EMN Swedish Presidency Conference

Displacement and migration related to disasters, climate change and environmental degradation

11-12 May 2023

CONFERENCE REPORT

The conference on "Displacement and migration related to disasters, climate change and environmental degradation" took place in Stockholm on 11-12 May 2023. It brought together policy makers, EU agencies, NGOs, international organisations and academia to explore the potential impact of climate change on global migration patterns, discuss policy developments on the topic, and debate potential future policy action to address the challenges and impacts.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

OPENING AND INTRODUCTION OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference was opened by **Ylva Johansson** (EU Commissioner for Home Affairs) through a video message. Highlighting the increase in natural disasters and displaced persons, the Commissioner gave examples of extreme weather events, such as flooding in Pakistan, drought in Somalia, wildfires in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Sahel and other regions. She referred to the link between natural disasters and inequality, vulnerability, and poverty, which are conditions conducive to conflict, crisis and war, and further stated that "we must not hide away from the facts. We need to look ahead". With this in mind, Commissioner Johansson emphasised the importance of the green transition linked to the labour market, where developing green skills and bringing skilled labour from abroad can support the process. She referred to the actions already taken by the European Commission to support most affected people and regions, for example: 30% of EU development and cooperation funds go towards climate goals; the publication of the European Commission's Staff Working Document[1] and the joint EMN-OECD paper on climate change and migration.[2] Finally, the Commissioner welcomed the ensuing discussion in the conference among experts, encouraging comprehensive and constructive discussions, which are essential to confront the challenges that climate change and natural disasters bring.

In a subsequent introductory speech, **Maria Malmer Stenergard** (Minister for Migration, Ministry of Justice) outlined the Swedish, European, and global dimensions of climate-related migration. Sweden has been supporting global work to address migratory pressures, as well as on the green transition, understanding that climate migration also implies investment in developing partnership and economic development across borders. Europe has

[1] European Commission, Staff working document 'Addressing displacement and migration related to disasters, climate change and environmental degradation' 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/swd_2022_displacement_and_migration_related_to_disasters_climate_change_and_environmental_degradation.pdf, last accessed on 20 July 2023.

[2] European Migration Network (EMN) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 'Displacement and migration related to disasters, climate change and environmental degradation, (2023) https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/document/download/54124ff4-841a-4bbc-98b8-79ba1d4cc75b_en?filename=EMN_Inform_climate_related_migration_final_May2023_090523.pdf, last accessed on 25 May 2023.

also been seeing an increase in forest fires, rising sea levels and extreme weather conditions that, among other consequences, leads to economic losses. Forecasting predictions show increasingly severe events already within the next two years. The Minister also referenced the 2021 World Bank Groundswell report on internal displacement rates by 2050.[3] On a global level, there is a need to address the root causes and drivers of climate change to reduce its impact. She also emphasised the need for cross-border cooperation, the exchange of experience, and evidence-based solutions.

Mikael Ribbenvik (Director General, Swedish Migration Agency) spoke next, emphasising the need for cooperation across borders, agencies and experts. The Director General focused on mixed mobility patterns that will require pooled expertise and interconnected policy action at all levels. Bringing into focus examples of Kenya, Somalia, and the Horn of Africa undergoing the most severe droughts in over 40 years, he highlighted the interlinkage between climate change and conflict. There is a risk of having too much of a Eurocentric view instead of understanding the larger context and what is at stake globally. He encouraged the cultivation of knowledge of the current state-of-play and the long-term outlook, as well as discussion on the short-term challenges, where collective expertise can find solutions.

