

Climate Justice as a Foundation for Climate Migration Policy

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Abstract

'Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future.'

Niels Bohr

This thesis aims to examine the relationship between climate justice and climate migration. The goal is to describe this relationship's place in international policy making. Impacts from climate change will make certain areas of the world uninhabitable, inducing so-called "climate migration". The number of migrants is predicted to be between 200 million and 250 million by 2050. Currently, there is no international law or mechanism that protects people displaced by climate change, something that is crucial in order to avoid a humanitarian disaster. Through a literary study of previous research a few of the proposals for forming international law concerning climate migrants that have been put forward will be outlined. The most frequently brought up proposals are adding a separate section to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC), adding climate migrants to existing international laws on refugees or creating a new and separate treaty. When developing mechanisms for climate migration, a foundation in climate justice allows responsibility to be put on those who caused the problem. However, the concept of climate justice is not a set principle in international law, making it difficult to use as anything more than an argument if not a completely new treaty is drafted. By incorporating existing human rights law and treaties on climate change into climate migration mechanisms, a cohesive and just migration process where human well-being is in focus can be realized whilst the time-consuming process of creating an entirely new treaty is avoided.

Keywords

Climate migration, Climate migrants, Climate refugees, Climate justice, International policy, International politics, Climate change.

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Abbreviations

AOSIS – Alliance of Small Island States

COP – Conference of the Parties

GHG – Greenhouse Gas

GNP – Gross National Product

IDP – Internally Displaced Person

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

OHCHR – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNHCR – United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees

I. Introduction

The disproportionate relationship between those responsible for current climate change and those who will be affected the most calls for innovative and multi-layered international policy (Adams & Luchsinger, 2009). Climate Justice is frequently brought up in the international climate debate but still remains little more than an ideal (Fisher, 2014). The situation today is defined by a number of intertwined factors such as economy, human rights and level of development, resulting in an issue that is very hard to handle. The international community needs to address the justice aspect of the situation in order to create sustainable solutions with highest possible standard of living for all (Running, 2014).

This results in the question; what are rich countries' responsibilities? Right now, lowering emissions is seen as an economic drain and developed countries have been unwilling to take on too big a burden in order to avoid slowing or stopping the economic growth of their country (Shah, 2012).

In September a man from Kiribati was the first to seek status as a climate refugee. The highest court in New Zealand declined the appeal, saying that the man wasn't subject to 'serious harm' and could be protected by his own government in Kiribati (Dastgheib, 2015). The outcome clearly shows that there is a gap in international law where people displaced by climate change fall.

The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees only includes political refugees and deals with them individually. One of the major differences between political refugees and climate migrants is that climate migrants are not fleeing because of an oppressive government; in general they would like to keep their existing leadership and stay within their own country if possible (Biermann and Boas, 2008). The question of policy development concerning climate migrants is therefore one of lasting and great changes to current programs or development of entirely new mechanisms. UNHCR might not even be the best agency to deal with this problem, the World Bank or the UN Development Programme (UNDP) could possibly be a better foundation to start from when forming these new international policies (Biermann and Boas, 2008).

One country that is especially vulnerable is the Maldives. The Maldivian government has been pushing for climate change mitigation since 1987 and raising concerns over the risk the impending situation that sea level rise might lead to for their low-lying islands (Knox, 2009). To highlight the reality of climate change and climate migration a case study of the Maldives' situation will be utilised, describing what has happened and what measures they have called for.

Depending on the number of climate migrants, existing international mechanisms might not suffice (Burkett, 2011). When incorporating climate justice as an ideal within international policy development, responsibility falls upon developed countries to provide aid and support to developing countries concerning the matter of climate migrants. Extensive mechanisms in form of transportation, accommodation and integration will need to be developed from a local to an international scale to adequately handle an increased number of climate migrants.

I. I Purpose

The field of climate justice has been emerging within the international debate on climate change during the last couple of years. However, the field is relatively unknown among the general population. The same is true about the question of climate migrants. The general population might know that there is a potential problematic situation in the future but not the magnitude of, or possible solutions to it.

This study will draw on existing knowledge and mechanisms regarding climate migrants to paint a picture that shows advantages and disadvantages of the existing proposals. It will also address how the concept of climate justice is related to climate migration policy.

I.2 Posed Questions

What solutions have been suggested for dealing with climate migrants and what are their advantages and disadvantages?

What is climate justice's role in relation to climate migration policy?

2. Background

2.1 Climate Change

The risk of severe climate change is clear, the vast majority of scientists agree on this. In the Fourth Assessment Report from the IPCC the global mean temperature increase between the periods of 1980–1999 and 2080–2099 ranged between 1.8°C to 4.0°C for the best estimation (Caney, 2014). For the 'likely range' during the same period, temperature increase varied between 1.1°C and 6.4°C. This will inevitably have major effects on several natural processes and system, possibly leading to catastrophic outcomes for a large part of life on earth (Caney, 2014).

