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DAY 3: GLOBAL SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AND SOCIAL ACTION
SYMPOSIUM 9: MIGRATION IN A TRANSFORMING WORLD

Migration, Displacement and Climate Change



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Outline

- ☞ Conceptual framework of environmental migration
- ☞ Environmental migration/displacement and climate change
- ☞ Policy considerations
- ☞ Final remarks



Conceptual framework of environmental migration

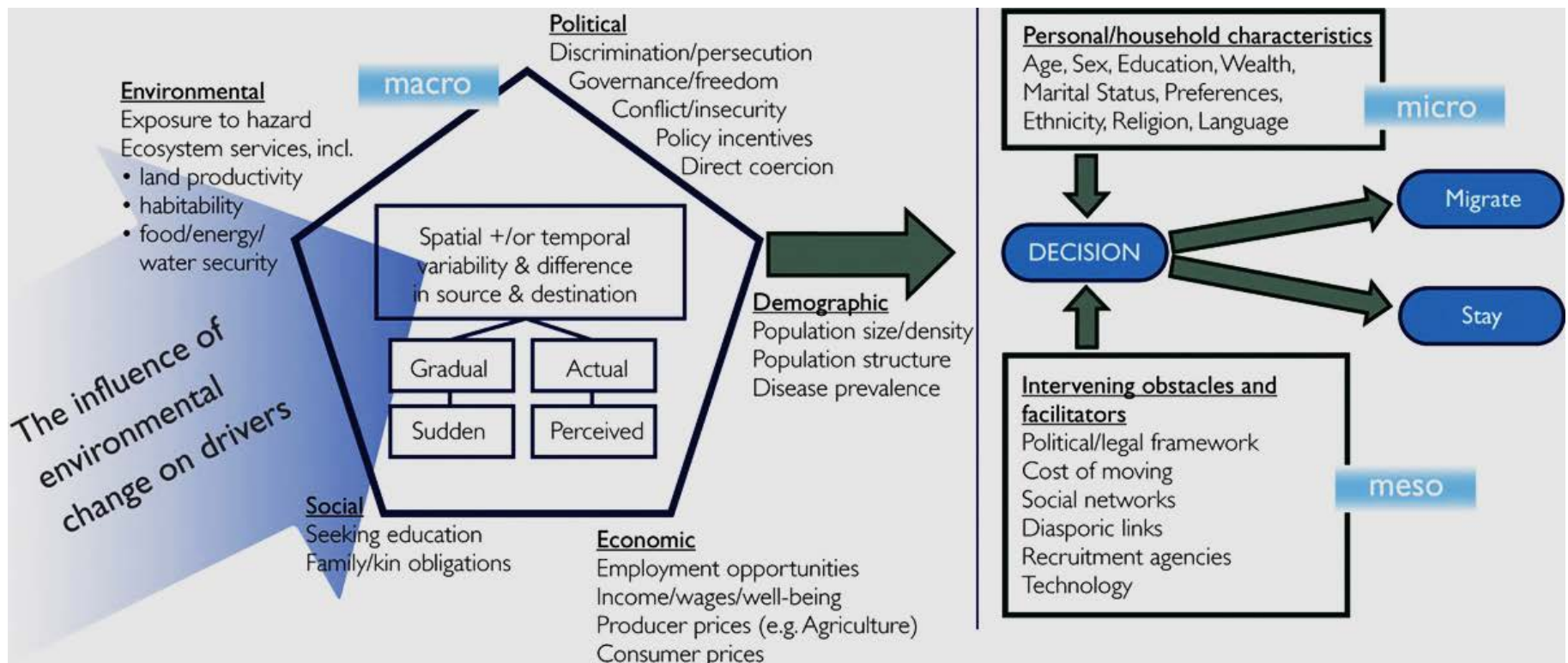


About population mobility/migration

- ∞ Population mobility is a **multi-dimensional and multi-faceted phenomenon**, with multiple levels of analysis, embedded in social and other contexts and further defined by temporal and spatial dimensions.
- ∞ Migration simultaneously represents a **development challenge and an opportunity** as it is influenced by, and influences, human wellbeing and behavior in both origin and destination locations.
- ∞ Human migration is potentially influenced by environmental factors, but ultimately shaped by **a complexity of forces** including social, economic and cultural processes.

