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# The Defining Crisis of our Time: Climate Change and Migration

A Comprehensive Approach on what to do about Climate Migrants

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Master Thesis

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*Dedico este estudo a todos aqueles que vivem na lacuna permanente e insólita do sentimento de uma casa, de um lar, de um lugar de memórias. Que a esperança que em mim coloco e consequentes gerações, nas nossas mãos e nas nossas ações, seja diferença na Vossa vida. Que o Futuro seja risonho. E que o planeta volte a sorrir na esperança dos nossos atos. E, findando, que a proteção seja um lugar de todos e para Todos.*

*I dedicate this study to all those who live in the permanent and unexpected emptiness of the feeling of a house, a home, a place of memories. May the hope that I place in myself and subsequent generations, in our hands and in our actions, be a difference in Your lives. May the future be bright. And may the planet smile again in the hope of our actions. And ultimately, may protection be a place of all and for All.*

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## **Abstract**

Climate disasters, environmental degradation, and the adverse effects of climate change are causing the displacement of individuals submerged in unknown waters in the realms of protection, where there is a legal gap in what is or, in this case, is not provided for them. More than 200 million people are expected to be forcibly displaced by the climate by 2050. Through a comprehensive analysis of the international panorama, the interconnected global challenges and their current unpredictability, the existential threat to human life posed by climate change, and the complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon *per se* of climate-induced migration, this dissertation will develop how to approach the problem of climate migration under this critical conjuncture for humankind.

At the heart of a profound transformation of the current global dynamic, marked by uncertainty and the prevalence of national interests to the detriment of collective well-being, lies the issue of climate change. Such a crisis, with impacts on all levels of society, transcends national borders and calls for action based on international cooperation, particularly in view of the perverse effect it will have on human mobility. The exponential increase in climate-induced migration, whether internal or external, can be contained if our actions and collective mitigation efforts are both rapid and effective, which has not occurred as we find ourselves at the critical limit of global temperature projections.

From an interdisciplinary, comprehensive, and long-term perspective, and based on the assumption that climate migration requires current legal frameworks related to the protection of migrants and/or refugees at a regional level to be adapted to this new reality, which does not comply with a one-size-fits-all approach. This dissertation aims to analyze not only the impact of climate change as a whole on migratory movements but also what possible and innovative ways of solving this problem are currently available to bridge the existing knowledge gaps and promote multilateral cooperation in shaping a sustainable future.

**Keywords:** Climate Migration, Climate Change, Displacement, Protection, International Cooperation.

**Word count Abstract:** 315

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## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

### **C**

CIBOD - Barcelona Centre for International Affairs

CLICIM - Climate-change Induced Migration

COP – Conference of the Parties

### **D**

DRM - Digital Rights Management

### **E**

ECB – European Central Bank

ECHO - EU's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

ECOSOC - Economic and Social Council (?)

EEAS - European External Action Service

EESC - European Economic and Social Committee

EMN - European Migration Network

EMODnet - European Marine Observation and Data Network

EU – European Union

### **G**

GCM – Global Compact for Migration

CGR - Global Compact for Refugees

### **H**

HMCCC - Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change

### **I**

IDMC - Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

IDP - Internally Displaced Persons

IGAD - East African Intergovernmental Authority on Development

IIED - International Institute for the Environment and Development

IOM - International Organization for Migration

IPCC - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

**L**

LCD - Least Developed Countries

LLDC - Landlocked Developing Countries

**M**

MENA - Middle East and North Africa

MHPSS - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

**N**

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NDCs - Nationally Determined Contributions

NFIs - Non-food Items

**O**

OAU - Organization of African Union

**P**

PDD – Platform on Disaster Displacement

**R**

REP Fund - Refugee Environmental Protection Fund

**S**

SIDS - Small Island Developing States

**U**

UN – United Nations

UDHR - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNDRR - UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme

UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

USA - United States of America

**W**

WASH - Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

WB – World Bank

WBGU - German Advisory Council on Global Change

WFP - World Food Program

WMO - World Meteorological Organization

WMR - World Migration Report

## Introduction

*“We can park our chair on the beach as often as we please, and cry on the oncoming waves, but the tide will not listen, nor the sea retreat.”*

*(Robert Winder apud Bauman 2015)*

We turn on the television, it's the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 2023, and we're faced with yet another piece of news about how small we are in relation to nature and the changes it undergoes because of our small, big actions: an earthquake measuring 6.8 on the Richter scale hit Morocco during the night. However, the death toll is still insurmountable. More than 1,000 dead by midday the following day, and the remaining population? Where will those whose homes were destroyed by the quake go? Where will all those who saw their city collapse and everything that gave them a livelihood and access to a dignified life turn to dust? Where will those, whose environmental disaster took away everything they had built up until now, go? Who will protect them? How? When? Displacement is the path and the future is uncertainty.

Through the unknown borders of the theoretical framework within international relations and migrations appears the phenomena of climate migrants. While some will call it unconventional refugees or non-binary migrants, the protection of this social group remains a collective problem to solve, not only practical but also in the main veins of the national policies and agreements based on the broad institutions of the international system.

Nowadays, our public sphere is determined by a snowball effect based on contexts that make discourses and narratives that shape actions. Moreover, in a world where the context is the absence of multilateral protection, we call for action on the relevance of words and behaviours based on compliance with environmental issues and multilateralism. The United Nations (UN) and all the players involved in the case, such as members, nation-states, leaders, ambassadors, and organisations are key policy-making authorities to deliver fair measures at the proper time. With this comprehensive research, we will attempt to reach a consensus regarding the response given to the incessant search for protection of those displaced by the environment, a group that is characterized by its passive and progressive appearance.

To understand the relevance of this analysis we must face the inevitable reality of climate change in our everyday life and realize that there is a powerful link between environmental changes and migratory flows. The ecosystem degradation with droughts, rising sea levels, and firestorms along with the overall consumption over the limit of natural common resources, together with non-climatic global trends are having an insurmountable impact in many, inducing massive inequalities and leading people to escape (Calvin et al. 2023, 15). Individuals are being forced to relocate their homes due to climate change and it is time to raise awareness of the nearly irreversible consequences of the environmental phenomena.

In the international system, we should be reminded that we all live in a common society and share a common ground, the environment. Thereby, when we are faced with an alteration in one ecosystem, such as the elimination or decline of certain species or over-exploitation of natural resources, these alterations will, inevitably, result in the degradation of another ecosystem (Boon e Tra 2007, 89). The practices of one are the consequences of many.

Migration was never a contemporary concern in the international agenda and debating sphere between nation-states. In fact, when speaking about human movement through both national and transnational borders, this phenomenon takes us back to the past, present, and future history of humankind. The search for new settlements and better living conditions follows the journey of humanity and it was continuously triggered by wars, social conflicts, and the environment itself (Boon e Tra 2007, 85). However, as well as any phenomenon that takes place in society, it also presents patterns over time that accompany different societal rhythms. In ancient times, migration was smaller in scale and simple in nature (Boon e Tra 2007, 85), and a new settlement was a fight to be a synonym of a new home to those who faced it. Nowadays, migration has a new facet and it's understood as one of the greatest challenges of contemporary times, considering its new nature based on obligation and security.

According to Jane McAdam, movement in response to climate change is defined as a human adaptation strategy, but migration is not always a viable path for these individuals due to national immigration laws that restrict entry into other countries for environmental reasons. International law recognizes only a small class of forced migrants as those for whom other countries have an obligation to protect them, these being refugees, stateless persons, and individuals eligible for complementary protection. Cross-border displacement due to natural disasters, climate change, and environmental

degradation has been identified as a normative gap in the international legal protection regime (McAdam 2012, 1).

The majority of climate change projections are based on an increase in the average global temperature of 2° Celsius, which currently stands at around 2.5°C and is a long way from reaching 2.°C or even the 1.5°C decrease expected by the Paris Agreement. As such, the impacts will be multiple and will be felt differently in different communities due to the varying underlying political, economic, social, and even technological conditions (McAdam 2012, 1). Consequently, there is no current analysis that says the number of individuals forced to move by the adverse effects of climate will stagnate; on the contrary, most studies show that the number will either be the same or get worse, and it is expected that climate change could trigger an extraordinary population movement reflected in an internal and/or external migration of 216 million people by 2050, according to the World Bank (Clement et al. 2021, 15).

People moving in response to the effects of climate change is not a new fact, however, the large number expected to be triggered and thought likely to be affected by the great risk of global temperature rise or sea level rise and the speed of it is what turns the relationship between climate change and forced migration into an increasingly studied and contested area of research (McAdam 2012, 4). Thus, there is an imperative need to analyze this problem given the insolubility of the issue so far and, additionally, given the complexity of the migration decision and its interconnection with the various environmental, economic, social, and political factors that make it difficult to estimate the number of people affected by this phenomenon (McAdam 2012, 5). We know that most movements will be internal and not across international borders and, as such, it is necessary to study a legal regime that offers adequate protection for all types of movement.

A one-size-fits-all response will not correspond to the real needs of communities, both those of origin and those of the host, and the development of new norms or solutions is complex and would be difficult to practice due to the lack of implementation and application (McAdam 2012, 8). As such, it is necessary to analyze existing legal principles and agreements that can be adapted to the new circumstances of both internally displaced people and those who move across borders due to the adverse effects of the climate crisis we are experiencing.

In this dissertation we seek to answer two main questions "What is the impact of climate change on migratory movements?" and "What possible ways of addressing this problem are currently considered?" following the main objective of this study, which is to find the solutions on the table for this category of migrants by analyzing the main agreements and advances so far that can serve as basic instruments for a comprehensive local and/or regional solution. Additionally, we will address the secondary objectives, which are to find out what the international context is, what the technical context of climate change is, what measures have been adopted so far, and what ideas are underway that will allow us to form our possible final considerations.

For the purposes of this study, this dissertation is based on a comprehensive and holistic approach that is centered on identifying possible responses to the mitigation of a problem that is multisectoral and has international and national components, being at the local, regional, or national levels. We start from the general considerations of climate change to the particular resulting effects using therefore a deductive approach and a qualitative method of analysis. We will try to explore how the concepts of climate-related displacement relate to each other and we intend to apply the findings of this research to a broader context. Starting from a broad analysis of the current international panorama in which we live with the game of pool of tensions that we witness on a daily basis, including the environmental crisis, we move on to examine the current state of this climate crisis and its various effects and consequences, namely the displacement of individuals. By examining the concept of climate migrants in the light of the evolution of the practices that concern them, we can understand how the studies and main agreements that have been developed so far, - focusing on the relationship between disaster, climate change, and environmental degradation and displacement -, can provide instruments for a comprehensive solution to protect this category of migrant.

In addition, and to complement the documentary and textual analysis carried out throughout this study, four exploratory interviews were also conducted with experts in the field of migration, human geography, and environment. Through these interviews, we were able to get the point of view of experts working on the various aspects of migration and the environment. Firstly, through an interview with a Head of Mission from the main international organization that works actively on the ground and close to migrants, the IOM (International Organization for Migration), followed by a more academic view and from a country that, for example, leads the way on environmental and migratory issues, Finland, with an interview with a professor from the University of Oulu who led a project

for the Finnish government called "Climate Migration: Towards a Better Understanding and Management". In addition, combining the academic view with humanitarian work, an interview was conducted with a human geography specialist who works at the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security and, finally, taking a non-governmental view, an interview was carried out with a specialist in climate-driven migration and displacement, who created one of the only civil society projects in the world dedicated exclusively on the links between climate change and migration.

This dissertation is structured in four chapters. The first chapter of this dissertation provides a comprehensive overview of the complex and volatile international landscape we live in in the middle of 2023. The chapter begins by emphasizing the importance of understanding the world as it is, rather than as it should be, and sets the stage for a broad exploration of the unique challenges and tensions facing the global community.

The second chapter explores the current state of the climate and the climate crisis, its wide and varied impacts, and the urgent and imperative need for coordinated global action as well as the complex interplay of factors in the evolving security landscape. Some of the key issues addressed here relate to the existential threat of climate change, the recognition of the relationship between movement and the environment, the need for government regulation of environmental policies and their practicality, the vulnerability of developing countries, and the regionality of the impacts arising from the phenomenon, as well as the progress that has been made on mitigation and adaptation efforts, highlighting the implementation gaps that remain. Here, we set the stage for addressing and exploring the effects and consequences of climate-related issues, this being an interconnected challenge.

Following the established backdrop of tensions in the international system, conflict crises, and the climate crisis, the third chapter develops the almost absolute effects and consequences of climate change on individuals. In this chapter, we delve into the complex subject of climate migration and its implications, contextualizing the current migration context and introducing the category of climate migrants with all the challenges that surround it and the different perspectives of different actors in assisting and protecting them.

In the fourth and final chapter, we look at the state of the art of our issue. We analyze the approaches at the table to assess what is deemed feasible, useful, or ineffective. We immerse ourselves in the complexity of the relationship between

migration and climate change and provide insights to address the challenges, research gaps, and policy developments surrounding human mobility in the context of climate change. This chapter recognizes the growing awareness of the phenomenon of climate migration over the last decade and the policy responses that have emerged through regional and global processes, while also acknowledging the intricate interplay that arises between nations and climate change experts in developing migration policies and the need to understand migration as an adaptation to climate impacts. Knowing that what is at stake is finding a way to develop policy approaches that are realistic and that recognize that migration is inevitable, in various climate change contexts, and truly help to reduce the vulnerabilities of migrants and reinforce the positive impacts that migration brings us, both for migrants and for the communities they are part of. As such, we analyze three international agreements that could provide essential tools for building these comprehensive and realistic policies to be applied in each nation: the Protection Agenda (PDD), the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), and the Cartagena Declaration.

The choice of these three international agreements stems from the fact that all share a common recognition of the importance of protecting the most vulnerable individuals in the light of displacement, including those affected by climate-induced migration. Although they differ in their scope, focus, and legal status, they are related in the way they recognize the challenges that climate-induced migration and displacement entail and how the environmental factor can be an enabler of forced migration, making it necessary to address the protection and rights of those most affected.

At the end of this dissertation, we hope that the reader will be able to understand the broad solutions that are on the table to address climate migration and that the relationship between human displacement and the adverse effects of climate change will be clear.

## **Chapter I: The World in 2023**

### **The Current State of the International System**

It is said that internationalists differ in science by describing reality as it is, and not as it should be. It is certainly necessary to explore the intrinsic characteristics of this unique international context we live in, which is described by, literally, living on the edge. In the midst of the year 2023, individual and collective limits are tested to the full by tensions at all societal levels, whether by phenomena such as inflation, food, and international security, energy crises, political pressure in the stratosphere of geopolitical competition, or governments being torn apart by extremist forces (Colomina et al. 2022, 1). The collective responsiveness of individual nations and the international system itself has never been more tested than it is today.

The cold war period between 1947 and 1991 shook up the world, even without a direct battle, but under an almost permanent confrontational atmosphere derived from critical dispute events, such as the containment of Russia, the arms race between the two greatest powers, United States of America (USA) and Russia, the development of the nuclear arsenal and space exploration. Today, the world finds itself under constant tension, conflicts, and crises emerging and contributing to the permanence of a climate that fosters violence in all its forms. If there were any doubts, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has cleared them up. The more the risks associated with geostrategic confrontation, the more limited the collective security frameworks become in meeting the challenges that exceed those for which they were created. Increasingly, there is a widening gap between the means, the challenges, and the instruments for overcoming them. The war of aggression launched by Russia in early 2022 seems to mark a turning point in history that accelerated the erosion of the post-1945 world order with consequences and impacts yet to be predicted (Colomina et al. 2022, 1).

Not only is the scale of the current crisis and the conflict taking place, all the time and every minute, incalculable, but we are also undergoing a process of structural change that is happening through an invisible and unknowable hand.

Currently, we can imagine the stage of the International System personified in a real game of pool table. The war in Ukraine can be considered the cue ball that moved all the balls of the game and profoundly changed the issues on the table of the international agenda. The violent conflict in Eastern Europe caused transformations and crises in global society as we knew it, creating a new momentum and a new game of balls that collide

with each other and, increasingly, raise the sense of disorder and uncertainty that derive from the geopolitical landscape and in the international community (Colomina et al. 2022, 1). At the present time, all the balls are at play and we are always waiting for the next shot to know what will be the next moves that will guide and shake the world.

## **The International Agenda**

According to a study published by CIBOD (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs) in partnership with EsadeGeo-Center for Global Economy and Geopolitics in December 2022, there are ten developments on the table that will shape the international agenda, these being: Strategic competition accelerates; Inefficient global collective security frameworks; Transitions collide; a Global economic recession is possible; Basic goods and a crisis of access and guarantees; Instability and social discontent; Movements and their demands fracture and atomize; Authoritarianism under pressure; Regulatory fragmentation, sectoral deglobalization; and last but not least, the black ball of them all - Testing limits (Colomina et al. 2022, 2).

In 2022, *permacrisis*, - that is, a word describing the feeling of living through a period of war, inflation, and political instability, - was elected word of the year. In mid-2023, the scenario remains the same. If in the first twenty years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we lived through times characterized by economic, financial, and property uncertainty, in the last two years we have been overwhelmed by a pandemic that brought the world to a standstill, and in the last year we have lived with a senseless war that brings us devastating daily consequences and puts many people under the roof of vulnerability (Torrão 2023). The population, in general, is facing an inability to protect the common and essential goods for all, especially food, energy, and the environment. The scenario projected in 2023 remains an incognita. We know that the future was once brighter and that the greater the risk, the more obsolete the regulatory frameworks and protection systems, - systems that defended us in the turbulence created by volatility, - so it is necessary to think of ways to resolve the state of *permacrisis* and create stability and preparedness before crises, tensions, and violence (Colomina et al. 2022, 2).

Below, we would like to analyze in detail the actions that write the consequent pages of our international agenda.

Firstly, when we speak of the acceleration of strategic competition, we speak of the atmosphere of confrontation and tension felt between those who are the greatest powers on a global scale. The war in Ukraine has brought to the drift of international debate issues that accentuate the tension between the major state actors. The world is currently living under what some consider a “subjective cold war” where it is no longer divided into two blocks, but it is, indeed, experiencing the reconfiguration of the international system through several new alliances (some unforeseen). As well as the repositioning of state actors against other actors in search of a transformation of their competitive strategy and, consequently, placing the world on multiple poles of tension and geographically scattered (Colomina et al. 2022, 2).

Although the epicenter of the transformation can be located in Europe, in 2023, the change was noticed long ago with the movement of power to the Pacific Region, the rising of the rest, or the emergence of a more multipolar world. New strategies emerge from different countries in cooperation with the different great powers, be they the United States, China, or Russia. This year, the pack of cards is on the table and it is necessary to pay attention to the movement of all the cards, from the most to the least valuable (Colomina et al. 2022, 2).

From the strategies of India<sup>1</sup> and Turkey<sup>2</sup>, through the evolution of Saudi Arabia<sup>3</sup> to Latin America with the recent mandate of the Brazilian presidency of Lula da Silva,

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<sup>1</sup> India is set to become the world's most populous nation and continue on a trajectory of rapid economic growth in 2023. As the country assumes the presidencies of the G-20 and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), it is expected to host leaders from across the globe as it prepares for its own general elections in 2024. India seeks to raise its leadership profile as a bridging power between various poles of the international system, both East and West, and North and South. As one of the world's fastest-growing economies, India is courted by investors due to its growing market, digital economy, and favorable demographics. India's multilateral institutional pursuits have more of a steady-state flavor, with priorities at the SCO, SCO, and Quad. At the G-20 summit in September, India seeks to establish its global leadership bonafides and broker substantive consensus on pressing global concerns. (United States Institute of Peace 2023)

<sup>2</sup> The ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey has intensified Islam's role in public life, leading to a poor human rights record and a decline in democracy. The country's foreign policy aims to expand its global influence through trade and diplomacy, but its relations with Western allies are at a stalemate. The economy is in crisis, with inflation resurgence and citizens' living standards plummeting. The AKP is preparing for elections in 2023, but the breakdown of democratic norms, restrictions on freedom of expression, and government monopoly on broadcast media pose a challenge for the opposition. (Middle East Institute 2022)

<sup>3</sup> Saudi Arabia has been attracting international attention with various diplomatic initiatives, including normalizing relations with Iran, peace talks with Yemeni Houthis, reintegrating Syria into the Arab League, brokering a ceasefire in Sudan, and hosting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. This shift in Saudi foreign policy reflects an evolution in regional and international positioning, but does not change the country's strategic direction. The primary objective of Saudi foreign policy is to counter and contain Middle East instability, limit risks to oil exports, and facilitate domestic economic development. Saudi foreign policy aims to support and enable Vision 2030, reducing threats from instability or conflict in its neighboring countries. (RUSI 2023)

for example. All of these international actors have strategic transnational connections in their favor, which challenge the current international game, either through new alliances in the making or through the strategic interests they hold which may change the rules of the game (Colomina et al. 2022, 2).

However, geopolitical change is not only based on these new alliances and interests. The change is also highly motivated and influenced by the recent energy crises. Iran and Venezuela<sup>4</sup>, well-known producers of gas and oil, have suffered various sanctions for their political crises. While many countries have sought to ease sanctions on the Venezuelans in order to alleviate the energy crisis in the market, in Iran sanctions have been reinforced because of its links to Russia (Colomina et al. 2022, 3).

In addition, over and above its transformations in its core business, strategic competition has reached a new level by going beyond physical and dimensional boundaries and reaching into non-dimensional space such as the digital world and space (Colomina et al. 2022, 3).

It is inevitable to approach the war in Ukraine as a point of reference, as currently the primary issues to be addressed by the international agenda have been significantly leveraged by this event. This is to say that this war has raised the curtain on the fragilities and risks of the geostrategic world (and beyond), as well as on the ephemerality and obsolescence of global structures in the defense and security business, such as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). (Colomina et al. 2022, 3).

However, it is necessary to look beyond the transatlantic structure and understand that the instruments of collective security are directly influenced by the conflicts that will be on the agenda of each nation, each region, and the international system. Such conflicts may have a religious origin as has been felt in the Global South with the rise of jihadism, but they may also stem from and be significantly hampered by the deep climate crisis we are living in. A real example that puts a human face not only on the conflict but also on the climate crisis is the case of the Sahel<sup>5</sup>. In a community where its existence depends

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<sup>4</sup> Iran and Venezuela's energy relationship is influenced by mutual interests and geopolitical considerations. Iran aims to boost Venezuela's refining capacity, while trade and investment remain limited due to middle-income status, resource constraints, and economic instability. Nuclear negotiations and potential agreements will shape future relations. (Emirates Policy Center 2023)

<sup>5</sup> “The Sahel, the vast semi-arid region of Africa separating the Sahara Desert to the north and tropical savannas to the south, is as much a land of opportunities as it is of challenges. Although it has abundant human and natural resources, offering tremendous potential for rapid growth, there are deep-rooted challenges—environmental, political and security—that may affect the prosperity and peace of the Sahel.” (United Nations s.d.)

on agriculture, albeit on a small scale, the land no longer provides the minimum resources to generate a source of income. Droughts predominate and the inhabitants can only look forward to the rainy seasons. However, this waiting is no longer done at home, many are forced to move internally and wait for the day when they receive a call from their relatives acclaiming that the rain has come and they can return to their homes, otherwise, they will not return (UN Human Rights Office 2022b).

Recently at the Conference Of the Parties 27 (COP 27), a new report was released - following the first document made in this regard at COP 26 - which explores and illustrates the effects of climate change on human rights in a migrant context and the rights they need for survival and dignified lives through communities in Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria (UN Human Rights Office 2022b). Climate change and the stories that surround it matter and the United Nations are extremely concerned about changing the narrative around climate change and migration. From a harmful narrative focused on the threats posed by climate change-induced migration to one that promotes hope and community work to address the adverse impacts of climate change (UN Human Rights Office 2022a).

The wish of those studying and working on this narrative is that it is necessary a step away from the abstraction of the climate negotiations and return the action to the ultimate goal - "a stable climate that safeguards human health and welfare now and, in the future" (UN Human Rights Office 2022b).

Not only regarding the climate, but also peace structures, this year can be considered as a year of reflection, where practical structures may not yet emerge, but where real reflection is taking place on how to create sustainable solutions for all.

In many nations, their governance rushed through the implementation of a digital and, simultaneously, a green transition so that both could accommodate together to build a more sustainable world (Joint Research Centre EU Science Hub 2022). However, with the impact of war, the 2022 data tells us that transitions have collided. Markets have changed, dependencies have increased, and climate and alternative energy use commitments have suffered a paradox between damage and acceleration. In the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report released in April 2022, this dual effect is present: "Digital technologies have significant potential to contribute to decarbonization (...) Yet, if left unmanaged, the digital transformation will probably increase energy demand, exacerbate inequities and the concentration of power, leaving

developing economies with less access to digital technologies behind” (Colomina et al., 2022, p.7 apud Skea et al. 2023, 142).

The changes brought about by the war in Ukraine were a turning point in changing energy policies – as there is a new concern to look for new alternative energy sources to Russia and a never-ending race to find renewable energy - and markets. Due to the competition generated, prices will continue to rise with no date for stability, this phenomenon will have effects not only in the current time but for decades to come, according to the International Energy Agency (International Energy Agency 2022b). In addition to coal consumption increasing by 0.7% in 2022 (International Energy Agency 2022a), the construction of new fossil-fuel structures in Europe and China, delays closures of coal-fired power plant closures, and the extension of the hours of those still in operation - furthermore to the reopening of some already closed - have instilled that green trends and climate ambition have been curbed (International Energy Agency 2022b). As a consequence, the goal of reversing the temperature increase limited to 1.5 °C by 2020 has become practically unachievable and we are on course to reach this limit by 2100, according to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

In the fullness of uncertainty and unachieved objectives, looms what is also the inevitable consequence of conflict on a large scale, the faltering of the global economy through dreaded inflation. With the effects of the war on energy, the disruptions in the supply chain, the geopolitical tensions, the increase in interest rates, and the consequent constant adaptation of policies to fight the unstoppable inflation, the future of the economy is in question and the discussion of a possible recession appears in central debates (El-Erian 2022).

According to the European Central Bank (ECB), by the end of 2022 and in the middle of 2023, warnings that the Eurozone may enter an era of technical recession or stagnation may become a reality on the world stage (Iñiguez 2022). Scenarios such as these usually depart from a reading of history as transitory, temporary, and reversible, however, the current state is probably not just another page in the economy's cycle book. The current state of the global economy is undergoing extremely significant structural changes that will linger over time and exceed the usual business cycle. Economic developments such as these are unusual and will intensify the uncertainty of the future, namely “the shift from insufficient demand to insufficient supply as a major multi-year

drag on growth, the end of boundless liquidity from central banks, and the increasing fragility of financial markets” (El-Erian 2022).

This change, besides being structural, will be transversal to all levels of society, whether social and individual, economic and corporate, or political and governmental. Thus, economic and financial outcomes will be increasingly difficult to predict and efforts will have to be extended to a multilateral level, governments will have to reinforce the supervision and regulation of all entities, banking and non-banking, as well as strengthen safety nets in order to protect the most vulnerable segments of society (El-Erian 2022).

The plague of inflation and looming recession intensify the already existing problems of access to essential and basic goods such as energy, food, and water (Colomina et al. 2022). The war in Ukraine has meant that this fundamental feature for structural development and reduction of poverty and inequality has come up against yet another obstacle and created an unprecedented food crisis (United Nations 2022a). According to the World Food Program (WFP), during the first months of 2022, an exponential increase in the number of hungry people was observed, rising from 282 million to 345 million (World Food Programme 2022). The world is at risk of breaking another record and with the current food crisis reaching unthinkable hunger and food security figures. Such an outcome is the result of a multifactorial crisis brought about by climate change, conflict, and economic pressures. Those most frequently and intensely affected by climate change occurrences, with insufficient time to recover from one disaster to another, are countries with alarming points of security at all levels, including food security, and lacking a responsive government, such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen. As a consequence, millions move internally and across borders to avoid death due to hunger (United Nations 2022a).

However, it is not only the least developed who lack access to essential and public goods. The world is discontent. The state of *permacrisis* has been developing into a public outcry across several nations. Since 2022 alone, demonstrations of dissatisfaction were recorded in more than 90 countries, due to the rising price of fuel, among other causes - including climate justice. The world contradicts itself. At the same time that COP conferences are increasingly praised, they are also becoming more and more victims of controversy over sponsorship or even the very venue itself. COP28 will be hosted by the United Arab Emirates, one of the main producers of oil and gas, which often refuses to

comply with the rules of containment. Faced with this incongruity, activists revolt and gradually people take to the streets and turn them into real demonstration stages as speakers, performers, and experts. Mass mobilization has been progressively increasing, especially protests and non-violent campaigns, yet change has been difficult to achieve through these processes (Colomina et al. 2022, 10).

The increased mobilization in the form of protest has been observed on both sides of the political coin, whether in democracies<sup>6</sup> or dictatorships, but always in relatively fractured and polarized societies (Colomina et al. 2022, 11).

According to the Global Risks Report 2023, the erosion of social cohesion and societal polarization, in recent years, has been rising in the rankings of perceived severity (World Economic Forum 2023b, 23). This phenomenon is defined as the loss of social capital as well as the breakdown of communities and is currently the fifth-most severe global risk in the short term. Its consequences influence in an incomparable way structural aspects of society such as the decline of social stability, individual and collective well-being, and economic productivity. This risk can be a conduit for other potential short and long-term risks, such as debt crises, state instability, cost-of-living crises, inflation, prolonged economic downturn, and climate migration (World Economic Forum 2023a). Both democratic and autocratic systems suffer an existential challenge imposed by the values and equality gap that the world lives in. Determinant issues of societal governance such as immigration, gender, ethnicity, region, and climate are targets of extreme polarization that have significantly influenced recent elections, referenda, and protests all over the world, from the United States of America to China to the Islamic Republic of Iran (Colomina et al. 2022).

The same report, makes us consider that the next decade will be characterized by societal and environmental crises that will be enhanced by geopolitical and economic trends. In the short term, more specifically in the two next years, the risk that dominates the global sphere will be that of the cost of living. In the long term, the debates and respective actions on a global scale will probably prevail, namely resulting from the failure of climate action with the expressive loss of biodiversity and the possible collapse of the ecosystem (World Economic Forum 2023b, 7).

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<sup>6</sup> V-Dem Institute's report on the state of democracy around the world warns that in 2022 the level was "down to 1989 levels", which could mean that 30 years of democratic advances have been wiped off the map. Democracy is under pressure as well as electoral autocracies. (Boese et al. 2022, 12)

The world is at its limits in the most literal sense of the word. In this context of accentuated division and uncertainty, a black ball on the table represents any and all events that may arise unexpectedly and affect international politics, its timelines, and strategies. These events that might emerge on the table may include major risks as it would be the case of a nuclear attack, an invasion of Taiwan, or an unprecedented meteorological phenomenon. The year 2022 was marked by floods, heat waves, and droughts. 2023 will be no different facing instability and threats yet unknown (Colomina et al. 2022, 15–16).

Reviewing the last and present year, as conflict, in all its forms and causes, arises and with greater frequency, hope remains in international dialogue. While all limits are being tested, the head of the UN, António Guterres, warns of the urgency for the international system to restrain itself and listen to reason, refraining from any action and/or declaration that would push the current situation to its limit, a call stemming from the consequences and virality of the war in Ukraine (United Nations 2022b).

The ramifications of the war in Europe have challenged and placed a constant test on the strands of society. At the same time, the tensions present in the rest of the world remain on the table. As is the case of African countries, with the emergence of new conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mali, or the faint hope for peace in Sudan and Ethiopia. The same phenomenon can be seen in the Middle East with long-term conflicts to which no end can be seen, such as in Syria, Yemen, and Palestine. As far as the Americas are concerned, Haiti is on the verge of abyss and even if a political solution could be developed, it will no longer be enough to address the crisis. While in Colombia, signs that peacetime can be achieved are beginning to appear after 6 years of the peace agreement signed between the government and its rebels. And finally, on the Asian continent, tensions are rising and Afghanistan continues to move in the opposite direction of history, as does North Korea and its permanent development around its nuclear capacity (United Nations 2022b).

Within this context, in September 2021, before the end of the 75th session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General of the UN, António Guterres, presented his report – “Our Common Agenda” - on a vision for the next 25 years of cooperation and breakthrough on the reinvigorated multilateralism, reinforcing the pivotal moment that we live in. Guterres called to action of all the member States to implement the report into the

day-to-day of the nation given the importance of deliberating each of its ninety proposals (Saraiva 2021, 4).

Our world is in crisis and with COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine, everything went from bad to worse regarding not only health but also the world economy, climate change, poverty, and inequalities. In this way, multilateral cooperation and collective action are very much needed in the international system, once trust and solidarity are presented as the fundamental values to make the breakthrough and, therefore, the new social contract that humanity needs. This agenda was built before the war in Europe, but its issues became even more relevant in light of the effects of the war (Saraiva 2021, 4).

Instead of focusing on geopolitical tensions, decades of international failure, or the weakening of multilateral institutions, “Our Common Agenda” focuses on what nations need to achieve as a whole and the urgency of not "getting our hands dirty". The proposal of the document rests on the underlying principle of renewing the social contract between all nations and their institutions, where adaptation to the challenges of the new century prevails. With the war in Ukraine and all its consequential effects, the challenge remains in building trust. However, while humanity sways between breakdown or breakthrough, ambition speaks louder and the compromises made set out high aspirations (United Nations 2021, 3). The inclusiveness of not leaving anyone behind, whether in social protection, health care, or security spectrums; the constant desire to protect the planet by reaching the 1.5°C goal and net zero emissions by 2050 or even sooner; the promotion of peace and conflict prevention to reduce strategic risks such as nuclear power or the investment in prevention and peace-building actions, are presented as some of the commitments made that, only since 2021, the possibility of moving from words and ambitions to actions is already being questioned by the current events and tensions experienced across the board (United Nations 2021, 6).

## **Conclusions: Navigating Uncertainty**

In this way, corresponding to our secondary objective of evaluating the current international context, we can conclude that the general lines of the international situation precipitated with the war in Ukraine as a probable turning point in history that accelerated the erosion of the global order and potentiated the changes we have been witnessing, significantly altering the international panorama. We are witnessing the emergence of new geopolitical dynamics in the international system with the shifting of alliances and

strategic competitions between the major political powers and the emergence of new actors that could become key players in solving global challenges, such as India.

Within the major global challenges, we can identify an interconnectedness between them. Global challenges are frequently linked and their impacts become mutual. For example, the climate crisis does not exist in isolation but is intertwined with other challenges, be they economic, migratory, or food security, and each of these phenomena ends up exacerbating the other. The same happens between migration and security or conflict and displacement. At the moment, both the climate crisis and the energy crisis are reshaping not only global politics but also the security framework.

Thus, the current international context negatively affects the problem we are analyzing here of the climate crisis and clearly leads to a situation of greater difficulty in tackling major international issues. The competition between the major powers has a consequence. And what is behind this competition? It's based on the understanding that the great powers prioritize their own interests to the absolute detriment of collective and shareable, ultimately global, interests. We all know that global warming, organized crime, and terrorism can't be solved by any one state, this means that this analysis of the international situation and what we see happening in the future has a profound perverse effect on the resolution of collective problems, including this one, which is a complicated problem in itself.

As such, in the face of increased difficulty in understanding the new dynamics and the prevalence of individualistic dynamics between nations, we must emphasize the importance and necessity of international dialogue and multilateral cooperation as an instrument of hope for resolving conflicts and addressing global crises collectively.

In a future where uncertainty is the only certainty, the commitments and ambitions of the international agenda remain opaque rather than reflecting a profound change in the international environment that urges a response and solution to its current conflicts and crises, the crises of conflict and the climate crisis.

After this cross-cutting analysis, it seems plausible to conclude that we are living in a complex, dangerous, and rapidly evolving historical moment. We do not yet know, with rigor and certainty, in which direction we are heading. However, we do know that the current complex situation is suffering from a profound structural change centered on climate change, with effects that have repercussions and extend to the other conditioning factors of the global context.

Aware that this dimension of the international problem cannot be assessed separately, it seems possible to us, however, to focus our attention on the magnitude of the so-called "climate emergency" and its impact on human life, particularly in terms of inducing people to move in order to be safe from situations that make their lives impossible.

## **Chapter II: The Climate Crisis**

### **Context**

What time has proved to us is that the phenomenon of climate change is one of the greatest existential threats as well as a challenge to humanity. Every corner of the world, from Pakistan to Nigeria to Australia, has been a target of catastrophic weather events that intensify climate change, as well as victims of slow onset events such as sea level rise (Human Rights Watch 2023). The link between people and nature is now universally recognized and even considered unbreakable by the UN General Assembly. Such recognition followed the confirmation of the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment by the UN itself last year (Human Rights Watch 2023, 11).

As the destructive effects of this hitherto unstoppable phenomenon intensify, there is a subjective, legal, and moral need for every government to regulate its policies and actions in favor of protecting the human right to a livable environment. Urgency is paramount. Not only in the need to transition to phase out fossil fuels and prevent agribusinesses from exploiting forests without measures but also in the urgency to act and hold accountable those who promote vulnerability and exposure to extreme weather events and changes brought about by these developing phenomena. The indigenous population, women, children, the elderly population, individuals with disabilities, and the most impoverished populations are those who are at the highest level of vulnerability (Human Rights Watch 2023, 11–12).

The environmental phenomena also pose a significant security policy challenge, as it could overstretch societies' adaptive capacities, leading to destabilization and violence. However, it could also unite the international community by recognizing climate change as a threat and adopting a dynamic and globally coordinated climate policy. If not done, climate change could create division and conflict in international relations, triggering conflicts over resource distribution, migration management, and compensation payments. To avoid these developments, an ambitious global climate policy must be implemented over the next 10-15 years, aiming to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions by the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century. This major international policy challenge arises in parallel to a shift in the political world order explored above, with new powers like China and India and the US's loss of power (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 1).

Climate change's social impacts will vary across different regions, with North Africa experiencing intensified political crisis and migration pressure due to increased drought, water scarcity, population growth, and poor political problem-solving capacities. The Sahel zone faces additional environmental stress and social crises, while Southern Africa's economic potential is threatened. Central Asia faces exacerbated water, agricultural, and distribution problems, while India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh face severe impacts. China faces intensified environmental stress due to heat waves and droughts, while the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico face increased hurricane frequency. The Andean region and Amazonia face worsening water problems, and the collapse of the Amazon rainforest could significantly alter South America's natural environment, posing economic and social consequences (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 3).

## **Causes and Consequences**

From north to south, east to west, the earth is in crisis and the causes behind it are mostly human-made. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 2023 report, Global warming is a result of human activity, principally greenhouse gas emissions, with the global surface temperature rising by 1.1°C between 2011 and 2020 compared to the period between 1850 and 1900. Such a figure presents itself as a historical milestone that results from the ongoing contributions of various nations regarding unsustainable energy use, land-use changes, unbearable consumption, production patterns, and lifestyles adopted by various regions horizontally by several countries and individuals (Calvin et al. 2023, 4). A 0.99°C rise was recorded over the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The best estimate for the entire rise in global surface temperature caused by humans is 1.07°C, with a probability range of 0.8°C to 1.3°C (Calvin et al. 2023, 4).

There is no “equivocation” in science on how much human influence has warmed the atmosphere. Human-caused climate change is causing extreme weather and climate events in all regions of the hemispheres and consequently influencing the increasingly common record of rapid changes in the atmosphere, oceans, cryosphere, and biosphere. In this context of adverse and extreme events, the consequences result in thousands of damages and losses not only to nature but also to individuals, mainly to the most vulnerable communities and those, historically, located in the regions and nations that

have contributed the least to the current proportion of climate change (Calvin et al. 2023, 5), more commonly referred to as developing countries.

One of the biggest and most observable indicators over the last century of the deep changes that have been felt is the rise in sea level, as we can see in the following graph (based on the values of the IPCC 2023 report). The main driver for this rise, most evident since 1971, is human influence. The same applies when we talk about the increasingly frequent extreme events since 1951, such as heatwaves, floods, droughts, or tropical cyclones. Human influence has strongly contributed not only to their appearance but also to their higher concurrent frequency (Calvin et al. 2023, 5).

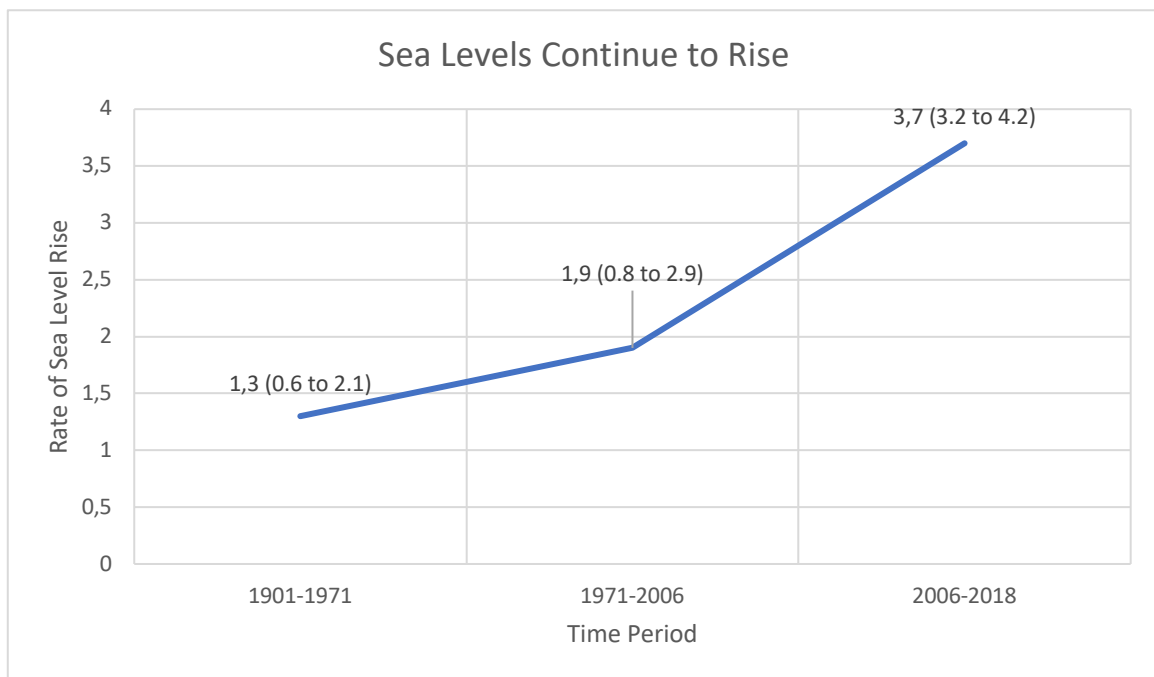


Figure 1 - Sea Levels Continue to Rise

Source: Own elaboration based on IPCC (Calvin et al. 2023, 5)

Note: The rates are displayed in millimeters per year (mm/yr) and, where applicable, confidence intervals are included in brackets.

If human influence is the main trigger of climate action and change in the ecosystem, then the individual himself puts a considerable part of his global community at risk of vulnerability, extreme in some cases. But this also alerts us to the possibility of promoting corrective actions.

