

IOM'S ENGAGEMENT IN

MIGRATION ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE



MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE: OUR VISION

Migration, environment and climate change: Our vision

The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) vision¹ on migration, environment and climate change is that contemporary migration governance, policy and practice must reflect the significance of environmental, disaster and climate change factors on human mobility. Environmental factors must be integrated across all areas of migration management, such as: prevention, preparedness and response to displacement, border management, labour migration and integration, and return and reintegration.

As the leading intergovernmental agency working on migration, IOM recognizes the necessity to step up national, regional and international efforts to address human mobility challenges associated with environmental factors and climate change.

IOM has been engaging in research, policy and advocacy efforts, and operational activities in the area of migration, environment and climate change since the 1990s, seeking to bring environmental migration to the heart of international, regional and national concerns in collaboration with its Member States, observers and partners.

Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division

Since 2007, Member States have requested IOM to report on its work on migration, environment and climate change within its governing bodies, including at its Council, the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finances and the International Dialogue on Migration. In 2014, Member States requested IOM to scale up action on migration, environment and climate change, which led to the establishment of the Migration, Environment and Climate Change (MECC) Division in 2015. This institutional change formalized IOM's engagement

in this thematic area, making IOM the first international organization to have established an institutional unit fully devoted to this topic. Since 2018, IOM has MECC Regional Thematic Specialists in five regional offices: Bangkok, Dakar, Nairobi, San José and Vienna.

What are IOM's objectives in managing environmental migration?

- (a) To prevent forced migration that results from environmental factors to the extent possible;
- (b) To provide assistance and protection to affected populations when forced migration does occur, and to seek durable solutions to their situation;
- (c) To facilitate migration as a climate change adaptation strategy and enhance the resilience of affected communities.²

Sustainable development is recognized as an integral part of this approach, implemented through disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability measures.

Decoding the nexus: Understanding environmental migration

- Environmental factors have always been a cause of migration.
- It is often difficult to isolate the environmental and climatic factors from social and economic factors, but increasing number of studies show that environmental challenges are clearly a factor that impact the decision to move or to stay.
- The movement of people is and will continue to be affected by natural disasters and environmental degradation.

1 For more information, please refer to the IOM Outlook on Migration, Environment and Climate Change (IOM, 2014).

2 See the International Organization for Migration, *International Dialogue on Migration No 18: "Climate change, environmental degradation and migration"* (Geneva, 2012), pp. 17–18.

Climate change is expected to have major impacts on human mobility.

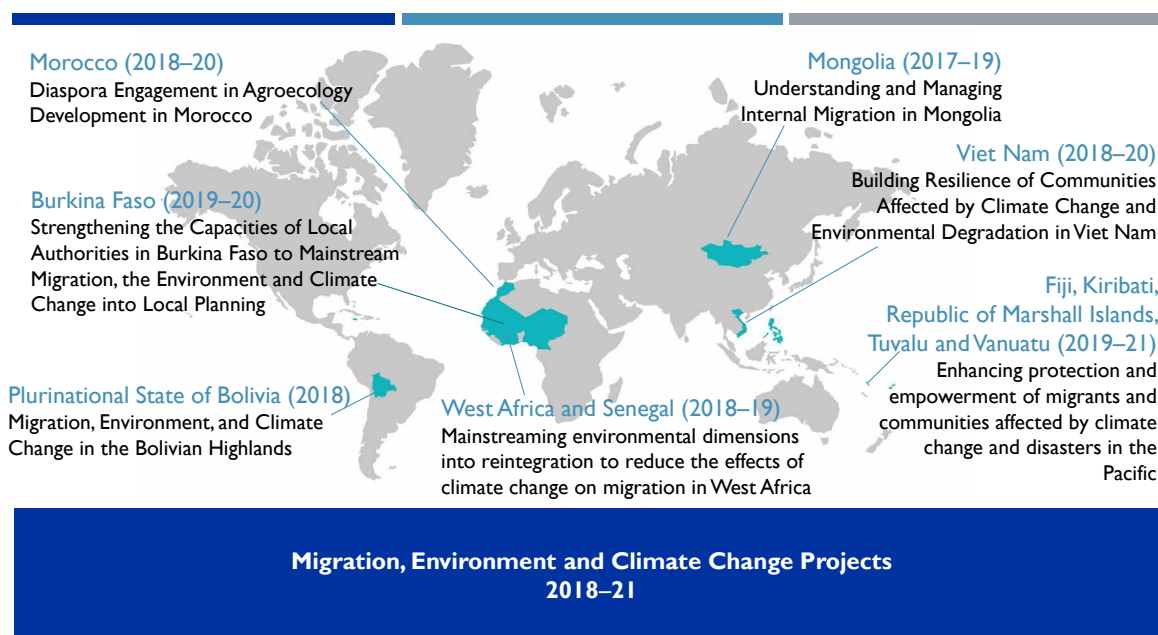
- Environmental migration may take many complex forms: forced and voluntary, temporary and permanent, internal and international.
- The concept of “vulnerability” needs to be put at the centre of current and future responses to environmental migration. The most vulnerable may be those who are unable to or do not move (trapped populations).
- Environmental migration should not be understood as a wholly negative or positive outcome – migration can amplify existing vulnerabilities and can also allow people to build resilience. For example, temporary migration and

