



EFFECTS OF WAR ON CLIMATE

Hemant Kumar

Shayan Lal College, University of Delhi

While most of us are aware that armed conflict is bad for humans, we frequently overlook the extremely negative and long-lasting effects it has on the environment. The "natural environment" is made up of the land, the water, the plants, the animals, and every other living thing. Due to its interaction with nature, a geographic environment is also referred to as a natural environment. The natural environment includes things like the surface of the world, rivers, mountains, deserts, land, water, oceans, volcanoes, etc. Natural resources are found in the environment and are used as raw materials in the production of goods. Food, fuel, and raw materials for the manufacture of commodities are all made with the help of natural resources. Natural resources include things like stone, sand, metals, oil, coal, and natural gas. Other natural resources are air, sunlight, soil, water, animals, birds, fish and plants.

Some of the natural resources on the world are included in this graph along with their final uses. The chart lists a few of the natural resources that each nation has to offer. These natural resources indicate the nation's wealth, which is also based on how those resources are used.

ENVIRONMENTAL & ECO-TERRORISM

The term "environmental terrorism" refers to the intentional destruction of natural resources. Targeting the built environment, such as roads, buildings, and trucks, is referred to as "eco-terrorism." Many wars have been documented throughout history. The devastating impact of destruction has resulted in the degradation and decline of the planet and its natural environment.

Natural Resource	Products/Services Examples
Air	Wind power, oxygen, CO2
Animals	Food and clothing
Coal	Energy, electricity, heat
Minerals	Steel, aluminum, wire, power, batteries
Natural gas	Energy, electricity, heat
Oil	Energy, electricity, heat, plastics, fuel
Plants	Paper, wood, clothing, food, medicines
Sunlight	Solar power, heat, photosynthesis
Water	Hydropower, cleaning, drinking

Not only can war be harmful to the social environment, but it also emits large amounts of greenhouse gases, causing pollution that contributes to anthropogenic climate change and resource depletion, among other negative effects on the overall environment.

War results in pollution incidents that are industrial in scope. Oil or energy facilities are targeted on purpose. Scorched earth techniques include the destruction of agricultural infrastructure such as canals, wells, and pumps, resulting in cross-border contamination of rivers, aquifers, and the sea. Time and history show that winning wars has resulted in devastation and crippling damage by destroying and depleting countries' natural resources. Let's take a look at some specific conflicts and evaluate their impact on the environment.



World conflicts and their environmental damage

World War I: Due to the changes in the landscape brought on by trench fighting, World War I had the greatest negative effects on the ecosystem. Trench digging resulted in soil churning, crushing of plants and animals, and trampling of grassland. Logging in the forest to create more trenches caused erosion.

World War II: The environmental consequences of World War II were severe, allowing them to be observed during the Cold War period and up to the present day. Conflict, chemical contamination, and aerial warfare all contribute to a reduction in global flora and fauna populations, as well as a reduction in species diversity.

Vietnam War: New technologies were developed during the Vietnam War, some of which helped Vietnam's environment transition from a once-pristine habitat to an almost apocalyptic state after the conflict. These technologies included methods for chemical deforestation.

The current war in Ukraine: The current invasion of Ukraine by Russia impacted its natural environment in many ways. Wars are by nature violent and destructive.

Sometimes the destruction of resources can cause more severe damage than bombs and bullets. The destruction of farms, livestock, gardens, land, and other civilian infrastructure is resulting in a lack of food, a severe disruption of economic activity, a threat to survival, an issue to the lives of people and all wild species, and it is also causing displacement, starvation, and death due to threatened food security and other factors.

Can Warfare Protect Nature?

It may seem counterintuitive, but some argue that military conflicts often result in the preservation of the natural environment. "It's one of the findings that is completely contrary to expectations," says Jurgen Brauer, Ph.D., an economics professor at Augusta State University in Augusta, Georgia. "The demilitarised zone is the most preserved area in all of Korea because human activity is prohibited," he says. Other researchers have observed that, despite massive herbicide use during the Vietnam War, more forests have been lost in that country since the war's end than during it, owing to peacetime commerce and Vietnam's quest for prosperity.

. The coal-black skies caused by the Kuwaiti oil fires in 1991 provided striking visual evidence of the environmental damage caused by war. However, these oil fires consumed roughly the same amount of oil as the United States in a single day in one month.

"Peace can also be harmful," says Dabelko. "You've got some ironic twists."

Experts, however, are quick to point out that this is not an argument in favour of armed conflict. "War is bad for the environment," says Brauer, author of "War and Nature: The Environmental Consequences of War in a Globalized World."

And, as Bruch points out, warfare only postpones the environmental damage caused by peaceful human activity and commerce. "It may provide a temporary reprieve, but the long-term effects of war aren't all that different from what happens in commercial development," he says.

Environmental opportunities

While military operations and armed conflicts can contribute to or facilitate a variety of environmental harms, they can also offer chances for establishing and maintaining peace as well as for assisting in the transformation of society through sustainable recovery.

Common environmental hazards that transcend national boundaries and human borders, as well as shared natural resources, can serve as the starting point for communication between parties engaged in conflict.

Conflicts can drive a switch to solar energy due to unpredictable energy supply, and the destruction they wreak can be an opportunity to rebuild greener or to establish new domestic legislative frameworks for resource management in a sustainable way.

These opportunities, however, are dependent on greater attention being paid to the environment prior to, during, and after conflicts. If we do not demand greater protection before and during conflicts, damage will be accepted. And ignoring the environment after a conflict not only misses out on opportunities to encourage long-term recovery, but it may also set states up for future resource conflicts. Several studies have found a strong positive correlation between military spending and increased greenhouse gas emissions, with the impact of military spending on carbon emissions being more pronounced for countries of the Global North (i.e.: OECD developed countries).

