

SIDE EVENT ON ENVIRONMENT AND MIGRATION

Theme:

The correlation between migration and environment: what do we do next?

Background:

When addressing challenges related to poverty and natural resources management, it is critical to consider migration dimensions. Both poverty and the unavailability or shrinking of natural resources, often compounded by the adverse effects of climate change, might lead people to migrate, internally or externally and either directly or indirectly. Unplanned migration could lead to further compounding environmental challenges such as food insecurity and biodiversity loss, resulting in a vicious cycle.

In recent years, environmental migration questions have increasingly featured in global environmental and climate change policy discussions, notably under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in previous United Nations Environmental Assemblies, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. On the migration policy side, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the first international migration agreement to be negotiated among United Nations Member States, proposes comprehensive measures for states to increase cooperation to address the drivers of environmental migration. As policy discussions intensify on a topic seen as a key challenge of today and tomorrow's global governance, this event will give to the participants of the United Nations Environmental Assembly the opportunities to discuss and provide some key recommendations.

Also, while a solid foundation of research and the sharing of best practices in the fields of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction have contributed to the development of more cohesive policy and comprehensive approaches to risk management, the explicit consideration of environmental factors is not yet sufficiently addressed. In addition to a better understanding of the environment-migration nexus, more efforts need to be exerted on the ground to incorporate environmental elements of resilience. Ensuring the latter will contribute to sustainable approaches to alleviate human suffering, and restore as well as maintain human livelihoods while at the same time protecting the environment. The identification and consideration of environmental root causes of migration, i.e. the push and pull factors, will help develop appropriate mechanisms and venues for supporting livelihoods, improving health and contributing to sustainable development.



ORGANIZERS:

- *Permanent Mission of Morocco in Nairobi,*
- *International Organization for Migration,*
- *United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction,*
- *United Nations Environment Programme.*

Context:

1. This event links into several on-going international policy processes:
 - ▶ First of all it is aligned with the UNEA 4 – “ Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production” and falls under the theme: Environmental challenges related to poverty and natural resources management.
 - ▶ The Global Compact for Migration addresses Environment and Climate Change under Objective 2- “Minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin.” It articulates a comprehensive understanding of the challenges linked to the environment-migration nexus and formulates a range of potential responses to support states and migrants.
 - ▶ Loss and damage is included in the Paris Agreement, with the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism to establish a task force to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change.
 - ▶ The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 serves as the global framework for reducing disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health, aiming to substantially reduce the number of affected people globally over the coming 15 years.
2. This UNEA side event will provide an opportunity to follow up on the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration which took place in Marrakech, Morocco on the 10th and 11th of December, 2018.
3. Again, in terms of UNEA itself, the event links to the overall theme of “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production” as migration can be a visible symptom of environmental stress and forced migrants are particularly vulnerable to a wide variety of environmental and health risks. Projections of future climate change paint a picture of much higher levels of migration and human security in future.

Objectives of the Side event:

4. The aims of the event are:
 - ▶ To focus attention of policy makers on various dimensions of environmental degradation, migration, and human security both at present and in the future under current projections of climate change and land degradation, in the context of the 2030 agenda;
 - ▶ To bring together leading thinkers, agencies, initiatives that are innovative and governments concerned about the links between migration, environment, and human security for a discussion on shared priorities and concrete next steps.

Format of the event:

5. There will be 1 hour and 1/2 long and will consist of one panel.

Opening with comments from M. Satya S. Tripathi, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Moderation of the panel discussion: Dr. Mokhtar GHAMBOU, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to UNEP/UN- Habitat in Kenya

Panel discussion:

Based on the following questions, the panelists will provide evidence based information (challenges and opportunities) on the environment and migration nexus.

- ▶ What do we know about the links between migration and the environment? What are the gaps in our knowledge?
- ▶ What does the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) concretely provide in terms of measures to address the drivers of environmental migration?
- ▶ What actions should be implemented as a priority to address or prevent the environmental root causes of migration?
- ▶ What role can the environmental community play in addressing the root causes of environmental migration? What sort of innovative approaches, partnerships etc will be needed?
- ▶ What are the environmental implications of migration, now and in the future?
- ▶ Should there be specific provisions in international law for human mobility as a result of environmental factors? Should the international community create formal protection regimes for migrants for environmental reasons?
- ▶ What is the role and responsibility of the global environmental community to address current and future migration?

During the panel discussion, Ms. Habibo Muse will be invited to share her experience as Somali national who migrated to Kenya in part due to the indirect effects of drought in Somalia, which resulted in a massive economic loss and severe hardships.

Level of participation:

This side event will attract participation from member states, civil society organizations, international and humanitarian organizations, and UN agencies.

Panelists:

- ▶ **Dr. Nezha El Ouafi**, Minister of Environment of the Kingdom of Morocco
- ▶ **Mr. Nazir Soobratthy**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development.
- ▶ **Ms. Mami Mizutori**, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
- ▶ **M. Satya S. Tripathi**, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme.
- ▶ **Dr. Riad Balaghi**, Representative of the initiative for the Adaptation of African Agriculture (AAA)
- ▶ **Ms. Alice Kimani**, Regional Liaison Policy Officer, International Organization for Migration (IOM)



Contact details for the side event:

Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco & Permanent Mission in Nairobi: Mr. Simohamed EL LAITI BEN AYAD, Counselor Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco (simohamed_ellaiti@hotmail.com)

International Organization for Migration: Ms. Lisa Lim Ah Ken, Regional Thematic Specialist, Migration, Environment and Climate Change (lilmahken@iom.int)

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction: Mr. Luca Rossi, Deputy Chief, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, Regional Office for Africa (rossil@un.org)

United Nations Environment Programme: Mr. Saidou Hamani, Regional Coordinator, Resilience to Disasters and Conflicts Programme (saidou.hamani@un.org)