Therefore, if no concrete climate development action is taken, climate change could trigger an extraordinary population movement reflected in the internal and/or external migration of 216 million people by 2050, according to the World Bank (WB). These movements caused a significant rise in migration in developing countries and

taking place primarily within national borders with transboundary migration firstly and mainly taking the form of south-south migration (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 3), will have diverse geographical origins. Namely, approximately 5 million from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 17 million from Latin America, 19 million from North Africa, 40 million from South Asia, 49 million from East Asia and the Pacific, and 86 million from Sub-Saharan Africa. This will mostly happen within their own countries and will intensify rural, urban, and coastal systems. The urgency of taking action is reflected in the significant impact that could be achieved by acting now, reducing the number of people forced to move by climate change by up to 80 percent, and dropping displacement by 44 million people by 2050 (Clement et al. 2021, 4–5). This leads us to a first and fundamental conclusion. Climate migrants are not subsumed into movements between States but have an internal movement of a similar size. His handling has to be approached both ways.

As the earth becomes unable to sustain its population due to water scarcity, declining crop productivity, and rising sea levels, people are looking for areas that offer them opportunities to build resilient livelihoods. According to the report "Groundswell, Acting on Internal Climate Migration", by taking action to moderate change and protect individuals, it will be possible or affordable to reduce these migrants in the face of action. If we act now and cut global greenhouse gases, we will reduce the climate pressures that provoke environmentally-induced migration, also a growing conflict constellation (Clement et al. 2021, 16).

If we act now and integrate climate migration into political policies and crisis management preparedness, we will develop greener, more resilient, and more inclusive planning. If we act now and plan for each phase of the migration process, before, during, and after, we can ensure positive adaptation of affected individuals and a positively developed outcome. If we act now and invest in fully understanding the drivers of climate migration through evidence-based research, modeling, and consultancy, we will be better able to inform and build a prepared and inclusive policy response capacity. The trajectory of this climate migration, particularly internal migration, over the next half-century thus depends on this collective action on climate and green, resilient, and inclusive development. The window of opportunity to convert the conditions that may await us is closing fast and nations must come together and act to secure this development, reduce

global emissions, and commit to the word and promise of the Paris Agreement<sup>7</sup> (Clement et al. 2021, 5–7).

Furthermore, it is estimated that approximately between 3.3 and 3.6 billion people live in a context of high vulnerability to climate change. Therefore, the interdependence that exists between human and ecosystem vulnerability is undeniable. In fact, regions and individuals that are at a level of development below the norm have a high risk of vulnerability to climate hazards, as analyzed and concluded by the IPCC report (Calvin et al. 2023, 5). Thus, such regions and individuals are exposed to food and water insecurity - one of the greatest current risks, as examined above - affecting communities mainly in the regions of South Asia and Southern Africa. This insecurity translated into a significant increase in human mortality in these vulnerable regions between 2010 and 2020 from causes such as floods, droughts, and storms (Calvin et al. 2023, 5).

In addition, the occurrence and incidence of climate-related events cause serious observed widespread damage and losses in terms of health and well-being, namely mental health, infectious diseases, heat strokes, malnutrition, and harm from wildfire as well as displacement (Calvin et al. 2023, 6).

In addition to the changes and impacts referred to in the IPCC report, it also expresses a notable conclusion and correlation between extreme climate and meteorological events and the significant increase in the movement of people. Individuals in such communities are forced to move because of the effects of climate change on the economy, including agriculture, forestry, fishery, energy, and tourism sectors, the destruction of their homes and key infrastructures such as transportation or sanitation, loss of property and income, human health and food security, and adverse effects on social equity and gender (Calvin et al. 2023, 6).

The projections made since 1900 have changed a lot over the generations, as the climate and our choices regarding the environment have influenced what is today's reality. The same happens with the current and future generations that will experience a much warmer and different world than the one we live in today. If an individual born in 1950 experienced a global temperature variation between 0°C and 0.5°C during practically whole his life, he will reach 70 years of age in 2020 and experience an increase in global

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<sup>7</sup> The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty aiming to limit global average temperature increase to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. However, world leaders emphasize limiting warming to 1.5°C by the end of this century to avoid severe impacts like droughts, heatwaves, and rainfall. To achieve this, greenhouse gas emissions must peak before 2025 and decline 43% by 2030. (UNFCCC s.d.)

temperature, reaching his last years of life with a global temperature of approximately 1°C. On the other hand, an individual born in 2020, will experience a global temperature of 1.1°C, and at the age of 70, in the year 2090, the same individual will experience a global temperature between 2°C and 3.5°C or even 4°C, depending on how we address climate change now (Calvin et al. 2023, 7).

Global warming most probably will continue to increase in the short term, considering the period between 2021 and 2040, and the main reason for that will continue to be greenhouse gas emissions and, consequently, the accumulation of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the atmosphere. In this short period of time and in the best of estimates, it is considered that global warming of 1.5°C will be reached in this short term and that it will possibly be decreased to less than 1.5°C by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Whereas, in the worst-case scenario, it is estimated that it will be likely or very likely to exceed 1.5°C in the short term (Calvin et al. 2023, 12). In addition, for each additional increase in global warming, changes in extremes are expected to be increasingly pronounced, including intensification of the global water cycle, its variability, global precipitation, weather events ranging from very wet to very dry, and, as already mentioned, the increase of global sea level. Each continental region will be increasingly affected by multiple and simultaneous changes, facing increases in climate hazards ranging from more frequent heat waves and droughts, extreme weather events occurring annually, or intensification of tropical cyclones and fires (Calvin et al. 2023, 12–13). As according to the IPCC 2023 report “For any given warming level, the level of risk will also depend on trends in vulnerability and exposure of humans and ecosystems. Future exposure to climatic hazards is increasing globally due to socio-economic development trends including migration, growing inequality, and urbanization” (Calvin et al. 2023, 14).

Although there is notable progress across sectors and regions regarding climate adaptation plans and their implementation, ownership gaps still prevail. In some regions and sectors, there is even a maladaptation process and, in most cases, global funding is not enough for an unconstrained implementation, especially in developing countries. Undoubtedly, climate propaganda and advocacy have been growing in the core of several communities due to the political and public awareness of climate impacts and risks. Given that, a considerable part of the mass mobilization that has been witnessed and creating one of the main tensions of this year, adopting the form of protests, represents the frustrations of thousands of people facing the non-compliance and lack of commitment of several nations to follow the climate goals and targets. In fact, the increased awareness

of climate change in the public sphere has had positive results as 170 countries and several cities have started to instill climate policies and climate adaptation plans in their agendas. However, their effectiveness is, in most cases, questioned (Calvin et al. 2023, 8).

Many of the adaptation responses, including disaster risk management, early warning systems, climate services, and social safety nets, despite being applicable to various sectors, are fragmented, incremental, or unevenly distributed across regions (Calvin et al. 2023, 8). The truth is that there is progress, but while this progress exists, it is overshadowed by adaptation gaps between sectors and regions. This happens because as levels of application increase in certain regions and sectors with high incomes and development, these gaps also increase as application and adaptation become increasingly restricted and devalued in communities with significantly lower incomes. Hence, it follows that the main barriers to adaptation focus on income and the ways in which it is reflected, such as scarcity of resources, absence of the private sector, or insufficient mobilization of finance (Calvin et al. 2023, 9).

Additionally, the lack of income is compounded by low levels of climate literacy, limited research, low sense of urgency, which together, result in a lack of political commitment at all levels, national, regional, and global. This phenomenon of lack of interest and urgency for action also happens because those suffering the greatest loss and damage are characterized as developing and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) (Calvin et al. 2023, 9). Therefore, in the absence of rapid, deep, and sustainable mitigation as well as accelerated adaptation action, losses and damages will continue to rise relentlessly and adverse impacts in the regions of Africa, LDCs, Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC) Central and South America, Asia and the Arctic, will continue to disproportionately affect what are the most vulnerable population (Calvin et al. 2023, 26).

However, especially after the IPCC AR5<sup>8</sup> report was issued, policies and laws made for the purpose of mitigating the progress of climate change have been consistently increasing. The world has been arousing the awareness of the global society after the analysis and conclusion that the emissions in 2030 would cause the maximum predicted temperature increase of 1.5°C to be exceeded, which will have severe consequences hindering the process of limiting the temperature increase below 2°C in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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<sup>8</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) produces comprehensive Assessment Reports every five to seven years, including the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) released in 2014, which influenced the Paris Agreement and global climate policies. (IPCC 2014)

This gap between the projected emissions and the implementation of policies has been the subject of discussion in major discussion arenas, such as international conferences like the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement (Calvin et al. 2023, 10), - these agreements will be subject of analyze in the course of this dissertation. The subject is discussed and studied at a global level and fails in its local application through, for example, resilient power systems, improved water use efficiency, agroforestry, sustainable aquaculture and fisheries, forest-based adaptation, green infrastructure and ecosystem services, enhanced health services, social safety nets, disaster risk management or planned relocation and resettlement (Calvin et al. 2023, 27).

When discussing the adoption of policies for the mitigation and adaptation of climate change, governance must be wedded to the thought that the choices and actions implemented today and over the next decade will be decisive in the current and future long-term impact of the mitigation of this phenomenon (Calvin et al. 2023, 24). Today's choices will be tomorrow's future. Therefore, cooperative and coordinated actions among a range of actors and at various levels are crucial. This means that government actions should be developed in close collaboration with civil society and the private sector for sustainable climate resilience at sub-national, national, and international levels (Calvin et al. 2023, 24).

## **Climate Change and the Security Framework**

The German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU) suggests that climate policy should be a preventive security policy, limiting global averaged surface temperatures to no more than 2°C. If mitigation fails, climate-induced security risks will manifest in various regions from 2025-2040. The key challenge is to take decisive climate policy action within the next 10-15 years to avoid socioeconomic distortions and intensify international security implications (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 6).

In the groundbreaking Europe-wide document presented by the German council – “World in Transition: Climate Change as Security Risk”, we were able to find some recommendations as guidelines for actions that nations, European and beyond could follow. In this document, we find both abstract recommendations, such as addressing and shaping global policy change, and practical recommendations (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 7).

Firstly, we must consider reforming the United Nations. As environmental-induced conflicts and security issues become more significant, the United Nations and its institutions should play a more crucial role in managing these problems. This way, WBGU supports better coordination of organizations and programs under the UN's auspices and enhances their role in prevention. As the UN Security Council's role in addressing climate change and environmental degradation is questioned, and the Security Council's mandate could be adjusted to address these challenges, WBGU recommends upgrading the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to a UN specialized agency and ensuring adequate financing for UNEP. In addition, the UN should also strengthen its development capacities by establishing a high-level Council on Global Development and Environment, replacing the ineffective Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In the short term, WBGU recommends policy guided by pragmatic proposals and a UN Sustainable Development Board, reporting to ECOSOC (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 7).

Secondly, ambitiously pursuing an international climate policy. The World Bank recommends adopting a global temperature guard rail limiting near-surface air temperature rise to a maximum of 2°C, requiring a 50% reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Therefore, industrialized countries should integrate newly industrialized and developing countries into mitigation efforts as well as preserving natural carbon stocks, particularly tropical forests, becoming a key goal of future climate protection policy (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 8).

Thirdly, implementing the energy turnaround in the European Union (EU). To be a credible negotiating partner in the climate process, the European Union should achieve Paris commitments and set ambitious reduction targets. As follows, the WBGU believes a 80% reduction target for greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 are appropriate. Additionally, the Energy Policy for Europe should be improved with binding targets, threshold values, and timetables. Importantly, the proposals should focus on sustainability criteria and a focus on efficiency revolution (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 8).

Fourthly, developing mitigation strategies through partnerships focuses on increasing improvement approaches and integrating climate protection as a cross-cutting theme in development cooperation. As such, Germany and the EU should enter strategic decarbonization partnerships with newly industrializing countries, such as China and

India, to move energy systems and energy efficiency towards sustainability. In this manner, conferences such as the G8+5 forum should be used to develop joint targets for promoting climate-compatible technologies and products, allowing countries to become the driving force in the transformation of the world's energy systems (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 9).

Fifthly, supporting adaptation strategies for developing countries. To adapt water resources management to climate change, international cooperation is crucial, allowing access to scientific data and reorienting water management towards action under increased uncertainty. As such, integrated water resources management offers a suitable framework for this. Alongside, growing agriculture to climate change requires strengthening and reorienting rural development, reforming world agricultural markets, and addressing the growing dependency on food imports. Therefore, international climate policy should focus on long-term supply and demand problems, such as compensating other adversely affected States for price increases and climate-related drops in agricultural yields. In addition, strengthening disaster prevention is also crucial and requires developing cross-sectoral approaches in development cooperation, focusing on emergency planning, adaptation of land-use planning, and clear decision-making structures. These strategies will help develop and implement effective adaptation strategies for developing countries, ensuring they can adapt to the impacts of climate change and maintain their resilience. Furthermore, reviewing disaster prevention systems in industrialized countries, especially in light of climate change challenges, is also highly recommended (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 9–10).

And lastly, managing migration through cooperation and developing international law. A comprehensive migration policy strategy is needed to address environmentally-induced migration, considering the interests of all stakeholders (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen 2007, 11). How this approach is taken will be developed in the course of the next chapters dedicated to the study of what we can and should do about climate migrants.

## **Climate Change and Displacement**

The discussion centered on this phenomenon of the influence of climate change on security has taken on more significant proportions since its effects have begun to

transform migration patterns across regions. Since 2017, history has been made, when the number of people forced to move by climate, refugees or climate migrants, surpassed the number of refugees originating from war and conflict. If in 2015 the world reached levels of instability and dangerousness as never imaginable before, in the middle of 2023 to the persistent economic crises, violence and terrorism in fragile regions and the mass movement of war refugees, we have added a pandemic, the war in Europe and the inflation with no end in sight as well as marked environmental deregulation. As such, the international security context is in a process of continuous change (Ramos 2017, 1). If once the international system's pool game focused on analyzing the behavioral actions of the great powers, today it is necessary to understand and analyze the behavior of "the rest" (Ramos 2017, 2) and their developments, negative and positive, which significantly disrupt the world order through unanticipated risks and threats. To analyze the way in which "micro-powers" (Ramos 2017, 2) traditionally places constraints on the order and on the actors of the game of greater power. The diffusion of power between States has meant that many actions, interests, and strategies are beyond the control of those who would be and are the most powerful (Ramos 2017, 1–2).

As of 2008, the European Security Strategy has recognized the changing security landscape and the perceived threats of poverty, pandemics, energy dependence, terrorism, weapons proliferation, regional conflicts, and organized crime have been joined by cyber threats, piracy, and climate change (Ramos 2017, 3). Before climate change appeared on a list as a mere challenge or threat in a spontaneous way, without proven interconnections and at the whim of events, today, this phenomenon is considered a real trigger of instability and general concern. It is no longer seen as a fragmented and punctual phenomenon but as a constant on the national and international security agendas. However, the major problem lies in the crisis management process and the lack of preparedness that exists until the problem arises. Nowadays, crisis management happens increasingly, but it happens mostly on top of the event instead of being based on an analysis and study of prevention and minimization of the consequences that arise from it. This problem happens a lot when it comes to the asylum of mass refugees or the response to a catastrophic climate event. In fact, solutions are sought, yet action happens only when the problem arrives (Ramos 2017, 4).

The preventive attitude, in the case of climate change, should be incorporated by all, despite the fact that the areas of great impact, i.e. developing countries, are enveloped by a feeling of injustice, because those who caused the consequences in these regions felt

were largely the developed countries that continually make promises in this regard that are not fulfilled (Ramos 2017, 4). In such a way, this correlation between developing and developed countries with antagonistic effects thus becomes extensive to the whole world, and challenges that before would be linked to power, are now linked to the lack of it. According to Ikenberry, this phenomenon is based on the concept of "interconnectedness and reciprocal action" (Ikenberry 2015 apud Ramos 2017, 5). In this line of thought, Ikenberry recognizes what is the profound change in the security strategy underway and, now especially aggravated and accelerated by the war in Europe, and the complex network of challenges that countries face, characterized as comprehensive, mutable, and uncertain. Thus, Ikenberry was among the first scholars to recognize the divergence of what are the current threats to international peace and security, being decentralized, regionally, and politically. That is, the relevant conflicts have decentralized from the great powers and the spectrum is widening and spreading to the entire world. Furthermore, the author highlights the fact mentioned above that current dangers such as climate change derive from the weakness of States rather than their strength and the distance that debilitated States or actors can take in the face of evolving discrepancies. If Ikenberry stated that the "various threats are interconnected and it is the prospect of their reciprocal action that multiplies the dangers" (Ikenberry 2015 apud Ramos 2017, 5), this reflection fits the underlying pattern of the danger of climate change and its cumulative effects. The author himself states this example and highlights how climate change triggers other crises such as the food crisis and, consequently, the migration crisis with the explosion of mass flows of individuals from the most destabilized regions (Ikenberry 2015 apud Ramos 2017, 5).

Poor countries are victims of constant phenomena that, instead of enhancing their structures and regions, considerably weaken their development as a whole. The convergence of their exponential growth with their weak social structures and scarcity of resources has a significant impact on the environment. The increasing pressure on arable land, food, natural resources, energy, water, employment, and housing, among others, in a more unstable context characterized by areas of unsustainable demography, an increasingly diverse, conflicting, and moving world, has the inevitable result of creating weaker social structures with unstoppable urbanization and less social capital, for example (Ramos 2017, 7). However, it is important to note that when we speak of developing countries we are talking about a total of 152 countries out of 193 countries overall. There is also a subset that includes 47 underdeveloped nations with extreme

poverty levels and the lowest level of development, the so-called Least Developing Countries, with 1.10 billion inhabitants that represent 13.88% of the world population. Most of these countries are located on the African continent, followed by some countries in the Near East, Southeast Asia, and Oceania. Faced with a scenario where economic growth does not keep up with population growth, the inevitable end will be a condition of greater poverty and, increasingly, instability and unsustainability (Ramos 2017, 8).

The quadrupling of the human population, the use of technologies, and the exploitation of the environment for short-term ends are three fundamental factors for the radical change that has occurred between humanity and the ecological system, according to Al Gore (Al Gore apud Ramos 2017, 13). This fundamental change has been attacked in terms of its scope and the gravity of its consequences, since today's environmental issues affect the ecological system in a way that is even existential, with the balance of the global climate at stake, the survival of our civilization is on the table of the political debate. The collision between humans and nature is causing a profound change in the earth's water cycle, the destruction of crucial natural ecological systems, and damage to the plants and animals on which we are daily dependent. It is estimated that between 20% and 50% of the species that currently inhabit the planet may become extinct during the course of this century, as well as the reduction of forest cover, desertification of the soil, acidification of the oceans, depletion of aquifers and crucial fishing areas, the continuous and excessive production of toxic waste and, above all, the increase in global temperature - the greatest manifestation of the collision between man and nature (Ramos 2017, 13).

In essence, the profound change in living conditions such as desertification, and reduction of arable land and aquifers, means that the most vulnerable suffer the greatest impact through the inability to adapt, scarcity of resources, and exponential population growth, which is reflected in a complete strategic context and weaker global governance, inevitably creating a source of instability (Ramos 2017, 14).

Climate change is currently endangering the livelihoods of many people. Especially in the most vulnerable regions, the developing countries, survival becomes so difficult that people are forced to leave their homes. As a consequence, they then move to a larger village and then to cities, as a prelude to migrating. Most cities are facing unstoppable growth presenting poor and detached peripheries, sources of criminality and instability. In summary, the high levels of poverty in these regions, and the lack of perspective have made the short and long-term consequences of climate change a cause of migration and displacement (Ramos 2017, 15).

Climate change-related human mobility has become a hot topic on political agendas, attracting much interest and, at the same time, controversy. Until the first decade of the 21st century, many academics contested the estimates of the mass movements of the so-called climate migrants for the supposed lack of methodological transparency and scientific rigor. However, with the continued existence and persistence of the topic in the political discourses and especially in the media, it has attracted special attention from the international system (Beyer e Milan 2023, 6).

The shift in this attention happens because of the spread of the movement. What was the initial mass movement related to environmental factors within the same country has shifted to a transnational level and the movement is now happening more frequently across borders. The new movement from the Global South to the Global North in response to climate change has given this phenomenon international and large-scale significance. Some examples of this large-scale migration associated with environmental factors include migration from Syria in 2015 and Central America in 2018 (Beyer e Milan 2023, 6). The magnitude of displacement enhanced by climate events and change illustrates the need to develop an understanding of the relationship between human mobility and the environment. In the last decade, internal displacement incited by storms, floods, wildfires, droughts, and extreme temperatures was estimated to be around 21.9 million annually (Beyer and Milan 2023, 6–7).

The phenomena experienced over the course of the last year exposed the severity of the population's pre-existing vulnerabilities and inequalities. Conflict, the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, environmental disasters, and the war in Ukraine coupled with a food security crisis, was the perfect storm to overshadow the progress made to date and put at extreme risk of vulnerability, individuals acting on a last resort basis such as displacement, calling themselves Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (IDMC 2023, 5). When compared to the 2021 figures, we see a sharp increase with approximately 71.1 million people living in an internally displaced situation by the end of 2022, very much in part because of the war in Ukraine but also because of persistent conflicts in the Global South as well as the increasingly frequent and destructive disasters (IDMC 2023, 6).

Additionally, approximately 31.8 million of the internal displacements were the result of weather-related events - such as storms (approximately 9.9m, related to cyclones and other storms), floods (approx. 19.2m), wildfires (approx. 366 000 thousand), droughts (approx. 2.2m), landslides (approx. 53 000 thousand) and extreme temperatures (approx.

12 000 thousand) – and around 716 000 were caused by geophysical activity - such as earthquakes (approx. 699 000 thousand), volcanic eruptions (approx. 13 000) and landslides (approx. 3 700) (IDMC 2023, 9). Given these figures and by analyzing the last decade, we can deduce that internal displacement in 2022 was 41% higher than the annual average of the last 10 years (IDMC 2023, 9). Such an increase is justified by the floods in Pakistan, the drought in the Horn of Africa and the persistence of the meteorological phenomenon known as "El Niño" or "La Niña"<sup>9</sup> (Stallard e Poynting 2023).

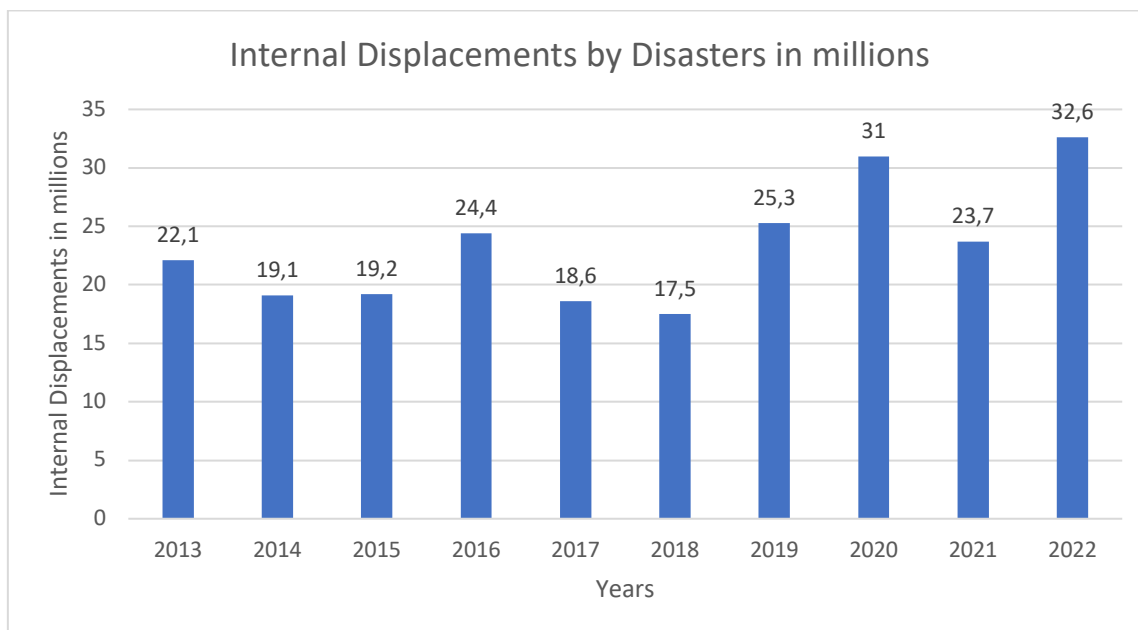


Figure 2 - Internal Displacements by Disasters in millions

Source: Own Elaboration based on the Global Report on Internal Displacements 2023 (IDMC 2023, 9)

By the present year, 2023, the planet has already suffered dozens of opposing cases resulting from the same phenomenon. The floods in Nigeria that have led to the death of hundreds of people and the displacement of millions, the floods that have caused landslides in Venezuela, the drought in Somalia where millions of people have been forced to leave their homes in search of water, food and humanitarian services, as well as in Kenya and Ethiopia, the floods in Chad and Afghanistan (Malta 2022) and many other cases that remain to be enumerated, are increasingly recurrent and numerous events leading to the forced displacement of millions of people in a changing climate.

<sup>9</sup> Global weather is currently impacted by the natural climate phenomena known as El Niño. It happens when eastern Pacific sea surface temperatures increase by at least 0.5°C over the long-term average. Trade winds deteriorate during El Niño, causing warm waters to move eastward. On the other hand, when La Niña occurs, east-to-west winds become stronger, forcing warm seas westward and causing cold water to ascend, resulting in lower sea surface temperatures.

In accordance with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in the next 30 years, it is estimated that 1.2 billion people will be considered climate migrants (Voultepsi and Kantemnidis 2023). According to the IOM's Head of Mission in Portugal, Vasco Malta, in the interview that was conducted<sup>10</sup>, within IOM there is a clear recognition of this group of people, having submitted a definition of environmental migrant to the United Nations, quoting "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" (Malta 2022). Millions of individuals will move, internationally or internally, for merely environmental reasons or for adverse reasons that will be complicated by the extremism of the climate, and will be affected without the possibility of change, expectations that will not be met and, consequently, we are left with a set of individuals on the move without any protection and without any way of survival for being on the tail end of a set of changes.

While in 1992 the IPCC warned that the greatest risk of climate change could be the human migration of millions who would be displaced by shoreline erosion, coastal flooding, and severe drought, in 2023 we are presented daily with the real numbers and case studies of millions of displacements caused by natural disasters (Schewel 2023). However, many of these terms remain nebulous and without any legal meaning attached to them. There is no government that offers a legal migration pathway based solely on an individual's exposure to the impacts of climate change. As the institution awarded for its action on forced migration, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), has over the years analyzed and affirmed that forced displacement by climate change impacts does not establish a proper basis for the application of refugee status (Schewel 2023). As such, many terms are emerging and whether it is a migrant or a refugee, it is imperative to look at this group of people driven to displacement due to the environment and adopt a holistic approach in terms of measures as well as a multi-level approach in terms of local, regional and global actions.

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<sup>10</sup> For more guidance, see Attachment VI "Exploratory Interview with Vasco Malta", with the full interview transcription with the Head of Mission of IOM Portugal.

## **Conclusions: An Idea of Insolubility**

According to the study carried out here, climate change is identified as one of the greatest existential threats to humanity as we know it, and there is an unbreakable link between nature and the individual, namely through their actions and consequences. As such, there is an urgent need to regularize the policies and actions of each and every nation in order to protect the human right to a livable environment.

Its consequences are becoming increasingly unpredictable and catastrophic. This is largely due to its interconnection with other global challenges and the need to change strategic variables in society, such as security policy. We know that their impact is regionalized and that there is a greater propensity to attack certain regions of the world, namely developing countries, despite the fact that many of those responsible for the greatest impacts through gas pollution are in developed countries. As such, it is necessary to address global mitigation efforts and climate adaptation as a whole.

Rather than only a temperature rise, climate change represents the greatest threat to human mobility. Decisions about migration as a feasible tactic are influenced by variables such as weather patterns, storms, sea level rise, biodiversity loss, health risks, food insecurity, and idiosyncratic political, structural, and distinctive concerns. Migration is either a form of adaptation or a failure to adapt, depending on the timing and effectiveness of policy interventions. Therefore, governments must deal with adaptation to climate change holistically, not just in terms of erecting physical structures or financing climate-resistant crops (McAdam 2012, 21–22).

In this second chapter, taking into account the study we have done and our secondary objective of portraying the technicality of the climate context, we know that these climate changes are expected to affect and boost the displacement of a total of 216 million people by 2050, causing both internal and across borders displacement, but mostly internal movement within their own country. As such, solving the problem will initially start from the source, since from it we can address the various aspects of the problem, which are political, economic, social, and, let's say, technological. The most affected regions will be the African continent, namely North and Sub-Saharan Africa, the Latin American region, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, South Asia as well as East Asia and the Pacific. In short, the regions most affected will be the LDCs, the LLDCs, and the SIDS.

Given all the information we have on the table, we are faced with a general idea of the insolubility of this issue since we have come to the conclusion that there is no study or expert that tells us that the number of these climate-displaced people, i.e. climate migrants, will decrease over time, but we do have information that the number will continue to grow gradually or even exponentially, or that it will increase dramatically if nothing is done to mitigate it. There is, therefore, an imperative need to analyze the problem, because the evolution of the climate is expected to remain negative. This can be seen in the global temperatures, where we are not close to achieving the decrease below 2°C above pre-industrial levels predicted by the Paris Agreement, but we are seeing projections very close to an increase of 2.5°C, a long way from the critical limit of 1.5°C that has been recognized in order to avoid extreme weather events, which have been recurrently occurring.

## **Chapter III: Through the nebula**

### **Measures Adopted to Address Climate Migration**

#### **Migration: A Global Overview**

Before entering the world of climate migration and its effects and consequences as well as the solutions presented towards this reality, it is imperative to contextualize today's world of migration. As such, by applying the World Migration Report 2022 - recently published by IOM - as a fact-checker combating the overwhelming disinformation about migration, we will understand the insights of an era that is showing an increasing interest in the world of migration and migrants (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 13).

Migration is a phenomenon as old as humanity. However, its definition and corresponding acceptance, have been full of difficulties since it covers very different situations, reasons, and legal consequences. The UN Migration Agency (IOM) defines a migrant as “any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (a) the person’s legal status; (b) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (c) what the causes for the movement are; or (d) what the length of the stay is” (United Nations s.d.).

IOM definition is, therefore, a broad definition since it “covers all forms of migration (voluntary/forced migration, internal/international migration, long-term/short-term migration), different motives for migration (migration because of political persecution, conflicts, economic problems, environmental degradation or a combination of these reasons or migration in search of better economic conditions or conditions of survival or well-being, or other motives) and irrespective of the means used to migrate (legal/irregular migration)” (United Nations s.d.). This definition also includes “migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification” (United Nations s.d.).

For the European Union, the understanding is more restricted and correlated with time. For the EU migration is the “movement of a person either across an international border (international migration) or within a state (internal migration) for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate” (European Commission s.d.). Not being the tonic of this dissertation, we will not proceed to analyze other definitions and concepts and in this text, we will take the IOM definition as the reference, unless otherwise specified.

The relevance is, however, for the immense variety of complex human situations involved either for those who are migrants or for the receiving communities. Relevant are also the sensibilities involved easily exploited by misinformation and politicization of a phenomenon concerning all levels and touching almost every society around the world. Reality has been changing and our country of birth is often no longer considered our forever home. One in every thirty individuals are migrants, mostly migrating within countries instead of across borders (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 21).

When we talk about migration, the discussion on the subject begins with the input of the analysis of numbers and data to understand the changes in scale, direction, frequency, emerging trends, and demographic shifts related to social and economic transformations (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 12).

Currently, on a global scale, there are an estimated 281 million international migrants, which equates to 3.6 percent of the global population and which has been increasing significantly over the last five decades (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 12). This estimated number of international migrants in 2020 is more than three times the number estimated in 1970 and is estimated to be approximately 128 million more than in 1990 (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 23). Despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years slowing down these dynamics, the phenomenon also highlighted an important interconnection between migration and mobility (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 23).

The last three years were not business as usual given the impacts of COVID-19 and the war in Europe. The worldview on migration cannot be shaped by observations that would previously have been made. Nowadays, observations on the benefits of migration across the world, best practices for safe, sustainable, and well-managed migration, as well as the impact of crises and misinformation, carry a higher importance due to the daily risk of political deviance, diverting people's eyes from what is truly needed and deteriorating the migration reality (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 1).

Many of the core values of this matter such as equality, sustainability, cooperation, collaboration, tolerance, and inclusion were often left aside when the pressure to provide a coercive response to the pandemic began to be implemented in most nations, creating a high degree of singularity in the international arena. According to the World Migration Report and as Gian Luca Gardini, President of the Scientific Committee of the European Institute of International Studies, would say, we can conclude that the impacts of COVID-19, "have called for the return to a holistic understanding of the world and the place that humans occupy in it" (Gardini 2020, 4).

In such a way, we must look to the future of migratory dynamics, recognizing the systematic effect that COVID-19 has had and will continue to have in the coming years. COVID-19 radically changed mobility around the world, with the hope that its effects would have short-term repercussions, after several waves of infection and various mutations, the effects lasted over time and this global event tested the resilience of the various countries, communities, systems, and sectors of the transnational society (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 2).

In addition, the last two years of migratory dynamics and displacement events have been marked by particular social situations. The flow of strong displacement driven by conflict, as in the recent case of Ukraine as well as the case of the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan, and/or by political and economic instability experienced in the case of Venezuela and Afghanistan. However, the years 2020, 2021, and 2022 were also marked by large-scale displacement imposed by climate and weather-related disasters in countries such as China, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, the United States, and Haiti (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 2).

All these data collected for several consecutive years have been teaching us that migration is not a uniform phenomenon across the world and that it is influenced by various factors, economic, geographical, and demographic, among others. Thus, migration patterns are distinct along the immense international borders and, consequently, we see different migration corridors being developed during the last few years. The largest trend and the most common corridor to observe is the movement of individuals from developing countries to developed countries with large-scale, innovative, and steadily growing economies, such as the United States of America, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, or Germany. The second largest corridor is a reflection of protracted conflict and related displacement, such as displacement from the Syrian Arab Republic to Turkey (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 2).

In order to have a bigger picture of the migration phenomenon, it is necessary to look at some data that reflect key migration information at a glance, as per the World Migration 2022.

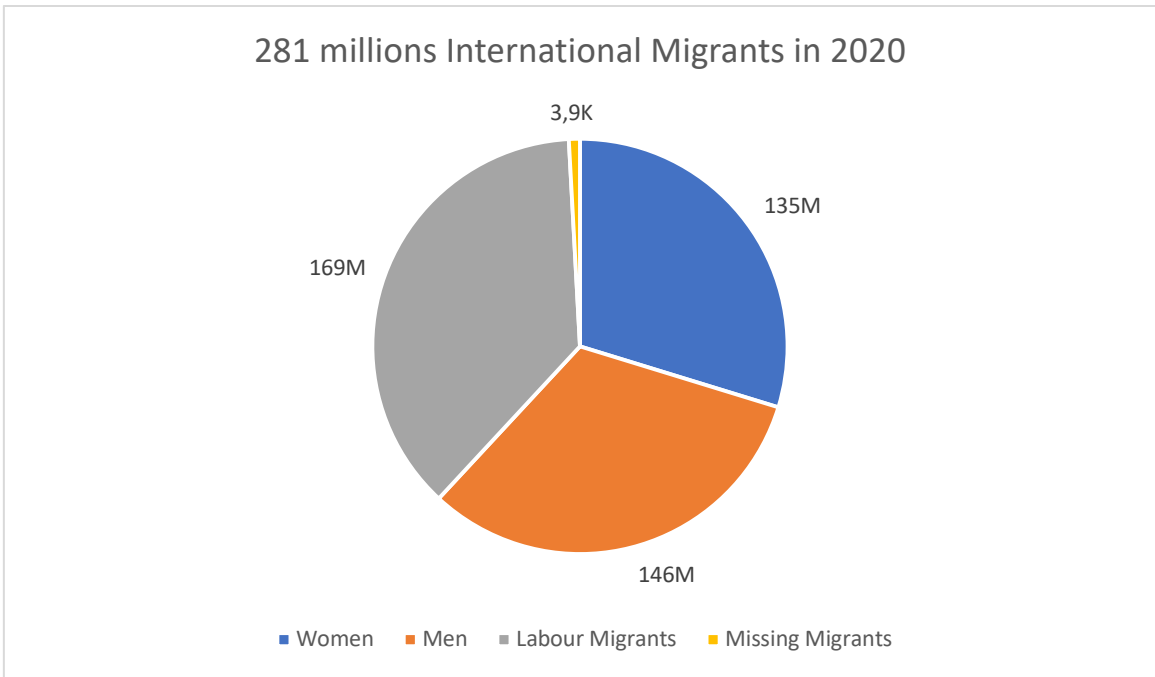


Figure 3 - International Migrants in 2020

Source: Own Elaboration based on the World Migration Report 2022 (McAuliffe e et al. 2021, 3)

When comparing with 2019 and as per the report, from 2019 to 2020 we see a substantial increase in international migrants from 272 million (corresponding to 3.5 percent of the world population) to the, already mentioned, 281 million (corresponding to 3.6 percent). Of these international migrants, 135 million are women, 146 million are men and 169 million are considered labor migrants (an increase of 5 million when compared to the 2017 data of 164 million labor migrants) (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 3). In this totality are also considered the missing migrants who, in 2020, were approximately 3900, corresponding to a considerable decrease of approximately 1,500 individuals compared to the 2019 data (of an estimated 5400 missing migrants) (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 3).

### Conceptualizing Climate Migrants

Within migration, hostility can emerge in a context of tension between the new arrivals and the host communities, a tension that is rooted in different reasons ranging from ideologic, economic, cultural, or other. We know that some move for economic reasons, and others flee from violence and persecution, but more recently, a third category has been growing and will be analyzed here - climate migrants, those who move due to environmental reasons. It is important to know how to approach intervention vis-à-vis

these migrants, but before talking about a practical application it is necessary to discuss perceptions of deservedness and self-responsibility in the causes of displacement, as these directly influence different evaluations and opening of intervention policies in a direct pathway with the different categories of migrants (Arias and Blair 2019, 1).

According to the study conducted by Arias and Blair focusing on the US and Germany as host countries for climate migrants, we live in a context where there are three broad categories of migrants, and climate migrants are probably considered an intermediate category, insofar as it is perceived as more deserving than people moving because of pure economic reasons, but less deserving than people fleeing from persecution or other forms of direct harm – the traditional causes of refugee flows. That is, they are in an intermediate place where they are more supported than labor migrants and less than refugees (Arias and Blair 2019, 1).

This new class of individuals was first identified by Essam El-Hinnawi in 1985, who, at the time, was a Research Professor at the National Research Centre of Cairo as well as an expert on the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). Although the origin of the denomination dates back to the previous year by the International Institute for the Environment and Development (IIED), the author populated and cultivated the term in the international community, introducing this migration population group in the UN. Essam El-Hinnawi defined environmental refugees as "those people who have been forced to leave their traditional habitat, temporarily or permanently, because of a marked environmental disruption (natural and/or triggered by people) that jeopardized their existence and/or seriously affected the quality of their life"(Hinnawi 1985, 4).

Within this broad definition, according to El-Hinnawi, we can also distinguish three major categories of environmental refugees. Firstly, we have those who are temporarily displaced because of environmental stress - as a consequence of disasters such as natural hazards like an earthquake or a cyclone – and once the environmental disruption subsides and the area of residence becomes habitable again, their community returns to inhabit the territory of origin (Hinnawi 1985, 4). The second category is those who have to be permanently displaced and re-settled in a new area of residence different from their origin. In this case, permanent changes in their habitats are involved, often man-made and severely affecting their home territory to a point of no return. Finally, the third category involving individuals or groups of individuals who have migrated from a territory of their country of origin, temporarily or permanently, to a new territory within its borders in search of a better quality of life. In these movements, the element of the

refugee's purpose stands out, i.e. the displacement happens because of a perceived change in the conditions in which the individual lives and his inability to cope with it. In most cases, the migratory movement takes place due to the inexistence and deterioration of resources of basic necessity that provide the minimum quality of life of its inhabitants (Hinnawi 1985, 5).

Perceptions of deservedness are a very relevant concept in this analysis as they are extremely relevant in defining the position where different categories of migrants find themselves. In Arias and Blair's study concerning the main question "Does the reason why a migrant moves affect public support for his/her resettlement?" (Arias and Blair 2019, 1), based on a conjoint experiment design embedded in nationally representative surveys of adult respondents in the US and Germany - a method that is gaining a relevant particularity in the field of migration - it was possible to build a realistic profile of what an individual might be as a migrant (Arias and Blair 2019, 1).

The reason that drives displacement is very relevant as the community becomes more empathetic towards it (Arias and Blair 2019, 2). The sympathy that the community feels towards refugees is much greater than the sympathy felt by economic migrants, while climate migrants fall in the middle. In the case of this study which focused particularly on two causes of climate migrants, some as fast and on-set phenomena such as wildfires and flooding, and others as slow on-set such as droughts, within the environmental causes, it was concluded that the cause itself is not so relevant. The sympathy felt by the community was the same, whether it was a flood or a drought (Arias e Blair 2019, 4). The same happens with the geographical migration flow factor, where people show the same level of sympathy whether it is within the country, internally displaced, or internationally, across borders (Arias and Blair 2019, 7).

The fact that the concept of climate migration is not a legal category can be nebulous in this debate, as one person's climate migrant can be a labor migrant to another. In other words, it is ambiguous how we connect certain individuals to this narrative in a way that has certain political implications (Arias and Blair 2019, 7). The contestation around this terminology is not a crucial feature for this thesis, however, we must recognize if climate migrants were to be considered a legal category that would require a lot of rights and obligations, since States have a set of requirements that they must, imperatively, meet, in addition to the obligation to provide resettlement. In this context, there is growing concern in the Global North that a wider set of obligations will fall upon them as the scope for future climate migration is enormous (Arias and Blair 2019, 7).

In general, the term used, both by international organizations and key institutions, to represent the uniqueness of this type of migration has been “Climate-Driven migration”. The eventual use of the term “refugee” is more sensitive, since it could not only increase the obligations of state actors but would also increase the public support provided. Notwithstanding, researchers in recent research have found that the reality does not necessarily follow this line of reasoning since, when analyzing the different policies made around climate migrants, one comes to the conclusion that there is already much support built around this population group. Thus, Aria and Blair argue that the added value or mere benefit in terms of public support of the shift from climate migrant to refugee might not be that relevant, and potential advocates might avoid the implications (Arias and Blair 2019, 7).

The term refugee is connoted with a set of specific obligations for the countries that adopt it, hence the resistance to debate the possibility of characterizing climate migrants as refugees. In reality, many of the already known migratory movements may be related to the environmental cause, since climate migration fits within what is called the mixed migration paradigm. Let us imagine that we have a set of individuals moving from Bali due to the desertification of the land that provides their livelihood. Such individuals may be exposed to all sorts of land clashes, inserted intervention of community conflict, all round up in the value of land and other climate factors. In the real world, these individuals may be farmers, and since they are left without their object of work and source of income when they move they also go in search of economic opportunities, in this case employment, and may be characterized as labor migrants. In practice, many of these categories of migrants are interlinked and difficult to disentangle - are these individuals just climate migrants or are they also a refugee or economic migrants?

The only possible theoretical measure to divide the three existing categories is through the construction of a realistic and individual profile where, after a complete and broad analysis, one could associate an exclusive label. However, the real world is not linear to theoretical guidelines and this exercise is deeply complicated to carry out in institutional and organizational policies.