KEYNOTE SPEECHES

Rainer Münz (Professor, Central European University) gave an in-depth overview of the impact climate change has on human mobility, and its implications on both the global and local dimension. Prof. Münz noted that not every disaster leads to displacement, but natural disasters displace large numbers of people. Natural disasters lead more often to displacement that can be reversed whereas gradual changes in the climate more often lead to permanent changes of residence. The degradation of the subsistence base also has the indirect effect of (perceived) negative economic change. He also highlighted the urgency of the changes we are already witnessing today with increasing numbers of natural disasters. While displacement across international borders is still rare, there were about 342 million people between 2008 and 2021, who have been displaced by natural disasters. Additionally, the risk of displacement is estimated at 3% for people living in high-income countries, compared with 68% for those living in low-income countries. He suggested to 1) increase resilience through infrastructure and preparation through investment, humanitarian and disaster relief, 2) prevention of greenhouse gas emissions (referencing the European Green Deal),[4] 3) preparing for permanent resettlement, 4) changing the subsistence base in terms of economic planning, and 5) adaptation and mitigation, such as the protection of freshwater resources. For more information, he referenced the 2022 Delmi report 'Climate Change, Displacement, Mobility and Migration.' [5]

In a second keynote speech, **Koko Warner** (Director, Global Data Institute, International Organization for Migration (IOM)) pointed out the importance of the timing of responses to disasters. She focused on four patterns that cause people to move: 1) internal displacement, in looking for shelter, 2) income and work, where economic reasons and remittances are the major motivation, 3) stability, linked with the organisation or disorganisation of places, and 4) habitability of a place. Vulnerabilities need to be acknowledged and work to address them needs to be conducted with urgency, such as providing universal healthcare and engaging communities.

PANEL 1: THE EFFECTS OF CLIMAGE CHANGE ON MIGRATION. EXAMPLES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Facilitated by **Joakim Palme** (Chair, Delmi – Delegation for Migration Studies), the first panel provided insights on the role of climate change and the impact it has on the drivers of migration by providing examples from different parts of the globe.

Mariam Yassin Hagi Yussuf (Special Presidential Envoy for Migrants, Returnees and Children's Rights, Office of the President of the Federal Government of Somalia) discussed the increase of internally displaced persons and focused on finding long-term solutions, predominantly by putting systems in place that focus on prevention and capacity building beyond mitigating risks. While most people are currently internally displaced by natural disasters, the increase of frequency and intensity of natural disasters and long-term impacts of climate change will soon

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[3] Clement, Viviane; Rigaud, Kanta Kumari; de Sherbinin, Alex; Jones, Bryan; Adamo, Susana; Schewe, Jacob; Sadiq, Nian; Shabahat, Elham. 2021. Groundswell Part 2: Acting on Internal Climate Migration. © World Bank, Washington, DC. http://hdl.handle.net/10986/36248, last accessed on 25 May 2023.

[4] Communication on the European Green Deal, COM (2019) 640 final, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1576150542719&uri=COM%3A2019%3A640%3AFIN, last accessed on 25 May 2023.

[5] Czaika, M. and R. Münz, 'Climate Change, Displacement, Mobility and Migration' (2022), *Delmi Research Overview*, https://www.delmi.se/media/qtogzthu/delmi-research-overview-2022_9-webb.pdf, last accessed on 24 May 2023.

result in more movements across borders. She also focused on the connection of climate degradation caused by climate change and conflict, giving the example of Sudan.

Walter Kälin (Envoy of the Chair, Platform on Disaster Displacement) explained under which conditions people move, notably through the combination of environmental drivers with political, demographic, economic and social drivers. These multi-causal factors leave many entry points for policy to come in. In his speech, he noted that action can be taken on climate change mitigation to reduce hazards; migration seen as adaptation and planned relocation can reduce exposure; and disaster risk reduction and reliance building can reduce vulnerability. He raised differences between types of displacement, notably sudden-onset, slow-onset, multi-hazard, and disaster linked to conflict. Putting forward solutions, he suggested forming agreements on the free movement of persons, developing related humanitarian visas and temporary protection, setting immigration quotas for people from affected countries, and adopting (regional) refugee law.

