

Militarism: the Environmental Cost

“Warfare in the modern era...results in environmental destruction of such a degree that it has been described as ecological holocaust.”



Ecological Footprint

A single KC135 plane uses 44 gallons of fuel per minute - same amount of CO₂ as 2000 cars.

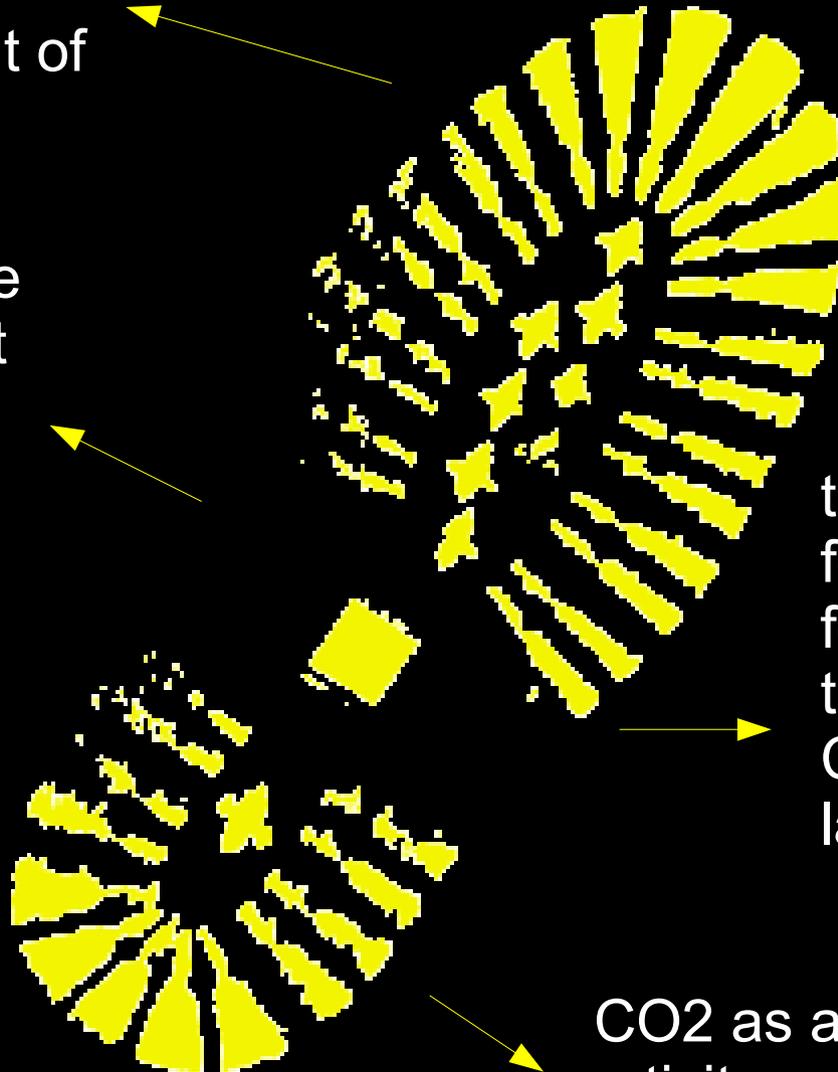
The US military is the world's single largest polluter & generates more toxics annually than the top five chemical companies combined

The Pentagon = single largest consumer of oil worldwide.

U.S. military is responsible for half of the worldwide use of CFC which accounts for 13 percent of overall ozone depletion.

the world's military forces are responsible for the release of more than two-thirds of CFC-113 into the ozone layer.

CO₂ as a result of military activity up to 10% of total global emissions



The Environmental Impacts of War: Israel-Lebanon War Summer 2006

Chemical Contamination

- Bombed and burnt out factories and industrial complexes
unexploded Israeli cluster bombs
- Wide-spread damage to Lebanon's water supply and sewage networks -
groundwater contamination & public health hazard

Oil spill hit Lebanon and Syria

- Israeli bombing of oil-fueled power plant of Jiyeh, on the coastline.