Currently, a variety of terms such as environmental refugees, climate refugees, environmentally forced migrants, climate-induced migrants, and climate migrants are used in public debate agendas concerning the discussion of the displacement of people by climate causes. While it is true that a refugee and a displaced from a climatic event are

both involuntary actions, it is also true that climate migration is a complex phenomenon that can take various forms. Once we may witness an individual combining the climate threat with the search for economic opportunities, other times we may see climate associated with an obligatory displacement as a refugee (Arias and Blair 2019, 2).

Since the incidence of climate change and migration, as well as their intersection in the form of climate-driven migration, are increasingly frequent and serious, individuals, governments, and international organizations should conduct their attitudes according to the understanding of the public perception of the issue in order to lead to the resolution of best practices and mitigating policies to be implemented (Arias and Blair 2019, 8).

### **Addressing Climate Migration**

After this overview of the migration scenario as well as the perceptions about different categories of migrants, it is possible to proceed to the relationship that has been gaining greater notoriety and visibility in the various political agendas (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 233)– especially since the international conference on population and development carried out in 1994 (Apap and Revel 2021, 2) - and which is the focus of our study, the relationship between climate change and migration and the respective outcome, the third category of migrants – climate migrants. Whatever the denomination that organizations or institutions prefer to adopt, it is a universal truth that they exist and it is imperative to look at these migrants or refugees and discuss what to do about their existence and their protection.

Since 2008, over 318 million people worldwide have been displaced by natural disasters, with 30.7 million in 2020 alone (Apap and Revel 2021, 1). The trend has been growing, with many finding refuge within their own countries or going abroad. Climate change, particularly in Europe, has led to a rise in the number of “climate refugees” or “climate migrants”. National and international responses have been limited, and protection for these people remains inadequate as the 1951 Refugee Convention only covers people with a well-founded fear of persecution and who are unable or unwilling to seek protection from their home countries<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, international institutions such as the EU have expressed growing concern and taken action to support these (climate)

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<sup>11</sup> For more guidance, see Attachment I “Defining Refugee in the International System” for a detailed analysis of the 1951 Convention and its definition of refugee status.

refugees (Apap and Revel 2021, 1). However, translating policy principles into actionable activities at national and local levels remains a challenge due to the fact that migration, in the context of adverse climate impacts, is multicausal with decision-making influenced by various factors, including climate drivers (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 233).

Although we have data - which has already been transcribed in this document on internally displaced persons (IDPs) - and the vast majority of people forcibly displaced by climate-related events are of this nature, some individuals move abroad, referring to themselves as “externally displaced persons” (Apap and Revel 2021, 2). As such, there is a struggle to ascertain the number of those who move across borders for climate-related reasons, and while we know the numbers of those who move internally, it is difficult to get an overview of the global scale of this type of migration. However, this is not the only cause of the lack of data, the legal lacuna regarding the status of climate migrants moving across borders prevents the implementation of an international legal framework that addresses the issue in its magnitude (Apap and Revel 2021, 2). According to Isabel Borges, Professor, and Researcher at the Norwegian Business School and University of Oslo, during the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) hearing, which took place in 2020, she enlightened that “the absence of an accurate definition of what constitutes a person displaced by environmental factors has resulted in the inability to measure exactly the number of existing and potential displacement flows” (European Economic and Social Committee 2020).

Climate displacement is commonly associated with internal displacement but following the launch of the Nansen Initiative in 2012 - a document that will make a major contribution to this issue and, including, to this dissertation when addressing the solutions on the table - the international community has started to consider the phenomenon of external climate migration (Apap and Revel 2021, 2).

The Nansen Initiative was launched in 2012 by Norway and Switzerland, and aimed to address the legal protection gap for people externally displaced by climate-related issues. It resulted in a non-binding agenda for the protection of cross-border displaced persons in the context of disasters and climate change, endorsed by 109 States (Schallenueller 2011). During the Nansen Conference on Climate Change and Displacement in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, ten Nansen principles were formulated based on a broad set of recommendations to respond to the challenge of displacement in the context of climate. The principles emphasize the need for a sound knowledge base, roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders, and the need for regional frameworks and

international cooperation to prevent displacement, assist, and protect communities affected by displacement. Additionally, the principles also emphasize the need for non-discrimination, consent, empowerment, participation, and partnerships with those directly affected, taking into account the voices of the displaced or those threatened with displacement (Apap and Revel 2021, 8).

The initiative paved the way for COP21, where the Paris Agreement recognized climate change as a threat to humankind and a trigger for human mobility. In accordance with the Report of the Conference of the Parties on its twenty-first session, held in Paris from 30 November to 13 December 2015, the conference and its parts “recognizes that climate change is a common concern of humankind and includes a reference to migrants, calling on parties to respect, promote and consider their respective obligations towards migrants, among others, when taking action to address climate change” (Apap and Revel 2021, 9). One of the decisions addressed by its Executive Committee to give effect to the agreement reached there would be, and I quote from paragraph 49 of the same document:

*“49. Also requests the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism to establish, according to its procedures and mandate, a task force to complement, draw upon the work of and involve, as appropriate, existing bodies and expert groups under the Convention including the Adaptation Committee and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group, as well as relevant organizations and expert bodies outside the Convention, to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change;”* (UNFCCC 2019a, 8).

Subsequently, in 2016, the initiative was strengthened, and its process was finalized with the creation of the Platform on Disaster Displacement, which I will develop shortly (Apap and Revel 2021, 8). In this way and at the same level of importance for future integration and adaptation solutions, the UN General Assembly adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in the same year, calling for the development of two global compacts on refugees and migrants. The creation of the second, called the Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration and agreed upon in 2018, would be essential in recognizing the urgency of the situation of migrants forced to move due to climate change, despite never establishing and guaranteeing any official and legal protection status (Apap and Revel 2021, 9).

In the same year, 2018, and as COP21 opened the door to discussion on the issue of climate displacement, the UN Climate Change Conference COP24 was held to address

climate change and implement the Paris Agreement (Apap and Revel 2021, 9). In this conference, climate migration was addressed differently and recognized as a concern and global challenge, identifying that climate change can exacerbate migration and displacement patterns (UNFCCC 2018). This differentiation in discussion resulted in a joint decision (Decision 10)<sup>12</sup> (UNFCCC 2019b, 40) encouraging its constituent parts to continue work on understanding human mobility, both internal and external, as a result of climate change and work in close collaboration with its Executive Committee (Apap and Revel 2021, 9).

The following year, in 2019, COP25 continued to emphasize the importance of recognizing climate-induced migration and underlined the need to address the vulnerability and rights of climate migrants, especially following the IPCC report<sup>13</sup> (Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change 2019) on desertification and the consequences on the deterioration of human quality of life (IOM s.d.).

The need for recognition continued in 2020 with COP26 and the continued acknowledgment of the necessity to adopt comprehensive strategies on climate migrants as well as the challenges posed by climate migration. At the same time, the conference discussed the importance of establishing frameworks for protection and resettlement in addition to integrating the issue into international agreements such as the Paris Agreement, being an integral part of global climate action (UNFCCC and UK Government s.d.).

Later on, before the last annual conference, the COP27 that took place in Egypt, the former Director General of IOM, António Vitorino, left an important message to all heads of state, mentioning the latest data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's Global Report 2022 and the World Bank - already cited here - and calling for the urgency to act and implement measures in order to leave no one behind (IOM s.d.). COP27 was prepared to tackle the phenomenon of climate change displacement with

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<sup>12</sup> “Decision 10/CP.24, Report of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, (...) Also recalling Article 8 of the Paris Agreement, (...) 5. Encourages the Executive Committee: (...) (b) To continue its work on human mobility under strategic workstream (d) of its five-year rolling workplan,<sup>9</sup> including by considering the activities set out in paragraphs 38 and 39 of its report referred to in paragraph 1(a) above;”

<sup>13</sup> The Special Report on Climate Change and Land (SRRCL) was the second Special Report in the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Cycle. It focuses on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems. The report builds on the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report and is the second of three cross-Working Group Special Reports in the AR6.

several conversations on the agenda around the subject, but the intended breakthrough has yet to be achieved (IOM s.d.).

Hence, despite the recognition of people externally displaced by climate-related issues being affirmed and acclaimed over the years and the sequential conferences, climate migrants are still caught in a grey area and a legal void.

## **UNHCR's Approach**

Although the UNHCR's legal basis, the 1951 Refugee Convention and its additional 1967 Protocol<sup>14</sup> (UNHCR s.d.), does not recognize climate change and related natural hazards as valid grounds to acquire refugee status, the UNHCR has made clear its concern to combat the "defining crisis of our time" (UNHCR s.d.) - climate change - and to provide assistance to those displaced by it. As regards the possibility of creating a new treaty or convention with the main subject and objective focused on the protection and assistance of climate migrants, UNHCR believes that those who move as a result of environmental change should be left to each national government itself, in theory (Apap and Revel 2021, 4). While for the European Commission, it should be, at least, considered a new binding convention to protect climate-displaced people, focusing on regional systems like the Kampala Convention<sup>15</sup> (Hub 2012) in Africa, which may better reflect subsidiarity and state behavior (Apap and Revel 2021, 4).

According to Article 1 of the 1951 Convention, a refugee is defined as someone who "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of [their] nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail [themselves] of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of [their] former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it" (UNHCR 2011, 14). However, due to its limiting character as it was created after the Second World War and limits its action strictly to the concept of persecution, regional instruments have been created according to the different contexts

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<sup>14</sup> For more guidance, see Attachment II "The Relevance of the 1951 Refugee Convention" to analyze how this legal definition provided a set of criteria from which certain rights and obligations could arise.

<sup>15</sup> The Kampala Convention, a treaty by the African Union, was enacted in December 2012 to protect internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Africa. It requires states to allocate resources, adopt policies, and enact legislation to prevent displacement and support IDPs. The convention also outlines the roles of armed groups, non-state actors, and civil society organizations in preventing internal displacement. The first of its kind globally, it has been signed by 37 African countries.

and origins of refugees as a complement to this convention. One example of agreements created to reference an objective number of circumstances compelling refugees to flee their countries of origin was the 1969 OAU (Organization of African Union) Refugee Convention which includes "external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order" (Sharpe 2018) for people fleeing Somalia. As well as the 1984 Cartagena Declaration, which will become very relevant to the defense of climate migrants and which includes displacement by circumstances of "generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order" (UNEP s.d.).

The UNHCR considers that the protection of migrants and refugees is essential as States are primarily responsible for protecting the fundamental human rights of their citizens, and when this protection cannot be guaranteed for political, conflictual, violent, and other reasons, an individual is exposed to a series of violations of their rights and is, therefore, forced to leave their home and find stability in another country or within their own country. Since their State does not protect them, the international community has to take the lead and ensure the safety and security of all (UNHCR s.d.). The same needs to be ensured when individuals are displaced by the climate emergency. The UNHCR recognizes that the climate crisis is a human crisis and underlines what is stated by the Global Compact on Refugees (UN General Assembly 2018), recognizing that climate, environmental degradation, and disasters interact directly and increasingly frequently with the movement of refugees and migrants. As such, recognizing the sense of urgency, preparedness becomes the order of the day in order to mitigate future protection needs and prevent increased displacement from this source (UNHCR s.d.).

Regarding UNHCR's work in addressing both climate change and disaster-related displacement, in terms of law and policy, the organization provides legal advice, guidance, and support to the international community to promote not only the protection of climate-displaced refugees and migrants but also the discussion of their rights on international agendas (UNHCR s.d.). In terms of operations, the international organization aims to establish strong partnerships to jointly increase the chances of predicting and preparing for climate emergencies. Additionally, with initiatives such as the Refugee Environmental Protection Fund (REP Fund) and the Operational Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability 2022-2025, they seek to incorporate consideration for climate and the environment into their operational responses (UNHCR s.d.). The REP Fund aims to create a sustainable financing mechanism for reforestation

and clean-cooking programs in climate-vulnerable refugee-hosting communities. This would generate large-scale refugee-generated carbon credits, replenishing the Fund and reinvesting in new programs, ensuring financial and operational sustainability (UNHCR s.d.). Also, the Organization’s Operational Strategy focuses on an action plan based on strengthening the resilience and protection of forcibly displaced persons and their respective host communities in relation to the impact of climate change. Recognizing their multi-dimensional interplay, its action will be structured on recognizing climate migrants and their hosts as agents of change themselves (UNHCR s.d.).

In addition to these initiatives, UNHCR plays a key role in the Global Protection Cluster, an inter-institution that brings together non-governmental organizations, international organizations, and various UN agencies involved in protection work in humanitarian emergencies, whether they arise from armed conflict or disasters. This multi-agency recognizes that in times of crisis, humanity demands action and protection for those most vulnerable (Global Protection Cluster s.d.).

Furthermore, UNHCR's action is reinforced by joint work between UN agencies, notably IOM. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2022, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), published a treaty that may indicate the beginning of a new era in the relations between UNHCR and IOM<sup>16</sup>. Under the name of “Framework of Engagement: Serving & Protecting Together”, the two main organizations committed to the principle of human and orderly migration benefit to the society and migrants, signed the document aiming to strengthen their ties, collaboration, and complementary action on 3 critical areas, namely the mixed movements of migrants and refugees, the durable solutions for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and data (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022, 1).

In the last decades, we’ve been observing the interaction between these two intergovernmental institutions that work closely to mitigate the problems related to Migrant and Refugee movements, under the scope of the United Nations. On one side, IOM is dedicated to meeting the operational challenges of migration, advancing the understanding of migration issues, encouraging social and economic development through migration, and upholding the human dignity and well-being of migration (IOM s.d.). On the other side, UNHCR is devoted to saving lives, protecting rights, and building

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<sup>16</sup> For more guidance, see Attachment III “Relation between UNHCR and IOM – A New Chapter ahead”, where we explain into greater detail about the historical context of the two organizations and the future joint work they aim to develop.

a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities, and stateless people. This global organization is committed to ensuring that every person has the right to seek asylum and find a safe refugee (UNHCR s.d.).

Fast-forward to late June 2022, with all the background presented, IOM and UNHCR signed the Framework Engagement agreement, reinforcing the idea that together these two organizations are stronger to better serve the people that they both aim to protect, assist, and seek solutions (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022, 1). With all this juncture and history behind the two main agencies working in the field of migration, some people may ask themselves if a merger would facilitate the management of all related work within the condition of migrants globally. Nonetheless, the question it's not clear as that could indicate that one of them gave up their human resources and individual responsibilities, so all efforts are being put into improving and maximizing the way they support individuals in transition (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022, 9).

## **Regional's Approaches**

After acknowledging the tremendous challenges ahead in this regard, the creation of the Platform on Disaster Displacement was the place where we can observe the results of an active partnership. Not only between UNHCR and IOM but also with other key partners and actors such as UNDRR (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction), UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), WMO (World Meteorological Organization), and UNDP (UN Development Programme) (UNHCR s.d.).

The Platform on Disaster Displacement, as a state-led initiative in support of the implementation of the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction<sup>17</sup> (UNDRR s.d.), and the Paris Agreement, has opened a space for cooperation and dialogue between governments, international organizations, and other stakeholders to share knowledge, best practices, and policy solutions to protect the rights and provide assistance to those displaced by the adverse effects of climate change. At the

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<sup>17</sup> The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 is a major agreement in the post-2015 development agenda, providing Member States with concrete actions to protect development gains from disaster risks. It aligns with other 2030 Agenda agreements and advocates for substantial reduction in disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods, health, and assets. The framework recognizes the State's primary role in reducing disaster risk but shares responsibility with local government and the private sector.

same time, the platform also facilitates the development of comprehensive strategies that will be essential in protecting and discussing what to do about these migrants, emphasizing resilience, and strengthening disaster risk reduction measures. In a sense, it has become the forum, on a global scale, for those advocating for the rights and protections of this population (Platform on Disaster Displacement s.d.).

These normative frameworks not only reflect an understanding of the impact of climate on people but also an acknowledgment of the need to act proactively. Proactive action can and should be based on a number of existing instruments relevant to preparing for, assisting, and protecting current climate migration. At an international level, these include human rights conventions and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. These principles constitute an international framework and standard for the protection of victims of natural disasters that do not go beyond borders (Apap and Revel 2021, 7) and has a broad legal basis in several instruments, among which we would like to highlight the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (applied by analogy), and the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I and II) (OHCHR s.d.).

Since 2009, the Council of Europe has been advising the use of this powerful international instrument for the development of a global framework for the protection of those who move across borders due to climate change and natural disaster (Apap e Revel 2021, 7). While it has not yet been used to design this international guide to cross-border displacement, it has been used to develop a crucial regional instrument, the Kampala Convention. This is a complementary form of protection that offers an alternative to individuals in Africa who are not protected by the 1951 Refugee Convention and its additional protocol (Apap and Revel 2021, 7). Additionally, at a regional level, highlights the Nansen Initiative discussed above and with the greatest impact of the external climate migration discussion.

However, despite the repeated failures to target mitigation action on the ground, there are some countries that have built policies at the national level that can serve as examples for the necessary action. Some of these examples, concerning subsidiary protection, have been presented by the Nordic countries, namely Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. In a study advanced by two professors from the London School of Economics and Aalto University School of Business, focused on presenting policy

lessons regarding the exercise of dealing with a refugee or migration crisis they take the example of Finland's actions in contrast to other European countries (Hangartner and Sarvimäki 2017). Given that, prior to the 2015 refugee crisis, Finland issued a type of residence permit called "humanitarian protection" (Hangartner and Sarvimäki 2017, 10) that could be granted to individuals who did not fulfill the requirements for refugee status or subsidiary protection and who were simultaneously trapped by not being able to return to their country of origin due to security and conflict issues or environmental catastrophe (Hangartner and Sarvimäki 2017, 10).

Sweden and Finland have adopted disaster displacement provisions as a form of refugee-like protection under national law. The Swedish provision, suspended in 2016 and repealed in 2021, was framed as an alternative source of international protection for non-citizens who need protection due to an external or internal armed conflict or environmental disaster (Scott and Garner 2022, 105–6). The similarly-worded Finnish provision, found in section 88a of the 2004 Finnish Aliens Act, was added in 1999 until its removal in 2016 (Scott and Garner 2022, 106). Therefore, Sweden and Finland are two of only a few<sup>18</sup> European Union Member States to have adopted such provisions, providing valuable insights into regional calls for new norms of international protection to address cross-border displacement in the context of disasters and climate change. In addition, other Nordic countries have also taken legal and policy measures to address cross-border displacement, such as Denmark issuing residence permits to people affected by famine in Afghanistan, and Norway – having previously played a leading role in the launch of the Nansen Initiative and consequently as a member of the Steering Committee of the initiative's successor, PDD – also recognizing drought as a significant factor precluding internal relocation in cases involving Somalia seeking international protection (Scott and Garner 2022, 107).

On the other corner of the world, we also find a lesson to be learned from the creation of a specific visa for climate refugees in New Zealand («With Climate Crisis Generating Growing Threats to Global Peace, Security Council Must Ramp Up Efforts, Lessen Risk of Conflicts, Speakers Stress in Open Debate | UN Press» 2023). The Pacific small island developing States, such as the Marshall Islands, face significant challenges due to climate change, including rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and extreme

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<sup>18</sup> For more guidance, see: <https://www.bmz.de/de/themen/klimawandel-und-entwicklung/migration-und-klima> to analyze the German approach introduced on the official website of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

weather events. They face extinction and are 15 times more likely to die from climate-related impacts, as well as being the most affected by forced migration via rising sea levels. Therefore, they appeal for urgency to address these issues from the adoption of a more comprehensive security strategy and definition by the UN Security Council («With Climate Crisis Generating Growing Threats to Global Peace, Security Council Must Ramp Up Efforts, Lessen Risk of Conflicts, Speakers Stress in Open Debate | UN Press» 2023). Thus, New Zealand's plan to issue "climate refugee" visas was dropped due to Pacific Islanders' dissatisfaction with the prospect of gaining refugee status (Dempster and Ober 2020). They called for a step-wise approach to reduce emissions, support adaptation efforts, provide legal migration pathways, and, if necessary, grant refugee status. In terms of supporting adaptation efforts, it is a crucial step in the process, as many Pacific Islanders see migrating as a cultural loss. Hence, they want developed countries to support developing countries to adapt to climate change, which will require significant funding, providing legal migration pathways is essential as it avoids the stigma of refugee status, and it will require bilateral/regional labor migration opportunities, humanitarian visas, and planned relocation/managed retreat (Dempster and Ober 2020).

As for Europe and the path towards a European framework, the European Commission has acknowledged climate change as a factor in migration, instability, conflict, and food insecurity in the 2019 European Green Deal initiative (European Commission 2019). However, individual EU Member States have not supported the idea of creating a new category for climate migrants, arguing that there is no need for “refugee-type protection” (Apap and Revel 2021, 10) on climate-related grounds. Alternatively, the EU focuses on addressing the root causes of these migrations, advocating for better global climate policies and regional development programs to reduce the impact of climate change on vulnerable regions. Thus, in 2018, the European Commission proposed addressing the key reasons for irregular migration, such as underdevelopment, demography, lack of opportunities, climate change, and inequality. However, the new pact on migration and asylum, released in September 2020, does not address climate change as a recognized reason for migration or climate disasters as a legitimate motive to seek asylum (Apap and Revel 2021, 10). Despite the EU's increasingly concerned about forced displacement due to climate within its borders, with wildfire being the main reason for displacement in 2020 onwards (Apap and Revel 2021, 11), the dynamics of disaster-related displacement are constantly varying and Europe will ultimately face the challenge of developing its own set of effective practices (Scott and Garner 2022).

Recently, climate change and environmental degradation have been a topic of debate among several members of the European Migration Network (EMN) with, for example, Belgium reporting parliamentary discussions based on climate change and asylum, namely, questions were raised about the definition of “climate refugee”, highlighting the need for a coordinated response (European Migration Network 2023, 8). In Finland, there has been a recurring discussion on climate change and environmental disasters as driving migration on a wider scale, with a 2021 study focusing on supporting adaptation and preparedness in vulnerable countries<sup>19</sup>. In the meantime, other countries also mentioned climate-related migration in policy documents and studies, such as Estonia's Cohesive Estonia Strategy 2030, Slovenia's Migration Strategy, Slovak Republic's Climate Policy Action Plan, and the US's White House report on climate migration (European Migration Network 2023, 8).

Sustainable solutions could prevent displacement and stabilize living conditions for millions of people. It is important to address climate displacement from an interdisciplinary perspective and as a short-term and regional challenge, as a treaty based on the Nansen initiative could help bridge the legal gap, for example (Noonan e Rusu 2022). The EU can play a central role in achieving a more optimistic future scenario. In spite of having adopted the European Green Deal and the European Climate Law, long-term strategies need to be adopted systematically and effectively (Noonan and Rusu 2022). Thus, in addition to the European Parliament recognizing climate change as a driver of migration, the EU must support developed and vulnerable countries through continued partnerships and investments with regional areas such as the Sahel, MENA, and Asia Pacific (Noonan and Rusu 2022). By developing joint research on the environment and cooperating with the most affected countries, it is possible to define responses and reduce their vulnerability, including that of climate migrants (Noonan and Rusu 2022). At an international level, there are increasing numbers of independent climate experts appointed by the UN who suggest that the Human Rights Council develop an optional protocol under the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees to address displacement and legal protection of people affected by the climate crisis. But until that suggestion is fulfilled, nations should be urged to develop national legislation to grant humanitarian visas to people displaced across international borders (United Nations

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<sup>19</sup> For more guidance, see Attachment VIII “Exploratory Interview with Eeva-Kaisa Prokkola”, with the full interview transcription with the Finnish academic who led the climate migration project in Sanna Marin's government.

2023). As COP28 approaches, governments and leaders must take practical and local initiatives to support climate migrants and combat climate change, addressing the biggest challenge of this era (Apap and Revel 2021, 11).

In summary, according to the World Migration Report 2022, the complex nature of climate and migration policies is a major challenge. Climate migration is mostly multicausal, influenced by various factors such as climate drivers as well as sudden-onset disasters, sea-level rise, and land degradation (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 233). Additionally, a further complexity of this phenomenon is the different forms that migratory movements can take in the context of climate change, including temporary or permanent relocations, internal or external, within or across borders. Consequently, in this framework, we are confronted with the same lines of thought and conclusions that the most recently developed studies present - which we will develop in the next chapter - of the intrinsic need for more research and consideration of the relevant policies (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 234).

## **Conclusions: Sustainable Solutions**

The consideration of climate migration as a multidimensional phenomenon is the primary conclusion of all the responses developed to date. It is not possible to address this problem with a one-size-fits-all approach, as it is influenced by a wide range of factors. Therefore, recognizing the complexity of our problem is the first step toward planning an effective response, whether political or practical.

As the 1951 Convention does not legally protect those who are displaced by climate change, it is necessary to strengthen and develop alternative political and legal frameworks at a national and international level so that the rights of these individuals can be guaranteed and there is a way to provide assistance mechanisms for them. Therefore, as the UNHCR is the key organization in refugee action and as the holder and defender of the 1951 Convention, it should play a fundamental role in fighting for the protection rights of climate-displaced migrants and in presenting alternatives to this problem. Its approach has been essential in advocating climate change and its impacts, namely, the relationship between the environment and human movement, creating legal guidance, operational partnerships, and interagency cooperation, as well as initiatives aimed at incorporating the environmental issue into its action responses.

In addition, we can see that different regions have adopted different approaches to this phenomenon and that some of Europe's regions, particularly the Nordics, have been pioneers in innovating and applying practices that tackle the problem directly. Although many member States do not want to create a new category of climate migrants, the European Commission recognizes the impact of climate change on migration and emphasizes the need to address the root causes and apply regional climate development.

As such, in order to develop sustainable solutions, an interdisciplinary perspective and long-term strategies seem needed to prevent mass displacement and stabilize the living conditions of affected populations. Europe and other international bodies play a pivotal role in supporting these solutions and developing alternatives to those already known, such as the 1951 Convention to provide much-needed protection for climate migrants. From analyzing the measures taken and actions developed so far, we can conclude that climate-related displacement remains a complex challenge and, despite the efforts and initiatives adopted, more research, policy development, and international cooperation are needed.

Thus, taking into account our third secondary objective of finding out what measures have been adopted so far and the articulation of existing responses, by analyzing them in this chapter we can conclude that, although some progress has already been made, continued efforts and innovation are needed to address the ever-evolving dynamics of the phenomenon of climate-induced displacement.

## **Chapter IV: The Means to an End**

### **Emerging Conceptualizations and Future Considerations**

#### **Research Challenges and Needs**

Over the past decade, a significant amount of research has been conducted not only in disaster risk reduction<sup>20</sup> but mainly and most importantly on the relationship between climate change and migration nexus, with the term "Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change" (HMCCC) (Oakes et al. 2023, 2) viewed as an umbrella term that encompasses all mobility processes, from voluntary labor migration through mixed migration to forced displacement. Since the second half of the 2000s, there has been a growing number of studies and research projects on HMCCC (Oakes et al. 2023, 2), with 2023 being the ninth consecutive year with annual global temperatures above pre-industrial levels. In addition, high-profile migration events, such as the Syrian conflict and the Central America migrant caravan, have further increased public attention on the issue. Therefore, climate change is increasingly influencing migration policy priorities, with the appearance of global processes like the UNFCCC's Task Force on Displacement, the Global Compact Migration, the Platform on Disaster Displacement, and even regional processes such as the East African Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)<sup>21</sup> (IGAD s.d.) addressing various aspects of HMCCC (Oakes et al. 2023, 2). This complex interplay between nation-states and climate change actors, which we find at the

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<sup>20</sup> From 2005 onwards, we saw the formulation of concrete proposals with a view to producing an awareness of the consequences of climate change, namely through the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the 2016 Agenda for Humanity, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) 2015 Paris Agreement with the foundation of the Task Force on Displacement and last but not least, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. Understanding disaster risk in all its dimensions, strengthening disaster risk governance, investing in disaster risk reduction and improving disaster awareness were actions paramount to the agenda of the Sendai Framework. This major agreement was the first ever to offer concrete actions to Nations when facing the risks of disaster, following the long steps taken by the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-1015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disaster. Working hand in hand with the other 2030 Agenda agreements, its actions will always be in favor of advocating the State with the primary role of reducing disaster risk and, simultaneously, share the responsibility with their key stakeholders (inc. local government, private sector, among others).

<sup>21</sup> The IGAD Regional Strategy and Implementation Matrix 2021-2025 aims to transform the IGAD region - Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda - into an upper middle-income economy and industrialized region by 2050. The strategy is based on the IGAD Vision 2050, which focuses on regional peace, stability, and security. The plan is divided into three phases, each focusing on specific goals, such as food security, social economic development, sustainable resource management, and climate change mitigation. The strategy requires coordination and global support for trade, policy, and regulatory frameworks.

center of these processes, is crucial in shaping migration policy priorities. Even as policymakers and structures are working to address the HMCCC effectively, bridging the gaps between the political and scientific communities, the process remains a constant and daily challenge (Oakes et al. 2023, 2).

According to a recent Special Issue Article published in the “International Migration” scientific journal on the future agenda for research on climate change and human mobility, climate change and migration have been extensively researched, with 1737 publications and 694 case studies recorded by the end of 2020 (Piaget apud Oakes et al. 2023, 3). Within research, the focus has often been on how climate change triggers mobility, with climate factors being accepted as drivers of mobility, particularly in rural livelihoods and high dependencies on natural resources. However, the exact way mobility manifests can be very nuanced, as climate change interacts with non-climatic drivers of mobility such as economic, social, cultural, demographic, and environmental factors - as we have already concluded in the previous chapters. In fact, environmental factors are rarely the only or main drivers of mobility, even in the case of rapid-onset hazards like floods (Oakes et al. 2023, 3).

In terms of an academic understanding of Human Mobility Challenges, there is a shift towards "mobilities perspectives" (Oakes et al. 2023, 4) which include understudied vulnerable groups and their impacts. This approach can provide a broader understanding of HMCCC, including potential losses and adaptive outcomes. To address this, research on HMCCC needs to be differentiated, integrated, and generalized, addressing disaggregated data, promoting discipline unification, and developing a shared body of literature and methodologies (Oakes et al. 2023, 4).

Differentiated research is crucial for producing focused and disaggregated knowledge on Human Mobility and Community Cohabitation. Recent meta-analyses highlight the need for more varied research on vulnerable groups, access to resources, work, services, and impacts on physical and mental health (Oakes et al. 2023, 4). In addition, research gaps also affect geographical aspects, with most studies focusing on specific climate-related hazards and regions more commonly known for their degree of involvement. Nowadays, the barriers to producing new knowledge include a lack of researchers with specific local and vulnerable contexts as well as insufficient funding, infrastructure, or time. As such, investment and capacity development can help overcome these gaps. The fact is differentiated nature of societies, environments, and socio-ecological systems can't be fully understood without differentiation of research.

Furthermore, policy frameworks focused on narrower geographical or demographic bounds are more likely to gain traction and contribute to successful outcomes (Oakes et al. 2023, 4).

However, what is important to outline is that in the future research on human mobility and climate change needs to focus on more generalizability and explore the linkages between these two phenomena (Oakes et al. 2023, 6). Longitudinal and comparative studies<sup>22</sup> are essential for understanding how livelihoods are changing with mobility, adaptation, or immobility. As there is a wide range of temporal and spatial mobility responses, the interaction of sudden-onset hazards and slow-onset processes is another complication worthy of research. Moreover, further work is needed on the forms of mobility and their contexts, as different social groups experience mobility differently, leading to different ways of coping, adaptation, and longer-term resilience (Oakes et al. 2023, 6).

Thus, a more general and broader approach is needed to take HMCCC to the next level, as a more mature object of study (Oakes et al. 2023, 6). By placing mobility in a broader context, it will be possible to establish lasting and mutually beneficial links with effective policies. In this manner, it is estimated that it will be possible to promote good practices and effective forms of development cooperation that maximize the positive potential of mobility while minimizing its negative aspects, such as labor exploitation (Oakes et al. 2023, 6).

Hence, recognizing the significant advances in the field of human migration and climate change in terms of research and policy, addressing various aspects of climate mobility, is a necessary step for the discipline to continue evolving towards more differentiated and integrated research. A better understanding of the subject can help people make informed decisions and integrate climate change and migration into policies, facilitating orderly, regular, and safe migration (Oakes et al. 2023, 7).

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<sup>22</sup> For more guidance, see appendix IV “Climate Migration in Developing Countries: A Small Comparative Case Study of the Federal Republic of Somalia, the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Republic of the Marshall Islands”, which was carried out for the purpose of this research based on an analysis of different vulnerability indicators, namely the World Risk Report Index and the EU INFORM Risk Index.

## **Towards a Comprehensive Approach**

Due to the multi-causal nature inherent in the phenomenon of climate migration, approaches to the nexus can be differentiated by the actors responsible for acting on protection and aid policies. While climate and disaster risk reduction specialists are leaders in addressing the adverse factors of migration, policymakers increasingly need to address and act on this phenomenon (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 245). In the interim, those responsible for migration policies face a daunting task and challenge with regard to climate migration and the relentless pursuit of adapting existing frameworks or developing new adaptive frameworks to the specific contextual reality, since many of these policies are still part of national disaster risk reduction policies, as is the case in Colombia<sup>23</sup> (IOM 2018, 13), and do not merit the focused and prestigious attention that an ideal-type preparedness plan should include (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 245).

In the words of the World Migration Report 2022, facilitating regular migration is the best political response that can be provided in this context of displacement due to the environmental effects (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 245). Such regularization of the process is facilitated, for example, through the negotiation of bilateral labor migration agreements. Another key point that has been debated in this area is the connection and understanding that migration can be a way for individuals to adapt to climate impacts (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 245).

While, on the one hand, the perception of migration as adaptation allows policymakers to see voluntary migration as a means of reducing the exposure and vulnerability of populations to climate impacts. On the other hand, it is also argued in the public arena that the perception of migration as adaptation could lead to a dilution of the responsibility of political forces, focusing on individual resilience and opportunities for displacement rather than on issues of inequality and the pursuit of justice. The two sides of the coin presented here depend on a broad contextualization through additional factors such as gender, and age, among others (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 245).

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<sup>23</sup> In the report of IOM “ Mapping Human Mobility and Climate Change in Relevant National Policies and Institutional Frameworks”, the mapping reveals Colombia as 'champion' country in integrating human mobility considerations into their climate change policies. They consistently include this in their national adaptation plans, Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, and National Communications. However, it hasn't integrated human mobility in the context of climate change in both migration and climate change national policies, although it grants international protection on humanitarian grounds, including in disaster-related migration flows.

In the case of migration in response to climate impacts, it ranges from voluntary to forced, with the voluntary movement itself generally induced by external pressures that mold the individual's actions towards migration. In the same somewhat contradictory way of thinking, the forced movement gives migrants the freedom to decide where and how they move to their new place of cohabitation. In a way, when we talk about migration in a climate context, the exceptions to the common rules of the migratory process are evidenced (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 245).

However, beyond analyzing the perception of migration as climate adaptation and the form it takes, whether voluntary or not, the most important thing is to recognize that this population is already on the move, will continue to be on the move, and will eventually massively increase its displacement, not being standardized in all countries and varying in scale and intensity. Therefore, what is at stake, and what we seek to develop in this chapter, is how to develop realistic political approaches in order to recognize the inevitability of migration and provide for the reduction of vulnerabilities by reinforcing the positive impacts of migration, not only for the individuals who conduct the act but also for the communities, both of origin and of reception (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 245).

Despite the challenge of incalculable dimensions, it is necessary to ensure the development of new safe and legal migration routes to deal with climate migration, those already affected and the millions more expected to be impacted<sup>24</sup>. Therefore, the safe bet that has been made and that will be applied in this study is to analyze the possibility of adjusting or extending the existing approaches. Revising and broadening these approaches - policies and practices - could lead to positive change, achieving the long-awaited goal of increasing protection and reducing vulnerabilities for these migrants (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 246).

It is a commonly accepted fact that the majority of those displaced by the effects of climate change remain within the borders of their country and, therefore, may have easier access to the "coverage" of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (Kaelin 2020, 257). Under the umbrella of these principles, which describe how legally binding international human rights law guarantees the necessary means for these people

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<sup>24</sup> A meta-analysis mentioned in the World Migration Report 2022 suggests that slow-onset climate changes, such as extreme temperatures and droughts, are more likely to increase migration than sudden events. Migrants adjusting to these changes may have more time to gather resources, while sudden events reduce migration ability due to resource depletion.

(Kaelin 2020, 257), those who move internally have access to a greater number of protection instruments. The biggest gap, both practical and theoretical, surrounds those who move beyond their borders, since there is no international instrument governing this phenomenon, only a few domestic laws that vary from country to country and that allow for the entry and relative protection of those displaced externally by climate change. However, these domestic or regional laws lack a guarantee of rights and coordination, being individualized laws for a specific government and situation (Kaelin 2020, 257).

As such, developing new legal migration pathways to cope with the adverse impacts of climate is a necessity, as well as a challenge in itself in the political arena. Migration policy experts continue to invest in research into how current practices and approaches can be adjusted, molded, or expanded in the face of the reality of climate displacement challenges (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 246).

In terms of cross-border migration, the World Migration Report 2022 states that there can be a number of solutions on the table, including the development and expansion of available visa options (both humanitarian or temporary) for those individuals who are unable to remain in or return to their area of origin - already provided in objective 5<sup>25</sup> (UN General Assembly 2018, 11–12) of the Global Compact for Migration - and which could take into account models that have been adopted in situations of climate-related humanitarian crises, such as the humanitarian visa granted by Brazil to Haitian migrants following the 2010 earthquake (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 246).

In addition, for those who are already abroad, migration management and support options could be applied because of the difficulty they face in returning to their country of origin due to the climate impacts and degradation caused by slow-onset climate phenomena, some of the measures to be adopted could be based on the design of residence permits for these individuals (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 246).

Finally, not only can current practices such as the creation of bilateral agreements on education, training, or labor be sustainable alternatives for the integration of those

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<sup>25</sup> “Objective 5: Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration (...) 21. We commit to adapt options and pathways for regular migration in a manner that facilitates labor mobility and decent work reflecting demographic and labor 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. (...) (h) Cooperate to identify, develop and strengthen solutions for migrants compelled to leave their countries of origin owing to slow-onset natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change, and environmental degradation, such as desertification, land degradation, drought and sea level rise, including by devising planned relocation and visa options, in cases where adaptation in or return to their country of origin is not possible;”

most vulnerable to climate impacts, but also the use of provisions in regional free movement agreements for the facilitated admission of climate migrants (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 246).

Alongside practical and legal approaches, we must not forget policies that support the specific challenges faced by this population, such as voluntary return or reintegration programs, seeking to integrate these migrants into jobs related to the green or blue economy as well as sustainable development and the environment, drawing on their personal experience to develop best practices and policies in the countries affected (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 246).

Furthermore, despite the fact that internal displacement is better protected, protection needs to be strengthened and facilitated, taking greater account of the specificities of climate-induced internal displacement. As such, it is important for migration policies to take special account of urbanization issues, as the migratory flow, in most of these situations, happens from rural areas that are gradually but severely affected by slow-onset climatic phenomena to urban areas and centers. In these urban centers, migrants seek two essentials for a dignified human life, livelihood opportunities and access to basic services. However, it is necessary to change the itinerary of these migratory flows from rural zones to areas secondary to big cities, since population density provides greater exposure to phenomena such as heat waves or droughts (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 246). Secondary cities can offer unique opportunities in terms of geographical location and spacing between urban centers, so they could be considered safer options if there is an investment in building greater climate resilience combined with a positive attitude towards welcoming migrants, according to a study designed to be applied in Bangladesh to build cities that are both climate resilient and migrant-friendly (Alam et al. 2018).

Safe and orderly are watchwords when it comes to migration. Therefore, in order to facilitate safe and orderly migration, it is necessary to adopt relocation policies, migration management policies, and comprehensive review exercises to analyze how current migration management policies can be applied to the new migration challenges, including above all, the challenges of climate migration (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 246).

Today, the displacement of entire communities due to the irreversible effects of environmental degradation such as rising water levels is taking place in more than 60 countries and regions affecting all continents (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 247). As such, it is necessary to plan for this displacement, even if it is seen as an action of last resort. Taking

prepared action before the event will prevent the vulnerabilities of the affected population from worsening through thoughtful policies and practices that facilitate job search, access to primary services, and even social cohesion between the displaced community and the destination community (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 247).

The management of the phenomenon requires a symbiosis between migration management policies and climate adaptation strategies. As migration management goes hand in hand with climate adaptation in areas of origin and areas of destination, we will be able to, simultaneously, combat the climatic causes of the migration process and reduce the vulnerabilities of these individuals' areas of origin. This becomes a win-win governance situation, especially if migrants themselves are involved in policy planning at a local and national level, ensuring that the challenges specific to each region and population situation are taken into account when managing migration and modifying or possibly creating policies and instruments capable of responding to the new climate challenges (McAuliffe et al. 2021, 247).

### **Analysis of the new European Approach**

In terms of analyzing European action and policy, the development of strategies strictly focused on climate migration has not yet become the focus of EU action but is often integrated into climate change adaptation policies, migration policies, or humanitarian assistance. However, in terms of climate adaptation, the EU has been at the forefront and has been developing some of the main strategies and initiatives in this field, such as the European Green Deal (2019), already explored in the previous chapter.

Since February 2021, the European Commission has adopted its new climate change adaptation strategy which sets out the EU's position on how it can adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate and build climate resilience by 2050 (European Commission s.d.). This adaptation focuses on being above all: (a) smart, through research and innovation with the creation of the Climate-ADAPT platform<sup>26</sup> (European Climate Adaptation Platform s.d.) which provides access to extensive information on climate adaptation, including case studies, adaptation strategies, instruments and resources to

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<sup>26</sup> Climate-ADAPT is a European Climate Adaptation Platform partnered with the European Commission and the European Environment Agency. It provides data on expected climate change, vulnerability of regions and sectors, EU and national adaptation strategies, case studies, and tools for adaptation planning. The platform organizes information under EU Policy, Countries, Transnational Regions, Cities, Knowledge, and Networks, and includes a quality-checked database for easy search.

support the various levels of adaptation; (b) faster, in order to reduce climate-related risk, increase climate protection and guarantee the availability of drinking water; (c) systemic, through horizontal governance by various levels of society instrumentalized by integrating adaptation into macro-fiscal policy, nature-based solutions - promoting nature-based solutions as the fundamental component for the adaptation process and including initiatives such as the restoration and protection of essential ecosystems - and local action; and (d) international, with increased support for international climate resilience and the preparedness process through the sharing of knowledge and resources, both material and financial (European Commission s.d.).

The enormity of the adaptation challenge means that the effort must be collective, with the whole of government, society, the public, and private sectors collaborating closely in this process, particularly in the area of financing. The public sector is called to support the private sector with a strategy and tools that allow it to identify risks and direct investment towards adaptation and resilience actions. By raising awareness of climate impacts and the solutions we can use to be more resilient, the European Commission will help external actors in society such as large companies, SMEs, local administrations, social partners, and the general public to perceive adaptation not as a cost, but as an investment for society as a whole (European Commission 2021a, 4).

