

## **Approaches to the study of environmental security**

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Since the emergence of the nation state system, international security has been understood and practiced with reference to the needs and interests of states. The concept of security however took a different shape during the twentieth century when critical voices were raised for the protection of human beings and the global environment. Thus an alternative approach to security emerged that gave priority to individual and societal dimensions. In the process, the scope of security was broadened and a multi-sectoral approach was suggested to study the same. Environmental sector was one of the primary areas of multi-sectoral approaches. As a result, environmental security became high on the agenda at the national and global levels. By the twentieth century, environmental issues had been on the international agenda for a whole generation of political leaders, governmental officials, scientists and concerned citizens. The major theoretical perspectives for understanding global politics have shed light on international environmental cooperation, even though it is fairly a new area in world politics. In looking at the prospects for environmental cooperation, realism expects cooperation among sovereign states would be very difficult because international agreements reflect interests of the most powerful states strongly. Liberals, in contrast, remain inclined to believe the reality of ecological interdependence. According to them, environmental problems could only be resolved through new and far reaching mechanism of cooperation. The Marxists on the other hand blamed Capitalism as the main factor for environmental degradation. The feminist thinkers drew parallels between male control over nature and men's control over women as connected. This apart, Green Political Thinkers provide a useful base for Green ideas about international relations. In this backdrop, this paper attempts to study the concept of environmental security through the prisms of various approaches cited above.

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