Forest fires in Israel and Lebanon

- Missiles fired by Hizbullah damaged 9,000 acres of land, including about 3,000 acres of forest
- About half a million trees were destroyed by almost 500 fires. In southern Lebanon, forest fires also raged after Israeli bombings.
- 60 years to recover



Jiyyeh Coastline – largest ever oil spill in Mediterranean

- Estimated 12,000 to 15,000 tonnes of oil into the eastern Mediterranean.
- 10 km (6 mi) wide oil slick covered 170 km (105 statute miles) of coastline
- Killed fish including the northern bluefin tuna, a species already nearing extinction in the Mediterranean, and threatened the habitat of the endangered green sea turtle



Israel - Lebanon Conflict

New military bases

Hezbollah
rocket attacks

Israeli bombing

Altered
natural landscape

Forest fires

Hydrocarbon
contamination of
soil and water

Bombing of Jiyeh plant
in Lebanon

Unexploded
ordnance

Air pollution

Oil spill into
Mediterranean Sea

Respiratory
problems among
local residents

Polluted
coastline

Polluted rock
underneath the plant

Contaminated
groundwater

Energy

- The Department of Defence purchased 2 billion barrels of oil for military use in 1989 - enough to run all of the U.S. public transit systems for 22 years
- A modern battle tank's fuel consumption is so high that it can be measured in gallons per mile
- Approximately one quarter (42 million tons per year) or the world's jet fuel is used by armed forces
- The worldwide military use of aluminium, copper, nickel and platinum is greater than the entire Global South demand for these materials

Land Use

Globally, up to 1.5 million km² of land are controlled by armed forces (same size as Mongolia), not including the area occupied by arms producing companies



War Games

- Severe degradation
- Manoeuvres demolish natural vegetation, disturb wildlife habitat, erode and compact soil, silt up streams, and cause flooding
- Bombing ranges transform the land into a moon-like wasteland
- Shooting ranges for tanks and artillery contaminate soil and groundwater with lead and other toxic residues
- Recovery can take thousands of years
- Nuclear test sites = permanent contamination
- Some production and testing sites used by the military are rendered completely unusable