Some of the most important policies and practices that the Commission will adopt, according to the document "Forging a climate-resilient Europe - the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change" (European Commission 2021a), and a personal assessment will be:

Table 1 - European Commission Policies on Climate Adaptation

Source: Own Elaboration based on the Document of Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change (European Commission 2021a)

<b>Smarter Adaptation</b>	<b>Pushing the frontiers of knowledge on adaptation</b>	<i>(a) help to close knowledge gaps on climate impacts and resilience, including on oceans, through Horizon Europe<sup>27</sup> (European Commission 2023c), Digital Europe<sup>28</sup> (European Commission 2023b), Copernicus<sup>29</sup>(European Union s.d.) and EMODnet<sup>30</sup> (European Commission 2021b);</i>
		<i>(b) improve the state of the art on adaptation modelling, risk assessment and management tools – towards “asset-level modelling”.</i>
	<b>More and better climate-related risk and losses data</b>	<i>(a) promote and support the use of its Risk Data Hub<sup>31</sup>(European Commission s.d.) to harmonize the recording and collection of comprehensive and granular climate-related risk and losses data, and promote national level public private partnerships to collect and share such data;</i>
		<i>(b) extend the scope of public access to environmental information in the INSPIRE Directive<sup>32</sup>(European Commission s.d.) to include climate-related risk and losses data;</i>
	<b>Making Climate-ADAPT the authoritative European platform for adaptation</b>	<i>(a) establish a European climate and health observatory under Climate-ADAPT;</i>

<sup>27</sup> Horizon Europe, the EU's €95.5 billion funding program for research and innovation, aims to combat climate change, achieve Sustainable Development Goals, and boost EU competitiveness. It supports collaboration, knowledge dispersion, job creation, talent engagement, economic growth, industrial competitiveness, and investment impact.

<sup>28</sup> The Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL) is a EU funding initiative aimed at promoting digital technology in businesses, citizens, and public administrations. The program, with a €7.5 billion budget, aims to accelerate economic recovery and shape Europe's digital transformation, particularly benefiting small and medium-sized enterprises. It complements other EU programs and is part of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027.

<sup>29</sup> Copernicus is the Earth observation component of the European Union's Space program, providing information services using satellite Earth Observation and non-space data. Managed by the European Commission, it collaborates with Member States, ESA, EUMETSAT, EMWF, EU Agencies, and Mercator Océan to improve citizens' quality of life through free, open-access services.

<sup>30</sup> The European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) is a network of organizations that collects, processes, and makes sea data available as interoperable products, benefiting policy makers, scientists, private industry, and the public, potentially saving at least one billion Euros annually.

<sup>31</sup> The Risk Data Hub utilizes administrative frameworks, policies, OpenDRI (data sharing initiatives), and INSPIRE to establish knowledge for DRM (Digital Rights Management), at local, national, regional, and Europe-wide levels. It collects and organizes Europe-wide risk data, evaluating science-based risk assessment approaches and proposing alternative sources.

<sup>32</sup> The INSPIRE Directive, enacted in May 2007, establishes a spatial information infrastructure in Europe to support Community environmental policies and activities. It addresses 34 spatial data themes, implementing technical rules for regional environmental applications.

<b>Systemic Adaptation</b>	<b>Improving adaptation strategies and plans</b>	<i>(a) stimulate cooperation regionally and across borders and enhance the guidelines on national adaptation strategies in cooperation with the Member States;</i>
		<i>(b) upgrade adaptation monitoring, reporting and evaluation by using a harmonized framework of standards and indicators;</i>
	<b>Fostering local, individual, and just resilience</b>	<i>(a) step up support to planning and implementation of local adaptation and launch an adaptation support facility under the EU Covenant of Mayors;</i>
		<i>(b) continue to ensure the enforcement of existing employment and social legislation, and, where relevant, consider proposing new initiatives that increase workers' protection from climate impacts;</i>
<b>Integrating climate resilience in national fiscal frameworks</b>	<i>(a) develop ways to measure the potential impact of climate-related risks on public finances, develop tools and models for climate stress testing, and engage in discussions with Member States on better take into account climate change in national reporting and fiscal frameworks;</i>	
	<i>(b) promote better coordination and complementarity between the post-disaster emergency and recovery operations supported by the European Union Solidarity Fund<sup>33</sup> (European Commission s.d.) and other EU funds to encourage the "build back better" principle;</i>	
<b>Promoting nature-based solutions for adaptation</b>	<i>(a) continue to incentivize and assist Member States to rollout nature-based solutions through assessments, guidance, capacity building, and EU funding;</i>	
<b>Faster Adaptation</b>	<b>Accelerating the rollout of adaptation solutions</b>	<i>(a) implement the planned Horizon Europe Mission<sup>34</sup> (European Commission s.d.) on 'Adaptation to Climate Change' and other adaptation-relevant Missions, including on soil health, climate-neutral cities, and oceans once these are endorsed;</i>
		<i>(b) support the development of further adaptation solutions, including rapid response decision support tools to enrich the toolbox for adaptation practitioners;</i>
	<b>Reducing climate-related risk</b>	<i>(a) develop an EU-wide climate risk assessment and strengthen climate considerations in EU disaster risk prevention and management;</i>
		<i>(b) increase cooperation with standardization organizations to climate-proof standards and to develop new ones for climate adaptation solutions;</i>

<sup>33</sup> The European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) was established in 2002 to respond to major natural disasters and express solidarity. It has been used for 107 disasters and 20 public health emergencies, supporting 24 Member States and 3 accession countries with over EUR 8.2 billion.

<sup>34</sup> EU Missions, part of the Horizon Europe research and innovation programme, aim to deliver concrete solutions to Europe's greatest challenges by 2030. These missions involve research and innovation, governance, collaboration, and citizen engagement. They support Commission priorities like the European Green Deal.

	<b>Closing the climate protection gap</b>	<i>(a) strengthen dialogue between insurers, policymakers and other stakeholders;</i>
		<i>(b) explore the wider use of financial instruments and innovative solutions to deal with climate-induced risks.</i>
	<b>Ensuring the availability and sustainability of freshwater</b>	<i>(a) help ensure climate-resilient, sustainable use and management of water across sectors and borders by improving coordination of thematic plans and other mechanisms, such as water resource allocation and water-permits;</i>
<b>International Action</b>	<b>Increasing support for international climate resilience and preparedness</b>	<i>(a) strengthen the support for the development and implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)<sup>35</sup> (UNDP 2023) and National Adaptation Plans in EU partner countries and mainstream conflict-sensitive, anticipatory and preventive climate resilience and preparedness in relevant EU policies and instruments for external action;</i>
		<i>(b) intensify and broaden adaptation support to local authorities in EU partner countries and develop regional programs, including for countries in the EU Southern and Eastern neighborhoods, and in candidate countries and potential candidates;</i>
		<i>(c) include climate change considerations in the future agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.</i>
	<b>Scaling up international finance to build climate resilience</b>	<i>(a) support partner countries in the design of policies and incentives to promote climate resilient investment, including in nature-based solutions;</i>
	<b>Strengthen global engagement and exchanges on adaptation</b>	<i>(a) submit the EU's adaptation plans and actions under the Paris Agreement;</i>
<i>(b) deepen political engagement on climate change adaptation with international and regional partners, and partner countries;</i>		
<i>(c) increase the pool of knowledge and tools on adaptation available to non-EU countries and promote adaptation in Green Alliances and partnerships.</i>		

European policy recognizes the importance of adaptation as a crucial component of the global response to climate change. As such, it has launched this adaptation strategy to build a climate-resilient society by 2050 and integrate adaptation to climate change into the European Green Deal and its external dimension. The strategy aims to improve knowledge of climate impacts, accelerate adaptation planning, and strengthen global

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<sup>35</sup> Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are short- to medium-term climate pledges under the Paris Agreement, detailing how countries will meet the global goal of 1.5°C. These plans are updated every five years, with increasingly ambitious ambitions. Progress is being made, especially in developing countries, and NDCs could help tackle climate, biodiversity loss, and energy security crises.

climate resilience. Accordingly, the European Commission invites the European Parliament and Council to endorse the strategy, and encourages public participation in implementing it, aiming to also be anchored in the European Climate Law and implemented in close collaboration with other elements of the European Green Deal (European Commission 2021a, 22).

Although the climate adaptation strategy does not focus on any development or practice relating to climate migration, we know that Europe is part of the main international agreements that could provide protection instruments and we also know that Europe itself is capable of building temporary protection mechanisms in the event of an emergency, as was the case with Implementing Decision 2022/382<sup>36</sup> on the mass flow of displaced persons from Ukraine. This decision had the effect of applying temporary protection and guiding its member States in areas such as the scope of application, i.e. the people covered and not covered by the protection granted in the decision, as well as how to deal with children and unaccompanied minors. In addition, the decision addresses the right of free movement between all member States and the procedures for registering and sharing information (European Commission 2022b, 1).

While this document has been formulated with a view to being a living document that will have to be updated regularly based on new issues that may arise in the member States and the uniqueness of what is experienced on the ground and the respective needs, it shows the flexibility that can exist within Europe to develop innovative forms of protection for different cases of forced migration (European Commission 2022b, 1). A practical example of this flexibility and holding the necessary resources was the design of the Solidarity Platform - established in this same decision. With its creation of this platform, the Commission has aimed to coordinate an operational response between member States, which will work closely with the EU's Blueprint Network. Its work is based on gathering essential information, analyzing the needs identified by the Member States, and coordinating operational follow-up to respond to targeted needs (European Commission 2022b, 1). In this way, the creation of this platform has allowed for the mobilization of relevant instruments to create solutions and partnerships between solidarity offers and identified needs. In addition, it has also enabled collective work between not only EU member States but also third countries, EU agencies, and other actors that may be considered relevant (European Commission 2022b, 2).

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<sup>36</sup> For more guidance, see [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022XC0321\(03\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022XC0321(03)&from=EN)

The war in Ukraine was a driver for the work and commitment that the EU would have adopted in 2020 in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum<sup>37</sup> (European Commission s.d.). Under this pact, it was planned to create a migration preparedness and crisis management mechanism that would provide an operational framework capable of anticipating and monitoring migratory flows and situations and organizing a coordinated response to migratory crises. Thus, since the beginning of 2022, the Commission has been meeting with the European External Action Service<sup>38</sup> (European Union External Action s.d.) and other relevant EU agencies in order to draw up a general framework for preparing for a possible crisis. Since the beginning of the war, a lot of information sharing has taken place with continuous shared reports and one goal in mind, to ensure a coordinated response to the challenges of migration (European Commission 2022b, 2).

The biggest challenge in migration management is providing suitable protection for each situation, involving respect for human dignity, and a decent standard of living, associated with residence rights, access to means of subsistence and housing, emergency care and adequate care for minors. The council's decision outlines the use of "equivalent national protection" in Ukraine, i.e. an alternative to international protection that covers forms of protection such as temporary protection<sup>39</sup> (European Commission s.d.) or humanitarian protection<sup>40</sup> (European Commission s.d.) (European Commission 2022b, 3). This type of complementary protection could be an example of a practice to be applied to climate migrants who have no way of ensuring a safe return - due to the environmental risk - or a lasting return to their country or region of origin (European Commission 2022b, 4). - due to the removal of basic needs such as soil deterioration.

Since 2022, migration management has been a priority in European research and negotiation. As such, in July 2022, the European Commission launched a preparatory document on migration related to climate change, prepared by the EU's Directorate-

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<sup>37</sup> The New Pact on Migration and Asylum aims to create a fairer, efficient, and sustainable migration and asylum process for the European Union. It was proposed in September 2020 and aims to manage and normalize migration for the long term. Progress has included developing an early warning system for migration crises, improving cooperation on search and rescue, replacing the European Asylum Support Office, appointing a Return Coordinator, and establishing a voluntary solidarity mechanism. Over 1000 asylum seekers have been relocated from Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, and Spain by early 2023.

<sup>38</sup> The European External Action Service (EEAS) is the diplomatic service of the European Union, implementing the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy since 2011.

<sup>39</sup> "Temporary protection is an exceptional measure to provide immediate and temporary protection in the event of a mass influx or imminent mass influx of displaced persons from non-EU countries who are unable to return to their country of origin."

<sup>40</sup> "National type of protection which is granted in cases where applicants for international protection are found not to be eligible for recognition as refugees or beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, but who are nonetheless considered to be in need of protection due to special humanitarian reasons."

General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)<sup>41</sup> (UNICEF s.d.) and the Directorate-General for International Partnerships<sup>42</sup>(European Commission s.d.), that assesses the EU's policies, instruments, and practices in addressing disaster displacement. The document emphasizes the urgent need for partnership to strengthen assistance and promote resilient communities, capitalizing on the EU Presidency of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (European Commission 2022a, 3).

In recent years, the effort to translate their words of concern about climate-induced displacement into action has been increasing. The EU Green Deal has led to the EU becoming a global leader in addressing climate change and one of the largest contributors of public climate finance for adaptation to developing countries (namely the Least Developed Countries and the Small Island Developing States), with one-third of the world's public climate finance coming from the EU and its Member States. Through intergovernmental and interinstitutional dialogue with key stakeholders and nations, the EU seeks to expand its external cooperation and make it a key tool in the exercise of warning, minimizing, and adapting to disaster climate-related displacement (European Commission 2022a, 14).

The EU's support for minimizing and adapting to climate migration is based on research and data collection on disaster and climate-related displacement since these two variables are essential for understanding the scale and dynamics of displacement and migration caused by climate change, disasters, or environmental degradation. It also supports the disaster preparedness process and strengthens partner countries' systems through financial support (European Commission 2022a, 14–16).

Active involvement in research and data collection is crucial for developing policies and strategic frameworks, as well as programming actions and initiatives addressing these issues. The EU has been a pioneer in sponsoring multi-country comparative research on climate change and human mobility, with projects like the HABITABLE project<sup>43</sup> (European Union s.d.) and the Climate-change Induced Migration (CLICIM) project<sup>44</sup> (European Commission s.d.). In addition, the EU also supports

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<sup>41</sup> The European Civil Protection and Aid Operations (ECHO) is a key partner to UNICEF, focusing on humanitarian emergency and disaster response.

<sup>42</sup> The EU's international partnership and development policy aim to reduce poverty, ensure sustainable growth, and promote democracy, human rights, and rule of law globally.

<sup>43</sup> HABITABLE, an EU-funded project involving 22 partners from 18 countries, aims to understand the link between climate impacts and migration patterns, with the goal of predicting future migration trends.

<sup>44</sup> The CLICIM project examines the link between climate change and population dynamics in Africa, focusing on slow-onset climatic events and net migration estimates. It provides evidence on population vulnerability to climate change and its impact on migration and development.

Member States and partner countries in collecting data and assessing climate risks through the Copernicus Climate Change Service and the EU Civil Protection Knowledge Network<sup>45</sup> (European Union s.d.). All their work and theoretical commitment will be essential for the development of data models, analyses, and the preparation of early action frameworks for the constitution of a broader humanitarian system (European Commission 2022a, 15).

As far as financial support is concerned, the EU's humanitarian budget for natural disasters has grown over the years, integrating response and preparedness tools. The budget line for preparedness actions has grown from EUR 50 million to 76.5 million per year between 2019-2022. Along these lines, the EU supports actions that aim to strengthen the preparedness capacities of governments and communities for early response to hazards and threats, by developing better response policies and planning tools on disaster displacement (European Commission 2022a, 16).

With regard to the strengthening of operational responses and the specific issue of protection, the same document addresses protection issues relating to migrants and individuals displaced by natural disasters, adverse climate effects, and environmental degradation. The EU recognizes that climate change consequences exacerbate vulnerabilities and increase protection risks, particularly for women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. These risks include violence, family separation, land, housing, property rights issues, and loss of personal documentation. At the same time, displacement and migration disrupt livelihoods, and children's access to education, and can lead to psychosocial and physical health impacts. Therefore, the EU funds projects to address these risks and vulnerabilities, such as the IOM-led project 'Emergency Life-saving Assistance and Protection to Displacement Affected Populations in Ethiopia'<sup>46</sup> (IOM 2022) and the CARE-implemented project 'Expanded Education in Emergency Support to Disaster Affected Children In Somalia'<sup>47</sup>. However, the EU also recognizes that protection problems can arise due to the lack of a well-defined legal status and associated rights (European Commission 2022a, 18).

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<sup>45</sup> The Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network, launched in December 2021, enhances civil protection training efficiency, promotes innovation, and fosters cooperation among Member States' national authorities.

<sup>46</sup> IOM targets 2,575,744 displacement-affected people, 43,750 refugees, and 125,279 vulnerable returnees to Ethiopia, providing support for food, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), NFIs (Non-food Items), health, MHPSS (Mental Health and Psychosocial Support), and protection.

<sup>47</sup> For more guidance, see [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/hip2021/echo\\_hf\\_bud\\_2021\\_91000\\_v5.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/hip2021/echo_hf_bud_2021_91000_v5.pdf).

As such, recognizing the existing gap, the EU reiterates the importance of taking the lead in multilateral processes to ensure the coordination of comprehensive responses capable of meeting this global challenge. In this sense, the EU's current presidency of the Platform on Disaster Displacement, from July 2022 until December 2023, is a benchmark for EU action on climate-related migrations (European Commission 2022a, 20). As we know, the PDD promotes a comprehensive approach to disaster displacement and, in this context, the EU plans to financially support the PDD's activities and secretariat, aiming to improve protection, advocacy, policy development, best practices exchange, and capacity building in selected countries (European Commission 2022a, 21).

Additionally, the EU actively supports the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR), through the International Migration Review Forum in 2022, centered on reviewing the progress and implementation of the GCM, the holding of the Global Refugee Forum in 2019, and the High-Level Officials Meeting held in 2021, also linked to the CGR (European Commission 2022a, 20).

In sum, the EU is addressing displacement and migration caused by disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation through a comprehensive, gender-sensitive approach. This includes preventing movements, preparing for them, and strengthening resilience besides actively engaging in humanitarian and development actions in affected countries and conducting research. Ultimately, European action is essential to maximize synergies and complement existing actions, strengthening and empowering them (European Commission 2022a, 22).

## **Proposals for Addressing Climate Migration**

Since 2004, experts in the field have tried to explore how this legal gap acknowledged by every key actor and specialist could be filled. While some suggested adopting an additional protocol to the existing conventions on environmental disasters and their adverse and humanitarian effects, others supported the idea of adopting and creating a whole new convention. The common point among all the experts was and still is, that the solution must come from the law, beyond additional humanitarian aid, which is leveraged by various countries (Polychronidi s.d., 11).

With regard to the creation of a new Convention, we would like to highlight the work of Frank Biermann and Ingrid Boas with their 2007 proposal "Preparing for a

Warmer World: Towards a Global Governance System to Protect Climate Refugees" and the regime by Bonnie Docherty and Tyler Giannini in 2009, called "Confronting a Rising Tide: A Proposal for a Convention on Climate Change".

Biermann and Boas, recognizing the lack of theoretical and literary support for an extension of the 1951 Geneva Convention and its failure to adapt to the protection required by climate migrants, have developed a separate legal and political *sui generis* regime to recognize, protect, and resettle climate refugees under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (Biermann and Boas 2010, 75). This *sui generis* regime would be tailored to the identified needs of climate migrants and would be based on 5 fundamental principles, namely: (a) the Principle of Planned Relocation<sup>48</sup> (European Commission s.d.) and Resettlement<sup>49</sup> (UNHCR s.d.); (b) the Principle of Resettlement Instead of Temporary Asylum; (c) the Principle of Collective Rights<sup>50</sup> (Nuila 2018) for Local Populations; (d) the Principle of International Assistance for Domestic Measures; and (e) the Principle of International Burden-sharing<sup>51</sup> (UHNCR 2000) (Biermann e Boas 2010, 75–76).

In terms of institutional setting, the regime included an executive committee, a separate fund, a coordinating secretariat, and a network of existing agencies, where climate refugees are treated as permanent immigrants in their countries. The same scheme is designed to support governments, local communities, and national agencies in protecting people in their territories, aside from providing international assistance and funding for internal support and resettlement programs in affected countries. Finally, its constituent States had the right to propose affected areas under their jurisdiction (Polychronidi s.d., 13).

As for Docherty and Giannini's approach, it was inspired by the Geneva Convention and focused solely on protecting those displaced by climate change across

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<sup>48</sup> The EU-context involves the transfer of persons with a status defined by the Geneva Refugee Convention and Protocol, or those applying for international protection, from one EU Member State to another. In the context of the EU emergency relocation programme, it involves the transfer of persons in clear need of international protection, as defined in Council Decisions 2015/1601 and 2016/1754.

<sup>49</sup> According to the UNHCR, resettlement involves transferring refugees from an asylum country to another state that grants permanent residence. Governments and NGO partners provide services for integration, cultural orientation, language and vocational training, and education and employment programs.

<sup>50</sup> According to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People working in Rural Areas, the rights include free, prior, informed consent, the creation of food and agricultural systems, collective management of resources, and enjoyment of resource development and conservation benefits.

<sup>51</sup> National responsibilities for protecting and assisting refugees lie with host countries, and burden-sharing has three components: national, regional, and international. Recognizing the heavy burden placed on host States is crucial during emergency phases or prolonged refugee situations.

borders, admitting that the best way to address the issue would be through an independent convention. According to the authors, the problem of climate-induced migration, as a recently recognized and substantial phenomenon, justifies the creation of its own legal regime adapted and designed according to its specific and complex needs (Docherty and Giannini 2009, 350). The instrument proposed here had the duty to create obligations to deal with the prevention and remediation of the climate change migrant problem. This duty was reflected in first establishing the guarantee of human rights protection and humanitarian aid, followed by a burden-sharing process in ensuring these rights were shared by the countries of origin, the host countries, and the international community, and finally forming the institutions for the implementation of provisions such as a global fund, a coordinating agency and an active body of experts in the field (Docherty and Giannini 2009, 350). With the aim of being a comprehensive instrument, designed on the basis of existing legal precedents and academic theory, it would be able to provide a solution that corresponds to the legal, human, and circumstantial needs of the phenomenon (Docherty and Giannini 2009, 349).

Notwithstanding the efforts of these academics, their proposals ended up falling into a vacuum due to the lack of viability or support for the approaches described. The reasons for this may be the lack of political commitment, since international agreements and policies require the cooperation of several nations and the issue of climate migrants and their protection still lacks a uniform political will. In addition, given the legal, ethical, and logistical complexity of the climate-induced migration challenge, it leads to a context of great uncertainty that makes it easier to support possible key stakeholders in building practical and real approaches. Nevertheless, the biggest challenge is the legal nature of the issue. Climate migration involves displacement, both internally and across borders, and this displacement raises questions and complications about legal jurisdiction, enforcement, and accountability. If the proposals and alternatives presented do not address the legal challenges in the right way, they fail to provide a coherent and effective framework and to navigate the complexity of the processes related to climate change and displacement.

### **Comparative Analysis of Three International Agreements**

In a study conducted by Jane McAdam in her book “Climate Change, Forced Migration, and International Law”- a lawyer specializing in climate change and refugees - the author states that one of the most common mistakes in research when reviewing the

discussion of climate migration is the tendency to treat all climate-related movements as a single phenomenon that can be discussed in a general and ambiguous way (McAdam 2012, 186). The one-size-fits-all approach is not an adequate response to climate migration. The displacements that result from this phenomenon are represented in different scenarios and, consequently, each scenario needs its own examination in order to develop policies or normative frameworks suitable for each feature (McAdam 2012, 187). There is no single factor that forces displacement, but rather a convergence of factors that together cause mobility, be they socio-economic vulnerability, political collapse, or environmental collapse.

Today, with the lack of legally binding policies and the number of climate-induced migrations increasing exponentially, certain international organizations and their member States have proposed ad hoc policies to guide this intersectional migration (Lawing 2021, 16) - such as the proposals analyzed above. The aim of these proposals is to obtain protection rather than refuge. The 1951 Convention, centered on the political spectrum of involuntary migration, is not an adequate instrument for the reality of the 21st century. We have therefore come to the conclusion that the solution to filling the Convention's major legal gap is based on a regional materialization, i.e. local and regional solutions adapted to the reality of each nation-state and the consequences they experience in their daily lives by adapting existing regional and global instruments to understand this problem (Lawing 2021, 16–17).

Climate migrants assume a volatile position in the international system thanks to the role that the 1951 Convention assigns to the small fraction of refugees it takes in (Lawing 2021, 17). Thus, regional agreements have been created that accommodate and determine protection processes for a broader spectrum of migrants with a considerable degree of vulnerability. Some of the most relevant agreements were: the Nansen Initiative, the United Nation's Global Compact for Migration, and Central America's Cartagena Declaration (Lawing 2021, 17). Their evolution was always thought to remove the gaps contained in the 1951 Convention and address climate-induced migration, and, as such, are the instruments of analysis we have chosen here to develop possibilities for adaptation and protection through current agreements.

The challenge of addressing the various impacts of migration is multidimensional and stems from a causality of interrelated factors. Thus, this research will follow the line of thought approached by Meredith Lawing in the study "Addressing climate-induced displacement: An analysis of protection policies for environmental migrants", based on a

methodology aimed to develop an informal but comprehensive understanding of all the policies and their impacts, by focusing on four criteria to evaluate policies' effectiveness of the three agreements mentioned (Lawing 2021, 17). The criteria are assessing rights protections, autonomy, burden-sharing suggestions, and credible commitments (Lawing 2021, 18). With this, the goal was to create a fair migration system that prevents discrimination, human rights abuses, corruption, and unequal financial strains, outlining that the evaluation of policies against these criteria is strictly subjective to Lawing's personal assessment, as climate-induced migration is a complex issue with intersecting factors (Lawing 2021, 18).

1. **Rights Protection** – Lawing uses McAdam's vision and states that the “rights protections to climate migrants provide the most scope for prevention of unsafe return and cruel or inhumane treatment”. In this way, ensuring basic legal rights (including the right to non-refoulement, the right to not be punished for illegal entry, freedom of movement, the right to work, housing, education, public assistance, freedom of religion, and access to judicial courts) is the minimum requirement for adequate protection. The combination of these rights for high-impact protection must take into account fundamental rights established not only in the 1951 Convention, but also in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the labor rights of refugees, and the mechanisms for the protection of minorities (Lawing 2021, 18–19).
2. **Autonomy** – Respecting the dignity and individual choice of each refugee is the focus of the sense of autonomy. Basic rights are essential, but they don't fulfill an individual's life completely. It is necessary for a refugee to have the same autonomy as a human individual who lives and collaborates in society and who contributes and acquires values and goods as an economic and empowered contributor. Therefore, it is important to involve refugees in the socio-economic development of societies through self-sufficiency directives (Lawing 2021, 19–20).
3. **Burden Sharing**– Essentially, this is the result of the combination of collective efforts to support refugees and mass migration, whether through research, communication, diplomacy, funding, or external organizations. In essence, it is a mechanism of mutual aid and equity between territories of the same nation or between nations that becomes necessary to prevent disproportionate numbers of migratory flows and refugees in the same region, and which can be translated into

the development of administrative transparency, for example (Lawing 2021, 19–21).

4. **Credible Commitments** – Credibility is directly correlated with responsibility and motivation measures (e.g. reporting requirements or legally binding commitment with economic sanctions), i.e. the realization of objectives previously defined in a given agreement (Lawing 2021, 21–22).

In this study, Lawing defines that each of these four factors can be characterized in three dimensions: low, moderate, and high, varying directly according to the agreement to be analyzed and its respective practices (Lawing 2021, 18).

In addition to these four factors identified by Lawing, from the perspective of this study, it is important to add two new factors for a more detailed analysis of the topic in question, the evaluation of which will be based on a personal assessment by the author. These fifth and sixth factors would be:

5. **Legal and Biding Nature:** The effectiveness of an agreement depends on whether it is legally binding or voluntary, with legally binding agreements ensuring obligations, while voluntary agreements may lack enforceability and its effectiveness depends on countries' compliance.

The contract challenge depends on whether a legal process is binding or nonbinding. In arbitration and in international law, binding contracts are legally enforceable, while nonbinding documents are not. Understanding contract terms is crucial for any agreement, international, regional, or national (Zimmermann 2021).

The primary philosophy of international law refers to the rules governing state relations, which are considered binding upon States, despite the absence of superior authority to enforce them. These rules are not set down in legislation approved by a parliament and are only applicable to States that have consented to be bound. The precise rules of international law are often more difficult to identify than national laws and can be found in various sources (Department of Foreign Affairs s.d.).

6. **Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Measures:** Examining how the agreement aims to address migration's root causes by integrating climate adaptation and mitigation measures, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building

climate resilience to prevent forced displacement and support community adaptation.

Sharing information on climate change's impacts and the need for adaptation and mitigation is crucial for building resilience. It should be tailored to different audiences, considering their roles, backgrounds, and vulnerability to risks, highlighting the benefits of climate adaptation measures, such as nature-based measures, local employment opportunities, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions (European Commission 2023a, 9).

*Table 2 - Definitions and Measures for the Evaluation Criteria of the Agreements*

*Source: Own Elaboration based on the Lawing study on “Addressing climate induced displacement: An analysis of protection policies for environmental migrants” (Lawing 2021, 20)*

	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Rights Protection</b>	Providing adequate human rights and protections to refugees throughout their migration and resettlement process within the agreement.	Affirms the 1951 Refugee Convention and the UDHR for all refugee, primarily focused rhetoric, but suggests some rights-based policy	Adopts and accepts labor rights in addition to UDHR, and the 1951 Convention implementing some policy.	Sets specific goals to provide protections, labor protections, minorities receive protections, in addition to UDHR and the 1951 Convention, creates a core goal of rights protections.
<b>Autonomy</b>	Allowing refugees make their own decisions regarding their lives and families within the agreement.	Specifies self-sufficiency as a key requirement for living a dignified life.	Believes that refugees should be able to provide their own incomes and should not be reliant on a system in addition to self-sufficiency.	State self-sufficiency recognizes refugees as contributing individuals especially pertaining to economic value, incorporates refugees in policy development process, creates more roles for migrant self-support.

<b>Burden Sharing</b>	Mechanisms that equally distribute the burden of supporting refugees among States that are signatories on the agreement.	Minimal outlined burden sharing mechanisms.	Develop communication mechanisms between States and external organizations.	Developed functioning system to create support for host countries and control flows of migration equally.
<b>Credible Commitments</b>	Legally binding policy agreements with enforcement mechanisms that monitor effective participation with the agreement and hold countries accountable for their actions.	Minimal outlined credible commitments.	Developing a forum to discuss potential solutions and suggest accountability measures.	Binding enforcement with accountability measures that ensure States are supporting refugees and host countries via external organizations/other States, when breaking binding enforcement loss of privilege as punishment to take things out of the hands of political leaders.
<b>Legal and Biding Nature</b>	Agreement effectiveness depends on whether it's legally binding or voluntary, with legally binding agreements ensuring obligations, while voluntary agreements may lack enforceability and compliance with countries' laws.	The binding nature of the agreement is entirely voluntary and depends on the willingness of countries to comply.	The binding nature of the agreement is mostly voluntary but has possible indirect legal effects of non-legally binding instruments (such non-legally binding instruments do, at least to a certain degree, exercise a "normative pull") (Zimmermann 2021, 7).	The binding nature of the agreement is legally binding and parties are obligated to fulfill their commitments.

<b>Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Measures</b>	Aiming to tackle migration's root causes by integrating climate adaptation and mitigation measures, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and fostering climate resilience to prevent forced displacement.	Minimal commitments and practices regarding climate adaptation and mitigation measures for displacement.	Refers to changes in processes, practices, and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change (Denton et al. 2014).	Address immediate and anticipated threats based on current practices, management approaches, or technical strategies (Denton et al. 2014).
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The analysis of an international agreement on climate migration using these six criteria can conduct a comprehensive analysis that allows to identify strengths and weaknesses, aiding in the development of more effective and equitable solutions to tackle global climate-induced migration challenges.

### **The Nansen Initiative**

The Nansen Initiative, created in October 2012 in a sub-regional context and under a bottom-up process, was developed with the aim of facing the exponential consequences of environmental degradation in certain regions and, consequently, promoting migration. This initiative was based on paragraph 14 (f) of the 2010 UNFCCC Cancun Agreement, which emphasized the need to adapt to climate change through cooperation and coordination measures in relation to climate displacement, migration, and planned relocation. Years later, in 2016, in order to consolidate the results of in-depth regional and intergovernmental consultancy work, the objectives of the Nansen Initiative were realized and evolved into the Platform on Disaster Displacement (THE NANSEN INITIATIVE 2015).

The Initiative's primary objective was to develop a consultative process that would create support structures for climate refugees and, at the same time, develop preventive mechanisms when disaster strikes. Rather than creating new legal norms and standards on a global scale, its purpose was to develop a process of intergovernmental collaboration for the efficient exercise of policies relating to the effects of climate change on forced migration (McAdam apud Lawing 2021, 22–23). The collaborative idea stems from the

initiative of two nation-states, Norway and Switzerland, who, in the midst of the UNHCR conference, shared their intention to address the issue of climate-induced migration and jointly encourage their peers to accept the creation of an external organization - the current Platform on Disaster Displacement - that would make it possible to establish a new global framework. It's important to emphasize that this new institutional space while being a space for discussion of the relationship between climate and migration, would also be a space for highlighting existing legal shortcomings and the need for expansion and flexibility in the legal definitions currently in force and their respective protection measures (McAdam apud Lawing 2021, 22–23).

In order to achieve its objectives and the pillars on which it is based – international cooperation and solidarity, standards of treatment of affected people, operational responses (UNHCR, s.d.)-, this organization created the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons. The Agenda was consolidated as a result of various outcomes of regional intergovernmental consultations and civil society meetings, assembled by the Nansen Institute. Its functions would be based on 3 phases of action, namely preparedness (before the disaster occurs), protection and assistance (during the displacement), and transition to solutions (after the disaster recurs) (UNHCR, s.d.).

The Protection Agenda appears as an alternative to a mandatory international convention on cross-border disaster displacement and refers to an approach focused on the integration of effective practices into the normative frameworks of States and other regional organizations, permanently in accordance with their situation related to disaster displacements and the challenges ahead. In this way, it is important to highlight the use of the word protection with a humanitarian nature in this agenda as a way of appreciating any positive action taken by States, whether or not based on legal assumptions, also mentioning that the aim of the creation of this agenda was not to expand the State's legal obligations under international law related to refugees and/or human rights for both individuals forced to displaced or at the risk of being displaced (THE NANSEN INITIATIVE 2015).

The definition of protection in this document is flexible to the action of each State and is identified as “(...) any positive action (whether or not based on legal obligation) undertaken by States on the behalf of disaster displaced persons or people at risk of being displaced that aim at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual” (THE NANSEN INITIATIVE 2015, 7).

Overall, in terms of the protection of rights, the document presents itself as a slight extension of the 1951 Convention and the UDHR, where the discussion of rights is merely theoretical, and there is no practical attempt to prioritize the rights of refugees, either during or after events that lead to displacement (Lawing 2021, 24).

The same goes for autonomy, where there are no measures to respect refugees' self-sufficiency and independence (Lawing 2021, 24).

On the other side of the coin, when it comes to the commitment to develop joint protection systems for States that experience the same phenomenon of mass migration, the document reaches a very high level of burden sharing, focusing its action on collaboration and prevention. The primary function of this initiative focuses on researching potential environmental risks, developing plans to support displaced people in the face of these events, and helping States develop their own effective capacity to manage these migratory processes (Lawing 2021, 25).

However, despite developing annual reports focused on the most affected regions, it has no mechanisms for reprimanding States that fail to act to the detriment of the common environmental good and continue to promote climate disaster. It therefore contains a moderate level of credible commitments (Lawing 2021, 25).

Through a global dialogue, the Protection Agenda was developed in a non-binding way and is only considered a framework that allows normative, institutional, and operational development. As such, it admits a low level of legally binding nature and a clear practical difficulty in gaining government support for a normative framework (McAdam 2013).

Despite its non-binding nature, this agreement stands out for its measures and recognitions regarding climate migration and the mitigation of its effects, with a first part dedicated to the protection of cross-border disaster-displaced persons - a real asset in the subject we are addressing, because many of those internally displaced by the adverse effects of the climate can be guided by the solutions put forward for IDPs and the principles established for them - followed by a second part which focuses on the management of disaster displacement and risk reduction in the countries of origin, and a third and final part devoted to future actions to prioritize and adapt to the phenomenon. With regard to cross-border disaster displacement, the need for preparedness for States and regions exposed to high disaster risks is emphasized, and some effective practices for the preparedness process are mentioned, such as: (a) “including cross-border displacement scenarios within bilateral or regional disaster contingency, planning

exercises”; (b) reviewing existing legal frameworks at the regional and national level and, if relevant, harmonizing them, with respect to receiving cross-border disaster-displaced persons”; and (c) “building the capacity of competent border and immigration authorities through training and technical support to apply relevant legal frameworks and policies for cross-border disaster-displacement persons” (THE NANSEN INITIATIVE 2015, 24).

States can take a number of measures, according to the Agenda for Protection, in order to have a plan and practical management of the phenomenon of disaster displacement and its risk reduction, which will, therefore, make it possible to reduce vulnerability and build resilience to the risk of displacement. Some of these effective measures pointed out by the document analyzed here are:

(a) “elaborating new or reviewing separate or joint climate change adaptation and disaster risk management strategies, plans or laws at all levels, in close cooperation with local governments and affected communities, to specifically incorporate disaster displacement risk and protection needs” ;

(b) taking measures to identify people at risk of displacement in the immediate and long term, and develop appropriate responses, in particular by:

(b1) enhancing the disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation capacity of local authorities and communities;

(b2) ensuring that, where needed, countries have adequate access to climate change adaptation and other relevant funding for human mobility-related programs and activities.”(THE NANSEN INITIATIVE 2015, 34).

As resilience is a key factor in the drafting of the document and the development of effective practices, it is worth considering that the protection agenda derived from the Nansen Initiative is based on a high level of climate adaptation and mitigation measures.

In general, the challenge was identified – the protection gap - and the response was tailored to all the concerns in order to formulate an intergovernmental burden-sharing mechanism and, consequently, alert the commitment of States and regions to provide support systems to combat climate change and, consequently, migration.

Table 3 - Evaluation on the Protection Agenda based on Lawing and on personal assessment

Source: Own Elaboration based on the Lawing study on “Addressing climate induced displacement: An analysis of protection policies for environmental migrants” (Lawing 2021, 24-25)

<b>The Nansen Initiative – The Protection Agenda</b>			
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Rights Protection</b>	X		
<b>Autonomy</b>	X		
<b>Burden Sharing</b>			X
<b>Credible Commitments</b>	X		
<b>Legal &amp; Binding Nature</b>	X		
<b>Climate Adaptation &amp; Mitigation Measures</b>			X

### **The Global Compact for Migration**

In the context of UN action, this agreement was the first to focus on developing a common approach to international migration through an understanding of the intersectionality of human movement. At the General Assembly in 2018, member States and UN systems were approached with the proposal to adopt this agreement. The aim was clear, to fill the gap in the current global refugee support system. By stating the differences in the drivers of migration, it sought to strengthen cooperative working between state and non-state actors toward a pragmatic vision of the current migration spectrum (Lawing 2021, 26).

In the structure of the document, we can find a clear attempt to develop an integrated support system and active suggestions for countries that take in refugees. In a way, the Global Compact for Migration does not aim to deconstruct and change the world's migration support system, but rather to re-align its vision in the light of the migratory reality in the context of climate-induced displacement. Its perspective does not have strong legal ties, but instead, a soft law approach that, while trying to suggest innovative policies, continually strives to respect the values of sovereignty, responsibility, non-discrimination, and the protection of human rights. Its main objectives, aligned with a logic of migration management at the local, national, and international level, focus on (a) relieving the pressure felt by the host countries, (b) enhancing refugee self-reliance,

(c) expanding access to support for third world countries, (d) improving conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity (Lawing 2021, 26).

Beyond the descriptive scrutiny of migrants' rights declared in the International Convention on Human Rights, the agreement here unashamedly affirms not only the need to recognize and address the complexity of migratory flows but also the importance of counteracting the geographical pressure bubbles felt in some regions known as host countries. The agreement's reminder to all nation-states is simple: reinforce the need for a more secure and cost-effective system to support refugees and their host countries (United Nations 2016).

Migration is intersectionality, co-operation between state and non-state actors is fundamental and the development of new visions of the migration process are key components of this action. In addition, there is an important and particularly dedicated element in the agreement, the understanding of climate change as a displacement driver. By recognizing the correlation between migration and environmental change, the Global Compact states that it is necessary to develop adaptive strategies for this type of phenomenon, both sudden and on-set environmental disasters (Lawing 2021, 27).

With a strong sense of fighting for the protection rights of all refugees, this agreement achieves a high level of protection rights. As well as recognizing the 1951 Convention and the UDHR, there is a clear incentive for States that have not ratified these conventions to do so, promoting the rights of all migrants and refugees, but especially women and children. The focus on the permanent fight for rights by encouraging active policies makes it the document with the most focus on the rights of migrants (Lawing 2021, 27–28).

In a way, the document has considerable theoretical density, but in practice, both in terms of autonomy, burden-sharing, and credible commitments, the efforts are moderate. Although there has been an effort at collaborative action by a fund with the World Bank, and the fact that it constantly emphasizes the need to build regional and international mechanisms, there is no specific order as to what these systems would look like on a day-to-day basis. As with the previously established objectives, twenty-three objectives were presented and proposed, but in the exercise of coercion, the document lacks a pulse in limiting consequences to the actions of each country. The objectives are no more than suggestions and motivations, and the accountability measures are limited to the requirement for the Secretary-General to report on the state of implementation of the document (Lawing 2021, 28–29).

As far as its legal nature is concerned, the document takes on a legally non-binding form and this aspect is one of its most debated and criticized characteristics (Höflinger 2020). In spite of its non-binding nature, however, the GCM has the characteristics of relevance, the capacities, and the legitimacy to become a normative force in the field of international migration governance. As such, we can assume a moderate level of binding nature in that, although it provides significant mechanisms for effective action, the fulfillment of the commitments it proposes is directly dependent on the political will of the States that incorporate it. Despite its non-binding nature, this does not make it an irrelevant instrument because it is a regime subject to legal thinking and with potential legal effect on the interpretation of States' obligations. Therefore, its relevance and future impact should depend on monitoring mechanisms to instill in States a sense of compliance with its objectives. If its legitimacy is not supported by external members such as the wider United Nations network, its formulation and action will only be a reflection of the exclusive interests of the most powerful countries, i.e. the Global North (Höflinger 2020).

The final draft of the document not only contains guiding principles and concrete measures related to border management, documentation, migrant services, capacity building for States, consular protection, skills recognition, mechanism of portability, and building environments for migrants but also includes several references to climate migration by articulating the nexus between migration and the environment, namely:

- (a) In objective two: “Minimizing the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin, which contains a section specifically dedicated to the subject and entitled "Natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change, and environmental degradation”(UN General Assembly 2018, 8);
- (b) In objective five: “Enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration”(UN General Assembly 2018, 11).

Through this information, we were able to uncover important takeaways for climate migration. These include recognizing the importance of climate adaptation and mitigation measures, such as the need to prioritize this type of measure in countries of origin in order to minimize migration drivers, facilitating adaptation processes *in situ*, and strengthening pathways for regular migration through visa options or relocation plans, highlighting the need for States to cooperate in order to identify, develop and strengthen solutions for individuals who move due to slow-onset environmental degradation and

disasters, or stressing the importance of working and developing solutions at a regional level (IOM s.d.).

In summary, the combination of a document based on a soft-law approach, of a non-legally binding nature and broad in its content, makes its accountability and, consequently, its practical implementation difficult. However, the Global Compact for Migration is nonetheless the latest and greatest theoretical effort to reform the current migration and refugee system and to fill gaps in hard law in migration governance through fostering cooperation and consolidating international obligations, standards, and stakeholders (Höflinger 2020).

