POLICY ANALYSIS ON MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

ARMENIA

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ARMENIA

Heghine Grigoryan, PhD

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Traditional Armenian souvenirs. © Unsplash/Hasmik Ghazaryan OLSON

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A monument to the Armenian alphabet. © Unsplash/Robert LEVONYAN

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ArmStat	Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia
CEPA	European Union–Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement
CSO	civil society organization
DRR	disaster risk reduction
GDP	gross domestic product
IACC	Inter-Agency Coordination Council
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MECC	migration, environment and climate change
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NDC(s)	Nationally Determined Contribution(s)
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
TFD	Task Force on Displacement
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WUA	water users' association

Pre-Christian Temple of Garni. © Pixabay 2020/Mostafa MERAJI

GLOSSARY

1. KEY ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE TERMINOLOGY

Adaptation	In human systems, the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In natural systems, the process of adjustment to actual climate and its effects; human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects.[1]
Adaptive capacity	The ability of systems, institutions, humans and other organisms to adjust to potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities or to respond to consequences.[2]
Climate	In a narrow sense, climate is usually defined as the average weather – or, more rigorously, as the statistical description in terms of the mean and variability of relevant quantities – over a period of time ranging from months to thousands or millions of years. The classical period for averaging these variables is 30 years, as defined by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The relevant quantities are most often surface variables such as temperature, precipitation and wind. Climate in a wider sense is the state, including a statistical description, of the climate system.[3]
Climate change	A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g. by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings such as modulations of the solar cycles, volcanic eruptions and persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use. Note that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in its article 1, defines climate change as: "a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods". The UNFCCC thus makes a distinction between climate change attributable to human activities altering the atmospheric composition and climate variability attributable to natural causes.[4]

1 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2022a.
2 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005.
3 IPCC, 2022a.
4 Ibid.

Climate variability	Deviations of some climate variables from a given mean state (including, e.g. the occurrence of extremes) at all spatial and temporal scales beyond that of individual weather events. Variability may be intrinsic, due to fluctuations of processes internal to the climate system (internal variability), or extrinsic, due to variations in natural or anthropogenic external forcing (forced variability).[5]
Climate-resilient development	In the WGII report, climate-resilient development refers to the process of implementing greenhouse gas mitigation and adaptation measures to support sustainable development for all.[6]
Disaster	A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts.[7]
Disaster risk reduction (DRR)	Denotes both a policy goal or objective, and the strategic and instrumental measures employed for anticipating future disaster risk; reducing existing exposure, hazard or vulnerability; and improving resilience.[8]
Environmental degradation	The reduction of the capacity of the environment to meet social and ecological objectives and needs. … Degradation of the environment can alter the frequency and intensity of natural hazards and increase the vulnerability of communities. The types of human-induced degradation are varied and include land misuse, soil erosion and loss, desertification, wildland fires, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, mangrove destruction, land, water and air pollution, climate change, sea-level rise and ozone depletion.[9]
Exposure	The presence of people, livelihoods, species or ecosystems, environmental functions, services and resources, infrastructure, or economic, social, or cultural assets in places and settings that could be adversely affected.[10]
Extreme weather event	An event that is rare at a particular place and time of the year. Definitions of "rare" vary, but an extreme weather event would normally be as rare as or rarer than the tenth or ninetieth percentile of a probability density function estimated from observations. By definition, the characteristics of what is called "extreme weather" may vary from place to place in an absolute sense.[11]

5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
7 United Nations, 2016c, in: IPCC, 2022a.
8 IPCC, 2022a.
9 United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), 2009.
10 IPCC, 2022a.
11 Ibid.

Hazard	The potential occurrence of a natural or human-induced physical event or trend that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, as well as damage and loss to property, infrastructure, livelihoods, service provision, ecosystems and environmental resources.[12]
Loss and damage, and losses and damages	Research has taken Loss and Damage (capitalized letters) to refer to political debate under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), following the establishment of the Warsaw Mechanism on Loss and Damage in 2013, which sets to "address loss and damage associated with impacts of climate change, including extreme events and slow-onset events, in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change." Lower-case initial letters ("losses" and "damages") have been taken to refer broadly to harm from (observed) impacts and (projected) risks and can be economic or non-economic.[13]
Mitigation (of climate change)	A human intervention to reduce emissions or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases.[14]
Resilience	The capacity of interconnected social, economic and ecological systems to cope with a hazardous event, trend or disturbance, responding or reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identity and structure. Resilience is a positive attribute when it maintains capacity for adaptation, learning and/or transformation.[15]
Sensitivity	The degree to which a system or species is affected, either adversely or beneficially, by climate variability or change. The effect may be direct (e.g. a change in crop yield in response to a change in the mean, range or variability of temperature) or indirect (e.g. damages caused by an increase in the frequency of coastal flooding due to sea-level rise).
Vulnerability	The propensity or predisposition to be adversely affected. Vulnerability encompasses a variety of concepts and elements, including sensitivity or susceptibility to harm and lack of capacity to cope and adapt.

12 Ibid.
13 Mechler et al., 2018:4 (in footnote 1).
14 IPCC, 2022a.
15 Arctic Council, 2016:xvii.

2. KEY MIGRATION-RELATED TERMINOLOGY

Climate migration	The movement of a person or groups of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive change in the environment due to climate change, are obliged to leave their habitual place of residence, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, within a State or across an international border.[16]
Cross-border displacement	The movements of persons who have been forced or obliged to leave their homes or places of habitual residence and move across international borders.[17]
Disaster displacement	The movement of persons who have been forced or obliged to leave their homes or places of habitual residence as a result of a disaster or in order to avoid the impact of an immediate and foreseeable natural hazard.[18]
Displaced persons	Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, either across an international border or within a State, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters.[19]
Displacement	The movement of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights, or natural or human-made disasters.[20]
Environmental migrant	A person or group(s) of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are forced to leave their places of habitual residence, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move within or outside their country of origin or habitual residence.[21]

16 IOM, 2007 and 2016.
17 Adapted from Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility, 2014:3.
18 Adapted from The Nansen Initiative, 2015:16.
19 Adapted from United Nations, 1998: introduction, para. 2.
20 Ibid. (Unlike the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the definition offered here is meant to cover both internal and cross-border displacement.)
21 IOM, 2007, 2012:32 and 2014:23.

Environmental migration	The movement of persons or groups of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are forced to leave their places of habitual residence, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move within or outside their country of origin or habitual residence.[22]
Evacuation	Facilitation or organization of transfer of individuals or groups from one area/locality to another in order to ensure their security, safety and well-being.[23]
Forced migration	A migratory movement which, although the drivers can be diverse, involves force, compulsion or coercion.[24]
Human mobility	A generic term covering all the different forms of movements of persons. (Note: The term "human mobility" reflects a wider range of movements of persons than the term "migration".) The term is usually understood as also encompassing tourists that are generally considered as not engaging in migration.[25] The international organization members of the Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility use the term to refer to the broad range of types of movements that can take place in the context of climate change.
Internal migrant	Any person who is moving or has moved within a State for the purpose of establishing a new temporary or permanent residence or because of displacement.[26]
Internal migration	The movement of people within a State involving the establishment of a new temporary or permanent residence.[27]
Internally displaced person (IDP)	Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.[28]

22 IOM, 2019b.
23 Global Protection Cluster Working Group, 2010:503.
24 IOM, 2019b.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 IOM, 2015:198.
28 United Nations, 1998: introduction, para. 2.

International migrant	Any person who is outside a State of which he or she is a citizen or national, or, in the case of a stateless person, his or her State of birth or habitual residence. The term also refers to migrants who intend to move permanently or temporarily, and those who move in a regular or documented manner, as well as migrants in irregular situations.[29]
Migrant	An umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers and persons whose particular types of movements are legally defined (such as smuggled migrants), as well as those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law, such as international students.[30]
Migration	The movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State.[31]
Pastoralism	A livelihood strategy based on moving livestock to seasonal pastures primarily in order to convert grasses, forbs, tree leaves or crop residues into human food. The search for pasture is, however, not the only reason for mobility; people and livestock may move to avoid various natural and/or social hazards and competition with others, or to seek more favorable conditions.[32]
Planned relocation	In the context of disasters or environmental degradation, including that due to the effects of climate change, is a planned process in which persons or groups of persons move or are assisted to move away from their homes or places of temporary residence and are settled in a new location, where they are provided with the conditions for rebuilding their lives'.[33]
Trapped populations	Populations that have not migrated yet and are situated in areas under threat. They are at risk of becoming "trapped" (i.e. having or being forced to stay behind), where they will be more vulnerable to environmental shocks and impoverishment.[34]

29 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2014:4 (in footnote 2).
30 IOM, 2019b.
31 Ibid.
32 IPCC, 2014:1770.
33 Adapted from Brookings Institution, Georgetown University Walsh School of Foreign Service Institute for the Study of International Migration, and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, 2015:6.
34 Adapted from Foresight, 2011:25.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Globally, the importance of the migration, environment and climate change (MECC) nexus has been recognized by the Paris Agreement; the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration; the United Nations Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience; the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030; United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 35/20 (A/HRC/RES/35/20); Decision 22/COP.14 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; the Nansen Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change; and the New Urban Agenda. In Armenia, the challenges and opportunities associated with migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation need to be taken into account in national policies, laws and strategies associated with the aforementioned global policy frameworks. This will, in turn, support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Armenia.

The present study aims to increase understanding of how and to what extent migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation has been mainstreamed into national policy, legal and strategy documents in Armenia. The methodology for this mapping exercise comprises two major steps: First, it identifies existing relevant Armenian laws, policies and strategies related to the environment and climate change, disaster risk reduction (DRR), sustainable development, agriculture, rural development, urban development, gender, migration and remittances. Second, it analyses these documents for content pertaining to the MECC nexus and links the Armenian landscape with global approaches in this subject area. (An example of a global MECC initiative, undertaken at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in November 2015, was the creation of a Task Force on Displacement as part of the work programme of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage.) In total, 51 existing policy, legal, and strategy documents are mapped and evaluated to determine the extent to which they strategy documents are aligned with the recommendations of the task force. (It should be noted that the list of documents considered in this mapping exercise is unlikely to be exhaustive.) In reviewing the documents, priority is given to the most recent versions, including draft stages, of the most pertinent documents available publicly. This prioritization is necessary due to time and resource constraints. However, older versions of documents that are specific and particularly pertinent to a government sector, or to an administrative division or territorial region, are also reviewed.

In summary, of the 51 documents studied, 12 provide clear references to the MECC nexus. While the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation can trigger different forms of migration (e.g. disaster displacement, evacuation, labour migration, pastoralism and planned relocation), "evacuation" is shown to be the most common form of migration related to environmental degradation and the adverse impacts of climate change mentioned in the documents studied. The mainstreaming of the MECC nexus is predominantly observed in DRR policy and legislation through the definition of the term "emergency situation", which could be caused by natural hazards, including those linked to climate change. Migration policy addresses the nexus through the term "internally displaced person" (IDP), which has linkages to natural hazards as possible causes of internal displacement. However, the normative framework does not give a legal definition of the term yet; subsequently, the legal status of this category of migrants remains unclear. The review also reveals a systemic problem in most of the documents: Migration is mostly viewed as a challenge to national security, with limited recognition of its potential positive impacts. The overall approach is concentrated on ensuring national security, not only by addressing demographic decline and brain drain, but also in the context of possible mass influxes of migrants into Armenia due to natural hazards. At any rate, parallel importance is given to envisioning necessary support to migrants and establishing social and other guarantees. The understanding of migration as an adaptation strategy, however, remains limited.

The MECC nexus is reflected upon in the context of sustainable development, albeit in an incoherent, fragmented manner and only in a few documents. Labour migration and adaptation perspectives are largely missing in the reviewed policy, legal and strategy documents. For example, the Concept of State Management of Migration, approved by the Government of Armenia, does not recognize that migration (i.e. in the form of temporary, circular or seasonal labour migration) could help families staying behind manage risks posed by climate shocks and stressors and environmental degradation. There are knowledge gaps due to the lack of data regarding the interlinkages of migration, the environment and climate change in Armenia – including data on disaster displacement, especially in case of slow-onset events. Also, the study finds that the MECC nexus is largely missing in the reporting to global policy frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

At the same time, the study identifies certain institutional mechanisms, processes under way and planned developments that would be relevant to averting, minimizing and addressing displacement as a result of the adverse effects of climate change and leveraging migration-related opportunities to support climate change adaptation. It is worth noting that the country cannot rely on ongoing and planned activities to overcome the challenges brought about by climate change, and that further, more comprehensive measures will be required to address the MECC nexus. To do so,

stakeholders, including the Government, should undertake steps to mainstream the MECC nexus into the various laws, strategies and policy frameworks identified in the report.

The study identifies two main challenges to such mainstreaming of the MECC nexus: First is the lack of a common understanding of the nexus itself. Second, there are limited capacities and coordination among various actors in Armenia to address the nexus. Such actors, which the study looks at, include government ministries, State agencies, local authorities, civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations, migrants, and sending and destination communities.

The report puts forth the following 21 recommendations that could address some of the identified gaps.

CALLS TO ACTION

1.1. Adopt a whole-of-government approach.

1.2. Ensure capacity development based on a whole-of-society approach for inclusive decision-making and enhanced transparency.

1.3. Ensure policy coherence and synergies to promote the green transition according to the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (2021–2026).

2.1. Improve data collection and use of data, and increase expertise in these activities.

2.2. Adopt a transdisciplinary approach and facilitate research.

2.3. Introduce longitudinal and panel data approaches.

2.4. Ensure gender-disaggregated data collection.

2.5. Ensure capacity development of national experts.

3.1. Establish key definitions in national DRR legislation.

3.2. Strengthen preparedness at the national, regional and local levels.

4.1. Mainstream the MECC nexus into national policy processes.

4.2. Foster policy coherence between different policy domains.

5.1. Establish a legal definition for "internally displaced person" and develop a dedicated legal regime.

5.2. Assist people displaced across borders in the context of disasters, as appropriate.

6.1. Integrate migration as part of adaptation strategies in the context of climate change.

6.2. Establish a legal framework for internal migration.

6.3. Establish a legal regime for planned relocation.

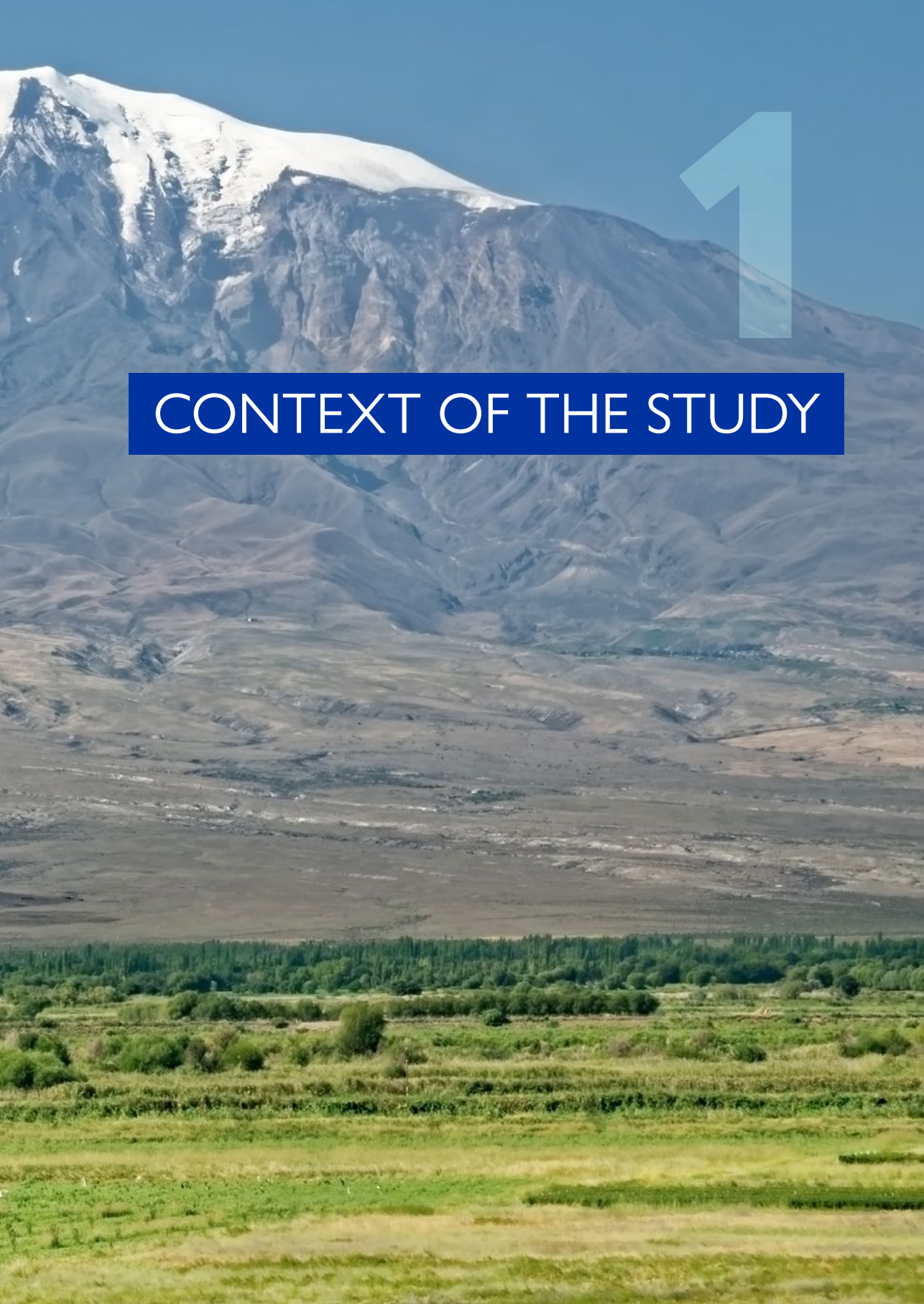
6.4. Establish a legal definition of and relevant regulations on pastoralism.

6.5. Enable the channelling of remittances towards climate action.

6.6. Develop the capacities of migrants to participate in and benefit from the circular economy.

6.7. Support just transition for workers in vulnerable sectors and regions.

Mount Ararat. © Pixabay 2018/Makalu



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CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

An Armenian woman working in the fields. © Pixabay 2017/Cesar Augusto Ramirez VALLEJO

1. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY[35]

Climate change, environmental degradation and disasters due to natural hazards may significantly change migration patterns worldwide, bringing challenges but also opening up opportunities for both sending and receiving countries. The Paris Agreement on Climate Change,[36] the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration,[37] the United Nations Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience,[38] the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 ("Sendai Framework",[39] United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/RES/35/20,[40] Decision 22/COP.14 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,[41] the Nansen Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change,[42] and the New Urban Agenda[43] are the key global policy frameworks that recognize and address the MECC nexus. These mutually reinforcing frameworks provide a set of principles for action on the MECC nexus. The challenges and opportunities associated with migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation need to be taken into account in national policy, legal and strategy documents associated with the aforementioned global policy frameworks. This will, in turn, contribute towards achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.[44]

Armenia describes itself as a country vulnerable to climate change, with average annual temperature projected to increase by up to 1.6 °C by 2040, 3.3 °C by 2070 and 4.7 °C by 2100 from the baseline annual average of 5.5 °C for the 1961–1990 period. Atmospheric precipitation is projected to decline by up to 2.7 per cent by 2040, 5.4 per cent by 2070 and 8.3 per cent by 2100 from the baseline annual average of 592 mm during the same period.[45] The settlements and infrastructure throughout the country are exposed to climate-induced natural hazards, particularly floods, mudflows, landslides, rockfalls and avalanches.[46] Analysis of Armenia's historical data on slow-onset events, such as droughts and soil erosion, shows that rural, low-income communities are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to heightened water insecurity, increased

35 This report is based on Jeenbaeva and Banerjee (2022) and Gampp (2023). It is part of a policy analysis series that also covers these other countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine.
36 United Nations, 2015a.
37 United Nations, 2018a.
38 United Nations, 2016a.
39 United Nations, 2015b.
40 United Nations, 2017a.
41 United Nations, 2019a.
42 The Nansen Initiative, 2015.
43 United Nations, 2016b.
44 United Nations, 2015c.
45 Government of Armenia, 2020a.
46 Ibid.

health risks, reduced agricultural productivity and increased incidence of hazardous hydrometeorological phenomena.[47] According to statistical data provided by the Ministry of Emergency Situations, there were a total of 479 natural hazard events in 2021, with no official data on estimated losses.[48] An earlier study by the World Bank evidences that Armenia lost well over USD 1.5 billion from 1994 to 2014 due to natural hazards such as floods, earthquakes, drought, hail, spring frosts and mudflows.[49]

Armenia is a landlocked, mountainous country – 90 per cent of its land is over 1,000 m above sea level. According to a paper by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), "increasing temperatures will continue to induce changes in mountain[ous] regions throughout the twenty-first century, with expected negative consequences for the mountain cryosphere, biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being".[50] Due to the sharply intersected relief of Armenia's topography and the nature of slope development, Armenia is characterized by active external processes (e.g. soil erosion, weathering and mass wasting). A high frequency and magnitude of hazardous hydrometeorological phenomena are characteristic of Armenia, where they trigger droughts, landslides, mudslides, forest fires and other disasters, thereby inflicting significant losses on the population and the economy. According to forecasts, Armenia's wheat yield will decrease by 19 per cent by 2070, assuming natural circumstances, with the loss hitting mountainous regions the most.[51] The national economy comprises predominantly climate-sensitive sectors that depend heavily on natural ecosystems and resources, such as agriculture, energy production, industry and construction. While potential adaptation options exist to reduce this type of vulnerability, some residual vulnerability will continue to exist given prevailing national development circumstances.[52] As noted by IPCC Working Group II in its contribution to the sixth assessment report:

> Adaptation does not prevent all losses and damages, even with effective adaptation and before reaching soft and hard limits. Losses and damages are unequally distributed across systems, regions and sectors and are not comprehensively addressed by current financial, governance and institutional arrangements, particularly in vulnerable developing countries. With increasing global warming, losses and damages increase and become increasingly difficult to avoid, while strongly concentrated among the poorest vulnerable.[53]

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47 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2009.
48 Government of Armenia, 2021i.
49 World Bank, 2017.
50 Adler et al., 2022.
51 Government of Armenia, 2021a.
52 Ibid.
53 IPCC, 2022b. (The Working Group II's contribution to the IPCC sixth assessment report assesses the impacts of climate change, looking at ecosystems, biodiversity and human communities at the global and regional (Armenian: *marz*) levels. It also reviews vulnerabilities and the capacities and limits of the natural world and human societies to adapt to climate change.)

