



WEBSTER UNIVERSITY, GENEVA CAMPUS

THE NEXUS BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Geneva, 22 July 2024

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1. **Human Trafficking**: Definitions & Figures

2. Human Trafficking & **Climate Change**

- **The Climate Change & Human Trafficking Nexus**

- **Legal Protection**: HR, Labor, IHL,
No IDP Protection (except AU Kampala Convention),
No "Climate Refugees" (but "Nansen Initiative" & HRC Special Rapport)
34th International Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent
 - Comprehensive Disaster Laws, Policies and Plans
 - Empowering Local Leadership
 - Strengthen anticipatory action

- **Bilateral**: Australia & Nauru Memorandum of Understanding

- **Emergency** Humanitarian Relief Operations
(including in Switzerland...)

- **Prevention**:
Preparedness must include the prevention of human trafficking.
Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction:
from Sendai (2015) to Geneva (GPDRR2025, June 2-6)





Power of humanity

34th International Conference
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

28–31 October 2024, Geneva

**Protecting people from the
humanitarian impacts of extreme
climate and weather events:
Working together to strengthen
anticipatory action**

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

April 2024

EN

IC34/24/XX



Power of humanity

34th International Conference
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
28–31 October 2024, Geneva

Concept Note

34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

NAVIGATE UNCERTAINTY – STRENGTHEN HUMANITY
GENEVA · 28–31 OCTOBER 2024



[LINK](#)

**The International Conference is one of
the world's oldest, largest international
forums**

1. INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

- ➔ A contemporary form of slavery
- ➔ **Invisible** (on purpose or not)
- ➔ **Everywhere in the world**
- ➔ **Even in Switzerland**

**Human trafficking is a scourge,
a monstrous plague that continues to
evolve and grow**

**There have never been as many slaves
in history as there are today.**

The scourge is further exacerbated
by:

- The consequences COVID-19 **pandemic** (isolation and increased use of the Internet)
- **Armed conflicts**, situations of violence, and economic and political instability
- **Climate change (increasing conflict, poverty, vulnerability)**
- **Waves of migration** (national, regional, international)
- Increased difficulties in protecting vulnerable people and victims
- Excessive **impunity** for traffickers (criminal and civil): 1 in 2,150 ...
- Misuse of **technology** (by traffickers and victims)
- **Lack of limits to the economic exploitation of vulnerable people**

2. DEFINITIONS

Trafficking in human beings:

It is characterized by the **exploitation** of a human being, **combined with coercion or deception**.

This constraint can take the form of physical or psychological violence

The different forms of human trafficking:

Forced labour	Women, men, children, in industry, agriculture, construction, fishing, domestic work and so on.
Sexual exploitation	Forced prostitution, forced marriage, forced motherhood
Child recruitment	Recruitment of child soldiers
Purchase and theft of children	For adoption, abuse, sale, organs
Child Pornography	Mainly on Internet
Organ harvesting and trafficking	For transplantation
Forced Crime	Begging, theft, drug trafficking, terrorism

According to ILO, of those **50 million** victims:

27.6 million

people are in forced labour.

2022 Global Estimates

US\$ 236 billion

generated in illegal profits every year.

Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour (2024)

3.9 million

of them are in State-imposed form of forced labour.

2022 Global Estimates

39.4%

of them are women and girls (4.9 million in forced commercial sexual exploitation, and 6 million in other economic sectors).

2022 Global Estimates

12%

of them are children (3.3 million). More than half of these children are in commercial sexual exploitation.

2022 Global Estimates

3 times more

risk of forced labour for migrant workers.

2022 Global Estimates

The need to **USE ALL LEGAL APPROACHES** to prevent and combat human trafficking

- **Specific legal instruments against trafficking** (since 2000)
- **Human Rights** (1948)
- **International Humanitarian Law** (1949)
- **International Labor Law** (ILO)
- **International migration law** (IOM)
- **Protection of the life and dignity of all human beings**
- **Integral ecology** (protection of humanity and the environment, economic justice)

**States must apply and ensure respect for all these instruments
and place respect for human life and dignity
at the center of their efforts.**

