

The Central Asia Pavilion

COP28, Blue Zone, Zone B2, Building 15

Climate Change and Human Mobility in Mountain Areas: Uncovering New Evidence for Policymaking

10 December 2023 | 16:45-18:00 UAE time

Context

Mountain areas worldwide are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As a result of global warming, Andean glaciers have lost between 30% and more than 50% of their area since the 1980s, with grave consequences for water availability¹. The observed changes include increasing temperatures, changing seasonal weather, reductions in snow cover and duration at low elevations, loss of glacier mass, increased permafrost thaw, and an increase in the number and size of glacier lakes.² An increasing trend in disaster frequency has been observed in the Andes, the Himalayas, and the mountain regions of Africa.³ A 2°C rise in global warming will lead to a 31-66% loss of glacier mass in Central Asia.⁴ The projections indicate negative consequences for the mountain cryosphere, biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being as a result of changes induced by increasing temperatures.⁵ The worsening impacts of climate change imply the need to consider economic and non-economic loss and damage, including for indigenous populations and other marginalized groups affected by reduced habitability of their ancestral lands.

The Summary for Policymakers of the Working Group II Report of the Sixth Assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports with high confidence that the negative impacts of climate-related displacement and involuntary migration for migrants and sending and receiving areas could be minimized by increasing adaptive capacities. This improves the degree of choice under which migration decisions are made. This, in turn, will ensure safe and orderly movements of people within and between countries.⁶ Certain types of migration such as disaster displacement will increase the vulnerability of those involved. At the same time, other forms of migration such as planned evacuation, pastoralism, labour migration, and planned relocation could enhance climate change adaptation.

In 2019, the Special Report on Ocean and Cryosphere of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change noted that migration can result in mixed outcomes on socio-economic vulnerability in high-mountain regions.⁷ However, there is limited understanding of the multi-dimensional nexus between migration, environment, and climate change in many mountain regions. The available case studies – many of which are based on cross-

¹ https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_Chapter12.pdf.

² <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/chapter/ccp5/>

³ <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/chapter/ccp5/>

⁴ <https://www.grida.no/resources/11155>

⁵ <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/chapter/ccp5/>

⁶ <https://ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/chapter/summary-for-policymakers/>

⁷ https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/3/2022/03/SROCC_FullReport_FINAL.pdf

sectional surveys that collect data at a single point in time – are not able to address the dynamic interlinkages between migration, environment, and climate change. The lack of a common methodology also limits a comparative analysis of migration in the context of climate change in mountain areas in different countries and regions

The global stakeholders increasingly recognize climate action cannot be addressed in silos. Neither can human mobility in the context of climate change. More attention is needed to increase our collective understanding of the complex migration, environment, and climate change nexus in the mountain regions, including solutions for people to move, people on the move and people to stay. In 2023, IOM in collaboration with partners launched a research initiative on ‘Assessing Migration, Environment, and Climate Change Nexus in the Mountain Areas’. This research aims to address two key questions: First, how do climate change impacts shape different types of migration such as disaster displacement, planned evacuation, pastoralism, and planned relocation in mountain areas? Second, how do migration consequences contribute to climate change adaptation in mountain areas? The research methodology involves longitudinal studies. The multiple waves of evidence gathering in the study areas in Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan will help the national stakeholders to better understand the changing circumstances of local populations in terms of their vulnerability to environmental and climatic hazards, their migration experiences, and how these shape adaptation. The coordinated evidence-gathering will also help the stakeholders to compare the findings from different mountain regions, which in turn, will contribute to collective advocacy for mountain regions.

Objectives of the side event

The objectives of this side event are:

- Bring together stakeholders from the mountain countries to share experiences on human mobility in the context of climate change.
- Explore areas of cooperation in addressing the adverse effects and taking advantage of the opportunities for human mobility in the context of climate change in mountain areas.

Event Information

The event will be a moderated panel discussion. The panel discussion will be followed by a Question & Answer segment. The total duration of the event is 60 minutes.

Venue

Central Asia Pavillion (B2, BLDG 15), Blue Zone.

Dates

10 December 2023, 16:45-18:00

Languages

The event will have simultaneous interpretations in English and Russian.

Agenda (draft)

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| 16:45 -16:50 | Opening remark (IOM) |
| 16:50 – 17:45 | Panelists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Kebal Bhandari, Secretary, the Ministry of Labour Employment and Social Security, Government of the Republic of Nepal. |

- Ms Saule Sabiyeva, Director, Climate Policy Department, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan.
- Mr Saidov Sattor, Head, Centre for the Study of Climate Change, Agency of Hydrometeorology, Committee for Environmental Protection, Government of the Republic of Tajikistan.
- Ms Lauren Baker, Senior Policy Officer, Office of Policy USAID.
- Ms Begim Zhanuzakova, Climate Change Program Coordinator, Unison Group, Kyrgyzstan.
- Mr Abhisekh Kumar, Senior Programme Manager, Population Council Consulting Private Limited (online).

17:45 -17:55 Question and answer with the audience

17:55 - 18:00 Closing remark