remittances can open up alternative sources of income and reduce reliance on the environment for subsistence.

Operational activities on migration, environment and climate change

Since 1998, more than 1,000 projects have been funded and implemented worldwide by IOM to respond to and address environmental migration and disaster displacement, demonstrating that creative solutions exist for communities affected by disasters, environmental degradation and climate change, and that migration does not have to be a “last resort” solution but can also be a positive driver for change.

Below are some examples of IOM’s ongoing efforts to address environmental migration.



IOM’s engagement in policy processes

Recognizing that migration is a multi-causal reality, Since 2009, IOM has devoted its policy work in the area of migration, environment and climate change to bringing human mobility into other key policy processes, promoting coherence across key thematic policy areas. The Organization has directly contributed to international policy processes through evidence building, advocacy, as well as technical expertise and communication campaigns.

At the international policy level, IOM has been actively advocating for the recognition of the migration, environment and climate change nexus in key global policy processes, such as the preparatory process for the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Forum on

Migration and Development; and has also been supporting regional dialogue on these issues as part of the Regional Consultative Processes on Migration.

Finally, IOM supports State-led efforts to develop specific solutions to address these complex challenges, in particular the work of the Nansen Initiative and its successor, the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD)³ and the Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative.⁴

Global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted on 19 September 2016 during the Seventy-first session of the General Assembly, clearly acknowledged the importance of environmental and climate change factors as drivers of human mobility.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration represents a historical opportunity for the international community to advance on global migration governance and management.

Following the New York Declaration, United Nations Member States, for the first time of their history, committed to develop, negotiate and adopt a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The Global Compact for Migration is a non-binding cooperation framework that articulates a common set of commitments, on the basis of 23 objectives, for States to respond to the challenges and opportunities of contemporary international migration, and formulates provisions for implementation, follow up and review.

The text adopted in December 2018 in Marrakesh contains multiple references to environmental migration, including a section specially dedicated to addressing disasters, climate change and environmental degradation. The text articulates a wide and comprehensive understanding of the challenges linked to the environment–migration nexus, including the necessity to prioritize adaptation efforts in countries of origin, and the need for states to cooperate to develop solutions in cases where adaptation or return of migrants are not possible.

³ <https://disasterdisplacement.org>

⁴ See <https://micicinitiative.iom.int>

The Global Compact for Migration represents an important advancement in the inclusion of environmental climate change concerns in the international migration governance agenda. IOM supported States upon request throughout the negotiation process by providing evidence, data, examples and analysis of good practices and lessons learned and by supporting national and regional consultations. The United Nations established a Network on Migration, coordinated by IOM, to ensure effective, timely and coordinated system-wide support to Member States implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact for Migration. IOM in cooperation with other UN agencies and partners from the civil society and academia is supporting the Network to anchor climate change and environmental factors at the core of inter-agency cooperation. IOM supports policy coherence with relevant processes, notably the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). IOM also continues to work bilaterally with states implementing the Global Compact for Migration, with the aim to support the inclusion of environmental and climate change issues in both migration policy and practices.

UNFCCC and the Task Force on Displacement

The UNFCCC first recognized the growing importance of human mobility with the adoption of the 2010 Cancun Adaptation Framework (Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 14(f)) and the 2012 Doha Decision on Loss and Damage (Decision 3/CP.18, paragraph 7 (a) (vi)).