MAKE FULL USE OF ALL INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

HUMAN RIGHTS

- **Universal Declaration** of Human Rights, 1948
- International **Covenant** on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966
- International **Covenant** on Civil and Political Rights, 1966
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of **Discrimination against Women** New York, 1979
- Convention Against **Torture** and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989**
 - **Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000**
 - **Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, 2000**
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All **Migrant Workers** and Members of Their Families, 1990
- **Convention Nr. 182 against the worst forms of child labour, 1999**
- **UN Convention Against Corruption, 2003**
- **Council of Europe (COE)**, European Convention on Human Rights, 1950
- **COE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2005**
- **COE Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, 2007**
- EU, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the **European Union**, 2000
- OAS, **American** Convention on Human Rights, 1969
- AU, **African** Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1981
- ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, 2012
- ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP), 2015

LABOUR LAW

- ILO Migration for Employment Convention (Revised) No. 97, 1949
- ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, No. 143, 1975
- COE, European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers, 1977
- EU, Directive 2014/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on the conditions of entry and stay of third-country nationals for employment as seasonal workers

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

- Geneva Conventions of the 12 August 1949
- Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of the 12 August 1949, 1977

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW

- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), 1998

HT as a war crime and crime against humanity

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME LAW

- International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974
- International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR), 1979
- U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982
- 2004 Amendments to the SOLAS and SAR

REFUGEE AND MIGRANT LAW

- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951
- Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, 1967
- Convention relating to the status of stateless persons, 1954
- African Union C. for the protection and assistance of IDPs in Africa (Kampala Conv. 2009)

U.N. CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (UNTOC) 2000

- **Palermo Protocol** to Prevent, Suppress and Punish **Trafficking** in Persons, especially Women and Children
- **Palermo Protocol** against the **Smuggling of Migrants** by Land, Sea and Air

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 1992
- Kyoto Protocol, 1997, in force on 16 February 2005 (common and different responsibilities)
- Doha Amendment, 2012. • Paris Agreement, 12 December 2015, in force on 4 November 2016
- UN Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, Paris, 17 June 1994

Intersection of Human Trafficking and Climate Change

1. Increased Vulnerability

Example: Cyclone Amphan, Bangladesh in 2020

After Cyclone Amphan in 2020, there was a spike in trafficking cases as displaced families were targeted by traffickers. Natural disasters often lead to increased vulnerability due to loss of homes and livelihoods. Source: [UNODC Policy Brief Climate, Crime and Exploitation Report 2022](#), p. 32

2. Intersection of Trafficking and Migration & Displacement

Example: West Africa and Sahel Region

The region faces severe droughts and conflicts, driving migration and increasing the risk of trafficking. Climate change exacerbates resource scarcity, making populations more vulnerable. Source: [The Intersection of Irregular Migration and Trafficking in West Africa and the Sahel Understanding the Patterns of Vulnerability](#)

3. Policy and Action: Strengthen Resilience, Reduce Trafficking

Example: Philippines Community Programs

Projects focus on disaster risk reduction and economic empowerment to combat trafficking. By strengthening community resilience, these programs aim to reduce susceptibility to trafficking. Source: the [TJI Foundation](#)

4. Raising Awareness: Promote Integrated Approaches

Example: International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The IOM has conducted studies showing the links between climate change, displacement, and trafficking, promoting integrated approaches to address these issues. Sources: The IOM [Climate Change-Human Trafficking Nexus](#)

5. Prevention and Preparedness

Example: Cancún (2015) – [Geneva \(2025\)](#)

Role of Special Rapporteurs to the U.N. Human Rights Council

**Special Rapporteur
on trafficking in
persons, especially
women and children**



Prof. Siobhán Mullally

**Special Rapporteur
on contemporary
forms of slavery**



Professeur Tomoya Obokata

**Special Rapporteur
on the sale and
sexual exploitation of
children**



**Mme Mama Fatima
Singhateh**

**Special Rapporteur
on the human rights
of migrants**



M. Felipe González Morales

**Special Rapporteur
on violence against
women and girls**



Mme Reem Alsalem



**United
Nations**



**UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS**
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

A UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON HUMAN RIGHTS & CLIMATE CHANGE?

Regional Perspectives

Clémence Billard Schachter, Francesca Mingrone
January 2021



This report builds upon the call from the Climate Vulnerable Forum and Pacific Island States to establish a mandate for a new UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change.



