



Annual Conference

Conflicts and Natural Resources in the MENA Region and its Immediate Neighbourhood

 @medirections

21 - 22 October 2019

Theatre - Badia Fiesolana, Via dei Roccettini 9 - San Domenico di Fiesole (Fiesole, Florence)

Luigi Narbone | School of Transnational Governance & Middle East Directions Programme, European University Institute

Virginie Collombier | Middle East Directions Programme, European University Institute

Christopher Frattina | Middle East Directions Programme, European University Institute

Introduction

Several important trends point to the increasing risk of conflicts over or related to natural resources in the MENA region, and its immediate neighbourhood in the coming years. These indicators include protracted civil wars, in which competition over the control and management of natural resources has increasingly become a key element, both as a driver of conflict and as an instrument for its perpetuation; friction between local populations, state authorities and international actors over their conflicting interests in issues such as investment, transparency and local development; the growing scarcity of water and land resources and the impact this is having on local and regional security; and broader challenges and transformations linked to geopolitical changes, energy transition and climate change.

This conference will bring together a select group of international experts from the worlds of academia and practice to analyse how natural resources are affecting the stability of the MENA region and their potential to do so in the future, taking into account issues related to geopolitics and governance, as well as changes taking place in the natural resources sector itself. The final policy roundtable will conclude the conference with a focus on identifying connections, drawing comparisons and discussing innovative new directions for policy-making.

Draft Programme

21 October

14.00 - 14.15 Registration with welcome coffee

14.15 - 14.30 **Institutional Welcome**

Brigid Laffan | Director, Robert Schuman Centre

Luigi Narbone | Director, MEDirections Programme

14.30 - 15.30 **Panel One | Governance of natural resources: the impact of national-level decision making**

Chair: **Virginie Collombier** | MEDirections Programme

The role of civil society in resolving the natural resources crisis in Tunisia

Speaker: **Manel Ben Achour** | I WATCH organization

Phosphate mining in Jordan: impact on local communities

Speaker: **Rami Alrawashdeh** | Al-Hussein Bin Talal University

Water crisis in Iran - What implications for regional security?

Speaker: **Susanne Schmeier** | IHE Delft

15.30 - 16.00 **Panel one discussion**

16.00 - 16.15 Coffee break

16.15 - 17.30 **Documentary Screening and Discussion**

20.00 **Dinner** (invitation only)

Ristorante Benedicta

22 October

09.00 - 10.30 **Panel Two | Institutional infrastructure and the management of insecurity**

Chair: **Christopher Frattina** | MEDirections Programme

Understanding geopolitical links between climate, water, and conflict

Speaker: **Karen Meijer** | Deltares

Assessing the dual impact of sanctions and climate change

Speaker: **Tamer Badawi** | School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute

The geopolitics of the new EU phosphate regulation and its implications in North Africa

Speaker: **Amine Ghouli** | King's College London

Critical infrastructure vulnerabilities in the Gulf: Threats and opportunities

Speaker: **Robert Mogielnicki** | Arab Gulf States Institute

10.30 - 11.00 **Panel two discussion**

11.00 - 11.15 Coffee break

- 11.15 - 12.45 **Panel Three | The Geopolitics of Natural Resources**
- Chair: **Francesco Strazzari** | Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies
- National Oil Companies and Central Banks in Arab civil wars**
Speaker: **Ariel I. Ahram** | Virginia Tech
- Ramifications of the oil industry in the Iraq Kurdistan**
Speaker: **Alessandro Tinti** | Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies
- Lebanon's hydrocarbons sector: Geopolitical challenges and opportunities**
Speaker: **Laury Haytayan** | National Resource Governance Institute
- The geopolitics of renewable energy transitions in the region**
Speaker: **Eckart Woertz** | Director of the Institute of Middle East Studies (IMES) at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA)
- 12.45 - 13.15 **Panel three discussion**
- 13.15 - 14.30 Lunch
Sala Buonsanti
- 14.30 - 16.00 **Keynote lecture | Geopolitics and the future of energy and natural resources**
- Speaker: **Andris Piebalgs** | Adviser to the President of Latvia and former Commissioner for Energy (Barroso I) and for Development (Barroso II); part-time Professor, Florence School of Regulation, Robert Schuman Center, European University Institute
- 16.00 - 16.15 Coffee break
- 16.15 - 17.00 **Policy Roundtable | Will future transformations of the natural resources sector further threaten stability?**
Chair: **Luigi Narbone** | MEDirections Programme
- Speakers:
Andris Piebalgs | Adviser to the President of Latvia and former Commissioner for Energy (Barroso I) and for Development (Barroso II); part-time Professor, Florence School of Regulation, Robert Schuman Center, European University Institute
Carole Naklhe | Crystol Energy
Eckart Woertz | Director, the GIGA Institute of Middle East Studies Professor for contemporary history and politics of the Middle East, University of Hamburg
Francesco Strazzari | Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies
Hani Sabra | Alef Advisory
- 17.00 - 17.30 Drinks reception

Speakers

Ariel Ahram	Virginia Tech
Rami Alrawashdeh	Al-Hussein Bin Talal University
Tamer Badawi	School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute
Manel Ben Achour	I WATCH organization
Virginie Collombier	MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute
Christopher Frattina	MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute
Amine Ghoulidi	King's College London
Laury Haytayan	Natural Resource Governance Institute
Brigid Laffan	Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute
Karen Meijer	Deltares
Robert Mogielnicki	Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington
Carole Nakhle	Crystal Energy
Luigi Narbone	MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute
Andris Piebalgs	Latvian Presidency; Florence School of Regulation, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute
Hani Sabra	Alef Advisory
Susanne Schmeier	IHE Delft
Francesco Strazzari	Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies
Alessandro Tinti	Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies