

ACICE Issue 06/23 (Jun)

# ACICE Monthly Digest

A monthly roundup of significant news around the world



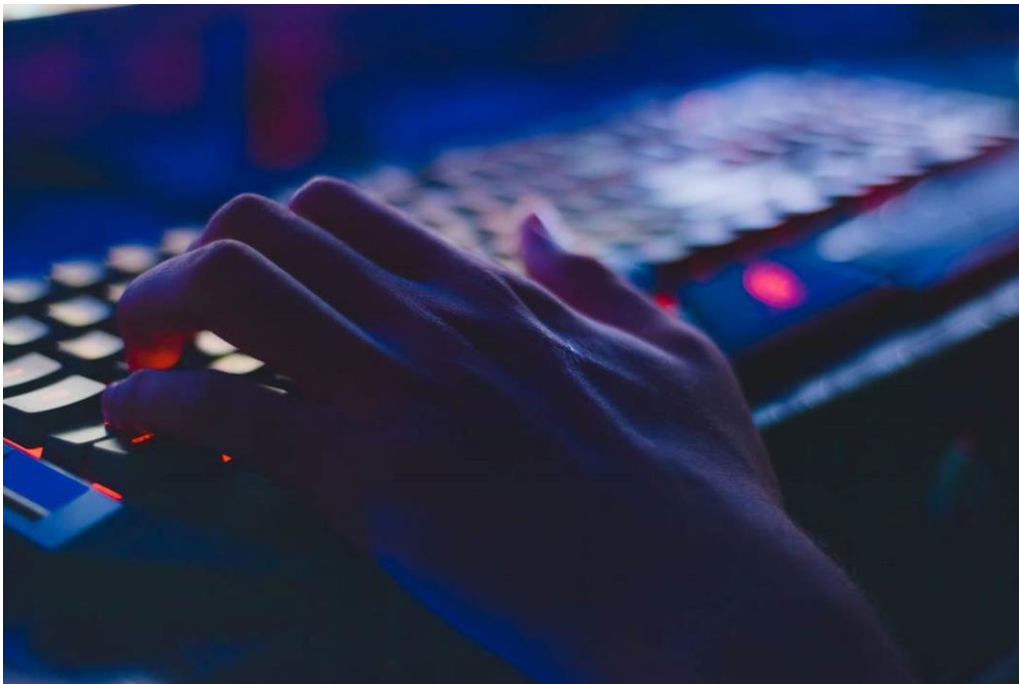
ADMM Cybersecurity and  
Information Centre of Excellence

# Terrorism

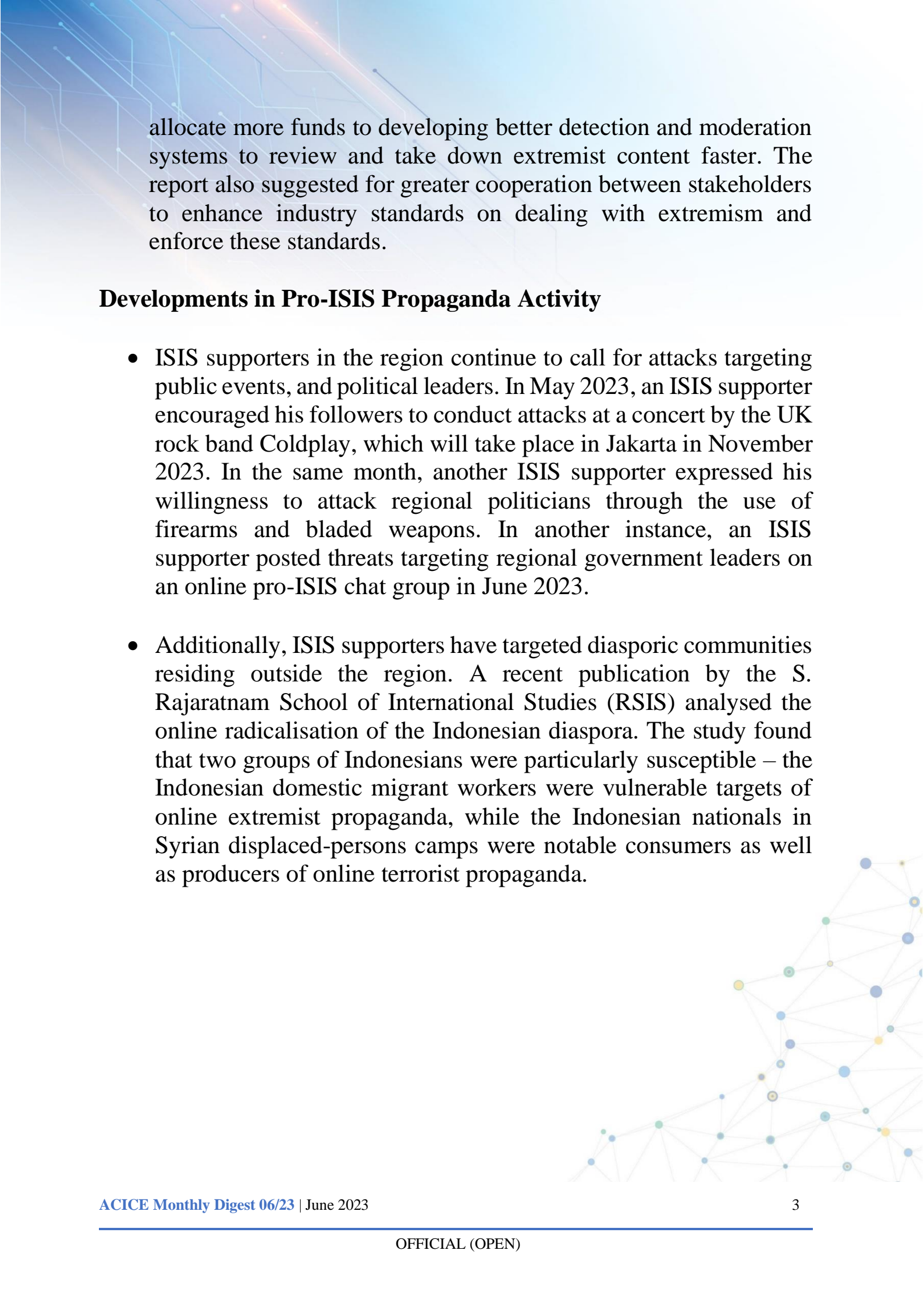
## Countering Extremism on Gaming Platforms

- Extremists have been observed making use of gaming platforms to recruit and radicalise youths. It was reported by Singapore’s Ministry of Home Affairs in February 2023 that a Singaporean youth had been self-radicalised by pro-ISIS propaganda. The youth had joined several ISIS-themed servers on the online gaming platform Roblox, where the virtual game settings replicated ISIS conflict zones. The youth regarded himself as an ISIS member in these games, and simulated the killing of ISIS’ “enemies”.
- These terror groups target youths because they may be more impressionable and easily influenced in their search for a sense of identity, purpose and belonging. According to a June 2023 publication by the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), it can be difficult to monitor and moderate activity on some of these gaming platforms, as private game servers and chat rooms are relatively opaque spaces. This has made these platforms a popular tool for some terrorists to spread terror propaganda.
- In the same February 2023 report, Singapore’s Ministry of Home Affairs noted that terrorists were “appropriating gaming culture to increase their reach”. The ICCT publication further elaborated that elements of misogyny and sexism that exist in certain gaming cultures may have been exploited to promote and normalise extremist views. For instance, the study suggested that video games that simulate military environments tend to have spaces that largely comprise of males. Such images may be “potentially attractive” for some extremists, especially if their ideologies feature aspects related to gender, misogyny, and hyper-masculinity. It has also been reported that some terror groups made use of video games, such as that of the *Fallout* and *Deus Ex* series that used sleek aesthetics and engaging narratives to better appeal to youths.

- While it is important to prevent gaming platforms from being exploited by extremists, the ICCT publication argued that it is near impossible for States to carry out the necessary monitoring and moderation on their own, as the resources demanded for such a task is enormous. One possible approach may be to create channels for gamers to report instances of attempted radicalisation and other behaviour associated with extremism. This could make it easier for enforcement agencies to identify extremists operating on these platforms.



- A commentary published on *Channel NewsAsia* in March 2023 advocated for parents and guardians to play a more active role in steering youths away from the influence of extremists on online games platforms. Adults could explore gaming platforms to better understand what youths do on these platforms, and to encourage the youths to share their online experiences. This can help to strengthen relationships; with mutual trust and understanding built between the adult and youth, it may be easier to spot signs of radicalisation early on, and thus allow for quicker and more effective intervention.
- A May 2023 report released by New York University recommended for the gaming industry and related sectors to



allocate more funds to developing better detection and moderation systems to review and take down extremist content faster. The report also suggested for greater cooperation between stakeholders to enhance industry standards on dealing with extremism and enforce these standards.