It presents key recommendations from civil society and Indigenous Peoples experts on the creation of this mandate, collected through regional consultations across the world.



It is suggested that effective support from Member States will be essential for a UN Special Rapporteur to fulfil its important role in ensuring greater respect and protection of rights in climate action.

Human Rights Council

Fifty-third session

19 June–14 July 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Providing legal options to protect the human rights of persons displaced across international borders due to climate change

**Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of
human rights in the context of climate change, Ian Fry**

Summary

The number of people displaced across international borders due to climate change is rapidly increasing, as the effects of climate change become more severe. As people are forced across international borders, they face numerous human rights violations. This is particularly the case for women and children, who make up the majority of displaced people. There are many definitions used to define people displaced by climate change. Some use the term “climate change refugees”, despite the fact that this term does not align with the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or the Protocol thereto.

In the present report, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change considers various international, regional and national legal and policy approaches to address people displaced across international borders due to climate change. He concludes that there is a deficit in legal protection for such people and makes a number of recommendations on how this legal deficit can be resolved, including his recommendation for the development of an optional protocol to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees to protect the human rights of persons displaced across international borders due to climate change.

”CLIMATE CHANGE REFUGEES”

proposal of an optional Protocol to the 1951 Convention
to **protect the human rights of persons displaced
across international borders due to climate change**

A/HRC/53/34
18 April 2023

The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change established by the UN Human Rights Council at its 48th session in October 2021 ([RES/48/14](#)).

[Learn more about the mandate](#)

Current mandate holder



Elisa Morgera is a Professor of Global Environmental Law at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow (UK) and Adjunct Professor in International and European Union Environmental Law at the University of Eastern Finland. Previously, she worked with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Italy and the United Nations Development Programme in Barbados; and continued to collaborate with the United Nations and other international

organizations as consultant and independent expert. She advised governments and civil society in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the South Pacific.

Appointed
in April 2024

Human Rights Council

Fifty-sixth session

18 June–12 July 2024

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Scene-setting report

**Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of
human rights in the context of climate change, Elisa Morgera***

Summary

The present report maps efforts made in international human rights processes to clarify issues and obligations in relation to climate change. It aims to identify good practices, challenges and opportunities relevant to the implementation of the Special Rapporteur's mandate for the years to come in the context of climate change mitigation, adaptation, just transition, climate finance, and loss and damage. The report stresses the importance of intersectionality, with a view to promoting policy coherence and increased cooperation.

A/HRC/56/46
21 June 2024

52. The Special Rapporteur trafficking in persons, especially women and children clarified that States must recognize and effectively prevent, in the context of climate change, the increased risks of exploitation faced by internally displaced persons and ensure effective protection for them and host communities (A/77/170). The Rapporteur also recommended that States ensure the participation of migrant and displaced women in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies designed to prevent human trafficking in the context of climate-related displacement, migration and disasters; and integrate measures to prevent human trafficking arising in the context of climate change in action plans, programmes and measures relating to women, peace and security (A/77/170).

56. OHCHR and the International Labour Organization (ILO) articulated that just transition requires: the progressive realisation of economic, social and cultural rights; equitable access to the benefits of the transition process, as well as fair distribution of its burdens; shifting of economic models to those that create wellbeing of people and planet, gender equality, and the reduction of inequalities; protection of the rights of workers and communities affected by the ecological transformation from impacts on their livelihoods; investment in the creation of decent jobs and the provision of social security; participation of workers and trade unions to guarantee decent work, social protection, training opportunities and job security; reduced consumption and production driving excessive energy and resource demands, pollution and negative impacts on human health; and access to effective remedies for those who experience human rights violations or abuses.²²

76. The present report stresses the importance of intersectionality for the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change and maps out a number of relevant recommendations from Special Rapporteurs and Treaty Bodies. The Rapporteur will coordinate with these procedures and bodies in her future work, and welcomes comments on the synthesis of international guidance in the present report with a view to working with all stakeholders to advance intersectionality in the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change. **It is essential to implement recommendations on intersectionality to prevent further discrimination from climate change impacts and response measures. It is also critical for the effectiveness of all climate action to recognize – on the same level as technical expertise – and to respectfully and genuinely engage with the lived experiences and distinctive knowledge of the human rights holders in situations of vulnerability, as agents of change.**

77. To that end, the Special Rapporteur recommends that, with the effective participation of human rights holders, in particular those in situations of vulnerability:

(a) States, individually and through international cooperation, apply international guidance on intersectionality in developing, implementing, funding, monitoring, evaluating, learning from and reviewing climate action at all levels;

(b) States, UN entities and other international organizations, business, civil society and the research community integrate international guidance on intersectionality in climate change-related awareness-raising, education, research, capacity-building and technology-development activities.

