about thresholds and priorities
  - What counts? What matters most?
  - What are your criteria and can you articulate them?
What are We Trying to Do?
A Few Basic Principles

- **Understand** environmental and natural resource problems in full context – in other words, *how did it get to be this way?*

- **Engage** in dialogue and understand the concerns/grievances of affected communities and responsible officials.

- **Develop** strategies to work on causes rather than symptoms, based on incentives to change behaviors.

- **Achieve** the implementation of tangible steps to enhance human security and prevent or reduce conflict.
From Slash-and-Burn Agriculture to Slash-and-Burn Tourism in the DR?
Promoting Mining in the Philippines: Foreign Investment vs. Social Justice?
Land Degradation and Siltation
Lake Tana Watershed, Ethiopia
Climate Change in Arid Lands: Conflict in Karamoja, Uganda
Some Lessons Learned

- A coherent methodological approach is just the beginning:

1. The places most in need of ESA are among the hardest places to work (DRC, Horn of Africa, Andes, Indochina)
2. Governance is the core factor: If the minimum space for dialogue with key actors does not exist, don’t go
3. ESA requires deep knowledge of the country’s political, social, economic, and historical context -- and *dramatis personae*
4. For credibility and reliability, ESA must be done with a reliable local partner
Some Lessons Learned (cont.)

The challenge is to move from information to insight:

1. Everyone agrees ESA requires multifactoral analysis (info), but what are the specific pathways to or away from conflict in a specific place (insight)?

2. The specific context (country X or Y) is more important than placing a problem in a general category (e.g., “conflict over scarce water resources”)

3. Keep your conclusions provisional: If you think you understand the whole picture, you are almost certainly wrong (the “Roshomon effect”)

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Some Lessons Learned (cont.)

- Institutional characteristics and requirements both empower and limit our analysis and follow-up:
  1. Where can we go?
  2. Who can we (or cannot) talk to?
  3. To whom are our recommendations addressed?
  4. What is the nature and length of our engagement with the ES issues?
Further Considerations for ESA

- In ESA, people are not just the objects of analysis but also the actors affecting ES outcomes.

- Achieving environmental security requires good decisions at all levels:
  - Government
  - Civil society
  - Communities
  - Private sector
ESA is Not an Academic Exercise: Conducting ESA Means Engagement

- Environmental Security Summit in the Dominican Republic with signed multistakeholder commitments from government and civil society (unanticipated and unplanned)
Small, Tangible Successes Count

Shifting to agriculture in artisanal diamond mining lands of Sierra Leone