It has been estimated that by 2050 global CO₂ emissions should be between 50-85% below 2000 level in order to avoid warming above 2 °C. The burning of fossil fuels need to be replaced with sustainable energy alternatives. One major issue is that historically, development has been made possible through high-energy intensity paths (Moellendorf, 2012).

When analysing results of climate impacts it is crucial to remember that increased climate change and higher temperatures will lead to even worse damages and less ability to adapt within human populations (Gemenne, 2010).

2.1.1 Sea-level rise

Before this century is over, sea levels are estimated to rise between 0,19 and 0,58 meters, according to the IPCC (Gemenne, 2010). Melting of Antarctic and Greenland ice sheet seem to be faster than predicted according to new research, resulting in even faster sea-level rise. This more recent research estimates the rise to be between 0,5 and 1 meter at the end of the century (Knox. 2009). Millions of people might suffer from flooding each year before 2080 (Gemenne, 2010). Low-lying areas with high population density and low adaptive ability in combination with those areas already suffering from other environmental issues such as collapsing of coastal areas and storms are particularly vulnerable. However, the rising of sea levels is fairly

predictable, resulting in the opportunity to plan out adaptation and identify possible impacted populations before they are affected (Gemenne, 2010).

2.1.2 Extreme weather events

Flooding, tropical cyclones, droughts and heat waves are all extreme weather events. The IPCC has predicted that all of these will increase by the end of the century, possibly acting as push-factors for migration (Gemenne, 2010). When considering extreme weather events in relation to migration it is however of utmost important to consider the fact that much of this displacement can be temporary. Not all of these events result in permanent damage, creating the possibility for migrants to return home once the land is restored. This creates a need for mechanisms dealing with this through temporary protection status, something different from permanent migration. Still, extreme weather events can also result in damages or changes so fundamental that people are not able to return, meaning that mechanisms will also need to include permanent migration (Gemenne, 2010).

2.1.3 Water stress

Changes to mountain glacier melting, droughts and salt-water intrusion as a result of rising sea levels will all contribute to shortages in freshwater. Areas dependent on freshwater from melting snow covers and glaciers will be heavily impacted (Gemenne, 2010). The combination of declining freshwater availability and increasing demand will very likely intensify the issue. Whether water stress leads to increased migration is greatly disputed (Gemenne, 2010), it is a reason to migrate and migration patterns have changed with water stress but when faced with droughts there are several adaptation strategies and international migration even tends to decrease during droughts (Gemenne, 2010).

2.2 Geographic distribution of impacts

The final ability to adapt and level of vulnerability in relation to climate change is a result of many contributing factors such as the nation's financial and institutional sector's ability to adjust to changed conditions, level of direct natural resource reliance, GDP per capita, societal safety nets and poverty level. Climate change can be a major disturbance but other

environmental issues, conflict, demography changes, disease, colonialism and post colonialism all combine to create the final opportunity for well-being and general livelihood (Thomas & Twyman, 2005).

Climate change will increase already high numbers of people being impacted or at risk of flooding and extreme weather events. The North African and Asian mega deltas are especially vulnerable. Something crucial to consider when comparing communities impacted by climate change is that risk and vulnerability are two different things. Communities might share the same risk for an impact, but their vulnerability is decided by ability to cope with the possible outcome, this is partly decided by poverty level and infrastructure quality (Moellendorf, 2012). The IPCC stated that the actual physical impact partly determines vulnerability but that a natural system or population's ability to adjust is the factor that decides the level of vulnerability. The ability to adjust is largely determined by the nations development level, poverty limits the ability to adapt whilst technology and resources improves it (McAdams, 2011).

Like blame for the climate change situation today, its impacts will also be unevenly distributed. Low-latitude countries are predicted to suffer 80% of damages from climate change (Mendelsohn, 2009). Developing nations tend to have agriculture, forestry and tourism as their main economic sectors- three of the sectors that will be most affected by climate change consequences such as extreme weather events and change in weather patterns. Farmland will be dried out; by 2080 a fifth of the farmland in Africa will be under severe stress and many of the countries with the worlds' lowest level of food security will be the ones most affected by agricultural loss (The Economist, 2009, Mendelsohn, 2009).

