

# Climate Security

## Time to Move from Talk to Action

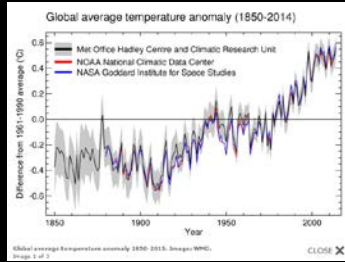
25 January 2016

Presentation at Planetary Security event hosted in New York City  
by Kingdom of the Netherlands

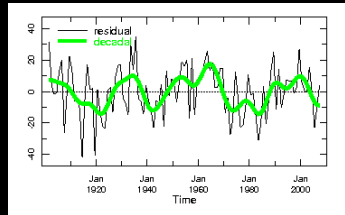
Marc Levy  
CIESIN, Earth Institute  
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[@marc\\_a\\_levy](https://twitter.com/marc_a_levy)

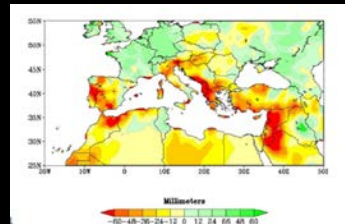
# Climate



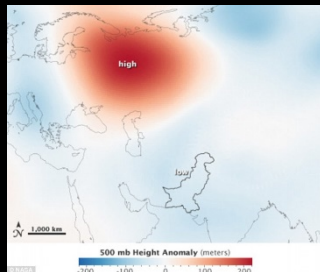
Averages



Variability



Extremes



Patterns

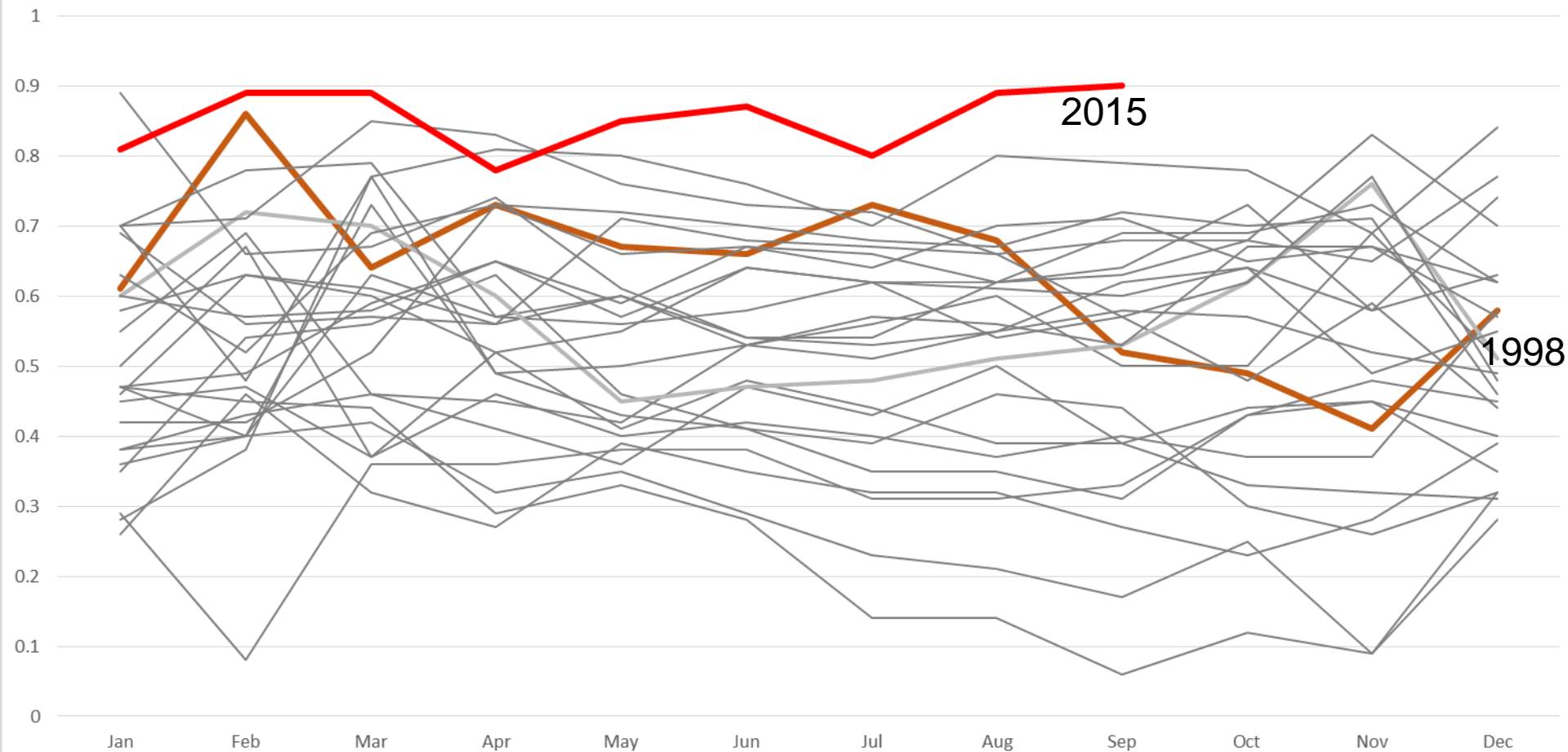


Climate change appears in different forms.

The science is strongest on averages and variability because that's where our data and models are best.

We have recently become more aware of changes in extreme events and changes to climate patterns.

