

ROUTLEDGE STUDIES IN DEVELOPMENT, MOBILITIES AND
MIGRATION

Organizational Perspectives on Environmental Migration

Edited by
Kerstin Rosenow-Williams and
François Gemenne

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ROUTLEDGE


Organizational Perspectives on Environmental Migration

Over the past decade, international organizations (IOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have increasingly focused their efforts on the plight of environmental migrants in both industrialized and developing countries. However, to date very few studies have analysed the influence and rhetoric of advocacy groups in the debates on environmental migration.

Organizational Perspectives on Environmental Migration fills this lacuna by drawing together and examining the related themes of climate change and environmental degradation, migration and organizational studies to provide a fresh perspective on their increasing relevance. In order to assess the role of IOs and NGOs in the environmental migration discourse and to understand their interaction and their ways of addressing the topic, the book contains a wide-range of contributions covering the perspectives of organizational sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, geographers, lawyers and practitioners. The chapters are organized thematically around the perspectives of key actors in the area of environmental migration, including IOs, courts and advocacy groups. The geographically diverse and interdisciplinary range of contributions makes this volume an essential foundational text for organizational responses to environmental migration.

This volume will be of great interest to students and scholars of migration studies, international relations, organizational sociology, refugee law and policy, and development studies.

Kerstin Rosenow-Williams is a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict and at the Chair for Sociology/Organisation, Migration, Participation, Ruhr University Bochum, Germany.

François Gemenne is a research fellow in Political Science (FNRS/CEDEM – University of Liège/CEARC – University of Versailles), and an associate expert with CERI – Sciences Po, France.

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Acknowledgements

In October 2013, we discussed our current research on organizational perspectives at the 'Climate Change, Migration and Conflict: Humanitarian Perspectives and Responses' panel at the Third World Conference on Humanitarian Studies in Istanbul. We agreed with the audience that not only have academics and politicians increasingly addressed the challenge of environmental migration but also many types of organizations ranging from small non-governmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations, to international organizations, such as various United Nations bodies or the International Organization for Migration.

However, organizational perspective on environmental migration had so far received limited attention in academic discourses. It was this observation that led to the idea to gather a group of academics and practitioners working in the field of migration to discuss the current state of affairs both from a scholarly and practical perspective. The aim was to outline where the academic, legal, public and political discussions currently stand and how these debates are related to the experiences of those actors who advocate for the rights and the protection of environmental migrants.

In November 2014, 28 participants from 13 different countries and three different continents gathered in Rome to participate in well-informed, up-to-date and lively discussions that comparatively addressed the organizational challenges and possible solutions for people being displaced by environmental or climate change-related factors. We deeply thank each participant for their contribution and valuable input that helped advance each of the chapters that are now presented in this volume.

The workshop benefited from the support of the Academia Belgica, and was funded by the COST Action 'Climate Change and Migration: Knowledge, Law and Policy, and Theory', which provides opportunities for experts, practitioners, researchers and policy-makers to exchange, develop and improve on knowledge and tools surrounding issues of climate change and environmental migration. We thank the COST secretariat, especially Catherine Alexander and Andrew Baldwin, in helping us organize this event.

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Kerstin Rosenow-Williams and François Gemenne
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Abbreviations

AU	African Union
AWG-LCA	Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BCCSAP	Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
CAF	Cancun Adaptation Framework
CAMM	Common Agenda for Migration and Mobility
CBDR	Common but Different Responsibilities
CCA	Climate Change Adaption
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CCEMA	Climate Change, Environment and Migration Alliance
CCIS	Joint Paper on Climate Change and International Security
CEARC	Cultures Environments Arctic Representations Climate
CEDEM	Center for Ethnic and Migration Studies
CEGIS	Centre for Environment and Geographic Information Services
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CEN	Center for Earth System Research and Sustainability
CERI	Center for International Studies and Research
CMP	Conference of the Parties Serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol
CNA	Center for Naval Analyses
COAST	Coastal Association for Social Transformation
COHRE	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
COP	Conference of the Parties
COREPER	Committee of Permanent Representatives
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
DG	Directorate-General
DG CLIMA	Directorate-General for Climate Action
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction

DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
ECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECJ	Court of Justice of the European Union
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EDP	Environmentally Displaced Person
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFMSV	Environmentally Forced Migration and Social Vulnerability
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMSVA	Environmental Migration, Social Vulnerability and Adaptation Section
EPSRC	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FRONTEX	European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union
GAM	Global Approach to Migration: Priority Actions Focusing on Africa and the Mediterranean
GAMM	Global Approach to Migration and Mobility
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GRC	German Red Cross
GRCY	German Red Cross Youth Organization
HELIX	High-End cLimate Impact eXtremes
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction
HRC	Human Rights Council
HRUFASP	High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDM	International Dialogue on Migration
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IEE	Institute of Development Research and Development Policy
IEO	International Epistemic Organization
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFHV	Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IO	International Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
KNOMAD	Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LiSER	Living Space for Environmental Refugees
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MECC	Migration, Environment and Climate Change
MECLEP	Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Evidence for Policy
MoEF	Ministry of Environment and Forest
MP	Mobility Partnership
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OAS	Organization of American States
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODID	Oxford Department of International Development
OWG	Open Working Group
QD	Qualification Directive
RC/RC	Red Cross/Red Crescent
SAPRSO	Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization
SCPF	Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TPD	Temporary Protection Directive
UK	United Kingdom (of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
UKCCMC	UK Climate Change and Migration Coalition
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNU	United Nations University
UNU-EHS	United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security
ZLHR	Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights

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Contributors

Elmond Bandauko is an urban policy science intern and researcher with the Zimbabwe Democracy Institute in Harare. His research interests are urban systems, urban management and strategic urban planning.

Barbara Bendandi works as a migration and environment policy officer for the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Previously, she worked for other international organizations in the field of environmental conservation (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification [UNCCD] and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)) and advised the Italian government for the G8/G20 Office. She earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University (New York) and is pursuing a PhD in Economics at Ca' Foscari University (Venice).

Julia Blocher is a PhD candidate at the Center for Ethnic and Migration Studies (CEDEM) at the University of Liège and a research assistant for the "Politics of the Earth" research programme at Sciences Po Paris. She previously worked for the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Lena Brenn has been a programme coordinator on disasters and climate change at the Partnership and Policy Department of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) since 2014. Previously, from 2012, she worked on displacement and humanitarian policy at the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

Innocent Chirisa is an urban and regional planner. Since 2007, he has been researching urbanization, environment and housing among other related subjects. He completed his doctoral thesis on the stewardship of peri-urban areas and housing in Zimbabwe at the University of Zimbabwe in 2013. He has published several articles.

Thea Coventry is an admitted lawyer in Australia, and is currently completing a Master of Law in Human Rights at Maastricht University, as well as working as a

graduate research assistant at the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV), Ruhr University Bochum. She previously worked at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal in Sydney.

Clara Crimella works as a migration and environment project officer for the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Prior to joining IOM, Clara worked as a consultant for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Philosophy from La Sapienza University Rome and a Master's degree in International Security from the Paris School of International Affairs (Sciences Po, Paris). She is a specialist in Migration Studies.

François Gemenne, is a research fellow in Political Science (Center for Ethnic and Migration Studies (CEDEM), University of Liège, and Cultures Environments Arctic Representations Climate [CEARC], University of Versailles), and an associate expert with the Center for International Studies and Research (CERI) – Sciences Po. He is a specialist of environmental geopolitics and migration governance, and lectures on these issues at various universities.

Sinja Hantscher is a research fellow at the Chair of International Governance at the University of Münster. Her current research explores how international organizations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), approach climate change and environmental migration. She completed a Bachelor's degree in International Relations and specialized in Conflict Studies for her Master's degree.

Aminul Hoque is the deputy director of the Bangladeshi non-governmental organization Coastal Association for Social Transformation (COAST) Trust. He works as a policy researcher and has experience in development campaigns and policy advocacy in the field of economic, climate change and environmental issues.

Dina Ionesco is the head of the Migration, Environment and Climate Change (MECC) Division at the International Organization for Migration (IOM). She has been coordinating and developing IOM's MECC thematic portfolio since 2011, including policy, research, capacity-building and communication activities.

Charlotte Lülff, LL.M., M.A. is a research associate at the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV), and is completing her PhD at the Institute of Development Research and Development Policy (IEE) at the Ruhr University Bochum.

Sarah Nash is a PhD student in Political Science at the University of Hamburg. She is based in the research group 'Climate Change and Security' within the

Center for Earth System Research and Sustainability (CEN). Her research is funded by a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Angela Pilath is a DPhil candidate at the Oxford Department of International Development (ODID) at the University of Oxford. She holds an MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies from the University of Oxford and a BA (Hons) in European Studies from Maastricht University. Her current research examines the politics of environmental migration focusing on the influence of epistemic actors, the political effects of causal claims and the political economy of knowledge production in the environment-migration nexus.

Alex Randall coordinates the UK Climate Change and Migration Coalition (UKCCMC), a network of refugee and migration rights organizations working together on migration linked to climate change. The coalition aims to alter the media and public discourse around migration and climate change to make it reflect the needs of affected communities.

Kerstin Rosenow-Williams, is a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV) and at the Chair for Sociology/Organisation, Migration, Participation, Ruhr University Bochum, Germany. Her current research focuses on international migration, climate change, humanitarian action and civil society organizations.

Lars Thomann, works as a development consultant, including for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Mariam Traore Chazalnoël has been working with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) since 2011. She currently serves as the Organization's associate expert on migration, environment and climate change.

Sven Walter works as programme officer for the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification's (UNCCD) Liaison Office on Land, Security and Resilience housed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

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1 Introduction

Organizational perspectives on environmental migration

Kerstin Rosenow-Williams

Introduction

Over the past few years several civil society organizations have emerged that are specifically devoted to the plight of environmental migrants, both in industrialized and developing countries. In addition, most large international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and international organizations (IOs) have also developed advocacy work with regard to environmental migration. What is their role in shaping the discourse on environmental migration? How do they interact with other organizations? Very few studies have yet analysed the influence and rhetoric of advocacy groups in the debates on environmental migration.

In order to both address and close this research gap, this publication unites researchers that work on these questions from various disciplinary contexts, including sociology, political science, geography, anthropology, and conflict studies. Contributions also come from members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), INGOs, and IOs who reflect on their organizational needs and challenges to address the topic of environmental migration efficiently in order to reach the targeted audiences (e.g., the general public, policy makers, migrants, or other stakeholders both in the countries affected by environmental migration internally and destination countries worldwide).

To situate the chapters collected in this volume within the current debates on environmental migration, this chapter gives a threefold overview of the state-of-the-art academic, political and legal debates on environmental migration, outlining the main points of departure and remaining gaps. The main contributions and their linkages to these debates, including their theoretical approaches to the study of organizational perspectives on environmental migration, are then briefly introduced.

*Academic debates on environmental migration*¹

Various empirical studies in the field have been conducted clearly establishing the impact of changing climate patterns on local responses, with migration emerging as one adaptation strategy across the globe (Ferris 2013; Ferris *et al.* 2011; Gemenne *et al.* 2011; Kolmannskog 2009a; Rasmussen 2009; UNEP 2012; Warner *et al.* 2009, 2012). In describing the future development of environmental

migration, the latest International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report of Working Group II concluded:

Climate change over the 21st century is projected to increase displacement of people (medium evidence, high agreement). Displacement risk increases when populations that lack the resources for planned migration experience higher exposure to extreme weather events, in both rural and urban areas, particularly in developing countries with low income. Expanding opportunities for mobility can reduce vulnerability for such populations. Changes in migration patterns can be responses to both extreme weather events and longer-term climate variability and change, and migration can also be an effective adaptation strategy. There is low confidence in quantitative projections of changes in mobility, due to its complex, multi-causal nature.

(IPCC 2014: 20)

While the figures on the extent of environmental migration are highly 'contentious' and 'not satisfactory' (Gemenne 2011), the known numbers especially for internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been steadily increasing. By the end of 2013, 51.2 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide including 16.7 million refugees and 33.3 million IDPs (UNHCR 2014: 2–3).

The literature has generally stressed the need to differentiate between national and international environmental migration, temporary and permanent environmental migration (Williams 2008), and environmental migration caused by sudden-onset weather-related extremes, such as heat waves, floods, and cyclones, or by slow-onset deterioration of the environment such as rising sea levels, desertification and permafrost melt (Brown and McLeman 2013; IPCC 2014; Kolmannskog and Trebbi 2010; Warner *et al.* 2013). Displacement has also been identified from conflicts over scarce resources following environmental change or through development projects (Drydyk 2007; Ferris 2011, 2012; Kolmannskog and Trebbi 2010).

The urgency of environmental migration will depend on the combination of factors present described above. Accordingly Renaud *et al.* (2011) differentiate between *environmental emergency migrants*, due to floods or cyclones, *environmentally forced migrants*, due to deteriorating environments such as coastal erosions or sea level rise, and *environmentally motivated migrants*, who might leave a deteriorating environment, such as in cases of desertification or salinification of water supplies, to pre-empt the worst case scenario. Similarly Brown and McLeman (2013) distinguish *distress migration* and *adaptive or amenity seeking migration* patterns which also include movements to regions that have become more habitable due to climatic changes such as is occurring in the Arctic tundra.

Researchers furthermore agree that most migration caused by climate change takes place within nation states (McAdam 2011: 8). Moreover, climate and environmental change is often just one driver for migration among many (Kolmannskog 2008), and while having a limited direct role has a strong effect on various other drivers of migration (Foresight 2011a: 43ff.). The interrelationship

between the varieties of changing climate-related factors and the possible human responses creates a continuum of scenarios that have been summarized under the umbrella term environmental migration. Although freedom of choice as a factor is hard to measure empirically (Renaud *et al.* 2011), the term environmental migration also encompasses voluntary migration patterns that pre-empt forced displacement due to natural or manmade causes. Overall, ‘migration can be seen as a form of adaptation and an appropriate response to a variety of local environmental pressures’ (World Bank 2013: 95).

The most often cited definition on environmental migrants, provided by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2007), also encompasses both voluntary and involuntary migration, making it difficult to incorporate into legal responses as outlined below:

Environmental migrants are persons or groups of persons who, for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive change in the environment that adversely affects their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad.

(IOM 2007: 2–3)

Within the environmental migration research arena, the concepts of vulnerability and resilience, as related to local populations affected by climate change, have received increasing research attention (Afifi and Jäger 2010; Boano *et al.* 2007; Laczko and Aghazarm 2009; Oliver-Smith 2009; Warner *et al.* 2012). According to Brown and McLeman (2013) populations are vulnerable to *biophysical conditions* due to their geographic location, such as flood or drought prone areas. Secondly, vulnerability is affected by the level of household *sensitivity*, that is, particular social, economic and livelihood practices. Thirdly, the individual and community *capacity* to adapt or cope with the changes impacts on the level of vulnerability. Taking these conditions into account, the level of vulnerability differs considerably with, for example, elderly and handicapped people being more vulnerable in emergency evacuations and poorer households being often less capable of adapting their livelihoods to changing climate patterns. This knowledge is of importance to provide targeted assistance and protection.

In their comparative study of changing rainfall patterns in eight countries across several continents, a research team from the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) in Bonn observed four different migration patterns in the context of changing climate conditions (Warner *et al.* 2012). On the one hand, migration takes place as a positive risk management strategy that can improve the resilience of households, such as through remittances or through new livelihood options in the destination area. On the other hand, migration can be less successful, or even not possible at all due to lack of the resources allowing for relocation. As in many forced migration contexts, the people left behind might require as much humanitarian attention as those migrating due to environmental stress (Foresight 2011b: 6).

Overall, the main challenges highlighted by the academic debates on the topic are the need for more research and for consensus on common definitions, which will in turn allow for a comparative approach between different global case studies. Moreover, since the first studies proved the increasing relevance of environmental migration in a globally warming world, calls have been made for policies that adequately address the challenges of environmental migration, including the issues of legal protection and individual rights in cases of displacement (cf. CSC 2013).

Political debates on environmental migration

Environmental migration has been addressed as a topic by international politics since the mid-1990s. In the mid-1980s, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) commissioned a report on ‘Environmental Refugees’ (El-Hinnawi 1985) referring to ‘those people who have been forced to leave their traditional habitat, temporarily or permanently, because of a marked environmental disruption (natural and/or triggered by people) that jeopardized their existence and/or seriously affected the quality of their life’. Since then, the use of the refugee terminology in the context of climate change has been controversially discussed.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) underlines that the Geneva Convention on Refugees provides no basis for claims of climate-induced migrants. The UNHCR and the International Red Cross/Red Crescent (RC/RC) Movement therefore oppose the term ‘climate refugee’ because of its potential to undermine the existing refugee protection system (IFRC 2012; UNHCR 2008). Consequentially, the terms ‘environmental migration’ or ‘environmental displacement’ have gained acceptance in international policy debates.

Throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century, UNHCR strengthened its advocacy work on environmental migration (UNHCR 2009a, 2009b), pressing the international community of nation states to collaborate on the issue and add it to the official UNHCR mandate. One of the tangible outcomes of this advocacy work was the Cancun Outcome Agreement in 2010 at the Conference of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. It was the first time that the international community of nation states recognized ‘climate change-induced migration, displacement and planned relocation’ as an adaption challenge and agreed ‘to enhance [their] understanding, coordination and cooperation’ on the issue (UNFCCC 2010: para. 14[f]).

In December 2011, however, at the UNHCR Ministerial Conference, the international community of nation states refused to extend the UNHCR mandate to address environmental migration at the United Nations (UN) level (Hall 2013; Ministerial Communiqué 2011; McAdam 2013: 15–6). As an alternative response, the Nansen Initiative was established under the leadership of Switzerland and Norway who pledged to address disaster-induced cross-border displacement (The Nansen Initiative 2014a). The first Nansen Conference on

Climate Change and Displacement was held in Oslo in June 2011 and the Nansen Initiative was officially launched in October 2012. With a projected duration of three years, five sub-regional consultative groups from the most affected regions (the Pacific, Central America, Horn of Africa, South Asia and South-East Asia) have taken place leading up to a global consultative meeting in October 2015.

The main goal of the Nansen Initiative is to find new ways to strengthen the international cooperation among states in protecting displaced people. The envisioned protection agenda is based on three pillars: 'i) international cooperation and solidarity; ii) standards for admission, stay and status; and iii) operational responses, including funding mechanisms and responsibilities for international humanitarian and development actors' (The Nansen Initiative 2014b: 1). The Nansen Initiative therefore highlights key legal and policy gaps concerning the international responsibility of states to accept migrants crossing their borders due to sudden-onset or slow-onset natural disasters.

At the same time, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)² has also addressed the issue through various subsidiary bodies. A former IASC Task Force on Climate Change, established in 2008, addressed the topic of environmental migration when outlining the general challenges posed to humanitarians by a changing climate:

Climate change increases the frequency, intensity and uncertainty of weather and climatic hazards such as floods, tropical cyclones, heat waves and droughts. It can also lead to ecosystem degradation, reduced availability of water and food, increase of insect plagues and health threats such as malnutrition and diseases like malaria, diarrhoea and dengue, impact on livelihoods, and may provoke conflict and migration and displacement. Few people will be unaffected by climate change, with the poorest and most vulnerable populations most at risk.

(IASC 2010: 1)

A sub-committee of the IASC Task Force entitled 'Climate Change and Migration' was also established. Its goal was to develop a joint position in order to best influence the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations in Poznan (2008), Copenhagen (2009) and Cancun (2010), identifying, for example, existing legal protection gaps for those 'directly affected by the effects of climate change' (IASC 2008: 1; cf. Hall forthcoming).

International legal debates on environmental migration

The third context in which environmental migration has been debated is within the framework of international law (Kälin and Schrepfer 2012; Kolmannskog 2009b; Kolmannskog and Myrstad 2009; McAdam 2011, 2012). Legal protection mechanisms for environmental migration are discussed in the context of national legislations, regional frameworks and international treaties such as the Geneva

Convention on Refugees and its additional protocols (UNHCR 2010) or international human rights law (UNHCR 2011). As Leighton explains,

Human rights law, as a general matter, obligates states to safeguard the life and property of those within a state's territory against threats of disaster and foreseeable harm. It requires states to mitigate the negative impacts of disaster when these occur, including through legal and administrative mechanisms, evacuation and possible temporary or permanent relocation of affected persons consonant with the right of freedom of movement. It further obligates governments to be particularly sensitive to the needs of vulnerable groups, such as women, children, minorities and indigenous peoples.

(2010: 2)

As outlined in the policy debates, gaps in the legal framework mainly concern environmental migrants crossing international borders. Climate change as a ground for 'well-founded fear of persecution' is not included in the 1951 Geneva Convention for Refugees or its additional protocols (UNHCR 2010), but only applies to people being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion (UNHCR 2010). Victims of natural disasters could only be protected if their government consciously withheld assistance following the natural disaster because the person belonged to one of the five protection grounds (UNHCR 2009a).

Refugee law is therefore clearly linked to the state's responsibility either for the act of persecution, the failure to prevent such persecution, or the failure to provide adequate protection for victims (UNHCR 2009a). In the context of climate change, however, it is not possible to assign a single state the responsibility for a certain extreme weather event. Moreover, the logic to provide refugee status in industrialized countries would be:

A complete reversal of the traditional refugee paradigm: whereas Convention refugees flee their own government (or private actors that the government is unable or unwilling to protect them from), a person fleeing the effects of climate change is not escaping his or her government but rather is seeking refuge from—yet within—countries that have contributed to climate change.

(McAdam 2011: 12–3)

This position has also been taken by the High Court in New Zealand in 2013 when rejecting the appeal of a Kiribati islander, who claimed asylum as an environmental refugee under the Geneva Convention for Refugees (NZHC 2013).

With regards to the international human rights doctrine, it has been agreed that climate change will negatively affect various human rights, including civil and political rights (UNGA 1966a) and economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to adequate food, water and the highest attainable level of health (OHCHR 2009; UNGA 1966b). Therefore, while there is no recognized right to

a safe and healthy environment, UN conventions recognize the intrinsic link between a healthy environment and the realization of rights.

Generally, human rights apply differently to migrants being displaced within or across national borders. With regard to internal displacement, human rights and state obligations have been summarized in the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (UN 2004). However, as the principles are a soft law instrument, the implementation of national protection measures against arbitrary and forced displacement, provisions for housing and restitution and for the freedom of movement lie in the power of national executives.

People moving across borders also enjoy general human rights protection, but human rights law does not regulate their admission to foreign territories. Currently, climate change is not perceived as activating *non-refoulement* obligations through state-based complementary protection mechanisms in domestic refugee law, normally triggered when the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment are threatened (Kolmannskog and Myrstad 2009; McAdam 2011, 2012).

Legal discussions on progressing environmental migration protection mechanisms have suggested the establishment of new conventions: internationally, in the form of a new UN convention for persons displaced by climate change both internally and across state borders (Hodgkinson and Young 2012); regionally, in the form of protection mechanisms such as those established in the European Union (EU),³ the African Union (AU),⁴ and in Latin America,⁵ or nationally, as in the case of Finnish and Swedish legislation on temporary protection for people affected by serious environmental disruptions, or the Danish law that expands protection for victims and their families seeking humanitarian asylum from drought disasters (Leighton 2010: 6–7).

Contributions to this volume

Due to the diverse range of debates surrounding the concept of environmental migration and the diversity of actors in this organizational field, this book analyses organizational perspectives upon this topic from five different angles. The [first part](#) disentangles the ‘Complex regime of environmental migration’, the [second part](#) pays close attention to the ‘Role of courts’, followed by a [third part](#) that summarizes the ‘Role of international organizations’ including analyses of the main IOs in the field. The [fourth part](#) switches from an analytical perspective to ‘The point of view of practitioners’, highlighting the daily challenges encountered by international NGOs and IOs working on the topic of environmental migration. The [fifth part](#) focuses on ‘The role of advocacy work’ in the context of environmental migration outlining recent shifts in both discourse and related practices by epistemic communities and civil society organizations. The ‘Conclusion’ part summarizes the roles of the main actors in the environmental migration complex.

In [Part 1](#), the two authors use differing theoretical lenses to discuss ‘The complex regime of environmental migration’ ([Part 1](#)). While Lars Thomann

looks at the environmental migration concept from an international relations perspective to explain why IOs embrace this relatively new issue or not; Julia Blocher applies the concept of organizational fields within an intra-organizational approach to trace the issue of environmental migration and its institutional location within EU structures. Thomann concludes, after reviewing the ongoing negotiations for a post-2015 sustainable development agenda and a post-Kyoto climate change agreement, that environmental migration, at best, plays a minor role in both processes. He explains this situation with reference to realist, institutionalist and constructivist schools of international relations, pointing to differences in the distribution of power, interests and identities. Blocher argues in her analysis that responses towards the topic of environmental migration have been shaped by security actors within the EU. Despite this she has also observed a slow integration of the debates into the fields of climate change adaptation and development cooperation with third countries. Although the integration of the topic in the climate adaptation and development portfolios of the EU is still in its early stages, she evaluates this approach as ‘a more promising avenue than through the EU’s external migration and asylum policy’. Both authors therefore explore the range of discourse and policy opportunities that the debate on environmental migration entails.

The second pair of authors focus on ‘The role of courts’ (Part 2) within this complex regime of actors. While Charlotte Lülfi focuses on the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice and their role as ‘pacemakers for defining, redefining and potentially expanding climate refugee protection in European asylum laws’, Thea Coventry analyses national courts and tribunals in the common law countries of New Zealand, Australia and Canada with regards to a possible expansion of the protection space within the still restrictive complementary protection regimes for displaced persons. Both authors analyse the strategies used by the courts to find legal solutions for the claims raised by people crossing international borders due to environmental or climate change-induced changes in their countries of origin. As the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol are not applicable in these cases, issues of complimentary and subsidiary protection under international human rights law, EU asylum law and the EU qualification directive are comparatively assessed. Since an international law framework that recognizes state responsibility for persons displaced because of natural disasters or environmental degradation is not yet in place and not likely to develop in the near future, individual court cases, which generate public discussion and which might eventually influence governments’ policy positions, remain the main source of legal analysis and legal development.

Part 3 of the book addresses ‘The role of IOs’ in the environmental migration discourse, presenting current case studies on UNHCR, IOM, and the International RC/RC Movement. Sinja Hantscher discusses UNHCR’s role from the perspective of security studies. The frameworks of the Copenhagen school and the Paris school are used as a theoretical background to analyse how UNHCR as a humanitarian organization uses the language of securitization for environmental migrants. Dina Ionesco and Mariam Traore Chazalnoël describe the role of IOM