

STUBE Hessen-Seminar 1019  
06<sup>th</sup>-08<sup>th</sup> December 2019 in Marburg  
“Natural Resources and Conflict”

- Seminar facilitator:** Ms Eileen Paßlack, STUBE Hessen-Referentin
- Co-facilitator:** Ms Conita Ocarina Dewi (Indonesia), Business Administration, Philipps-University Marburg
- Target group:** Students from Africa, Asia and Latin America studying in English in Hessen
- learning goals:** SDG 16 – peace, justice and strong institutions; learning which resources are scarce and source of conflicts; discussing the reasons why it leads to conflicts and who is involved into conflicts; discussing how to manage basic resources when they are too few for a country and by extension for two or more countries/ethnicities, exploring what is the most morally right solution; exploring alternatives to conflicts; discussing the role of outsiders, international institutions within such conflicts; exploring possible compromises that could be made by the concerned countries/ethnicities so that conflicts are avoided; questioning the dominating narrative of resources leading to conflict; developing alternative narratives; reflecting on putting a price tag on nature/natural resources
- Participants:** The number of registrations totalled 63 and a number of 26 students participated in this English speaking seminar (10 women, 16 men). Out of 26 participants, 9 participants attended a STUBE seminar for the first time. All in all, the number of represented countries was 16. Divided by regions, 6 students from 5 African countries, 12 students from 5 Asian countries, 7 students from 5 states in the MENA-region, 1 student from 1 Latin-American country participated in the seminar. 3 exchange students from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia took part as external guests on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**Process of the seminar**

The seminar could not take place as indicated by the program, since the speaker Dr. Melanie Coni-Zimmer had to cancel her workshop due to illness. Dr. Hakim Al-Nagah filled in for her and provided a workshop on “Geopolitics of Natural Resources in Libya”.

Friday, 06<sup>th</sup> December 2019

The seminar started with a welcome speech for the participating students by the instructor Eileen Paßlack and co-instructor Conita Dewi. The program started at 7 pm, after dinner. Ms Paßlack and Ms Dewi introduced themselves. The instructor presented the various offers of STUBE to the participants. Mr Mamdouh Altabaa, STUBE participant and student of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Marburg, introduced the participants to the topic and gave a short presentation on “Natural resources: when blessings become curses”. First he elaborated the meaning “natural resources” together with the participants. He suggested the definition of natural resources as “materials by nature that are used by humans” (Barsch & Bürger 1996). Afterwards they discussed the importance of natural resources as basis of survival of and interactions between living and non-living things. It was followed by a first categorization of natural resources in renewable and non-renewable resources. Furthermore, an overview about the distribution of natural resources was presented as well as political and geographical dependence on them. The leading question of the workshop was whether natural resources are blessing or curses. Using examples from philosophers and nowadays-opinions, Mr Altabaa showed that there are different approaches to this question

(depending on the point of view) and asked the students about their view on this topic. They talked about controlled territories, conflicts and corruption, the economic problems in poor countries and the fact, that natural resources should be shared in a better way. Mr. Altabaa explained the example of Dubai and drew attention to disparities between the richness of natural resources and the simultaneous poverty of these countries. It often is a historical and political problem, mostly caused by colonialism. The workshop was concluded by the statement, that the human being is the biggest problem and the main question is how to manage people. During the presentation, a student started a discussion about the question, whether human count as a natural resource. After the presentation the participants and the co-instructor developed different rules that need to be followed during the seminar, like respect, punctuality, no side-talking. The co-instructor then assigned duties like taking pictures to some participants who volunteered. Afterwards Ms Dewi introduced the participants to some games to get to know each other.

Saturday, 07<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Before the first workshop, the co-instructor started with a small energizer. Afterwards, the speaker, Ms Dorothea Hamilton from the Department of Geography (Section Human Geography and Development) at Justus Liebig University Giessen, was introduced. She led through the workshop “Do natural resources hinder peace?” First, she started with the method brainstorming. The participants had to arrange themselves in the seminar room according to the availability of natural resources of their countries of origin. Then, every student had to write down three natural resources available in their countries. The result was a large and diverse Mind Map, which was clustered by renewable, non-renewable and geocological natural resources. The participants learned about the interaction between resources, conflict and development, about the human perspective to take nature as source of economic benefit and the fact that taking a resource often is connected with destruction of other resources. The main part contained different actors, who are involved in natural resource issues. Main questions were:

- Who or what are resources important for?
- Who are the main actors involved in access to natural resources?
- Which are types of resource conflicts?
- Does gold makes you rich?