With the 2015 Conference of Parties in Paris (COP21), climate migrants finally moved from invisibility into the spotlight. The Paris Agreement represents an unprecedented breakthrough for action on migration and climate with the formal inclusion of references to migrants in the Agreement’s Preamble and in Paragraph 50 of the COP21 Decision referring to Loss and Damage and “integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change”.

From 2012, IOM joined forces with other likeminded intergovernmental and civil society stakeholders in the informal “Advisory Group on Human Mobility and Climate Change” to provide technical advice to negotiators, and the Secretariat of the UNFCCC, and promoting the inclusion of the topic in the

negotiations during the Conferences of the Parties (COP).

IOM also plays an active role in supporting the Executive Committee (Excom) of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM). In 2016, IOM and the WIM Excom organized a Technical Meeting on Migration, Displacement and Human Mobility in Casablanca, which brought together experts from governmental institutions, specialized agencies and the academia to provide recommendations in support of the implementation of the workplan of the Excom. In 2017, IOM was invited to join the Task Force on Displacement established under decision 1/CP.21, and led the implementation of several activities of the Task Force work plan. In 2018, IOM and the PDD organized a Stakeholder Meeting on behalf of the Task Force to contribute to the development of “Recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change”.

On the basis of the Task Force’s work, the Excom finalized the recommendations; they were presented at COP24 in 2018 to UNFCCC Parties which was adopted in decision 10/CP.24. The recommendations address all forms of human mobility linked to climate change, highlighting the need for comprehensive State-led action, including the necessity to create connections with global migration governance through the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration. Migration issues are now firmly anchored in the global climate change policy agenda, and the Task Force’s mandate was renewed for another two years and migration issues are included as a standalone component of the Excom’s five years’ work programme. IOM continues to provide technical expertise to support states to develop policy and operational solutions anchored in the adopted recommendations.

Supporting the implementation of the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda and the Platform on Disaster Displacement

IOM provided active support to the Nansen Initiative from 2012 to 2015 and welcomed the endorsement in 2015 of the Nansen Initiative Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change.

In 2016, Germany and Bangladesh established the State-led PDD to follow up on the work of the Nansen

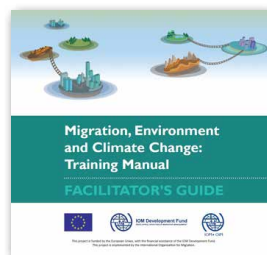
Initiative and implement the recommendations of the Protection Agenda.

IOM is a standing invitee on the Platform’s Steering Group, a close partner of the Platform’s Coordination Unit and a member of its Advisory Committee. IOM provided key support for the implementation of the Platform’s 2016–2019 workplan, and will continue to support the work of the Platform in its new phase (2019–2022), contributing to addressing the protection needs of persons displaced across borders in the context of disasters and climate change.

Activities under the Workplan are directly in line with IOM’s long-standing vision and action on migration and displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change. Since the platform’s launch in July 2016, IOM has provided expertise for a wide range of activities under its four strategic priorities, including addressing knowledge and data gaps, supporting governmental capacity-building, developing practical tools and solutions to address disaster displacement, promoting the mainstreaming of disaster displacement in key global and regional policy dialogues, and supporting policy development.⁵

Building capacities to address environmental migration

IOM’s capacity-building programme on migration, environment and climate change focuses on enhancing the understanding of the complex issue of managing migration in the context of climate and environmental change; and linking the many policy areas that are relevant in addressing environmental migration, including migration, climate change adaptation, environment, development, security and disaster risk reduction.



The objectives of the capacity-building programme are as follows:

⁵ For more information about IOM's activities in support of the PDD, please see <http://environmentalmigration.iom.int/platform-disaster-displacement>

- (a) Build capacity of policymakers and practitioners in order to factor migration into environmental and development policies, climate change adaptation strategies, and to take into account environmental change in comprehensive migration management policies at the national level; and
- (b) Facilitate policy exchange among policymakers and practitioners on migration, environment and climate change.

IOM has been organizing regional and national training workshops since 2013 in response to the needs and requests of Member States. To date, IOM has built capacity of over 450 policymakers from 58 countries, through 17 national and 6 regional workshops.