*Table 4 - Evaluation on the Global Compact for Migration based on Lawing and on personal assessment*

*Source: Own Elaboration based on the Lawing study on “Addressing climate induced displacement: An analysis of protection policies for environmental migrants” (Lawing 2021, 27-29)*

<b>The Global Compact for Migration</b>			
	Low	Moderate	High
<b>Rights Protection</b>			X
<b>Autonomy</b>		X	
<b>Burden Sharing</b>			X
<b>Credible Commitments</b>		X	
<b>Legal &amp; Binding Nature</b>		X	
<b>Climate Adaptation &amp; Mitigation Measures</b>			X

### **The Cartagena Declaration**

The Cartagena Declaration is a regional document, originally drawn up in 1984 to provide support for refugees and migrants in Central America. In the 1980s, it was at the forefront of addressing forced migration and inter-regional movements and of differentiating itself from the existing legislation on refugees and human rights that Latin American countries<sup>52</sup> (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 1984) had adopted during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its groundbreaking achievement was that it was designated as a non-binding regional instrument that would not eliminate the traditional

<sup>52</sup> Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela.

definitions and rules subscribed to by the 1951 Convention, but would only be an extension of the definition of protection (Lawing 2021, 30–31). However, the innovation was not left to drift on paper and in theory, and so the declaration moved from words to action with the creation of the Cartagena Colloquium, an active and monitoring body that ensured the decision-making of standards that would be applied in its 10 constituent members as well as a mechanism of intergovernmental communication (Lawing 2021, 32).

At the end of the 20th century, the Cartagena Declaration was unique in its understanding of forced migration from a non-political and appealing perspective, in that it was seen as a strictly humanitarian issue. Cases involving the phenomenon of forced migration would have to base their infrastructure (social and otherwise) on common minimum instruments (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 1984). These standard instruments were based on two fundamental and simultaneous ideas that would complement each other, the establishment of a safe physical space - through the creation of refugee camps - and the empowerment of self-sufficiency - through the provision of assistance and protection (Lawing 2021, 31).

By instilling that expansionist idea, many of its member States decided to reconsider and apply a more inclusive definition of refugee in their constitutions. Despite this reconsideration of the classic term prescribed by the Convention, the declaration has always made clear the idea of working together with external organizations, in particular the UNHCR (Lawing 2021, 33).

Since the focus of action is mainly on creating a mutual understanding of migration by maximizing systems capable of addressing the different migratory flows in the region of the 10 countries involved, the issue of protecting the rights of migrants becomes secondary. As such, on the indicator of the protection of rights, this declaration presents a moderate level of guarantee. The declaration not only recognizes the importance of the two primary documents on the subject - the 1951 Convention and the Declaration of Human Rights - but also defends the existence of a minimum standard of security and housing conditions in the reception of displaced people and specialized military and humanitarian training to better support this population (Lawing 2021, 33).

At the same level when it comes to autonomy, the Cartagena declaration emphasizes the refugee as an individual with a wealth of experience who will contribute to the development of their host country, as well as underlining the unity of the family as a whole while they go through the migration process (Lawing 2021, 33).

Its distinctive feature is reflected in the high level of burden sharing it entails due to the great detail provided on how to create a regional support system within the borders of member countries. The document contains a clear obligation for cooperation and intergovernmental work to be provided by a collective system of action between States and external organizations in order to coordinate aid efforts. However, this high level of burden sharing is not accompanied by an equally high, but moderate, level of credible commitments since the only practical action body set up to make decisions and carry out research into climate migration support and adaptation, the Cartagena Colloquium, has been hardly used for this very purpose and is not recognized in the public sphere as an accountability structure (Lawing 2021, 33).

It is clear that the Cartagena Declaration did not establish any binding law, being, as we mentioned, a non-binding regional instrument. When this agreement was adopted, most of its constituent States did not have a national legal framework that was capable of dealing with refugees and the issues surrounding them, such as protection. Thus, the Cartagena Declaration became a "common language" that incorporated the concerns surrounding protection and gained legal force through its widespread adoption in several countries in the region. So, despite not being legally binding, we can say that it initially assumed a moderate level of binding nature due to the regional proportions it may have taken on. However, today, this agreement is only invoked when it is necessary to recall an alternative, regional definition of a refugee. As for all the principles associated with legal protection and humanitarian aid, such as the exercise of active inter-state cooperation to satisfy humanitarian needs, the non-political nature of asylum, and the principle of non-refoulement (Reed-Hurtado 2013, 5), they become largely ignored in the international system and, therefore, nowadays, their legal nature takes on a low level.

The declaration states the importance of coordinating efforts and developing practices and research on migratory flows in order to obtain data and evidence for improving systems in the face of the climate migration process. According to the agreement, it is necessary to promote adaptation to migratory changes and, consequently, to the need to mitigate climate change, as stated in point 15 of the agreement, quoting: *“Also reiterate that efforts to reduce the region’s greenhouse gas emissions and climate change vulnerability require urgent responses by all our countries and the international community, ensuring the provision of adequate, new and additional financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building by developed countries so that our adaptation and mitigation needs can be addressed, in accordance with the principle of common, but*

*differentiated responsibilities,*” (*Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean 2016, 5*). As such, cooperation and coordination efforts reflect a high level of exposure to climate mitigation and adaptation measures to the climate migration movement.

In short, the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees can create a regional refugee support system by promoting regional cooperation and coordination - through instruments such as sharing information, coordinating refugee policies and programs, and providing mutual support to countries that are hosting large numbers of refugees; international cooperation and support – by providing financial and technical assistance to countries hosting refugees, as well as working to address the root causes of refugee displacement; the involvement of civil society organizations, and the development of legal frameworks that protect the rights of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons – via ensuring access to asylum procedures, protecting refugees from refoulment, and promoting the integration of refugees into host communities (Reed-Hurtado 2017).

Its inclusive influence in many national constitutions meant that there was a paradox in relation to the document. While it reflected the document's success, it also meant a variation in the conceptualization of the definition of the refugee itself. As such, the relevance of the initial document and its prescription lost strength at an international level, reducing the importance of the declaration's objectives in relation to the work done in the Central American region. However, the declaration is still considered in the international system as potentially one of the best working models for addressing forced migration at a regional level - provided it is implemented properly and accompanied by concrete measures to support and protect forced migrants (Lawing 2021, 34).

*Table 5 - Evaluation on the Cartagena Declaration based on Lawing and on personal assessment*

*Source: Own Elaboration based on the Lawing study on “Addressing climate induced displacement: An analysis of protection policies for environmental migrants” (Lawing 2021, 32-34)*

<b>The Cartagena Declaration</b>			
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Rights Protection</b>		X	
<b>Autonomy</b>		X	
<b>Burden Sharing</b>			X
<b>Credible Commitments</b>		X	
<b>Legal &amp; Binding Nature</b>	X	X	
<b>Climate Adaptation &amp; Mitigation Measures</b>			X

## Bridging the Gap on Climate Migration

When we analyze each of these three policies in detail, we find significant instruments and contributions to address the protection and support of those displaced by climate action. When analyzing each document separately, we can consider the unique contributions provided by each one.

Table 6 - Contributions of the Agreements for Protection, Assistance, and Support Actions of Climate Migrants

Source: Own Elaboration based on the analysis of the previous chapter

	<b>The Protection Agenda</b>	<b>The Global Compact for Migration</b>	<b>The Cartagena Declaration</b>
<b>Definition</b>	It recognizes climate and environmental change as a factor driving displacement and prioritizes the protection of these migrants, addressing their causes and consequences.	Recognizes climate change as a factor driving displacement and, at the same time, calls for an urgent and broad international response/approach to all causes and aspects of migration.	Promotes the extension of the refugee definition to a more inclusive form that includes people forced to move for environmental and climate reasons.
<b>Protection, Assistance and Support Actions</b>	<b>1. Develop a common understanding of climate change</b> as a driver of displacement and how to create a Framework to address it.	<b>1. Protect the rights of all migrants regardless of their status or cause/reason</b> for their migratory displacement, including access to basic services and a minimum quality of life and due protection from discrimination, violence, or exploitation.	<b>1. Expand the definition of refugee</b> , as the declaration recognizes that displacement can be triggered by a variety of factors, including climate change. It therefore recognizes the need to broaden the definition of refugee to include those forced to move by environmental factors.
	<b>2. Build Response Capacity</b> in each nation and organization for displacement due to climate change through instruments such as training or the development of best practices.	<b>2. Address the drivers of migration</b> , including climate change and environmental degradation, and consequently promote sustainable development or gas emission reduction measures.	<b>2. Provide protection and assistance</b> , protection of the rights of refugees which are human rights, and assistance in legal terms, shelter, food, health, and education.

<b>Protection, Assistance and Support Actions</b>	<p><b>3. Strengthen legal frameworks for the protection of migrants displaced by climate change</b> at all levels, national, regional, and international.</p>	<p><b>3. Provide support and assistance</b> through cooperation between the countries and communities most affected by displacement due to climate change, instilling humanitarian assistance measures, building long-term solutions for those displaced, and guaranteeing their rights.</p>	<p><b>3. Address the root causes of displacement</b>, which are based not only on conflict, violence, and human rights violations but also on environmental degradation.</p>
	<p><b>4. Mobilize resources internationally</b>, such as funding, humanitarian assistance, or disaster risk reduction measures.</p>	<p><b>4. Strengthen international cooperation</b>, since the GPM believes that in order to provide viable solutions to climate-induced migration, it is strictly necessary to exercise international cooperation and collaboration between the most affected countries and their respective stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>4. Promote regional cooperation for protection and assistance</b> that is more focused on the needs of those displaced. Regional cooperation is based on collective working tools such as sharing information, resources, and best practices. This mutual effort in the same direction will promote the construction of mechanisms to guide displacement due to environmental change in a given region - creating regional mechanisms/instruments.</p>

Although no single agreement has been created with the sole intention of providing guidance, either internationally or regionally, on the issue of displacement induced by climate and environmental change, the combination of the three existing agreements provides a suitable framework for targeting the problem in such a way as to guarantee protection and support measures and mechanisms for those displaced by these factors. The combination of these policies becomes a comprehensive approach to climate migration, its effects, causes, and consequences. This approach would be an addition and

extension of what is defined in the 1951 Refugee Convention (Lawing 2021, 34). Beyond the mere existence of such policies, it is an open door to discussing and analyzing the imminent link between climate change and migration.

However, in their singular application, many have failed to effectively implement compliance measures and make credible commitments, ending up acting as merely rhetorical documents and policies that provide theoretical models for international cooperation without any real and conclusive impact. Many of the countries that have real intentions to improve the current refugee system and seek to implement these policies lack the power and resource capacity to do so. Another critical aspect of their implementation is that they are documents that come from reaction actions and establish policy after disasters, human or natural. When we talk about action plans for migration, we must take into account contingency plans based on in-depth preparedness and "pre-emptive discussion of policies" (Lawing 2021, 35) creating, for example, evacuation plans adapted to all locations, including migrants and their needs. Furthermore, when we talk about the climate change spectrum, where phenomena are unexpected and bring devastating consequences, preparation is key, because the plan cannot be developed when the crisis occurs, but prior action must be taken to prepare the international and/or regional community for the consequences during and after such phenomena.

Many governments have yet to ratify the Geneva Convention, and a good number of those that have done so have failed to effectively apply the stands, principles, and solutions put forward by the purpose of this document, which remains the main document for dealing with the protection of refugees. In this way, the lack of consensus is a crucial factor in the existence of viable alternatives to ensure the intersection of migration and the environment (Lawing 2021, 36). According to António Vitorino, more people are displaced by climate change than by conflict, despite the fact that many countries have a significant level of vulnerability to climate change and internal conflicts. The two phenomena play together, interact with each other, and become triggers for displacement. The 20 million people affected annually by climate change over the last decade have been moving internally, but sooner or later they will cross international borders. Assistance mechanisms are urgently needed to save lives and then find lasting solutions for the future.

*“As climate change shows us, the environment has more control over the plight of humanity than humans do.”(Lawing 2021, 37)*

## **Conclusions: Future Prospects and Recommendations**

While in the previous chapter we analyzed the measures that have already been adopted over time and those that are still on the table, in this chapter we open up the range of possible solutions. Considering which of them are more or less useful, more or less feasible, we analyze the new conceptualizations that they can provide us with to address the problem of climate migration and the legal gap that it lacks, in order to respond to our last secondary objective of identifying what ideas are underway that can will allow us to form our possible final considerations.

The first step is to recognize the growing importance of climate change in shaping migratory movement as a policy priority, to see the urgency of supporting climate-induced migration, to identify the gap between the scientific community, and the political community, and to strengthen differentiated and generalized research to explore the links in this relationship.

The second step that we can absorb through the analysis of European policy and strategy is to recognize migration as a climate adaptation and, consequently, to know that in order to minimize this type of forced migration, there will be a need for a strong investment in measures that can build climate resilience. By strengthening the climate resilience of the most affected nations, we can reduce vulnerabilities and inequalities between individuals and bring climate justice to all.

Given the amount of research done to date and the practicality or lack thereof presented by the 1951 Convention's narrow definition of refugee, we know that this international legal framework presents itself as an inadequate response to address climate-induced migration and thus results in the creation of a legal gap for this population group. Hence, the debate in the public sphere has been about the need for a new convention designed specifically to protect climate migrants or the adaptation of existing international agreements on the table to cover the issue. In the course of this study, it is possible to come to the conclusion that in the absence of a comprehensive international agreement, the best solution presents itself as the adaptation of existing international and regional regimes, such as the Nansen Initiative, the Global Compact for Migration and the Cartagena Declaration, to the needs and specificities of climate migration.

The analysis of these three agreements reveals the need for a diversified approach and a comprehensive strategy given the multifaceted nature of the climate migration phenomenon. While the Protection Agenda, addresses protection and prevention, the

Global Compact for Migration addresses the problem through a comprehensive approach and the Cartagena Declaration highlights regional support. All these agreements prioritize the protection and assistance of climate migrants at their various levels. In particular, the Protection Agenda focuses on the protection of displaced persons. The GCM aims to protect the rights of all migrants, including those who are forcibly displaced by climate impacts. Finally, the Cartagena Declaration expanded the definition of refugee regionally to include the climate factor, emphasizing the need for an individual to be protected when they are the victim of climate-induced displacement.

We know that the implementation of these agreements presents a number of challenges, not only financial but also based on the ability of States to commit adequately given their non-binding nature. Overcoming these challenges is therefore essential if there is to be a tangible impact on this class of migrants. Such a step will only be possible if there is international cooperation and collaboration in addressing the phenomenon, which transcends borders and forces nations to work actively and collectively to find a sustainable and effective solution that combines the best policies on the table in these agreements. Strengthening the legal and binding nature of these agreements, promoting maximum cooperation between States, and allocating resources for their proper implementation are some of the recommendations we found in our analysis.

In short, by opening up the range of possible solutions, we are faced with the potential of these international agreements to address the phenomenon of climate migration as well as the challenges they face in practical and effective implementation. Although these agreements make critical strides in recognizing and mitigating climate-induced displacement, there is still a need to ensure that the theoretical agreement is reflected in the practical protection and assistance of those who are severely affected by the effects of the overwhelming crisis of climate change.

## **Final Considerations: A Call to Action**

As we conclude this comprehensive analysis of the interconnected issues of the present international environment of instability and unpredictability, the profound impact of climate change, and the complex challenge of climate migration, we can say that we are facing a critical moment in human history. The conversion of the conclusions drawn from analyzing each of these themes corresponds to each of our four specific objectives - the current international context, the technical analysis of climate change and its impact on migratory movement, the measures adopted so far to address climate migration and the emerging ideas of solutions that are on the table to combat the phenomenon and provide the protection that this category of migrants needs - provides us with the conditions to paint the picture of the current international system as well as the conjunctures that will shape the future, namely the future and the implications of the multi-causal challenge presented by climate-induced migration.

First of all, by analyzing the international panorama, we can conclude that we are going through a transformational change in global dynamics, which is currently characterized above all by uncertainty and the incessant pursuit of individual national interests to the detriment of collective interests, which consequently provide for global collective well-being. This change in international dynamics is described by the events that cause the erosion of the world order, fueled by the exacerbation of political rivalries reflected in violent wars with no end in sight, the emergence of new powerful political actors, and, naturally, the emergence of new strategic political alliances between the traditional great powers and emerging powerful actors, such as India. In this context, the need for continued international dialogue and multilateral cooperation instruments and actions to respond to the interconnected challenges we face on a daily basis is becoming essential. One such challenge is climate change, which exacerbates economic, social, and security problems, resulting in one of the most damaging human impacts of our times – millions of errant people escaping unsupportable conditions of living. Climate change is an interconnected crisis and threat that, in this sense, cannot be resolved efficiently and effectively by a single nation acting in solitude.

Furthermore, after analyzing the technical context of climate change and its adverse impacts, we can draw the harsh realization, which consists of the representation of climate change as an existential threat to humanity with consequences that are calculable in scope, but unpredictable and interconnected. The truth is that the climate

change crisis is getting closer and more present; it is no longer a distant reality, but it is now visible in terms of its impacts. It is estimated that this problem will trigger the displacement of more than 200 million people by 2050, with an uneven and regionalized distribution, but mainly affecting the developing countries, which are considered to be the world's most vulnerable regions to climate risk and where its impacts exacerbate existing challenges, including migratory flows. However, we know that this estimate is unpredictable and that, while those internally displaced by the climate will be more easily taken into account, those who will move across borders remain unknown pending our action. While we realize that the number will not fall, maintaining its exponential increase is directly linked to the speed and effectiveness of our action to mitigate this phenomenon, as we face global temperature rises projected beyond critical limits.

Therefore, the climate crisis in inducing migratory movements, i.e. climate-induced displacement, will have an internal dimension above all, but also an external one. As such, it is probable that the first steps towards a viable approach to the problem will involve a technical and practical dimension based on data and research that will make it possible to understand the scale and migratory patterns of this class of migrants through the collection of fundamental data to track climate change, identify vulnerabilities and estimate migratory movements, while at the same time, it is also necessary to complement this dimension with the adoption of early warning systems with disaster risk identification and preparedness practices.

In addition, this problem, being multi-causal, also has political, economic, and social causes and consequences that need remedies. Political in the sense of developing a legal framework and policies that are comprehensive enough to address the problem effectively, be they adaptive, disaster risk reduction, or assessing the needs of those who move and those who receive them. Economic, not only because of the allocation of resources needed to support this population group through funding, humanitarian aid, and infrastructure development in the most vulnerable areas, but also because of the impact on the labor market in host communities. Lastly, it is social in the sense that it puts into action community resilience in dealing with climate impacts and supporting migrants by implementing adaptation and disaster preparedness practices. However, the societal resilience tested is not only climate resilience but also the adaptive capacity tested in the culture and identity of a given community insofar as there may be potential tensions between the displaced and those who welcome them. Its challenge is ongoing and multifaceted given the changing circumstances we face in this phenomenon.

Furthermore, its multidimensional nature is emphasized in our analysis of climate migration and the actions that have been developed in this area. The issue of climate-induced displacement per se is characterized as complex by the interweaving of factors that surround and influence it, which means that there is a need for adaptation and the development of alternative policy frameworks to the existing ones, namely the current international legal framework established by the 1951 Convention. This agreement is largely insufficient in its ability to respond to the protection of climate-displaced individuals, creating a legal gap in this area and, as such, reinforcing the imperative need for innovative approaches, especially in the duties of organizations such as the UNHCR. Moreover, the progress in research so far, let us concluded that a one-size-fits-all approach is not the appropriate response to the problem at hand. The approach depends not only on the multi-faceted nature of the problem but also on the needs arising from the region where the phenomenon begins and where it ends, i.e. where people move and to where. In this research, we have analyzed that different regions have adopted different approaches, some more innovative than others, namely the approaches developed by the Nordic countries.

The key players in the design of this mitigation must take into account the construction of sustainable solutions from an interdisciplinary, comprehensive, and long-term perspective. These actors, be they Europe or other relevant international bodies, despite the progress that has been made, must support this ongoing effort and recognize that dealing with climate migration is a constantly evolving challenge given its recurring and, more recently, almost daily nature in our lives. For this reason, focusing on climate resilience and adaptation measures and adapting existing international agreements to encompass the issue becomes the most viable solution. These solutions can be based on agreements that, according to our research, have powerful instruments and mechanisms to meet the specific needs of climate migrants, such as the Nansen Initiative, the Global Compact for Migration, and the Cartagena Declaration. While the Protection Agenda provides a focus on protection and prevention, the GCM generates a comprehensive approach to migration and, finally, the Cartagena Declaration calls our attention to regional support tailored to the needs of the region and its circumstances. In our in-depth analysis of these agreements, we concluded that bringing together the best policies and practices from all three would result in an approach capable of absorbing the various nuances of the problem and its respective protection and assistance. Its implementation would not be made any easier by the lack of financial resources and viable commitments

from States - given its non-binding nature – however, overcoming these challenges is a crucial step towards affecting our transcendent problem for all nations. Therefore, strengthening the legal nature, promoting multilateral cooperation, and allocating resources for efficient implementation would be a step closer to meeting the needs of those who are seriously affected by the devastating consequences of the climate.

In light of these conclusions, it is possible to say that we are faced with the difficulty of drawing a definitive conclusion that provides a practical and effective answer to one of our starting questions - "What possible ways of addressing this problem are currently available?". Therefore, we will try to sum up our conclusions around some generic principles. As for the answer to the first question - "What is the impact of climate change on migratory movements?", this has been answered in the course of our comprehensive analysis of the various impacts of climate change on migration, with the estimated number of people who will be affected by climate-related forced displacement, not only by disasters, but also by environmental degradation and the various levels of climate change, the regions of greatest concern and the dimensions of the societal sphere that will be affected. However, as far as our second main research question is concerned, it is certain that we are sailing in very unsettled and somewhat troubled waters. A call to action is imperative, and it is not enough to merely recognize the scale and multi-causality of the problem, it is necessary to complement and strengthen our international system, not only as a whole collectively, but also the system of those who are most vulnerable. We need to look at the issue as if it were a collective commitment so that there can be a real exercise of international cooperation, developing equitable policies, and setting up protection and assistance systems for this class of migrants.

Taking into consideration this complex and interconnected issue, we would like to set out some general principles that may guide all the actors who are addressing this challenge posed by climate migration. From what we have analyzed throughout this research, it is possible to conclude that:

- The problem of climate change has a planetary dimension and, as such, its treatment and the search for solutions can only be achieved through a comprehensive, coordinated, and global response. In other words, it is necessary to recognize climate change and its adverse impacts as a challenge that requires global collective responsibility. There are no partial solutions and, therefore, the actions of nations that prioritize their interests to the detriment of the collective good are unsustainable.

- Given the current panorama, even if there were a significant reduction in the factors that induce global warming, which is not the case, the consequences of global warming in the area of climate migrants require indispensable and unavoidable measures. Above all, it is necessary to prioritize a holistic approach with the development of comprehensive policies that are capable of providing solutions to the multi-causal nature of the problem.

- The weakness of certain regions to absorb climate shocks without this translating into surges in population movements is evident, which induces the need for specific support in these cases so that migration does not bring painful consequences and becomes a vital global issue due to the number of people involved and the impact on peripheral regions, emphasizing the need for ongoing dialogue and international cooperation to build collaborative and interdisciplinary solutions.

- The measures to be adopted have a fundamental internal component. In two actions: improving the resilience of affected societies - improving their ability to withstand disasters - and coherently planning the relocation of people to places where living conditions are better - called adaptation. The need for transformative management is transversal and must be based on a commitment to community resilience, disaster preparedness, and climate adaptation in order to reduce possible tensions between displaced individuals and the host communities.

- In the external component, by recognizing the importance of shared responsibility among all members of the international community, those must act to support the problem of climate migration and strengthen the legal nature of existing agreements for the effective allocation of resources and efficient implementation of established instruments, recognizing a tailored approach to the different continental regions that take into account the unique needs and circumstances of the countries of origin and reception.

In conclusion, the climate crisis and the mass movement of climate migrants will be the offspring of shared responsibility and parenthood among all members of the international community. It is necessary to go beyond the progress of academic endeavor and call for the actions of each government, each organization, and each individual. Today's choices and actions will shape tomorrow's future.

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## **Glossary**

**Borders (International)** - Politically defined boundaries separating territory or maritime zones between political entities and the areas where political entities exercise border governance measures on their territory or extraterritorially. Such areas include border crossing points (airports, land border crossing points, ports), immigration and transit zones, the “no-man’s land” between crossing points of neighboring countries, as well as embassies and consulates (insofar as visa issuance is concerned).

**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.

**Country of destination** – In the migration context, a country that is the destination for a person or a group of persons, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly.

**Country of origin** – In the migration context, a country of nationality or of former habitual residence of a person or group of persons who have migrated abroad, irrespective of whether they migrate regularly or irregularly.

**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.

**Climate 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.

**Freedom of movement (right to)** – In human rights law, a human right comprising three basic elements: freedom of movement within the territory of a country and to choose one's residence, the right to leave any country and the right to return to one's own country.

**Humanitarian visa** – A visa granting access to and temporary stay in the issuing State for a variable duration to a person on humanitarian grounds as specified in the applicable national or regional law, often aimed at complying with relevant human rights and refugee law.

**Integration** – The two-way process of mutual adaptation between migrants and the societies in which they live, whereby migrants are incorporated into the social, economic, cultural and political life of the receiving community. It entails a set of joint responsibilities for migrants and communities, and incorporates other related notions such as social inclusion and social cohesion.

**Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)** – Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or (IDPs) 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.

**International migration** – The movement of persons away from their place of usual residence and across an international border to a country of which they are not nationals.

**International protection** – The protection that is accorded by the international community to individuals or groups who are outside their own country and are unable to return home because their return would infringe upon the principle of non-refoulement, and their country is unable or unwilling to protect them.

**Labor migration** – Movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment.

**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; 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.

**Migrant flow (international)** – The number of international migrants arriving in a country (immigrants) or the number of international migrants departing from a country (emigrants) over the course of a specific period.

**Migrants in vulnerable situations** – Migrants who are unable to effectively enjoy their human rights, are at increased risk of violations and abuse and who, accordingly, are entitled to call on a duty bearer's heightened duty of care

**Migration** – The movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State.

**Regular migration** – Migration that occurs in compliance with the laws of the country of origin, transit and destination.

**Refugee (1951 Convention)** – A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

**Safe, orderly and regular migration** – Movement of persons in keeping both with the laws and regulations governing exit from, entry and return to and stay in States and with States' international law obligations, in a manner in which the human dignity and well-being of migrants are upheld, their rights are respected, protected and fulfilled and the risks associated with the movement of people are acknowledged and mitigated.

**Vulnerability** – Within a migration context, vulnerability is the limited capacity to avoid, resist, cope with, or recover from harm. This limited capacity is the result of the unique interaction of individual, household, community, and structural characteristics and conditions.

All definitions above are from the International Organization for Migration Glossary on Migration (IOM 2019).

## **Attachments**

## **Attachment I**

### **Defining Refugee in the International System**

For anyone concerned with the fate of refugees and, consequently, the process of determination of refugee status and related policy issues, the drafting history and interpretation of both the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol is a clear necessity and, indeed, a true challenge. This research is not an exception and, therefore, we are facing up to the challenge, putting all efforts firstly into the interpretation of legal instruments – through an international relations lens – relating refugees, whether national or international. When speaking of the 1951 Convention, we must recognize that this was the first human rights treaty to be adopted by the United Nations and, perhaps, one of the most effective of all UN human rights treaties. Along these lines, the conduction of most treaties of human rights leads the way to basic principles of national constitutions in democratic societies, however, the drafting rules set out in the 1951 Convention contain principles different from the usual national spheres (Zimmermann 2011). Notwithstanding, crucial questions must be asked such as Who a refugee is, What are their rights and obligations – bearing in mind refugees’ rights are human rights, Is the status temporary, Can a refugee be deported, What does international protection mean practically and What are the obligations towards the nation-states and the UNHCR (Ager 2012).

Although we may think that the answers to those questions are straightforward due to the frame that the Convention provides us within the meaning of the term Refugee, the practical operationalization creates confusion and controversy in the public sphere around the way normative expressions, namely the “well-founded fear of persecution” are a target of a multiplicity of interpretations, especially through the eyes of non-lawyers. Therefore, to deal with such questions, we toned to interpret the created status in the light of the history of the moment, taking into account a comparative analysis of the connections between significant moments of History – including the relationship with other articles and/or international agreements - and the construction of the provisions in mind of the Convention and Protocol (Zimmermann 2011). This comparative approach follows the unique commentary based on a historicize of the evolution and application of the Convention of Andreas Zimmermann in his book, “The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol: A Commentary”.

Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that when looking at all the literature reviewing the Convention and all its provisions throughout the days of old and present, there is still no commentary or theory that turns out possible to create a response to one of the greatest critical question regarding this matter and that is, today, my object of study - whether the international definition of the term “refugee” comprehensive in the Convention should or should not be an object of a broad construction of narrative or if it should be narrowed (Zimmermann 2011).

After the First World War, under the League of Nations and facing a massive wave of refugees, the notion that these problems were and still are a matter of concern for the international community and must be addressed in a context of international cooperation and burden-sharing was slowly gaining ground in the humanitarian field. However, immediately once the Second World War is finished and the consequences are numbered - 500 000 Jews fleeing Nazi Germany - and analyzed, this notion is strengthened and taken into action within mutual efforts of nation-states that build the greatest international organization – the United Nations (UN) – allowing the creation of 1951 Convention (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990), an “instrument of burden sharing”, and later building the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees with an aim of being the responsible organ for the coordination of international and collective efforts (Zimmermann 2011).

Attention must be drawn when dealing with the question of refugees, collective action by multiple governments to find a global solution will always be assumed. On that account, the standards of efforts over the years were reflected in international instruments, naming conventions, resolutions, and recommendations, among others. Instruments that demand a universal adaptation – either under the framework of the UN or within regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), Council of Europe (CO), or the Pacific Island Forum (PIF), for example. Although there is a need to ensure the implementation on a transnational level, we must not forget that when implementing these resolutions under national laws and guidelines, the process to a more effective solution is eased. Nevertheless, regarding the approach to the refugee problem, at a universal level, the most “legally binding international instrument” was, indeed, the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 28<sup>th</sup> July 1951 (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990). According to two authors of the *Magna Carta* of international refugee law, “the overall object and purpose of the 1951 Convention is to provide protection by

creating an obligation for the contracting parties to ensure that individuals within their jurisdiction are not turned back to countries where they would be exposed to the risk of persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” (Zimmermann 2011). The conception that political asylum is declared in the Convention is, indeed, a misconception as the only major obligation contained in this treat is the principle of non-refoulment, which I’ll develop briefly in a later stage.

After a brief period with a specific deadline concerning those who were refugees of European origins and as a result of the events arising before 1st January 1951, the Convention had its first adaptation/modification leading towards contemporary efforts to make the convention fully applicable for all new in refugee situations. Consequently, as a result of these new concerns, the United Nations Refugee Protocol of 31st January 1967 was generated, implemented, and adopted by the 114 nation-states (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990).

From this moment, the procedure for defining Refugee Status follows the criteria of this universal convention[1] stating that a person is a refugee within the meaning of the 1951 Convention (and/or 1967 Protocol) as soon as he or she fulfills the criteria contained in the definition. Thus, in order to determine whether a person can be or not be declared with Refugee Status, the state’s parties that created this fundamental convention have settled the “refugee status determination procedures” or “asylum procedures”, (UNHCR 2011) which is a mechanism to verify that the claims of fear and/or persecution fall within the definition of the 1951 Convention, that according to the Article 1 of this international instrument, a refugee is defined as someone who is seeking asylum.

On that note, we must analyze that the claim made by an asylum-seeker is always targeting an evaluation of the decision-makers of the country of asylum. Hence, this nation becomes the owner of the decision-making power of whether that person will be able to be recognized with the status of refugee or not, since “not every asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee, but every refugee is initially an asylum-seeker”. Through the convention, we have the guideline definition that every nation has to take into account in the process of welcoming asylum-seekers. Nevertheless, this legal instrument did not build a process with the specific requirements to determine every refugee situation, it is up to each Member State with its own sovereignty to draw the fundamental lines of each determination process (UNHCR 2011). As follows, the substance of the treaty is a target of massive interpretation directly related to the reality

of the applicants. Each case is distinctive, each country thinks differently, and therefore the actor practicing this application – state or non-state - may follow the desirable law projected by the Convention since there is a misunderstanding of what is “black letter” law or merely *lex ferenda*<sup>53</sup>(Zimmermann 2011). Realistically, there are only two categories of rights ensured by this legal instrument. One is the right of non-refoulement, a non-derogable right that affirms that no state is allowed to return refugees to territories where their lives or freedom is threatened as a consequence of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. The other one is a whole of civil, political, and social rights to which they began to be entitled in the country of destination (Zimmermann 2011).

Even when the refugee status determination takes place in a regional organization such as the European Union (EU), we continue not to be presented with a common asylum procedure. This way, each Member State has the power to conduct its procedures, interpret the singular provisions of the 1951 Convention, and consequently, define the special legal regime when recognized with the alleged statute, in addition to the particular obligations that the refugee holds towards the country of asylum/host State (UNHCR 2011).

Despite that, each State has to follow the overall rights defined by the Convention, which constitute international refugee protection, which includes the entitlement of several rights and benefits as well as assistance and protection actions. Accordingly, all these actions responsible for the institutions of national borders depend on an interpretation of a singular definition. Therefore a good understanding of the universal definition provides the sensibility to the protection needs of the person crossing borders, moreover to an improved identification of who must be admitted into the asylum application (UNHCR 2011). Defining the term refugee was the highest provision of all and one thing that is common ground within the commentaries and interpretations of researchers and analysts of this draft is that: the convention was drafted, to this extent, to exclude the so-called internally displaced refugees, the migrants arising from economic and personal motivations, the persons who were not subject of discriminatory persecution and, finally but most importantly in this case, the victims of natural disasters and environmental issues (Zimmermann 2011).

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<sup>53</sup> Future law – what the law should be.

As each situation becomes more different and, somewhat, difficult to consider all the peculiarities, the need to create specific criteria to define the point where a person must be qualified as a refugee is mandatory— whether this process is ascertained by an individual or an organ of a nation-state (e.g. parliament, ministries) or by an international or regional organization (e.g. Councils). However, when speaking about providing international protection to refugees, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is the core organization on this competence, at an international level, dividing its resources through regional offices in key regions. The exercise is reviewed under Article 35 of the 1951 Convention – “Co-operation of the national authorities with the United Nations”, stating the responsibility of the UNHCR as a supervisor that provides the monitor the ensuing procedures, ensure practical interventions, and draw attention to the need to contracting States to co-operate with UN offices in all its range of functions (UNHCR 2011).

Underlining the collective aspect of this work, five criteria were outlined for qualifying refugees, namely:

- (a) a person must be outside of his/her country of nationality and/or habitual residence;
- (b) the fear should be well-founded;
- (c) the individual in due applicant must face persecution;
- (d) the individual has to be unable to seek the origin country’s protection (due to the fear of persecution);
- (e) the reasons for seeking asylum must arise/prompted/originated from race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. (UNHCR 2011)

Notwithstanding, these five criteria are also a target of differences in approaches taken to the interpretation of key terms – such as persecution, protection, voluntary action – and cross-referencing between contributions from different actors in the national and/or international system.

The first criterion of being outside of the country of nationality and/or habitual residence is a significant element in this definition, a person can only be named a refugee if he/she is outside of his/her country of origin, usually of nationality and/or residence. In addition, it is also applicable for those who are stateless – individuals with no citizenship, denominated Stateless Person. In a practical sense, this is reflected in an absence of

documents, statements, or any other information obtained from alternative sources than the Nation-State itself (UNHCR 2011).

Concerning the second criterion, the subjective element – fear - defined as a state of mind and subjective to the background and personal experiences of the individuals at hand, is based on the interpretation of a personal expression in the face of circumstances out of ordinary –peace being ordinary, most of the times. As a general rule, the simple act of applying for refugee status is frequently perceived as a clear indication of the fear of return. As for the objective element, the “well-foundedness” (UNHCR 2011), the basis for the argument being validated with a good foundation depends strictly on the context of the situation in the applicant’s country of origin as well as of the individual personal positions - whether that is social, political, racial or religious. In this element, the organization involved in the process of evaluation may require credibility research based on profiles backgrounds, and past experiences, i.e. objective and reliable information (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990).

About persecution, when aligned with the well-founded fear, it becomes the most significant element in the determination of the status and, simultaneously, the subject of most interpretation – influenced by different approaches, some more subjective and others more objective (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990). In other words, the protection of the convention is conceived when the individual harm causing the need to flee is most likely determined by persecution itself. Although there is no common ground on the definition of persecution, there is a common view that is highly engaged with the threat of life and/or freedom as well as it is linked to the motivation brought to certain actions, that is to say, the acts involving persecution depend on the context where they happen – some acts that may be persecution in one determinate context, might not be in another (Keyes 2019). From the right to life, through the freedom from torture, from slavery to recognition as a person before the law and, finally, to the freedom of thought, these become core rights – or “non-derogable” – in the context of qualifying refugees, building a context that will be an analysis of tolerance or intolerance (UNHCR 2011).

If we are going to withdraw a single reflection of Article 1 of the Convention, it is that the guarantee of protection to refugees is either granted, denied, or discontinued based on a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, in addition to the already mentioned and analyzed reasons, namely being outside of their country of origin (UN

High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990). Notwithstanding, as persecution is a criterion whose application is measured with the existence of objective facts, it is going to be a critical asset to the dissertation and to the explanation of whether environmental refugees fit under the umbrella of persecution.

The fact of an individual's being a constant target of persecution and impediment to fundamental life rights is the most determinative factor in the deliberation of refugee status - the other factors mentioned being merely questions of fact. The existence of the involvement of other factors in the determination process turns out to be evidence regarding the practical and real consequences of the fear of persecution. Whereas the criterion of well-founded fear of persecution has in itself a legal and standardized basis, founded on the existence of objective and concrete facts (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990, 7). According to Grahl-Madsen, by using the term well-founded fear, it is assumed that it is not the frame of mind of the person concerned that is decisive for her or his claim to refugee status, but rather that the claim should be measured by a more objective standard (Robinson 1968).

Thus, when the term "well-founded fear" is used in this process of legal determination, it is assumed that there are sufficient and objective facts to justify a conclusion in favor of the adoption of refugee status by the applicant, as a return to his country of origin would be subject to unsustainable persecution. However, in the day-to-day life of the courts and the decisive actors in the status application process, the adoption of the term in question is connoted in different ways and is subject to differences in the content of what it actually means. That differentiation between contexts indicates the largely interpretative problems that surround the criteria governing refugee status (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990, 8).

In fact, the term persecution is not defined either by the 1951 Convention or by the material prepared for its construction. The concealment in the design of the agreement and in its written exercise may even have a logical reason behind it. When we are faced with a case of possible application of the statute, whatever the case, from a legal point of view, persecution is always connoted as injurious or oppressive action. According to Hathaway, the problem with this narrative and approach to the meaning of persecution is that the institution of asylum as a whole faces constraints that threaten the humanitarian spirit of the Convention (Hathaway and Foster 2014). In such a way, from the moment that there is a realization of the bigger picture of the international system, the challenges to broaden the conception of persecution are increased so that protection continues to be

guaranteed. One of these challenges is the link that exists between human rights and the refugee regime, where changes in human rights law have a direct effect on the development of the concept of persecution, pointing that, "any meaning that has to be given to the concept of persecution must take into account the existing general human rights standards" (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990, 8). Thus, the human rights principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations are embraced as a guide in the preamble to the Geneva Convention. The principle laid down in this preamble that human beings shall own fundamental rights and freedoms may provide the assumption that the violation of certain rights may either institute persecution per se, or evidence thereof (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990, 9).

Within the last criteria, it is important to highlight and describe what the means to describe what is race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group, and last but not least, political opinion, according to the UNHCR Protection Training Manual for European Border and Entry Officials.

Defining what a refugee is per se, the concept of race has to be interpreted in a broad perspective. This comprehensive approach must include what are the ethnic characteristics that distinguish individuals from each other, whether these characteristics are a figurative reality or merely a perception of one group towards another societal group. The constitution of such groups differs according to their minority or majority characterization, underlining that in the migration context, minority groups are more likely to be persecuted than majority groups. Thus, the mirror of such discrimination may reveal itself through the denial of citizenship status and the respective loss of the rights associated with it (UNHCR 2011, 4).

As far as religion is concerned, this is a divergent and subjective concept at its root since the right that a person has to hold or not to hold a certain religion is absolute and non-derogable, so it is a necessary condition to the person as much as to the extent that he defines it. It is its manifestation itself that may (or may not) be subject to restrictions and, consequently, to persecution. Thus, a person is a victim of persecution for his or her religion when he or she is subject to restrictions on the exercise of his or her religious freedom by being prohibited from becoming a member of a given religious community, or when he or she is seriously discriminated against because of religious practice in a given religious community. That is, deliberate religious practice may be punished by others when the individual is freely exercising practices associated with a given religion (UNHCR 2011, 4).

Contrary to religion, nationality is a *fait accompli* to every individual – except for individuals considered stateless - and additionally, when we speak in the context of defining refugee, it is not only limited to an individual's citizenship but also extends across the boundaries of what is perceived by ethnic, religious, cultural and/or linguistic identity (UNHCR 2011, 4).

Within the large sphere that is nationality, different individuals of different nationalities may feel themselves to be members of particular social groups forming a new community. This community urges the sharing of a common characteristic that places them at risk of persecution and is perceived by the collective of society as a group. The common characteristic may be reflected in various forms, some are innate such as gender, race, sexual orientation, and language background, and others may be unchangeable, i.e. related to an individual's past such as previous trade union membership. All these characteristics are intrinsic to the identity and awareness of the individual inserted in society and holder of the full exercise of his rights and duties, in such a way that they are assumed as characteristics that are not expected to change in a given temporal or spatial period (UNHCR 2011, 4).

Finally and related to the membership of a particular social group, given its dimension and impact in the last decades, when considering the refugee status, it is necessary to take into account the concept of political opinion in its broadest and most interpretative sense. When we approach the concept of political opinion in this world of movement, we must always keep in mind that the opinion is directly intertwined and engaged with issues related to the machinery of the State, Government, and Society as a whole. Let us not fall into the error of a condescending interpretation limited to simple identification with a given political party and/or ideology. When we analyze the statute and the ground for claiming the same, a meritorious interpretation is required where there is a fundamental question to be asked of whether the applicant holds – or is perceived to hold – opinions that are not tolerated by the authorities or by the community, and whether he or she has a well-founded fear of persecution for that reason (UNHCR 2011, 4).

All in all, although all the elements/criteria are indeed relevant and significant, it all comes as a matter of ways or reflections of the fear of persecution. As Dr. Paul Weis would say in his analyze of the Convention - “The other elements of the definition, i.e. outside the country of origin, nationality, or habitual residence, coupled with the unwillingness to return are essentially questions of fact. They constitute evidence of the claimant's fear of persecution in their country of origin, nationality, or habitual residence,

as well as of the fact that they have lost the protection of such a country” (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1990)).

## **Attachment II**

### **The Relevance of the 1951 Refugee Convention**

The term refugee is a legal term of art. The term is conceived by the Geneva Convention and, consequently, by international law in a given way, covering a certain number of individuals, but that does not necessarily mean that people not covered by this definition are not worthy of a dignified form of legal and international protection, nor that the preconceived definition of refugee denies any right to those who are not characterized in such a way. In this sense, it is necessary to underline that definitions, whether in a social, economic, or political context - among others - serve an instrumental purpose. In this specific case, the definition created is a bureaucratic label that has served to delimit certain rights and obligations as well as may seek to bolster some kind of ethical claim to protection or assistance (McAdam 2012, 42).