Anders Jägerskog (Senior Water Resources Management Specialist, the World Bank) showcased predictions and forecasting on possible future migratory patterns and looked at the major drivers behind migration. Echoing the suggestions that came also from the previous speakers, he emphasised the importance of resilience, prevention, coordination and planning. Long-term measures and preparedness to protect fresh-water resources and investing in sustainable water infrastructure will be particularly important. Policymakers will likely face trade-offs between short-term, uncoordinated measures to respond to immediate needs and long-term solutions. He concluded with focusing on development and the need to provide support to people affected by climate change by helping them move away from, as well as back to, their home countries.

Glynis Harrison (Secretary General, Namibia Red Cross Society) brought into the discussion the important aspect of addressing the host communities who are usually the first responders to disaster management, bringing up the experience of supporting communities on the ground in Namibia. She recalled the many young mothers arriving with their children and the need to understand and respect people wanting to maintain their ways after they have been displaced. She highlighted issues of infant mortality, food insecurity and malnutrition, and urged to consider the impact that all combined factors will have on the development of future populations. The need to act on a global, collective scale is critical, suggesting we need to change the language we use to speak about these issues in a way that can reach everyone. It is particularly important to understand the local level of upcoming events and actions that need to take place on the ground.

In the follow-up discussion, speakers were asked to address where they thought the most important knowledge gaps are. All speakers pointed to the need to bridge the knowledge into action. While certain data gaps were identified, such as data on the drivers of migration (Mariam Yassin Hagi Yussuf), what happens to displaced persons in the mid- to long-run (Walter Kälin) or knowledge gaps on long-term repercussions (Anders Jägerskog), there is consensus that there is enough information to take immediate action. Joakim Palme noted that the best predictions for the future are not necessarily about absolute accuracy but when they spark action. Glynis Harrison suggested that indigenous knowledge could be used regarding how we communicate across different communities.

PANEL 2: POSSIBLE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON MIGRATION TOWARDS THE EMN MEMBER AND OBSERVER COUNTRIES – WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

Moderated by **Bernd Parusel** (Senior Researcher, Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, SIEPS) the second panel reflected on longer-term developments regarding migration and the difficulties in identifying and forecasting climate-related migration.

Michael Shotter (Director, Migration and Asylum, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission) focused on the Pact on Migration and Asylum, the Green Deal, and efforts taken by the European Commission regarding long-term planning. Educational opportunities, job creation in countries of origin, and climate resilience were highlighted. Particularly regarding climate resilience, he stressed that this was not only a matter of solidarity, but also a matter of self-interest for the EU and its Member States. He suggested that a better collective understanding of the drivers, vulnerabilities, and risks that cause displacement will lead to better identification and forecasting of migration patterns. The Pact on Migration and Asylum names climate change as one of the key global societal challenges impacting migration. The Pact also calls for increased efforts in monitoring the migratory situation, anticipating and addressing possible migration crises. He noted that the conference is an important step in the process of the European Commission's further engagement and better understanding of the issues at hand.

Dina Ionesco (Senior Advisor on Migration, Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) & Vulnerable Twenty Group (V20)) discussed resilience, policy coherence, and the role of migrants as active drivers of actions to protect the climate. Referencing the Climate Ambassador for Ambition at CVF, she noted that if climate change is the biggest threat to human rights, then activism on climate change can be the biggest opportunity to safeguard these rights. Also Climate Prosperity Plans (CPPs) that build on existing climate platforms, focusing on the implementation of climate reliant and climate prosperity pathways was mentioned. CPPs are starting to integrate migration topics into future plans and to boost financing for green economies. Migration policy can be a point of conjunction, as cooperation and initiatives on migration management are complementary with climate resilience pathways to avoid situations of crisis migration. She emphasised addressing the root causes and the importance of including migrants in the debate.

Lisa Andersson (Economist, International Migration Division, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)) presented on how migration can be seen as a solution to some of the challenges ahead in the green transition through labour migration policy. For instance, international students and start-up visas can boost green innovation. She also noted that it will be important to consider how labour markets will be impacted by skills bottlenecks created by green policies and the green transition. Additionally, it will be important to focus on integration aspects and the inclusion of low-skilled migrants in the development of long-term plans. She concluded with the suggestion to facilitate remittances and to increase cooperation for a global green transition.

