

# Climate and Conflict

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Why do men fight? Have changes in climate been an important influence in the past? Will they be in the future? Anthropologists and historians have a rich store of anecdotal evidence, but since this evidence relies heavily on simple co-occurrence it invites skepticism. A recent, contrasting approach applies quantitative methods to investigate the connection between climate and conflict. This discourse in this subfield is fittingly cantankerous. Whereas historians often have plausible stories explaining the causal links from climate to conflict, the quants rarely offer more than a statistical relation. I will discuss my own work on two topics: El Niño and global incidence of civil conflict, and the impact of anthropogenic climate change on the civil war in Syria