According to the Statistical Committee of Armenia (ArmStat), 9.7 per cent of the country's population (2.9 million total) live below the poverty line, and the percentage of the population living below the poverty line is 22.5 per cent and 33.6 per cent in urban and rural areas, respectively.[54] The poor population is more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to their lack of options brought about by limited sources of income, lower levels of education and awareness, less favourable health conditions and other factors. Climate-resilient development is enabled when governments, civil society and the private sector make inclusive development choices that prioritize risk reduction, equity and justice, and when decision-making processes, project financing and actions are integrated across government levels, sectors and activity time frames. It is facilitated through international cooperation and by governments at all levels working with communities, civil society, academic bodies, scientific and related institutions, media, investors, and businesses, as well as by developing partnerships with traditionally marginalized groups, including women, youth, indigenous peoples, local communities and ethnic minorities.[55]

Changes in the physical climate system – most notably the occurrence of more intense extreme events – have adversely affected other natural and human systems around the world, contributing to the degradation and even loss of ecosystems, water and food insecurity, damage to infrastructure, mortality and morbidity, human migration and displacement, damaged livelihoods, mental health issues, and inequality. Increasing adaptive capacities will minimize the negative impacts of climate-related displacement and involuntary migration not only for migrants, but also sending and receiving areas, thereby improving the degree to which migration is by choice, as well as ensuring safe and orderly movement of people within and between countries.[56] Climate impacts may influence different forms of migration: disaster displacement, evacuation, pastoralism, labour migration (both internal and international) and planned relocation. The risk of displacement increases for populations that lack resources for planned migration experience higher exposure to extreme weather events; this is true for both rural and urban areas, particularly in developing countries with low incomes. Expanding opportunities for mobility can reduce the vulnerability of such populations, as migration can be an effective adaptation strategy, and switching from one type of migration to another can be a further response to extreme weather events and longer-term climate variability and change. In this context, it is worth noting that despite the downtrend, pastoralism is still practiced in mountainous regions of Armenia. However, due to the impacts of climate change, areas used as pastures are gradually declining in quality at relatively lower altitudes, thus increasing the vulnerability of pastoralists. There are no statistics in Armenia on displacement induced by the effects of

54 Government of Armenia, 2021b.
55 Adler et al., 2022.
56 Ibid.

climate change and the worsening of environmental conditions, even as such cases are not rare. In addition, there is low confidence in quantitative projections of changes in migration patterns due to the complex, multicausal nature of migration.[57] For instance, the statistic of 1,031 people evacuated in 2021[58] is not broken down according to the natural hazards (e.g. snowstorms, avalanches and ice-covered roads) that caused their displacement. At any rate, there is increasing recognition of migration as an adaptation and coping strategy that may help the population effectively address the adverse impacts of climate change.[59] According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the net migration rate of Armenia, as of 2021, is –5.43 migrants/1,000 population (with no corresponding sex- or gender-disaggregated data reported).[60] According to government statistics, 9.6 per cent of households had members who were either internal or external migrants during the period 2015–2020.[61] As of 2020, 42.1 per cent (around 92,300 persons) of these households had members absent from their communities and living in Yerevan, another community of their region, another region of Armenia or a foreign country, and 41.6 per cent (around 91,000 persons) have had their migrant family members return home.[62] As of 2021, 73,571 of the 762,792 Armenian citizens who had left the country have not returned.[63]

As of 2017, the total volume of international remittance transfers to Armenia was around USD 1.7 billion, constituting around 15.2 per cent of GDP.[64] Remittances are crucial to improving the well-being of Armenian migrants' family members back in the home country, including by enabling their access to basic services such as education and health care. Recent research shows that, globally, labour migration has considerable positive impacts on climate change adaptation at the household and community levels.[65] As some places will become uninhabitable due to the adverse impacts of climate change, an important climate change adaptation measure will be planned relocation (i.e. the permanent, voluntary migration of people to a new location, supported by government policy and projects, which include the reconstruction of community' infrastructure, services, housing and livelihoods at the destination).[66] Planned relocation is a complex process that often has multiple implications on aggregate risk levels. It should be considered as a strategy of last resort, as it entails high costs and has the potential to deplete the human, social and economic capital of both relocated and host communities, thereby causing impoverishment and further vulnerability.

57 IPCC, 2014.
58 Government of Armenia, 2021h.
59 Sobczak-Szelc and Fekih, 2020; IOM, 2019b.
60 CIA, 2021.
61 Government of Armenia, 2021b.
62 Ibid.
63 Government of Armenia, 2021h.
64 Eurasian Economic Union, n.d.
65 Sobczak-Szelc and Fekih, 2020.
66 IOM, 2017.

During the research for this report, it has become clear that there is a lack of understanding of the MECC nexus. In addition, and as such, the capacity of relevant actors in Armenia (e.g. government ministries, State agencies, local government institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations, migrants and diaspora members, and sending and destination communities) and their coordination to address the topic remain limited. These are major barriers to mainstreaming the MECC nexus in government institutions, such as the Ministry of Environment, the Migration Service, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, and the Urban Development Committee under the Ministers' Cabinet of Armenia.

The Conference of the Parties (COP), at its twenty-first session in Paris, established the Task Force on Displacement (TFD) to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change. The Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage is entrusted by the COP to operationalize the TFD, according to Decision 1/CP.21.[67] The TFD acts as the main global platform for policymaking towards the integration of migration issues into the climate change agenda and recommends to the Parties to:[68]

(a) Consider the formulation of national and subnational legislation, policies and strategies, as appropriate, that recognize the importance of integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change and issues around human mobility (33a);

(b) Enhance research, data collection, risk analysis and sharing of information to better map, understand and manage human mobility-related to the adverse impacts of climate change (33b);

(c) Strengthen preparedness to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change (33c);

(d) Integrate human mobility challenges and opportunities into national planning processes and consider publicly communicating efforts undertaken (33d);

[67] United Nations, 2015d: para. 49.
[68] United Nations 2018b.

(e) Consider assisting internally displaced persons (IDPs), including those displaced as a result of the adverse effects of climate change, and strengthen efforts to find durable solutions (33e);

(f) Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and the mobility of people, as appropriate and in accordance with national laws and policies, and by enhancing opportunities for regular migration pathways, including through labour mobility, in the context of climate change (33f).

As a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Armenia commits to aligning its policies, legislation and strategies with the recommendations made by the TFD. Towards this end, the Ministry of Environment of Armenia is the dedicated focal point for the UNFCCC process.[69]

The Sendai Framework makes specific references to the impacts of disasters on migration (i.e. displacement) and underlines the importance of coordinating with migrants on disaster risk management at the local level (27h). It also recognizes that the knowledge, skills and capacities of migrants can be useful in designing and implementing disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures (36a(VI)).[70] The Ministry of Emergency Situations is the focal point for the Sendai Framework process. The Global Compact for Migration recognizes "natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation" as adverse drivers that compel people to leave their country of origin under its Objective 2. Further, Objective 5 acknowledges that enhancing the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration (e.g. through humanitarian visas, private sponsorships, access to education and temporary work permits) could help address the needs of migrants in situations of vulnerability. Within the Government of Armenia, the Migration Service of Armenia (under the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure) is responsible for policymaking on internal and international migration. It is the main counterpart of the United Nations Network on Migration, coordinating Global Compact-related activities in Armenia.

[69] Government of Armenia, 2018a.
[70] United Nations, 2015b.

As there is limited information on the subject, this study aims to map the extent to which migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation has been mainstreamed into existing Armenian policy, legal and strategy documents related to climate change, the environment, DRR, sustainable development, agriculture, rural and urban development, gender, migration (e.g. internal and international) and remittances, and provide recommendations to bridge the gaps where relevant. In addition, it analyses the extent to which these documents are aligned with the recommendations of the Warsaw International Mechanism TFD, as well as with the Sendai Framework and Global Compact for Migration objectives. This report has the following structure: Chapter 2 describes the methodology adopted for the study. In chapter 3, Armenian legislation, policies and strategies pertaining to or referencing the environment, climate change and DRR (section 3.1), sustainable development and poverty reduction (section 3.2), migration (section 3.3) and gender (section 3.4) are mapped. Specifically, documents related to various relevant global policy frameworks and processes are mapped. This allows for the subsequent analysis of the extent to which Armenia has already adopted and localized TFD recommendations to the COP (chapter 4) and outlines recommendations to address identified gaps. Chapter 5 concludes the report by summarizing its findings and recommendations. As a whole, this exercise supports Armenia's efforts to better address migration challenges and opportunities in the context of climate change.

A mountainous landscape in Armenia. © Pixabay 2021/Armennano

2 METHODOLOGY

Gata, a traditional Armenian pastry. © 2022/Lasma PLONE

2. METHODOLOGY[71]

IOM defines "migration" as "the movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State".[72] The report uses the generic term "migration" to encompass different types of movements in the context of climate change and environmental degradation: disaster displacement, evacuation, pastoralism, labour migration and planned relocation. It covers both internal and international migration, as well as permanent, temporary, circular and seasonal forms of migration. This definition is aligned with the language adopted in official documents of the UNFCCC and in the five-year rolling workplan of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism.

This report adopts the definitions of the terms "avert", "minimize "and "address", as used by the Warsaw International Mechanism TFD in its 2018 report.[73]

(a) To **avert** is understood as implementing measures to reduce or avoid the risk of forced migration. These measures may include DRR, climate change adaptation, resilience-building and community stabilization.

(b) To **minimize** is understood as implementing measures to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration as part of adaptation strategies against climate change. These measures may include ensuring migration pathways via free movement protocols, labour schemes, leveraging of remittances and transhumance agreements, or, as a last resort, planned relocation of people living in high-risk areas.

(c) To **address** is understood as implementing measures to prepare for and respond to displacement when it happens, including through the provision of assistance and protection to those displaced due to disasters induced by climatic shocks and stressors, and seeking lasting solutions. These measures may include contingency planning; humanitarian relief aid; granting, expediting or waiving of visas; and non-return policies or reintegration strategies.

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71 *Policy Analysis on Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Armenia* is part of a policy-mapping and analysis series that includes Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Türkiye and Ukraine. This report adopts the methodology developed in Gampp (2023).

72 IOM, 2019b:137.

73 United Nations, 2018b.

The methodology for this mapping exercise entails two major steps:

(a) Identifying relevant policy, legal and strategy documents;

(b) Analysing these documents for content about the MECC nexus.

2.1. IDENTIFYING RELEVANT POLICY, LEGAL AND STRATEGY DOCUMENTS

Key stakeholders are contacted to ensure that the current exercise will not be a duplication of existing mapping of Armenian policy, legal and strategy documents focusing on the MECC nexus. It is assumed that relevant documents will be found across various policy domains. Relevant policies, legislation and strategies on the environment, climate change, DRR, sustainable development, agriculture, rural development, urban development, gender and migration are identified, and copies of them are collected. In accordance with the approach of the Workplan of the Warsaw International Mechanism TFD, this mapping exercise relies on publicly accessible documents,[74] which are in either Armenian or English, and a list of these documents is found in the Bibliography section of this report.

2.2. ANALYSING DOCUMENTS FOR MECC NEXUS-RELATED CONTENT

The mapping involves identifying documents that refer to the MECC nexus. Documents with any such references are assessed to ascertain if the narrative mentions environmental and climate change impacts as drivers of migration, and/or if it explores the role of migration consequences (e.g. financial and social remittances) in the context of climate change adaptation and resilience-building. In all, 51 documents are reviewed and analysed, including: 15 documents on the environment, 4 on climate change, 8 on DRR and disaster preparedness, 6 on sustainable development, 2 on migration, 3 on gender and 11 covering a broader scope (but touching on one or more of the aforementioned issues), such as the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 2021–2026 and the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia, both of which outline activities and include specific provisions for where the MECC nexus could be mainstreamed at the operationalization stage. In addition, the framing of migration and migrants (for instance, as victims, as having agency or as a security threat)

[74] United Nations, 2019b.

and the contexts of such framing are assessed. The mapping identifies the specific migration actors acknowledged in each document (migrants, families staying behind, the diaspora, pastoralists, IDPs, and sending and destination communities).

In migration-related documents, an inspection is made of mentions of environmental and climate change in the narrative. With regard to documents in other domains (which, thus, do not explicitly mention the MECC nexus), an assessment is made of whether migration is mentioned in the context of climate change adaptation or resilience-building – including mentions by way of framing migration and migrants, specifying types of migration, and identifying migration actors. For both sets of documents, the mapping identifies existing mechanisms, measures and practices that may be relevant to addressing migration-related challenges and opportunities in the context of the adverse impacts of climate change. Strategies to leverage remittances for climate-resilient development, for example, may also be relevant to climate change adaptation. As such, the mapping involves identifying overlaps that may indicate a lack of coherence between the domains.

The analytical exercise assesses the extent to which existing national legislation, policies and strategies are aligned with the six recommendations of the Warsaw International Mechanism TFD. Where relevant, overlaps between these documents and the Sendai Framework and the Global Compact for Migration are highlighted. Actionable recommendations are formulated based on the analysis.

2.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It should be noted that this mapping exercise gathers the most important and comprehensive policy, legal and strategy documents, with priority given to the latest versions of the documents. This prioritization, as well as limiting the mapping to publicly accessible documents, is necessary due to the limited time and resources available. However, older versions of documents that are specific and particularly pertinent to a government sector or administrative division or territorial region are also reviewed.

A wheat field after a harvest. © Pixabay 2016/Makalu

3

POLICY SITUATION: THE MECC NEXUS IN ARMENIAN POLICIES, LAWS AND STRATEGIES

A cherry harvest in Armenia. © 2021/Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Armenia

3. POLICY SITUATION: THE MECC NEXUS IN ARMENIAN POLICIES, LAWS AND STRATEGIES

This chapter maps governing policy, legal and strategy documents covering the various aspects of the MECC nexus, with sections structured to cover key policy domains. Section 3.1 looks at references to migration in the national environment, climate change and DRR domains to see, for example, how climate policy instruments address migration. Section 3.2 explores if and to what extent national sustainable development policies and poverty reduction strategies consider linkages between migration, the environment and climate change. Section 3.3 then reviews migration frameworks and explores where and how climate change and environmental issues are taken into consideration. Lastly, the guiding gender and social legislative frameworks are presented in section 3.4 to explore the role of women and marginalized members of society in the context of the MECC nexus.

In summary, 12 of the 51 documents[75] studied mention the MECC nexus. The mapping indicates that evacuation is the most common dimension of migration that is addressed in the context of emergency situations, including that induced by natural hazards. The mapping also shows that in most of the documents examined, migration is perceived through the lens of economic and demographic challenges, given that Armenia is predominantly a sending country, with its potential positive impacts recognized to a limited extent. Neither the Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia[76] nor the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2021–2025[77] addresses the MECC nexus in the context of facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility, or enhancing opportunities for regular migration pathways, including through labour mobility, consistent with international labour standards, in the context of climate change. In addition, there are gaps in institutional coordination, as well as policy coherence and synergies.

[75] Several documents are reviewed under more than one section, as they touch on various aspects of the subject at hand.
[76] Government of Armenia, 2004b.
[77] Government of Armenia, 2021a.

3.1. ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Overall, 31 documents on the environment, climate change and DRR are analysed. Subsection 3.1.1 maps 19 national legal and strategy frameworks for the protection of the environment and the use of natural resources and if and how they mention any of the various forms of migration. Subsection 3.1.2 reviews three documents to understand the extent to which Armenia's climate change laws and strategies take account of migration. Finally, subsection 3.1.3 studies nine national DRR documents to determine how migration in the context of environmental degradation and climate change is integrated.

3.1.1. Legal frameworks for the protection of the environment and use of natural resources

This subsection looks at policy, legal and strategy documents governing the environment sector, as well as those containing important provisions on environmental protection and the use of natural resources. It reviews the following documents in particular: the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia,[78] the Criminal Code,[79] the Administrative Infringements Code,[80] the Decision of the Supreme Council "On the Fundamentals of the Legislation on Environmental Protection",[81] the Land Code,[82] the Civil Code,[83] the Law "On Control over Use and Protection of Lands",[84] the Water Code,[85] the Order of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Armenia "On Approval of Sanitary Norms and Rules N2-III-A3-1 (Drinking Water: Hygienic Requirements for the Water Supplied via Centralized Systems: Quality Control),[86] the Law "On the Fundamental Provisions of the National Water Policy of the Republic of Armenia",[87] the Law "On National Water Program",[88] the Law "On Lake Sevan",[89] the Law "On Water Users Associations and Unions of Water Users Associations",[90] the Forest Code,[91] the Law "On Specially Protected Natural

78 Government of Armenia, 2005d and 2015a.
79 Government of Armenia, 2003a.
80 Government of Armenia, 1985.
81 Government of Armenia, 1991. (As Armenia has only one official language, Armenian, most of the country's legislative texts do not have official English translations. Wherever such texts are mentioned in this report, their titles are enclosed in quotation marks.)
82 Government of Armenia, 2001a.
83 Government of Armenia, 1998a.
84 Government of Armenia, 2008a.
85 Government of Armenia, 2002a.
86 Government of Armenia, 2002b.
87 Government of Armenia, 2005a.
88 Government of Armenia, 2006a.
89 Government of Armenia, 2001b.
90 Government of Armenia, 2002c.
91 Government of Armenia, 2005b.

Areas",[92] the Law "On Flora",[93] the Law "On Fauna",[94] the Law "On Specially Protected Natural Areas",[95] the Law "On Protection of Atmospheric Air",[96] and the Law "On Ensuring Sanitary–Epidemiological Safety of the Population of the Republic of Armenia".[97]

Constitution of the Republic of Armenia

The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, with the amendments of 2015, establishes the obligation of the State to promote the preservation, improvement and restoration of the environment and the reasonable use of natural resources, guided by the principle of sustainable development and taking into account its responsibility to future generations. It is worth mentioning that, unlike the current Constitution, the previous Constitution (with the amendments of 2005) established the obligation of the State to "ensure the protection and restoration of the environment and the reasonable use of natural resources".[98] There is no mention of migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation in the Constitution.

Criminal Code

The Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia defines "ecocide" as the "mass destruction of flora and fauna, poisoning the environment, the soil or water resources, as well as the implementation of other actions causing ecological catastrophe".[99] The punishment for this crime shall be imprisonment for a term of 10 to 15 years. Ecocide is classified as a particularly grave crime against human security, and an expiration period is not applied to it. The nodal institutions and agencies are the Police, the Prosecutor's Office, the Investigative Committee of Armenia and the criminal courts. Chapter 27 of the Criminal Code ("Crimes against Environmental Safety") identifies 17 types of crimes against various elements of the environment (e.g. water resources, soil, forests and specially protected natural areas) and environmental safety in general (arts. 281–298). There is no mention in the Criminal Code of migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation.

92 Government of Armenia, 2006b.
93 Government of Armenia, 1999.
94 Government of Armenia, 2000.
95 Government of Armenia, 2006b.
96 Government of Armenia, 1994.
97 Government of Armenia, 1992.
98 Ibid., art. 10.
99 Government of Armenia, 2003a: art. 394.

Administrative Infringements Code

The Administrative Infringements Code of the Republic of Armenia, in its chapter 7 (Administrative Infringements in Sectors of Land Use, Geodesy, Cartography, Protection of the Natural Environment, and Historical and Cultural Monuments), lists relevant administrative infringements (arts. 54–94). The nodal institutions and agencies are the Environmental Protection and Mining Inspection Body of Armenia, the Police and the Investigative Committee, as well as the administrative courts. Administrative liability, predominantly in the form of fines, is applied in cases of administrative infringements related to the use of land that is incompatible with its "target use" (or "target position", i.e. the land's intended purpose, e.g. for settlement, agriculture or industry, among others) or "operational significance" (e.g. settlements may have residential, public and/or other types of construction); arbitrary changes from the officially designated target use or operational significance of land parcels; breach of land use limitations and conditions on the use of fertile soil layers; violations of legislation on subsoil and water resource use; damage to water systems and infrastructure; use of forest land without permission; and illegal logging, to name a few. There is no mention of migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation in the Administrative Infringements Code.

Scope of environmental legislation in Armenia

After voiding the Decision of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia "On the Fundamentals of the Legislation on Environmental Protection" in 2007, the National Assembly (i.e. Armenia's parliament) has not adopted another legal framework or codified legislation to cover the broad spectrum of relations in the area of environmental protection and natural resource use. Subsequent legislative developments have primarily focused on sectoral regulations, resulting in the adoption of codes and laws governing the management, protection and use of various natural resources and objects, as well as relevant secondary legislation that provides implementation mechanisms, procedures, methodologies and official orders, among others. The subsequent legislation makes no mention of migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation.