Out of the 15 largest cities of the developing world, ten are at risk of destruction from coastal floods and/or sea-level rise including Cairo, Mumbai and Shanghai. Floodplains in East and South Asia have been areas with high concentrations of both people and economic action for a very long time; climate change impacts pose serious threats to these regions (The Economist, 2009). Approximately 10% of the total population in the world lives at or below 10 m in relation to the sea level, putting them at risk of severe impacts, primarily from sea-level rise (Moellendorf, 2012). Climate change is predicted to lead to a decrease in freshwater availability in Southeast, East, South and Central Asia, this, combined with increasing freshwater demand and population growth, can lead to over one billion people being impacted by 2050. In Africa, between 75 million and 250 million people are going to suffer from

freshwater shortages by 2020 caused by climate change. Yet again a higher demand combined with these shortages can lead to very intense and problematic situations (Gemenne, 2010).

The cost of climate change paints an even more unequal picture. A 2°C rise in global average temperature has been calculated to cost approximately 1% of global GDP but the cost to India could be as high as 5% and for Africa 4%. Developing nations make up about 80% of the world's population but they bear a much bigger share of the burden (The Economist, 2009).

2.3 Climate Justice

2.3.1 Historical Responsibility

It is clear today that the majority of the responsibility for the current level of climate change belongs to developed countries (The World Bank, 2004). Of the total carbon emissions released since 1850, two-thirds can be attributed to developed countries. Today, developing countries are catching up with developed; slightly more than half of all carbon emissions come from poor and middle-income nations. These nations' intended power stations would release as much carbon as total industrial emissions since 1850 during the span of their lifetime. Another factor to include today is that even though many developing nations are catching up in terms of absolute emissions, their emissions per capita is in many cases still low (The Economist, 2009).

2.3.2 Analysing Climate Change Through Climate Justice

Climate change can be analysed through examination of a few overarching questions; who bears responsibility, who can handle consequences and how, who will be able to survive and possibly benefit from changing conditions and finally who will suffer the most from the outcomes (Adams & Luchsinger, 2009). Climate justice can be viewed from two standpoints, either from a burden-sharing perspective or from an avoiding harm and protecting victim's perspective (Caney, 2014). When looking at burden sharing, there are several principles through which a fair outcome can be reached. The most common approaches to sharing burden is by looking at who have drawn advantages from climate change triggering activities, who have caused the problem or who has the capacity to pay. The prevention perspective however

puts emphasis on averting impacts and protecting victims. From this an imperative to limit climate change is built (Caney, 2014).

Climate justice is not limited to distributional concerns connected to climate change internationally; national and local spread of environmental goods is also included within the concept. It further incorporates the need to promote participation and recognition. For developing countries, one of the most important aspects of climate justice is the unequal process of development (Fisher, 2014).

When addressing climate change it is important to consider the scale of governance. The divide does not only lie in impacts and responsibility, the ability to adapt for both individuals and groups differ too. Since impacts vary between social groups and geographic location, climate justice needs to be looked at from each individual's perspective in order to secure their well-being. Each individual carries out adaptation to climate change impacts and the scale is based on their own limits, economic ones or others. This means that some governance should be located directly at the level where impacts are happening, rather than at a global scale. Even though climate change is a global environmental issue and need to be addressed at a global level, local issues stemming from climate change are best handled at the local level. Adaptation to climate change will need responses at all levels in order to satisfyingly deal with the wide variety of impacts (Adger, 2001).

2.3.3 Addressing Climate Justice

Since the UN Framework Convention On Climate Change (UNFCCC) was established in 1992, the world has been trying to address climate change through a comprehensive international approach. The principle of climate justice is embedded within the norm of “common but differentiated responsibilities” stated in the UNFCCC (Fisher, 2014). “Common but differentiated responsibilities” encompasses the fact that already industrialized nations have emitted the majority of greenhouse gases and through that gained a cheaper development path. Because of that, rich countries are responsible for action to limit climate change and also to help developing countries take adaptation measures against unavoidable consequences (Shah, 2012).

During climate negotiations there has been a constant predisposition in favour of certain matters and interests over others. The equity aspect connected to climate change is present in negotiations but far from prominent. The injustice between both poor and

rich regions and poor and rich people becomes evident with climate change, both regarding responsibility, division of resources and paths of development (Adams & Luchsinger, 2009).

To address equity when it come to climate change, a justice and human rights lens needs to be applied to questions of future development and efforts to slow down the climate change process. Efficiency and effectiveness is also promoted when measures are taken to move towards climate change equity. When working towards the earth being habitable in the future, available technical, financial and natural resources will go where the need is the greatest. It will be more efficient if choices are made now with the entire world in mind instead of postponing decision-making until the situation has deteriorated, being more expensive and harder to resolve. Thinking of previous negotiations, equity could be the most rational aspect to include when working towards reaching an agreement that most nations find just and that would result in actual action by those nations (Adams & Luchsinger, 2009).

2.3.4 Level of Development

Another important justice aspect to consider in the climate change field is that all development is not equal. Already developed countries' continued growth contributes to raising the standard further above the average whilst growth in developing countries with increasing populations are needed to provide basic human needs (Shah, 2012).