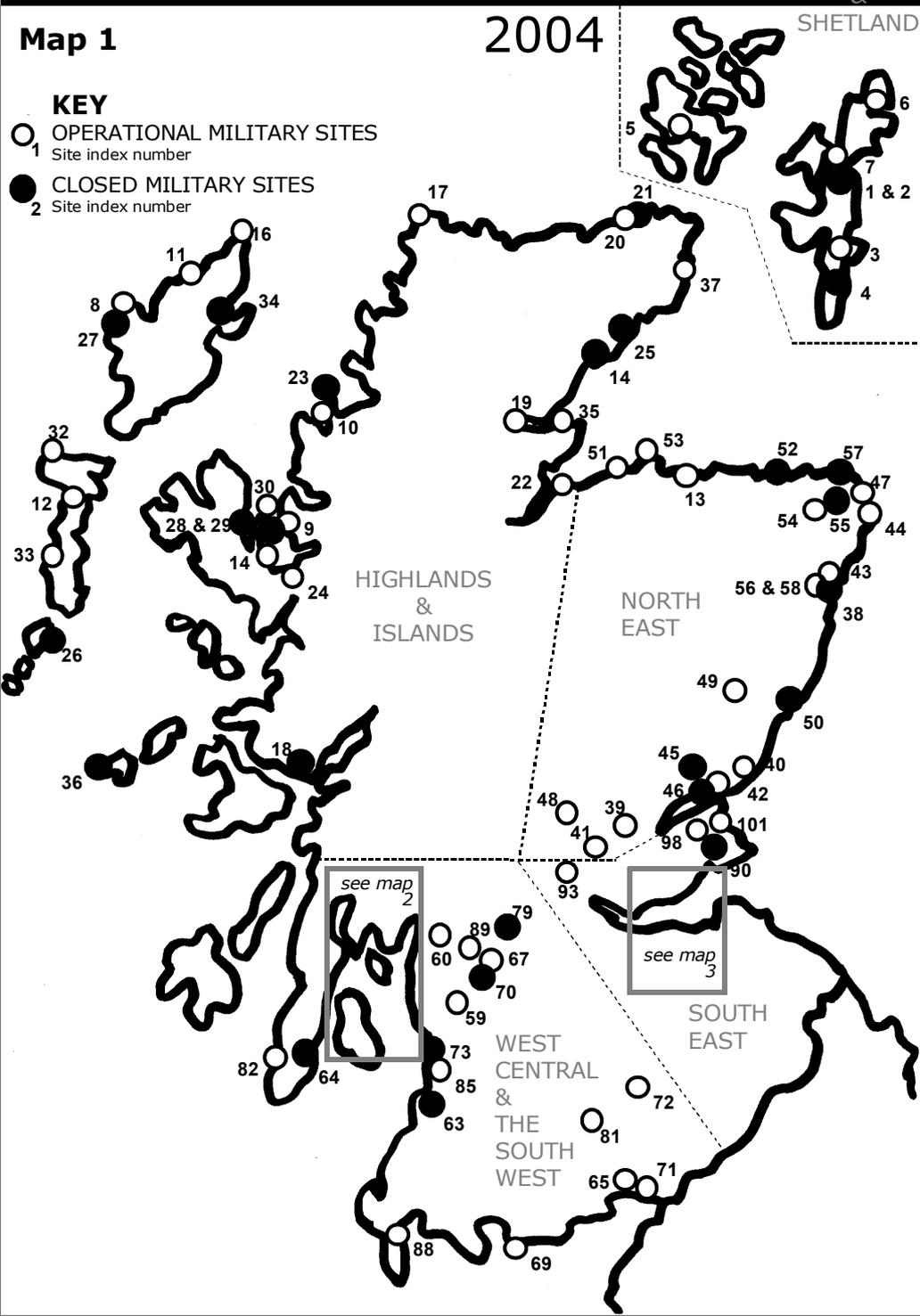


Map 1

2004

ORKNEY
&
SHETLAND

- KEY**
- OPERATIONAL MILITARY SITES
1 Site index number
 - CLOSED MILITARY SITES
2 Site index number



Atmospheric Pollution

- World's armed forces have even more access to airspace than to land
- Military activities have greatly contributed to problems such as air pollution and ozone depletion
- West German armed forces jets accounted for 58% of air pollutants generated by all air traffic over its territory
- Approximately one quarter (42 million tons per year) of the world's jet fuel is used by armed forces
- One of the most serious effects is low-level flights, which disrupt wildlife migrations and behavioral patterns



Resource Extraction for Continuous War: the Military-Industrial Complex

"anywhere in the world, a military presence is the single most reliable predictor of environmental damage."

The US military (the world's single largest polluter) is responsible for 27,000 toxic hot spots on 8,500 current and former military properties

...but even where no military is present the environmental impact of the industry supporting it is devastating

- Metal products
- Chemicals
- Radioactive materials

Virtually all of the world's nuclear bomb test sites, as well as most uranium mines and radioactive dumps, occupy Native lands. Similar concerns with other toxic military activities

The Cost of Aluminium Production

- 30% of all aluminium produced goes to the arms trade
- Aluminium smelting is one of the most environmentally destructive processes
- Bauxite is the raw material
 - Destruction of tropical rainforests
 - Appropriation of indigenous lands
 - Chemical pollution to riverine and groundwater systems
 - 'Land regeneration' a myth
 - Jamaica, India, Trinidad, Australia
- Aluminium smelting requires vast energy input – 'clean energy' by damming all of Iceland's major glacial rivers and destroying Europe's last remaining great wilderness



Why link the movements?

Militarism & environmental destruction part of the same agenda -
two movements are fighting the same systems of domination and oppression

Free market capitalism results in the need for continuous war, the military-industrial complex, and ever increasing rates of resource extraction - cause environmental degradation and climate change

Militarist Greenwash:

US military launches 'war on global warming'
'Military to play key role in tackling climate change'