Land Code

In Armenia, State regulation of "land relations" (i.e. all matters concerning ownership, use and disposition of land, as well as the management of land resources) is aimed at, among others, the development of the land reform concept and the implementation of a unified a investment policy for enhancing the fertility of land parcels, land use and protection, and ensuring natural agricultural turnover. The nodal government institutions in relation to the Land Code of the Republic

of Armenia[100] are the Ministry of Economy (which also oversees the agricultural sector), the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure and the Urban Development Committee. In addition, local self-governance bodies are in charge of managing land parcels under community ownership, including ensuring the implementation of the legal regime of land use across all ownership types. The land stock is classified into nine categories, among which are agricultural and forest land, which, by virtue of their fertility, enjoy special status. Agricultural land is envisaged for agricultural purposes, including the growing and harvesting of plants, establishment of long-term plantations and cattle-breeding, among other activities. Agricultural soil types include, among others, cultivated land, long-term plantations, haymaking and pastures.[101] They are entitled to special protection, and for this purpose the Land Code establishes regulations to facilitate the rational use of agricultural land and prevent it from remaining uncultivated. The recategorization of agricultural land to a non-agricultural type is permitted in exceptional cases, according to procedures defined in the Land Code. The change from a valuable agricultural soil type to a less valuable type is performed through an agreement with the Community Leader and in accordance with procedures established by the Government.[102] Furthermore, the Land Code prohibits the sale of fertile soil extracted or released during construction and mining activities, and instead requires that it be used in less fertile areas, with the consent of the concerned community leader.[103] The Land Code contains a dedicated chapter (18) regulating the turnover of agricultural land, including its allocation by the State and communities, and possession thereof by legal entities; lease of pastures; and inheritance, among others.[104]

Another measure to prevent the misuse of agricultural land is the requirement that it can be inherited only by an inheritor who commits to engaging in agricultural production.[105] In order to prevent border and high-mountain settlements from depopulating, the Land Code stipulates that families willing to move to border and high-mountain communities are entitled to a land parcel from the State for the construction of residential buildings or for agricultural activities.[106]

"Land relations" in Armenia are primarily regulated by the Constitution, the Civil Code and the Land Code. Establishing a legal regime for the ownership and use of different land categories is essential for the proper implementation of State policy for the protection and use of water resources, forests and specially protected

100 Government of Armenia, 2001a.
101 Ibid., art. 9.
102 Ibid.
103 Ibid., art. 36.
104 Ibid., chapter 18.
105 Ibid., art. 95.
106 Ibid., art. 64.

natural areas, as well as for mining and urban development, among others. The Land Code is one of the most dynamically amended laws (with 129 changes since its first iteration), demonstrating the extent to which land relations are sensitive to economic and social development, such as massive urban development projects.

There is no mention of migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation in the Land Code. However, the code lays out incentives for families willing to move to border and high-mountain communities – the latter being environmentally fragile and vulnerable to climate change. Also, given the multisectoral regulatory nature of the Land Code – specifically as pertains to the establishment of a legal regime for forests, specially protected natural areas, water objects and other target uses – it is obvious that interlinkages with the land legal regime can significantly influence migration induced by environmental degradation, climate change and natural hazards.

Law "On Control over Use and Protection of Lands"

The Law "On Control over Use and Protection of Lands" establishes the objectives, types and authorized bodies for control over the use of and for the protection of land. It is worth mentioning that only control over land resources is regulated by a specific law intended to cover matters that fall outside the scope of environmental control exercised over land and other natural resources. Under the law, all land in Armenia, irrespective of target use and form of ownership, is subject to State control.[107] The nodal government institutions in relation to this law are the Environmental Protection and Mining Inspection Body, the Urban Development Committee, the Technical and Fire Safety Inspection Body, regional administrative bodies (Armenian: *marzpetaran*), and local self-governance bodies.

The Law "On Control over Use and Protection of Lands" does not directly refer to the MECC nexus. It focuses largely on ensuring that the target use and operational significance of land are observed. Its objectives include ensuring proper use and protection of the fertile layer of soil, cultivation and improvement of new land, and the implementation of national and regional land management programmes.[108]

Water Code

The Water Code of the Republic of Armenia provides for the protection of the national water reserve and the rational use of useable water resources to meet the needs of citizens and the economy while ensuring environmental sustainability. The regulatory scope of the Water Code is quite broad, encompassing protection

[107] Ibid., art. 2.
[108] Ibid., art. 3.

of water resources; sustainable water management and water use for all purposes and by all sectors of the economy; management of water systems, such as irrigation systems, reservoirs, and water supply and wastewater removal services; and so on.[109] The Water Code establishes a number of key concepts essential for the protection of water reserves and ensuring the rational use of water resources – national water reserve, water balance and ecological flow, to name a few.

Sanitary norms for drinking water supplied through centralized systems, based on the requirements of the Water Code, are established in an order issued by the Ministry of Health.[110] Standards for irrigation water have not been adopted so far.

The Ministry of Environment and water basin management bodies, subordinate to it, are the key entities involved in water resource management. As for the management of water systems themselves – such as irrigation channels and related infrastructure, reservoirs, and sewage systems – the Water Committee of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure is the nodal authority. The water basin management principle is one of the key approaches incorporated in the Water Code for the management of water resources based on water basin management plans (hence the name of the principle) developed for the five water basin areas within the territory of Armenia. Water basin management plans, which cover six-year periods, are approved by the Government of Armenia and are expected to balance the interrelationships between various water users, which include communities, the energy sector, industries, agriculture and the environment. These management plans shall include, among other components, an assessment of water resource vulnerability to climate change impacts that comprises hydrological models based on climate change predictions, scenario forecasting and a mapping of areas vulnerable to climate change. Risks of mudflows and drought, and their associated emergency situations, shall be assessed and included in the management plans.

The Water Code requires the development of draft legislation and other documents by the concerned water resource protection and management body to be subject to public participation. These include the National Water Program, the National Water Policy, water basin management plans, water standards, water use permits and draft legislation on water use tariffs.

There is no direct mention of the MECC nexus in the Water Code. However, the recent amendment to the Water Code of (dated 7 July 2022) introduced the key terms, "water resource adaptation to climate change" and "water resource

[109] Government of Armenia, 2002a: art. 6.
[110] Government of Armenia, 2002b.

vulnerability to climate change". In addition, a specific article on a "Water Resource Adaptation Plan to Climate Change" mainstreams adaptation planning into strategy and planning documents for the water sector.[111] Also, the water basin management principle incorporates important elements to address climate change issues in the planning of water resource use and addressing disaster risks, which can help to avert, minimize and address migration in the context of climate change and other issues related to migration.

Fundamental Provisions of the National Water Policy

The Law "On the Fundamental Provisions of the National Water Policy of the Republic of Armenia" is aimed at establishing a water regime that ensures water resources of proper quantity and quality for human well-being, alongside the development of the social and economic systems of the republic presently and into the future.[112] The law also aims to ensure periodic assessments of the accessibility of water resources, determination of the national water reserve and implementation of the process of assessing water demand and supply. The nodal government authority in relation to this law is the Ministry of Environment.

One of the key provisions of this law is the setting of priorities for water use in the following order: national water reserve, traditional water use, water use according to national legislation and international treaties, household consumption, agriculture, energy production, industry, recreation and anti-drought measures. Water distribution shall not take place if it poses a risk to the national water reserve.[113] In cases of emergency with respect to the accessibility of water resources, the limitations of use may change to reflect a different order of priorities.

The Law "On Fundamental Provisions of the National Water Policy of the Republic of Armenia" does not mention the MECC nexus.

Law "On National Water Program"

The Law "On National Water Program" regulates the definition and implementation of the National Water Program, under which the national water reserve and strategic water reserve are defined; periodic assessments of useable water resources and water supply and demand are conducted; and key challenges to and prospects for water resource protection and water sector development are identified.[114] It also establishes the classification of water resources and water systems based on their social, economic, strategic and environmental significance and the likelihood of

[111] Government of Armenia, 2002a: art. 16.1.
[112] Government of Armenia, 2005a: art. 1.
[113] Ibid., art. 13.
[114] Government of Armenia, 2006a: art. 1.

exposure to disruptions and accident risks. The nodal government authorities in relation to this law are the Ministry of Environment and the Water Committee of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure.

The National Water Program is the only piece of legislation that addresses the issue of environmental emergency situations involving water basins. Environmental emergency zones are areas where, due to natural phenomena or economic and/or other types of activities, the environment has been negatively affected, thereby posing risks to the health of (human) populations, endangering the flora and fauna, or disrupting the balance of natural ecosystems. In environmental emergency zones, specific types of natural resource use and other economic activities with negative impacts on human life, health and the environment are to be limited or terminated, and measures are to be undertaken for the recovery and regeneration of natural resources. The Government of Armenia is entitled to declare a specific area of a water basin as an environmental emergency zone based on the ability of resources to recover and the time it would take to do so, as well as the stability of such recovery.[115] No criteria pertaining to these have yet been established.

The National Water Program does not make any references to the MECC nexus. However, it covers important aspects of water resource and water system management that have significant importance in terms of addressing climate change impacts.

Law "On Lake Sevan"

Lake Sevan is the largest water body in both Armenia and the Caucasus region and is one of the largest high-altitude (alpine) freshwater lakes in Eurasia. The lake, fed by 28 rivers and streams, is situated in Gegharkunik Province, at an altitude of 1,900 m (6,235 ft) above sea level. Only 10 per cent of the incoming water is drained by the Hrazdan River, while the remaining 90 per cent evaporates.[116] Lake Sevan is heavily exploited for irrigation and power generation. Due to this exploitation, coupled with climate change impacts and contamination of the lake with organic substances, eutrophication is being observed during the warm season.[117] The programme, EU4Sevan (2020–2024), currently under way, aims to enhance the capacities of public and private stakeholders to ensure an ecosystem-friendly and water-protecting economy in the region.

115 Ibid., art. 26.

116 Babayan et al., 2006:347.

117 Eutrophication is the process by which an entire body of water or parts of it become progressively enriched with minerals and nutrients, particularly nitrogen and phosphorus. It has also been defined as "nutrient-induced increase in phytoplankton productivity (Chapin et al., 2011).

Thus, Lake Sevan is a freshwater reservoir with unique strategic, economic, environmental, recreational and cultural significance for Armenia[118] and the entire Transcaucasus region. The protection and use of the Lake Sevan ecosystem are governed by the Law "On Lake Sevan", which establishes fundamental legal and economic principles for a State policy aimed at the normal development, recovery and regeneration of the natural resources of an ecosystem that has strategic environmental, economic, social, scientific, historical, cultural, aesthetic, health, recreational and spiritual value.

The Law "On Lake Sevan" establishes environmental zoning of the lake ecosystem area and defines the applicable regime of economic and other activities for the various zones.[119] In particular, it introduces the concept of "local self-governance bodies in the immediate impact zone of the lake ecosystem". These authorities shall support the implementation of the legal requirements for the recovery, preservation, rehabilitation and use of the Lake Sevan ecosystem. Also, they shall ensure public participation in decision-making processes related to the lake ecosystem.[120] The nodal government authority in relation to this law is the Ministry of Environment.

The Ministry of Environment prepares comprehensive and annual programmes for the recovery, protection and rehabilitation of the lake ecosystem. The implementation report of the annual programme is presented at the National Assembly meeting[121] to ensure further transparency. In order to ensure scientific consultation and expertise informs the comprehensive and annual programmes – as well as the implementation reports thereof and other related documents – the Law "On Lake Sevan" establishes the Expert Commission for the Protection of Lake Sevan, whose headquarters are located adjacent to that of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia.[122]

There is no mention of the MECC nexus in the Law "On Lake Sevan". However, it addresses essential elements of lake ecosystem management that are significant to addressing climate change impacts.

118 Government of Armenia, 2001b: preamble.
119 Ibid., chapter 2.
120 Ibid., art. 18.
121 Ibid., arts. 12–14.
122 Ibid., chapter 5.

Law "On Water Users Associations and Unions of Water Users Associations"

The Law "On Water Users Associations and Unions of Water Users Associations" defines the legal basis and status of water users' associations (WUAs) and unions of WUAs, including the principles guiding their relations with public authorities. It is aimed at enhancing the efficiency of irrigation systems.[123] A WUA is a non-commercial organization, with the status of a legal entity, that carries out the maintenance and use of irrigation systems as guided by public interest. WUAs observe, among others, the principles of fair distribution of irrigation water between association members and non-members, including based on the arable land area and cultivated plants; effective use and conservation of water resources, eliminating non-industrial losses; and protection of the rights and legal interests of water users.[124] The nodal government authority in relation to this law is the Water Committee of the Ministry of the Territorial Administration and Infrastructure.

Still according to this law, WUAs are established by an initiative group, which may comprise natural and legal entities.[125] The activities of WUAs shall be regulated by the Regulatory Commission, established by the Government. WUAs are obliged to undergo annual audits and submit annual reports to the Regulatory Commission.[126] The tariffs for irrigation water are established by the Public Services Regulatory Commission.

The Law "On Water Users Associations and Unions of Water Users Associations" does not mention the MECC nexus.

National legislation on forests and biodiversity

The Forest Code of the Republic of Armenia, the Law "On Specially Protected Natural Areas", the Law "On Flora" and the Law "On Fauna" are the essential legal documents regulating affairs with respect to the preservation, protection and use of forests, specially protected natural areas and bioresources. The Forest Code and the Law "On Specially Protected Natural Areas" mention among their objectives the protection, recovery and normal development of biological diversity and landscapes, sustainable management of forests, ensuring sustainable use of biological resources and natural objects.[127] The nodal government authority for these laws is the Ministry of Environment. None of the laws mention the MECC nexus.

[123] Ibid., art. 1.
[124] Ibid., art. 5.
[125] Ibid., art. 6.
[126] Ibid., art. 32.
[127] Government of Armenia, 2005b: art. 18 and 2006b: art. 3.

Law "On Protection of Atmospheric Air"

The Law "On Protection of Atmospheric Air" regulates matters as regards ensuring the proper quality of atmospheric air and preventing and reducing adverse impacts on it. The nodal government authorities for this law are the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Health, the Environmental Protection and Mining Inspection Body, and the Health and Labor Inspection Body.

While the law does not refer to the MECC nexus, it maintains that in cases of threats to human health and life due to unfavourable hydrometeorological conditions accompanied by increased emissions of pollutants (from a factory/plant or other facility) into or other adverse factors affecting the atmospheric air, the polluting entities, the State Control Service and the aforementioned inspection bodies shall issue warnings about these threats and implement measures to eliminate them.[128] Although neither the law nor the relevant secondary legislation goes as far as to list them, these measures could theoretically include evacuation and sheltering of affected populations should there be relevant linkages to DRR legislation.

Law "On Ensuring Sanitary–Epidemiological Safety of the Population of the Republic of Armenia"

The Law "On Ensuring Sanitary–Epidemiological Safety of the Population of the Republic of Armenia" establishes guarantees and legal mechanisms to ensure that the impacts of adverse environmental factors on human populations is neutralized, and favourable conditions for the present and future generations are created.[129] The nodal government authorities for this law are the Ministry of Health, the Health and Labor Inspection Body, and territorial administration and local self-governance bodies.

The law sets out the key requirements for ensuring the sanitary–epidemiological safety of the population with respect to various situations and in various areas, including urban planning and development, water supply and water use, occupational air quality and sanitation in settlements. While the law does not make any mention of the MECC nexus, it contains elements essential to ensuring the well-being of populations, including migrants.

[128] Government of Armenia, 1994.
[129] Government of Armenia, 1992: preamble.

3.1.2. Climate change policies in the framework of the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement processes

This subsection looks at key policy, legal and strategy documents governing the climate sector: the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of the Republic of Armenia to the Paris Agreement,[130] the National Action Program of Adaptation to Climate Change[131] and the Decision of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia "On Establishing an Inter-Agency Coordination Council on Implementation of Requirements and Provisions of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, Approving its Composition and Rules of Procedure".[132]

Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement

The 2021–2030 Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of the Republic of Armenia to the Paris Agreement is the update of the country's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution of 2015. The NDC document provides upfront information on the level of emission reduction to be achieved by 2030, with the goal of climate neutrality in the second half of this century. The nodal government institution in relation to NDC is the Ministry of Environment. The NDC is based on the principle of a green economy and is compatible with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are reflected in the social and economic development goals of Armenia. The NDC document refers to the national adaptation planning (NAP) process, which aims to promote the reduction and management of climate risks by addressing the impacts of climate change, taking advantage of emerging opportunities, avoiding losses and damages, and building mechanisms that would enable the adaptation of natural, human, production and infrastructure systems. Adaptation activities shall be implemented in the following sectors: natural ecosystems (aquatic and terrestrial), human health, water resource management, agriculture, energy, human settlements and infrastructure, and tourism. The NDC document does not mention the MECC nexus.

National Action Program of Adaptation to Climate Change

The National Action Program of Adaptation to Climate Change and the List of Measures for 2021–2025 defines the strategy framework of adaptation and enumerates efforts towards national adaptation planning; it guides climate change adaptation presently and shall continue to do so on a rolling basis into the future. This programme, approved by the Government of Armenia, marks the coordinated launch and implementation of the NAP process in Armenia, including

130 Government of Armenia, 2021d.
131 Government of Armenia, 2021a.
132 Government of Armenia, 2021e.

meeting the commitments under international climate change treaties that are in line with the SDGs. The overarching vision of the NAP process is that all sectors considered under government policy as being vulnerable to the impacts of climate change – in particular, sectors pertaining to natural ecosystems, water, agriculture, energy, health, human settlements and tourism – shall mainstream climate change adaptation considerations to provide greater clarity, balance and direction towards the effective delivery of adaptation action.[133] Some of these sectoral adaptation plans are currently under development and will be subsequently submitted to the Government for approval.

The programme aligns the NAP process as a whole, with the direction that climate change risks be considered in every aspect of national decision-making, and highlights the fact that investments will occur in a more integrated manner through supplying the NAP process and crafting a stable foundation for additional adaptation action.[134] The NAP is not designed to replace any existing planning processes but, rather, to complement them. It does not prescribe how sectors and regions (Armenian: *marzer*, singular, *marz*) should conduct their policy and planning processes but provides guidance on good practice. The NAP process builds on the following principles: recognition that climate vulnerability and social equity are linked; promotion of gender-responsive approaches to climate change adaptation; multihazard approach; balancing risk reduction with development; ecosystem-based adaptation; participation and inclusivity; openness and knowledge transfer; and climate-aligned financial decision-making and management.[135] The nodal government institution in relation to the NAP process is the Ministry of Environment, with relevant line ministries responsible for sectoral adaptation plans, such as those for energy, agriculture and tourism, to name a few.

The National Action Program of Adaptation to Climate Change and the List of Measures for 2021–2025 establishes that gender-responsive approaches to climate change adaptation shall be promoted, as women and men have different needs, opportunities and capacities, and thus experience the impacts of climate change in different ways. In many contexts, women face additional barriers to adaptation compared to their male counterparts due to social norms and practices that limit their access to information, resources and opportunities. These issues are to be considered in adaptation planning to avoid the risk of exacerbating gender inequalities. By acknowledging and addressing gender differences, climate change adaptation can help overcome traditional gender barriers to women's participation in decision-making. With equitable and effective participation, there is a greater likelihood that adaptation will be channelled in gender-responsive ways, and

133 Government of Armenia, 2021a: para. 26.
134 Ibid., para. 28.
135 Ibid., chapter 3.

that the opportunities and benefits resulting from these processes will be more equitable and thus reduce gender-based vulnerabilities and risks.[136] This important statement will guide sectoral and *marz*-level adaptation planning envisaged in the NAP Action Plan.

The National Action Program does not mention the MECC nexus. However, the sectoral, regional and local-level adaptation plans to be developed have significant potential to address a range of issues within the scope of migration and climate change.

Decision of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia "On Establishing an Inter-Agency Coordination Council on Implementation of Requirements and Provisions of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, Approving its Composition and Rules of Procedure"

The purpose of the establishment of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Council (IACC) on the implementation of the requirements and provisions of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement is to ensure the fulfilment of the obligations undertaken by Armenia under the UNFCCC; coordination of the Nationally Determined Contribution of the Republic of Armenia under the Paris Agreement for the years 2021–2030; and the National Action Program on Adaptation to Climate Change; and implementation of SDG 13 (Climate Action).

The IACC is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and co-chaired by the Minister of Environment. It is composed of deputy minister of relevant line ministries, high-level officials of other government authorities[137] and representatives of the National Academy of Sciences and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). To provide expert and professional support to the IACC, three inter-agency working groups have been established, composed of officials with relevant technical expertise and each covering a thematic area: (a) climate change mitigation and adaptation, (b) national reporting commitments and (c) financing. The working groups shall conduct research, prepare data and relevant opinion and conclusion papers, and perform other relevant activities at the instruction of the IACC, to which they are accountable. They shall hold regular meetings once every

[136] Ibid., para. 34.

[137] Representatives of government agencies who are the members of the IACC include the following: the Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Deputy Minister of Health; Deputy Minister of Justice, Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations; Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Minister of High-tech Industry, Deputy Minister of Economy, Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, the two Deputy Ministers of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (one in charge of the energy sector and the other, of territorial development), Deputy Minister of Finance; Deputy Chair of the Cadaster Committee, one member of the State Statistics Council, the Deputy-Chair of the Urban Development Committee, the Head of the Tourism Committee of the Ministry of Economy, and a representative from the Public Services Regulatory Commission.

six months, as well as ad hoc. In cases when specific issues on the IACC agenda fall outside the scope of the working groups' respective mandates, the IACC is entitled to establishing ad hoc working groups to cover these.

The MECC nexus is not mentioned in the decision document. However, the mandate of the IACC and the relevant working group(s) may logically cover this area should issues emerge.

3.1.3. Disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response

This subsection looks at the policy, legal and strategy documents governing the DRR sector. In particular, this subsection reviews the following documents: National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Action Plan for Implementing the National Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction,[138] the draft National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management and Action Plan for Implementation 2022–2030,[139] the draft Law "On Disaster Risk Management and Protection of the Population",[140] the Law "On Protection of Population in Emergency Situations",[141] the Law "On the Legal Regime of Emergency Situations",[142] the Law "On Civil Protection",[143] the Concept of Civil Protection of the Republic of Armenia,[144] the Government Decree "On Approval of the Order on the Evacuation of the Population and of Material and Cultural Assets from Dangerous Areas",[145] the Government Decree "On the Order on Ensuring Vital Services for Evacuated Population in Settlement Areas",[146] and the Government Decree "On the Order of Preparing Civil Protection Plans".[147]

National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Action Plan for Implementing the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction

The National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Action Plan for Implementing the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction is aimed at making the country resilient to disasters and gradually enhancing and developing the safety of individuals and the general public. The nodal government institution in relation to the strategy and the accompanying action plan for implementing it is the Ministry of Emergency Situations. It establishes that the Ministry of Health shall provide

138 Government of Armenia, 2012a.
139 Government of Armenia, 2021f.
140 Government of Armenia, 2022a.
141 Government of Armenia, 1998c.
142 Government of Armenia, 2012b.
143 Government of Armenia, 2002d.
144 Government of Armenia, 2011b.
145 Government of Armenia, 2011a.
146 Government of Armenia, 2010c.
147 Government of Armenia, 2004a.

medical care to those evacuated due to emergency situations, including disasters induced by natural hazards.