With the creation of a definition lies an assumption of a constant re-testing, over time and through societal transformations, of its pre-established limits and parameters. Thus, when a definition is created, there is an increasing and incessant re-evaluation, and sometimes redefinition, of its intrinsic scope to keep up with the development of the ambiguous and volatile world in which we live and cohabit. However, this definition, despite undergoing various mutations over time, was also a starting point for State action, insofar as it was something jointly constructed and that demonstrated the will of States to align themselves around an agreement and in search of a solution. According to McAdam, legal definitions bind States in a way that descriptive labels cannot (McAdam 2012, 42).

The central point to bear in mind in this discussion and following McAdam's line of thought is that the law does not answer or solve what are the fundamental problems of definitional debates, the law simply provides a set of criteria that certain rights and obligations may flow (McAdam 2012, 42). Here we can distinguish between the reality of law that defines what reality should be and the reality of internationalist theorists who study reality as it is.

In such a way, there are a very considerable and relevant number of costly obstacles that stand in the discussion about people forced to move by the impacts/consequences of climate change being considered refugees within what is the Convention's definition of a refugee.

Firstly, the Convention's definition covers only those who have crossed an international border, and as we will explain later, most movements created by climate

change will be internal and, thus, environmentally displaced persons do not meet the preliminary requirement. Thus, this prerequisite creates a limitation to any proposal to extend the 1951 Convention to cover people displaced by environmental impacts, either by opening the instrument to renegotiation or by designing a more comprehensive protocol. Hereinafter comes the problem already mentioned of the difficulty of linking climate change and persecution – the case being, that climate change is the actor of persecution. The concept of persecution is objectively instructed as a serious violation of human rights, being characterized by its degree and proportion and by the nature of the right at risk - to life or liberty - that puts a certain community and/or individual.

There are some studies that do indeed link climate as an actor in the act of persecution, however here we adopt McAdam's view which admits that although the effects of climate change such as sea level rise and extreme weather events such as floods and cyclones, are causing great harm and sometimes fatal, they do not meet the threshold of persecution, in what is its current understanding in the system of international and domestic law, respectively.

Rather than a link with persecution, we may see an interconnection between climate change and the violation of socio-economic rights, which are not considered within the persecution spectrum. In the case of small island developing islands such as Tuvalu, which we will examine later, there are substantial concerns that the phenomenon of climate change is a disruptive means for the viability of economic, social, and cultural rights (McAdam 2012, 43). How? Scientists explain that territories such as Tuvalu are prone to significant overpopulation, - which has only tended to worsen over the years, denoting that this year, last November 16, 2022, it was announced that, for the first time in human history, the planet earth has reached the 8 billion people mark, an event that appears only 11 years after we passed the 7 billion mark- and victims of a notorious unemployment rate. In such a way, the erosion of the territory through climate change threatens the habitable conditions of these countries through agricultural incapacity, increased salinization, and coastal erosion, concentrating the population in urban areas and, consequently, increasing the pressure on the labor market as well as worsening the state of health of people who are increasingly dependent on absorbing imported processed foods for their own survival (McAdam 2012, 44).

However, in Refugee law for the deprivation of a presumptive right to go beyond what is the "mere", so to speak, non-fulfillment of the violation of a given right, there must be a pre-fundamental element for the establishment of the act of persecution, that

is, a visible or perceptible discriminatory element. Meaning, it must be visible or perceived in the eyes of the actors of law that the persecutor is engaging in the act because of an attribute of the person being persecuted, objective or subjective. This is the determining factor for attributing international protection to a given person, which means that it is not only the poverty or economic factor that makes the person in need of protection, but also the level of deprivation to which he or she is being subjected and the inability of the individual's government to provide him or her with instruments capable of protecting them - deprivation being equivalent to persecution (McAdam 2012, 44). Consequently, this must be based on one of the five grounds set out in the 1951 Convention discussed above.

Thus, it is legitimate to state that there is no visible or implied impediment in the Convention to the recognition of environmental damage and its equivalence to a means of persecution. The only limitation to the existence of recognition is that the elements discussed above are explicitly set out. Whereas stating that climate change per se reaches the established limits is already a statement that goes beyond what is known and recognized by the Convention to date. In the vast majority of cases related to environmental harms, these are caused together with a set of other easily perceptible practices of persecution. Such explanation is one of the major factors for which people tend not to discuss the existence of international protection and even the very term environmental refugees, as many of the current refugees result from a set of discriminatory economic or cultural factors, where the environmental factor is often implicit in the multiplicity of causes from which the need for refugee status arises. A refugee claim based solely and only on the impact of climate change will not succeed in the eyes of international law, being a group considered marginalized when compared to society at large (McAdam 2012, 44).

Taking the case of the relationship between Tuvalu and New Zealand, according to the previous New Zealand Refugee Status Appeals Authority<sup>54</sup> (New Zealand Refugee Status Appeals Authority 2000), those claiming to be included in the Refugee Quota as refugees in New Zealand could not be considered refugees if not treated differently from

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<sup>54</sup> The New Zealand Refugee Status Appeals Authority (RSAA) is an independent body established to determine appeals from decisions of the Refugee Status Branch of the New Zealand Immigration Service declining refugee status. The RSAA was initially established in 1991 under the prerogative powers of the Executive (Cabinet) of the New Zealand Government. The RSAA was later given statutory basis pursuant to the Immigration Amendment Act 1999, which came into force on 1 October 1999. The RSAA ceased to exist on 29 November 2010, when it was replaced by the Immigration and Protection Tribunal.

the rest of the population and therefore recognition would be denied (New Zealand Refugee Status Appeals Authority 2000). The entire population of Tuvalu faces the same risk and difficulty in achieving minimum standards of quality of life equally in the face of environmental and economic problems. In this case, the citizens of Tuvalu, in the eyes of the external actors and those with the power to design protection instruments for them, would just be unfortunate victims of the forces of nature. On August 17, 2000, the New Zealand government declined to grant refugee status to all citizens of Tuvalu, stating that:

*“In relation to environmental and economic difficulties they faced in Tuvalu these fears could not be said to be for reason of “any one of the five Convention grounds in terms of the Refugee Convention, namely race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular group and political opinion”. The Authority specifically noted that all Tuvalu citizens face the same environmental and economic difficulties and therefore it appeared that there was no real chance that the appellants were differentially at risk of persecution for any of the five Convention grounds”* (New Zealand Refugee Status Appeals Authority 2000, 2–3).

We are talking about a population that sees its life being destroyed by the environment on a daily basis. As far back as 2000, the appellants to the status were already complaining, inter alia, of their properties being submerged by water during high tides, of the island's coastlines being severely eroded, and of the general lack of drinking water and basic medicines. Consequently, in addition to the effects of climate change, there was a weak and small economic context, where employment opportunities were scarce and food prices were increasingly high, as most of the goods were imported. Transport on the island was poor, as was access to medicine and the goods that go with it, and there was also a lack of access to universal higher education facilities. All this context made it clear that the citizens of Tuvalu had no proper place to live, leaving the entire population insecure, fearful, and sinking into the effects of climate change, namely global warming and sea level rise. Hence, living in an extremely fragile situation, the population found itself without the means to fight for its quality of life in the place where it belongs. Such weakness is added to the fact that the government itself was also negligent to the reality of the citizens, not being an intervening actor and promoter of appropriate actions and drivers of change (New Zealand Refugee Status Appeals Authority 2000, 4–5).

However, despite being a perfect example of a reality extremely weakened by climate change, the conclusion was what it is to this day, that there is no real chance of appellants being at risk of persecution and, as such, their fear is not well-founded and may only be included in the group of "persons of concern" (New Zealand Refugee Status Appeals Authority 2000, 6). In this particular case, the conclusion reiterated by the responsible authority was as follows:

*"In conclusion, for the reasons explained: The appellants' respective appeals are prima facie manifestly unfounded or clearly abusive. It follows that the appellants will not be given the opportunity by the Authority to attend an interview; The appeals, as assessed on the papers, must fail. I find that none of the appellants are refugees within the meaning of Article 1A(2) of the Refugee Convention. In respect of each appeal, refugee status is declined. Accordingly, all of the appeals are dismissed"*(New Zealand Refugee Status Appeals Authority 2000, 7).

In some measure, the problem when addressing the possibility of granting climate migrants refugee status is the inability to identify the persecutor in question. In the case of Tuvalu, the government is not the one responsible for climate change as a whole or for developing policies that promote increased climate impacts (McAdam 2012, 45). The consequences affecting the people of Tuvalu, and many of the main individuals affected by climate change, stem from the actions of others in the international community. This is one of the assumptions made by many academics that the international community itself is the persecutor. In fact, when one says international community, may mean that it is the mass industrialized countries in particular or the so-called great powers that fail, yearly, to reduce their waste as well as gas emissions (McAdam 2012, 45), which condition the lives of countries that are, unfortunately, located in territories prone to climate strategist.

*"This delinking of the actor of persecution from the territory from which flight occurs is a complete reversal of the traditional refugee paradigm: whereas Convention refugees flee their own government (or private actors that the government is unable or unwilling to protect them from),<sup>33</sup> a person fleeing the effects of climate change is not escaping his or her government, but rather is seeking refuge from—yet within—countries that have contributed to climate change"*(McAdam 2012, 45).

Finally, with regard to the relevance of the Convention, even if a climate change impact could be characterized as persecution, the definition that we address and analyze here requires that such persecution must have a reason and that reason must be based on one of the following characteristics intrinsic to an individual or community, namely their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group. Thus, persecution alone is not a constitutive and arguable reason for recognizing an individual as a refugee. The fact that these characteristics are, in addition to being discriminatory, innate to an individual's existence allows us to conclude that the consequences of climate change are largely indiscriminate. An individual or a community will not be hit by a tsunami for reasons linked to their background or beliefs, or particular characteristics of birth. Instead, the only factors that make certain countries more vulnerable to the effects of climate change are their geography and the resources within their territory. In other words, while persecution is intrinsically linked to the personal characteristics of the individual and/or the community, climate change and the degree of its impact are inherently connected to the geographical characteristics of a country, and it is highly redundant to place the citizens of the most affected countries as a particular social group given their mutable characteristics (McAdam 2012, 46).

Over the past years, on the court stages, it has always been argued that the Convention has a limited and objective scope and does not cover those seeking better living conditions, economic migrants, those who are victims of natural accidents, and climate migrants, despite always being declared the right to deserve international sanctuary. Moreover, the limitation or reservation of the Convention is expressed by the requirement of persecution, such factor limits the humanitarian scope and does not allow protection to be designed for all asylum seekers. Those who are affected by natural disasters, bad economic conditions, or extreme epidemic situations fall outside the Convention and are not a refugee within the terms of the Convention (McAdam 2012, 46–47).

From the cases in Australia and New Zealand with citizens of Tuvalu, Kiribati, and Tonga debating their right to be granted protection, to the cases of Bangladesh, Fiji and more recently Somalia or Yemen, all are denied a voice on the stage of international law and all are denied the right for which they proclaim, for the harm that takes away their home is not accumulated in persecution and for there is no differential impact between individuals. Notwithstanding, there are some exceptions where degrading environmental impact amounts to persecution and they all relate to actors who assume

the role of persecutors, mostly governments who, for example, obstruct assistance in ways that marginalize people, create policies unsuitable for agricultural promotion, pollute waters and contribute to environmental degradation and pollution, refuse humanitarian aid from other States in times of distress, or fail to adopt appropriate disaster prevention measures (McAdam 2012, 47–48).

However, in this contextual reality of law, it is important to mention that regional organizations, namely the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention and the Cartagena Declaration in Latin America, have adopted a term of refugee that is broader to their reality. That is, in a region that is characterized as one of the most affected by the climate and where mostly pay for the mistakes of others, the OAU Convention declared the written inclusion of people displaced on account of events seriously disturbing the public order, where there is much debate as to whether this definition includes catastrophes such as drought - given its intrinsic characteristic, also to the already existing 1951 Convention, of being subject to interpretation and endless theoretical possibilities not translated into practice (McAdam 2012, 48). Though, according to McAdam this theoretical and interpretative freedom is directly correlated with the support or rejection that a State considers it feasible to attribute to a convention of international law (McAdam 2012, 49). So even in this broader concept and convention, States are unlikely to accept an even deeper expansion of it beyond the boundaries of public disturbances that most often result in violent conflict. In this way, many are the questions posed by national and international in the attribution of climate change as a driver of movement. In regional instrumental solutions, we also see a different implication from the 1951 Convention. Whereas the Geneva Convention assesses the risk of possible future harm, the regional instruments require evidence of a threat that has already been generating a forced exit and consequently the usefulness in terms of preventive protection of these regionalized instruments is limited or even non-existent (McAdam 2012, 49).

Despite the limited applicability of these Conventions, particularly the 1951 Convention, it contains conceptual constructs which are very useful for dealing with and understanding displacement enhanced by climate change. As there are still many implications and conceptual difficulties in framing protection in these terms given the multiple threat interlinked with other country's vulnerabilities and the scientific impossibility of isolating climate change as the root cause of an individual extreme weather event. Within the scope of the international discussion on the existence of a protection instrument for cases related to climate change, it is necessary to insert the

discussion in a broader spectrum and instead of discussing a protection instrument merely focused on climate change, to be a disaster-oriented instrument. Not isolate the cause of climate change, but involve everything that is climate-related (McAdam 2012, 50).

In sum, we can conclude that international refugee law is a cumbersome framework that does not serve the purposes, needs, and consequences of climate-related migratory flows and, above all, the impact of climate change, is highly inappropriate as a vehicle to respond to displacement due to environmental causes. In their current state, the existing definitions and their conceptual frameworks are unable to address the dimension of climate-related movement and all the entanglements related to its mass dimension such as the maintenance of culture and statehood of communities urging to relocate across borders. In line with McAdam's thinking, in situations where the movement is internal, there is an instructive response guided by the Principles on Internal Displacement - although it lacks a development that accompanies the dynamics of climate-related movements-, but in terms of refugee law per se and in its essence instructed by the UNHCR, this is inefficient to a constructive response to the environmental phenomenon (McAdam 2012, 51).

### **Attachment III**

#### **Relation between UNHCR and IOM – A New Chapter ahead**

Initially called the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe (or PICMME)<sup>55</sup> (IOM s.d.) in 1951, in a post-World War II context, the IOM only began operating on the radar of the United Nations in 2016, despite having been in office for over 70 years (reaching the milestone in 2021).

When addressing the subject of migration, it is practically impossible not to refer to the work of this organization, which is the leading intergovernmental organization that promotes orderly and humane migration for the benefit of society as a whole, holding 174 Member States and standing out for a vast presence in over 100 countries across the world (McAuliffe e et al. 2021, 8).

From its inception to the present day, it has significantly broadened its scope of action, reflecting the growing importance and focus of various nations in having migration governance, but also being a consequence of the unexpected growth in migration and displacement that has forced a significant reinforcement of humanitarian aid. However, its tracking of human-induced and natural disasters has always been on its agenda over the past century, having been a key player in events such as Hungary in 1956, the former Czechoslovakia in 1969, Chile in 1973, Vietnam in 1975, Kuwait in 1990 and the tsunamis in Asia between 2004 and 2005. What started with the aim of focusing on the logistics involved in supporting resettling people displaced by conflict, grew with the amplification of the phenomena that would lead to migration and displacement (McAuliffe e et al. 2021, 8).

IOM has always followed long-term migration and displacement trends, and these have always varied within a spectrum of factors, among which is geography. As such, IOM regional offices vary in direct relation to the migration dynamics taking place along a timeline. In practical terms, while the United Nations as a whole refers to six geographic regions - these being Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean, Northern America, and Oceania (McAuliffe e et al. 2021, 59) - the IOM has nine geographic regions, namely East and Horn of Africa; West and Central Africa; Southern Africa; Middle East and North Africa; Asia and the Pacific; South-Eastern Europe; Eastern Europe and Central Asia; European Economic Area, the European Union and NAT; South

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<sup>55</sup> The succession of its name occurred in 1980 to the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM) and later in 1989 to the hitherto International Organization for Migration.

America, North America and the Caribbean (McAuliffe e et al. 2021, 9). All the work carried out in the offices in those geographic regions aims to be a reflection of IOM's Strategic Vision adopted in 2019 and its initial constitution, in addition to the aforementioned overriding principle of orderly and humane migration.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) signed a treaty titled "Framework of Engagement: Serving & Protecting Together" on June 30, 2022. The treaty aims to strengthen their collaboration and action on three critical areas: mixed migrations of migrants and refugees, durable solutions for internally displaced persons, and data (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022). The IOM focuses on operational challenges, understanding migration issues, and upholding human dignity, while the UNHCR focuses on saving lives and protecting rights.

According to the *Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration* (MOU), published by the UNHCR in May 1997, the actions of these two organizations are determined by their respective mandates. The implementation of such an MOU was taken into consideration after the provisions of the Cooperation Agreement between the United Nations and IOM in June 1996. The actions of these institutions can be expanded upon by separate agreements to cover specific operation situations. In that case, related activities shall be the subject of agreed terms, subscribed in the Letter of Understanding that reflects and quotes “the agreed activities of each agency, the specific institutional framework for cooperation, the intended linkages between the activities of both organizations and funding arrangements” (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 1997).

In this memorandum, the roles and responsibilities entrusted/assigned to each agency vary according to the population group to be worked on. For example, as for Refugees – given the Statute Office’s definition - the UNHCR, according to the Statute of its Office and subsequent General Assembly resolutions aims to provide international protection and humanitarian assistance as well as to support long-lasting solutions to their problems. As for IOM, as per its Member States, their objective is to ensure orderly migration processes, where the organized allocation of refugees can be included through documentation, training, and integration, among others. Concerning Migrants, the IOM constitution provides a broader commitment to the mentioned principle of humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As regards UNHCR, it is the general interest of the agency to be moved by the recognition of the possible connections between

involuntary displacement and migratory movements (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 1997).

In the MOU, we can also find in detail the definition of cooperative activities between the two organizations with a long-standing partnership and a history of occasional Joint Operation Strategies as a result of the recognition of mutual interest and concerns. The collaborative activities are based on crucial tasks when dealing with migration management such as:

- (a) Prevention (through the early warning, monitoring, and prevention of situations that could lead to displacement);
- (b) Contingency planning (UNHCR must invite IOM to actively participate in planning for refugee influxes and it's a necessity that IOM analyses with both national authorities and UNHCR how the ongoing country operations could benefit of IOM emergency assistance);
- (c) Institutional capacity building;
- (d) In-country processing for organized departure;
- (e) Voluntary repatriation of refugees, reintegration, resettlement, among others. (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 1997)

However, there is always a responsibility that is entrusted to each organization and carried out singularly because each agency is responsible for mobilizing the resources necessary and ensuring efficient use of those resources (UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 1997).

Fast-forward to January 2019, the redaction of a joint letter would reiterate the position of the two organizations against the background of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) and of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), which acknowledge that *“Refugees and Migrants are entitled to the same universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, which must be respected, protected and fulfilled at all times. However, migrants and refugees are distinct groups governed by separate legal frameworks”* (UNHCR e IOM 2019).

The letter at stake was a profound statement underlining the joint vision of engagement between the two agencies with a mutual goal – the benefit of migrants and refugees alike.

António Vitorino, Director-General for the International Organization of Migration, and Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees committed support for comprehensive responses and prosperous and effective operational

approaches to migrants along their migratory journey to suffering from abuse and unnecessary hardship. Nevertheless, along this approach, the distinct terminology is always an aspect to bear in mind as “while refugees and migrants, at times, move along the same routes, not all movements are mixed” (UNHCR e IOM 2019). For example, in circumstances where the group of individuals on a move is predominantly composed of refugees, the operation response and lead responsibility must be led and carried out by the UNHCR. However, when the origin of movements is of a mixed nature it is the responsibility of both IOM and UNHCR to work hand-in-hand in establishing and co-leading Refugees and Migrants Coordination Platforms for effective coordination.

Alongside, in the protection and assistance to internally displaced persons and as per the joint letter of July 2018 – developed between IOM, UNHCR, the Emergency Relief Coordination, and the UNDP Administrator – both agencies agreed to continue working together and, in addition, extended their commitment towards extending their work in the area of Climate Change and Disaster Displacements after acknowledging the tremendous challenges ahead in this regard. In this way, the creation of the Platform on Disaster Displacement – which I’ll develop later - was the place where we can observe the results of an active partnership (UNHCR e IOM 2019).

In addition and in line with the GCM and GCR mentioned above, there was a promise of coordination of efforts to strengthen the response system of various nations when confronted with the rights and needs of persons on the moves, whether in the area of migration, asylum or internally displaced persons (IDP). Thus, the establishment and implementation of the GCM objectives will be coordinated by IOM and UNHCR under a complementary action led by the GCR and in particular by the, to be established, Asylum Capacity Support Group. While UNHCR will carry out all the efforts towards building national asylum capacities in the migration management areas of resettlement and complementary pathways for refugees, IOM will put into action its development and implementation (UNHCR e IOM 2019).

In June 2022, IOM and UNHCR signed a Framework Engagement agreement, strengthening their collaboration to better serve migrants. While some speculate a merger could streamline global migration management, it's unclear if this would eliminate human resources and individual responsibilities. Instead, efforts are focused on improving support for individuals in transition (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022).

Within the Mixes Movements of Migrants and Refugees, the acknowledgment on both levels that some situation falls under this category remain a respected area by the two, and, at the same time, they constantly recognize the importance of appropriate and consistent use of terminology and definitions of migrants and refugees in internal as well as external documents as vital action to effective collaboration. As regards the real responses to this type of situation they will continue to be guided by the commitment made by States in the NY Declaration for Refugees and Migration on 19 September 2016 – which led to the adoption of the GCR and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration – moreover to improve inter-agency strategic planning, increase coordination efforts with partners, namely States, the UN, and civil society and provide better outcomes for the individuals facing vulnerability (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022).

Understanding if we are in the presence of mixed movements or not is defined under the scope of international law, meaning that for this agreement the correct use of the definition of refugees applicable is not merely our object of study, the 1951 Convention Relating the Status of Refugees, but also the regional definitions specified in the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa as well as the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees. In addition, it also defined other helpful criteria that can trigger the coordinated co-leadership to get a better response to mixed movement circumstances, such as citing: the scale of the crisis (determined by the number of potentially affected countries or individuals); the movement complexity from the country of origin; the national capacity for a correspondent response by IOM and UNHCR in the identified country; and the national legislation and practices as well as the government and local actors capacity regarding refugee and migrants (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022).

This framework is also a result of previous practical experiences/models, including the Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (RAV model) that enables a scope of co-leadership mechanism, especially on joint strategizing and planning, defence, programmatic interventions and coordination on data and information management. With the joint forces of over 200 organizations from across the region's focal point, this collective action enables the emergency assistance, protection, and cultural as well as socio-economic integration of both Venezuelan migrants and refugees hosted by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. As all the organization's ends were aligned, their actions resulted in the creation of real-life

instruments such as a platform for joint data collection, management, and dissemination (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022).

Regarding joint and strengthened advocacy, critical areas were defined to be pursued by IOM and UNHCR – without any prejudice related to their respective accountabilities – at a global, regional, route-based, and country scale. Some of those areas included access to safe territory, guaranteeing the existence of adequate forms of protection, rescue at sea, and promotion of alternatives to detention (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022).

Acknowledging the unprecedented level observed at a global scale of the increasing number of IDPs, the need for durable solutions is recognized by the two agencies. Both IOM and UNHCR recall the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and affirm that the two are guided by Principle 28, which aims to affirm the primary duty and responsibility of establishing conditions and provide the necessary means for IDPs to return voluntarily and safely to their homes or places of habitual residence or to resettle voluntarily in another region of their country (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022).

Importantly, all solutions provided by the two agencies in the context of IDPs are always based on a key value and commitment towards a sustainable way of (re)integration. In such a manner, addressing integration is reflected by multiple actions of long-term safety, security, freedom, adequate quality of life, access to employment, documentation, and justice, among others. A humanitarian challenge differs from the usual matters and demands a state of responsibility that needs to be acknowledged throughout all taken actions since we are always facing cases where people's lives are in question. As such, the work of both organizations must fit under this conceptualization and must be taken upon in the areas of straight collaboration in these fields, including in the analysis and tracking of multi-sectoral conditions in potential areas of settlement, in the resource mobilization and the advocacy and strategic communication with synchronized engagement with the private sector as well as development and climate actors. Moreover, on a practical level, IOM and UNHCR will co-lead the GP2.0 Global Platform on International Displacement focusing on the work and vision toward the identification of real solutions (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022).

Given the importance of analyzing and taking into account the numbers that are generated daily, the IOM and UNHCR sustain their responsibility for population data management. In the field of data and information management, integrity and reliability

are critical to addressing the existing gaps and appropriate data protection. Within different situations and in line with their respective mandates, while IOM will hold responsibility for ensuring identity management and population data for migrant situations, UNHCR will be responsible for the respective refugee situations, reiterating their work towards the coordination of data collection, verification methods, analysis, production of information management tools and dissemination. Thus, the three main fields to take into consideration for joint workforces – migrant or refugee, mixed movements, and IDPs – will always be strengthened through joint data teams, interoperability of IOM and UNHCR systems, agreements on reporting format and standardized approach communications, and joint dissemination on data and evidence to raise awareness in civil society (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022).

Whether in any area of activity in question, all the work around people of concern will be a collective work in itself and constituted based on multiple dynamics where the actors will be the human and material resources of each organization allied to a consultancy movement of key stakeholders such as States, other UN institutions, donors, non-governmental organizations and civil society. The use of joining forces will always hold the ultimate goal of enhancing humanitarian assistance and being up to the challenge which is to deal with various migrants and refugee flows (UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2022).

The truth is that this collaboration may not come up as a surprise to any State due to the real-life benefits that have already been brought to us in the international system for example, the case of Yemen in 2015. In October 2015, representatives from both agencies presented the Regional Refugee Migrant Response Plan for Yemen Situation (RRMRP), (Murphy e Lusweti 2015) as a result of an inter-agency planning process that took place at regional borders. The needs of individuals coming from different States are multiple, after passing through traumatizing and exhausting experiences there was an urgency for basic needs such as food, water, and healthcare. There was no time to divide resources, but there was only hope to enable emergency response and address the basic needs of human beings, register and provide crucial documentation, and provide access to essential services. As Claire Bourgeois once said about the Yemen situation, “Today, more than ever, governments, humanitarian, development, and other actors must ensure that people in need are not neglected. They must be able to restore dignity to their lives as efforts are made to find long-lasting solutions to their plight” (Murphy e Lusweti 2015, 2). Thereby, facing the inevitable truth, IOM and UNHCR in coordination with States

and other key partners were committed to continuously collaborating for the benefit of those people of concern to both organizations. The framework early released and to be implemented is another step toward the positive co-leadership and engagement between the two great leaders of IOM and UNHCR as well as the commitment towards aiming joint missions to the fields and leading by example in complementary actions.

## **Attachment IV**

### **Climate Migration in Developing Countries: A Small Comparative Case Study of the Federal Republic of Somalia, the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Republic of the Marshall Islands**

The least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS) are disproportionately affected by the various negative impacts of climate change. The negative impact results predominantly from the constraint of their societal structures and their geographical disadvantage vis-à-vis other countries which, in a way, contribute more to climate change than the countries mentioned here (IOM 2019, 4).

Of the 91 countries they represent in total, LDCs represent the most vulnerable and poorest segment of the international community. Among the many challenges they face, development is the most hindered with limited production capacity, lack of economic diversification, inadequate infrastructure and public services, stagnant exports and investment, and above all, a large and limited institutional capacity. All these constraints bury these types of countries at a higher rate of vulnerability and predisposition to be targets of systemic shocks such as economic crises, epidemic crises, and, above all for the thesis defended here, natural disasters and environmental crises (IOM 2019, 4).

In the other fraction of these countries, we are presented with LLDCs that are characterized by their lack of access to the sea and, consequently, affected by poor infrastructure and weak exchange/trade capacity, not being among the centers of international routes. In such a way, economic growth becomes debilitated with great costs associated with any type of exchange, physical or even immaterial, naturally also limiting the socio-economic development of the country. Most LLDCs are also characterized as LDCs and, within this category, they are generalized by their poor performance within the international context. This performance reflects a limited capacity for competitiveness and where their political and economic situation is always in a relationship dependent on their neighboring countries and their actions (IOM 2019, 4).

In the last fraction of these least developed countries, we have SIDS, a special case for sustainable development due to their geographical dispersion, scarcity of resource bases, and limited economies. On account of their geographical position surrounded by sea all along their border, they face a greater risk of marginalization in world markets. These countries are often almost forgotten as a consequence of their size

and distance from the larger global scale. Yet, their fragility in the face of resilience to natural disasters is a major contributor to catastrophic economic outcomes and much more fragile economic realities. The great threat of rising sea levels presents itself as the supreme impetus for not-so-positive change and even a threat to its very existence. In a way, climate change is a threat to the existence of these countries (IOM 2019, 4).

In 2016, the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS and the Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft, through the World Risk Report made a key finding on the causal relationship between infrastructure and the natural environment. The existence of inadequate infrastructure and weak sustainability logistics chains increases the risk that, when faced with an extreme natural phenomenon, it will turn into a disaster (United Nations University 2016). According to Peter Mucke, Project Director of the World Risk Report and Managing Director of Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft:

*“When it comes to aid measures following extreme natural events, the challenges mostly lie in the ‘last mile’ of the logistics chain: organizing transportation despite destroyed streets or bridges and ensuring fair distribution when there is a shortage of (for example) water, food, and shelter. (...) Crumbling transport routes, unreliable electricity grids, and dilapidated buildings not only hinder humanitarian aid from overseas, but also delay crucial aid for those affected in the event of a disaster” (United Nations University 2016).*

Thus, recognizing the importance of infrastructure in society is a way of calling the attention of the international community to invest more and better in the development and maintenance of infrastructure critical to the development of a society in order to prevent disaster, especially in the countries we are dealing with. However, it is not enough to stick to the idea of development, it is necessary to continually invest in its quality, management, and self-sufficiency to strengthen its response to catastrophic consequences of natural hazards, both in prevention and humanitarian aid. In such a way, the existence of critical infrastructures<sup>56</sup>(UNU-EHS 2016, 7) potentiates the reduction of the

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<sup>56</sup> Critical infrastructures that makes societies vulnerable distinguishes in nine sectors: Energy: electricity, gas, oil Information technology and telecommunication; Transport and traffic: air transport, maritime transport, inland waterways transport, rail transport, road transport, logistics; Health: medical services, pharmaceuticals and vaccines, laboratories; Water: public water supply, public sewage disposal; Food: food industry, food trade; Finance and insurance: banks, stock exchanges, insurance companies, financial service providers; State and administration: government and public administration, parliament, judicial bodies, emergency/rescue services including civil protection; Media and culture: broadcasting (television and

population's risk towards natural hazards as well as facilitating the mitigation of significant economic losses (United Nations University 2016).

According to the risk report, we can draw the conclusion that to improve disaster relief, disaster management is not enough. It requires a set of efforts to set up an efficient preparedness framework by, for example, strengthening local aid systems or rehabilitating critical infrastructures. In addition, these efforts cannot come only from one side of society but rather require a collective effort across sectors (inc. public and private) (UNU-EHS 2016, 9).

In a way, in this study, we are facing a basic assumption that the severity of the impacts of the forces of nature on people is not the only decisive factor and that there is another factor as important, which is the impact of the tables on the level of development of a society - as we can see in the following image. It is also important to realize that the exposure<sup>57</sup> (UNU-EHS 2016, 45) of a given population group to earthquakes, storms, floods, droughts, and sea level rise in this study results mainly from calculating the sum of the number of people in a country exposed to natural hazards such as earthquakes, cyclones and/or floods, and the number of people in this same country who are threatened by droughts and/or sea level rise, divided by the total number of population in the country. This calculation reflects the sphere of natural hazards in a given country. However, the World Hazard Index report is a more comprehensive calculation of the multiplication of the natural hazards sphere and the social vulnerability sphere (UNU-EHS 2016, 44).

The term vulnerability is a key concept for the development and good understanding of this subject. In a way, vulnerability is a non-static concept that refers to people's exposure and adaptive capacity, and that varies according to time and space. According to Lama and M. & Wester, in their article concerning migration dimensions in relation to climate change, they describe vulnerability as something that has been produced over time and that places a certain group of individuals at a higher level of risk than others in the face of the same phenomenon such as in the face of the same natural threat (Hamza e Wester 2020). Vulnerability is contextually produced and reproduced over time among households and groups during their active engagement with their physical and social environment. However, vulnerability is not merely related to the

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radio), print and electronic media, cultural property, structures of symbolic meaning. The breakdown of one sector can lead into a snowball effect and trigger a cascade of failures or damage.

<sup>57</sup> Exposure means that an entity (population, built-up area, infrastructure component, environmental area) is exposed to one or more natural hazards (earthquakes, cyclones, droughts, floods, and sea level rise).

personal predisposition of individuals or groups of individuals, but also to geographical areas. Namely, physical geography and human-induced actions are two factors that affect the vulnerability of different geographical areas (Prokkola et al. 2021, 50).

Regarding individuals and groups of individuals, vulnerability can be shaped by a range of social, political, economic, and physical factors to which they are subjected, such as social inequalities, disability, health, age, or the possibility to migrate. In relation to the climate and environmental changes that lead to movement, certain groups present a greater contribution to vulnerability than others. These more vulnerable groups are often the impoverished, gender groups such as women, age groups such as seniors and children, particular groups such as the disabled and indigenous individuals, and groups related to mobility and space such as trapped populations, people who have moved several times because of the impacts of climate change, among other reasons, and persons without citizen rights (Prokkola et al. 2021, 50–51).

As for social vulnerability<sup>58</sup>, (UNU-EHS 2016, 46) the World Risk Index is composed of susceptibility<sup>59</sup> (UNU-EHS 2016, 46), lack of coping capacities<sup>60</sup> (UNU-EHS 2016, 46), and lack of adaptive capacities<sup>61</sup> (UNU-EHS 2016, 46) of a societal collectivity. Each of these components has its most relevant particularities which reflect the level of development of a society. In the case of susceptibility, one of its particularities is the existence of public infrastructures and horizontal access to them, housing conditions, a nourished population, poverty, and economic capacities. In addition, with regard the lack of coping capacities, this reflects on good governance and the population's perceptions of corruption, the existence of disaster preparedness and pre-defined warnings as well as available medical services and material coverage. Lastly, the lack of adaptive capacities is listed through the resources available for education and research, gender equality, environmental protection, adaptation strategies, and investment (UNU-EHS 2016, 45).

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<sup>59</sup>Susceptibility is understood as the likelihood of suffering harm in the event of a natural hazard process. Thus, susceptibility describes structural characteristics and framework conditions of a society.

<sup>60</sup> Coping and coping capacities comprise various abilities of societies and exposed elements to minimize negative impacts of natural hazards and climate change through direct action and the resources available. Coping capacities encompass measures and abilities that are immediately available to reduce harm and damages in the occurrence of an event.

<sup>61</sup>Adaptation, unlike coping, is understood as a long-term process that also includes structural changes as well as measures and strategies dealing with and attempting to address the negative impacts of natural hazards and climate change in the long run.

With that being said, according to the index carried out in the World Risk Report 171 countries were analyzed in combined scrutiny of natural hazards and social vulnerabilities – since there is no new data related to exposure since the World Risk Report 2012-, the first 15 listed as countries exposed to high vulnerability are developing countries - either LDCs, LLDCs or SIDS and of those 15, a total of 13 are located in the African continent<sup>62</sup> (UNU-EHS 2016, 11).

Following the analysis and the recognition of structural failures in many of those underdeveloped countries, a set of programs was created to overcome these fundamental challenges and, consequently, eradicate poverty and achieve the internationally defined development goals. For LDCs, the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2012-2020 (IPoA)<sup>63</sup> was adopted, while for LLDCs the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (VPoA)<sup>64</sup> was created and as for the SIDS, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway<sup>65</sup> was adopted to address priority areas for SIDS as well as calling out for urgent action and support of these in achieving their sustainable development goals (IOM 2019, 5).

All those programs have reinforced their high degree of vulnerability to climate change and its consequent impacts. The IPoA reiterates the decisions taken by the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to induce measures that promote understanding, coordination, and cooperation on climate-induced displacement, as well as enhanced migration and relocation planning at all levels, national, regional, and international. The VPoA highlights the vulnerability of LLDCs to climate change and its disproportionate effects and impacts in the face of desertification, land degradation, and drought. The SAMOA Pathway has played an important role in recognizing climate change and sea level rise as major risk factors for the very existence of SIDS and the inability to make efforts to achieve sustainable development goals (IOM 2019, 5). All action plans differ from one to another as LDCs,

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<sup>62</sup> Central African Republic (74.8%), Eritrea (74.23%), Chad (72.86%), Afghanistan (72.12%), Haiti (71.85%), Liberia (71.54%), the Niger (70.80%), Sierra Leone (69.69%), Madagascar (69.52%), Guinea-Bissau (68.99%), Mozambique (68.28%), Guinea (68.21%), Burundi (67.98%), Sudan (67.37%) and Zimbabwe (67.24%).

<sup>63</sup> The IPoA was adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries in 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey.

<sup>64</sup> The VPoA was adopted at the Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries in 2014 in Vienna, Austria.

<sup>65</sup> The SAMOA Pathway adopted at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in 2014 in Samoa.

LLDCs, and SIDS are impacted by climate migration in different ways. However, while they are the most affected by the negative impacts of displacement, they are also the ones with the most robust action in this area and the first to recognize the positive role migrants play in community development through transfers of divergent skills and knowledge (IOM 2019, 5).

Reflection of a daily negative impact on their populations reinforces the need to address the challenges they face to maximize the benefits of migration. As such, it is crucial to mainstream climate change and migration at the center of their national agendas across all their agendas, whether through development planning, migration policies, or climate adaptation. However, this work of strengthening the integration of climate change and migration does not bring visible results if it is the work of a single person, in this case nation. Regional cooperation is an integral factor in developing efficient and effective responses and solutions at all levels (IOM 2019, 5).

Although the World Risk Report Index carried out in 2016 was analyzed here, there is also another alternative that is important to analyze and keep in mind for all studies carried out for policymakers and decision-making processes related to climate and climate change. An alternative that presents us with more updated data for 2021, the EU INFORM Risk Index<sup>66</sup>, also shows how vulnerability does not merely depend on a single factor, but always depends on a combination of factors, such as those analyzed above as exposure to both natural and human hazards (including earthquake, flood, tsunami, tropical cyclone, drought and epidemic, and current conflict intensity and projected conflict risk), socio-economic vulnerability (inc. development & deprivation. Inequality and aid dependency in vulnerable groups such as uprooted people and others) and lack of coping capacity (including institutional such as DRR and Governance and Infrastructure namely communication, physical infrastructures and access to health system) (European Commission s.d.). These indices are important means to an end, and in this case present themselves as an effective analytical tool to assess climate displacement and migration as a result of a combination of different factors - environmental, political, economic, and social - and drivers, often human.

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<sup>66</sup>INFORM is a multi-stakeholder forum for developing shared, quantitative analysis relevant to humanitarian crises and disaster. It is based in a collaboration of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Risk, Early Warning and Preparedness and the European Commission. The INFORM Risk specifically is applicable to development, risk reduction, crisis prevention, preparedness and analysis the generalised risk of a crisis based on structural conditions.

However, the 2016 results carry over to more recent years as the highest risk rates continue to remain in African and developing countries. We know that some countries that have a higher level of risk in the areas of environment and climate-induced migration and displacement may have a moderate level of exposure to natural threats but a high human vulnerability, and vice versa. In a further conclusion from the study, a high socio-economic vulnerability is often linked to a lack of coping capacity (Prokkola et al. 2021, 53). When looking at the results of the 2022 report, it is notable to draw the conclusion that the phase risk exposure is either stable or rising in an international context, there is rarely a country where the risk rate is decreasing. On the international scene, only Cameroon (6.1/10), Cuba (2.4/10), and Nicaragua (4.7/10) are qualified with a decreasing risk trend. In addition, most of the Regional trends show us that European countries have a very low-risk index and, at the same time, a tendency to stabilize as Oceania, and there has been a general reduction of risk in Asia and a general increase in the Americas (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022, 12). While in the countries with the highest risk rate and increasing trend, most of those identified in the last year have been seriously affected by climate change, disasters, and lack of efficient infrastructure, such as Chad, Mali, Mozambique, and South Sudan (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022, 11). In this way, Africa presents a mixed pattern that is related to several conflicts, but, in fact, human hazards are the main drivers in changing risk. While there has been a reduction in the number of countries in the low and medium-risk categories, this reality is compensated by an important increase in countries in the high-risk category (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022, 12).

Also in the INFORM annual report, the necessary correlation between the risk index and the severity index is reported. The severity index measures the gravity of a humanitarian crisis through the impact of the crisis, the conditions of the people affected by it, and its complexity (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022, 18). While what we have analyzed so far is the risk index and its factors that translate the structural risk of a crisis in a given country, the severity index reflects how the risk translates into a current crisis. There is, in fact, a strong correlation between these two since more than 95% of the countries that experience a crisis, its severity is in the same risk category, and the higher the risk level of a country, the higher the probability of having a severe crisis. When we cross the highest levels of risk with the highest levels of severity, we find Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo,

Ethiopia, Iraq, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022, 14).

When we analyze the case of Afghanistan we are faced with a very high degree of complexity of a crisis due to the multiple and successive crises that have been ongoing over the last year - the Rohingya refugee crisis, the cyclone *Amphan* Bangladesh, the Rohingya Regional Crisis and the conflict in Burkina Faso. All these phenomena have contributed significantly to a considerable human and geographical impact, as well as to an increase in the number of people in need and a decrease in the conditions of the affected populations and, furthermore, by jeopardizing the security of society and increasing the difficulty of carrying out operations on the ground (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022, 19).

From a regional perspective, we continue to face the fact that most active crises in 2021 have been located in Africa, followed by Asia, the Americas, and, lastly, the Middle East. However, the most severe crises have been predominantly in the Middle East, as the Americas and Asia have been the regions where the severity has been increasing in leaps and bounds over the last year (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022, 23).

In order to keep pace with the events of recent years, INFORM has created a new product based on its index risk, the INFORM Climate Change<sup>67</sup>. This index incorporates climate and socio-economic projections to allow for analysis of how a given country's risk will change with the impact of climate change, taking into account different population and emission scenarios. With the goal of informing decision-makers across the world about the risk of climate-amplified hazards and, simultaneously, how increased risks could be offset by improved vulnerability and coping capacity, the index uses a combination of Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs) – “describing the evolution of future atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations and other radiative forcing’s”, - and Shared Socioeconomic Pathways (SSPs) – “portray how socioeconomic factors may change over the next century” (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022, 27). While there is uncertainty regarding the analysis of future gases and emissions and the development of socio-economic pathways, there is a general conclusion that climate change will increase the risk of crisis and simultaneously may lead to extreme and significant impacts and requirements for crisis prevention and

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<sup>67</sup> INFORM Climate Change is a new INFORM product that is a result of collaboration between the Euro-Mediterranean Center on Climate Change and Joint Research Centre of European Commission.

humanitarian assistance. Therefore, by 2050, more than 1.6 billion individuals will be living in countries experiencing large increases in the risk of humanitarian crises and disasters. Once again, Africa and low-income countries are the worst affected. Although crisis and disaster risks will increase in all regions regardless of climate or socioeconomic scenarios, certain regions will be most affected, especially the ones located in Western, Southern, and Eastern Africa. In addition, other regions of Africa, Central, and South America as well as Western and Southern Asia will also face increasing risks (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022, 3).