To respond to the increasing urgency to address human mobility and climate change, IOM has published a standardized Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Training Manual (Facilitator’s Guide) in 2016. This participatory training tool is available in English, French, Spanish, Russian and Azerbaijani to respond to the global demand and allow to build capacities of States.

The MECC capacity-building programme is in line with the overall IOM’s goal to support the integration of human mobility issues within climate change and environmental policies, and, vice versa, the inclusion of climate and environmental concerns within migration processes. The programme is also in line with paragraph 14(f) of the Cancun Adaptation Framework, which first brought the notion of human mobility to international climate negotiations, the Paris Agreement and COP21 Decision, and the Marrakesh Accords on Capacity Building in developing countries (Decision 2/CP.7).

Strengthening data and evidence to support policy development

IOM has been conducting research in the area of migration, environment and climate change since the early 1990s to support the development of evidence-based policy and practice.

Over the years, IOM has devoted efforts to improving the understanding of key issues around the migration, environment and climate change

nexus through a number of regional and global studies, and has contributed to strengthening the evidence base on migration, environment and climate change in many countries through national studies, migration profiles and operational data collection in the field.

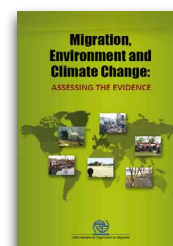
Since 1992, IOM has published more than 180 publications on migration, environment and climate change, including flagship publications, reports, thematic papers and infosheets – exploring the links to such issues as land degradation, oceanic change, heat, human trafficking – MECC Policy Brief Series, articles in external books and journals and others.

IOM also supports the wider dissemination of knowledge and evidence on this topic through its Environmental Migration Portal and a dedicated Research Database, which gathers the latest global research on this topic from the academia and specialized organizations.

Flagship publications

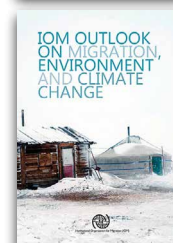
Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Assessing the Evidence

2009/448 pages
ISBN 978-92-9068-454-1
English
USD 78



IOM Outlook on Migration, Environment and Climate Change

2014/144 pages
ISBN 978-92-9068-703-0
English



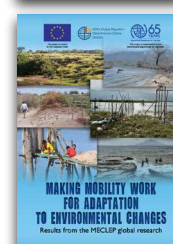
The Atlas of Environmental Migration

2017/172 pages
ISBN 978-11-3802-206-5
English



Making Mobility Work for Adaptation to Environmental Changes

2017/144 pages
English



IOM Environmental Sustainability Programme

IOM recognizes that a healthy environment is intrinsically linked to the well-being and resilience of migrants and host communities. In 2017, IOM launched its institutional Environmental Sustainability Programme. It made an institutional commitment to improve the sustainability of its operations at the strategic, programmatic and facility levels, focusing on three key areas: (a) greenhouse gas emissions; (b) water and (c) waste management.

After joining the United Nations Environment Management Group in 2017 and in order to adhere to United Nations' sustainability

standards, IOM carried out an organization-wide mapping that identified over 100 IOM projects with an environmentally sustainable component implemented since 2012. In 2019, IOM also carried out a global environmental inventory in line with UN standards set through the Greening the Blue initiative. Besides looking at the environmental sustainability of own facilities and operations, IOM has been contributing to policy-level discussions to highlight the significance of environmentally sustainable practices in migration management governance.

The Environmental Migration Portal is an online knowledge sharing platform on migration, environment and climate change.

The Portal seeks to fill the existing data, research and knowledge gaps on the migration-environment nexus, and provides up-to-date information on IOM's activities, as well as external key events, new publications, and more.

Visit the Environmental Migration Portal at:
www.environmentalmigration.iom.int
www.iom.int/migration-and-climate-change

Follow us on Twitter: [@IOM_MECC](https://twitter.com/IOM_MECC)

Environmental Migration Portal
Knowledge Platform on People on the Move in a Changing Climate

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ABOUT THE PORTAL

The *Environmental Migration Portal: Knowledge Platform on People on the Move in a Changing Climate* seeks to provide a one-stop service website to promote new research, information exchange and dialogue, intended to fill the existing data, research and knowledge gaps on the migration-environment nexus.

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NEW! IOM Environmental Migration Newsletter - April issue

For more information on IOM's activities in the area of migration, environment and climate change, please visit the Environmental Migration Portal www.environmentalmigration.iom.int or contact:

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