The strategy is a unified document establishing the strategic direction, tasks and principles of disaster risk management and defines approaches to clarifying the roles and functions of key actors. It widely recognizes that DRR cannot be the monopoly of a single institution; rather, it requires a complex approach that involves, among others, the mobilization of resources of all entities concerned, as well as the application of political, technical and participatory elements, which is in line with the whole-of-government approach of the Warsaw International Mechanism TFD. It is mentioned that climate change and the intensity of related disasters, including the losses they cause to various sectors of the economy, underline the importance of seeking new solutions and approaches in climate risk management and the integration thereof into the national DRR strategy. Climate is considered an additional factor that challenges the resilience of the public to disasters.[148] The strategy prioritizes the assessment of possible climate risks and development of measures, including early-warning systems, to prevent the consequences thereof.

Draft National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management and Action Plan for Implementation 2022–2030

Currently, the Government Armenia has circulated the draft National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management and the Action Plan (2022–2030) thereof, which reflects the approaches taken by the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda. This draft will replace the 2012 Disaster Risk Management Strategy following its adoption, expanding the scope and the extent to which it addresses climate change as a disaster risk factor and the importance of adaptation planning for various sectors and at all levels based on the vulnerabilities of Armenia. Based on forecasts by the DRR sector, the territory of Armenia is projected to become more vulnerable to climate change impacts, thus adaptation considerations shall be prioritized.[149] The draft national strategy underlines the importance of developing early-warning systems and the integration thereof into community DRR plans throughout the country, considering the specific needs of vulnerable groups of the population. It is also recognized that the lack of contingency planning, post-disaster recovery plans and disaster risk insurance system in the past years have been significant obstacles to the country's sustainable development. Therefore, the action plan includes relevant measures aimed at the development and enactment of relevant tools.

[148] Government of Armenia, 2012a: paras. 6 and 35.
[149] Government of Armenia, 2021f: para. 16.

The draft national strategy includes superficial recognition of the MECC nexus by listing among the country's challenges the lack of a management plan of migration movements that have emerged as a consequence of disasters induced by natural hazards and armed conflict. Further, it notes that insufficient levels of disaster risk assessment, associated with land degradation, infringement of land use requirements and urban development norms, are among the important issues to be addressed.

Law "On Protection of the Population in Emergency Situations"

The Law "On Protection of the Population in Emergency Situations", as a key law in the DRR sector, defines the basis and organization of the protection of the population in emergencies, establishing the rights and obligations of public authorities, organizations, public officials and citizens.[150] The system of protection is composed of public authorities, including local self-governance bodies, and other public, as well as private, entities.[151] The nodal government authority in relation to these laws is the Ministry of Emergency Situations. Another important entity is the National Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction (ARNAP),[152] a foundation established by the Republic of Armenia.

The Law "On Protection of the Population in Emergency Situations" alludes to the MECC nexus through its legal definition of "emergency situation" and subsequently defines the preventive and main measures to protect the population. Evacuating populations from disaster zones and sheltering them are among forms of protection that shall be supplemented with the provision health care and other vital services. An order to evacuate is issued by the Government.

The Government has circulated a draft Law "On Disaster Risk Management and Protection of Population", which refers to the concept of climate change adaptation and establishes disaster risk and climate change assessment information systems to serve disaster risk management and adaptation needs. All public and private entities are required to include DRR and climate change adaptation considerations in their development planning and disaster risk management documentation. The draft law will replace the Law "On Protection of the Population in Emergency Situations" following its adoption by the National Assembly.

150 Government of Armenia, 1998c: preamble.
151 Ibid., art. 3.
152 The ARNAP website is available at www.arnap.am.

Law "On the Legal Regime of Emergency Situations"

The Law "On the Legal Regime of Emergency Situations" establishes that a "state of emergency" may be declared by the Government of Armenia, and an actual emergency (e.g. a disaster induced by a natural hazard(s)) is a condition for such.[153]

It should be noted that, as provided for in the Law "On Protection of Population in Emergency Situations", a state of emergency may only be declared if the emergency represents an imminent threat to the constitutional order of the country, and the risk cannot be eliminated without this extraordinary measure.[154] During a state of emergency, rights and freedoms of citizens can be temporarily limited. The duration of a state of emergency cannot exceed 30 days if countrywide and 60 days if declared only in a certain area.

The MECC nexus figures in this law through the concept of "emergency situation", which, as mentioned, may be induced by a natural hazard(s) and be a possible reason to declare a state of emergency, necessitating protection measures, including evacuation and the provision of shelter, among others.

Order on the Evacuation of the Population and of Material and Cultural Assets from Dangerous Areas

The Government Decree "On Approval of the Order on the Evacuation of the Population and of Material and Cultural Assets from Dangerous Areas" regulates the planning, organization, implementation and formation of so-called "evacuation bodies" (or "evacuation units") and defines the functions thereof. A "dangerous area" is defined as a territory, settlement or premises of an organization where the consequences of a (plausible) emergency or war can adversely impact human health and livelihoods. The nodal institution in relation to this order is the Ministry of Emergency Situations.

Depending on the severity and the scale of an emergency, a decision to evacuate shall be made by the Government, the head of the regional administration or the head of the community – or, in the case of a corporate entity, a competent company director. The population shall be evacuated according to evacuation plans, and priority evacuation is required for vulnerable groups – pregnant women, people requiring medical care, women who have children up to 14 years old, children, the elderly and medical personnel. Evacuation may be conducted in two stages: First, the population shall be evacuated from the disaster zone to a safe

[153] Government of Armenia, 2012b: art. 1.
[154] Ibid.

area – that is, a camp for temporary shelter. In case of a protracted emergency situation or the impossibility of return, a second stage may consist of transporting the population to a long(er)-term settlement area.

In order to plan and prepare for and conduct evacuation, public authorities, including local self-governance bodies and organizations, shall establish evacuation bodies well in advance. These bodies shall cooperate with relevant authorities and civil protection services.[155]

Order on Ensuring Vital Services for Evacuated Populations in Settlement Areas

The Order on Ensuring Vital Services for Evacuated Populations in Settlement Areas establishes the legal basis for organizing and ensuring vital services for evacuated populations – and, in relation, enshrines the functions of relevant public authorities, local self-governance bodies and organizations, as well as defining the principles of planning the process of providing vital services. The nodal government institution for the order is the Ministry of Emergency Situations.

Planning the process of providing vital services to evacuated populations consists of several stages: (a) collection of baseline data, (b) selection of measures and substantiation, and (c) evaluation of necessary material, technical and financial resources for the preparedness of the regional system to provide vital services to the population.[156]

The Order on Ensuring Vital Services for Evacuated Populations in Settlement Areas establishes allocations of various types of food, clothing and hygienic supplies for each person.[157] The lists and allocations of clothing and hygienic supplies, which define specific items for men and women, reflect gender considerations. Different allocations for food and clothing are also established for children.

Concept of Civil Protection of the Republic of Armenia

The Concept of Civil Protection of the Republic of Armenia is aimed at coordinating civil protection measures and developing civil protection systems in situations of war. ("Civil protection" is defined as a system of measures for the protection or for preparing for the protection of the population and its material resources in case of an armed invasion of Armenia (or an imminent threat thereof) or a declaration of a war by the National Assembly.) This document identifies the challenges and

[155] Government of Armenia, 2011a: para. 30.
[156] Government of Armenia, 2010c: para. 10.
[157] Ibid., form 1.

problems of civil protection systems and outlines the importance that all public and private entities, as well as individual citizens, are involved in civil protection through their respective duties. The nodal government institution for the Concept of Civil Protection is the Ministry of Defence.

Although the concept explicitly covers only situations of war and military attacks, it is still relevant in terms of the MECC nexus, as armed conflict may trigger environmental hazards and increase vulnerability to climate change in a number of ways. The concept has a clear focus on building the capacities of evacuation bodies, which, in fact, are the same units referred to in the Government Decree "On Approval of the Order on the Evacuation of the Population and of Material and Cultural Assets from Dangerous Areas".[158]

Law "On Civil Protection"

The Law "On Civil Protection" defines the principles, rights and obligations of entities in the civil protection system. The nodal government institution in relation to this law is the Ministry of Defence.

Regulations for purposes of civil protection are applicable in case of a military attack on the territory of Armenia (as noted in the Concept of Civil Protection). Forms of civil protection, especially during emergency situations, include evacuation and sheltering of affected populations, as well as individual protection.[159] One important civil protection measure to be implemented at all times is maintaining tight control over and monitoring of the quality of environmental resources, including water and food resources.[160] With respect to evacuation, sheltering and provision of vital services, both the Order on the Evacuation of the Population and of Material and Cultural Assets from Dangerous Areas and the Order on Ensuring Vital Services for Evacuated Populations in Settlement Areas apply.

Based on the Law "On Civil Protection", the Government has approved the Order on Preparing Civil Protection Plans, which envisages how these plans are to be developed, agreed upon and approved. Neither document addresses the MECC nexus.

158 Government of Armenia, 2011a.
159 Government of Armenia, 2002d: art. 5.
160 Ibid.,: art. 8.

Summary of environmental, climate change and DRR policies, laws and strategies

A total of 31 documents were reviewed to understand how and to what extent the MECC nexus is addressed in national policy, legal and strategy documents on environmental degradation, climate change and disaster risks.

None of the 19 documents related to environmental protection refers to migration induced by environmental degradation and natural hazards. Although the Land Code does not make any mention of the MECC nexus, it lays out incentives for families willing to move to border and high-mountain communities – the latter being environmentally fragile and vulnerable to climate change. Existing policy, legal and strategy documents on climate change do not refer to the MECC nexus; as such, the NAP process, including the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025, and sectoral and regional adaptation plans (yet to be developed) could be a starting point towards addressing the nexus. The MECC nexus is referenced in all eight documents related to DRR through the definition of "emergency situation" (in the Law "On the Legal Regime of Emergency Situations"), which may be caused by a natural hazard, including climate change. Further mainstreaming is observed in regulations on evacuation and providing vital services to evacuated populations.

3.2. NATIONAL STRATEGY FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Overall, 14 national-level legal and strategy documents on sustainable development linked to local self-governance, urban development, sustainable agriculture, statistics, and data and knowledge management are analysed to determine if and how they refer to the MECC nexus. Subsection 3.2.1 maps five national legal and strategy documents and frameworks for national-level strategizing on sustainable development; subsection 3.2.2 reviews one law on local self-governance; subsection 3.2.3 maps one law on urban development; subsection 3.2.4 reviews four documents on sustainable agriculture; and subsection 3.2.5 studies three documents on statistics and data management.

3.2.1. National-level strategizing for sustainable development

This subsection maps policy, legal and strategy documents establishing and guiding the national sustainable development strategy framework: the European Union–Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement,[161] the Strategic Program for the Prospective Development of the Republic of Armenia 2014–2025,[162] the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 2021–2026,[163] the Decree of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia "On Establishing Sustainable Development Council and Approval of Its Rules of Procedure"[164] and the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia.[165]

European Union–Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement

Entering into force on 1 March 2021, the European Union–Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) sets the political and economic cooperation agenda between the European Union and Armenia. It is aimed at enhancing comprehensive political and economic partnerships and cooperation in all areas of mutual interest and promoting the development of close political relations between the two parties.

With respect to environmental protection, the agreement mentions that "[c]operation shall aim at preserving, protecting, improving and rehabilitating the quality of the environment, protecting human health, utilizing natural resources in a sustainable manner and promoting measures at the international level to address regional and global environmental problems".[166] The nodal government institution for actions on the environment and climate change is the Ministry of Environment. The agreement enshrines a broad set of activities covering environmental governance, air quality, water quality, water resource management, waste management, biodiversity, industrial hazards, industrial pollution and chemicals management. An important aspect of the agreement to highlight here is that the cooperation between the parties aims at integrating environmental considerations in non-environmental policy areas as well[167] – a key element for further strengthening multisectoral linkages with migration policy.

161 Government of Armenia, 2017.
162 Government of Armenia, 2014.
163 Government of Armenia, 2021c.
164 Government of Armenia, 2020b.
165 Government of Armenia, 2020c.
166 Government of Armenia, 2017: art. 46.
167 Ibid.

The agreement specifically addresses climate action and suggests that the parties develop and strengthen cooperation to combat climate change, including through mitigation, adaptation, establishment of market and non-market mechanisms, fostering of research and innovation, mainstreaming of climate considerations into general and sector-specific policies, and awareness-raising, for example, through the development of educational programmes.[168]

The agreement does not explicitly address the MECC nexus. However, it emphasizes the facilitation of circular migration for the benefit of development.[169]

Strategic Program for the Prospective Development of the Republic of Armenia 2014–2025

The Strategic Program for the Prospective Development of the Republic of Armenia 2014–2025, approved by the Government, is the updated version of its Sustainable Development Program of 2008. It outlines the priority directions for the country's social and economic development and identifies key challenges and limitations, as well as opportunities for development, to serve as a framework for government policy. The nodal government authorities in relation to this document are the Central Government and relevant line ministries – namely the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure.

The long-term development goal is the continuous improvement of the material and non-material well-being of the population.[170] This goal is mainstreamed into sectoral development directions, including agriculture, as well as into the development of villages, small and medium entrepreneurship, the labour market, infrastructure, poverty and inequality reduction, the social protection system, health care and environmental protection, among others. With respect to the protection of the environment, the Strategic Program for Prospective Development underlines the importance of minimizing environmental risks, including the emerging risks of desertification and the overexploitation of underground water resources, brought about by climate change and the rapid growth of the water extraction industry. Prospective actions cover a broad range of environmental protection activities – in particular, enhancing legislation, institutional capacity-building, rational use of water resources, including those of Lake Sevan, and sustainable use of biodiversity.[171]

168 Ibid., arts. 51–52.
169 Ibid., art. 14.
170 Government of Armenia, 2014: para. 5.
171 Ibid., section 25.

It is worth noting that the programme does not explicitly address sustainable development issues as they are presented in the 2030 Agenda, although it mentions the creation of economic leverages for the transition to the green economy.

The programme perceives migration (only international migration is covered in the context of labour migration) as a generally negative phenomenon with adverse impacts on the domestic labour market, as remittances increase the reservation wage. However, it recognizes the economic benefits of labour migration in the short term. The programme is oriented towards an overall reduction of migration flows from Armenia by putting in place economic leverages that would subsequently contribute to domestic labour market activity.

The programme does not mention the MECC nexus, and migration perspectives are not linked to environmental degradation and climate change impacts. It recognizes, however, that climate change impacts will result in the degradation of natural resources and the environment at large, exacerbate the social and economic situation, and worsen the unequal development of communities. Strategic development priorities formulated in the areas of environmental protection, agriculture and migration might, at the operationalization stage (i.e. when actualized in the form of programmes and projects), also encompass elements relevant to addressing migration-related challenges and opportunities in the context of climate change.

Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 2021–2026

The Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 2021–2026 (hereafter "Government Programme 2021–2026") enshrines the key directions of government activities for the five-year period following the parliamentary elections in 2021.

In Government Programme 2021–2026, the concept of sustainable development, in its modern interpretation, is widely present and discussed in connection with almost all strategic sectors. An important component in this regard relates to building a green economy, which shall promote the creation of conditions that would enable natural resources to remain in the production cycle to the longest extent possible.[172] The nodal government authorities in relation to this document are the Central Government and relevant line ministries – namely the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure. Government Programme 2021–2026 features dedicated chapters on agriculture, sustainable management of natural resources,

[172] Government of Armenia, 2021c: section 2.2.

infrastructure, migration, environmental protection and climate change. While the specific issues currently prioritized for action related to environmental protection, migration and climate change remain siloed, there is potential to build synergies between these sectors during the operationalization of the action plan, given that appropriate coordination is in place and policy dialogue among stakeholders is launched.

In the sphere of environmental protection, among others, Government Programme 2021–2026 prioritizes the effective use of water resources and, in this regard, the implications of installing water-saving systems; the protection of Lake Sevan; ecosystem balance and biological diversity; sustainable forest management; mitigation and adaptation to climate change; facilitating the development of a green economy; and sustainable development, to name a few.[173] With respect to migration, the programme draws up a series of important initiatives, such as institutional amendments to migration management systems; digitalization of migration management systems and migration-related services provided to both citizens and non-citizens; implementation of the Action Plan of the Concept of State Management of Migration; amendment of the system for accepting foreign citizens and stateless individuals seeking asylum; and efficient organization of readmission procedures.[174]

Government Programme 2021–2026 does not mention the MECC nexus.

Decree of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia "On Establishing Sustainable Development Council and Approval of Its Rules of Procedure"

The Decree of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia "On Establishing Sustainable Development Council and Approval of Its Rules of Procedure" mandates the council to establish national priorities as regards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, mainstreaming these into national policies and ensuring the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs.[175] The nodal government institutions in relation to this document are the Office of the Prime Minister, as well as relevant line ministries and State agencies that compose the council.[176] Membership of the council comprise high-level officials representing all line ministries, other State bodies, key government services and departments thereof (e.g. the Migration Service is mentioned specifically, as is the Ministry of

173 Ibid., section 4.10.
174 Ibid., section 4.2.
175 Government of Armenia, 2020c: chapter 1 and annex 3.
176 Ibid., annex 1.

Territorial Administration and Infrastructure), and representatives of CSOs in seven key sectors (including one CSO in the environmental protection and climate change sector and another in the sector of labour, employment and poverty reduction).

The Decree of the Prime Minister "On Establishing Sustainable Development Council and Approval of its Rules of Procedure" does not establish any requirement for transparency with and accessibility of records of the proceedings and outcomes of the council's meetings. Thus, publicly available information about the council and its activities is extremely limited and fragmented. As the decree mainly covers organizational and procedural issues, it does not mention specific synergies or linkages between sectors. At any rate, the council's composition has significant representation and its mandate has sufficient scope to enable it to address and mainstream the MECC nexus into its activities.

National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia

The National Security Strategy is aimed at establishing guidelines for ensuring the secure and forward-looking development and well-being of Armenia and its citizens. An independent, sovereign and powerful Republic of Armenia – the homeland of Armenians dispersed throughout the world – guarantees this goal. The strategy outlines the national interests of Armenia and the strategic means to protect them effectively. The strategy views sustainable development as a cross-cutting concept that relates to various matters related to the security and well-being of Armenian citizens and sustainable socioeconomic development.[177] Sections of the document are dedicated to topics such as the promotion of public health and biosecurity, as well as the rehabilitation, protection and improvement of the environment. It stresses that protection of the environment and effective management of natural resources are imperative factors for ensuring livelihoods and the national security of Armenia. Thus, the country balances its policy of environmental management with social justice and economic efficiency. The sustainable development concept calls for Armenia to take effective steps towards the sustainable management and propagation of fauna and flora and expansion of forests and protected nature reserves, as well as reducing soil erosion and desertification. Other priorities include the reasonable use of natural resources, remediation of damaged land, ensuring the safety of tailing ponds and biosecurity.

The concept also reaffirms Armenia's commitment to international cooperation aimed at mitigating the negative impacts of global climate change and increasing resilience and adaptability.[178] At the same time, it considers migration as an

[177] Government of Armenia, 2020b: chapter 7.
[178] Ibid., sections 7.49, 7.51 and 7.55.

undesired phenomenon in the context of national security. The National Security Strategy mentions current demographic trends as domestic threats to Armenia's national security, as they negatively impact the sustainability of the country's social and economic development. A decline in the birth rate, a high level of emigration, ageing of the population and uneven economic development pose substantial challenges and threats to Armenia, particularly in the form of brain drain, a reduced workforce and an increasing burden on the social security system. The strategy refers to the country's commitment to safeguarding the free and safe mobility of people, simultaneously balancing it with the provision of national security. The State shall employ effective procedures to prevent the country's infiltration by infectious diseases posing public health threats. Given the possibility of regional emergencies, the country shall develop clear measures for the management of potential mass influxes of people into Armenia due to military action or disasters induced by natural hazards.[179] The nodal government institutions in relation to implementing the cited sections of the document is the Ministry of Environment.

The National Security Strategy addresses the MECC nexus by recognizing the importance of managing migration flows into Armenia due to military action and disasters induced by natural hazards. Possible positive impacts of migration and approaches to mainstreaming the potential of migrants into national development are not identified in the strategy. The strategy widely recognizes the importance of protecting the environment, the rational use of natural resources, shifting to a green economy, and mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. Therefore, during the operationalization of specific actions, effective coordination among line ministries and relevant government agencies will be required to ensure a coherent and inclusive approach.

3.2.2. Local self-governance and sustainable development

This subsection reviews the Law "On Local Self-Governance"[180] to identify whether and to what extent migration issues are reflected in the context of sustainable community development.

Law "On Local Self-Governance"

The Law "On Local Self-Governance" establishes a system for and principles of local self-governance, the mandatory tasks of communities, and the functions of local self-governance bodies (i.e. the head of the community and the council of elders), providing the legal, economic and financial bases thereof, as well as regulating

[179] Ibid., sections 2.15 and 7.7.
[180] Government of Armenia, 2002e.

relations between central authorities and local self-governance bodies.[181] The nodal government institution in relation to the Law "On Local Self-Governance" is the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure.

Local self-governance is carried out in all communities throughout the entire territory of Armenia to serve the interests of communities by placing the responsibility of solving community issues on elected local self-governance bodies.[182]

According to the Law "On Local Self-Governance", communities have mandatory tasks, and they may commit to implementing ad hoc tasks, on a voluntary basis, subject to the availability of additional resources.[183] Among these mandatory tasks are sustainable development, improvement of the business environment and promotion of entrepreneurship, social protection of the local population, facilitation of residential construction, DRR and protection of the population during emergencies, agricultural development, and environmental protection.[184] In order to implement these tasks, the head of the community is endowed with their own and delegated functions, although legal regulations and procedures for delegating functions are not articulated in the law.

The MECC nexus is not covered in the Law "On Local Self-Governance". However, according to the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025, a guide for preparing community plans for climate change adaptation will be developed[185] based on vulnerability assessments carried out for specific regions.

3.2.3. Urban development and sustainable development

This subsection reviews the Law "On Urban Development"[186] to identify whether and to what extent migration issues are addressed in the context of sustainable urban development.

