



POP In Pursuit of Prosperity

Shaping U.S. Foreign Policy to Address the
Changing Global Environment and
Resource Scarcity

July 2014





In Pursuit of Prosperity

World Wildlife Fund’s (WWF) In Pursuit of Prosperity (iPOP) initiative aspires to make environmental sustainability a central tenet in U.S. foreign policy. America’s prosperity is directly dependent on the stability and prosperity of our political and economic partners around the world. Our goal is to propose and advocate for recommendations that accelerate the transition to a U.S. foreign policy that is more responsive to rapidly changing global environmental conditions, resource scarcity, ecosystem degradation and the accompanying economic challenges.

Our Analysis

We launched the iPOP initiative by conducting rigorous analysis of rapidly changing environmental conditions in 10 countries and regions of strategic importance to the United States. That analysis allowed us to develop a policy framework that reflects both the long-standing engagements of the U.S. government in specific areas of the world and the changing environmental conditions that require adjustments in our policies. We conducted that research in close collaboration with key institutional players in the foreign policy arena. The case studies, background analysis and recommendations are presented in the book *In Pursuit of Prosperity: U.S. Foreign Policy in an Era of Natural Resource Scarcity* (Routledge, 2014).

Summary of Findings

The 10 case studies have confirmed the impacts of natural resource scarcities and global environmental change that will reverberate across those societies for the foreseeable future. These include

Geophysical impacts: The studies done in China, India, Pakistan, Tanzania and Mexico highlight growing water scarcities that are stressing provision of food and energy in many regions of those countries. Rising temperatures, variable rainfall and drought are exacerbating scarcities of renewable resources such as water and productive lands.

Socioeconomic impacts: Resource scarcities in rural areas are disrupting livelihoods and accelerating the migration of tens

Case Study	Author
Arctic/Russia	Heather Conley, Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Lev Neretin
Brazil	Ricardo Sennes, Woodrow Wilson Center
Coastal East Africa	Rep. Mark Green, Former Ambassador
China	Chris Sall, Tufts University, and Katrina Brandon
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Theodore Trefon, Boston University
India	Rich Verma, Former Assistant Secretary of State
Mexico	Pamela Stedman-Edwards
Nepal	John Norris, Center for American Progress
Pakistan	Shuja Nawaz, Atlantic Council, and Saleem Ali, University of Vermont
South China Sea	Murray Hiebert and Gregory Poling, Center for Strategic and International Studies



“The question is not whether resource scarcity in other parts of the world will affect U.S. prosperity and national security, but rather when and how. And, in equal measure, how will the U.S. government and our economy respond to the attendant social unrest and economic disruption.”

—David Reed, WWF

of millions of inhabitants to urban areas. Internal urban migration, in turn, is increasing pressure in sprawling cities such as Karachi, Mexico City, Delhi and Guangzhou, as governments try to provide housing, sanitation, water and energy. Local governments face deepening public distrust and rising social protest as conditions sharpen in urban centers.

Impacts on neighboring countries: Internal scarcities spill over into relations with neighboring countries as governments try to access natural resource wealth (timber, water, energy) through legal and illegal paths. Tensions among neighbors, ranging from the U.S.-Mexico border to India and Pakistan, are on the rise.

Impacts on national institutions: Many government offices are unable to respond to the new demands arising from increasing scarcities and changing environmental conditions. Governments seldom discuss with stakeholders the difficult trade-offs among water, food, energy and development options, hoping that technical and infrastructure responses will address the problems. Many regional cooperation organizations—usually created for commercial promotion and technical exchange purposes—are unable to address tensions created or intensified by competition for scarce resources among neighboring countries.

Consequences for U.S. Prosperity

These national and regional impacts have immediate and long-term consequences for U.S. prosperity and national security:

- Global supply chain disruptions, as experienced during the 2008 and 2012 global food price spikes, carry price and access impacts to U.S. markets, manufacturers and consumers.
- Migratory patterns and social discontent pose challenges to governments of key U.S. trading and political partners such as Kenya, Pakistan and Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- Internal tensions, for example in Pakistan and India, can easily spill over to amplify tensions between the two nations, further destabilizing the region.
- Should internal environmental and social problems in India, by way of example, multiply and destabilize local and national governments, the U.S. strategic balancing plan for the region could be put into question.
- As experienced in central and eastern Africa, illegal resource trade provides fertile ground for criminal networks that undermine legitimate governments and rule of law.

“Resource scarcity and climate change oblige us to adjust our engagement with economic and political partners around the world such that in supporting their prosperity and stability we, in turn, increase the prosperity and security of our nation.”

—David Reed, WWF



2014-2018 Objectives

Having completed research efforts and published the book of case studies, we will now focus our efforts on the following three objectives:

- Ensure that U.S. commercial statecraft promotes sustainable business practices that benefit U.S. companies and national security as well as local economies and ecosystems.
 - Ensure that the U.S. government anticipates and preemptively addresses disruptions and conflict associated with natural resource scarcity and climate change impacts as they threaten strategic U.S. interests and regional stability.
 - Promote U.S. foreign assistance to strategic partners to address responses to natural resource scarcity that may undermine U.S. domestic and geo-strategic interests.
- Training in natural resource scarcity and conflict avoidance
 - Conducting a war game on global food shocks and scarcity
 - Analyzing and advocating solutions to cross-boundary water scarcity in South Asia
 - Identifying corporate sustainability practices that the U.S. government can promote to stabilize global supply chains
 - Promoting a monitoring and response system in the U.S. government to identify emerging risks and potential environmental and economic shocks

POP In Pursuit of Prosperity

In Pursuit of Prosperity can be pre-ordered at
<http://routledge-ny.com/books/details/9781138791893/>

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