Strained Stability: Climate Change and Regional Security in Southeast Asia

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About ASP

- Founded 2005 by then Senators John Kerry, Chuck Hagel, Warren Hart and Gary Rudman
- Non-partisan, national security research organization
- Focus on the critical long term national security threats
- Board of Directors and Consensus for American Security include retired flag officers, government leaders, policy makers, and private sector stakeholders
The coastal communities in Southeast Asia will face some of the worst impacts of climate change. The secondary effects from climate change will impact fisheries, undermining community security. Adaptation methods will define security outcomes for communities. Southeast Asia must prepare for increased migration and decreased community security. Bolstering community resiliency to these threats will be critical for ensuring stability.
What is Climate Security?

- Climate change is an “accelerant of instability” or threat multiplier
- Environmental changes due to climate change will lead to secondary and tertiary impacts
- Ex: Warmer temperatures-extreme and frequent drought-crop failure-instability
Southeast Asia Background

- Included Countries:
  - Cambodia
  - Indonesia
  - Malaysia
  - Myanmar
  - Philippines
  - Thailand
  - Vietnam
- Environment: Tropical
- Religion:
  - Most practiced faith: Islam (40% Muslim); Buddhism & Christianity
Current and Predicted Climate Impacts for Southeast Asia

- Oceans have absorbed 93% of the extra energy from greenhouse gases and approximately 30% of the anthropogenic CO₂
  - The IPCC predicts that mean sea surface temperature will increase up to 3°C by 2100

- Southeast Asia
  - Temperature
    - Increased 0.2°C per decade since 1960s
    - Predicted up to 6°C by 2100
  - Sea Level Rise
    - Predicted to endanger 2/3 of Asian cities
Southeast Asia Effects

- Fisheries are a primary source of food and income for hundreds of millions of people and generates billions of dollars for the region.

- Impact on Fish Stocks
  - Increasing temperatures and acidity
  - Loss of coral reef habitat
  - Altered species diversity and distribution

- Overfishing, combined with climate change, threatens the survival of communities
  - Livelihood
  - Sustenance
Impacts on Security

- Adaptation Options
  - Migration
  - Economic shifts
  - Illicit activities
- Security Outcomes
  - Economic instability
  - Political instability
  - State collapse
Recommendations

- Increase intelligence sharing and coordination between countries combatting piracy, terrorism, and radicalization
- Develop processes to manage increased migration (both internal and international)
- Bolster community resiliency to threats
- Respond to climate change
Questions?

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