Law "On Urban Development"

Normative regulations on reliability, environmental protection, fire safety, sanitary rules and accessibility of planning documents, buildings and construction are stipulated in secondary legislation.[187] It is worth noting that the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025 envisages revising construction norms to integrate climate change adaptation and climate risk management considerations.[188]

181 Ibid., art. 1.
182 Ibid., art. 3.
183 Ibid., art. 10.
184 Ibid., art. 12.
185 Government of Armenia, 2021a: chapter 9.
186 Government of Armenia, 1998d.
187 Ibid., art. 16.
188 Government of Armenia, 2021a: chapter 9.

In order to prevent the depopulation of border and high-mountain settlements, the Land Code stipulates that families willing to move to these communities are entitled to free, privatized land parcels for the construction of residential buildings.[189]

The Urban Development Committee is mandated to develop spatial development plans aimed at improving environmental conditions, managing the negative impacts of urbanization on the environment and enhancing adaptation to climate change.[190]

The MECC nexus is not mentioned by the law.

3.2.4. Sustainable agriculture

This subsection maps policy, legal and strategy documents in the sphere of sustainable agriculture: the Strategy of Key Directions of Economic Development for the Agricultural Sector 2020–2030 and the Action Plan for 2020–2022,[191] the Law "On Agricultural Cooperatives",[192] the Law "On Melioration of Agricultural Lands"[193] and the Law "On Organic Agriculture".[194]

Strategy for Key Directions of Economic Development for the Agricultural Sector 2020–2030 and the Action Plan for 2020–2022

The Strategy for Key Directions of Economic Development for the Agricultural Sector 2020–2030 and the Action Plan for 2020–2022 recognize that ageing leading to decreasing populations in rural areas is a serious challenge for sustainable agricultural development. Within the last few decades, increased migration of youth to cities, the Russian Federation and other countries has been triggered by limited employment and income opportunities in origin areas. The decree further mentions that disasters induced by natural hazards and lack of modern knowledge and tools to reduce and manage disaster risks are adverse factors for the development of agriculture. The nodal government institution in relation to the strategy is the Ministry of Economy.

189 Ibid., art. 64.
190 Government of Armenia, 1998c: art. 10.1.
191 Government of Armenia, 2019a.
192 Government of Armenia, 2015c.
193 Government of Armenia, 2005c.
194 Government of Armenia, 2008b.

Adaptation to climate change and protection of the environment are among important highlights of the strategy document, which envisages relevant actions aimed at awareness-raising, reasonable use of natural resources, agricultural insurance, development of "smart" agriculture, prevention of losses through early-warning systems, circulation of drought-resistant plant cultivars with various maturing periods and application of best practices.[195]

Gender equity and inclusivity are among the core values of the strategy. While it does not have an explicit focus on the feminization of agriculture, the strategy nevertheless enshrines approaches to supporting women and youth involved in agriculture, including awareness-raising on innovative solutions and environment-friendly agriculture.

The recognition of the MECC nexus in the strategy document is rather weak. However, its action plan (to be developed for the next cycle, which starts in 2023) could incorporate measures addressing the MECC nexus. It is also worth noting that the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025 envisages the development of a Climate Change Adaptation Concept for the Agricultural Sector,[196] which may bridge the gap to a great extent.

Law "On Agricultural Cooperatives"

The Law "On Agricultural Cooperatives" is aimed at facilitating the expansion of agricultural farms while ensuring rational use of resources, meeting the material and other needs of cooperative members, implementing new initiatives, and enhancing the efficiency of cooperative activities. Agricultural cooperatives may be established for the following purposes: agricultural production and product realization; supplying of agricultural equipment, seeds and fertilizers; provision of agricultural services; and recycling of agricultural production.[197] The nodal government institution in relation to this law is the Ministry of Economy.

The MECC nexus is not mentioned in the law. At any rate, by virtue of its objective to expand farmland, it carries the potential to foster adaptation measures and enhance the resilience of farms to cope with migration-related challenges in the context of climate change, as well as their capacity to leverage opportunities.

[195] Government of Armenia, 2019a: chapter 3.
[196] Ibid., chapter 9.
[197] Government of Armenia, 2015c: arts. 4 and 5.

Law "On Melioration of Agricultural Lands"

The Law "On Melioration of Agricultural Lands" establishes measures and respective mechanisms to maintain and enhance the fertility of agricultural land, including through protection from salination, and to improve ("meliorate") less fertile agricultural land.[198] The law stipulates that proposed improvement activities should meet legal requirements regarding the protection of land, as well as observe, as applicable, energy sector, forestry and other environmental limitations.[199] The nodal government institution in relation to this law is the Ministry of Economy.

The Law "On Melioration of Agricultural Land" does not make direct references to the MECC nexus per se, but it has the potential to address migration-related opportunities and challenges in the context of climate change, as it recognizes the importance of and suggests measures to improve degraded land and return it to agricultural circulation.

Law "On Organic Agriculture"

The Law on "Organic Agriculture" regulates matters with respect to the realization, production, storage, processing, transportation and realization of organic products and raw materials, establishes the legal basis and guiding principles for organic agriculture, as well as defining the main requirements for product circulation and State support measures.[200] The nodal government institution in relation to this law is the Ministry of Economy.

The Law does not address the MECC nexus; rather, it stipulates that environment pollution shall not occur. Similarly, the use of chemicals, hormones, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and other biotechnologies and environmentally unfriendly technologies shall be prohibited.[201]. Buffer zones between organic and regular agricultural land units shall be formed, and the fertility of agricultural land shall be enhanced[202] – a matter that is relevant to the MECC nexus.

198 Government of Armenia, 2005c: art. 1.
199 Ibid., art. 11.
200 Government of Armenia, 2008b: art. 1.
201 Ibid., art. 4.
202 Ibid., art. 8.

3.2.5. Statistics, data and knowledge management

This subsection maps the policy, legal and strategy documents in the sphere of statistics and data, reviewing the following documents: the Road Map for the Development of Climate Change-related Statistics,[203] the Law "On Official Statistics",[204] the Resolution of the State Statistics Council "On the Statistical Program of the Republic of Armenia for 2019–2023".[205]

Mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support

Armenia has developed a platform (http://sdg.armstat.am/am), run by ArmStat, for tracking the implementation of the SDGs in Armenia. The platform is built in such a way as to show relevant national data for each global indicator under each SDG, with relevant data sources and the status of data analysis indicated. As such, the platform supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the country level and serves decision-making and awareness-raising purposes. The data collection methodology is aligned with SDG reporting guidelines.

A Road Map for the Development of Climate Change-related Statistics has been developed and adopted in parallel by the State Council on Statistics and is aimed at assessing the current status of the climate change-related national statistical system and establishing the priorities and actions for the development thereof. The following topics are covered by the Road Map: statistics on greenhouse gas emissions, statistics measuring the impacts of climate change on human and natural systems (e.g. damage to infrastructure caused by environmental disasters), climate change mitigation statistics (e.g. data on the installation of solar, wind and geothermal power plants) and statistics on measures to adapt to the consequences of climate change (such as installation of residential air conditioning).[206]

Supported by UNDP and the European Union, country-level efforts – including relevant legal and institutional arrangements – are under way to build a system for monitoring, reporting and verifying progress towards goals under the Paris Agreement. This action is in line with the CEPA and Government Programme 2021–2026. While relevant planned actions in the CEPA Roadmap and Government Programme 2021–2026 do not refer to the MECC nexus, they nevertheless carry the potential to address it during operationalization, given that efficient coordination across different policy domains is ensured.

[203] Government of Armenia, 2020d.
[204] Government of Armenia, 2018b.
[205] Government of Armenia, 2018c.
[206] Government of Armenia, 2020d: chapter 4.

Law "On Official Statistics"

The Law "On Official Statistics" regulates matters with respect to the formation of a national statistical system, including the processing, production and dissemination of official statistics, and the conduct of universal accounting.[207] It envisages that statistical projects shall be conducted under annual and five-year statistical programmes, which serve as key instruments for strategic and operational management and coordination. The nodal government institution in relation to the law and its accompanying resolution is ArmStat.

The current five-year programme spans the period 2019–2023. Among the priorities the programme mentions are preparatory works to develop and apply statistical indicators relating to the development of the green economy.[208] In addition, relevant activities shall be carried out to develop statistical systems for agriculture, demography and migration, the labour market, poverty, the SDGs, the environment, and gender issues, with a view to achieving compliance with internationally accepted standards.[209] The programme does not include activities directly addressing the MECC nexus.

3.2.6. Summary of national policy, legal and strategy documents for sustainable development

A total of 14 national policy, legal and strategy documents on sustainable development were reviewed to understand how and to what extent the MECC nexus is present. The MECC nexus is mentioned in three documents related to national development, urban development and agriculture. Documents on national development are relevant as regards averting, minimizing or addressing displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change or carrying significant potential to address migration in the context of climate change during the operationalization of planned activities (e.g. activities of the Sustainable Development Council and the development of statistical indicators by ArmStat). In order to ensure that the MECC nexus is efficiently mainstreamed into various general and sectoral development policy, legal and strategy documents, efficient coordination mechanism and relevant tools will be required.

[207] Government of Armenia, 2018b: art. 1.
[208] Government of Armenia, 2018c: chapter 4.
[209] Ibid., para. 30.

3.3. MIGRATION LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Overall, eight documents[210] on international and internal migration, pastoralism and transhumance, and the contributions of migrants and the diaspora are analysed to see if and how they take account of and integrate the MECC nexus. Subsection 3.3.1 maps three national legal and strategy frameworks for international and internal migration. Subsection 3.3.2 reviews three documents on pastoralism and transhumance. Finally, subsection 3.3.3 studies three national strategy frameworks for leveraging the contributions of migrants and the diaspora to see how, more specifically, migration in the context of environmental degradation and climate change is integrated.

3.3.1. International and internal migration

This subsection maps policy, legal and strategy documents in the sphere of international and internal migration, specifically: the Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan,[211] the Law "On Employment",[212] and the Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia.[213]

Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan (Government of Armenia, 2021g)

The Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan establish the commitments of the Government of Armenia in relation to migration management and outlines the target directions thereof. The nodal government institution in relation to the concept is the State Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure. The concept is aligned with the 2030 Agenda, particularly in regard to facilitating orderly, safe and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies (SDG target 10.7); protecting the labour rights of and promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants and those in precarious employment (SDG target 8.8); reducing the transaction cost of migrant remittances to less than 3 per cent and eliminating remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent (SDG target 10.c); enhancing global partnerships for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships for mobilizing and sharing knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support

[210] The sum of mapped documents exceeds eight, since one document is repeated under two sections in different aspects.
[211] Government of Armenia, 2021g.
[212] Government of Armenia, 2013.
[213] Government of Armenia, 2004b.

the achievement of the SDGs in all countries, particularly developing countries (SDG target 17.16); and enhancing capacity-building support to developing countries, including least developed countries and small island developing States, to significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability status, geographic location and other variables or characteristics relevant in the national context (SDG target 17.18).

The concept refers to the MECC nexus through its definition of "internally displaced person", whereby natural (including climate-induced) and anthropogenic hazards are identified as potential reasons for displacement. However, it is worth noting that slow-onset climate events are not considered among the reasons for any type of displacement. As the term "internally displaced person", as defined in the concept, is not yet enshrined in the normative framework, it does not have normative significance and cannot be directly applied in practice unless it is mainstreamed into laws.

The Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan notes that strategic programmes to be developed based on the concept shall include needs-based and gender-sensitive projects. It posits that the labour rights of all workers, such as the right to a safe and secure working environment, including migrant workers, and particularly women migrants, shall be protected. In addition, a gender-disaggregated approach shall be adopted in data collection linked to SDG target 17.18. The concept also refers to gender in the context of the capacity-building of border officials in gender-sensitive issues.[214] While the concept recognizes the importance of enhancing the quality of migration data and the digitalization thereof, it is silent on the opportunities and challenges experienced by women staying behind and female migrants in their households and communities.

Despite the lack of comprehensive recognition of the MECC nexus in the concept, a description of key directions for migration policy development (such as the enhancement of the migration information management system, capacity-building for migration management, assessment of migration flows and the facilitation of reasonable migration, improving the protection of the rights of various groups of migrants, supporting employment, economic inclusion and so on),[215] if sufficiently detailed and streamlined, may also integrate climate change and environment considerations.

[214] Government of Armenia, 2021g: paras. 22 and 24.
[215] Ibid., chapter 7.

Law "On Employment"

The Law "On Employment" sets forth the organizational and economic fundamentals and legal basis underlying employment in Armenia and the forms of social support to be made available to the population in case of unemployment.[216] The nodal government institutions in relation to this law are the Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Armenia.

The law does not address the MECC nexus, but it stipulates that authorized government institutions shall sign international agreements aimed at regulating labour migration and protecting the interests of labour migrants.[217]

Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia

The Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia prohibits any form of discrimination, including gender discrimination, both during employment and prior, such as when defining salaries and publishing vacancy announcements, unless the positions have gender-specific requirements. The nodal government agencies for the Labor Code are the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health. The Labor Code provides further guarantees to ensure that specific needs of women are respected in the workplace. In particular, pregnant women and those who have a child under one year of age may perform overtime work, which may be on non-working days or holidays, or sent on business trips only with their consent.[218] Pregnant women and those who have a child under three years of age may perform night shift work only with their consent and after clearance based on the results of a medical assessment.[219]

The Labor Code does not mention the MECC nexus.

3.3.2. Pastoralism and transhumance

This subsection maps legal documents in the sphere of pastoralism and transhumance: the Government Decree of the Republic of Armenia "On Approval of the Order on the Use of Pastures and Haymaking" (two iterations: 2010 and 2011)[220] and the Government Decree "On Approval of the Order on the Use of

[216] Government of Armenia, 2013: art. 1.
[217] Ibid., art. 2.
[218] Government of Armenia, 2004b: arts. 144, 155, 156 and 209.
[219] Ibid., art. 148.
[220] Government of Armenia, 2010b and 2011c.

Water Systems for Hydrating Pastures, Desalination of Land and Other Agricultural Purposes".[221]

Regulation of pasture management

According to the Land Code, pastures are a specific soil type of agricultural land.[222] Pastures under State and community ownership can be leased for agricultural purposes, with the size of pastureland allowed for lease based on an established per-livestock norm.

The Order on the Use of Pastures and Haymaking establishes the lease rate (i.e. equivalent to the land tax rate) and the maximum duration of the lease contract (three years), as well as providing a template for a lease contract, to be signed by local self-governance bodies and the lessee.[223] A later iteration of the order establishes the allowed pasture load per type of pasture and other conditions thereof.[224] In order to prevent the degradation of pastures and ensure that degraded pastureland is properly rehabilitated, the Order on the Use of Water Systems for Irrigation, Hydrating Pastures, Desalination of Land and Other Agricultural Purposes establishes the regime for calculating water demand and preparing water use plans, in cooperation with WUAs.[225] The nodal government institutions for the aforementioned regulations are the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure and the Ministry of Economy.

The guide for preparing and implementing sustainable pasture management plans developed under the programme, "Sustainable Management of Biodiversity, South Caucasus", in cooperation with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure and the German Agency for International Cooperation (German: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH), recognizes the impacts of climate change on land degradation and the deterioration of biodiversity.[226] Although there are legal regulations for pasture management in place, pastoralism, as a type of (economic) activity, is not regulated, even as pastoralists are greatly impacted by existing pasture management regulations and practices.

221 Government of Armenia, 2003b.
222 Government of Armenia, 2001a: art. 9.
223 Government of Armenia, 2010b.
224 Government of Armenia, 2011c.
225 Government of Armenia, 2003b: chapter III.
226 Tovmasyan, 2015:5.

3.3.3. Contributions of migrants and diasporas: remittances, knowledge and investments

This subsection maps legal documents in the area of pastoralism and transhumance: the Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan,[227] the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 2021–2026,[228] and the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia.[229]

Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan

Among migration management objectives mentioned in the Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan are reforms in the regime for the integration and reintegration of both Armenians and foreigners that aim to enhance the impact of migration on sustainable human development.[230] The concept is aligned with the 2030 Agenda, particularly with SDG targets 10.7, 8.8, 10.c, 17.16 and 17.18. The nodal government institution in relation to the concept is the Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure.

According to a statistical study (Integrated Living Conditions Survey 2021), 9.6 per cent of households had members who were either internal or international migration during the period 2015–2020.[231] As of 2020, around 42.1 per cent (92,300) of these migrants were absent from their community and living in another region of Armenia, Yerevan, another community within the same region or a foreign country, while 41.6 per cent (around 91,000) had returned home.[232] In 2021, out of 762,792 Armenian citizens who had left the country, 73,571 had not returned.[233] Each year, the number of international migrants to Armenia rises as well, which underlines the importance of managing the demographic impacts posed by migration.[234]

The concept recognizes that services provided by the State (e.g. border services, accommodations, protection of rights, integration and reintegration) are not sufficiently accessible and not of sufficient quality for specific groups of migrants, as Armenia has been overwhelmingly a sending country for decades, while migration inflows have risen only fairly recently. Another challenge is insufficient preparedness to respond to migration crises.[235] To address the identified problems,

227 Government of Armenia, 2021g.
228 Government of Armenia, 2021c.
229 Government of Armenia, 2020b.
230 Government of Armenia, 2021g: para. 6.
231 Government of Armenia, 2021b:23.
232 Ibid.
233 *News.am*, 2022.
234 Government of Armenia, 2021g: para. 11.
235 Ibid., chapter 6.

the concept prioritizes several focus areas: facilitating the return and repatriation of members of the Armenian diaspora; assessing the volume and structure of emigration flows and facilitating desired inflows; enhancing the quality of the protection of rights and interests, including those of Armenian migrants abroad; and enhancing regulations directed at migrant workers in Armenia. To leverage the impact of migration on sustainable development, the concept focuses on reducing brain drain and facilitating migration for knowledge and expertise exchange; reducing labour migration; identifying the intellectual and economic potentials of migrants and the diaspora and applying mechanisms to leverage that potential for human development in Armenia; leveraging foreign remittances for development; enhancing the financial literacy of migrants' families; and building relations with Armenian communities abroad, among others. Another important direction is the reduction of remittance service fees below 3 per cent and eliminating high-cost transaction corridors by 2030.[236]

The abovementioned directions have yet to be mainstreamed into relevant legal instruments and operationalized. For this purpose, the action plan of the concept envisages the development of four new strategy documents – namely a Strategy on Integration and Reintegration, a Program on Migration Flows Management, a Program on Crisis Management of Massive Flows of Forced Migrants, and a Program Facilitating Repatriation.[237]

The concept does not address remittances in the context of climate change adaptation and building resilience. However, it widely recognizes the potential of remittances to contribute to development. The concept also addresses the vulnerability aspect of migrants' families left behind in terms of their quality of life and access to vital services (e.g. education and health care), underlining the importance of empowering them, including by enhancing their financial literacy.

Strategy documents on leveraging the contributions of migrants and the diaspora

The **Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 2021–2026** ("Government Programme 2021–2026") highlights the importance of assessing the intellectual and economic potentials of the Armenian diaspora, with a view to engaging them in political, social, cultural, economic, educational and scientific initiatives in Armenia. Government Programme 2021–2026 also looks towards facilitating repatriation by creating favourable conditions for potential returnees, such as by granting special status to the Western Armenian language and integrating

236 Ibid., chapter 7.
237 Ibid., annex 2.

it in educational programmes.[238] It should be noted that the Ministry of Diaspora has existed until 2018 and then replaced by the Office of High Commissioner on Diaspora Affairs.

With respect to migration, the programme underlines the need to enhance the quality of services provided to migrants and for the digitalization thereof; manage migration flows; enhance integration and reintegration services; and facilitate repatriation.[239]

The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia names the so-called "pan-Armenian potential" and the Armenian diaspora among the country's "national values" (i.e. national assets, tangible and intangible). As the diaspora contributes to Armenia's competitive and powerful potential, steps shall be undertaken to leverage the knowledge, skills and abilities of the diaspora towards resolving State-building, security, economic, scientific–educational, demographic, technological, modernization and other strategic issues that pose challenges to Armenia.

The nodal government institution for both Government Programme 2021–2026 and the National Security Strategy is the Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure.

3.3.4. Summary of national migration policies, laws and strategies

A total of eight documents were reviewed to understand how and to what extent the MECC nexus is present in national policy, legal and strategy documents on migration. The MECC nexus is mentioned in one document – the Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan – through its definition of the term, "internally displaced person", whereby both natural (including climate-induced) and anthropogenic hazards are mentioned as potential reasons for displacement. However, the nexus is addressed in a fragmented manner and makes no mention of slow-onset climate events as potential reasons for migration. Furthermore, the definition of the term and, subsequently, the legal status of IDPs are not enshrined in the normative framework to make them operationalizable. The interlinkages between voluntary migration, remittances and climate change adaptation are yet to be recognized. Government decrees (specifically on a Strategy on Integration and Reintegration, a Program on Migration Flows Management, a Program on Crisis Management of Massive Flows of Forced Migrants and a Program Facilitating

[238] Government of Armenia, 2021c: section 1.4 ("Relations with diaspora").
[239] Ibid., section 4.2 ("Migration").

Repatriation) planned for adoption, as per the Concept of State Management of Migration, could be relevant entry points for addressing the MECC nexus.

3.4. NATIONAL POLICY, LEGAL AND STRATEGY FRAMEWORKS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Armenia is steadily advancing in terms of sustainable human development, according to international indicators used to measure and compare results across countries. Such progress benefits both women and men. However, key indicators used for international comparisons of gender equality suggest that gaps continue to exist. Addressing these gaps would make an important contribution towards Armenia's achievement of SDG 5 (on gender equality), as well as the other SDGs.[240] The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia recognizes the equal rights of women and men and bans any form of discrimination, including gender-based discrimination. Facilitating factual equality of women and men is one of the key directions of the Constitution.[241] The Law on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women in Armenia lays the foundation for new gender-based legislation and policy. Armenia has signed international conventions on gender equality that require its commitment to the continuous improvement of its legislative and policy frameworks for gender equality. The country recently adopted the updated Gender Equality Strategy 2019–2023, which articulates its priorities and the way forward to mainstream gender in diverse sectors.