A/HRC/56/46
21 June 2024

COOPERATION

Prevention-Protection-Prosecution
Reparation & Rehabilitation

Involve all actors.
Including victims and
survivors

Governments
& Int'l Org.

Religious
Congregations

Victims and
survivors

Business
and media

Research and
Training

Together we can abolish modern slavery



SOVEREIGN ORDER OF MALTA
AMBASSADOR
AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Eighth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025)

Organizer(s) United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is the main global forum to assess and discuss progress on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The eighth session of the Global Platform (GP2025) will be organized by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) from 2 to 6 June 2025, in Geneva, Switzerland, hosted by the Government of Switzerland. The event will be co-chaired by the Government of Switzerland and UNDRR.



The Great Aletsch Glacier, in Canton of Valais, Switzerland has one of the largest net ice mass losses amongst the World Heritage sites due to climate change.

Venue

International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG)

Date

2 June 2025 - 6 June 2025



ENDSLAVERY



MODERN SLAVERY AND CLIMATE CHANGE:



THE COMMITMENT OF THE CITIES

21 JULY 2015
NEW SYNOD HALL
VATICAN CITY

anti-slavery

iied International Institute
for Environment
and Development



Climate-induced migration and modern slavery

A toolkit for policy-makers

by Ritu Bharadwaj, Danielle Bishop, Somnath Hazra,
Enock Pufaa and James Kofi Annan.

September 2021



Forced displacement and climate change

Two defining crises of our time



Climate change is **exacerbating the protection needs and risks** for forcibly displaced people and

contributing to new, onward and protracted displacement.

At the end of 2023, almost **3 in 4** forcibly displaced people were

living in countries with high-to-extreme exposure to climate-related hazards.



Almost
55.5 million
people forced to flee

are in countries exposed to high, severe or extreme levels of **climate-related hazards** while also faced with conflict.

Countries experiencing high, severe or extreme levels of climate-related hazards, as well as conflict **include DR Congo, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.**



Sudan is the country where the largest number of forcibly displaced people are exposed **both to climate-related hazards and conflict.**

Without **urgent adaptation, mitigation and measures** to address loss and damage, climate change impacts are

expected to increasingly and disproportionately affect **climate-vulnerable countries and communities, including forcibly displaced people.**



Press Release

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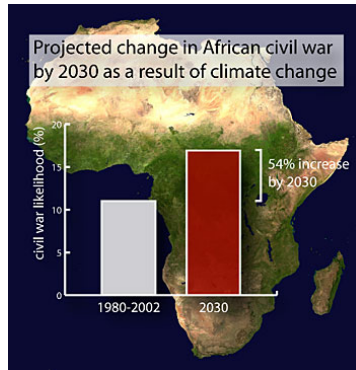
Farmers and pastoralists in a maize-growing region of Eastern Kenya. A new study finds that climate change could severely harm crop productivity and increase the likelihood that disadvantaged rural populations will take up arms. (Marshall Burke photo)

Climate change could boost incidence of civil war in Africa, study finds

By Kathleen Maclay, Media Relations | 23 November 2009

BERKELEY — Climate change could increase the likelihood of civil war in sub-Saharan Africa by over 50 percent within the next two decades, according to a new study led by a team of researchers at University of California, Berkeley, and published in today's (Monday, Nov. 23) online issue of the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS).

The study, conducted by researchers at UC Berkeley as well as at Stanford University, New York University and Harvard University, provides the first quantitative evidence linking climate change and the risk of civil conflict. It concludes by urging accelerated support by African governments and foreign aid donors for new and/or expanded policies to assist with African adaptation to climate change.



