

to force compliance.<sup>17</sup>

- Environmental Scarcity

The causal links of environmental scarcity are analogous to those of environmental stress. Key variables are demographics, technology, resource availability within a country, social and political institutions, and resource availability outside the country. But there are distinctions. Scarcity does not necessarily imply any degradation of the environment. Furthermore, identifying environmental scarcity is particularly difficult. This occurs as scarcity is partly a sociological response, as a given per capita level of a commodity may be considered low by one individual or group and adequate by another.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, the distribution of goods amongst different groups in society, perhaps on an ethnic basis, can contribute to "scarcity" in one or more of the groups. Environmental scarcity type interstate conflict would include state A not having enough renewable resource Y, perhaps water, and seeking to obtain more resources through conflict. Conflict could also arise over resources not under national control, such as fish stocks. Additionally, environmental scarcity could lead to intrastate conflict. For China, concerns over the future level of per capita food consumption is often raised as an environmental scarcity issue.

## 5. Model Application to China

### 5.1 China's Population and Demographics

Population levels, the distribution of the population (rural-urban split), and population growth have a fundamental role in the analysis of Chinese environmental and national security issues. Ironically, many of the current and future population pressures facing China stem from the 1950-1965 period, when Mao Zedong

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<sup>17</sup>With respect to resource scarcities, international conflict could also arise over access to resources, such as how natural resources in Antarctica are to be distributed.

<sup>18</sup>This is the concept of "relative deprivation". Relative deprivation occurs when people perceive a gap between the level of their well-being, often defined by economic indicators such as per capita calory consumption, and the level they believe they deserve. Deprivation is therefore relative to some individually determined subjective standard. The basis for relative deprivation need not be environmental, as for example ethnic and racial factors may be seen by individuals as the primary cause of their deprivation. For a discussion of the security implications of inequity, see Samuel D. Porteous, "Equity and National Security," Commentary, No. 37, Canadian Security Intelligence Service, 1993.