Gender equality goals are mentioned in recent national development policies, but better mainstreaming of gender in strategies for the economic and other sectors is needed. Labour migration from Armenia has largely been male-dominated to date, and there is little information about female migrant workers moving into or out of the country. Further, there is especially little data on traditionally feminized labour markets such as domestic work. Due to the informality of the domestic sector, oversight is commonly low. However, this could change with shifting social norms and structural unemployment patterns in Armenia and neighbouring countries.[242]

240 Asian Development Bank (ADB), 2019.
241 Government of Armenia, 2015a.
242 IOM, 2019c.

3.4.1. 2019–2023 Strategy on Implementing the Gender Policy and its Action Plan

The 2019–2023 Strategy on Implementing the Gender Policy in the Republic of Armenia sets forward priority directions for gender policy and aims to ensure favourable conditions for the realization of the rights and potentials of both women and men in all spheres of public life. The nodal government institution in relation to the strategy and its action plan is the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. The strategy presents key statistical data to highlight important gender challenges in the country. Specifically, male labour force participation is at 70.7 per cent, while female participation is at only 52.8 per cent. Further, 79.6 per cent of employees and 54.4 per cent of self-employed persons are men,[243] and the average wages of women are 32.5 per cent lower than that of men.[244] In order to address these challenges, the strategy prioritizes equal engagement of women and men in governance and decision-making roles; overcoming gender-based socioeconomic inequalities; and expanding economic opportunities for women, accompanied by the protection of the labour rights of vulnerable women especially. The strategy and its action plan do not directly address MECC issues.

3.4.2. Summary of national gender policies, laws and strategies

A review of the 2019–2023 Strategy on Implementing the Gender Policy and its Action Plan shows that while it does not refer to the MECC nexus, it, however, identifies key challenges that the country faces in relation to the population's economic participation (including gender differences in labour force participation), wage levels and citizens' engagement in governance and decision-making – including, perhaps, on issues pertaining to the MECC nexus.

[243] Government of Armenia, 2019b: para. 21.
[244] Ibid.

A sheepfold on its way to pasture. © Unsplash 2017/Lora OHANESSIAN

4

POLICY ANALYSIS: ALIGNMENT WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WARSAW INTERNATIONAL MECHANISM TASK FORCE ON DISPLACEMENT

A pasture in Ararat Valley. © 2022/Lasma PLONE

4. POLICY ANALYSIS: ALIGNMENT WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WARSAW INTERNATIONAL MECHANISM TASK FORCE ON DISPLACEMENT

The recommendations of the Warsaw International Mechanism TFD provide an analytical framework to assess the extent to which existing laws, policies and strategies in Armenia (presented in chapter 3) are aligned.[245] This analysis will help to identify gaps and suggest ways forward for stakeholders to apply the recommendations of the UNFCCC in the Armenian context more fully.

4.1. RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATED APPROACHES IN THE FORMULATION OF NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Consider the formulation of national and subnational legislation, policies, and strategies, as appropriate, that recognize the importance of integrated approaches to avert, minimize, and address displacement related to adverse impacts of climate change and issues around human mobility, taking into consideration human rights obligations and other relevant international standards and legal considerations, and with interministerial and cross-sectoral inputs, with the participation of relevant stakeholders.

(TFD recommendation 33a)[246]

The desired result of TFD recommendation 33a is the integration and mainstreaming of the MECC nexus into policy and institutional frameworks at the national and subnational levels. In Armenia, the consideration in the various policy frameworks of migration challenges and opportunities in the context of climate change and environmental degradation remain fragmented, thus lacking synergies and coherence.

Although various policy documents address the linkages between environmental degradation and climate change, there is no single document pertaining to the environment and/or the environmental sector that directly and precisely recognizes the nexus thereof with migration. It is worth noting that there are, however, certain regulations in various laws that have considerable capacity to

245 United Nations, 2018b.
246 Ibid.

supplement each other, should there be sufficient institutional coordination and relevant policy support. For example, water basin management plans are required to include an assessment of water resource vulnerability to climate change.[247] In parallel, the Law "On Control over Use and Protection of Lands" refers to the implementation of national and regional land management programmes, including agricultural land use.[248] Both processes obviously involve cross-cutting issues and are themselves interlinked, as agricultural production planning is based on water resource vulnerability, even while there is a lack of targeted coordination to ensure the coherence thereof.

In the climate change policy domain, the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025 establishes a list of adaptation planning documents to be developed for six priority sectors, all 10 *marzer* of Armenia and a guide to mainstreaming adaptation planning at the community level.[249] In addition, it envisages amendments to environmental impact assessment legislation and construction norms aimed at ensuring that, for planned activities in various sectors of the economy, climate change adaptation considerations are made at the planning stage and that building standards include adaptation-related requirements.[250] While the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025 does not directly mention the MECC nexus, planned sectoral, regional and community adaptation planning documents may incorporate this nexus, granted that relevant guidance and training is provided to authorities in charge of preparing the drafts. For instance, to prevent border and high-mountainous settlements from depopulating, the Land Code stipulates that families willing to move to these communities are entitled to free, privatized land parcels for the construction of residential buildings.[251] This policy approach could be integrated into the Climate Change Adaptation Concept for the Agricultural Sector and the Guidelines on Community Adaptation to Climate Change, to be developed according to the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025. Capacity-building, with a focus on interlinkages between the issues at stake, will be desired also for the IACC for the implementation of the requirements and provisions of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement and its task force on climate change mitigation and adaptation issues. There is little information available on the activities of the IACC for the implementation of the SDGs, although it would be important to align this process with the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025, coordinated by the IACC for the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.

247 Government of Armenia, 2002a.
248 Government of Armenia, 2008a.
249 Government of Armenia, 2021a.
250 Ibid., chapter 9.
251 Ibid., art. 64.

With respect to addressing migration in DRR policy and legislation, both existing regulations and drafts of proposed laws (subsection 3.1.3) cover the evacuation of the population from disaster zones solely as a humanitarian action in times of emergency, without a focus on adaptation. Also, neither of these documents provides a definition for "environmental disaster zone", which is an important starting point in identifying populations displaced by environmental disasters.

The existing DRR framework addresses the MECC nexus through the lens of the definition of "emergency situation" enshrined in the Law "On Protection of the Population in Emergency Situations", which may be caused by natural hazards, including climate change.[252] DRR, preparedness and response measures are present throughout the mapped documents. Further mainstreaming is observed in the regulations on evacuation[253] and the provision of vital services to evacuated populations,[254] which also have a focus on gender sensitivity in the provision of clothes and hygiene items, among others. It should be noted, however, that the term "emergency situation" does not cover slow-onset events, meaning that displacement under this category falls outside of the DRR framework. The National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and its Action Plan for Implementation (the first iteration, from 2012) widely recognize that climate change and the intensity of related disasters, and the losses caused to various sectors of the economy stress the importance of seeking new solutions in and approaches to climate risk management, as well as the integration thereof into the strategy. Climate is considered as an additional factor in contemplating the resilience of the public to disasters.[255] Thus, the strategy prioritizes the assessment of possible climate risks and the development of measures, including early-warning systems to prevent the consequences thereof. It recognizes that DRR cannot be the monopoly of a single institution; rather, it requires a complex approach through the mobilization of the resources of all concerned entities and the application of political, technical and participatory elements. However, this approach is not further elaborated, and it is not clear to what extent the migrants' resources – especially their intellectual potential, skills and knowledge – could be accommodated.

National DRR policy, legal and strategy documents are currently at the amendment stage – the draft National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management and its Action Plan for Implementation 2022–2030 and the draft Law "On Disaster Risk Management and Protection of Population" are currently in official circulation. Compared to the existing DRR framework, these drafts address the MECC nexus more precisely. The drafts have expanded the scope and the extent to which they address climate

[252] Government of Armenia, 1998b.
[253] See Government of Armenia, 2011a.
[254] See Government of Armenia, 2010c.
[255] See Government of Armenia, 2012a: paras. 6 and 35.

change as a disaster risk factor and the importance of adaptation planning for various sectors and at all levels, based on the vulnerabilities of Armenia. Trends mapped by the DRR sector predict that the territory of Armenia will become more vulnerable to climate change impacts; thus, adaptation considerations will need to be prioritized.[256] The draft national strategy, in particular, underlines the importance of developing early-warning systems that consider the specific needs of vulnerable groups and integrating such systems into community DRR plans throughout the country. It is also recognized that within the past years, the lack of contingency planning, post-disaster recovery plans and disaster risk insurance systems has been significant obstacles to the country's sustainable development. Another challenge identified is the lack of a management plan for migration movements that have emerged as a consequence of disasters induced by natural hazards and armed conflict. Therefore, the action plan of the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction includes relevant measures aimed at the development and enactment of corresponding tools.

The mainstreaming of the MECC nexus in the development domain does not follow a unified approach due to the lack of policy coherence and coordination. As such, while the MECC nexus is considered in a few documents, others reflect remote ideas that remain siloed under various other development-related topics, such as the green economy and sustainable development. For instance, Government Programme 2021–2026 features dedicated chapters on agriculture, sustainable management of natural resources, infrastructure, migration, environmental protection and climate change, with none on the specific issues currently prioritized for action related to environmental protection, migration and climate change. It is important to note that there is potential to build synergies among the aforementioned sectors during the operationalization of the action plan, given that appropriate coordination is put in place and policy dialogue among stakeholders is carried out. In this context, it is important to note that various general and sectoral development strategies, once operationalized, might encompass significant potential to address the MECC nexus. The mainstreaming of the MECC nexus in the development domain is addressed through its consideration in the National Security Strategy and in the Strategy for Key Directions of Economic Development for the Agricultural Sector 2020–2030 and the Action Plan for 2020–2022, being the only sectoral strategy that addresses the MECC nexus. In the National Security Strategy, sustainable development is a concept that cuts across various topics related to the security and well-being of citizens and sustainable socioeconomic development,[257] figuring in sections on the promotion of public health and biosecurity, and on the rehabilitation, protection and improvement of the environment. A decline in the

[256] Government of Armenia, 2021f: para. 16.
[257] Government of Armenia, 2020b: chapter 7.

birth rate, increase in emigration, ageing of the population and uneven economic development all pose substantial challenges and threats to Armenia, specifically in the form of brain drain, a reduced workforce and an increasing burden on the social security system. In light of these trends, the strategy refers to the Government's commitment to safeguarding the free and safe mobility of people, while balancing it with the provision of national security. The State will endeavour to employ effective procedures to prevent the country's infiltration by infectious diseases that pose public health threats. Given the possibility of regional emergencies, the country shall also develop clear measures for the management of potential mass influxes of people due to military action or natural disasters.[258] The text of the strategy document predominantly reflects a security perspective and is silent on the possible positive outcomes of mass influxes of people.

The Strategy for Key Directions of Economic Development for the Agricultural Sector 2020–2030 and the Action Plan for 2020–2022 highlight the importance of climate change and the protection of the environment as they relate to agricultural activities. On these premises, the strategy and its action plan envisage relevant approaches and actions aimed at awareness-raising, reasonable use of natural resources, agricultural insurance, development of "smart" agriculture, prevention of losses through early-warning systems, circulation of drought-resistant plant cultivars with various maturing periods and the application of best practices.[259] The strategy takes note that increasing rates of emigration of Armenians within the last few decades, especially that of youth moving to cities and the Russian Federation and other countries, were triggered by limited employment and income opportunities in the country, with ageing and decreasing populations in rural areas also being a challenge for sustainable agricultural development. It further mentions that natural disasters induced by natural hazards and lack of modern knowledge and tools to reduce and manage disaster risks are adverse factors against the agricultural development as a whole. At any rate, even as the MECC nexus is not addressed in the strategy document in a comprehensive manner and the relevant linkages are weakly established, at least some of its elements are dispersed across various policies, laws and other strategies and may be coordinated when these are operationalized, as well as being mainstreamed into their corresponding action plans (if any) for the current cycle, which starts in 2023. In addition, it is important to highlight that, according to the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025, a Climate Change Adaptation Concept for the Agricultural Sector is to be developed, which will have significant potential to ensure relevant synergies and bridge existing gaps. It is worth noting that the mapped laws on agriculture do not directly address the MECC nexus but are relevant in terms of averting, minimizing and addressing displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change, as they contain

[258] Ibid., sections 2.15 and 7.7.
[259] Government of Armenia, 2019a: chapter 3.

dedicated provisions on the protection of agricultural soil types and the prevention of agricultural land from remaining uncultivated and losing fertility. The Law "On Urban Development" recognizes the MECC nexus in the context of addressing the impacts of urbanization during spatial planning, which is an important point as it contributes to the capacity of communities to adapt to climate change. However, subsequent provisions in the law do not clarify the extent to which urbanization is linked to migration and whether migration-related urbanization would have specific implications.

Migration sector policy and legislation does not provide a definition for the term "environmental migrants"; thus, they are not recognized as a specific group with possibly specific needs and vulnerabilities and are not treated equally as other categories of migrants. Even more, while the Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan refers to "internally displaced person", this term is not used in normative regulations, which means that it is not operationalized.

None of the reviewed documents adopt, as a policy or regulatory approach, a view of migration as a means of adaptation to climate change that may have positive impacts in the long term. At best, Government Programme 2021–2026 and the National Security Strategy recognize that remittances and the capacity of the diaspora shall be mainstreamed to facilitate development projects in Armenia. Transnational diasporic connections are a potential asset for building resilience in migrant-sending communities with high exposure to climatic risks, with migrants' remittances potentially providing resources for long-term resilience-building, recovery from extreme events and reducing income inequality. Safe and orderly labour migration is consequently a potentially beneficial component of wider cross-sectoral approaches to building adaptive capacities and supporting sustainable development in regions highly exposed to climate risks.[260] An input document for the G20 Climate Sustainability Working Group, prepared by the International Labour Organization (ILO),[261] notes that social protection and skills development policies increase adaptive capabilities and can protect individuals and communities facing natural hazards against income and food insecurity. More generally, the labour regulatory framework can support adaptation policies by offering solutions to cope with environmentally induced stress at work, environmentally induced migration and the challenge of providing compensation and protection for workers in affected sectors, as well as by making tools available for the diversification of the economy. In parallel, the integration of environmental with labour-related objectives can go a long way towards ensuring that climate change adaptation and mitigation measures are also employment-friendly.[262]

260 Adler et al., 2022.
261 ILO, 2018.
262 Ibid.

There is a clear lack of coordination capacity both vertically (i.e. from the Central Government down to the regional governments and local self-governance bodies) and horizontally (i.e. across sectors) for properly addressing the MECC nexus in policymaking and development planning, including in the preparation of State and community budgets. Awareness of the MECC nexus and knowledge of how it shall be mainstreamed into development policies in a comprehensive and coordinated manner remain limited.

CALL TO ACTION **1.1.**

Adopt a whole-of-government approach

Ensure improved coordination among actors in the migration, climate change, SDGs and DRR policy areas, including by defining individual roles and responsibilities. The IACC on the implementation of the requirements and provisions of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement), chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, could be mandated to promote the Warsaw International Mechanism TFD recommendations to the wider set of actors, given its high-level representation (deputy ministers and high-level officials) and the capacity of working groups to provide professional and expert support. Aligning the implementation of the Warsaw International Mechanism TFD recommendations to the NAP process and its coordination mechanism may serve as a perfect entry point for the integration of the MECC nexus across the Government's vertical and lateral administrative structures and horizontal networks of donors and civil society and private sector partners. For this reason, it would be important to involve a representative from the Migration Service as an IACC member and other relevant government officials in specific IACC working groups. In addition, capacity-building will be required for the IACC and its standing Working Group on Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Issues. The IACC could also ensure coherence and collaboration between various government agencies and other stakeholders, since it is mandated to establish ad hoc working groups that can provide expert and professional support throughout the respective processes, covering cross-cutting issues in the following areas and sectors: rural development, agriculture and fisheries, urban development, emergency situations, the environment, climate change and forestry, labour and employment, migration and the diaspora, social protection, finance and the economy, remittances, gender, education and vocational training, and the collection and publication of statistics. The coordination mechanism will need to recognize and establish cooperation among local government entities that play a key role in collecting data and information, assessing vulnerabilities and implementing projects.

CALL TO ACTION 1.2.

Ensure capacity development based on a whole-of-society approach for inclusive decision-making and enhanced transparency

Improve technical and managerial capacities at the national, regional and community levels, as well as in civil society and corporations, to ensure that the MECC nexus is addressed in decision-making processes at these various levels and enhance the transparency of processes. Such capacity development can adopt a whole-of-society approach to include the government entities responsible for and CSOs engaged in the following areas and sectors: rural development, agriculture and fisheries, urban development, emergency situations, the environment, climate change and forestry, labour and employment, migration and the diaspora, social protection, finance, the economy, remittances, gender, education and vocational training, and statistics. Along with this, private companies involved in vulnerable sectors of the economy shall also be offered capacity development opportunities, considering their collective potential to facilitate climate change adaptation, as well as their economic impacts that either trigger or avert (or at least minimize) displacement induced by climate events and environmental degradation. Capacity development activities could be conducted by international partners and coordinated by the Government. Aligning the content of capacity development activities with existing decision-making principles, mechanisms and tools (including the requirements of the United Nations Economic Convention for Europe Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental matters) could significantly contribute towards addressing the MECC nexus – specifically through awareness-raising among CSOs, the private sector and citizens. It would also be important to ensure that relevant information on decision-making and its (potential) outcomes is disseminated in a timely and accessible manner.

CALL TO ACTION 1.3.

Ensure policy coherence and synergies to promote the green transition according to the Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 2021–2026

Through existing multi-stakeholder, inter-agency coordination mechanisms (e.g. IACC for the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Council and the Council on Migration Policy Issues), ensure policy coherence and synergies to ensure the green transition according to the green economy concept introduced in Government Programme 2021–2026, simultaneously incorporating the MECC nexus. This approach will help to break down silos representing individual, specific issues prioritized for action related to the environmental

protection, migration and climate change sectors, and linking them together to better address emerging issues while using fewer resources and bringing about greater benefits. The suggested approach, in addition, may facilitate policy dialogue among government stakeholders and CSOs in areas of shared competence and interest, given that both the green economy and the MECC nexus encompass a wide range of issues that are of concern to all areas of public administration.

4.2. MAPPING, UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING MIGRATION RELATED TO THE ADVERSE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Enhance research, data collection, risk analysis, and sharing of information to better map, understand and manage human mobility related to the adverse impacts of climate change, in a manner that includes the participation of communities affected and at risk of displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change.

(TFD recommendation 33b)[263]

In Armenia, no dedicated academic or other studies covering the MECC nexus have been conducted so far. It is worth mentioning that it was possible to find only one study that touches on these interlinkages. The UNDP report, "The socio-economic impact of climate change in Armenia", states that:

> Shortages of water and electricity, shortages of food and lower incomes for the rural population, and detrimental health effects from extreme temperatures during heat waves are all harmful to the labour force and, therefore, have the effect of reducing overall productivity. Impaired health can lead to losses in labour productivity – how well or how quickly each person works – and a loss of household income if wage earners become too ill or weak to work. In addition, worsening social conditions can lead to increased rates of emigration, especially among working age adults, and a smaller and older total Armenian labour force.[264]

The discussion of the MECC nexus in this study is limited to the above statement, which is not elaborated, echoed or reflected in any of the recommendations on climate change adaptation measures. Any substantial element pertaining to migration, the environment, climate change and DRR is covered separately.

[263] United Nations, 2018b.
[264] UNDP, 2009:40.

The lack of relevant studies on the multidimensional MECC nexus, which includes pathways such as disaster displacement, evacuation, pastoralism, labour migration and planned relocation, coupled with the lack of mainstreaming of the relationship in various policy domains, indicates that its lack of understanding and proper recognition is a key factor hampering the development and mainstreaming of the concept into relevant policy processes.

The development of sectoral and regional adaptation plans and a guide for community adaptation planning, as envisaged in the NAP Action Plan, is anticipated to build on the findings of vulnerability assessments of respective sectors, regions and communities. Therefore, the vulnerability assessments are a proper avenue for mainstreaming the MECC nexus into these sectors and various levels of governance. For this purpose, it is important to ensure methodological assistance to policymakers and other stakeholders, especially CSOs involved in relevant processes.

Research drawing on migration policy around the world has shown that greater emphasis on mobility within adaptation policies is effective if undertaken in a sensitive manner.[265] This emerging literature shows that some types of migration can erode adaptive capacity, while others can enhance adaptation.[266]

Reasons for migrating due to climate stresses and shocks vary from having been displaced because of a disaster, or proactive strategizing to diversify income and reduce vulnerability of the household (in affected communities), to relocating as a last resort. Thus, designing proper policy approaches that target various migration scenarios requires relevant data and research. To this end, there are serious gaps in relevant research, data collection, statistics, risk analysis and information-sharing on migration related to the adverse impacts of climate change in Armenia. The statistical data is limited to fragmented information on climate change, the status of elements of the environment and natural hazardous events; migration, evacuation and gender-disaggregated data, including on the labour market and environmental hazards, remain scant, if not totally non-existent. Moreover, data is not compiled and analysed with a view to illuminating the MECC nexus. The document for the five-year development programme of Yerevan (the capital is attractive for migrants due to its universities, extensive infrastructure activities and developed industry and services) mentions that the city showed positive population growth from 2013 to 2015 – during which period the population grew by 9,500 persons.[267] However, it is not certain as to what extent natural growth and internal migration have each contributed to this figure. Armenia's demographic statistics include figures

[265] Bardsley and Hugo, 2010; World Bank, 2010; Warner, 2010; Gemenne, 2011.
[266] Banerjee et al., 2015; Warner et al., 2015; Boyer and McKinnon, 2015; Doberstein and Tadgell, 2015.
[267] Municipality of Yerevan, 2017.

on internal mobility, which reflects the data provided by the Police of the Republic of Armenia based on changes of residence. However, this data is not reliable for analysing internal displacement, as it includes changes in residence of married women, labour migrants and persons moving for various other reasons.

Statistical data on displacement due to slow-onset events and migration for seasonal work is even more limited. In addition, it is unknown whether the methodology, content and representativeness of household surveys allow for reliable conclusions about the MECC nexus. In this respect, the CEPA Roadmap envisages extensive reforms in the statistics sector with regard to general demographics and data on migration, the labour market, the environment and related areas, with a view to ensuring compliance with corresponding European Union directives. The planned reforms have the potential to mainstream the MECC nexus in statistics across sectors, given that relevant support is available.