Raising developing nations out of poverty has been a major challenge for both the individual nations themselves but also for the international community as a whole. Climate change has the power to eradicate decades of progress, worsening the situation even further. Developing nations stress the need for aid from developed countries to fulfil their development aspiration. Global injustice and poverty can be decreased through development; however, development can also aggravate climate change since development has a strong link to increased GHG emissions. On the other hand poverty can also lead to increased climate change and environmental damage, which in its turn can lead to increased underdevelopment and poverty, creating a feedback loop that hampers effort for getting communities out of poverty. (Okereke & Schroeder, 2011). Developing nations' representatives are continuously resisting the notion that economic restrictions are needed for emission reductions and are promoting that all international climate change agreements should allow for their right to keep on the track of sustainable but continued development (Running, 2014).

The climate change justice concept captures the equity aspect by addressing human rights, just development and political expression. With this both future injustice and the on-going mechanisms of power and development inequality is beginning to be redressed. To achieve this there need to be real transformation and changes that aims to do what's best for the entire world, looking beyond country borders (Adams & Luchsinger, 2009).

2.4 Climate Refugees and Climate Migrants

Migration due to environmental change is not a new phenomenon, it has been occurring since the dawn of man and is a regular adaptation response to avoid harm and gain higher resilience. The new factors in environmental migration is the scale, i.e. amount of people projected to move, the rate of which it is happening and that the underlying cause is anthropogenic triggered climate change (McAdam, 2011). Further factors that sets climate migrants apart from traditional refugees are that the migration is highly predictable, the relocation is permanent and the fact that the migrants themselves many times has very little to do with the reason behind the need to migrate, creating a situation where other nations hold moral responsibility. (Burkett, 2011) The trauma of having to leave your homeland and culture is shared by all people displaced by climate change. However, people living in very low-lying areas, particularly small islands, might lose their home country permanently without the possibility of ever going back (Burkett, 2011).

2.4.1 Numbers

Flooding and extreme weather impacts are already putting millions at risk, 2,3 million are affected by landslides, 130 million by droughts, 244 million by tropical cyclones and 521 million by floods (Moellendorf, 2012). 200 million to 250 million climate migrants by 2050 is the most frequent estimation, however, the figures varies from 25 million to one billion. These estimations are based on many guesses and uncertainties but shows that this is a future large-scale problem (Burkett, 2011). However, the numbers are increasingly being questioned because of the uncertainty and the fact that it merely shows people at risk, people in poverty might not be able to move even though they are at risk of impacts from climate change. The large estimation span also makes it difficult to form policies since a world with 25 million migrants is

vastly different from one with one billion, creating the need for a highly flexible mechanism (Kothari, 2013). Migration caused by climate change is already happening; by 2008 20 million people were displaced because of climate change induced disasters like storms and floods (Burkett, 2011).

2.4.2 The question of definition

UNHCR states that it is becoming increasingly problematic to categorize migrants, since the reason for displacement often is a combination of economic, conflict and environmental factors (McAdam, 2011). One crucial part in forming a cohesive mechanism for climate migrants is to define who is a climate migrant since this largely decides their legal status. The term refugee carries legal protection and existing mechanisms with it, formed to protect “traditional” refugees, which is why the term is so heavily debated. Migration caused by climate change is surrounded by vastly different conditions than that caused by conflict (Burkett, 2011). The 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as someone at risk of oppression from the home state and lacking security currently being outside their “country of nationality or habitual residence”. Another suggested term is “environmentally displaced person”, connecting to UNHCR’s term “internally displaced person” (IDP). This carries with it one major factor, it puts less obligation on the international community. (Biermann & Boas, 2008) Many researchers, politicians and legal specialists prefer to use the terms “climate displaced” or “climate migrants” (Burkett, 2011).

In 1995 Myers contributed with a possible definition, stating that environmental refugees are people who cannot sustain their livelihood in their home state due to extraordinary environmental circumstances such as natural disaster, water stress, deforestation, desertification, soil erosion and climate change and therefore seek permanent or semi-permanent relocation (Hartmann, 2010). It is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between voluntary and forced migration, something that might be even more common with environmental migration, since change happens gradually and the need for relocation might not be instant (Gemenne, 2010).

The push to migrate is however connected to several factors in addition to environmental change, such as countries or an individual’s ability to adjust to outside pressure, political changes and economic development (Burkett, 2011). This is one of the major issues with defining migrants, finding a clear causal link between climate change and migration. (Kothari, 2013) The international narrative used, painting a picture of climate migrants as weak, passive

and with little will and strength to stay in their home state, is not only wrong but also highly damaging a constructive debate (McNamara & Gibson, 2009).

2.4.3 Current International Policy on Climate Migration

Policies on migration have often overlooked environmental changes as migration factors whilst policies on the environment usually addresses migration as a result of environmental impacts and the humanitarian problem this is. There is no international system for people displaced due to impacts from climate change (Gemenne, 2010).