### Monthly Global Land and Ocean Temperature Anomalies, 1990-2015

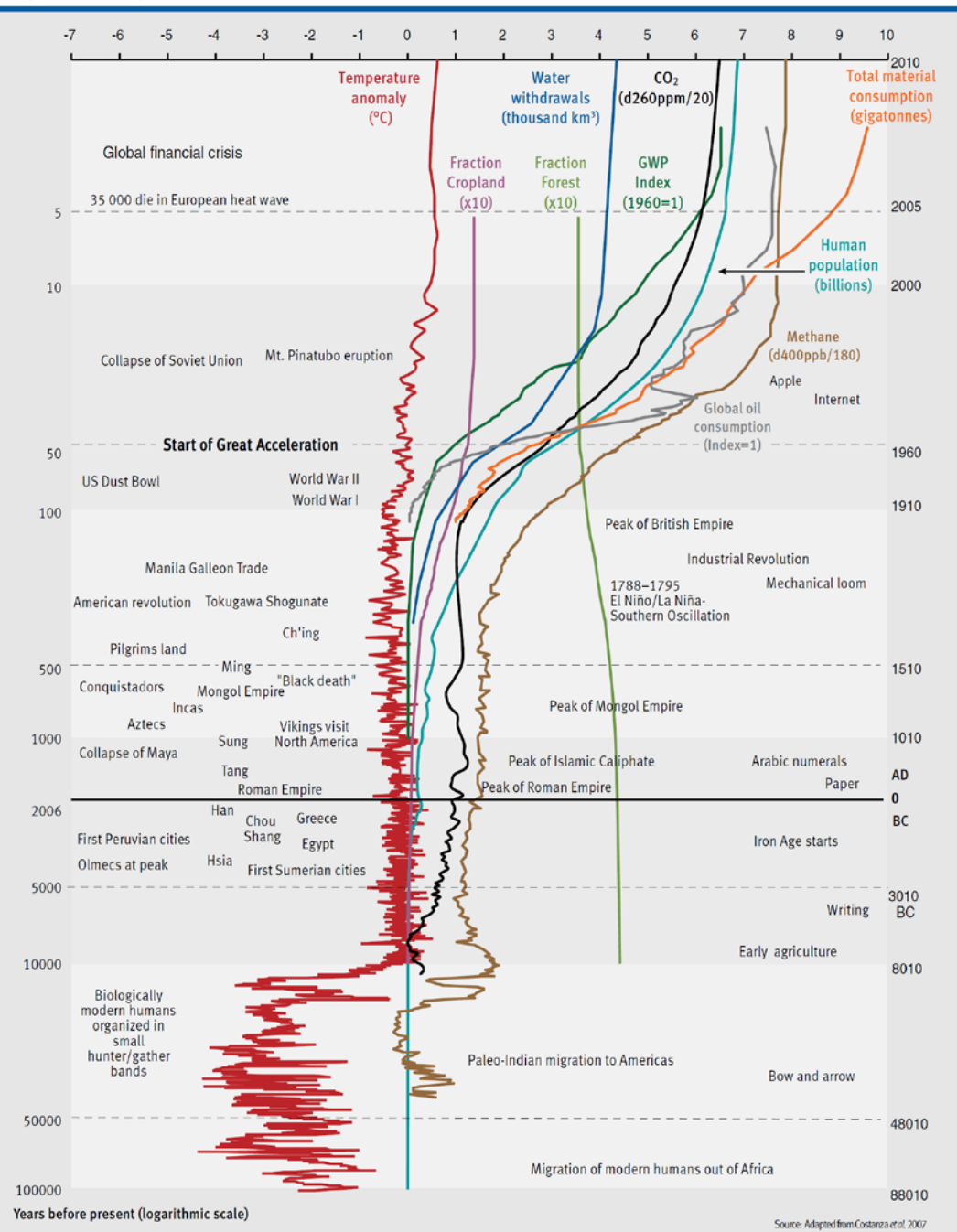


### Annual Global Land and Ocean Temperature Anomalies 1880-2014

10-year moving average



Figure 1.9 The great acceleration after the Second World War

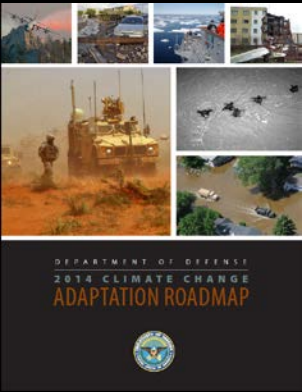
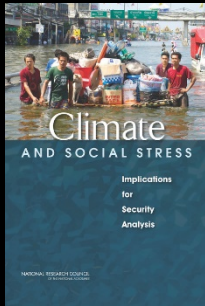



# Climate change doesn't have a monopoly on non-analog states

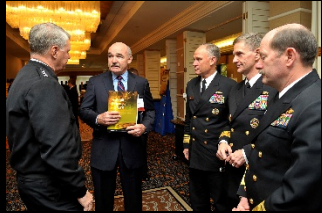
- Rapid global change underway
- Many trends unfavorable
- Alarming implications for risk

# Linkages

An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and Its Implications for United States National Security  
October 2003  
By Peter Schwartz and Doug Randall  
**Imagining the Unthinkable**



Annual Threat Assessment of the Intelligence Community  
for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence  
  
Dennis C. Blair  
Director of National Intelligence  
12 February 2009



**Over 70%**  
of countries view  
climate change as  
a national  
security issue  
Source: American Security Project (2013)

- Climate stress makes it harder to regulate violence
- Climate change alters the value of strategic assets
- Climate stress can trigger systemic instability
- Efforts to manage climate stress can transfer risk onto others and trigger backlash

Understanding of the linkages is changing fast, as new data and methods become available, and as we confront more fragile societies with unprecedented climate shocks.

On the research front, the new findings tend to find more reasons for worry, not fewer.

Among practitioners, the more people consider the linkages, the more alarmed they become.

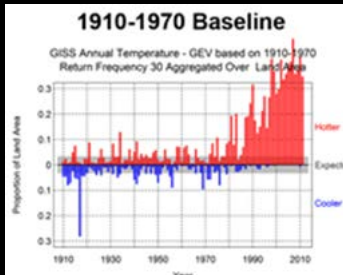
There has been a lot of effort to make sense of things in the past ten years.

There is very high convergence around four core types of linkages that a world with climate change less secure than a world without it.