It should be noted that local self-governance bodies are not involved in any manner in data collection on international migration. Exact figures could instead be provided by border control authorities, while information on the reasons for and factors triggering international migration (i.e. qualitative data to complement the quantitative data) could be obtained from local self-governance authorities, which stand closer to the Armenian population and are well aware of local conditions and household situations. Moreover, local self-governance authorities possess valuable internal migration figures, as well as more reliable and nuanced information on factors influencing internal migration, which may be underestimated or overlooked during quantitative data collection.

With respect to research supported by the Government, the Committee of Science, under the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, makes periodic calls for applications to conduct scientific research, with indications of priority disciplines and research topics. Various aspects of environmental and social impact issues are commonly present in annual research programmes. However, whether their nexus with migration is considered in the research cannot be determined.

CALL TO ACTION **2.1.**

Improve data collection and use of data and increase expertise in these activities

Support data collection, analysis and sharing of existing knowledge to assist the development of evidence-based policies, in consultation with relevant line ministries and stakeholders, to ensure coherence among development, labour, migration, employment, social protection, DRR, environmental and other relevant policies. The CEPA Roadmap-based planned reforms for the statistical sector carry significant

potential to integrate the MECC nexus by enhancing data collection modalities and the representativeness of household surveys. For this purpose, it would be important to: (a) develop a dedicated approach to mainstream the MECC nexus in the planned reforms, which would include introducing terminology on migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation; (b) improve the quality (i.e. updating questionnaires) and representativeness of household surveys in order to obtain data pertinent to the nexus, including statistics on internal displacement induced by the adverse effects of climate change; (c) develop a policy approach to use data on internal migration and factors triggering migration possessed by local self-governance bodies; and (d) build the capacity of relevant officials in order to build understanding of the MECC nexus.

CALL TO ACTION 2.2.

Adopt a transdisciplinary approach and facilitate research

Migration triggered by environmental degradation and climate change impacts is a multifaceted phenomenon that requires a transdisciplinary approach. In studying the interlinkages between migration, environmental degradation, climate change and natural disasters, the methodologies, tools and technologies applied should not be limited to those of the disciplines that focus on these individual phenomena (and study them in isolation), but also include those used in general demography and fields that involve the study of poverty, among others, as well as the data science and statistics sectors at large. It will also be necessary to break down silos between and within government entities, universities and research centres, CSOs, international donors and other relevant actors.[268] As well as prioritizing State-funded academic research targeting the MECC nexus, including pilot projects that explore the potential of migration as a form of adaptation to climate change. Facilitating academic research could be an important measure to inform policymaking for affected sectors and will be relevant to ongoing country-led processes relating to the NDC, the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025, the 2030 Agenda, and the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management and its Action Plan for Implementation, and which echo to global policy frameworks established by the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework, the SDGs and the Global Compact for Migration.

[268] Jeenbaeva and Banerjee, 2022.

CALL TO ACTION 2.3.

Introduce longitudinal and panel data approaches

The cross-sectoral surveys conducted by ArmStat produce only point-in-time data. Considering the dynamic nature of the MECC nexus, there is a need for longitudinal and panel data to properly assess the interlinkages between migration, the environment and climate change in Armenia. Specifically, the longitudinal and panel approaches may help in investigating attribution and causation.[269] Since 2005, data has been available from an annual household survey dedicated to living conditions. Although the survey questionnaire does not target the MECC nexus directly, it could still be useful in terms of extracting and analysing data on migration, remittances and household consumption, among others. By updating the questionnaire and enhancing data processing approaches, the survey may provide more useful inputs to assess climate resilience, climate responses and the adaptation capacities of households. In addition, the census held in autumn of 2022 could have important contributions to national planning and policymaking that is in line with the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework, the SDGs and the Global Compact for Migration.

CALL TO ACTION 2.4.

Ensure gender-disaggregated data collection

The migration, climate change, environment and DRR legal and strategy frameworks provide for the generation of a considerable amount of data, which is anticipated to increase in volume and scope in the coming years, given the planned extensive reforms guided by the CEPA and international frameworks, namely the 2030 Agenda, the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework and the Global Compact for Migration. Mainstreaming gender in data collection and statistical work could greatly contribute to policymaking and identifying issues that require priority responses. Mainstreaming gender in data collection should be done in a way that ensures the compatibility of gender-disaggregated data across various policy frameworks and themes.

[269] Ibid.

CALL TO ACTION 2.5.

Ensure capacity development of national experts

Given that the MECC nexus touches upon various disciplines and is of interest to expert groups focused on different issues, developing their capacity to generate new knowledge and creating common understanding among them are of particular importance. Enhancing experts' capacity to collect and analyse data pertaining to the MECC nexus will provide valuable contributions to policymaking towards mainstreaming the nexus into policy processes indirectly related to climate-driven displacement and resilience-building (e.g. through local self-governance systems, education and health care).

4.3. AVERTING, MINIMIZING AND ADDRESSING DISPLACEMENT RELATED TO THE ADVERSE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Strengthen preparedness, including early-warning systems, contingency planning, evacuation planning, and resilience-building strategies and plans, and develop innovative approaches, such as forecast-based financing, to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change.

(TFD recommendation 33c)[270]

Sustainable development in almost all sectors is sensitive to the adverse impacts of climate change and climate-driven natural hazards, which may cause material losses and trigger displacement. Migration and displacement are multicausal phenomena, and climate may exacerbate political, social, economic and other environmental drivers.[271] Although they do not directly target this problem, a number of legal tools and mechanisms are established in legislation and are complemented by a variety of measures envisaged in policies and strategies that guide relevant developments. In particular, the Law "On the Fundamental Provisions of the Water Policy" sets water use priorities aimed at securing the vital needs of ecosystems and the general population prior to allocating water for other uses. The development and installation of early-warning systems is envisaged by Government Programme 2021–2026, the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025, and the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction. There is considerable Armenian legislation on emergency situations and contingency and evacuation planning in place, and fundamental revisions are under way in accordance with commitments under the CEPA and have the potential to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the

[270] United Nations, 2018b.
[271] Adler et al., 2022.

adverse impacts of climate change. On the whole, the analysis shows that while there are good practices and enabling policies, laws and strategies for climate change adaptation, DRR and development, their "co-benefits" (to use a climate change-related term) in averting, minimizing and addressing disaster displacement are often not recognized by national stakeholders.

The NAP Action Plan 2021–2025 is a key mechanism incorporating a multi-hazard approach, which identifies and supports the implementation of solutions that address more than one hazard simultaneously. With this approach, it is possible to use resources more efficiently to address a diverse array of climate hazards. A multi-hazard approach also considers the interaction of hazards and cross-cutting solutions more holistically. Sectoral and regional adaptation plans to be developed according to the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025 shall also be guided by a multi-hazard approach. The NAP Action Plan 2021–2025 envisages the development and implementation of action plans to improve climate projections and early-warning systems, which will be relevant for averting, minimizing and addressing displacement related to the adverse effects of climate change.

In addition, it should be noted that national DRR legislation and the pending drafts of related documents lack definitions for several important legal terms such as "natural hazard", "ecological disaster" and "ecological disaster zone", which are relevant to the mainstreaming of the MECC nexus. The Law "On Protection of the Population in Emergency Situations" envisages sheltering and evacuation as forms of protecting the population during emergency situations. Subsequent government regulations establish the regime for the evacuation of the population and material assets, as well as providing social support and vital services to evacuated persons. Depending on the severity and scale of an emergency situation, a decision to evacuate shall be made by the Government of Armenia, the head of the regional administration and the head of the community or the company director (in the case of private companies working in vulnerable sectors). In order to plan, prepare for and conduct an evacuation, public authorities, local self-governance bodies and organizations shall establish evacuation bodies well in advance. An evacuation body shall cooperate with relevant authorities and civil protection services,[272] and the population shall be evacuated according to the evacuation plans. According to the Order on the Evacuation of the Population and of Material and Cultural Assets from Dangerous Areas, priority evacuation is required for vulnerable groups – pregnant women, persons requiring medical care, women who have children up to 14 years old, children, the elderly and medical personnel.[273] Evacuation may be conducted in two stages: First, the population shall be evacuated from

[272] Government of Armenia, 2011a: para. 30.
[273] Ibid., para. 19.

the disaster zone to a safe area – that is, a camp for temporary shelter. In a protracted emergency situation or when return is impossible, a second stage would entail transporting the population to a long-term settlement area. The Government Decree "On Approval of the Order on Ensuring Vital Services for Evacuated Populations in Settlement Areas" provides for planning a process for providing vital services to evacuated populations, as well as defining the scope and volume of support to be provided to evacuees. This regulation also addresses gender sensitivity in the provision of food, clothes and hygiene supplies. Follow-up amendments to DRR and migration legislation should address the various forms of migration, such as internal displacement, pastoralism, transhumance and internal migration linked to both sudden- and slow-onset events. To this end, it will be important to enhance contingency planning on various levels.

Due to the lack of migration legislation that establishes a specific regime for migrants from ecological disaster zones or who have left their homes due to slow-onset events, legal provisions for these groups are absent in the DRR domain as well. Addressing terminology gaps through legal reforms will enable the establishment of a dedicated legal regime for migrants displaced due to the adverse impacts of climate change and natural hazards; envisaging of relevant assistance mechanisms; and ensuring that migration contributes to adaptation to a greater extent. The gaps shall be bridged in parallel to enhancing institutional coordination and the collection and use of data, as well as capacity-building for the different actors involved, with a specific focus on cross-cutting issues such as gender and socially marginalized groups.

Armenian legislation envisages mechanisms for participatory decision-making on conceptual documents (e.g. policies, strategies, plans and programmes), which include contingency planning and community DRR documents. (Similarly, the involvement of civil society, communities and migrants in disaster management at the local level is also one of the recommendations of the Sendai Framework.) The Law "On Protection of the Population in Emergency Situations", for example, states that preparedness for emergency situations shall be maintained and enhanced through awareness-raising of the population. For this purpose, it is stipulated that periodic exercises are to be organized in communities – with the involvement of citizens and various organizations (including, e.g. schools and hospitals). These mechanisms, in theory, are efficient, as they involve various means of public communication, platforms and events for public discussion, and opportunities for the public to give feedback to decision-making authorities. However, actual public involvement in decision-making, except for the participation of well-established NGOs in decision-making on national policies, remains rather low. The periodic community exercises are not conducted at an appropriate level of quality and are merely pro forma.

CALL TO ACTION **3.1.**

Establish key definitions in national DRR legislation

The planned reforms to DRR legislation shall include establishing legal definitions of the terms "natural hazard", "ecological disaster" and "ecological disaster zone". Having these terms defined by law is of key importance in designing relevant contingency planning for emergencies and emergency preparedness and response mechanisms, as well as mechanisms for providing targeted assistance to persons displaced due to climate-driven natural hazards. Envisaging a special legal regime for DRR will enable relevant legislative developments specifically in the climate change adaptation policy domain as well. In particular, the preparation of sectoral, regional and community adaptation plans, envisaged in the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025,[274] will be guided and supplemented by these concepts in terms of the conduct of vulnerability assessments and the planning of other relevant actions and measures. With respect to interlinkages with migration legislation, the terms mentioned above could be useful in guiding the design of a dedicated assistance regime for persons displaced due to the adverse impacts of climate change while considering gender issues and any specific needs that vulnerable and socially marginalized groups might have.

CALL TO ACTION **3.2.**

Strengthen preparedness at the national, regional and local levels

Emergency situations in general, as well as, more specifically, natural hazards triggered by the adverse impacts of climate change, requires preparedness at different levels and with the appropriate focus. Given the novelty of issues emerging from the MECC nexus and the knowledge gap with respect to it, it is particularly important to reassess and build an understanding of the capacities and the levels of preparedness of the various actors involved in emergency planning, and of the necessary preparedness and response processes in the emerging new context. This would require further coordination of efforts by government entities, academics, CSOs and communities, as well as by groups considered vulnerable within these communities (e.g. children, the elderly, women-headed households, socially marginalized groups and persons with disabilities). Early-warning systems shall be operationalized and made accessible to a wider range of users to ensure that information can serve decision-making at various levels, including the operational, in, for example, the farming and other industries. Given the vulnerability of the agricultural sector to the adverse impacts of climate change, dedicated efforts

[274] See Government of Armenia, 2021a.

are needed to expand the coverage of agricultural insurance services by including more types of agricultural crops and yields at reasonable and affordable premiums and advocating for insurance services as a climate change adaptation measure. In addition to insurance services, other economic tools, including innovative solutions, shall also be considered. The planned climate change adaptation policy could acknowledge traditional knowledge and reinforce autonomous practices among mountain pastoralists, herders, herbalists, beekeepers, water distributors, foresters and rangers, among others.[275] Follow-up amendments to DRR and migration legislation should address the various forms of migration, such as internal displacement, pastoralism, transhumance and internal migration linked to both sudden-onset and slow-onset events. To this end, it will be important to enhance contingency planning on various levels.

4.4. INTEGRATING MIGRATION CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES INTO NATIONAL PLANNING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Integrate human mobility challenges and opportunities into national planning processes, including, inter alia, the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans, as appropriate, by drawing upon available tools, guidance, and good practices, and consider communicating efforts undertaken through, inter alia, National Communications, Adaptation Communications and Nationally Determined Contributions, as appropriate.

(TFD recommendation 33d)[276]

TFD recommendation 33d calls on States Parties to the UNFCCC to integrate migration challenges and opportunities into national planning processes and reporting on global policy frameworks such as the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework, the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and the Global Compact for Migration. The planning and communication mechanisms associated with these processes help to monitor and evaluate the progress towards alignment of national policies with global policy frameworks.

Armenia's national communications to the UNFCCC[277] thus far have not mentioned the MECC nexus. Although they were prepared through a participatory process, with the involvement of relevant government actors and CSOs, several important aspects, such as disaster displacement risk, the significance of remittances to the

275 Jeenbaeva and Banerjee, 2022.
276 United Nations, 2018b.
277 See Government of Armenia, 1998b, 2010a, 2015b and 2020a.

national economy, the well-being of families staying behind and the relevance of regular migration pathways have not been addressed so far. The NAP process is intended as an iterative, country-owned planning process that will allow Armenia to identify, address and review its evolving adaptation needs, issues, gaps, priorities and related resource requirements within the context of national adaptation plans.[278] It is also envisioned as an organic continuation of the formulation and implementation of countries' NDCs. The objectives of the NAP process are to reduce vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacity and resilience, and to facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation into fiscal, regulatory and development policies, programmes and activities,[279] as well as accelerating strategic investments in climate change-resilient development. Therefore, the NAP framework and its corresponding planned policy process will have the potential to bring considerations about human mobility into sectoral, regional and community-level adaptation plans. In this context, another important point is that the potential of migrants, their knowledge and skills should be recognized and considered during the development of sectoral and regional adaptation plans. There will be an opportunity to integrate the MECC nexus during the development of the planned documents. Relevant methodological assistance and coordinated guidance through the process could be beneficial to concerned government entities. Building a national transparency framework under the Paris Agreement and the preparation of a national monitoring, reporting and verification framework, currently under way in Armenia, will also involve the climate change adaptation domain. In this capacity, the framework could also involve information on adaptation projects, including those with a migration dimension.

Both the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Action Plan for Implementing the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (the first iteration, from 2012) and the draft National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management and its Action Plan for Implementation 2022–2030 reflect on the MECC nexus. The latter encompasses more in-depth recognition of the nexus, with clear and precise references to climate change adaptation, resilience-building, emergency preparedness and response, including early-warning systems and insurance, to name a few. The draft National Strategy also recognizes the lack of a management plan for massive migration flows triggered by armed conflict and disasters induced by natural hazards in Armenia. In terms of reporting under the Sendai Framework, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, as of 2019, was collecting data on disasters in Armenia, which was subsequently communicated to ArmStat. These data, updated twice a year, are disaggregated by region and type of natural hazard, and include statistics on the number of evacuated, injured and rescued persons, in addition to fatalities, disaggregated by gender.

[278] See Government of Armenia, 2021a.
[279] United Nations Climate Change Secretariat, 2012.

The First National Voluntary Review of the Implementation of SDGs by Armenia was submitted to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2018. ArmStat has adopted the international platform, Open SDG,[280] for reporting on the country's implementation of measures and progress towards the SDGs.[281] The MECC nexus is not addressed in the reporting on SDGs.

Under its Objective 2 on minimizing adverse drivers of migration, the Global Compact for Migration recognizes the challenges posed by "natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change, and environmental degradation"[282] in terms of international migration. Objective 5 suggests enhancing the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration. The first report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration reiterates that States underscore disasters, climate change and environmental degradation as pervasive adverse drivers of migration.[283] States have the power to reduce adversity and build resilience through inclusive, rights-based mitigation, risk reduction and adaptation, and multi-hazard, evidence-based approaches that recognize that crises, such as pandemics and storms, may overlap and have compounding effects. Building on lessons, guidance and commitments, efforts must be strengthened to address the implications of climate change for migration and to foster people's resilience to either remain in place with dignity or move as a form of adaptation. The aforementioned Global Compact objectives constitute a call to States Parties to mobilize efforts aimed at addressing the interlinkages of migration, the environment and climate change and build resilience. These messages could also guide in the reporting to the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF). In 2020, Armenia submitted a voluntary review of its implementation of the Global Compact for Migration.[284] The review made no references to the MECC nexus, which shall be prioritized in the next reporting cycle.

Migration patterns are shaped by the interaction between demographic, economic, environmental, political, and social drivers.[285] It is obvious that addressing the MECC nexus faces certain obstacles due to gaps in knowledge and institutional coordination. It is in this context that the establishment of the IACC (i.e. for the implementation of the provisions and requirements of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement) is an important step, as it is in its capacity as an institutional unit to bring together high-level officials of all government agencies and independent entities mandated to deal with sector-specific issues involving climate change

280 Data and metadata for 325 global and national SDG indicators were available on the platform at the time of this report's writing.
281 The ArmStat website for monitoring Armenia's progress towards the SDGs is available at http://sdg.armstat.am/am.
282 United Nations, 2018a.
283 United Nations, 2021.
284 See Government of Armenia, 2020e.
285 IPCC, 2014.

considerations. The IACC is a key mechanism for ensuring that the MECC nexus is reflected in strategy documents in the various relevant domains. For this purpose, capacity-building for the IACC, as well as the three inter-agency working groups (including one on climate change mitigation and adaptation), would be beneficial.

Climate change adaptation measures are already improving conditions for migrants and their origin and destination communities – for example, by increasing food, water and livelihood security. Better understanding of how migration is used as an adaptation strategy, as well as the impact of migration strategies on other types of adaptation measures, can increase the benefits of adaptation policies, programmes and projects for migrants and their home and destination communities, not to mention the co-benefits of climate change adaptation measures.[286] According to the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025, six sectoral adaptation plans shall be developed by the relevant nodal government authorities, while a dedicated mechanism for monitoring and collecting data for iteratively assessing vulnerabilities in the context of climate change is not yet in place.[287] Thus, in the course of the respective processes under way, limited available data collected from both official and non-official sources has left uncertainties that make vulnerability assessment problematic. Consequently, identification, prioritization and the design of measures to address adaptation needs should be carried out with some reservation.

Currently, sectoral, regional and community adaptation planning in Armenia entirely depends on external funding, and the corresponding planning documents (i.e. the sectoral, regional and community adaptation plans) are developed by local and international experts who are not part of any of the nodal government agencies. Thus, it is important that, following the adoption of the relevant adaptation planning documents, extensive capacity-building activities be conducted for government officials, as well as regional and community authorities, to ensure proper implementation of the plans, monitoring of results and updating of the planning documents. Capacity-building activities shall also address challenges with respect to the integration into the relevant adaptation planning documents of migration-related considerations under various policy domains.

CALL TO ACTION **4.1.**

Mainstream the MECC nexus into national policy processes

It is important to systematically take into account the challenges and opportunities related to the MECC nexus into workplans, reports, communications and submissions to regional and global reviews established under various treaties and

[286] Gottwald, 2021.
[287] Government of Armenia, 2021a.

other international instruments. Government Programme 2021–2026 features dedicated chapters on agriculture, sustainable management of natural resources, infrastructure, migration, environmental protection and climate change. It will be important to build synergies between these siloed sectors as relevant measures are operationalized. Another key process should be the mainstreaming of the nexus into four strategy documents (namely the Strategy on Integration and Reintegration; the Program on Migration Flows Management; the Program on Crisis Management of Massive Flows of Forced Migrants; and the Program Facilitating Repatriation) that are planned to be developed according to the Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan. In parallel, the NAP Action Plan 2021–2025 envisages the development of guidelines for community adaptation planning that are expected to facilitate vulnerability assessment by individual communities to underlie the design and prioritization of adaptation measures and the integration thereof into relevant community development documents (e.g. the community development plan, community DRR plan and urban development planning documents). This is a proper opportunity to include the MECC nexus into the guidelines for community adaptation planning. Thus, the NAP process and its coordination mechanism, the IACC, offer a good entry point for bringing considerations on human mobility into sectoral, regional and community-level adaptation plans. In addition, the reporting on actions under global frameworks (e.g. the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework and the Global Compact for Migration) could be useful for identifying funding opportunities and enhancing regional and international cooperation.

CALL TO ACTION **4.2.**

Foster policy coherence between different policy domains

Ensure that all national policies, laws, plans, strategies and guidelines related to migration in the context of climate change and environmental degradation are coherent across themes and levels of government. Following policymaking and the adoption of relevant legal regulations, it would be crucial to ensure that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for implementation progress towards adopted policy agendas. One way to achieve this could be by elaborating a methodological guide for government agencies to help mainstream the MECC nexus across policy domains and levels of government and assessing the implementation of activities pertaining to the MECC nexus.

4.5. PROTECTION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS, INCLUDING THOSE DISPLACED AS A RESULT OF THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Consider assisting internally displaced persons, including those displaced as a result of the adverse effects of climate change, and strengthen efforts to find durable solutions, taking into account the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, as appropriate.

