



Committee: UNEP

Topic: Protection of the Environment in Armed Conflicts

Country: Iran

Iran believes Military activity has significant impacts on the environment. Not only can war be destructive to the socioenvironment, but military activities produce extensive amounts of greenhouse gases, pollution, and cause resource depletion, among other environmental impacts. 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. Military land use needs often displace people from their lands and homes. Military activity uses solvents, fuels and other toxic chemicals which can leach toxins into the environment that remain there for decades and even centuries. Furthermore, heavy military vehicles can cause damage to soil and infrastructure.

Despite the lack of reliable data on environmental impacts, some effects are known. For example, it is known that extensive minefields and unexploded war materials in all of Iran's five war-affected provinces have posed daily hazards to local populations. Reza Malekzadeh, representative of the Iranian Ministry of Health, reported in 1991 that at least 10 people a day were wounded, maimed, or killed by live war munitions . It is also known that ground battles and aerial bombardments caused extensive destruction of forests - a process that was exacerbated by people searching for cooking fuel to replace normal supplies; run-off and erosion have increased as a result. During the conflict, more than 3 million date palms and 5,000 hectares of orchards were destroyed. Some 130,000 hectares of natural forests and 753,000 hectares of pasture land in the war-afflicted provinces were also rendered unusable.

We as Iran support the idea of the UN General Assembly requesting the ILC to examine the effectiveness of existing international law for protecting the environment during armed conflict. It can make a big difference in the world if it is enforced precisely.