3. Method and Materials

3.1 Selection of Method

The material was gathered through a systematic literature study of peer-reviewed articles, news articles and governmental reports. A systematic literature study defines a certain research question, thesis or problem by research of relevant literature, compilation of the found information and finally analysis and discussion of the found material (Taylor, n.d.).

To go more in depth, a case study of the Maldives and how their situation has been handled so far was conducted. This was to form a more concrete picture of how the question of climate migrants has appeared in international politics so far. The Maldives was selected due to the amount of information available on the situation and the fact that the Maldivian government has been active within climate change politics for a long time. The time span results in a case that paints a picture of how the situation for low-lying states has changes over the last decades.

The material was found through use of the search engine Google Scholar. Each search phrase related to a separate part of the posed questions. The search words used were; “Climate Justice”, “Climate Refugees” and “Maldives + Climate Refugees”.

Articles related to the topic were then thoroughly read and especially relevant sections were chosen out for background information and results. The research was built around and divided by the posed questions. Finally, analysis and discussion was carried out through revision of the result sections.

This method was chosen because there is a lot but dispersed knowledge on the subject. A literary study consolidates this knowledge to give an overview and make the situation clearer before further research can be made.

3.2 Limitations

When investigating a problem that is heavily debated and far from resolved, like the question of how to deal with the impending problem of climate migration is that information and opinion varies widely. This is positive in the sense that it creates a broad foundation with many points of view but a limitation in the sense that it is very difficult to find a set focus. The limitation does not necessarily lie in the division of opinions but rather in the reason behind the division of opinions. It is a subject surrounded by uncertainty. The field of international policymaking is filled with insecurities and it is impossible to foresee exactly how a certain policy measure will play out. This makes analysis of international policy hard and ranking of different options arbitrary. But in order to describe the current situation and possible ways forward this approach is one out of many valid ones.

Considering the timeframe, this thesis was limited to research on suggestions for international climate migration policy. There might be relevant national policies developed or suggested that could be vital in final management of the question. The different suggested policies were not studied in detailed, something that needs to be done in order to fully determine their efficiency and effectiveness.

4. Case Study - The Maldives

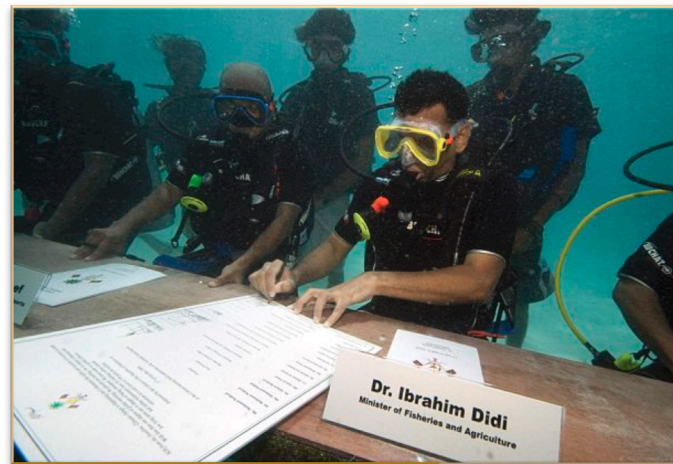
The Maldives has a population of about 350,000, living dispersed on 200 islands. There is an additional 1000 islands, which are uninhabited. Approximately one-third lives in the capital Male' and the rest are spread out across the atoll. Most islands have very few inhabitants, 74 islands have less than 500 inhabitants. Fishing and tourism are the primary economic activity in the country.

The average elevation above sea level is 1.5 and the highest is less than 2,5 meters, a rise in sea level by 0,5 meters by 2100 would flood half of the capital city Male'. By 2025 15% would already be submerged. Sea surges, resulting in temporary flooding, of 0.7 meters is predicted to occur annually by 2050, flooding the majority of the Maldives. 40% of the population lives less than 100 meters from the coast, with very little, if any, high ground to seek refuge at and over 80% lives below one meter sea level elevation. Sea level rise will not only lead to death, contamination of already limited freshwater resources, degrade agricultural land, damage infrastructure, erode beaches and through that decrease the islands main economic income tourism, but also complicate rescue operations and assistance to the islands. Flooding will most likely result in uninhabitable islands before sea level rise submerges the land entirely (Knox, 2009).