About population mobility/migration (2)

- ∞ Framing the migration-environment discussion in terms of drivers of migration, including but not limited to environment



(Black, R., W. N. Adger, et al. (2011). The effect of environmental change on human migration. *Global Environmental Change-Human and Policy Dimensions* 21: S3-S11.)

How do environmental factors affect migration decisions?

Listening to the actors



Why to leave:

“...Flooding occurs every year at my former living place. I could not grow and harvest crops. Life therefore was very miserable. Besides, my family did not know what else we could do other than growing rice and fishing [...] So we came here to find another livelihood...”
(migrant from the Mekong Delta living in Phnom Penh, Cambodia)




Why to stay:

“...We can’t do anything else, which is why we think twice about migrating from here. We know the end is coming, but what work will we find to feed our families elsewhere?...”
(fisherman in the Ganges Delta in Bangladesh)



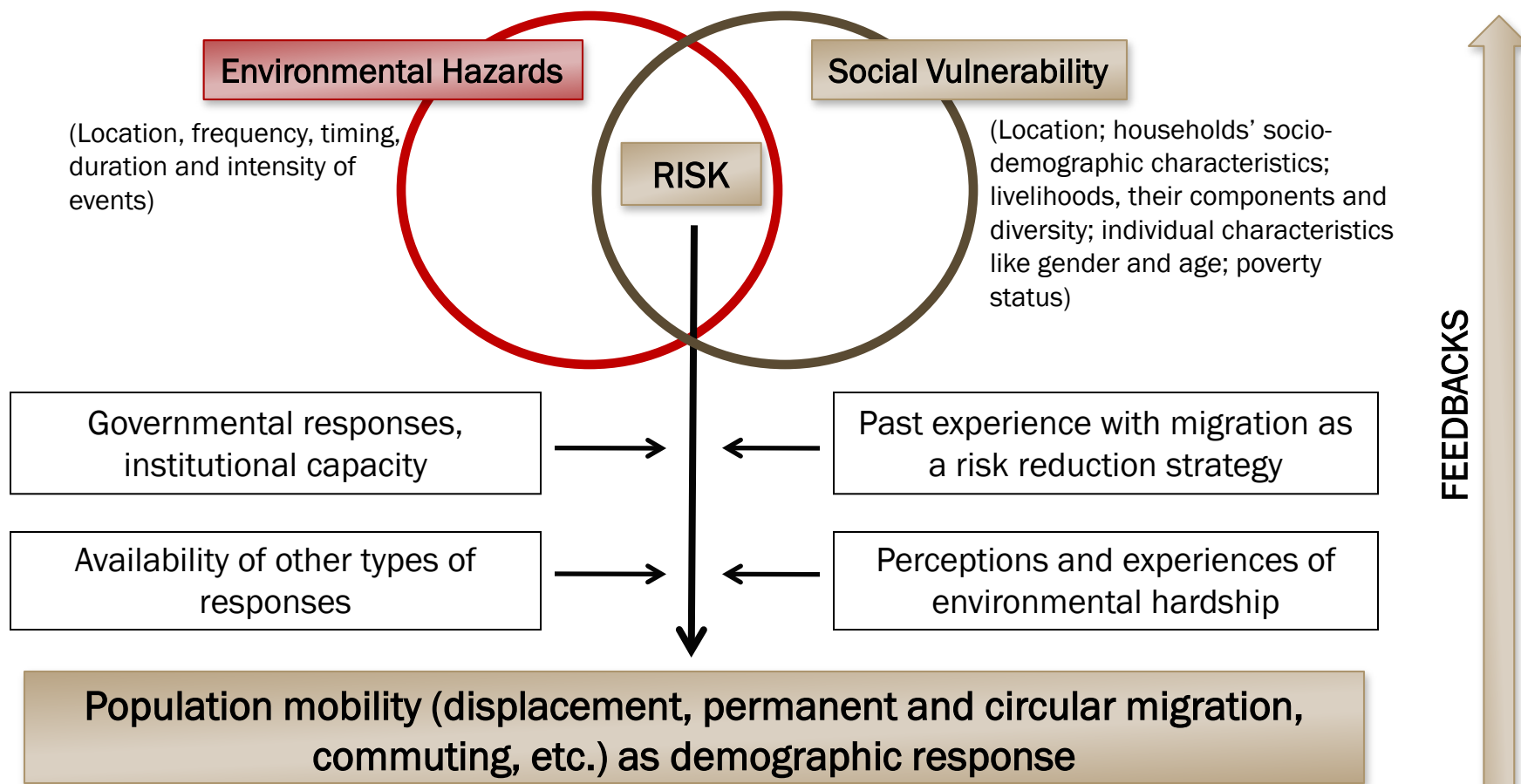
Why some stay and some leave:

“...I tell you what, there are no jobs here now, for the youngster, for the children, there is nothing. Entire families are leaving, because there are no jobs... And now, with this *revisión* [water logging], it is just worst...” (small farmer’s wife in a rural village in Mogna, Argentina)



How do environmental factors affect migration decisions?

Multiplicity and Complexity



Elaborated by S. Adamo and A. de Sherbinin based on Hewitt, K. 1997. *Regions of risk. A geographical introduction to disasters*; Blaikie, P., T. Cannon, I. Davis, and B. Wisner. 1994. *At risk: natural hazards, people's vulnerability and disasters*; Meze-Hausken, E. 2000. *Migration caused by climate change: how vulnerable are people in dryland areas? A case study in Northern Ethiopia*; Adamo, S. 2003. *Vulnerable people in fragile lands: migration and desertification in the drylands of Argentina*.

From a broad definition...

∞ *Environmental Migrants*

persons or group of persons who, for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect 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 (International Organization for Migration) (2007) Discussion note: migration and the environment.

www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/microsites/IDM/workshops/evolving_global_economy_2728112007/MC_INF_288_EN.pdf)

...to a continuum view...

CONTINUUM FROM FORCED TO NON-FORCED MOBILITY

Refugee-like situations:

very low level of control over the whole process and very high degree of vulnerability

Environmentally driven displacement:

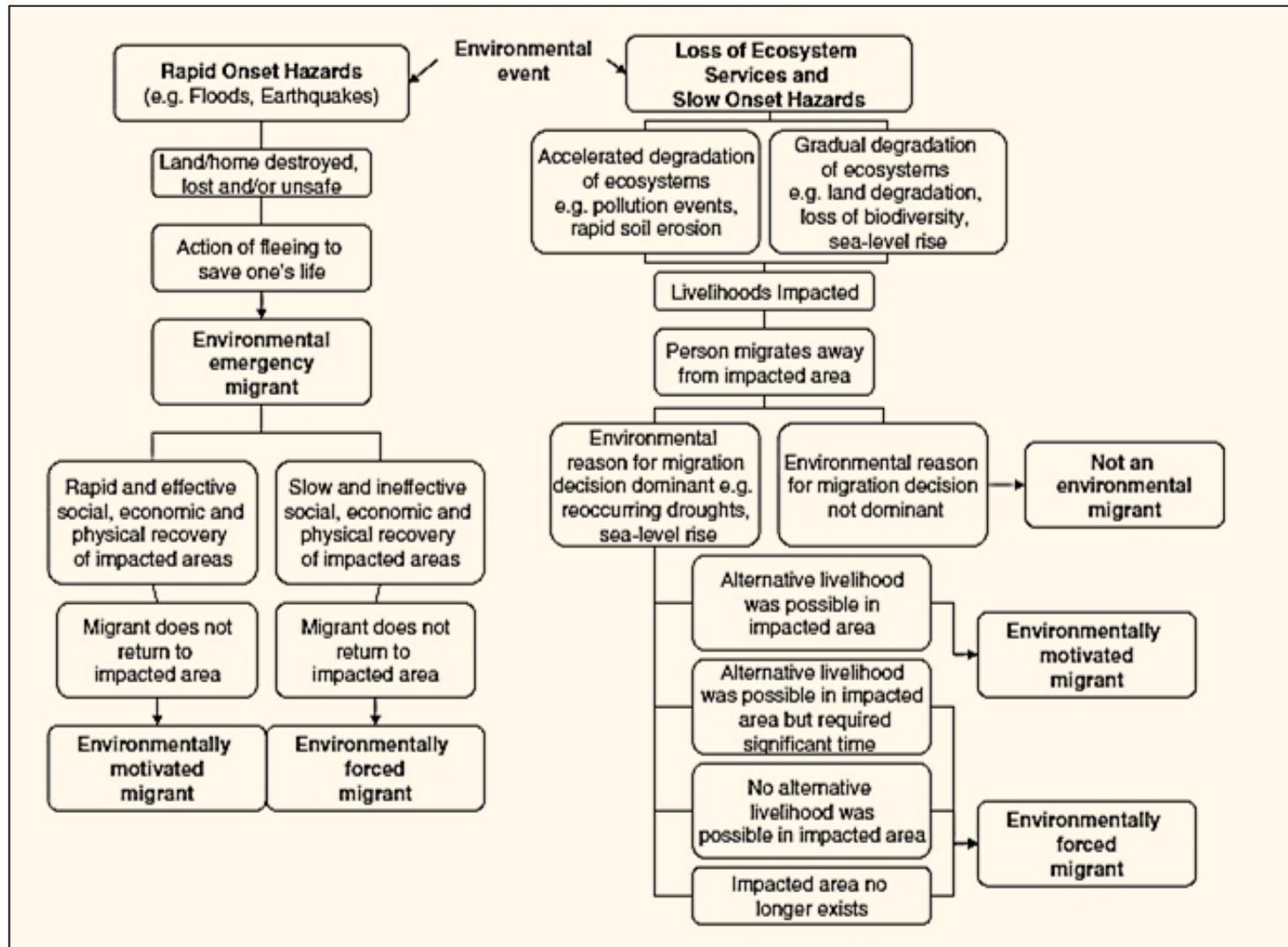
compelled but voluntary; more control over timing and direction and less vulnerability than refugees; but less control and more vulnerability than migrants.

