

Environmental Club Statement in Opposition of the War on Iraq

As war has become increasingly technologically advanced its impacts on the environment and human health have become more severe and longer lasting.

Even before the war, environmental damage is happening as a result of arms production and testing and military training. For example in countries manufacturing weapons large areas of land may be used to test missiles, chemical and biological warfare products, and nuclear weapons. The environment is overlooked to increase military technology and activity; as a result the natural ecosystems in these areas are negatively impacted.

During war the impact that chemical weapons have on the environment are destructive; for example, the impact of a single heavy bomb causes temperatures of approximately 3,000 degrees Celsius which destroys all the flower, fauna, and lower layers of soil, which can take anywhere from 1,500 to 7,400 years to regenerate.

As well as the health of the environmental human health is also severely affected in the aftermath of war. Depleted uranium, which is used in alloy form in shells in order to make them penetrate targets better, has detrimental effects on human health; once inhaled the depleted uranium releases radiation for the remainder of the person's life causing serious health issues such as cancer, stillbirths, children born with defects, and childhood leukemia.

Our government needs to recognize the potential devastation of a modern war. The unparalleled destruction created in a short time span by toxic munitions; unexploded weapons; the physical and biological effects of damage to soil and landscape; and the human suffering resulting from the disruption of social systems turn today's war zones into ecological disaster areas.