The researchers found that the incidence of African civil war could increase roughly 55 percent by 2030, leading to 390,000 more battle deaths if future wars are as

http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2009/11/23_africa_climate_change.shtml

Page 1 sur 3

Climate change, environmental degradation and migration

K. Warner · M. Hamza · A. Oliver-Smith · F. Renaud · A. Julca

Received: 9 May 2008 / Accepted: 19 June 2009 / Published online: 18 August 2009
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2009

Abstract Climate change will have a progressively increasing impact on environmental degradation and environmentally dependent socio-economic systems with potential to cause substantial population displacement. The key concerns in Less Developed Countries (LDCs) will include serious threats to food security and health, considerable economic decline, inundation of coastal areas, and degradation of land and fresh water resources (Reuveny in Polit Geogr, 2007). The relationship between environmental change and potential humanitarian crises has been captured by: McGregor (Geography and refugees: patterns and processes of change, Belhaven Press, London, pp 159–70, 1993), Kibreab (Environment and Population Change, International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, Liège, 1994), Kibreab (Disasters 21(1):20–38, 1997), Myers (Bioscience 43:752–761, 1993), Myers and Kent (Environmental exodus: an emergent crisis in the global arena, Climate Institute, Washington, DC, 1995), Black (New Issues in Refugee Research, Working Paper no. 34, 2001), Lee (Environmental matters: conflict, refugees and international relations, World Human Development Institute Press, Seoul and Tokyo, 2001), Castles (Environmental Change and Induced Migration: Making Sense of the Debate Working Paper No. 70, 2002), Christian Aid (Human tide: the real migration crisis, Christian Aid, London, 2007), and Massey et al. (<http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/pubs/pdf/r07-615.pdf>, 2007). However, we know little about the interplay between environmental change and stresses on ecological systems, resulting socio-economic vulnerability

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CLIMATE CHANGE: IMPLICATIONS FOR FOOD SAFETY



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POLICY BRIEF

NOVEMBER 2008

THE STING OF CLIMATE CHANGE: MALARIA AND DENGUE FEVER IN MARITIME SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Global climate change will intensify the already significant malaria and dengue problems in maritime Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. Those countries with the fewest resources and poor public health infrastructure are likely to feel the impact of increasing disease the most acutely. Australia itself is a 'fringe country' to the expanding endemic zone of mosquito-borne diseases to its north. Climate change may well make more of northern Australia more vulnerable to malaria and dengue outbreaks.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

Australia should strengthen regional efforts in maritime Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands for the better quantification of the effects of climate change on the spread of mosquito-borne diseases between and within susceptible countries. Australia's own risk assessments for malaria and dengue should be updated.

AusAID's increased budget allocations for climate change and public health should be leveraged to enhance impact-based research, public education and health care training programs in malaria and dengue-prone areas, especially previously unaffected ones.

Within Australia, quarantine procedures need to be re-evaluated. The Northern Territory policy of screening and treatment of immigrants from malaria-infected areas should be extended to other states, particularly Queensland and Western Australia. Consideration should be given to a similar screening and isolation program for dengue.

Themes

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How Copenhagen will affect international security

The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen has been billed as 'the most important gathering in human history'. Without binding commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and stabilise expectations, climate change will have a huge impact on future security considerations.

By Duncan Depledge for RUSI.org



Despite the large quantity of academic research carried out on environment-security linkages since the early 1980s, the potential for climate change to influence security considerations has only recently emerged as a serious concern for the international community. The United Nations Security Council held its first ever debate on climate change in 2007. It proved to be a contentious issue, particularly for developing states.

In the same year, reports from the CNA Corporation (prepared by a panel of retired three- and four-star generals) and the German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU) were important for advancing climate change and security issues within the mainstream security community. The following year, RUSI contributed to the debate by publishing an influential *Whitehall Paper* titled *Delivering Climate Security*.

Climate change is increasingly referred to as a 'threat multiplier'; the danger to international security is seen as arising from the potential for climate change to exacerbate the political, economic and social conditions that underpin the security of both people and states. The security dimensions of climate change are complex, but could potentially affect a plethora of issues concerning mitigation and adaptation strategies, energy security, nuclear proliferation, social justice and accountability, changing territorial boundaries, sovereignty claims, government legitimacy and the emergence of ungovernable spaces where non-state actors can operate with impunity.