Back in 1987, the president Maumoon Abdul Gayoom raised the issue of sea level rise and the fact that his country could become completely inundated before the U.N. General Assembly. The Maldives arranged a meeting with the other small islands states in 1989 to launch a movement with the purpose to raise awareness within the international community concerning the situation sea level rise could create (Knox, 2009). He further expressed that the people wished to stay in the home countries and that the only thing they really wanted was for the international community to step up and take the necessary steps to limit climate change and avoid impacts that would be detrimental to small island states (McNamara & Gibson, 2009). This was one of the very first times that a convention with binding commitments concerning climate change was requested. After this the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) was formed, they have constantly been demanding stricter GHG restrictions in the United Nations

climate negotiations (Knox, 2009). In 2009 Nasheed arranged an underwater cabinet meeting in order to raise awareness of their situations urgency (Mail Foreign Service, 2009)

The connections between human rights law and climate change policy is a fairly new concept that the Maldives only recently began to promote. They are using a political, less challenging approach by linking policy to human rights and by doing so, avoiding pursuit of legal verdicts aimed at groups of or individual emitters. The aim is rather to guide the entire international policy process towards a human rights path (Knox, 2009).



(Mail Foreign Service, 2009)

Other important factors to consider is that 16%, of the population is living below the poverty line, unemployment lies at 20% and that the tourism industry accounts for 30% of GNP, which affects the ability to adapt considerably and increases the dependency on aid from the outside (Kothari, 2013).

In 2008, right after President Nasheed was elected, a ‘sovereign wealth fund’ was established in order to prepare for a potential inundation of the country and make purchase of a new homeland possible. However, Maldivians didn’t take kindly to this proposition, raising concern regarding becoming exiles and leaving their homes. Another potential solution that has been put forward by the government is population consolidation, to concentrate the population onto fewer islands. One challenge is that people are moving onto Malé, which is already heavily crowded, instead of onto other designated island for relocation (Kothari, 2013).

The President, Mohamed Nasheed, has expressed the will to obtain land in other countries with similar culture, like Sri Lanka or India, where all of the 300,000 Maldivians could relocate (Burkett, 2011). Another possible alternative was Australia since they have a large share of unoccupied land. The president emphasized that they did not wish to leave their home country but that they are forced to look at alternatives in order to avoid becoming refugees (Ramesh, 2008).

To provoke developed countries into action, the President stated that he sees little chance for the rest of the world if the Maldives can’t be saved (Kothari, 2013).

5. Results

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released a report concerning human rights and climate change. It fails to address what individual states responsibilities should be and rejects that climate change directly breaches international human rights law but it does put forward one very important principle, that responsibilities are not limited geographically within each state. This means that states have a duty to ensure human rights internationally, something that has been heavily contested in certain developed states. This has great importance for climate change, since one of the main concerns is that it will jeopardize human rights globally (Knox, 2009).

5.1 Suggested Mechanisms

Table 1: Advantages and disadvantages of the different suggested mechanisms for climate refugee policy.

<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
<i>New Treaty</i>	<i>Can incorporate climate justice.</i>	<i>Time-consuming process.</i>
<i>Within UNFCCC</i>	<i>Main treaty already accepted by member states.</i>	<i>Climate justice is not included. Reliance on uncertain factors such as technology development.</i>
<i>Supplementary Protocol European Convention on Human Rights.</i>	<i>Main treaty already accepted by member states</i>	<i>Climate justice is not included. Environmental aspect not a fundamental part.</i>

One overarching solution that has been proposed is to compose a new treaty or convention to include climate migrants in international law and give them their own refugee status (Gemenne, 2010). One such solution is to establish a climate-immigration quota system within the UN. Climate migrants would then be relocated based on either the receiving country's carbon emission, making sure those who bears most responsibility for climate change compensates, or based on the country's population size (McNamara & Gibson, 2009). Although, concern has been raised that creating a new and separate mechanism might not be optimal or plausible even though it could be easier to manage (Atapattu, 2009).

A couple of draft conventions have been put forward. One is a "Draft Convention on the International Status of Environmentally-Displaced Persons" from the French University of Limoges. It would be an independent convention including mechanisms for administration, responsibility sharing and assistance. Another one is a project based in Australia "Draft Convention for Persons Displaced by Climate Change", founding an international management for categorization and management of those displaced by climate change (McAdam, 2011).

The optimal thing is probably to make fundamental, large-scale changes such as reforming certain economic sectors and incorporate more factors than income to the concept of "well-being". However, this would require great effort from the international community and will probably not happen in a foreseeable future (Johnson, 2009).