## **Developments in Pro-ISIS Propaganda Activity**

- ISIS supporters in the region continue to call for attacks targeting public events, and political leaders. In May 2023, an ISIS supporter encouraged his followers to conduct attacks at a concert by the UK rock band Coldplay, which will take place in Jakarta in November 2023. In the same month, another ISIS supporter expressed his willingness to attack regional politicians through the use of firearms and bladed weapons. In another instance, an ISIS supporter posted threats targeting regional government leaders on an online pro-ISIS chat group in June 2023.
- Additionally, ISIS supporters have targeted diasporic communities residing outside the region. A recent publication by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) analysed the online radicalisation of the Indonesian diaspora. The study found that two groups of Indonesians were particularly susceptible – the Indonesian domestic migrant workers were vulnerable targets of online extremist propaganda, while the Indonesian nationals in Syrian displaced-persons camps were notable consumers as well as producers of online terrorist propaganda.

# Climate Change

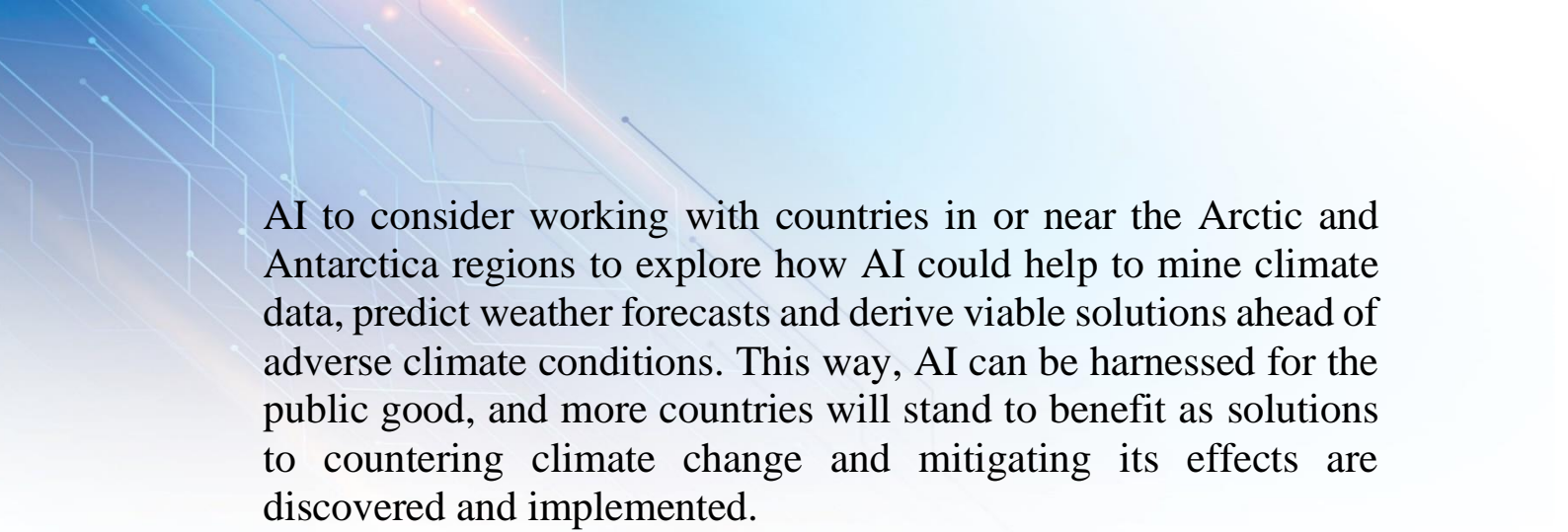
## Climate Affairs in the Antarctic and Arctic – Why It Affects Us

- Climate affairs in the Antarctic and Arctic may seem like issues of faraway lands, but they could have intimate effects on human lives. As polar ice caps melt due to global warming, the resultant rise in sea level could damage livelihoods or even threaten entire communities in low-lying or coastal areas. According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), a non-government conservation organisation, ice loss also contributes to heat waves, polar vortexes - a weather phenomenon typically associated with extreme cold weather episodes - and other cases of unpredictable weather that hurts crop yields worldwide and in turn damages the stability of the global supply chain.
- There are also indirect impacts of sea level rise, which include the migration of people inland. Some States may experience an influx of such migrants. A Euronews article estimated that as many as 13 million people in Europe may be forced to relocate if sea levels rose by one metre. Some populations on islands in Oceania, including in the Solomon Islands, have already been evacuated and relocated. In Asia, sea level rise could affect extremely populous deltas of large rivers, such as the Ganges delta in Bangladesh.
- Due to the direct and indirect impacts of the warming of Antarctic and Arctic, some States have started to monitor the developments in these regions more closely. Singapore, for instance, has participated actively in Arctic-related activities in the past decade, and is an observer in the Arctic Council since 2013. As a low-lying island city, Singapore is vulnerable to the effects of climate change, rising temperatures and the melting of ice sheets in the Arctic, which pose an existential threat to the physical survival of the country. Being involved in the Arctic Council also allows Singapore to benefit from the sharing of expertise and best

