

NEWS RELEASE

JUNE 5, 2014

Climate Change isn't just about Climate Any more

National and regional experts convened in Seattle say it's also about
National Security

SEATTLE, Wash. -- What do a White House senior advisor, scientists, military planners, business people and a Congressman have in common – besides a lot of opinions? Frequently, not much. But at a June 4 symposium in Seattle, they were all in agreement that climate change is having an impact on national security that will only increase with time.

Thirty-six leaders from federal agencies, state and local government, research organizations, business and academia participated in the symposium titled “The Intersection of National Security and Climate Change – What do Decision-makers need to be prepared?” The symposium was organized by the Henry M. Jackson Foundation and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

“We can't separate this out and say climate change is an energy problem and not a national security problem,” said Representative Adam Smith, (D-Wash.).

Research indicates that changing rainfall patterns can undermine agricultural productivity and food security, leading to conflict. More droughts can force migrations, which increase stress on weak governments. Melting sea ice will open new shipping lanes through the Arctic, which will affect military operations and international trade. All of these changes have implications for the Pacific Northwest and the nation as a whole.

“The workshop participants emphasized the urgency of addressing climate change and its impacts on our country's national security and determined that it is critical to take immediate action,” said Alice Hill, White House senior advisor Preparedness and Resilience.

Participants also agreed that the military, and other parts of the national security community, as well as state and local governments, business and industry and federal agencies can and should play a key role in defining and prioritizing what those actions should be.

“We have a duty to lead on threats from climate change that are making us vulnerable now,” said Larry Phillips, Chair of the King County Council. “King County government has successfully crafted a bipartisan ‘Strategic Climate Action Plan’ that guides our

efforts to reduce carbon emissions, as well as to protect our county government infrastructure and help our communities prepare for the impacts of climate change.”

“Recognizing that climate change is likely to be a catalyst for conflict, the State of Washington is a model for how to tackle the challenges it presents through responsible leadership,” said Sherri Goodman, senior vice president for CNA, the organization that recently compiled research for the military on how climate change acts as a catalyst for global political conflict.

“The impacts of climate change are truly a national security concern because they could threaten the American way of life. Climate change is not a national defense issue, but it is absolutely a national security issue,” said Mike Kluse, director of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

Organizers of the symposium plan to refine their recommendations and present them to a group of business and policy leaders in Washington, D.C. later this summer.

The Henry M Jackson Foundation was founded in 1983 to continue the unfinished work of the late Senator Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson in the areas in which he played a key leadership role: international affairs education, human rights, environment and natural resources management, and public service. Through its grantmaking and strategic initiatives, the Foundation seeks to make a lasting impact and perpetuate the Jackson legacy for the benefit of future generations.

Interdisciplinary teams at [Pacific Northwest National Laboratory](#) address many of America's most pressing issues in energy, the environment and national security through advances in basic and applied science. Founded in 1965, PNNL employs 4,300 staff and has an annual budget of about \$950 million. It is managed by Battelle for the U.S. Department of Energy. For more information, visit the [PNNL News Center](#), or follow PNNL on [Facebook](#), [Google+](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).