All indexes built around this matter in addition to the ones analyzed in this research, point to the notorious fragilities, present and future, of the least developed countries and the abrupt dysfunction of the African continent. Other indexes that are also used as analysis tools for policymakers and decision-makers are *The Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative Index* (ND-Gain), from the University of Notre Dame, USA, which considers a country's vulnerability to climate change and other global challenges. *The Climate Change Vulnerability Index* (CCVI), carried out by a global risk consultancy firm, Maplecroft, where 42 factors are assessed, including social, economic, and environmental factors, in order to address the national vulnerability of 193 countries. And, finally, *The Global Risk Index*, developed by a German NGO, Germanwatch, analyzes in a less comprehensive way than the previous ones to what extent countries were impacted by weather-related events, considering their economic and human losses (Prokkola et al. 2021, 53).

When we compare these so-called vulnerable countries with Portugal - ranked 172 out of 191, through the lens of analysis of these various indexes, but more specifically by the INFORM Risk Index, we observe a great difference and disparity in their results. All countries selected here show a high level of vulnerability to climate and environmental changes that are directly influenced by their socio-economic situations and coping capacities (Prokkola et al. 2021, 56). In a more detailed analysis of the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Chad, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the former Ellice Islands, Tuvulu, we compare different structures and geographies with the case of Portugal, which is positioned in a positive panorama compared to these countries, having only a high natural risk of exposure to Tsunamis.

The choice of these countries was based on the variety of natural events - slow and sudden-onset, geographical distribution across the world, diversity of human

mobility, and the relationship/exposure of these countries to different natural phenomena such as droughts, tropical cyclones, earthquakes, floods or tsunamis, phenomena that have been accentuated by climate change and where the incidence and frequency in these countries has increased significantly - although they are not the major cause of the consequences they have been suffering.

Table 7 - Comparing six Vulnerable Countries with Portugal

Source: Own Elaboration based on INFORM Risk Index

	Somalia	Afghanistan	Chad	Bangladesh	Marshall Islands	Tuvalu	Portugal
<b>Hazard &amp; Exposure Dimension</b>							
<b>Natural Category</b>							
<b>Droughts</b>	10	8.9	5.0	3.9	3.9	5.0	2.9
<b>Tropical Cyclone</b>	1.0	0.0	0.0	6.9	0.4	0.1	0.3
<b>Earthquakes</b>	1.6	9.7	0.1	9.2	0.1	0.1	3.7
<b>Floods</b>	7.5	7.2	7.5	10	0.1	0.1	3.7
<b>Tsunamis</b>	8.1	0.0	0.0	8.2	8.6	8.3	6.2
<b>Epidemic</b>	6.1	6.7	6.8	7.4	3.7	3.7	2.0
<b>Total Natural</b>	6.9	6.8	4.0	8.1	3.6	3.7	3.4
<b>Human Dimension</b>							
<b>Current conflicts</b>	10	10	9.0	-	-	-	-
<b>Violent Conflict probability Score</b>	10	10	10	4.7	0.0	0.0	0.1
<b>Total Human</b>	10	10	9.0	3.3	0.0	0.0	0.1
<b>Total</b>	8.9	8.9	7.2	6.3	2.0	2.0	1.9

<b>Vulnerability Dimension</b>							
<b>Socioeconomic Category</b>							
<b>Economic Dependency</b>	8.4	5.6	2.8	1.2	8.1	6.7	0.1
<b>Poverty &amp; Development</b>	9.0	8.5	10	6.6	3.9	4.2	0.7
<b>Inequality</b>	2.9	8.7	6.3	4.6	2.6	3.5	1.5
<b>Total Socioeconomic</b>	7.3	7.8	7.3	4.8	4.6	4.7	0.8
<b>Vulnerable Groups</b>							
<b>Uprooted people</b>	10	9.1	9.3	7.7	0.0	0.0	5.3
<b>Other vulnerable groups</b>	8.8	7.1	5.3	4.0	7.2	7.1	0.3
<b>Total Vulnerable groups</b>	9.5	9.0	7.9	6.2	4.5	4.4	3.2
<b>Total</b>	8.6	8.5	7.6	5.5	4.6	4.6	2.1
<b>Lack of Coping Capacity Dimension</b>							
<b>Infrastructure Category</b>							
<b>Access to Health Care</b>	9.6	8.0	9.4	5.2	7.4	5.3	0.5
<b>Physical Infrastructure</b>	7.5	6.5	9.9	4.6	14	0.6	0.0
<b>Communication</b>	7.4	6.3	8.9	4.4	3.9	4.3	1.8
<b>Total Infrastructure</b>	8.2	6.9	9.4	4.7	4.2	3.4	0.8
<b>Institutional Category</b>							
<b>Governance</b>	9.0	8.2	8.0	7.0	7.9	6.3	3.4
<b>Disaster Risk Reduction</b>	-	6.3	-	3.0	7.3	-	2.6
<b>Total Institutional</b>	9.0	7.3	8.0	5.0	7.6	6.3	3.0
<b>Total</b>	8.6	7.1	8.8	4.9	6.2	5.0	2.0
<b>INFORM Risk Class</b>	8.7	8.1	7.8	5.5	3.8	3.6	2.0
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>172</b>

### **Federal Republic of Somalia**

In the case of the Federal Republic of Somalia, - a country with a population of 16.36 million according to 2021 data (with an expected growth of 35 million by 2050) and an area of 637 655 km<sup>2</sup> in the Sub-Saharan region in East Africa - it ranks at the top

of the INFORM's risk index, characterizing it with the highest level of overall vulnerability – 8.6 out of 10 - to the impacts of climate and environmental change. The concept of vulnerability is fully intertwined with a situation of extreme poverty, food insecurity, and political instability leading to conflict, lack of healthcare and education, and economic deprivation, a situation that is fully reflected in Somalia. In Somalia, characterized by its arid and semi-arid climate with periodic monsoons and irregular rainfall, about 65% of the population depends on the existence of natural resources for their livelihood and, given its climate, approximately 6 million people face food insecurity problems on a daily basis (Prokkola et al. 2021, 57).

Climate projections do not favor the development of the country and the reduction of its vulnerability to climate change, since an increase in temperature of between 0.3-0.7°C is predicted up to 2035, as well as the intensification of long periods of droughts (risk of 10 out of 10 according to the table) and floods, which will inevitably impact the population's access to water, food and community security, the country's energy and the health of the population (Prokkola et al. 2021, 57). In fact, the recurrence of droughts and floods has already been a much-observed phenomenon, especially during 2022.

As recently as October 2022, the Somali Government and the United Nations urgently requested increased humanitarian aid to address what is the worst drought in the country for at least 40 years due to four consecutive poor rainy seasons, persistent conflict, displacement, and high food prices that leave millions starving. According to the joint statement by Somalia's Deputy Prime Minister Salah Ahmed Jama and the UN:

*"the country is facing a major emergency. Last year, we declared the drought an emergency and made efforts to reach the most vulnerable people, but we need the support of the international community to prevent further deterioration."*

The severity and duration of the drought have forced a revision of the United Nations budget for Somalia, requiring funding of €2.29 billion (up from €1.46 million in early 2022) in order to respond to the 7.6 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, and of which, over 80% is drought-related (United Nations 2022).

According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, the severe drought that the country is facing and which affected 80% of the population also triggered 168 000 displacements in 2021, the highest figure linked to this hazard since 2018, as people fled in search of food, water, and pasture for livestock (IDMC 2022). Somalia has suffered numerous losses in recent decades from conflict, climate, and overall injustices. Although the country's total carbon emissions are 0.00%, many of its human losses and

displacements are climate-driven. The lack of appropriate infrastructures and security propels the country towards a regular increase in its risk and vulnerability. Tension is felt horizontally throughout the country and is only likely to increase with, for example, the long-running Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) on the Blue Nile, which could involve the country in the beginning of an international conflict - even though it holds a neutral position so far - between Ethiopia, Egypt and other nations such as Eritrea and Sudan (Prokkola et al. 2021, 59). The whole conjuncture of significant loss of security, good governance, efficient infrastructure, political instability, and extreme exposure to climate will create even more internal displacement and cross borders not only across all regions of the country but also across several nations in the East Africa region.

### **People's Republic of Bangladesh**

As regards the People's Republic of Bangladesh, - with a population of 166.3 million and an area of 148 460 km<sup>2</sup> - despite ranking 29th out of 191 in the INFORM raking, it is one of the 10 countries most affected by climate on a global scale due to its location and high population density (IDMC 2021). On the coasts, the effects of rising sea levels and changing weather patterns are already being felt. The long-lying coastal areas of the Bay of Bengal have been suffering from different types of slow-onset environmental changes, such as soil salinization, contamination of drinking water, and loss of biodiversity. However, there have also been sudden-onset climate-related threats through the increasingly frequent presence of devastating floods and cyclones. In inland areas, the most commonly experienced phenomena is a conjunction of riverbank eruptions, floods, and droughts (Prokkola et al. 2021, 63).

In terms of climate projections, Bangladesh is one of the countries in the world that suffers most from heavy rainfall over a long seasonal period, with average annual rainfall fluctuating from 1,500 mm/year in the central part to over 3,000 mm/year in the southeast and northeastern parts of the country. The annual phenomenon combined with the increase in deadly tropical cyclones, of temperature between 1.5°C and 2.7°C by 2060, and the long-term sea level rise of 88 cm by the end of the 21st century, (Prokkola et al. 2021, 63–64) project a bleak future for the country. As such, disasters are the main trigger of displacement in the country, predominantly during the June-September monsoon season when floods relocate an average of a million people each other and cyclones displace an average of 110,000 a year. Although the number of new disaster displacements have decreased by 2021 with 99,000 people on record, the risk of

secondary displacement and prolonged humanitarian needs remains high due to the effect of disasters in the same areas year after year (IDMC 2021).

However, there is no agency responsible for accounting and reporting disaster displacement in Bangladesh. As such, data availability and coverage are subject to permanent change. Global estimates that by 2050, there will be some 20 million international climate migrants have prompted immediate government action to close this gap. Thus, a national strategy was adopted to comprehensively manage climate-induced international displacement by 2021, which constitutes a significant step towards addressing and preventing the phenomenon (IDMC 2021). In order to find durable solutions such as permanent resettlement and relocation, this national strategy was designed with an emphasis on the rights of displaced people and the process of resettlement.

The strategy is based on protocols already analyzed throughout this dissertation, namely the Sendai Framework, the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, it recognizes the implications for individuals and communities who experience climate-related displacement and the various human rights challenges they face relating to their safety, security, gender-based violence, unequal access to assistance, basic goods and services, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, forced relocation and unsafe or involuntary return or resettlement and, especially inadequate law enforcement mechanisms and restricted access to a fair and efficient justice system (Prokkola et al. 2021, 65). As per the Bangladesh Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, in 2020, the key aim is thus to reduce the risk of displacement before the hazards strike and when in cases when displacement cannot be prevented, put in place rights-based measures that protect people during evacuation and throughout displacement until durable solutions for return, local integration or further relocation or resettlement are in place (Prokkola et al. 2021, 65).

### **Republic of the Marshall Islands**

Regarding the Republic of the Marshall Islands, a small developing state in the Pacific, with 59,618 inhabitants spread over an area of 181 km<sup>2</sup>, they are part of the population with the highest level of disaster exposure, despite its average risk level according to the INFORM index - 3.8 out of 10 (ranking 86 out of 191).

Approximately 50,000 people are at risk of displacement each year and most of their services and structural infrastructure such as tourism are located in coastal areas and,

consequently, sudden-onset hazards such as tsunamis (8.6 out of 10 as per the INFORM Risk index) cyclones or floods pose high levels of social and economic risk to the inhabitants of Small Island Developing States in the Pacific (Bolo et al. 2022, 4).

The Marshall Islands lie halfway between Australia and Hawaii, northeast of Kiribati, and east of Federated States of Micronesia as several islands sit just above sea level. The climate is characterized as oceanic tropical with a wet season between May and November and a dry season between December and April, in addition to a typhoon season incident from September to November. Climate projections estimate that, since 1993, there has been a rise of approximately 7mm and is expected to rise to 9cm by 2030, the biggest challenge and risk facing the country (Bolo et al. 2022, 6). Although there are no official statistics on displacement, through the school dropout rate in the urban center where the risk tends to be concentrated - Ailinglaplap and Arno - it can be concluded that many families have been forced to move to other islands. This displacement happened at the expense of the disaster starting in 2015 when the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) triggered a severe drought, and in May 2016, 21 000 people, or almost half the population, were affected (Bolo et al. 2022, 7).

Since 2008, IDMC says that displacement due to disasters has been a trigger for some 2 046 movements, all of which resulted from a combination of phenomena, high tides impacts aggravated by storms and floods, according to data collected (Bolo et al. 2022, 9). However, despite the existence of validated and annually monitored data and the government's recognition of the problem and the need to prepare to address it, the Marshall Islands does not hold any specific policy or legislation for the problem of internal displacement (CCD 2020). In the National Strategic Plan 2020-2030 some key principles and approaches to deal with displacement associated with climate change and the impacts of natural disasters are induced. In this plan, we can also find explicitly recognized the guiding principles of their atoll adaptation, namely the "right to remain" on their islands, the imperative of resilience, an "integrated adaptation", a "consensus and inclusion" process (underlining consultation and consensus building), a "knowledge first" approach where scientific, and evidence-based knowledge prevails, an "adaptive capacity", a welcoming of technology and innovation, and the importance of "security" for human survival, well-being, and identity. A policy of orderly, safe, and responsible migration and human mobility is also emphasized (CCD 2020, 3).

In addition, while not having its own response, but always recognizing the need to achieve effective preparedness, the country's response to disaster displacement always

draws on the provisions of the *Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management of 2014* (Bolo et al. 2022, 7). This lack of governance and independence of state actors is implicit in the INFORM index, where government effectiveness presents a risk of 7.9 out of 10, strictly tangled with the fact of being a country dependent on actors outside its national ecosystem, presenting an economic dependence with a risk of 8.1 on a scale of 10 (European Commission. Joint Research Centre. 2022).

On an important note, in 2018 the government of the Marshall Islands in its 2018 Adaptation Proclamation stated its intention “We must not allow our people to become climate refugees, but will strengthen international and domestic efforts and international cooperation to plan, finance and implement resilience and adaptation measures to protect the rights of our people to remain on these islands” (CCD 2020, 29).

### **Concluding observations**

The decision to migrate or remain in one's place of residence is and always will be a complex one. Migration, climate, and environmental change are just some of the factors that contribute to this decision, although environmental threats have the potential to generate mass migration. There is a whole conjuncture of factors beyond the environment, be they social, economic, political, cultural, technological, and demographic in addition to the personal factors inherent to each individual and community that contribute to the decision to promote or prevent mobility. In the event of environmental threats, there are three possible scenarios in terms of the possibility of movement, long-term migration, short-term displacement, and immobility when populations are trapped in an empty and resource-scarce world (Prokkola et al. 2021, 75).

By examining vulnerable countries through the INFORM Risk Index, it is clearly demonstrated that climate and environmental change causes multiple risks and heightens existing vulnerabilities. In addition, as we have been able to analyze, the vulnerability of the countries most affected by climate change depends on the level of their response, resilience, and adaptability to climate-related events. This adaptability and resilience are constituted by a strong bet on the implementation of national adaptation strategies as well as policy responses so that a country is able to decrease its vulnerability and build safe and orderly migration processes. In this way, “vulnerable groups should be taken into consideration in policy formation and practical actions before, during, and after climate

and environmental changes induce migration and displacement” (Prokkola et al. 2021, 75).

The vulnerable countries analyzed here demonstrate how climate and environmental change and related migration and displacement affect various geographical areas in a variety of ways and phenomena. In the case of countries that already have high levels of vulnerability due to conflicts and consequently face large numbers of displaced persons - such as Somalia and Afghanistan - the climate change factor comes on top and further increases the vulnerability of these countries (Prokkola et al. 2021, 75). In the case of the Marshall Islands, which do not present human-induced conflicts, but where their vulnerability is significant due to weak governance and strong economic dependence on external actors, the giant factor and risk they present in the face of the climate with the rising sea level exposes the country to even greater vulnerability. The difficulty in this process is to know how to accurately identify the factors that lead to displacement, since climate is often an addition to situations of extreme poverty, employment opportunities, or security, especially in the case of vulnerable countries (Prokkola et al. 2021, 75).

## **Attachment V**

### **Exploratory Interview Guidelines in English**

1. Could you please tell me a bit about yourself?  
Personal, educational, professional, geographical background.
  
2. Turning now to the issue of Environmental Refugees. Could you please talk to me a little bit about this issue?
  - a. What are they for you?
  - b. How do you relate to this issue?/Do you recognize this population group?
  - c. Where do we stand on this issue?
  
3. One of the latest communiqués from the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) states that the number of refugees has increased. In your view, why is this?
  - a. Do you see the environment/climate change involved in the causes?
  - b. In your opinion, is the current statute fully adopted?
  - c. What shortcomings do you point out in its exercise?
  
4. In a recent interview with “Diário de Notícias”, the Director-General of the International Organization for Migration, António Vitorino, stated that there are two types of displaced persons, the first recognized internationally as being caused by persecution and the second, displaced persons due to natural disasters and climate change. What do you understand by this separation? Do you agree?
  - a. The right to international protection is recognized only in one of these groups. What is your opinion on recognizing protection for different types of refugees?
  - b. What kind of solutions do you advocate for those who are not recognized as entitled to international protection under the UN statute (1951 Convention)?
  - c. Does the solution have to start nationally or internationally?
  
5. Most of the host countries are not developed countries, but developing countries, characterized as poor. What can developed countries do to change the course of protection and migration?
  - a. What are the main shortcomings regarding migration flows?

- b. How can we regularize the issue of Migration and the flow of Refugees that continues to increase day by day?
- 
- 6. With regard to Climate Migration, "The impact of climate change on human movement across the globe is likely to be profound-though perhaps in significantly different ways than are perceived today", can you comment on your opinion regarding this reality?
    - a. How can/should we look at the relationship between Environment and Migration?
    - b. What is the relationship that, in your opinion, develops between Security and Environment in this perspective?
- 
- 7. How do you see the future of Migration/Refugees?
- 
- 8. Is there anything you would like to add?

## **Attachment VI**

### **Exploratory Interview with Vasco Malta**

**Interviewer:** Filipa Saraiva (F)

**Interviewee:** Vasco Malta (V)

#### **Description:**

Vasco Malta, graduated in Law and L.L.M in European Law in a Global Context, from Católica School of Law. He successfully completed the "Strategic Thinking and Management" course at Harvard Business Publishing School and IOM Resources Development in 2021. He has been a lawyer since 2005 and started his work in the area of human rights at the High Commissioner for Migration and Intercultural Dialogue in Portugal in 2009. He was also legal officer of the Commission for Equality and Against Racial Discrimination and was part of the National Human Rights Commission. He was appointed by the Portuguese Government in 2009 as National Liaison Officer for the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and, from 2014 until 2018, he worked at the Agency as a seconded National Expert, coordinating, among others, the network of EU National Liaison Officers to the Agency, the EU network of National Parliaments Focal Points, the EU Working Party on Hate Crime project and was also responsible for the cooperation between the Agency and the EU networks of legal practitioners. In February 2018, he was appointed Deputy High Commissioner for Migration and took up his duties in March 2019 as Director for International Relations, Migration Policy and Migrant Attraction of the High Commissioner for Migration. In November 2019, he was appointed Deputy of the Minister of Internal Affairs, for the areas of migration, refugees, trafficking in human beings and domestic violence and was appointed as Counsellor in the Commission for Equality and Against Racial Discrimination representing the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In November 2020, after an international selection process, he was chosen as Head of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Portugal. He is a frequent guest speaker at various national and international conferences.

## **Transcription<sup>68</sup>:**

V: Well then, let's look at something. I can talk about lots of things on this subject. I have also prepared some texts here that are linked to what the IOM's opinion is, in this particular sense. As you rightly said, from a strictly legal point of view, there is no such thing as a climate refugee and the doctrine is not unanimous on whether or not to define or consider it necessary to include the term climate refugee in the Geneva Convention. What I can say is that, in fact, the IOM has already presented a definition to the United Nations that seeks to somehow capture what is the complexity of the issues surrounding migration and climate change. This definition is climate migrant, not climate refugee. I can tell you my opinion and from my point of view, obviously, strictly from a legal point of view, I have some doubts that the inclusion of the term in the Convention or the broadening of the scope of the Geneva convention, in any way, frankly, might diminish protection. The arguments that it might diminish the protection of individuals is not an argument, for me, that is completely 100 per cent guaranteed. I mean, I think there is some risk, but I also think that climate change is, as of today, properly documented for us to realize that it is an urgent reality and that it is a reality of today.

The most important thing above all, regardless of whether we call them a migrant or a refugee, is to ensure that people who move for climate-related reasons are somehow protected in what is international law. Therefore, although, I repeat, although I am a person who advocates that this definition can be broadened, I am not completely closed to the fact that, from the point of view of legal settlement, this definition can be framed in a completely different field. What is important to me, whether in the context of the Geneva Convention or in the context of any other legal instrument, is that there should be a definition that is commonly accepted and that this should enable international law to protect these people. That is what is essential for me. If it's through the Geneva Convention, which I don't think is that big a deal.... I understand the arguments, but I don't think it's... I mean, for me it is still to be proven, from an academic point of view, that there is a direct relationship, cause and effect, between including the concept of climate refugee in the Geneva Convention and that this causes a reduction in protection, as some people and some authors argue, I don't think it is a direct relationship.

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<sup>68</sup> Translated from Portuguese.

**F: I fully understand because I also have a bit of this point of view and that is why I thought that initially and now I am still, I always have to remain neutral when I am doing this study that it was really necessary to modify. Because one thing that I found very funny when I was doing a study... the literature review, there was an author who did a study with 45 diplomats from the various UN representations around the world and both diplomats and government state actors always answered, "ah, I can't talk to you about that because it's not written in the definition". And they would absolutely cut it off, almost as if it was a way for countries to hide/deny the existence of all this displacement that's going on, because deep down nobody wants to be hidden.**

V: A purely administrative matter, isn't it?

**F: Yes, and because deep down nobody wants to be blamed for climate change itself. Because when you talk about the environment, nobody wants to.... Everybody is pointing the finger at each other, but no.... First there is one culprit, there are several. And so, I find that quite interesting. And I share your perspective a little bit too.**

V: Filipa, I agree with you. Now let's see something. This also has a lot to do with the evolution of many systems around the world. That is, there is always controversy, often on issues that can be considered fractured and Filipa, you touched very well, on a fracturing issue that is well from the moment we enshrine, from the point of view of international law, these issues on migrants or climate refugees. It is also important to realize who is the cause and who we can accuse in the event of a war, even if even in this it can be interpretative, as we know very well. The truth is that, in a neutral position, it is indeed possible to realize who is the cause and there the effect. With regard to the issue of climate change, this is indeed the great challenge because the marvelous islands of the Maldives may be disappearing and it may not be due to the direct action of the Maldivian population, but perhaps due to a part of a population that is even in another hemisphere and whose daily practices will subsequently have consequences on that population, on those islands. I realize that, but I still say, and taking your words a little bit, burying your head in the area and pretending that this doesn't exist, I don't think it's the solution either.

Mainly because it is more than scientifically proven the consequences of climate change and it is more than proven that people's movements are increasingly linked to climate change and climate issues. You only have to look at what happened three months ago in Afghanistan where, at the moment, following an earthquake, a natural phenomenon, we have more than 5 million internally displaced people. We can think of what happened very recently in Pakistan, with the floods, where the Secretary-General of the United Nations is going to appeal, in a clear and objective way to society.

**F: In Somalia too, for example.**

V: And so, the number of migrants, in fact, has doubled in the last decade and the perception that we have in IOM is that that number is going to increase more and more and the displaced people, forcibly displaced people is also going to increase more and the link with climate change is... Inevitable. It is already happening today and therefore it could and should unfortunately continue to happen in the near future. So, I repeat, I think it's important that we try to reach some legal consensus, that's my lawyer rib talking, not to please lawyers, not to please the legalistic part of it, but simply because it's through, probably, that mechanism that you can, from an international law point of view, help and assist and protect. I think it is important that that happens.

**F: And from your point of view. Do you recognize this population group?**

V: I recognize, without a shadow of a doubt, this population group.

**F: And does IOM recognize it as well?**

V: The IOM recognizes it so much, as I said, that it has submitted to the United Nations system its own definition of climate migrant. I will read you what the IOM understands about climate migrants. Climate migrants are persons or group of persons, who due to sudden or collective climate change or environmental change, which adversely affects their lives or living conditions are forced to leave their habitual residences or choose to do so temporarily or permanently within the country or abroad. And so, in essence, it is a very broad definition, I would say, that encompasses not only those who actually move internally or internationally because of climate change, but also

because of environmental issues, such as those that I was talking about just now, the floods in Pakistan, like those that we talked about the earthquake in Afghanistan. And so it covers, in my opinion, this whole concept.

**F: Completely.**

V: And this is, in essence, what we have put forward for eventually establishing a climate refugee or climate migrant status.

**F: And I think it ends up being much more comprehensive because when we talk about a refugee, sometimes we are just talking about a person who is forced, because I think that is what differs a lot between a refugee and a migrant. So that definition ends up being much broader, much more comprehensive.**

V: The only difference, I would say, which is clearly not here, is that although they are forced, right? The terminology is migration and not refugee, if you don't want to touch the Geneva convention, this is our proposal. And I think that the focus at this point, if it is to discuss the legal point of view, if it is not to touch then the Geneva Convention, is the constitution or establishment of a status of climate refugee or climate migrant, as you please.

**F: But in your personal opinion, completely personal, do you think that the status should be touched?**

V: No, I don't have a position, I've already said that, I don't have a closed position on this point. I'm following the doctrinal discussion on this matter and what I've read, I repeat, has not proven to me that the introduction of this issue or the concept of climate refugee in the Geneva Convention harms... therefore refugees under what is currently the Geneva Convention. I do not see why it does not diminish, the gravity is the same. From the point of view of what the consequences are for people. Do you understand what I mean?

So, if I'm forced to leave my island because the island is going to disappear, I'm forced to leave and I know I can't come back, obviously not because, I mean, in theory I can't come back because if I come back I die, I drown.

**F: But in terms of the Statute, what do you think are the biggest flaws in the exercise of the Statute? In its scope, I'm not just talking about the environment.**

V: I mean, in its scope the flaws that I see is that I see many countries in the world that don't agree. That for me is perhaps the biggest one. Now, there is what we talked about earlier about this difficulty from a technical point of view to prove that a certain occurrence is environmental, whether it is due to climate change, to point the finger directly, if I may, at a certain group of people. I would say that even that is subjective, because it is measurable to know which countries pollute more and which countries pollute less. The counterpart of a given country compared to another is easy to measure, what is not easy to measure is exactly the percentage. It is impossible to say that an island that disappears in the Maldives is caused by the direct action of what is, let's imagine, the gases caused in China. Just as it is impossible to know if it happens because of the gases or the pollution that is made by India or if it is because of all the factories that are in the United States of America. And that difficulty, I think, is what lies behind the difficulty of reaching a consensus, I would say.

But there you go, if I may, just this fundamental point. Firstly, back in 2007, now talking a little bit about the IOM, the IOM is an intergovernmental organization.

**F: They work a lot with their partners. Is that correct?**

V: Their partners are the state. As it is an intergovernmental organization, like the structure of the United Nations itself, there are countries that are part of it, there are countries that are not part of it. The definition of what the IOM's work is the result of the decision of the States that have decided to be part of the IOM and, as such, its work is linked to the definition of its objectives, either in the IOM General Assemblies or by defining what they will do, the objective of each Director-General within the scope of their mandate. And so, as early as 2007, the Member States that are part of IOM had requested that IOM work in the areas of migration, environment and climate change. And then, with the entry of our current IOM Director, we have within IOM, a specific division which is called "Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division", so to speak, where it tries to address the nexus of migration with environment and climate. And so, it is through this, let's say department, if you can put it that way, that we develop a set of

policy guidelines for activities linked to these issues of migration, environment and climate change. And so, what we have been doing in relation to this issue is to understand, together with the various projects that we have throughout the country, how, on the one hand, climate change affects migration, which we already know is interconnected, but above all also, a job that we have also done on the recommendation of the Director-General himself, is to work on these issues, on the impacts of climate change on migration, but also to help the various States to prioritize people who want to stay where they are, that is, so that this forced migration does not become mandatory. And therefore, we need to create resilience conditions in these communities so that, as far as possible, they can stay in their place of origin, right? And adapt to climate change.

**F: Dr. António Vitorino spoke a lot about this in a recent interview he gave to “Diário das Notícias”, he spoke a lot about regularized immigration, about regularizing this part. And I found it very funny that he, in that very interview as well, that he stated that there were two types of displaced persons. The first one, recognized internationals with a cause of persecution and the second one, those displaced due to natural accidents and climate change. And I even had a question here of this separation. Because even the Director-General of IOM himself makes this separation.**

V: Because this is a separation that still exists on a daily basis, isn't it? Now, whether or not this separation should be made is another question that we should have. But in any case, the IOM's vision, the one that has often been presented publicly, is that it is necessary to intensify national, regional and international efforts to address the challenges of mobility linked to climate change. What IOM understands and the Director-General understands is that IOM's view on migration, environment and climate change is that they should reflect, so to speak, the importance of environmental factors, disasters and climate change in mobility. Which means that in practice that all these environmental factors should be integrated into all areas of migration management. Such as prevention, that's why I talked about that other issue. Preparedness, response to displacement, border management. Environmental factors should be integrated into the management of all areas of migration, such as prevention, preparedness, response to displacement, border management, migration, labor integration and return and reintegration. That is, all these various phases of human mobility, all of them must somehow take into account what is

this factor, one of the factors that drives people to move. Therefore, it is important that when preparing any of these phases, and IOM has several projects, the environmental factor is always included, that is, one of the topics that is important.

As far as this particular case is concerned, the IOM's objectives are three very specific ones. First, to prevent, as far as possible, forced migration resulting from environmental factors, that is one of our main objectives. Second, to provide assistance and protection to affected populations when forced migration occurs in situations of environmental change, climate change or to find durable solutions to these situations. And third, to facilitate migration in the context of adaptation to climate change and increase the resilience of communities. That is, trying to make sure that, in fact, the decision to leave because of climate change is the last one for that to happen, it does happen, but trying to foster this resilience of the affected communities. And in a concrete case, if necessary, facilitate migrations when they have to happen.

**F: If I may interrupt. So, from that point of view, the solution has to come more from the national forum and not from the international forum, right?**

V: I think so.

**F: From national policies, within each country?**

V: It's like that, from the international context it's convenient to have a legal framework. Then it will be up to each country.

**F: What about Portugal and the state of Portuguese migration management?**

V: At the moment, Portugal needs two fundamental things that I have repeatedly said publicly. They are two things. Firstly, we clearly need to invest in a birth policy that is attractive. And this birth rate policy cannot be through a substantial and sudden change in wages, because let's be honest, it is one of the substantial reasons why most of the young population does not have children. It has to be, I would say, through the policies of fiscal incentives, of fiscal benefits. So that allows a young couple to feel incentivized to have children. That on the one hand.

On the other hand, clearly a policy of attracting migrant people. And it's a very big competitive world, people think no, that it's almost like charity that we let in. It's totally untrue. There is a competition, I want to believe, which is often healthy, between various countries in attracting people. Especially in attracting highly qualified and important people, this attraction has to exist and I think it has to be the focus of our migration policy. Ours, by the way, of the Portuguese State.

**F: And do you feel that Portuguese society still sees migrants as an affront?**

V: I don't really feel that, to be honest, Filipa. That doesn't correspond to the truth. The figures say exactly the opposite. In fact, it is very much based on the labor of migrants and their social contributions that we have a stable salary. Look, last year alone, the net contribution of migrants to the social security subsystem was around €800 million. This perception needs to be taken into account. Moreover, the data we have from the Migration Observatory, from reports and so on, do not show much to the contrary. This is very much what happens, depending on areas, we have many foreigners who clearly come to do the work that no Portuguese person wants to do. So they are not stealing work from anyone, for the most part.

Then with regard to the most qualified work, it is a question of comparing CVs and the criterion of being a national or a foreigner is not a criterion, in many of these companies, that is relevant for assigning that job to that person. And so, the figures say otherwise, the facts say otherwise.

Now, the perspective that exists in society in Portugal in the latest data, is that migration is welcome. Also because, let's be honest, the numbers we have of migrants are not significantly large numbers compared even with other countries that could lead to some kind of social cohesion problem. In fact, Portugal has a system built that allows, in my opinion, some social cohesion around the issue of migrants. Why? Because, firstly, there are not many coming, unfortunately. I say unfortunately because we need them in that sense. And then because, finally, there is also a whole history of Portuguese migration abroad, we are talking about two to three million Portuguese living abroad and who, in short, have that experience. I often say that there is no Portuguese who does not have at least one direct relative living abroad, a cousin, a brother, a father, and I, in my specific case, it is also true. And so, we know a lot about what it's like to be an immigrant abroad, I think that molds or has molded and still continues to mold a little bit the way the

Portuguese see the immigrants who come here. Now, obviously there are always areas or conflicts or potential conflicts, between, from a political point of view more than anything else, there are always people who are completely against it. There are people who are not informed and who don't have a formed, or properly formed, opinion about these circumstances.

Now, the perception that is made, what is even made, the assessment of integration, is that migrants have integrated relatively well, with some exceptions always. Knowing that there is this integration that is occurring, means, that it is from the community side, that it is from the public policy side, things will happen.

**F: And how is Portugal positioning itself in terms of climate migration?**

V: That's not for me to ask, but for the Portuguese government. I think there is still no need for this topic. Firstly because there is still the belief that Portugal, now, does not have Portuguese migrants going abroad because of climate change and has not been receiving, well, it is debatable, but it has not been receiving migrants or climate refugees or climate migrants as such. And therefore, also because most of the climate migrants, the perception we have is that they migrate to neighbouring countries. So, this is still a topic that I think is not being properly debated. I hope, though, that one day I will be able, within my time here at IOM, to have a project linked to climate change. I think that's something I'd really like to develop. But we are also dependent on funding, so we will wait for that to happen.

**F: And how do you see the future of migration?**

V: In Portugal? Or in the world?

**F: Internationally.**

V: Let's see something, the future in the area of migration is very simple, I mean, being a migrant is part of the history of the human being. We all know that. What I think is that, first point, putting this in a framework, the latest IOM data tells us that there were, in the world, international migrants, so of a person going from one country to another country, around 281 million people. 281 million people, we are talking about 3% to 4%

of the world population. 3% to 4% of the world's population means that there are 96% or 95% of the world's population who are not migrants, have never been migrants and probably will not be migrants. It is necessary to put this context, these figures in context.

Still, the evolution over time, over life, according to IOM data, over life, that is, over time, is that the numbers of migrants are increasing, they are increasing. Why? Because it is linked, on the one hand, to greater ease in migration, that is, in the past, migrating from one country to another was always more difficult than it is today. There were a lot of barriers, the barriers are slightly raised, well, obviously depending on the country we are talking about. That idea that only the rich could travel, for example, has declined and there is more and more democratization, in terms of the possibility for people to travel and move around. And so, from that point on, this democratization always allows people who perhaps had never thought of migrating to face this reality more easily. This will cause and has always caused an increase in the number of migrants.

In addition, there is this whole set of forced migrations linked to climate change, there is this whole set of migrations linked to possible conflicts, there is this whole set of migrations linked to issues of improving people's living conditions, then there is a set of migrations linked to the highly qualified, there are migrations linked to family grouping and, therefore, that is, there are several reasons that underlie migrations today and given the natural tendency of things, I would say, not predicting the future, is that these reasons constantly lead to more migrations. And so this movement of people from one place to another will be part of the life of the world's population and of the world, has been and will continue to be part of it.

Although, I repeat, from a global point of view, most of the world's population is not migrating and probably will not migrate. We are going to have in the coming period, I would say, as more and more of this travel is democratized and this movement is democratized and facilitated, there is inevitably going to be the possibility of people increasingly changing their residence from one country to another. And I think it is to be welcomed that this happens, provided that it is a conscious emigration, that it is an informed emigration, that people know what they are going to find and that they try to prepare themselves for this migration. Because this is another struggle that the IOM has, because there are many people, sometimes even, well, we have several concrete cases of migrants, mainly Brazilians, here in Portugal, who are deceived by social networks, by some internet channels, in which they sell a bit of Portugal in a reality that is not the one they find when they get here. And this, in fact, puts them in a very vulnerable, dramatic

situation and that is why it has been part of our role, within the various projects that we have, to alert exactly to the need for people to plan their trip consciously.

And it really worries us because the situations of vulnerability that have come to us, at this moment, of some people of Brazilian nationality is very worrying. They are people who have often sold everything they had in Brazil, coming with the expectation of finding a very easy job here with a great source of income. And the truth is that, unfortunately, the market conditions in Portugal in some areas are definitely not very well paid, especially compared to other countries and especially compared to what they had previously thought, deluded by social networks, deluded by many people who, even illegally and criminally, indicate on social networks how to emigrate to Portugal and then a broth is created, which sometimes has dramatic conclusions for the lives of those people.

**F: Well, because the Brazilian community has been growing exponentially.**

V: The Brazilian community has already been the largest in Portugal for about 14 consecutive years. At the moment, SEF data indicates that they must have a community of approximately 252 thousand people. My experience, for what it is worth, indicates to me that we have in fact, in addition to the 252 thousand, I would say between 50 and 70 thousand people who are in a situation, I am talking about the Brazilian community, but who will still be part of this community. So we are talking about 300,000 people, just Brazilians in Portugal, which is actually quite a substantial number.

**F: Would you like to add anything?**

V: No, there is nothing to add. I can only say good luck.

## **Attachment VII**

### **Exploratory Interview with Alex Randall**

**Interviewer:** Filipa Saraiva (F)

**Interviewee:** Alex Randall (A)

#### **Description:**

Alex Randall is a leading specialist in the connections between climate change, migration and conflict. He is Program manager at the Climate and Migration Coalition. He has been working on issues around climate, migration and human rights for 15 years. He advises a number of key international agencies and governments on their responses to climate-linked migration and displacement. Alex has also served on the advisory group of the Nansen Initiative and Platform on Disaster Displacement.

Alex has written extensively on climate change and migration for the Guardian, Le Monde Diplomatique, New Internationalist, Prospect and numerous other outlets. He is the author of a number of book chapters focusing on the connections between climate change and the rights of refugees and migrants.

Alex is currently leading the course ‘Climate change and migration: predictions, politics and policy’. The course is the world’s first free online course focused on the politics and policy of climate migration.

#### **Transcription:**

**F: To start this interview, can you please talk a little bit about yourself, your personal journey, education, career path? Feel free to speak.**

A: Okay, so... I run a project called the Climate and Migration Coalition and we are a network of refugee and migration rights organizations, mainly based in the UK. Most of the organizations that are part of the network work directly with migrants and refugees in Great Britain. They're mainly small organizations, they tend to be kind of grassroots community focused. several of them are migrant and refugee led themselves. And the way that we work is we bring other refugee migrant rights organizations into the network with the aim of helping them go through a process of understanding what it will be to be a refugee organization or a migrant rights organization on a hotter planet. What will it mean for their work? what will it mean for the people that they are assisting? What

will it mean for the communities that they work with? How might it change what they do operationally? How might it change the experiences of the people that they're working with? The things that they're fleeing, the situations that they are moving away from. And questions, wider questions as well, what will it mean for diaspora communities in the UK? as they witness increasing climate change impacts happening to family and friends in other parts of the world. So we feel like there were these really deep questions about what it means to be a refugee migrant-focused civil society organization as the planet begins to change and as those changes alter patterns of human mobility. And we're doing it because we think the role of civil society in the protection of migrant and refugee rights has always been really important. And I think a lot of the organizations that are part of our network really began their work many, many decades ago, before we even existed, when many of the existing legal protections, you know... flawed as they are, didn't exist at all. So for those organizations that have that long history, they see the role of civil society in championing migrant and refugee rights as being really central and for them that raises a question of what should their role be as the world changes? And will see some of the protections and the laws and the things that they've championed and succeeded in creating, like the Refugee Convention for example that they've campaigned for, lobbied for, will we see some of those protections being eroded? Will we see the need for new forms of protection, new laws, new agreements? And what will the role, what will civil society need to do? in order to make those things happen as the planet heats up.

**F: That's exactly my point. It's a search for that question, but around the main instrument that is the convention, because internationally today it's still the main instrument. So, but speaking on the matter of environmental refugees, Can you speak a little bit about this matter for you? What this means? What is the definition for you of environmental refugees? How do you relate to this? Do you recognize? Because a lot of people still don't recognize and still don't know what is environmental refugees.**

A: Right. So the way we look at it, I think, is shaped by the context that we work in. And we're primarily a UK organization. And it's... it is the case that most of the people who come to the UK as migrants or refugees are not like immediately fleeing the impacts of climate change. So the way that we draw that connection tends to be quite pluralistic. We don't say that there is one definition and this is a climate migrant and this is a climate

refugee and you're in the box or you're not in the box. We've tried to steer away from that because it can leave organizations feeling like they can't or shouldn't participate in the debate because they would look at the community that they work with and they would think, well, none of these people in our community, in our organization are... on the surface of it, obviously fleeing drought. So maybe we just shouldn't come to the meeting. Maybe we shouldn't join the coalition. Maybe we shouldn't be part of it. So we've tended to take a very kind of plural definition or sometimes even not use a definition at all. The way we do look at it is we say that lots of people may have a climate change dimension to their mobility. They may have moved for all sorts of reasons, which are... part of the story that individually they wish to tell and they may or may not include the impacts of climate change. So it might be that someone is moving, well if you are, I'm sure you're aware of this right, if you ask people like about their migratory story or their story of displacement. you know, it very often contains the things that are the starkest to them, or maybe, you know, it contains only the parts of it that they wish to share with me. Yeah, true. And they may wish to share some things with other people for other reasons, and you know. So it can be very difficult to say someone's a climate migrant and someone's not, someone's a climate refugee and someone's not. But this idea of having a climate change dimension I find very useful because it means that you can say well yeah maybe someone maybe someone moved primarily they feel to find work and that may be on the surface of it why they moved but perhaps we also know that there was drought. in the area that they were leaving. So even though they might not say, I am a climate migrant, right, that doesn't mean that there isn't in the kind of multiple causes of their mobility and all the complex factors that meant that they decided or were forced to go from one place to another, that climate change didn't somehow play a role. Now that's not to say that we want to tell people the reason that they moved, but I feel that is a better way of approaching it than a strict categorization. The other thing that I think is worth saying is as a network, we don't see the issue of climate change driving mobility. as the only important connection between climate change and human movement. So we think we often explore quite a lot, as I mentioned earlier, what it means for people to move, for example, to the UK and then for all kinds of different reasons, you know, economic, family, fleeing persecution, whatever. But then we also have this question of how are those people in the UK protected from the impacts of climate change, right? Yeah. We know that migrants and refugees on low incomes are probably more likely to be in areas of, you know, buildings that are less able to deal with extreme heat, they're more likely

to be in highly polluted areas where air quality becomes worse during extreme heat, they're more likely to be in, you know, kind of budget housing, which might be more exposed to flooding. So there are all of these questions where it's not just like, Did you move because of climate change? But like once you've moved, what does climate change mean?