Regarding the second question, the participants learned that there are many different actors interested in natural resources, which can be clustered into international, national, regional and local actors. Mostly, conflicts are caused by different intentions of two or more actors. Ms Hamilton asked the students to share examples and experiences of their countries of origin. That caused a lively discussion. The speaker used the fourth question to talk about different narratives and the concept of geodeterminism (dependence of the point of view regarding a topic). The main question was why gold is removed in poor countries connected with corruption, illegality and negative consequences, while there is also a stock of gold in Germany which nobody tries to remove. There are also narratives leading to the view that natural resources can lead to cooperation and environmental peace building. Ms Hamilton asked the participants to read texts written by different authors who have various views on natural resources. The students had to read the texts, think about the author’s position and missing information in these texts.

Mr Dr Hakim Al-Nagah conducted the second workshop on Saturday. He studied cultural sciences and international marketing at the University of Marburg and the University of Kassel, taught and researched at Libyan universities and worked as the director of the economic office of the German embassy in Tripoli. As a consultant and with GIZ, he works for a closer German-Libyan cooperation. In the first part of his workshop, he focused on the resources oil and gas. He gave a short introduction into the history of oil conflicts and explained that many actors tried to control the oil (“The one, who

controls the oil, controls the world"). This leads to several conflicts, wars and loss of many people. There are many conflicts caused by unfair revenue-distribution. In many countries which are rich of oil resources the community is divided into poor and rich, without the existence of a middle class. To explain the current situation, Mr Al-Nagah asked the participants to split into smaller groups while in every group should be a student from a country with oil or gas resources. This student informed the groups about the history and current conflicts caused by oil/gas. At the end the group got an overview about the different situations in Yemen, in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Nigeria, Syria and Egypt.

The second part emphasized the stakeholders of natural resources. Mostly, the government and big companies get the oil revenues without investing into local communities. The participants thought about the question, how to enable a fair sharing between international companies, the government and local communities and what kind of cooperation could come between these actors: Therefore transparency would be very important. The local communities should be part of contracts trying to bring people's interests into these contracts. Rebellion from local communities often goes along with violence. That's why a social protest using Social Media is recommended (then again in some countries are strict regulations regarding free expression in Social Media). Mr Nagah completed his workshop with a presentation of his current work for GIZ and KfW and focused on a GIZ-project about the socio-economic dialogue in Libya which tries to implement a dialogue to convince Libyan actors to talk about peaceful strategies. He talked about problems, difficulties and progresses in this project.

Sunday, 08<sup>th</sup> December 2019

After breakfast and a short energizer, the workshop "Sustainable Use of Resources: General Insight and a Namibian Case Study" was held by Marco Nilgen, Doctoral Candidate and Research Assistant at the Chair of Sustainable Use of Natural Resources at University of Marburg. He introduced the participants into the Chair, his research group and the economic perspective on resources and commons. Then, he explained the definitions of commons and common-pool resources. Furthermore, he suggested the categorization of natural resources along the ownership status: private goods, public goods, club and toll goods and common-pool goods. There is no "pure" version of these categories. It depends on ownerships, history and the local community itself. Additionally, he gave a second possibility to cluster things regarding how people use to manage their goods: private property, state property, common property and open access. Based on four examples the students tried to assign the categories. Mostly, there were several discussion points due to the correct categories.

The second part of the workshop discussed the question "Do local communities can solve the tragedy of commons on their own?" using a small thought experiment. The students had to imagine a community with main revenue in fishing. Because everyone is fishing without limits, the resource is used up and the local community has to solve the problem. The groups suggested activities to regenerate the resource, its protection and several ideas of regulation the fishing habits after regeneration. In the end, Mr. Nilgen explained the theoretical points of collective ruling the natural resources as well as the critical voices regarding them. After explaining shortly his Namibian case study, he ended up with the discussion, why there is monetary value of natural resources and whether it is a good concept.

#### **Used methods and evaluation of the seminar**

At the end of the last workshop, Ms Paßlack and Ms Dewi closed the seminar and asked the participants to fill in a short evaluation form. After that every participant had the chance to share their impression from the seminar. Following methods were used: different games to get to know each other, warming-up games, thought experiment, discussion and question rounds, teamwork in

groups, presenting in front of the other participants, power point-presentation, expert talks, problem solving methods

**Impressions from the seminar:**

- I learned a lot about the management & value of natural resources.
- Very educative & entertaining
- I think I will appreciate the resources more than before. The environment got more important.
- Ostrom's 8 principles
- Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)
- Classification of Natural Resources
- Relationship between Resources development and conflicts
- Community based natural resources management → this kind of purpose can be used for producing jobs in developing countries through marketing resources
- Characteristics of resources (excludability, rivalry)
- I have gathered some sweet memories here. Thanks.
- Natural resources & its management
- New friends is the best thing
- Refreshing my English was good as well
- I missed learning some topics related to water resources management & useful natural resources related to economic development
- Management of water resources
- I missed the tapes with names

10.12.2019

Eileen Paßlack

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