practices among participating countries, including preventing and managing oil spills and tracking Arctic migratory birds as part of conservation efforts.



- Singapore's example demonstrates that solutions to the climate emergencies in the Antarctic and Arctic do not lie solely with States located near those regions. The Australian National University published an article in March 2023 that encouraged the Australian government to set up a climate intelligence working group to improve climate projection capabilities and determine priority areas for climate investment, including a recommendation for greater funding support towards Antarctic and scientific research to mitigate disasters.
- The use of artificial intelligence (AI) to mitigate the effects of climate change has also been discussed among academics and industry players. In March 2023, Johns Hopkins University published an article, which discussed how AI can be harnessed to analyse large climate datasets and make accurate weather forecasts. The article also pointed out how AI could be used to design more energy-efficient models and systems to fight or reverse the negative implications of climate change to human and societal lives. In this regard, it may be useful for States more advanced in



AI to consider working with countries in or near the Arctic and Antarctica regions to explore how AI could help to mine climate data, predict weather forecasts and derive viable solutions ahead of adverse climate conditions. This way, AI can be harnessed for the public good, and more countries will stand to benefit as solutions to countering climate change and mitigating its effects are discovered and implemented.



# Annex

## References

### Countering Extremism on Gaming Platforms

1. Issuance of Orders Under the Internal Security Act Against Two Self-Radicalised Singaporean Youths

[Link: <https://www.mha.gov.sg/mediaroom/press-releases/issuance-of-orders-under-the-internal-security-act-against-two-self-radicalised-singaporean-youths/>]

2. Fighting extremism in gaming platforms: a set of design principles to develop comprehensive P/CVE strategies

[Link: <https://www.icct.nl/publication/fighting-extremism-gaming-platforms-set-design-principles-develop-comprehensive-pcve>]

3. Amid fears of radicalisation via gaming, parents need to step up and listen to their children

[Link: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/commentary/youth-radicalisation-gaming-roblox-discord-technology-parenting-3362441>]

4. Gaming The System: How Extremists Exploit Gaming Sites And What Can Be Done To Counter Them

[Link: <https://bhr.stern.nyu.edu/tech-gaming-report>]

5. <https://www.pexels.com/photo/photo-of-person-typing-on-computer-keyboard-735911/>

### Developments in Pro-ISIS Propaganda Activity

1. Online Radicalisation of the Indonesian Diaspora

[Link: <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/ctta-newsarticle/online-radicalisation-of-the-indonesian-diaspora/>]



## Climate Change in the Antarctic and Arctic – Why It Affects Us

1. Six ways loss of Arctic ice impacts everyone

[Link: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/six-ways-loss-of-arctic-ice-impacts-everyone>]

2. Rising sea levels: the silent killer that is already a reality

[Link: <https://www.euronews.com/2023/03/03/rising-sea-levels-the-silent-killer-that-is-already-a-reality>]

3. Singapore’s Participation at the Arctic Encounter Symposium 2023, 29 to 31 March 2023

[Link: <https://www.mfa.gov.sg/Newsroom/Press-Statements-Transcripts-and-Photos/2023/04/AES-2023>]

4. Cold logic: getting intelligent about Antarctica

[Link: [https://nsc.crawford.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publication/nsc\\_crawford\\_anu\\_edu\\_au/2023-03/web\\_nsc\\_pop\\_the\\_changing\\_value\\_of\\_antarctica\\_1.pdf](https://nsc.crawford.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publication/nsc_crawford_anu_edu_au/2023-03/web_nsc_pop_the_changing_value_of_antarctica_1.pdf)]

5. How AI Can Help Combat Climate Change

[Link: <https://hub.jhu.edu/2023/03/07/artificial-intelligence-combat-climate-change/>]

6. <https://unsplash.com/photos/Pp-zoKs3pXQ>

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