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Webinar: Science Diplomacy and Environmental Peacebuilding in Oceans Governance

9 May 2019

Environmental Peacebuilding Association

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This is the third of our three-part webinar series concerning science diplomacy and environmental peacebuilding. In this session, we will focus on this topic in the context of oceans governance. We will be joined by Dr. Leandra R Gonçalves, postdoctoral researcher at the Oceanographic Institute, University of São Paulo, Brazil and James Borton, faculty associate at the Walker Center, University of South Carolina, United States.

James Borton

Science Diplomacy and Dispute Management in the South China Sea

The South China Sea's natural heritage of marine biodiversity faces new ecological danger. The death and destruction of coral reefs continues in the South China Sea. Subsequently, the pressure is on marine scientists to encourage policy makers and claimant nations to embrace an ecosystem approach to integrate management of land, water and living resources to promote conservation and peace building. James Borton advocates marine conservation cooperation and confidence-building steps towards science diplomacy to address environmental security in the disputed region.

Dr. Leandra R Gonçalves

Science and Diplomacy for the oceans governance

In the past 30 years the international system has changed, and power has been distributed over different actors and states. These changes seem to make the world a much smaller and more interconnected place. This new scenario involves strong interactions between the sciences and decision-making across borders facilitating the emergence of science diplomacy where scientific collaborations among nations, and within countries are necessary to tackle increasingly common challenges, such as the anthropic impacts on the ocean. In this new called Anthropocene Epoch the challenges are immense, and the way society deals with that, or react to the impact it will greatly depend on the interface between knowledge and power. This webinar will explore the evolving relationship between science and diplomacy for the oceans governance, in a specific case to advance on a regulatory framework for the Brazilian Economic and Exclusive Zone.

The role of science in environmental diplomacy, whether it is in terms of fostering research collaborations between countries or communities, or in terms of its role in environmental treaty-making, has been under deliberation for a long time. However, how can science contribute to peacebuilding between nations and communities that are at war with each other or are simply hostile with each other through environmental cooperation? This is a question that needs to be addressed more seriously and urgently at a time when environmental security challenges and climate-fragility risks are posing threat to peace and stability in many parts of the world. In this context, this webinar series will strive to build bridges between two concepts – “environmental peacebuilding” and “science diplomacy” – through empirical observations from different regions.

The objectives of the webinar series are the following:

- To explore the role of science in environmental peacebuilding;
- To dissect the interlinkages between science diplomacy and environmental peacebuilding through empirical cases;

- To analyse the interplay between science diplomacy and issues such as conflict sensitivity and conflict prevention; and
- To identify the institutions and stakeholders at international, regional and local levels that could operationalise science diplomacy-environmental peacebuilding interface.

Where: online

When: 9 May 2019 at 10:00am EDT

Organizers: Environmental Peacebuilding Association

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