The links between climate change and security are now receiving much greater attention from governments in all parts of the world. This is demonstrated by recent pronouncements in the US, Europe, South America, Africa, the South Pacific, China, Indonesia and Japan. Although there is recognition that climate change could create opportunities for greater collaboration between states, there is clearly growing concern about the potential for conflict, even violent conflict. A changing climate threatens to push already tense situations relating to migration, food security, water security and energy security far beyond breaking point.

Many of these issues were captured in a recent report prepared by the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon for the UN General Assembly. The Secretary General warned that the impacts of climate change have the potential to 'challenge the existing system of international security governance' with 'serious consequences for the future security architecture of the planet'.

Why the conference in Copenhagen matters

According to Yvo de Boer, the executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, an agreement is essential if Copenhagen is to be regarded as a success.

A successful outcome in Copenhagen could limit the extent of dangerous climate change and, in turn, reduce the potential for climate change to exacerbate conditions that could cause conflict both within and between states. Moreover, success could strengthen confidence in the ability of the current multilateral system to protect vital interests in the states and communities most likely to be worst affected by climate change. This could have knock-on benefits for other multilateral negotiations - for example, over nuclear proliferation.

By contrast, failure in Copenhagen could undermine the entire multilateral system,

Key security considerations in Copenhagen

- Climate change has the potential to exacerbate the conditions that contribute to conflict.
- Failure to act could

Copenhagen Agenda

- How much are industrialised countries willing to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases?
- To what extent are major developing countries such

Related RUSI articles

Affirming Climate Change's Place in the National Security Framework

The annual review of Britain's National Security Strategy, released in June, assesses the nature of threats posed to UK security.

[More](#)

Whitehall Papers

Delivering Climate Security: International Security Responses to a Climate Changed World

This Whitehall Paper argues that the international response to climate security threats has been 'slow and inadequate' and nations need to integrate climate change into their security policy to prepare for worst case scenarios.

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The Other Climate Changers

Why Black Carbon and Ozone Also Matter

Jessica Seddon Wallack and Veerabhadran Ramanathan

September/October 2009 [Article Summary](#)

At last, world leaders have recognized that climate change is a threat. And to slow or reverse it, they are launching initiatives to reduce greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide, the gas responsible for about half of global warming to date. Significantly reducing emissions of carbon dioxide is essential, as they will likely become an even greater cause of global warming by the end of this century. But it is a daunting task: carbon dioxide remains in the atmosphere for centuries, and it is difficult to get governments to agree on reducing emissions because whereas the benefits of doing so are shared globally, the costs are borne by individual countries. As a result, no government is moving fast enough to offset the impact of past and present emissions. Even if current emissions were cut in half by 2050 -- one of the targets discussed at the 2008 UN Climate Change Conference -- by then, humans' total contribution to the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere would still have increased by a third since the beginning of this century.

Meanwhile, little attention has been given to a low-risk, cost-effective, and high-reward option: reducing emissions of light-absorbing carbon particles (known as "black carbon") and of the gases that form ozone. Together, these pollutants' warming effect is around 40-70 percent of that of carbon dioxide. Limiting their presence in the atmosphere is an easier, cheaper, and more politically feasible proposition than the most popular proposals for slowing climate change -- and it would have a more immediate effect.

Time is running out. Humans have already warmed the planet by more than 0.5 degrees Celsius since the nineteenth century and produced enough greenhouse gases to make it a total of 2.4 degrees Celsius warmer by the end of this century. If the levels of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide in the atmosphere continue to increase at current rates and if the climate proves more sensitive to greenhouse gases than predicted, the earth's temperature could rise by as much as five degrees before the century ends.

A temperature change of two to five degrees would have profound environmental and geopolitical effects. It would almost certainly melt all the Arctic summer sea ice. As a result, the Arctic Ocean would absorb more sunlight, which, in turn, would further amplify the warming. Such a rise could eliminate the Himalayan and Tibetan glaciers, which feed the major water systems of some of the poorest regions of the world. It would also accelerate the melting of the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets, raising the sea level worldwide and provoking large-scale emigration from low-lying coastal regions. Cycles of droughts and floods triggered by global warming would spell disaster for agriculture-dependent economies.

Some of global warming's environmental effects would be irreversible; some of its societal impacts, unmanageable. Given these consequences, policymakers worldwide seeking to slow climate change must weigh options beyond just reducing carbon dioxide, especially those that would produce rapid results. Cutting black carbon and ozone is one such strategy.

POWERFUL POLLUTANTS

The warming effect of carbon dioxide has been known since at least the 1900s, and that of ozone since the 1970s, but the importance of black carbon was discovered only recently. During the past decade, scientists have used sophisticated instruments on drones, aircraft, ships, and satellites to track black carbon and ozone from their sources to remote locations thousands of miles away and measure and model how much atmospheric heating they cause.



German Advisory Council
on Global Change
(WBGU)

Climate Change as a Security Risk



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The Historical Roots of Human Trafficking

Informing Primary Prevention of
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Forewords by Joshua M. Sharfstein and Ruth J. Simmons

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Copenhagen climate summit

December 7-18



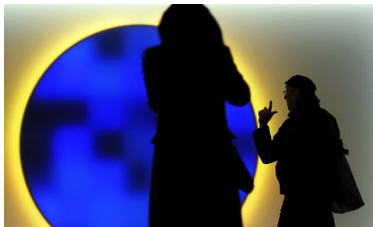
Climate change puts us all in the same boat. One hole will sink us all

Global warming does not respect borders. A mindset shift is required if world leaders are to save us from ourselves



Kofi Annan
guardian.co.uk, Thursday 10 December 2009 13:05 GMT

[A larger image](#)



Climate change does not respect national borders. Photograph: Adrian Dennis/AFP/Getty Images

The UN climate change conference in Copenhagen offers the prospect of a robust political deal, endorsed by the world's leaders and witnessed by the world's people, that sets out clear targets and a timeline for translating it into law. To be a truly historic achievement, such a deal must do two things.

First, it must lay the basis for a global regime and subsequent agreements that limit global temperature rise in accordance with the scientific evidence. Second, it must provide clarity on the mobilisation and volume of financial resources to support developing countries to adapt to climate change.

The stakes are enormous. Economic growth has been achieved at great environmental and social cost, aggravating inequality and human vulnerability. The irreparable damage that is being inflicted on ecosystems, agricultural productivity, forests and water systems is accelerating. Threats to health, life and livelihoods are growing. Disasters are also increasing in scale and frequency.

But despite the mounting evidence of negative impacts, reaching a deal will not be easy. It will require extraordinary political courage – both to cut the deal and to communicate its necessity to the public.

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Climate Change Seen as Threat to U.S. Security

By JOHN M. BRODER
Published: August 8, 2009

WASHINGTON — The changing global climate will pose profound strategic challenges to the United States in coming decades, raising the prospect of military intervention to deal with the effects of violent storms, drought, mass migration and pandemics, military and intelligence analysts say.

[Enlarge This Image](#)



Lynsey Addario

The conflict in southern Sudan, which has killed and displaced tens of thousands of people, is partly a result of drought in Darfur.

Such climate-induced crises could topple governments, feed terrorist movements or destabilize entire regions, say the analysts, experts at the Pentagon and intelligence agencies who for the first time are taking a serious look at the national security implications of climate change.

Recent war games and intelligence studies conclude that over the next 20 to 30 years, vulnerable regions, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and South and Southeast Asia, will face the prospect of food shortages, water crises and catastrophic flooding driven by climate change that could demand an American humanitarian relief or military response.

An exercise last December at the National Defense University, an educational institute that is overseen by the military, explored the potential impact of a destructive flood in Bangladesh that sent hundreds of thousands of refugees streaming into neighboring India, touching off religious conflict, the spread of contagious diseases and vast damage to infrastructure. "It gets real complicated real quickly," said Amanda J. Dory, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for strategy, who is working with a Pentagon group assigned to incorporate climate change into national security strategy planning.

Much of the public and political debate on global warming has focused on finding substitutes for fossil fuels, reducing emissions that contribute to greenhouse gases and furthering negotiations toward an international climate treaty — not potential security challenges.

But a growing number of policy makers say that the world's rising temperatures, surging

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Frequently Asked Questions on Human Rights and Climate Change



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

New York and Geneva, 2021

Fact Sheet No.