Salvatore Petronella (Strategic Advisor, Labor Mobility Partnerships (LaMP)) focused on the intersection of climate change and economic migration. He placed climate change within the global context, highlighting the global demographic changes of aging populations in wealthier countries and higher birth rates in sub-Saharan countries. People's lives are largely determined by where they are born, which brings into the discussion the larger challenge of bringing global justice. Data on climate change and the devastation it will bring is alarming, but the data on projected movements are not at this stage. We are not looking at large, unpredictable waves of migration. We know where climate change will have the biggest impact, with internal as well as cross-border movement that will take place as a result. Tools that are available include circular migration schemes (e.g. Pacific Labour Migration Schemes), the creation of legal migration pathways, and creating more interlinkages between policy fields. We will need to change our thinking around migration, where media can serve as an important tool to shift the narrative from one of crisis to one of action, and where humans are seen as actors rather than victims.

In the follow-up discussion, speakers were asked what could be done to raise awareness among people. Dina Ionesco pointed to education as a key way forward, noting the anxiety over climate change that can lead to inaction. In response to a question from the audience regarding specific sectors that have been identified with labour shortages, Salvatore Petronella suggested that countries review their Labour Shortage Occupation lists frequently and engage in dialogue with the private sector since they will have the data on where there are labour and skills shortages.

PANEL 3: HOW ARE THE EMN MEMBER AND OBSERVER COUNTRIES CURRENTLY ADDRESSING THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISPLACEMENT AND MIGRATION ACROSS DIFFERENT POLICY AREAS?

Moderated by **Elin Jakobsson** (Analyst at FOI (Swedish Defence Research Agency)), the third panel covered actions being taken by EMN Member and Observer Countries to mitigate the known effects of climate change on migration. Topics covered included contingency planning, possible national humanitarian protection statuses, resilience, and plans to establish new livelihoods in regions affected by climate change.

Matthew Scott (Senior Researcher, Human Rights and the Environment thematic area, Raoul Wallenberg Institute) presented on the legal responses of Nordic countries to inter-regional disaster displacement. In the 1990s, Finland and Sweden had a provision for disasters that was revoked in the context of the increased number of people seeking international protection in Europe in 2015.[6] Sweden and Finland pioneered legal provisions, although they were lacking in their implementation. There were challenges in defining and drafting the conditions under which protection could be granted regarding environmental degradation. He continued by providing examples of Denmark, issuing some residence permits to people impacted by famine in Afghanistan, and of Austria, sometimes using

[6] Mattehew Scott & Russell Garner, Nordic Norms, Natural Disasters and International Protection: Swedish and Finnish Practice in European Perspective, *Nordic Journal of International Law 91 (2022) 101-123, brill.com /nord.*

subsidiary protection for cases involving disaster displacement. He concluded by suggesting to integrate the protection agenda in Europe that most EU Member States have already endorsed on a national level.[7]

Göran Holmqvist (Director, Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)) raised moral questions surrounding climate financing and adaptation. As greenhouse gas emissions have been mostly from wealthier countries, the question remains on how this can be compensated. He also referrenced the Global Compact on Refugees.[8] There is a need to support developing countries, who host 85% of the world's refugees. There should be greater investments towards disaster risk reduction, such as Sweden's response to cyclone Gorky in Bangladesh in 1991. Smart climate agriculture was another initiative mentioned, such as water irrigation systems in Afghanistan, as well as urban planning to be better adapted to changes in the climate, such as UN-HABITAT Climate Action 4 Cities.[9] Shock-Responsive Social Protection was also suggested as an initiative to take on board, such as the productive safety net programme that was developed in Ethiopia. He concluded by suggesting to strengthen built-in contingency, so that when a disaster occurs there is an immediate response and appropriate support available; for example, contingency planning could be supported by satellite mapping to gather data to assess arising changes and the size of an intervention.

Raffaella Greco-Tonegutti (Lead Expert on Migration and Development, Enabel- Belgian Development Agency) stressed the need to adapt solutions to local situations and needs. The climate change phenomenon is global, but the impact is felt locally. There needs to be cooperation and policy coherence, as well as changes and initiatives that are communicated in a language that is accessible to people. She demonstrated that circular mobility could provide a climate change-adaptive solution, giving examples from Senegal of sustainable water management and sustainable food production (PEM WECCO). Skills partnerships can support adaptations to climate change. Returning to Commissioner Ylva Johansson's speech, she emphasised the two points on professional mobility and durable solutions for protracted displacement. Mobility should be considered as a way we can build resilience and to speed up the green transition process.

Chiara Scissa (Expert in International Protection and Human Rights, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies) presented on legislative examples from Italy having specific protection statuses for climate-related disasters and displacement that are unique in Europe. Insights can be taken from Italy's legislative initiatives, including implicit and explicit support and protection that is given to those who are escaping natural disasters. For example, Italy has a protection status against contingent and exceptional calamities. She presented the specific legislative initiatives from Italy that can be used as tools to adapt to emerging needs.

Laurent Rucker (Head of the Mission for Democratic Governance, French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs) focused on the Just Transition,[10] facilitating the recognition of skills, and investing in green skills. He presented examples from France and its role on the international scene, highlighting the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)[11] and how it connects local actors into a broader network. France is not in favour of amending the 1951 Geneva Convention, as a reopening of it would entail the need to ratify it again, with no guarantee that the 140 signatory states would do so, and therefore with the risk of creating legal gaps for many asylum seekers. Moreover, refugee status can only be acquired in the context of transnational movements and therefore does not take into account internally displaced persons (IDPs), which represent the majority of cases for environmental displacement. France therefore supports the implementation of concrete mechanisms, based on existing tools or on innovative solutions.

In the follow-up discussion, speakers discussed how these ideas and services can be best aligned to provide public support within a short timeframe. Suggestions that arose included increasing cooperation to share practices; emphasising human agency to respond to the loss of lives and livelihoods caused by displacement; and the adoption of a social science understanding of how disasters happen and to make this easily accessible to policy makers.

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[7] The Nansen Initiative, Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change, Vol 1, December 2015, https://disasterdisplacement.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/EN_Protection_Agenda_Volume_I_-low_res.pdf, last accessed on 9 June 2023.
[8] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 'The Global Compact on Refugees' (2018), https://www.unhcr.org/media/37797, last accessed on 25 May 2023.
[9] UN-HABITAT, Climate Action 4 Cities, https://unhabitat.org/climate-action, last accessed 25 May 2023.
[10] European Commission, Just Transition Platform, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/just-transition-fund/just-transition-platform_en, last accessed on 25 May 2023.
[11] Global Forum on Migration and Development, https://www.gfmd.org/, last accessed on 25 May 2023.

PANEL 4: HOW COULD THE EMN MEMBER AND OBSERVER COUNTRIES ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF DISPLACEMENT AND MIGRATION RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE FUTURE, WITH EXISTING OR NEW MIGRATION POLICY APPROACHED?

Moderated by **Camille Le Coz** (Senior Policy Analyst, Migration Policy Institute (MPI)), the fourth panel looked at opportunities to address the predicted effects of climate change, including identifying already existing policy tools and putting forward new strategies, policies and other innovative approaches.

Andrew Harper (Special Advisor to the High Commissioner for Climate Action, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)) stated that when talking about protection, it is important to discuss not only the protection of individuals, but also of host communities, countries and regions. There is ample evidence of the impact of climate change on generating or exacerbating conflicts, fragility, and thus displacement. In 60 years from now the world will not be as peaceful and calm as it is now; there is a need to prepare. The root causes of global warming are not being addressed; we need to change how we are working before more disasters take place. The solution cannot only be investing more money in emergency support; what is needed is to invest in enabling climate-change adaptation. Funds need to be raised, stakeholders need to work together by enabling local actors to take action, address structural divisions and silos that hinder informed action. He suggested increasing cooperation to optimise complementary mandates and expertise across sectors and aid organisations.

Michelle Leighton (Chief of the Labour Migration Branch, International Labour Organisation (ILO)) focused on labour migration in relation to climate change. She noted that half of the world already depends economically on natural ecosystems. Climate change is expected to drive around 10 million people into poverty and consequently, 2.2% of working hours and about 80 million jobs will be lost due to raising temperatures alone by 2030. These aspects need to be taken into consideration to address the current system: new jobs need to be created, substituted, and transformed. 33% of workers are not covered by social protection, many of which are migrant workers, mostly because of lack of legal pathways to move for work. Even migrants working regularly in the EU are often worse off than citizens in the countries where they work (low pay, low qualified jobs, etc.). This creates a more segmented labour market; with the coming climate crisis, migrants are likely to be the most affected by job loss or worsening conditions, resulting in decreased remittances, resulting in further difficulties in their home countries. Future responses should also take into consideration how labour markets can seek to foster labour mobility. More guidance needs to be provided; for this, there is a UN task force working on developing guidelines for government.[12] We are seeing transitions, some of which are positive: notably new jobs in clean energy and the emergence of a green economy. The question remains, however, about whether there are adequate labour skills available to fill the labour market needs. For example: are migrants' skills known and adapted? How are women integrated? There is a substantial data gap which is currently being addressed in the EU, but not in low- and middle-income countries. Some countries are discussing labour mobility schemes bilaterally, for example, Argentina adopted a wider visa category, innovations in promoting business-to-business schemes, and talent partnerships. Another point for attention should be to address pay gaps, resulting in social dumping and exploitation. Finally, there are also ongoing positive regional processes, notably the dialogue in the Pacific,[13] to facilitate labour mobility. In addition to labour mobility, future responses should also focus on facilitating adaptation process.

François Gemenne (Senior Research Associate and Director, The Hugo Observatory, University of Liège) highlighted that the situation is dire and will result in a negative spiral of exacerbation of vulnerabilities and inequalities. Climate change will not only drive migration directly but will also generate more inequalities. Climate change will also likely trigger the rise of anti-immigration political groups and nationalistic governments. Across Europe and beyond, there are portions of the population who are becoming increasingly anti-immigrant and with growing indifference to the human repercussions. Actions need to focus on narratives and to better understand why there is a negative perception of migration; until a pro-migration perception is established in public opinion, there is no chance that pro-migration policy will be successful. His second recommendation was to focus on how populations in the global south perceive migration and the impact of migration. People may not be interested in the global perspective, but rather on the impact of climate change on their realities (what they perceive, feel, and

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[12] United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Task Force on Measuring Labour Mobility, https://unece.org/statistics/networks-of-experts/task-force-measuring-labour-mobility, last accessed 25 May 2023.
[13] International Labour Migration, High-level Dialogue on the New Regional Framework on Climate Mobility concludes (2022), https://www.ilo.org/suva/public-information/WCMS_850454/lang--en/index.htm, last accessed 25 May 2023.

expect). It is essential to understand what is driving migration policy decisions; moving away from large migration models to tackle the drivers of migration policies. His third recommendation was to address the difficult discussion about preventive relocation in view of climate change effects. Governments should take into account the unavoidable impacts of climate change and plan for international relocation of some populations which are currently living in zones that will become inhabitable. Governments should engage with local communities and projects that can be more swiftly implemented and shift current ways of working to support community adoption plans.

Amreen Jahan (Counsellor, Bangladesh Embassy in Stockholm) discussed the situation in Bangladesh that is suffering heavily from natural disasters, where it has been ranked as the seventh most extreme disaster-prone country and sixth when it comes to internal displacement. Populations of the large coastal areas are the most affected by this; these phenomena generate significant internal migration to the capital, Dhaka, resulting in heavy socio-economic difficulties in the city due to lack of livelihood, housing and risk of exploitation. It is estimated that in Bangladesh alone, three million people will be displaced by 2025; this includes large numbers of Rohingya refugees. Bangladesh suffers heavily from disasters related to climate change, yet it makes a minimum contribution to the carbon emissions. Women and children are the most vulnerable, and therefore a gender-based approach is needed. The government developed a dedicated emergency plan and set up an emergency prevention fund. Furthermore, Bangladesh is a member of a number of international initiatives (e.g. the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) and the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)) seeking to address climate change challenges. Since the 1970s, national policies have managed to drastically reduce causalities.

In the follow-up discussion, speakers highlighted the importance to localise efforts, reflect on gender dynamics, aim to change the narratives around migration and climate change, create funding initiatives, and to clarify who to hold accountable for various initiatives.

CLOSING REMARKS

Magnus Ovilius (Head of Sector Forecasting, Preparedness and Policy Monitoring, Chair of the EMN, DG HOME, European Commission) concluded the event by providing a comprehensive overview of the main thematic elements that each speaker presented. Climate change, environmental degradation together with natural and man-made disasters and in conjunction with population growth will increasingly result in more displacement and migration. Cooperation, resilience, and proactive planning across sectors (development, humanitarian, migration, economic, environmental) will be essential. He emphasised the importance of migration forecast financing, with faster and more focused funding to the local communities and people at risk of being affected by climate change. He went on to state the strong need for better early warning and forecasting to better predict environment and climate change degradation so that mitigating action can be taken. Events-based scenarios would provide better preparedness and contingency planning in answering the What? Where? Who? and the Size of the Impact. This is a need to foster better resilience beyond the humanitarian assistance dimension. The importance of not only speaking the "same language" in terms of creating policy coherence, but also in better coordination across policy frameworks was highlighted.

To foster a better understanding of the issues at hand, accessibility of information to the broader public needs to be improved by addressing displacement and migration narratives from climate change in an objective and factual way as impacts will be global. In this context, it is ultimately an issue of also facing the ethical questions on global justice. The issues of statelessness that arise due to displacements across borders are also critical to address. Lastly, Magnus Ovilius closed by quoting President von der Leyen at the Opening of the High-Level Conference 'Investing in climate action: The Make-or-Break Decade', in cooperation with the European Investment Bank: "I want this decade to be the Roaring Twenties of climate action and climate investment. Europe must lead this change. It is our last chance to stop climate change. And it is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to become global leaders in the economy of the future."[14]

[14] European Commission (2021) 'Speech by President von der Leyen at the Opening of the High-Level Conference 'Investing in climate action: The Make-or-Break Decade', in cooperation with the EIB', https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_21_1361, last accessed 24 May 2023.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

During the conference, a number of themes reoccurred in several of the panels and by many of the speakers. The following are the major takeaways:

- There is already enough information on consequences of climate change to take immediate action.
- There is knowledge about how climate change affects migration – but there is a need to know more about needs and possible actions on the local level.
- The discussion needs to move from protection of individuals to protection of communities, countries, and regions.
- Effects of climate change are felt locally – therefore the solution also needs to be adapted to the local situation and needs. This can be done by supporting community adaption plans. Local host communities also need active support, as they are the first line of response.
- Cooperation and proactive planning across sectors and organisations will be essential.
- Move from re-action to pro-action – there is a need to focus on prevention, it is too late to act when a disaster has already happened.
- Greater investments towards disaster risk reduction, smart climate agriculture and urban planning will build resilience.
- The negative perception of migration diffuses the potential of migration as a solution to some of the challenges of climate change.
- Labour migration, creation of legal migration pathways, and circular migration could all be parts of the solution and essential in a green transition.