# This is a bad time to be experiencing these risks

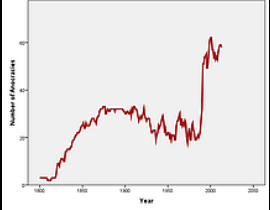
It wasn't long ago that we imagined that catastrophic climate change impacts were a problem for future generations.



The climate shocks that our statistical models tell us elevate security risks are now common and pervasive.

These are potent dangers right now, made worse by other unfavorable trends that also shape security risks.

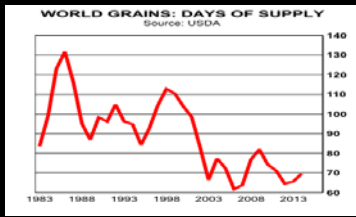
McElroy and Baker 2012



Number of countries with unstable political institutions is at historic high

The post-1990 trend toward less global insecurity is in reversal.

Polity



Globalization and other trends have undermined global political capabilities

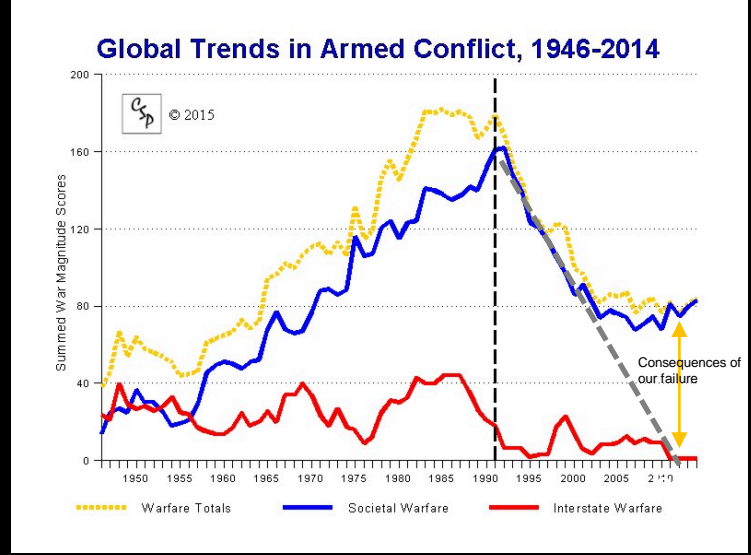
Unanticipated and poorly managed climate shocks are partly to blame.

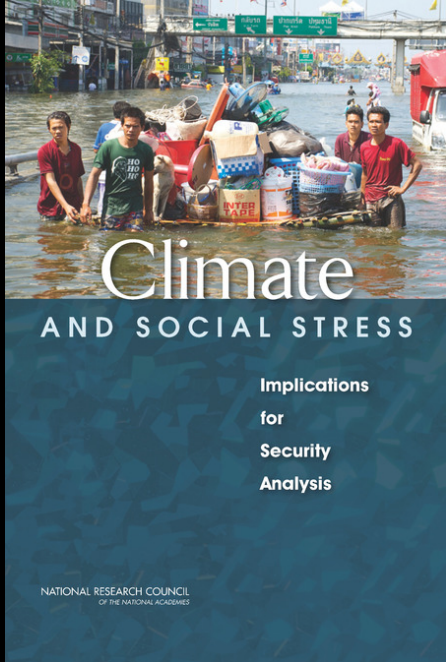
USDA



Robyn Woolston

All the other environmental and resource challenges continue apace





John Steinbruner,  
1941-2015

Don't pretend that currently dominant tools and methods will answer our questions.

Inertia drives investment in integrated assessment models, in predictive conflict models, but innovations languish.

## AN APPROACH TO ANTICIPATING RISKS

*Recommendation 6.3: The intelligence community should establish a system of periodic “stress testing” for countries, regions, and critical global systems regarding their ability to manage potentially disruptive climate events of concern. Stress tests would focus on potentially disruptive conjunctions of climate events and socioeconomic and political conditions.*

# CHANNEL GUIDE

9:10 AM



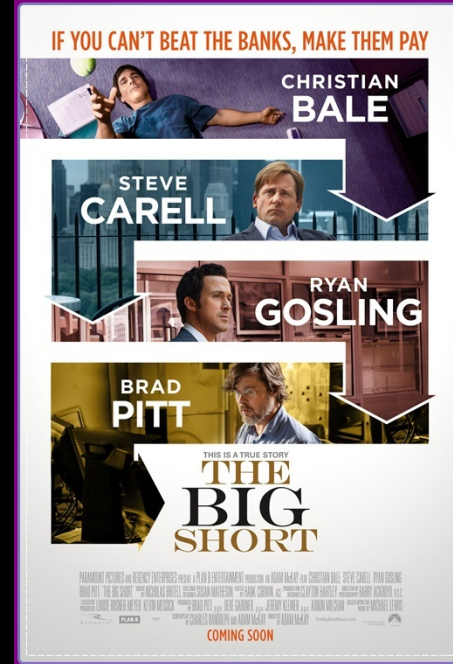
◀	▲	10:00 AM	10:30AM	11:00AM	11:30AM	12:00PM
501	<b>FEAR</b>	<i>Violence (MA)</i>	<i>Instability</i>	<i>Climate Change</i>	<i>Water Scarcity</i>	<i>Resource Wars</i>
502	<b>DATA</b>	<i>Event-coding</i>	<i>Satellites</i>	<i>Crowd-sourcing</i>	<i>Big-Data</i>	
503	<b>ACTION</b>	<i>Peacekeeping</i>	<i>Investment</i>	<i>Insurance</i>	<i>Humanitarian Response</i>	<i>Resource Management</i>
504	<i>FUSION</i>	<i>Early Warning</i>	<i>Program Design</i>	<i>Rapid Response</i>	<i>Risk Assessment</i>	<i>Community Empowerment</i>

**Making people afraid isn't enough.  
Showering them with data isn't enough.**

**We need tools, techniques, methods that drive effective action and build vibrant coalitions**



# Focus on Risk



**Widespread anxiety over systemic risk.**

**We worry about linked risk more**

**Our worst-case scenarios are much worse**

**Michigan AG: Flint water not even safe to 'bathe a newborn'**

Published January 20, 2016 - FoxNews.com



**Hawking Predicts "Biggest Event in Human History"**  
We've witnessed a perfect storm of technological advancements that brought us to this point.

**Trending in U.S.**

- University of Missouri professor charged with assault on tobacco journalist
- Republican fixes military wife's broken suitcase for \$1

**Our audience is different**

**The decision-support needs are different**

**We need to embed in multi-risk communities and frameworks**

# What does an action agenda look like?

- Improve ability to measure climate-security risk
  - Rapidly
  - Usable
  - Targeted
- Where data are inadequate, fix the data problem
- Where methods are inadequate, create better methods
- Where practices are weak, develop better practices

Quick Links Home Report Contributors Outreach Events IPCC Process Background

## Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability

IPCC Working Group II Contribution to AR5

The 10th Session of Working Group II (WGII-10) was held from 25 to 29 March 2014 in Yokohama, Japan. At the Session, the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of the Working Group II contribution to the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (WGII AR5) was approved and the underlying scientific and technical assessment accepted.

[SUMMARY FOR POLICYMAKERS](#) PDF - 32 Pages - 9.9MB

[FULL WGII AR5 REPORT](#) PDFs - 1820 pages

CLIMATE CHANGE

INITIAL NATIONAL COMMUNICATION

APRIL 2010

I N C

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC)

The cover features a blue background with stylized Arabic calligraphy and a central image of a traditional Syrian coffee pot (dallah) on a stand.

# Are we brave enough to grade ourselves against an action agenda?

- Convergence of views about what the problems are and the broad contours of what to do
- Why not leverage that convergence by using it as framework to grade actions
- Who is implementing the recommendations, and who is not?
- How can we encourage each other to do more and to do better?