

CGR4M0 Grade 12 Environmental and Resource Management
Warfare and the Environment

The most obvious casualties of conflict and war are the human costs. The “collateral damage” of the killing of non-combatants (civilians) is the worst part of war. However, warfare has a tremendous impact on the environment, beyond the obvious devastation to buildings and infrastructure from battle. Wars of the 20th and now the 21st century include the use of toxic chemicals, buried landmines, remains of unexploded shells, the altering of weather patterns, and the dropping of nuclear weapons. The environmental impact is not only local but is global in scale and the timeframe is extended.

The legacy of WWI for the residents of France and Belgium remains today. Read the following article about the problems, not of damaged landscapes but from a hidden menace, almost 90 years after the war.

According to Dr. Jennifer Leaning, the impact of warfare on the environment can be classified in four ways.

1. Production and testing of nuclear weapons
2. Aerial and naval bombardment of terrain
3. Dispersal and persistence of land mines and buried ordnance
4. Use or storage of military arms and armament, toxins, and waste

Part A

Go to the website (www.mrgoodbun.weebly.com) and read Dr. Leaning’s article that explains the four ways that warfare impacts the environment and while reading the article

Part B

Pick a conflict from the list and research it using Dr. Leaning’s four classifications. Design a chart, or write out your findings.

World War I	World War II	Vietnam War	Cold War
	Gulf War	War in Afghanistan	War in Iraq
	Arab-Israeli Wars	Bosnian War	