38

HUMAN RIGHTS

Q.1	Which human rights are most affected by climate change?	2
	Right to life	3
	Right to self-determination	5
	Right to development.....	6
	Right to health	8
	Right to food.....	10
	Rights to water and sanitation	12
	Right to adequate housing	13
	Cultural rights	17
Q.2	Which groups and individuals are most affected by climate change?.....	19
	Indigenous peoples	20
	Women.....	21
	Children	23
	Migrants and internally displaced persons	25
	Persons with disabilities	28

Q.3	Who are the rights holders and duty bearers in relation to climate change?	29
	Rights holders	29
	Duty bearers.....	30
Q.4	What are the human rights obligations of States related to climate change?	31
	Mitigate climate change and prevent its negative human rights impacts	31
	Ensure that all persons have the necessary capacity to adapt to climate change	31
	Ensure accountability and effective remedy for human rights harms caused by climate change	32
	Mobilize maximum available resources for sustainable, human rights-based development.....	32
	Cooperate with other States	33
	Ensure equity in climate action	33
	Guarantee that everyone enjoys the benefits of science and its applications....	34
	Protect human rights from business harms.....	34
	Guarantee equality and non-discrimination	34
	Ensure meaningful and informed participation	35

Q.5	What are the responsibilities of businesses related to human rights and climate change?	36
Q.6	Which key principles of international law apply to climate action in the context of human rights?.....	38
	Equality and non-discrimination	38
	Transparency and inclusiveness.....	39
	Precautionary principle	40
Q.7	What is a human rights-based approach to climate change?	41
Q.8	What is the role of climate litigation in protecting human rights?	43
Q.9	What is the role of the Human Rights Council in addressing climate change?	46
Q.10	What is the role of the other United Nations human rights mechanisms in addressing climate change?.....	49
	Special procedure mechanisms	49
	Universal periodic review	50
	Human rights treaty bodies.....	50

Q.12	What rights do future generations have in the face of climate change?.....	57
Q.13	How might global recognition of the human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment affect climate action?.....	60
Q.14	What efforts is the United Nations system making to promote and protect environmental human rights?.....	62
Q.15	What are States' common but differentiated responsibilities related to climate change?	63
Q.16	What role does international cooperation and solidarity play in climate action?	64
Q.17	What steps should be taken going forward?	65

A snapshot of key climate change impacts on human rights

- The World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that, between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths each year from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress alone.⁴
- According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), climate change is causing extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, depriving millions of people around the world of a livelihood. The nearly 78 per cent of the world's poor – approximately 800 million people – who live in rural areas, many of whom rely on agriculture, forestry and fisheries for their survival, are particularly affected.⁵
- Without urgent action, climate change impacts could push an additional 100 million people into poverty by 2030, according to the World Bank.⁶

⁴ See WHO, "Climate change and health", 1 February 2018. Available at www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health.

⁵ See FAO, *Agriculture and Climate Change: Challenges and Opportunities at the Global and Local Level – Collaboration on Climate-Smart Agriculture* (Rome, 2019). Available at www.fao.org/3/CA3204EN/ca3204en.pdf.

⁶ See World Bank, "Rapid, climate-informed development needed to keep climate change from pushing more than 100 million people into poverty by 2030", 8 November 2015. Available at www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2015/11/08/rapid-climate-informed-development-needed-to-keep-climate-change-from-pushing-more-than-100-million-people-into-poverty-by-2030.

- More than 2 billion people are currently living in countries with high water stress.⁷ Almost twice as many could be affected by 2050.⁸
- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that, by 2040, one in four children – around 600 million – will be living in areas of extremely high water stress.⁹
- Extreme weather events were one of the main causes of the internal displacement of 28 million people in 2018, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.¹⁰

Right to life

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights reiterates the inherent right to life of every human being as a non-derogable and fundamental right that cannot be limited or suspended under any circumstances. This means, at the very least, that States should not only take effective measures against foreseeable and preventable loss of life but also enable people to enjoy a life with dignity.¹¹

According to the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, “both aspects of man’s environment, the natural and the man-made, are essential to his well-being and to the enjoyment of basic human rights – even the right to life itself.”¹² The Human Rights

Committee stated, in its general comment No. 36 (2018) on the right to life, that climate change is one of “the most pressing and serious threats to the ability of present and future generations to enjoy the right to life” (para. 62). It concluded that States parties’ obligations under international environmental law should inform the content of article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and that the obligation of States parties to respect and ensure the right to life should inform their relevant obligations under international environmental law (ibid.).

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