Yet another mechanism is to form a "Protocol on the Recognition, Protection, and Resettlement of Climate Refugees" as a part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Biermann & Boas, 2008). Doing so would put the responsibility for administration to the COP meetings (Atapattu, 2009). This carries with it some crucial advantages, most existing parties to the convention would provide political support and already commonly accepted principles in the UNFCCC could be used to develop mechanisms for climate migrants (Biermann & Boas, 2008). Two principles that are a part of the UNFCCC, which might be especially important, are those of common but differentiated responsibilities and that states should contribute depending on their respective capabilities. This means that since climate change is a globally caused problem, it needs to be handled globally, that since developed nations have caused the majority of the problem they should bear the majority of the responsibility and that wealthier countries should bear a larger share of the cost for mitigating climate change (Bell, 2011). The general opinion is however that mechanisms with a base in the UNFCCC are very problematic. It is crucial to address justice and climate change together,

developing states are highly unlikely to agree to mechanisms where this is not the case. Current international policies need to be developed and supplemented to deal with current and future events. The existing mechanisms are based on assumptions that might be too uncertain, for example the reliance on development of technology, when it comes to forming systematic but flexible mechanisms (Kothari, 2013).

Another option of adding to an existing treaty is to form a supplementary protocol to the existing European Convention on Human Rights on a healthy and safe environment as further protection of human rights and to acknowledge environmental degradation and climate change (McAdam, 2011). Incorporating climate migration as a part of existing Human Rights law has been put forward as the best alternative multiple times, especially since a large share of the displacement will be internal. This would encompass the specific issue of people's well being whilst offering a very adjustable framework. (Hartmann, 2010) However, climate migrants are as previously mentioned in a unique situation, very different from anything currently regulated by law. This means that trying to include them into existing laws may not be optimal since their situation is so vastly different. (Hartmann, 2010)

5.1.2 International Policy Considerations

A difference between climate change induced displacement and political displacement is that climate change impacts are fairly predictable and happens gradually, making planning possible in a way that is almost impossible for political displacement. One important thing to incorporate, regardless of the chosen mechanism, is the thoughts and opinions of the affected people. As previously mentioned, vulnerability is much more than physical impact, the social system of the country plays a crucial part in the outcome of how, who and how many people that end up migrating (Kothari, 2013).

Concern has been raised that a treaty addressing the relocation of affected communities might be counterproductive, missing alternatives where affected population could stay in their homes or at least home countries longer, and instead rushing the migrations process (McAdam, 2011). Incorporating mechanisms for climate migrants into each country's own adaptation schemes are probably easier to achieve (Atapattu, 2009).

Mechanisms should be developed to adequately handle migrants on all levels; regional, national and international efforts are needed with public establishments both in the

home country and the receiving country. The final policy will need to evaluate at risk communities, when resettlement is likely to occur, where these migrants will relocate, develop necessary infrastructure, aiding in the actual relocation process and finally development of integration mechanisms in order to incorporate the migrants in the new host community. A final opinion that has been raised is that drastic measures need to be taken regarding international law and in order to protect climate migrants; binding agreements need to be reached soon (Burkett, 2011).

The phenomenon of entire legally recognized nations disappearing creates a completely new situation; something that existing international law is not designed for. Completely new international mechanisms might be needed in order to adequately handle this since the issue of environmentally driven migration is not best handled through universally applicable and uniform laws but rather through individually adaptable law (Burkett, 2011).

Through international law and the UN Charter, states are obliged to provide international collaboration in regards to human rights. State's policies must promote and work together with the principle of human rights when participating in international negotiations. This connects directly to the issue of climate change consequences and the field of Climate Justice. The right to pursue development puts the responsibility on individual nations to make sure that fundamental resources are equally and adequately accessible whilst the international community holds the responsibility to work towards efficient collaboration and just development policies. If climate change negotiations are unsuccessful, the right to development might be at risk (Cardona, 2009).

6. Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Case Study

The case study of the Maldives shows the desperation and realization of urgency that vulnerable societies experience related to the climate change crisis. Climate change impacts will hit hard against, if not completely destroy, the economy. All of the countries main sectors will be affected. This is even more worrisome when the fact that a large part of population lives below the poverty line is considered.

The less provocative approach that the Maldives are promoting where individuals are not targeted but instead the grand underlying problem with human rights issues and injustice might be less straight forward but possibly more effective in reaching a long-term global solution, especially when it comes to climate migration.

Purchasing of other land is probably the most extreme and controversial measure that has been suggested. First and foremost, moving an entire population comes with a number of logistical concerns such as transportation, new accommodation, cultural adjustment and opportunities for the population to make a living. Second, there is a major justice concern related to this. The Maldives holds very little responsibility for the emissions that might lead to inundation, for them to then have to pay for new land is highly debatable. This clearly shows the injustice of climate change. One country has benefitted from activities that lead to climate change, a different country that has not gained these benefits suffers from the consequences and is then forced to pay to save themselves from them.

Like the president said, there might be little hope for rest of the world since the case of the Maldives proves that the world still is largely passive when it comes to climate migration. However, the case also shows the determination within vulnerable countries, a determination that could be one of the factors that hopefully drives the international community into taking on adequate commitments. The difference between the situation today and when they first started requesting measures in 1987 is that the global community is finally starting to realize the reality

and urgency of climate change that has been recognized within vulnerable communities for decades.

