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The Tempest Within: Reconciling Disagreements on Climate-Conflict Links

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How dire are the security implications of climate change, and for whom? Research findings on the relationship between climate and conflict are diverse and contested, leaving policymakers of various types uncertain about productive ways to integrate climate into risk assessments and action plans. This talk discusses the evolution of debate around the security implications of climate change before reflecting on the benefits of inclusive, rather than confrontational, approaches to reconciling scholarly and scientific disagreements. Using a recent expert elicitation-based, consensus-building exercise as a positive case study, this talk assesses whether the incentive structure of standard scientific exchange is adequate for meeting the needs of the human and natural systems that will be affected by global environmental change.

Dr. Cullen Hendrix (@cullenhendrix) is Director of the Sié Chéou-Kang Center for International Security and Diplomacy and Associate Professor at the Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, and Senior Research Advisor at the Center for Climate & Security. He holds research appointments at the University of Texas at Austin and the Colorado School of Mines, and is Associate Editor of the Journal of Peace Research. Dr. Hendrix has broad interests in contentious politics, the political economy of development, and environmental politics. At the Korbel School, he leads the Environment, Food and Conflict (ENFOCO) Lab, which leverages collaborations between physical and social scientists and policymakers to produce scholarship and analysis on issues at the intersection of the environment, food security, and conflict. His research has been supported by the National Science Foundation's Coupled Natural and Human Systems program, the US Department of Defense Minerva Initiative, the Carnegie Corporation, and the Smith Richardson Foundation. Currently, he is the coordinating investigator on the Sie Center's Program on Rigor, Relevance, and Responsibility, which is designed to make ethical considerations an integral part of policy-relevant research and engagement.