(TFD recommendation 33e)[288]

The recommendation is aimed at ensuring the protection of displaced people, including those displaced due to the adverse effects of environmental and climate change within the borders of Armenia, and strengthening efforts to find durable solutions. The most serious challenge in addressing this issue in Armenia is that national legislation on migration does not define either "internal migrant" or "internally displaced person"; accordingly, there is no dedicated status and relevant legal regime for IDPs, including those displaced due to the adverse effects of climate change. Although the term "internally displaced person" is present in the Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan, it does not yet have normative significance, as it has not transposed to normative documents. In addition, it is important to note that terminology on migration in the context of climate change is not present in the national policy and legal framework either, ultimately causing further complications in the provision of assistance and support to persons displaced as a result of the adverse effects of climate change. The Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan provide that national security, public solidarity, the rights and dignity of all groups of migrants, cultural diversity and enrichment of local cultures, as well as international mobility, are values in migration management. This would be an important development with the potential to cover cases of internal displacement due to the adverse effects of climate change, including slow-onset events.

As "internally displaced person" is not an officially or legally recognized status or category of persons, there is no precise data on either the number of displaced persons or causes of displacement, although it is widely recognized that human mobility is triggered by environmental and climate change stressors. Movements of people, in turn, impact the environment.

The Law "On Protection of the Population in Emergency Situations" establishes evacuation, sheltering and individual protection as forms of protecting the population. Evacuation, however, cannot always be equated with displacement. Furthermore, assistance and vital services should be provided in case of both

[288] United Nations, 2018b.

evacuation and sheltering during an emergency situation, especially as this period is generally quite short. The status of IDPs would allow the establishment of a dedicated assistance mechanism that considers their specific needs (e.g. shelter, food, health care, education, livelihood, financial compensation, tax deductions, favourable loans and special permits for enterprise development and other business activities), while also making gender considerations. Although some aspects (e.g. quotes for various types of food, clothing and hygienic supplies for each person,[289] aimed at ensuring basic living standards) are covered in the Order on Ensuring of Vital Services to Evacuated Populations in Settlement Areas,[290] IDPs are not legally eligible to enjoy social guarantees or support for which "having been evacuated" is the main condition. Therefore, a specific, dedicated legal regime to establish "internally displaced person" as an officially recognized status or category of persons will be required to channel social guarantees and support to this group as well.

CALL TO ACTION 5.1.

Establish a legal definition for "internally displaced person" and develop a dedicated legal regime

Establish in migration legislation a legal definition for the term "internally displaced person" that enumerates the key elements for this category of migrants, which would include climate-related factors as causes for internal displacement. In parallel, it is necessary to establish a dedicated legal regime for IDPs to ensure that these persons' needs and potential are properly assessed, and that relevant social protection and assistance are provided to them in a manner that follows the logic and approaches adopted by the social support mechanism established for evacuated persons.[291]

CALL TO ACTION 5.2.

Assist people displaced across borders in the context of disasters, as appropriate

The Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda has a cross-sectoral "toolbox" of concrete policy options developed to specifically address the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters. This toolbox draws upon an integrated approach that addresses migration, protection, humanitarian development, DRR and climate action, among others. A guidance note could be developed to clarify the

[289] See Government of Armenia, 2010b: form 1.
[290] See Government of Armenia, 2010c: form 1.
[291] Ibid.

relevance and application of protection under international, regional and national instruments, customize the toolbox as per the context in Armenia, strengthen the tools therein and establish a monitoring mechanism to assess their effectiveness.

4.6. FACILITATING ORDERLY, SAFE, REGULAR AND RESPONSIBLE MIGRATION

Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, as appropriate and in accordance with national laws and policies, by considering the needs of migrants and displaced persons, communities of origin, transit and destination, and by enhancing opportunities for regular migration pathways, including through labour mobility, consistent with international labour standards, in the context of climate change.

(TFD recommendation 33f)[292]

The Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan, while recognizing the benefits of migration in the context of development, such as remittances, knowledge and skills, to a greater extent perceives all forms of migration, regardless of cause, as a negative factor impacting the country's demographic situation, which the National Security Strategy also frames as a security concern. The Concept of State Management of Migration also acknowledges that Armenia's migration and related legislation does not factor in emigration and return migration considerations. In order to address this gap, relevant strategy documents – namely the Strategy on Integration and Reintegration, the Program on Migration Flows Management, the Program on Crisis Management of Massive Flows of Forced Migrants, and the Program Facilitating Repatriation – are planned to be adopted.[293]

There is no relevant legal framework addressing internal and international migration and planned relocation for the management of regular migration pathways, except for some regulations on international migration. The Concept of State Management of Migration emphasizes that internal migration should be included in the national migration management policy agenda, and efficient mechanisms should be established to track internal migration and assess related demographic challenges. The concept specifically refers to return migration as an emerging issue that requires dedicated legal regulations that cover labour relations and support for return migrants, addressing specific needs that they might have. It should be noted that apart from migration legislation, there are no legal provisions pertaining to planned relocation, as the DRR framework does not cover this aspect either, leaving such cases to government decisions adopted on an ad hoc basis.

[292] United Nations, 2018b.
[293] Government of Armenia, 2021g: annex 2.

Given its seasonal nature, pastoralism in Armenia could be considered a form of internal migration with specific patterns. In addition, despite regulations on pasture management, the fact that pastoralism, as a form of (economic) activity, is not covered by national legislation makes pastoralists even more vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and does not enable or encourage the design of dedicated support mechanisms and tools. Pastoralists have been encountering several significant non-climatic challenges, and climate change impacts are only amplifying the underlying drivers of their vulnerability. Pastoral land is characterized by plant productivity peaks that are variable through space and time. In these environments, yields are unpredictable, and adaptive strategies are necessary to enable them to utilize available resources efficiently. Pastoralists are able to thrive in these environments, overcoming uncertainty through mobility and communal use of resources.[294]

The CEPA, while not referring to the MECC nexus, has a focus on the facilitation of circular migration,[295] which is defined as a repetition of regular migration by the same person between two or more countries.[296] Circular migration is recognized as benefiting the development of both sending and receiving communities; however, its relevance and linkages to climate change adaptation are not discussed. These could be addressed during the operationalization of corresponding measures by the Government of Armenia.

The Sendai Framework recognizes that migrants contribute to the resilience of communities and societies, and that their knowledge, skills and capacities can be useful in the design and implementation of DRR.[297] Further, Objective 5 of the Global Compact for Migration establishes the commitment to "adapt options and pathways for regular migration in a manner that facilitates labour mobility and decent work reflecting demographic and labour market realities, optimizes education opportunities, upholds the right to family life, and responds to the needs of migrants in a situation of vulnerability, with a view to expanding and diversifying availability of pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration."[298] To realize this commitment, it is envisaged that the Government shall "[d]evelop or build on existing national and regional practices for admission and stay of appropriate duration based on compassionate, humanitarian or other considerations for migrants compelled to leave their countries of origin due to sudden-onset natural disasters and other precarious situations, such as by providing humanitarian visas, private sponsorships, access to education for children, and temporary work permits while adaptation in or return to their country of origin is not possible".[299]

294 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), n.d.
295 See Government of Armenia, 2017.
296 European Migration Network, 2018.
297 United Nations, 2015b: para. 36(a)(vi).
298 United Nations, 2018a: para. 21.
299 Ibid., para 21(g).

The Sendai Framework highlights that there should be a broader and a more people-centred, preventive approach to disaster risk. In order to be efficient and effective, DRR practices need to be multi-hazard in its coverage, multisectoral, inclusive and accessible. Given their leadership, regulatory and coordination roles, governments should engage with relevant stakeholders, including women, children and youth, persons with disabilities, the poor, migrants, indigenous peoples, volunteers, the community of practitioners and older persons in the design and implementation of policies, plans and standards. There is a need for the public and private sectors and CSOs, as well as academia and scientific and research institutions, to create opportunities for collaboration and work more closely together, and for businesses to integrate disaster risk into their management practices. This approach is of crucial importance and should be mainstreamed into the operationalization of relevant actions under the national adaptation and DRR strategies.[300]

Both the Concept of State Management of Migration and its Action Plan consider that remittances contribute to the well-being of migrants' families and communities and emphasizes that these remittances should be used for development projects. The National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction attaches special importance to the identifying the potential of the Armenian diaspora and its knowledge network, in order to facilitate investments and development in Armenia; in this respect, numerous successful economic and social initiatives have been realized. While the potential of the diaspora is well-recognized in the development domain, the climate change policy framework does not yet reflect the same.

There is no focus in the Concept of State Management of Migration on how remittances or knowledge and skills gained abroad can contribute to addressing the challenges and causes of migration due to the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation, including adaptation at the household and community levels. The overall approach is concentrated on ensuring national security, not only in terms of the deterioration of the demographic situation and brain drain, but also in the context of mass influxes of migrants into Armenia due to natural hazards. In parallel, priority is given to envisioning the necessary support to migrants and establishing social and other guarantees. The limited scope and depth of the strategy-level recognition of the interlinkages between the migration–development and migration–climate change adaptation nexuses significantly hamper the building of synergies in legislative development and institutional coordination. In this context, it is worth noting that well-managed migration, coupled with targeted awareness-raising campaigns, can offer a safe pathway that protects migrants and their families and enables them to contribute

[300] See Government of Armenia, 2021a and 2021f.

to and benefit from climate change adaptation, at both household and community levels. As fairly noted in the article, "Do financial remittances build household-level adaptive capacity? A case study of flood-affected households in India", the adaptive potential of remittances can be realized if policy attention is directed towards enabling gains in financial capital to be translated to gains in other types of capital, and how the social element of remittances can be used to boost social capital.[301] The article, "How do social practices shape policy? Analysing the field of "migration as adaptation" with Bourdieu's 'Theory of Practice" suggests that, in general, the migration-as-adaptation strategy is framed through the lens of income generation, diversification and the spreading of risk for households, often in rural, agrarian settings[302] – for example, by facilitating an increase in financial literacy and skills training, particularly among poorer households in areas likely to be affected by the impacts of climate change and variability. Migration of workers, either within or between countries, can offer a way to adaptively manage the labour market needs of economies in transition – alongside appropriate skills development for those in situ, including workers in displaced, high-emissions industries. To allow this, labour market policy must actively address three key challenges: anticipating skills needs, (re)skilling workers and facilitating migration.[303] A common understanding should be shaped among policymakers that mainstreaming climate change adaptation considerations into migration management and labour market regulations could help not only migrants and those left behind, but also receiving communities, to address adaptation challenges and benefit from opportunities arising from migration (e.g. cultural communication, skills, knowledge and social networks). An important platform for this purpose could be the Council on Migration Policy Issues, which is envisaged to be established through a Prime Minister's decision and chaired by the Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure. The council will be composed of representatives of all governmental stakeholder institutions, international organizations, CSOs and migrants.[304]

CALL TO ACTION **6.1.**

Integrate migration as part of adaptation strategies in the context of climate change

Coherently integrate migration as part of adaptation strategies in the context of climate change in national legal and strategy frameworks and across the sectors of environmental protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation, DRR, human mobility, national development and gender. Fostering regular migration pathways

301 Banerjee et al., 2017.
302 Ober and Sakdapolrak, 2017.
303 Gençsü et al., 2020.
304 Government of Armenia, 2021e: para. 25.

in Armenia can be an important and effective strategy for adapting to the impacts of climate change, while at the same time strengthening the positive impact that migration can have on labour markets, GDP growth and technology transfers. In this respect, it will be important to have relevant mechanisms and tools in place to facilitate the involvement of migrants in climate-sensitive activities in an environmentally sustainable manner. Research is needed to better demonstrate the interlinkages, and subsequent cross-sectoral policy dialogue will need to be facilitated that can be jointly led by the IACC. Regular migration channels and schemes can be put in place in cooperation with the main receiving countries, especially the Russian Federation, to create a favourable labour migration regime that also mainstreams gender, with a view to promoting livelihood diversification, enhancing resilience at the community and household levels fostering adaptation-related actions. These arrangements should take into account the needs and specific conditions of those who are left behind in order to prevent them becoming more vulnerable in the face of climate change, economic, social and other threats.

CALL TO ACTION **6.2.**

Establish a legal framework for internal migration

Adopt relevant legal regulations to establish a dedicated legal regime for internal migration as a key element of regular migration. This would imply providing for a legal definition of "internal migrant", followed by setting up relevant State services (e.g. schools, including kindergartens, health care, and other social services) that are accessible to migrants and their families, as well as conditions of access. Addressing internal migration in the policy and legal framework could enable the mainstreaming of the MECC nexus into the functions of various government and community actors. For instance, in cases of internal migration triggered by slow-onset events, such as droughts and irrigation water shortages, no comprehensive data is collected, even as community leaders annually update information on the classification of parcels of land – which may include, among other categories, arable and non-arable, and cultivated and non-cultivated land – within the community borders and the area they cover. Internal migration within Armenia has been challenging in terms of data collection by ArmStat. However, linking available services and guarantees to the registration requirement would contribute to the generation of more accurate, gender-disaggregated data on internal migration.

CALL TO ACTION 6.3.

Establish a legal regime for planned relocation

In the context of ongoing amendments in the DRR strategic and legal framework, establish a dedicated legal regime for planned relocation as a key element of regular migration. This would imply providing for the legal definition of "planned relocation". This is important in terms of envisaging a relevant support regime and social guarantees for relocated persons, including basic living standards, integration into the labour market, relevant fiscal and non-fiscal privileges, and tax deductions or waivers. Planned relocation should also be addressed by urban planning and development regulations to ensure that the resilience and adaptive capacity of receiving communities to climate change is not hindered.

CALL TO ACTION 6.4.

Establish a legal definition of and relevant regulations on pastoralism

Considering pastoralism as a form of agricultural practice, pastoralists, as contributors to agricultural production, are a vulnerable group due to their unique livelihoods facing challenges linked to the environment and climate change. Legal regulation of pastoralism and its various elements, such as the governance of pastoral land, granting of access to resources, sustainable rangeland management, regulation of mobility and data collection pertaining to pastoralism would require relevant amendments in various sectoral laws and regulations. It would also be important to integrate key definitions and principles related to pastoralism in the Law "On Agriculture", which is planned to be developed according to the Strategy for Key Directions of Economic Development for the Agricultural Sector 2020–2030 and the Action Plan for 2020–2022.[305] In drafting relevant legal regulations, there will be room to integrate climate change adaptation considerations for pastoralism as an agricultural sector.

CALL TO ACTION 6.5.

Enable the channelling of remittances towards climate action

Create enabling conditions for migrants and their families, including families staying behind or remittance recipients, to channel remittances towards clean energy, sustainable agriculture, sustainable building and renovation, sustainable mobility, and the circular economy. For this purpose, targeted capacity-building and awareness-raising activities, based on a "whole-of-society" approach, would

[305] See Government of Armenia, 2019a.

be required in consideration of various groups of society, including youth, women, disabled persons, farmers and the elderly, among others. It would also be important to involve in this process local self-governance bodies to facilitate the alignment of community development programmes with the adaptation needs and opportunities in the community, as well as to support joint efforts of local authorities and population in building resilience. In addition, it is important that banks and other financial institutions offer relevant loans and other financial instruments (e.g. insurance) to facilitate climate action.

CALL TO ACTION **6.6.**

Develop the capacities of migrants to participate in and benefit from the circular economy

Support small and medium enterprise development that focuses on clean energy, sustainable building and renovation, sustainable mobility, the circular economy and sustainable agriculture among migrants and return migrants, as well as their families. One possible way to support the circular economy is by establishing and scaling-up fiscal and non-fiscal privileges for entrepreneurs, including women-led enterprises. In addition, access to technology and markets, in addition to capacity-building, will be vital to newly established businesses.

CALL TO ACTION **6.7.**

Support just transition for workers in vulnerable sectors and regions

Support workers, including migrant workers, in vulnerable sectors and regions by providing reskilling opportunities, adequate labour guarantees and social protection measures following the so-called principle of "just transition". The economic restructuring during the planned transition to a green economy in Armenia will result in changes in employment. In particular, resource-extensive economic sectors (e.g. building and/or construction) will need fewer employees, while demand in innovative sectors and agriculture might rise disproportionately with the number of skilled workers. In these circumstances, it would be necessary to ensure that migrants and their families and trapped populations are not left behind.

Fruits dried in the sun. © Pixabay 2016

5 CONCLUSION

Armenia – a fruit paradise. © 2008/Rita WILLAERT

5. CONCLUSION

The study developed 21 recommendations related to the MECC nexus for national actors in Armenia. The recommendations are based on the mapping and analysis of policy, legal and strategy documents covering different sectors in Armenia. In chapter 3, documents were mapped to determine if they recognize the interlinkages between migration, the environment and climate change, with 12 of 51 documents found to refer to this nexus. The MECC nexus is observed predominantly in policy, legal and strategy documents for the DRR sector and, to a limited extent, in documents for the development and migration domains. Chapter 4 showed that migration is predominantly addressed as a challenge to national security, with limited recognition of its potential positive impacts. The overall approach is concentrated on ensuring national security, not only in terms of the deterioration of the demographic situation and brain drain, but also in the context of mass influxes of migrants into Armenia due to natural hazards. In parallel, priority is given to envisioning necessary support to migrants and establishing social and other guarantees. The MECC nexus is reflected upon in the sustainable development domain, although incoherently and in a fragmented manner across a few documents. However, there are certain institutional mechanisms, processes under way and planned developments that could be relevant to averting, minimizing and addressing displacement resulting from the adverse effects of climate change and leveraging migration-related opportunities to support climate change adaptation. It is worth noting that even further comprehensive measures are required to address the MECC nexus. Thus, the study identifies the lack of an adaptation perspective as one of the major gaps in the policy, legal and strategy framework.

Several recommendations were made on facilitating the mainstreaming of the MECC nexus into national laws, policies and strategies. The study also formulated a set of recommendations on how to address the gaps that it identified (chapter 4). Stakeholders, including the Government, can take measures to mainstream the nexus into the various laws, strategies and policy frameworks identified in the report.[306]

The study revealed knowledge gaps resulting from the lack of data regarding the interlinkages of migration, the environment and climate change in Armenia. For instance, there is a lack of data on disaster displacement, especially displacement induced by slow-onset events. Furthermore, gender-related and/

[306] Policy, legal and strategy documents on the management of land and water resources; mitigation of and adaptation to climate change; disaster risk reduction; urban development; agriculture; labour and employment; migration; and long-term national development strategy.

or gender-disaggregated data is not always present in statistical reports covering subject areas relevant to the context of migration, the environment, DRR and climate change. The study finds that the MECC nexus is largely missing in the reporting to global policy frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework and the Global Compact for Migration.

The study identified two main challenges: First, there is a lack of common understanding, policy coherence and synergies as regards the MECC nexus across the various policy domains. Second, there are limited capacities and coordination among various actors in Armenia to address this nexus. Although sectoral development strategies involve multi-stakeholder coordination approaches, relevant inter-agency coordination units need substantial capacity support to ensure necessary cooperation and coordination across and among various government and other stakeholders. The study looked at a whole range of actors that includes ministries, State agencies, local authorities, CSOs, community-based organizations, migrants, and sending and destination communities.

Given the cross-sectoral nature of the MECC nexus, coordination among government entities and other stakeholders needs to be further strengthened. For this purpose, improvements in technical and managerial capacities at different government levels would be beneficial. Also, strengthening the capacities of the IACC and the Council of Migration Policy Issues could help to promote a transdisciplinary approach in mapping, understanding and managing the nexus. This would also require close cooperation with ArmStat in terms of generating longitudinal and panel data. Strengthening preparedness at the national, regional and local levels and developing innovative approaches would enhance climate change adaptation at the community level, which, in turn, would help to avert, minimize and address displacement. In addition, it would be necessary to consider migration challenges and opportunities in national planning processes associated with global policy frameworks such as the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework, the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and the Global Compact for Migration. Well-managed migration can help to support climate change adaptation but would require enabling conditions that promote or facilitate, for example, channelling remittances towards climate action, developing the capacities of migrants and their families to participate in and benefit from the circular economy, and promoting support mechanisms for migrant workers in vulnerable sectors and regions. Whenever possible, an inclusive approach that prioritizes migrants' participation and gives a voice to migrants should be promoted.[307]

[307] IOM, 2021.

A bountiful tomato harvest in Armenia. © 2021/Narek75

ANNEX

COUNTRY REPORTS RELEVANT TO THE MECC NEXUS

1. National communications to the UNFCCC

Armenia has prepared and submitted four national communications to the UNFCCC – in 1998, 2010, 2015 and 2020. The first national communication described the national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory, developed a national strategy to reduce GHG emissions and provided vulnerability assessment and adaptation approaches for natural ecosystems, water resources, agriculture and human health.[308] The second national communication involved a broader scope of climate studies and assessments, including the potential for GHG reduction among various sectors of industry; an assessment of the vulnerability of ecosystems and climate-dependent sectors of the economy; an assessment of the impacts of projected hydrometeorological phenomena; and an identification of early-warning and climate change monitoring needs.[309] The third national communication has enabled Armenia to make corrections to baseline and climate-mitigation scenarios and assess future indicators (until 2030) under new sectoral programmes facilitating the reduction in emissions for all categories of GHG emission sources, to assess, based on additional studies, the vulnerability of ecosystems and climate-dependent sectors of the economy, and identify priority adaptation measures to mitigate the consequences of climate change impacts.[310] The fourth national communication provides a GHG inventory and an assessment of climate change mitigation measures based on official statistical data from 1990–2016.[311] It also included updated information on recent policy, legislative and institutional changes and developments in sectors linked to or affected by climate change. Climate change-related studies and assessments have been further expanded within the framework of the fourth national communication. The nodal government institution in relation to national communications to the UNFCCC is the Ministry of Environment.

The MECC nexus is not mentioned in any of the four national communications.

[308] Government of Armenia, 1998b.
[309] Government of Armenia, 2010a.
[310] Government of Armenia, 2015b.
[311] Government of Armenia, 2020a.

2. Concluding observations by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the United Nations Committee against Torture

Concluding observations by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)[312] and the United Nations Committee against Torture[313] on the national reports submitted by Armenia urge the country to, among others, mainstream gender into national legislation and policies, improve the accessibility of justice and legal review options, overcome stereotypes in society, enhance the protection of rights of women belonging to vulnerable groups, including migrants, and expand the economic capacity of women.

[312] United Nations, 2016d.
[313] United Nations, 2016e.

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