

CLIMATE CRISIS, **ARMED FORCES** AND ENVIRONMENTAL PEACE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ecological crisis is undoubtedly a global threat and, thanks to pressure from social movements and the scientific community, governments and international institutions have finally recognized it as an existential threat.

But global capitalism, despite disguising itself in green and applying some protection measures, continues with its model of exploitation of non-renewable resources, using armed forces to subdue and if necessary repress the resistance to the plundering of the subsoil resources by the communities that inhabit these territories. Year after year, the resources of the military capabilities of the powerful countries increase with the aim of controlling the access to the resources they need to continue developing their economies.

This report continues and complements the research work begun in [Report 47 of the Delàs Centre](#), analysing the relationship among power structures, militarized security and the environmental crisis, to then study in detail the environmental footprint of the military economy and the carbon footprint of the military sector in Spain (armed forces and military industry), addressing one of the main threats looming over humanity: the growing use of military force to impose the political / economic model and to repress the resistance of those who oppose that model. Also studying the environmental damage and GHG emissions arising from military activities and placing emphasis on the sectors surrounding the military economy – sectors analysed are those for which information is available to quantify them -. These are some of the main conclusions:

- **The causes of the current climate and environmental crisis are concentrated in a few countries** (China, USA, Europe, India, Russia and Japan, which emit 66.9% of the world total) and in very specific economic sectors: production and energy use, transportation and land use. This is the consequence of the maintenance and improvement of the “way of life” of countries of the global North (and above all, that of their elites who hold power) at the cost of the total disregard of the populations of the global South, and at the cost of the depletion of the resources of the planet, resulting on a continued worsening of the ecological and environmental crisis.
- **Militarized security** plays an essential role in the constant worsening of the global environmental crisis. A role that consists of **protecting all non-democratic power agents** (extractive transnational corporations, large financial entities, military industry) that, with often unspeakable objectives of continuous growth for the personal benefit and profit of their ruling minorities, break the social and eco-planetary equilibriums. A protection of the few that excludes the great majority of the population, through the so-called national security. A protection that is essential, because without it, the predatory system of resources that is threatening the planet and its biological system could not exist. The 23 countries that manufacture and export 97.8% of weapons worldwide, with only 35.48% of the world’s population,

are home to the 50 global economic agents that control more than 63,000 transnational companies worldwide (39.78% of the total) and generate 67.1% of all global greenhouse gas emissions. National security schemes, under the pretext of preserving "national interests", actually what they really protect are the economic interests of certain elites of large corporations, along **with the lucrative interests of those who pull the strings of the military-industrial complex.** .

- **The national security system**, with the help and protection of the armed forces and the military-industrial complex to the activities of the non-democratic structures and organizations of power that are continuously increasing the planetary environmental crisis, **should be considered instrumentally responsible** of the vast majority of current emissions, as well as the environmental crisis in all its areas.
- **The military environmental footprint** includes carbon footprint (GHG emissions), toxic remnants of war, and damage to ecosystems.
- **The main source of military GHG is the combustion of fossil fuels from military vehicles**, especially those of the Air Force. The carbon footprint of EU military spending in 2019 was estimated at around 24.8 million tCO₂e, which is equivalent to the annual emissions of approximately 14 million cars.
- **Toxic remnants of war** are produced throughout the "conflict cycle" (peace - war - post-war), and pollute the land, water and atmosphere, with effects that **can last for a long period of time**, with consequences on human life, flora and fauna.
- The **damage to ecosystems caused by military air, naval and land operations**, documented in the report, may be responsible for the alteration of ecosystems: destruction of habitats, diseases, mortality and even extinction of plant and animal species.
- Considering that the GHG emissions of the Spanish Armed Forces follow similar parameters to those of countries such as France and Germany, it is estimated that **Spain emits an average of 7.46 tCO₂ for each of its 120,000 military personnel**. If the emissions of Scope 1 and 2 are added to those of Scope 3 to measure the final carbon footprint, then indirect emissions total 1,900,000 tCO₂, and emissions rise to 23.3 tCO₂ for each Spanish military. A considerable figure that places the Spanish armed forces in GHG emissions at the same level as the rest of the European armed forces. In relation to the Spanish military industry, **Navantia's** emissions were 14,148 tCO₂ in 2019, while the total emissions of the transnational **Indra** was 92,878 tCO₂ in the same year 2019. The military emissions of **ITP Aero** in 2018 are estimated in 1,316 tCO₂ while those of the **Airbus** group amounted to 48,970 tCO₂.
- **The Spanish Government must enforce the GHG emissions protocol** both for all business sectors in general, as well as for military industries in particular,

as well as for all agencies dependent on the Ministry of Defence and, especially, the armed forces. Without rigorous monitoring, it will be impossible to comply with the reduction of the ecological footprint committed to in the environmental policy objectives of the 2015 Paris agreements.

- It is necessary to speak of **environmental peace**, especially since the appearance of the new geological stage that the planet is experiencing, the Anthropocene, a stage caused by the aggressions developed since the Industrial Revolution by human action and that has altered life in the biosphere .
- The ecological crisis and its most visible part, climate change, should be the object of study in **peace research from an ecofeminism and post-violent perspective**, because the ecological crisis is undoubtedly a multiplier of threats to humanity and in that sense, also for peace. Threats that become visible through multiple phenomena that alter the life of the planet and cause great famines and massive migrations. That is why it is necessary for peace research and social movements to care and confront the aggressions that are being perpetrated against nature and that are the cause of multiple conflicts that erode environmental peace.

The human security of all the people of the planet cannot be based on the current militarized technologies of national security that allow the plunder of the planet while exercising violence against "the others", in this global village that we all share and in which we are all **us**. In this sense, we understand that **actions for the climate and the environment should include in their discourse the need for a reduction in world military spending** that will make it possible to reduce the production of arms and arms exports, as well as the **transfer of current military resources towards action programs to address the great global challenges** that affect us.



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