

Nexus of Climate Change and Maritime Security in Sri Lanka: Implications for Small Island Developing States

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Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face urgent challenges at the intersection of climate change and maritime security. Their limited land area, delicate ecosystems, and reliance on coastal resources make them highly vulnerable to the compounded effects of climate change, intensifying storms, rising sea levels, and ocean acidification. These factors exacerbate existing maritime security risks, such as illegal fishing, piracy, and territorial disputes. This research comprehensively assesses the vulnerability of SIDS to climate change-induced maritime security risks, with a focus on Sri Lanka as a representative SIDS. The research objectives are twofold. Firstly, it evaluates the specific impacts of climate change on SIDS' maritime security, encompassing socio-economic consequences, environmental degradation, and potential conflicts. Secondly, it examines the adaptation strategies and policy responses implemented by these states to mitigate and respond to the identified risks. The research adopts a qualitative approach with content analysis as the primary method. By examining policy documents, reports, and academic literature, the study provides contextual insights into SIDS' vulnerability. The content analysis identifies key themes and patterns related to climate change impacts and maritime security challenges faced by these states. Findings highlight the specific impacts of climate change on maritime security in SIDS, with Sri Lanka as the case study. Challenges include economic losses, resource scarcity, social unrest, and territorial disputes. The analysis of adaptation strategies and policy responses reveals successful approaches and areas needing improvement. The discussion emphasizes the need for robust adaptation measures and effective policy frameworks to safeguard SIDS' interests in the face of climate change and maritime security challenges. International cooperation, knowledge sharing, and sustainable development are crucial in mitigating the fragility faced by SIDS. In conclusion, the research findings establish a critical link between the vulnerabilities posed by climate change-induced maritime security risks and the national security of Sri Lanka. By comprehensively assessing the impacts and providing insights into effective adaptation strategies, the research offers a roadmap for enhancing Sri Lanka's resilience against potential threats, ensuring the protection of its maritime interests and overall national security. The findings offer valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders to develop informed strategies addressing vulnerabilities and enhancing SIDS' resilience.

Keywords: Small Island Developing States, Climate Change, Maritime Security, Sri Lanka, Adaptation Strategies