6.2 Suggested Solutions

There are many suggested solutions and it is very difficult to clearly decide which one would result in the best situation for both migrants and host countries. All suggestions have advantages and disadvantages. One primary factor that causes this is that the issue of climate migration is both internal and international. Some mechanisms might be better for internal migrations whilst other options are better for international.

Since the nature of climate migration is so vastly different from traditional political migration in both a strictly quantitative sense but also when it comes to reasons behind and factors surrounding climate migration, such as the fact that the people often wish to keep their government, it is best to separate them.

There are two overarching categories; adding to existing mechanisms or creating a completely new mechanism for climate migrations. Adding to an existing mechanism has one major advantage, countries have already signed and ratified it, making the process much quicker. However, it is far from clear which existing mechanism that most suitable for incorporation of climate migrants. A mixture of existing human rights law and environmental treaties could possibly result in a cohesive mechanism.

Nation bound adaptation schemes, financed by an international adaptation fund, could result in effort and funding being located where it is needed the most but this would have to be accompanied by international mechanisms as well in order to handle cross border displacement (Atapattu, 2009).

6.3 Climate Justice as a Foundation for Climate Migrant Policy

The justice aspect in relation to climate change should and needs to be incorporated in the entire process of building mechanisms, in the process of decision-making, in the framework's response mechanisms, in the connection between developed and developing nations and also in examining the interaction between climate change impacts and other disturbances on people's lives (Thomas & Twywin, 2005). But climate justice is still just an ideal; it is not a set principle.

This weakens the potential of climate justice severely. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in the UNFCCC incorporates a large share of the climate justice field and is an alternative to build arguments on and primarily promote developed countries into taking responsibility.

If a new treaty is formed climate justice can be incorporated. Since the climate justice concept encompasses the most important fundamental factors of climate migration it can be a very cohesive basis for policy. However, the issue of climate migration is getting increasingly urgent, there might not be time to form a completely new treaty.

6.4 Challenges

When the form of the treaty has been settled, one challenge will be to distinguish climate change from other reasons behind migration (Burkett, 2011). It is very difficult to differentiate between people moving because of climate change impacts and people moving because of poverty, something that has been observed in slums of Bangladesh where both of these push-factors are present. However, if climate change deepens poverty, then it can be seen as the contributing factor, even though it isn't the direct physical impacts of climate change that drives migration. To instead label the entire phenomenon as 'survival migration' has been put forward to highlight the fact that migration occurs as a result of many interacting factors. It can be valuable to think about this when developing international treaties and with what institution responsibility should lie (McAdams, 2011).

The fact that there has been a general unwillingness to form a treaty presents a daunting challenge (McAdams, 2011). Looking at climate negotiations today and the many difficulties surrounding both forming of the actual treaty but also implementation of the finalized treaty. It is not unbelievable that negotiations concerning climate migrants will be just as controversial. Even if a treaty was settled, implementation of it still poses a challenge. Current law on refugees is obviously not enough to handle the relatively small flow of refugees in the world today, proving that the actual law only is a part of the entire mechanism, implementation and enforcement is what creates the final situation (McAdams, 2011).

Considering the fact that the 10 million refugees present in the world today is seen as a major challenge and that there is no cohesive or durable solution for this situation, handling a possibly 20 times higher flow in the future will clearly need great effort from the

entire international community. One thing that differs between climate negotiations and future climate migrant negotiations is that climate mitigation is in a sense voluntary but when climate migration is induced the international community will not have a choice, migration will happen. Planning for this migration will only facilitate the process for both migrants and host countries.

7. Conclusion

The world is not just. Costs, benefits and responsibility for climate change are unevenly distributed between developed and developing countries. In order to rectify this measures will need to be taken (Running, 2014). By working with a foundation in climate justice the well-being of humans is put in focus. However, Climate Justice is not a set principle, it is still merely an ideal and too indistinct to use as something legally binding. It can be used to share responsibility, something that is crucial when forming international treaties.

Many different, widely varying policies have been suggested for dealing with the impending problem of climate migrants. There are mainly two different options, either climate migration is included in existing mechanisms, such as the UNFCCC or creating an entirely new treaty that only deals with climate migration.

Further research should be made on the efficiency on the various suggested mechanisms, especially concerning economy and integration. Had I had more time I would have gone further in depth on the different suggestions to paint a more detailed picture of how they would appear in reality.

As a final note, it should be said that the most important aspect to deal with when it comes to climate migrants is climate change. It is easy to forget about this when the focus lies on developing mechanisms for migration, when the best possible outcome would be to avoid the reasons behind migration all together (Johnson, 2009).

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Bild 1: "Klimat-Refugees Välkomna" till IT'S Stockholm Convention 2022



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