**F: What kind of solutions are being made to that, right?**

A: Yeah. And are migrants and refugees in the UK being included in adaptation planning in the UK? Are they being included in making decisions about how we deal with flooding, extreme heat, and all these other impacts that we're increasingly seeing? So we take that. We take that approach as well. But then we also look at the question of, okay, well, we have people moving to the UK for all sorts of reasons, and they are leaving behind people who will be impacted by climate change. So that's another way in which we've got, yeah, they're moving, but perhaps not because of climate change, but they are then in the UK, witnessing on the news and via WhatsApp, and Messenger, the difficult situations that people, your friends, family, acquaintances, going through when there is a hurricane strike, typhoon, flooding, heat wave in the place that they've come from. So we're not exclusively saying there is just this one kind of one-way street, climate change makes you move. We're saying there are lots of ways in which mobility and climate change interact with each other and we're interested in whichever of those connections. the network organizations feel that their communities, you know, think are important.

**F: Of course, but as you are saying the connections that are built, do you think there is like any sustained development in a connection between security and environment itself?**

A: Yeah, you mean between, when you say between security and environment, yeah, like tell me a bit more what you...

**F: I think like in terms of a conflict more in society.**

A: Like between, like a connection between kind of climate change impacts and a sort of erosion of security that then maybe leads to armed violence.

**F: Yes, like social problems, integration, reintegration, inclusion.**

A: Oh, so yeah, okay. I suppose there's sort of two, there's two possible. There's two possible pathways here, aren't there? So there's one where we could say, is there a connection between climate change, the erosion of security, then the creation of armed conflict, and then people fleeing, right? So there's that kind of causal chain. Then there's another causal chain where we could say there's the impacts of climate change that directly drive, that cause people to move. And then when people move, they come into contact with new people, overcrowding, resource competition, whatever, and that leads to conflict and then maybe more people fleeing, right? So yeah, like both of those causal chains have been mooted in the academic literature. Is your question, do I responded?

**F: No, absolutely, that is exactly what I was looking for in the two paths, because in the latest studies, we see a lot of people talking about security and environment. But I feel like people don't define the path and the connection.**

A: I think that's true.

**F: And you just defined, so that's perfect.**

A: We tend not to talk about security very much at all. Not because I particularly object to the term, but migrant and refugee organizations tend not to define the work that they do using that language. Or if they say security, they don't mean security in the sense that maybe the academic community means security. They say security means the immediate protection of the welfare of a migrant or a refugee. Like, is this person safe? So, yeah, we tend not to frame our work in terms of security but I have my reservations about security discourse and climate change generally.

**F: And what are those reservations?**

A: I think it tends to see migrants and refugees and people in the global south more broadly not as agents and individuals in their own right. It tends to see them as... people whose behavior is deterministically kind of predicted by the weather, right? Like

drought here, these people are gonna pick up a gun and whatever, right? I know that's a bit of a simplistic explanation. It's like saying that in warm countries people don't work as much as in the North Global because they are lazy. So I think there is an issue there of the way that this research into the nexus of climate change and security has been conducted and the way the image of people in the global south and specifically the idea of the migrant as a threat has been constructed in that research. Because it sees, I would say, a lot of that research it sees people in the global south who are maybe immediately more dependent on the natural environment around them as with a higher propensity to commit violence, which I think, I mean, I don't know, if we look over history, it's not. Those are not the people who started it. What's the theory behind, the base behind? No, there is no. So I think that's a problem with the academic literature. But then it also, I think, tends to see people... I think there's an implication that... when certain kinds of people, and they generally mean people from the global self, when they leave somewhere that they've been traditionally inhabiting, they then become somehow threatening. So there's this idea that like... As soon as someone leaves country A and goes to country B, they will stop being a peaceful, you know, kind person. And then there will be a threat. They'll become a threat.

**F: We see a lot of it. For example, in Portugal, nowadays we are receiving a lot of Brazilian migrants. And we see a lot of people, oh, they are coming everywhere. Why? What's the point? People is the same. Like just because they come from Brazil they are going to put a gun in your head or assault something. No, it's not it's not true.**

A: Yeah, so I think so I think there is a there are problems with the that entire academic discourse. that connects climate security and migration, basically. I'm not saying there isn't some really useful research, and I'm not saying that there are no connections between climate change and armed conflict, but I do think a lot of the research is being conducted in a way that unfairly characterizes migrants and people in the global south as being, A, sort of predict, like deterministic about the ways they will behave in certain situations or paints them as being somehow more violent than other people. So I tend not to draw very heavily on a lot of that research.

**F: But do you think that problem comes also from the State sometimes? Because sometimes the State doesn't like to acknowledge migrants. or for example climate migrants, because there is an additional problem to the state. So I think that came also from the base of the State and their actions.**

A: Yes. So yeah, you're right. I think there's... Yeah, that's a complicated question. Sorry, pitch me the question again.

**F: No, it's because I was reading an article the other day of a person that did a study with the diplomats of the United Nations. And all the diplomats were like, she was asking about environmental refugees and it's "Conceptualizing discourse on environmental refugees at the United Nations", and all of them were like, no, I'm not going to talk about that because there is not defined on the definition of the convention of 1951 or the protocol, there is not the definition, so I'm not allowed to talk about that. So it feels like States and all the actors of States are kind of ignoring that problem.**

A: Yes, I agree. I think the interesting question is though, which States are ignoring it and why?

**F: Yes, that is true.**

A: I think there are definitely governments that are ignoring it. absolutely acknowledge the connections between climate change and human mobility. They just do, right? Like most of the Pacific Island nations, obviously.

**F: I don't know if you agree with that, but the author was also saying that nobody wants to have the fault on climate change. So when it comes to climate change, everybody's like, no, it's the fault is on that one, that one. It's like it's a collective problem. We don't see the... Exactly, the main base and the main actor on the guilt of climate change. But when it comes to this problem of the environment and all the changes that the world is suffering, nobody wants to be the guilty one.**

A: Exactly. Yeah, so there's a question of the extent to which States will accept responsibility and acknowledging the connections between climate change and mobility. For some States is the same as or feels like acknowledging a level of responsibility that they feel they don't want to, or perhaps in the case of diplomats, they feel like they don't have the authorization to. I also think, though, there's an interesting question around the framing of this, because Yes, I can see why they might not want to talk about climate refugees, but they might be more willing to talk about the broader connections between climate change and mobility. Yes. Do you see what I mean?

**F: Yes.**

A: Because you're asking, by asking a diplomat, do you accept the existence of climate refugees? If they say "yes, I do", then... They're not just accepting some level of responsibility on behalf of their state. They're also saying, we think that the 1951 Refugee Convention needs to be changed. Needs to change. And they're not going to go there, and for many good reasons in my view. So I wonder whether that question maybe is quite narrow. And if you ask diplomats... Do you think that climate change is causing people to move? Do you think that it's leading to internal displacement? Do you think, what do you think the solutions to that are? You might find that they are... They acknowledge more. ...coming, whereas if you say... tell me, you know, what about climate refugees? They're just going to go, I'm not allowed to suggest that we want to change the refugee convention. And B, I'm not allowed to suggest that our country, if they're from the global north, is creating a movement of people. So I can see why they wouldn't.

**F: I know, I know. But it's interesting. In recent, I think it was last month, the Director General of the International Organization for Migration, that is Portuguese, António Vitorino, gave an interview to a Portuguese journal, and he himself stated that there are two types of displaced persons. The first recognized internationally as a result of persecution, and the second one, those displaced due to natural accidents and climate change. Even the director general gives us separation of these terms. So what do you feel about it? This kind of separation?**

A: I mean, it's interesting. It's interesting, isn't it? Because IOM is actually one of the organizations that's done the most to advance this discussion. You know. So, but yeah,

you can see how big organizations can have to say different things in different contexts. And I think that's what you can see there. So for example, like IOM has a huge team working on the connections between climate change and migration, probably bigger than any other organization on the planet.

**F: Even bigger than the High Commissioner for Refugees?**

A: Yes, so if we're talking specifically working on the connections between climate change and human mobility, IOM. of a bigger team than UNHCR. They do. So, like, UNHCR were really late to the party. They really were. Okay, okay. I don't know if you know, oh, I've totally forgotten his name. He's like the special, like, UNHCR's special advisor on climate change.

**F: I'm not seeing the name. It doesn't come to my mind, no.**

A: But he's got, there's him and there's a couple of people. Right? IOM have a whole division called MEC, which you may be familiar with, MECC, Migration Environment Climate Change, it's a big research unit. And you know that, so IOM I think have done a lot to... aid the understanding of how climate change is connected to mobility. And they've always taken an approach of this complicated, there's no simple causal pathway. Lots of it's going to be internal. There are always other factors involved. There are legal protection gaps. There's an open question about how we solve them. So, like, on one level, IOM... it's possible to have a very subtle, very nuanced conversation with them about it. But I can also see how when their, you know, their top person or their like, you know, needs to speak to the media, they've also got to remember that all of their salaries are paid by every single country in the world, right? And they don't want to annoy anyone. So I think you can have these parallel conversations. One where you're having people doing research, having quite a nuanced conversation, presenting things which are politically often very... Like, could be controversial. if they were like a policy recommendation, but they never are. They're saying like, this is the situation, these are the dynamics that play, this is what's likely to unfold. We're providing you states with information about a situation that might be, your country might be facing. These are the existing international laws that govern it. We feel like maybe there are gaps in these. Like none of that is political, right? Well, obviously it is political, but you can... It's not

necessarily politically controversial, because you're simply saying to a country who is also a donor to IOM... Yes, it's just stating reality. This is the reality, we're helping, you know, we're all trying to understand the reality, and we're all trying to understand what's going to happen in the future. But when it's like the chief guy, it's a different story.

**F: Yes and when he was asked about solutions... He just talked about national solutions, like countries have to change their immigration policy. But what kind of policies?**

A: Yes, exactly. I'm sure you've found this a lot yourself as well. And this doesn't apply to IOM, by the way. actually, this applies like right across the board, governments, international agencies, think tanks, everyone. There were some phrases in this space that just have so many multiple meanings that we steer clear from using them. And one of them is migration management, right? Because to, you can say it and it means something quite humane. You can say, People are fleeing disasters. They're evacuating themselves using their own vehicles or walking. It's total chaos. They're crossing a border irregularly. And then they're settling in a camp, which is unprovided for, has poor infrastructure. Wouldn't it be better if this situation was managed? If they were evacuated by an agency, they were helped to move, they were helped across the border, if they needed to, their movement across the border was regularized, they were given an emergency visa, they were accommodated in proper accommodation. Of course that's better. In a perfect world. And you can say that is migration management in the context of a climate-driven disaster. But you can also say... if you believe something else, that migration management is stopping people across the border. You can say we've got to manage this flow of people. And I think that's why some of these phrases are so tempting, especially to any organization that wants to try and like... The recruit wants to try and appeal to lots of different governments, that like sending governments, receiving countries, global north, global south, you can say migration management, because everyone wants to manage it, don't they? Yes, of course. No one wants it to be unmanaged, but the question is like managed by who? By who and how? And managed, you know, like management always means... you know, in someone's interests, right? Like a company is managed like in the interests of its shareholders, right? So when we talk about like migration management, like in whose interests is, is this being, is this management being done? Yeah. And I think provided that you'd ever answer that question, everyone can just agree with you. It's true.

**F: Yes, absolutely. That's very interesting. But it's so like, how is that like? Such a big problem, because we are talking about millions and millions of people, can be talked in such a widely way. I don't understand. But from your point of view, this is a crucial question. What do you think about the change or the adaption of the convention?**

A: Of the Refugee Convention?

**F: Yes.**

A: Generally, I think it's probably not the best way to move forward. And for a number of reasons, I think there's the possibility that by opening up the Refugee Convention, we may weaken it. You know, so like at the moment it does our job of protecting a group of people who are fleeing certain things. There is always the risk that if we put it back on the negotiating table and said we'd like to amend or add or change that potentially two things could happen. One is that, you know. government could take the opportunity to change something else as well. Yeah. If we're putting this on the table, we'd also like to put this on the table. Or there's a sort of longer term risk, which is that at the moment, lots of States are only just complying with their obligations under the Refugee Convention. Yeah. If they... Doing the bare minimum. They're doing the bare minimum. Yeah. And if they... see it as becoming a greater responsibility, they then have even more ammunition to do even less. They can say, well, look, we were complying with our legal international legal requirements, but look, now they've added this category to it. that it's not reasonable, we're not going to place in more restrictions, we're not going to comply completely anymore, or we're going to do, I don't know, it would potentially open up the door to various kinds of non-compliance, I think. So there are those sort of geopolitical reasons why I think there are risks to it. The other one, and I mean... if you speak to some people who are lawyers as well, they'll have a better handle on this as well, but I think the refugee convention is based around the idea of persecution. And you end up in a kind of political...

**F: Yes, because the definition of persecution is a target of various interpretations.**

A: Exactly, yes. it's also the case that someone has to be doing the persecuting, right? There's an active persecutor, whether it's government or military force or another group of people, criminal group, there is someone identifiable who is attempting that persecution, whether it's imprisonment, murder, torture, whatever. And in the case of climate change, like who is the persecutor? And you could it's the countries of the global north who have emitted the carbon dioxide that's causing these disasters. But then that doesn't quite work because then people would be fleeing probably to the south. It's like, well, yeah, it just, legally it's very difficult to see how you could an existing legal structure which is built around the idea of persecution by a responsible individual, government or group. And yes, you could create a kind of convoluted legal argument, you could do that, that sort of explained how climate change is a form of persecution but then I think at that point it stops being the refugee convention doesn't it? it's just like something completely different so yeah I don't tend to see the adaptation of the refugee convention.

**F: That's so interesting because when I started this research I was a strongly believable that we must change the definition. Now I'm not so certain of that.**

A: I think there's also a question to ask about how many people might help. And if we say that the political and legislative priorities should be somehow based around trying to. create the biggest impact, right? Help the most people or help the people who are in the most desperate situation. I think there are potentially bigger, there were bigger issues before we would get to the Refugee Convention. So for example, like a huge amount of the mobility happens internally. Right, so like lots of internal displacement, people who move within their own country as a result of like floods, storms, all the rest of it. Like the refugee convention is irrelevant to them. But it's also the case that while they're displaced, their welfare is not necessarily very well. looked after, there are potentially human rights violations that they suffer while they are displaced. If we think about internal migration, you know, people moving from rural areas into the country, into cities to find work, there are potential rights violations there, exploitation, all kinds of other things, risks that they are exposed to in their new setting. Again, the Refugee Convention isn't relevant in those cases either. So I think there are probably legal questions around the rights of people on the move because of climate change that we would want to address first because they affect more people. And then I think when it is

the case that people are crossing, when people do cross borders, I think you can ask yourself whether we would need necessarily a global binding agreement on that. And I get that might be ideal. If every single country on the planet signed up and said, yes, if someone crosses our border as a result of this kind of disaster. We know it's not the case. If that was realistic, then I would say, yes, we should have it. But I think... The crisis is already upon us and we don't have it. So the question is, what can we do fairly immediately that would help? And I think it is probably faster for countries to reach bilateral agreements. So you could say, it's likely that people are going to flee from country A to country B as a result of disasters. Like, how are those two countries going to agree? You know, and what are they going to do to protect each other's citizens? What kind of rights protection are they going to afford them while they're in their country? What kind of, you know, what options for regularizing their movement do they have? Yep. And if you ask 192 countries to try and agree that, we'll be there for a very long time. But if you ask two countries... to agree that maybe, maybe if they already have existing good relations, diplomatic relations, you could potentially reach a bilateral agreement quite quickly, especially if you were able to say look, here are another... Here are several existing international agreements that you already signaled to, right? Various human rights commitments that you've made. you know, what would it mean to simply implement these existing human rights protections for citizens of your neighbor if they flee across your border as a result of climate change? Right, now that feels like something more realistic. I don't know if you know more about diplomacy than I do, right?

**F: No, no, I don't think so. Yeah, but we were talking about the possible solutions and I think that what you were saying, there is kind of a problem that is like most of the host countries nowadays are developing countries. And so, there isn't a lot of work in the side of developed countries and I don't know if they are open to it.**

A: Yeah, I think that's a good question.

**F: And to do bilateral relations with countries that there is no specific interest in them to have an agreement.**

A: Yeah, absolutely. I think you can definitely see an issue there like for example, you know, you can't I don't know whether the US would be particularly motivated to reach a new bilateral agreement with Mexico that allowed people to flee across the southern border. Right? Especially given the kind of context in the US. So yeah, I don't think the bilateral agreements are the whole answer. But I think... it's a kind of pragmatic solution, which I think will probably achieve more than trying to renegotiate the refugee convention or trying to kind of create one new global framework.

**F: So yeah, I don't want to bother you much more in your time, but a final question for you and maybe a difficult one, not difficult, but it's how do you see the future of migration and refugees? How do you see it? It's very a reflection, but go ahead.**

A: Yeah, I honestly, um... I really, I really don't know. Um... I- I don't know whether to be an optimist or a pessimist, I really don't. I think you can see so many things that make you feel pessimistic. Yeah. Like you really can. Like the things you, you know, some of the attitudes you mentioned in Portugal, obviously I'm sure you're aware we've raised similar kind of attitudes that are quite deeply entrenched in the UK. And so those things tend to make me feel pessimistic. And on climate change as well, there are things, you know. can see the impacts, you can see the government's sort of not really legislating in proportion to the risks. So again, reasons for pessimism there, but then also there are reasons for optimism as well, like a lot of the organizations that we work with, like, do... do really amazing things with, you know, like, for one example in the UK, one of our partner organizations is City of Sanctuary and I think what, you know, their way of working is they ask people in the UK to kind of run sort of refugee welcoming projects, you know, sort of activities, clubs, events, host the refugees in their homes. And you know, so it feels like, yeah, on the one hand, you've got these really toxic attitudes. And there is also countries that give us some hope, like Finland or Sweden, that is developing projects on climate change for the governments.

**F: Yes, exactly.**

A: I think there's always reasons for optimism that you can find. Then there's also reasons for pessimism that you can find as well. And I think, like, realistically, Many of

the trends are going in the wrong direction. Yeah, I think You know more people are being More people are being displaced the impacts of climate change are accelerating government action on climate change and keep pace with the promises There seems to be a trend in refugee and migrant policy set and in the global north of closing borders, of investing in border militarization and border policing. So at the state level, yeah, I don't feel particularly optimistic. That's my honest answer.

**F: That's unfortunate to hear, but it's the reality.**

A: But... But you have to come to that with like, you know, we have also seen really powerful social movements change government action. You know. I think, like, you know, you're looking in Europe, especially on climate change, like, I think the youth climate protests really changed the debate. They changed the debate. I really think they did. Or at least brought the debate to the table. Yeah, exactly. So like you can, you can see how sort of like mass civic participation um, can, you know, can change things. So. I don't feel totally pessimistic that we're just on this one pathway and it's totally inevitable and there's nothing that can be done.

**F: Even in terms of the environment?**

A: I think we have to be realistic, we have to be honest about the situation, but I don't think that means that we necessarily have to be pessimistic about the change that activism could bring about. That's my... Yeah.

**F: Okay, that's a fair answer, absolutely. It was such a pleasure to talk with you. It was really enlightening and to see other perspectives of the... Because that's what I'm here for, to see other perspectives and what's really needed. But I will continue to follow your work closely and from my end, if you ever need something from a beginner in this field, just let me know. And thank you so much and all the best for you. Thank you so much.**

A: All right, see you soon.

**F: See you soon.**

## **Attachment VIII**

### **Exploratory Interview with Eeva-Kaisa Prokkola**

**Interviewer:** Filipa Saraiva (F)

**Interviewee:** Eeva-Kaisa Prokkola (E)

#### **Description:**

Eeva-Kaisa Prokkola is a professor in human geography, specializing in regional development and regional policy. Her research and teaching interest include political geography, regional and border region research, political borders, security and securitization, regional resilience and the politics of mobilities (labor mobility, migration, tourism). She has published widely in leading international human geography and interdisciplinary social science journals such as *Political Geography*, *Antipode*, *Environment and Planning*, *Social and Cultural Geography*, *Citizenship Studies*, *ACME*, *Tourism Geographies*, and *European Urban and Regional Studies*.

#### **Transcription:**

**F: Okay, it's already recording. Yes. So, can you please talk a little bit about yourself, personal journey, education, career path?**

E: Yes, so I'm a professor of human geography here at the University of Oulu and I actually studied my with the topic of border research and especially European border reasons and their transformation. But in my postdoc research project I started to focus more on migration and the question of migration and especially the securitization of migrants and borders. was at that time an emerging topic in also in geography and in border studies the focus started to move more and more towards the question of migration and so I did my postdoctoral project on European border management and migration management But although I'm a geographer, at that time I did not pay so much attention to environmental questions and how migrants are forced to move because of environmental change. But we had more focus on different factors of displacement. conflict and war. But then, as you probably, how you probably found me was this government report where I had a big main role. It was, the project was taken care by the University of Oulu and the Migration Research Institute here in Finland. We had a consortium of people from different disciplines and we were trying to respond to this call

for in the first place to provide... information to decision makers in Finland about the phenomena of climate migration and then some suggestions about the possible ways to somehow manage this migration so that it's the human here writing this report on environmental migration or climate migration.

**F: As you may know, Finland is an outstanding example on how to deal with this type of social group and in various aspects of the social human rights, I think. I'm very close to Finland due to personal reasons. So I was brought to my perspective how Finland is a lead example in Europe when we talk about social rights, including the environment. So how do you see the Finland perspective on this issue in a broader way?**

E: Do you mean in Finland or in Europe?

**F: In Finland, how do you see the aspect of the environment and the people of being forced to move due to the environment? How Finland manage these type of things?**

E: Yes. In... From the policy perspective and from the governmental perspective, Finland is of course part of the European Union. And it is not in Finland, perhaps not. Finland is perhaps not aiming to take a leading position in this field. Finland is geographically a little bit differently positioned in terms of migration. And most... migrants in Finland, of course, they arrive through Europe or through Russia. And the climate migration or environmental migration, which is of course very difficult to separate from other types of migration as you perhaps have done your background work, it's not easy to say who is... migrant because of environmental questions or because of climate change, because it is so complex phenomena. But yes, in Finland... It is not an easy topic, I would say, because Finland has a shorter history with migrants. A lot of this kind of racial nationalism has been very common in Finland, and Finland has just in the past... 20 years started to receive more migrants from different countries. Of course, Finnish people have moved to other countries, like Sweden and North America, but as a country, Finland has not received as many migrants as, for example, Sweden or Germany. And in this way, the attitudes towards migrants are... perhaps sometimes not so welcoming, and the same concerns, climate migrants. And in our research project we

found that our decision makers and people who work in the ministries, we had very regular contact with them. It was a difficult question for them. They were not... thinking so much about the security of climate migrants in, for example, arriving from African countries or from Asia, but the perspective was more like what could we do so that the migrants would not come here and they emphasize of course this adaptation in place in situ. And there, of course, our report was... We had many ministries, but the Foreign Affairs Ministry was one of the leading ministries in that work. And there, of course, they were interested in development work and what could be done in those countries that are suffering from... environmental hazards and where people are forced to move because of environmental change. But it was really difficult to get discussion about the Finnish context, that what if Finland could take more migrants who have to flee because of environmental change. But there was not very much willingness to create bad, new bads to migrate. Okay, I don't know if I was responding to your question.

**F: Yes, of course. But for you, what this means? What is the definition of environmental refugees? Because you were speaking about the difficult to distinguish the climate migration migrants for the other migrants. For you, do you recognize this social group? What this means for you?**

E: I think it means different things in different places. If we think on a global scale, we have these populations who live in the Pacific Ocean like Kiribati, that was one case in our report, where it's very easy to see the connection between climate change and displacement because simply they are losing their territory. But then on the other hand, we have countries where we see there will be more growth and no rain, and people just lose their pastures and their living, and then they move to the bigger cities perhaps, and then from there they move to cross borders. But yes, of course, I have to specify that... In our research group, we had some scholars who were studying internal migration within the countries, for example in Bangladesh, but I have my background in border studies, so I was more focusing on international migration across the borders. And so I'm speaking from that perspective, because this is more difficult to cope. In Finland, we are not so worried about internal migration, because Finland is not... the most vulnerable country. So Finland and Finnish decision makers were more concerned about international mobility to Finland. But what it means to me, yes, it is so diverse phenomena and in different places the root causes are very different.

**F: And... how you make a connection between environmental change and displacement?**

E: It's easier to show, to provide evidence in Kiribati than it is, for example, in Syria, because the causalities and factors and the processes are a little bit different.

**F: And when we speak about refugees, we are directly pointed out to the Convention of the United Nations. But in your opinion, do you think that the status, the current status of refugees in force is fully adopted? to the real times.**

E: Yes, I think that's, I'm not a legal scholar, so I'm actually in our research project, we had one from that side and Jaana Palander, she was writing that part. But I have understood from her research that it is actually one of the problems that in this refugee convention, you don't have... climate change or environmental change as a criteria for asylum or refuginess. And it is a politically sensitive question of course to include that. So I have understood that this is one of the problems.

**F: Why?**

E: Because it's not defined So there are no mechanisms to cover and to help.

**F: It will be interesting to apply the climate factor in the status. in Finland or in the UN context, United Nations context, European context? In the global context?**

E: Yes. At some point, perhaps, but I'm not seeing that it will happen in the next few years. We have seen different initiatives, for example, Nansen initiative, where States have started to pay more attention to this question. I can't see that it would happen very soon, but I hope it will. Okay.

**F: Yeah, but it's very interesting because some people say that, including the factor of climate, it will only not be beneficial to the refugees because it will bring other implications and other process. And it's interesting to see different points of view, of course, because when I started this study, I was very inclined to say that no,**

**yeah, we need to adapt the status. But now I think most and I think more about that. And I'm not sure. But It's interesting because even the Director General for the International Organization for Migration, in a recent interview given to a Portuguese journal, stated that there are two types of displaced persons. The first recognized internationally as a result of persecution, and the second those displaced due to natural accidents. What do you understand by this?**

E: Could you repeat these two different?

**F: Yes, of course. So, Antonio Vitorino said that there are two types of displaced persons. The first recognized international as a result of persecution, and the second is those displaced due to natural accidents and climate change.**

E: Okay, I'm not familiar with this discussion or that... Actually, I'm not so familiar with this idea that we have these two types of refugees. I think in our report when we were trying to find some ways how to create channels to migrants, like safe channels to people who are displaced and who have become refugees, we were also thinking about the migration, not only the refugee status, but also migration that you could come to Finland to study and work or because of family reason. But I don't think that in our report we had this two types. So I'm sorry, I'm not familiar with these discussions.

**F: Yeah, no, sorry, it's okay. Do you think that the solution to address climate migration must start nationally or a more regional site, like nationally or internationally in the United Nations, in the European Union? What do you think?**

E: The solutions, yes, of course, I think that international solutions are needed. And I hope the European Union will take action and will show leadership. But of course, the European Union is not the one voice, but different countries have very different opinions. And even at the European level, It is difficult to... The migration and asylum are very difficult political questions in the European Union. then some States will have different procedures and practices already within Europe. But I think the global solutions are needed and a lot of solidarity. Yes, that's how I think. Yes. But it's needed. Yes, of course.

**F: And how do you think we should look at the relation between environments and migration?**

E: Yes. I guess I'm not sure if there is one reason, or one solution, or one way to look at that. But of course, if we think about global justice and climate justice, what I think is that the western rich countries who are more capable of adapting and mitigating the climate change should not take care of their own problems, so to say, only, but because of this carbon footprint and the history of carbon footprint, I think there should be more solidarity and this kind of global justice perspective should be adopted. But to be honest, At the moment we have such a pollute crisis going on with energy, with climate change, with war in Europe and in many countries. It's really a difficult time to solve this because there are so many this kind of urgent crisis going on and this slow crisis of climate and environmental change is not taking as urgent matter at the moment.

**F: But do you think there is a connection between the environment, these issues of the environment and the security?**

E: Yes. Who's security? Do you mean a migrant security? The security of people?

**F: I'm just thinking about if the environment can be an input to create some kind of war, some kind of conflict.**

E: Yes, I know that there is some literature that is making connections and of course in many areas if you don't have food, if you don't have a strong state that is creating, kind of if you don't have a functional functionality in your society and strong institutions, then it is one trigger more. But I'm very, because I have been writing a lot about migration security session, how it is problematic to speak about migration as a security problem. And I'm very careful of making these connections because I don't want to see that humans are kind of... that it is the human nature to be violent and to respond with conflict. I think we must have different examples of peaceful ways of solving problems together, adapting to these problems. So I want to be careful not to make this connection, but I know that many researchers, they show these connections and they want to... emphasize. But for example in the case of Syria, I don't think that we can speak that the war is a result of environmental change. It was a result of a dictator who was making

attacking towards his own citizens. So I would not make connections in that way. I see, I think that humans have always have to take responsibility of their own violence. actions and not to blame environment for this kind of behavior. Yeah. Here I'm quite strict.

**F: Yeah, of course, of course. And I think the environment is always a tough topic to speak in political way, because no one wants to take the blame on the environment. So it's like no one's to be the guilty one for the reality that we are living in because of the environment. And it's very difficult to address a guilty country because everyone has their own part of this in this problem, I think. But personally, how do you see the future of migrations? the future of climate migration and refugees.**

E: Well, of course, it is expected that more and more people have to move because of environmental change, rising sea levels and drought and all. causal reasons that come because of that. There is no opportunities to live. So at least within States, there will be more displacements, and probably at the global scale too. But on the other hand, of course, border policies and for example European Union is kind of patrolling its borders and It is not very easy to find solutions. So at least within States it will increase and in many regions also across the borders. But I don't know about these scenarios about between global north and global south that is kind of this kind of threat scenarios of millions of tens of millions of people from the south coming to north. Here our research report, we were trying to emphasize that most vulnerable people, for example in some African regions, they don't have resources to move because it is expensive and yes, hard topic.

**F: Thank you so much and do you like to say something in conclusion? to add something to clarity that you think it's important for me to know.**

E: Well, it's just that it is an important topic and good luck with your thesis and I hope that you will succeed.

**F: I wish you all the best Eva, and thank you so much again for the time to speak with me. It was really rewarding from my point of view, and your insights will be a really added value, I believe. So if you need something from my end. please feel free to ask and thank you again.**

E: Good luck and good work.

## **Attachment IX**

### **Exploratory Interview with Kees van der Geest**

**Interviewer:** Filipa Saraiva (F)

**Interviewee:** Kees van der Geest (K)

#### **Description:**

Kees van der Geest (PhD) is a human geographer who studies the impacts of climate change, human mobility, environmental change, adaptation, livelihood resilience and rural development. Key features of his work are the people-centered perspective and the mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative research tools. His work has contributed substantially to expanding the empirical evidence base on migration-environment linkages and impacts of climate change beyond adaptation (“loss and damage”).

Kees has extensive fieldwork experience, mostly in Ghana (5 years), but also in Burkina Faso, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Nepal, Marshall Islands and Bolivia. He coordinated research in many other countries across the Global South. Since 2012 he has been working as senior researcher at United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security in Bonn (UNU-EHS). In September 2019 he became Head of Section, leading the newly established ‘Migration and Environment’ Section.

Between 2014 and 2017 Kees co-organized the annual Resilience Academy, which is a network of approximately 100 young professionals working on resilience, loss and damage, and human mobility in the context of global environmental change. From 2016 to 2018 he has been on a part-time secondment to the University of Hawaii, where he was involved in a research project about migration and environment linkages in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Kees studied at the University of Amsterdam (human geography) and a semester at the University of Sussex (migration studies). His Master’s thesis and PhD thesis were published as monographs by the African Studies Centre. Several chapters of his PhD thesis about migration-environment linkages in Ghana have been published in international journals, like *International Migration*, *Africa, Environment and Urbanization* and *Forced Migration Review*. Two articles from his PhD are in the top-50 of most influential articles on the relation between migration and the environment according to ISI web of knowledge.

From 2006 to 2012 Kees worked as a lecturer and researcher at the University of Amsterdam. He taught courses on environment and international development and his research covered the fields of migration, environment and rural development. In this period, he also worked as independent research consultant. Among his clients have been the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam, CARE International, DFID Ghana and the Foresight program of the UK Office for Science.

Kees has also been active as documentary film maker. His first, award-winning, documentary was screened at over twenty international film festivals worldwide. His second documentary received a nomination for the Holland-doc Jury Award of the Dutch Film Festival, and has been watched more than three million times online.

**Transcription:**

**F: Okay, so let's start. Can you please talk a little bit about yourself, your personal journey, education, career path?**

K: Yeah, I'm a geographer. I studied at the University of Amsterdam and for the Masters and PhD I both spend. in total five years in northern Ghana and Africa, where I studied first, you know, how people adapted their livelihoods to, you know, different changes in the climate. That was for the master and then in the PhD, I found out earlier that migration played quite an important role in people's adaptations to climate change or climate stressors. And so I decided to focus the PhD on that team specifically. And so when I after I defended the thesis, I got in touch with UNU when they asked me to do a case study for them in Vietnam. As a consultant. And then afterwards I stayed. And that's like 10 years ago. And doing research on the topic of the relation between environmental change, climate change, and human mobility. And then another topic that has quite some prominence in my work is the topic of loss and damage, which is about impacts of climate change that are kind of beyond adaptation. And since three years, I'm the head of the group that looks at these themes. Yeah, I read about it and it sounds really, really interesting and very useful for my thesis. Throughout the years you might have talked about environmental refugees, that is what I'm focusing now on the conceptualization of this concept.

**F: So for you, what that means, environmental refugees?**

K: Yeah, we personally, or I personally don't use that term at all. And yeah, there are a number of reasons for that. But I mean, please feel free to say what are the reasons because I'm really interested in that point. Yeah. So people do use that term, I think often do that with the best intention to draw attention to the fact that there will be people, and there are already people who have to leave their homes because of impacts of climate change that often they have had no, not much you know, influence on causing that like it's the problems are caused somewhere else, the rich countries and people will be forced to move. And so using the term climate refugees is a way that people may be used to draw attention to the phenomenon with, again, probably good intentions. But the thing is that when other people like normal non researchers, non-climate activists hear the term refugees and when politicians, policymakers heard the term refugees, the reaction is not like, hey, what can we do to avoid dangerous climate change? The reaction is like, oh shit, millions of people are coming our way, we have to close our borders. Yeah. So, what we, there are other reasons too, which are more on the legal side. But and more academic, we have years of research, we have found out that, you know, most of the displacements that do take place partly because of climatic factors happen within borders. So it's actually rather more exceptional that people move outside of their own country and making them and that's, you know, in international law, that's like a distinction, right? You have internally displaced people and you have refugees, where refugees cross international borders and internally displaced people move within their own country, which is more common in the case of climate stressors. I'm looking for like an interpretation of the convention, and I'm trying to analyze if there is some need to adapt the Convention.

**F: And from your point of view, what do you think about it? Do you think that it will scare the international system to close borders, as you were saying? Or do you think that it's not necessary because climate is already induced in other causes of persecution?**

K: You know, the problem is that... If you, as maybe a lawyer, you want to support somebody who has left this or her country to move to another country, and you want to support this person to get an official environmental or climate refugee status, you have to prove that this person has moved because of climate change. And... and 10, 20 years of

research on this theme has shown that it's always a quite complex interplay of different factors that cause people to migrate. So countries who would not be very willing to accept climate refugees will win any international court case on this. So if and lawyers or NGOs or, or refugees themselves would go to the courts and say, look, hey, I have asked to sign them as a refugee in this country. But the person did this, the country is not accepting me. And I'm gonna, you know, go to court and they're always gonna lose, maybe not 100% of the time, but probably 99% of the time, because from a legal point of view, it's really hard to prove that people have migrated primarily for, or that there aren't other reasons to. So it's much better to put the efforts in you know, support for internal, like better frameworks for protecting people against the harmful impacts of displacement, rather than going the legal way, I think.

**F: Okay. So, for you, can you give an example of what he's like? most likely solution to countries to adopt to help with these type of people.**

K: Yeah, you can split it out in different things. Like one is on the more simple like adaptation, like avoiding that people have to move for those reasons. So that has to do with adaptation and disaster risk management, which is already being done, but it needs to be done much better. there should be more commitment from international community and donors to support disaster risk management and adaptation. And then when people are displaced, it's important to make sure that they have safe places to go to and places that they have the right, you know, the ability to return after the major threats are over. And in the case of slow onset events, which would be more permanent, and to put programs in place to support people to build up a new life and livelihoods and preferably if they want as a community and not separating out communities for example. But for me, the main thing and that's maybe a bit fake, but whether you talk about resettlement, migration or displacement, which are like different types of human mobility, right? A kind of umbrella aim or objective, I think, is to increase people's ability to have control over where they want to be. know. So there are people who don't want to move. So it has to be whatever can be done to enable people to stay is also migration policy. So you think of migration policy as borders and you know, visa and seasonal work programs and and all that, but also helping people to stay is also migration policy, mobility policy. So a lot can be done.

**F: So in your perspective, how do you look at the relationship between environment and migration?**

K: I mean, yeah, that's kind of a broad question. Maybe you want to specify that a bit?

**F: Yeah, for example, do you think like there is any sustained development at this moment between security and the environment in this perspective? Like, can we build connections? Can we build concepts? How can we address the climate migration in this world of migrations policies?**

K: Yeah. And so, yeah, I mean, some of the examples I just gave are kind of in response to that question. I don't know, I can pick something from your question and try to say a few things about it. But I mean, for example, you talk about environment on one end and climate on the other. And so in our work, you know, we see climate and environment as kind of similar factors in terms of how they relate to human mobility. And where, you know, a lot of the environmental problems that people face around the world have a kind of a climate component, right? So when there's drought, it's droughts are climatic phenomenon, but then they have environmental repercussions, right? So when there's no rain, for a prolonged period of time, then the soil is dry and plants don't grow well, ecosystems suffer. So, I mean, for me, that environment and climate, they're definitely not the same, but like climate is an important component of environment. And it's interesting to see that when I started my work in this field in, say, in 2002, we looked at the environment and also the research group that I'm now heading is called environmental change and migration. But more and more the focus is on climate. And that's maybe also just because a lot of the environmental issues that have been causing population are climate related, but it's also just really there's more attention for climate change than for let's say land degradation or other environmental issues.

**F: But your work has been developing focus on the empirical evidence based on migration and environment linkage, right? And what kind of linkage do you see in this relation.**

K: Yeah, I can write a whole book about it. I can say. But you can you can say, okay, well, sometimes people move as a response to environmental problems. So let's say, there's drought, your harvest fails, there's not enough food to feed the family. One or two household members migrates to another area where there's work, work there for six months and come back. So there's a relation between environment and mobility there. But in the same village, there can be somebody who was planning next year, let's say to migrate to Spain or Portugal. And the same drought actually made it impossible for this person to go because the harvest failed. They can't sell the produce. They don't have money to pay the smugglers to cross over to North Africa and see if they can get a boat or like how to call it. So what I'm trying to say is that just with these two examples in the same village the same drought can cause in one a family, a migration that would not have taken place without that drought. And in another family in the same village, it can prevent a migration from actually happening. So there's all these ways, the environment and your mobility interact with each other. And coming back to the theme of climate refugees, the complexity of the relation between environmental change or climate change and human mobility is so complex. And that a term like climate refugees, you know, kind of denies the complexity of the reality. And I know that sometimes there are good reasons to reduce the complexity in terms of how to communicate with the media. So you see that the term climate refugees is popular among journalists who want to sell their stories. So if they say millions of climate refugees. Because if you say instead of climate refugee or environmental refugee, you say environment or partly environmentally induced migration. And now nobody's going to settle what's what is this. So, but also NGOs who, you know, need to raise money for their campaigns. So they like to adapt term. And I'm not saying that to kind of blame them for, you know, going after money. I completely understand. But it doesn't do any good to people who are affected by climate change. But it's interesting because sometimes the media and the States like to use that term. But when we speak about someone... has to take the blame on climate change, environmental change, no one wants to take the blame. And they speak, oh no, that does not exist. So it's very ambiguous, the question. And I'm a little bit lost. I'm still a little bit lost in this field because there is so much to analyze countries say one thing and but their actions are not what they are saying. So, yeah, yeah. You also see, I mean, I think you're, you're doing political science, right?

**F: Yes.**

K: I think in political science, there, there are more scientists who do not have such a problem with the term environmental refugees. sociology, it's different because and especially anthropologists, they, they do this kind of research from really people centered perspective. So they talk with people and, and are more capable of writing also in the interest of people. Whereas political science, and I'm not a political scientist, so correct me if I'm wrong. But they like to take a little bit more distance from.

**F: Yeah, absolutely. And I can see that different because my bachelor was in sociology, there is like more in the field, more like observe the reality that involves and political science is more abstract in that terms. So yeah, I understand that. to come to an end. I don't want to take your time too much, but how do you see the future of addressing climate change migration?**

K: Well, I think it's interesting to see what will happen with the global compact on migration. I'm not sure whether you have the chance to study that document and look a bit more closely at the different parts of the text that do speak about climate change and environmental degradation. It was... it wasn't so sure from the start that the compact would have any text on this. And in the end it did. So it's interesting to see what happened there. there have been sometimes very original ideas. My former director at EHS, UNU-EHS, launched this idea of a climate passport for specific region in the Pacific. So his simple idea was like, look, the Pacific, the islands in the Pacific, they're really at the forefront of climate change. their populations are really very small. I've done research on the Marshall Islands, and the number of people work, it's a country, it's an independent state. But it has around 50,000 people. That's nothing like it's like a small, inshore town in the West. So it's a lot of people. It's a lot of different small items with very little, small amounts of people. So his idea was to let the countries around the Pacific, like New Zealand, Australia, Chile, and United States, Canada, say, look, we create a climate passport. So anybody who has a passport from those countries. Whenever they want, they can just come. They don't have to show that they come for climate reasons. To avoid the whole legal thing and to emphasize that it's great if people really have a choice when they wanna go, when they wanna stay. Because if you're a refugee, once you have or if you decide to leave your country without such a document that is like regionally valid in a number of countries. People don't want to go back to their own country either because like oh I've

put so much effort in moving let's say to the US or to New Zealand and maybe they're not happy there they're unemployed they're getting addicted to whatever and they miss home, but they don't want to go home because they know that when they go home, it will be super difficult to go somewhere else again. So, but if you have a passport, a climate passport like that, and let people decide really where they want to be at any particular time, the benefits of migration are much greater too, because people will go not to the country that happens to accept them, they will go to the country where they think they're going to have the best life. And when do people have a good life? You know, also when they can contribute to their host societies. That's something that we often forget that migrants, you know, they, they want to accomplish something in life. And you can accomplish something if the country where you go to, I mean, that's like I wanted to end like on a positive note there. I could I could say a whole different story of like maybe a world in the future, because we don't know where it's going. A world with militarized borders and everything that it's only getting worse could also be. Yeah, of course. But that idea of the passport is very interesting. It's almost like have the benefits of a diplomat passport. But yeah, for a specific number of countries just to make it not too complex in actually achieving it. Yeah.

**F: Oh, that's very interesting. Okay. Thank you so much, Dr. Kees. I appreciate very much your time. It was an absolute pleasure. I wouldn't catch in your time anymore. So Thank you so much.**

K: All right. Bye bye. Good luck with your business. Thank you.