Migrant-like situations:

greater control over the process and less vulnerability, even if people are moving in response to deteriorating conditions.

...to discrete categories of environmental migrants

Renaud, F., O. Dunn, K. Warner and J. Bogardi. 2011. A Decision Framework for Environmentally Induced Migration. *International Migration*, 49(S1):e16-e29





Climate change as driver of environmental migration



Climate change, migration and displacement

∞ “Migration and resettlement may be the most threatening short-term effects of climate change on human settlements. People may decide to migrate in any of the following cases: **loss of housing** (because of river or sea flooding or mudslides); **loss of living resources** (like water, energy and food supply or employment affected by climate change); **loss of social and cultural resources** (loss of cultural properties, neighborhood or community networks, particularly in the case of a devastating flood)” (IPCC 1990 AR www.ipcc.ch/ipccreports/far/wg_II/ipcc_far_wg_II_chapter_05.pdf)

∞ *Impacts scenarios to vary substantially by geographic location*

Three main climate change impacts

- ∞ **Sea level rise:**
 - Rising average sea level
 - Salt water intrusion in aquifers
- ∞ **Water availability**
 - Increasing
 - Decreasing
- ∞ **Extreme weather events**
 - Droughts
 - Heat waves
 - Violent Storms
 - Floods

Speed of Event

Long-Term Migration Response

Slow Onset

Higher Certainty

Fast onset

Lower Certainty

Three main climate change impacts (2)

∞ Sea level rise:

- very slow onset;
- the most certain impact leading to displacement and resettlement;
- different options for adaptation, including mobility;

∞ Changes in water availability:

- slow onset events.
- significant factors: severity of the climatic event, human vulnerability, and the type and diversification of local survival strategies.
- key factors: disruption of livelihoods, progressive impoverishment, and general deterioration of population's living conditions.

∞ Extreme weather events:

- Usually sudden events
- likely to trigger local sudden and massive displacement;
- key factors: predictability, early warning systems, government and civil capacity

Environmental displacement and climate change: what is known and what is expected

∞ *What is already known?*

- Although economic and political factors are the dominant drivers of displacement and migration today, climate change is already having a detectable effect
- Overall, probability of displacement is higher in developing countries
 - Socioeconomic status as predictor, but the effect is not linear
- Land and house tenure matters
- Seasonal migration is likely to become even more common, as is the practice of migrating from place to place in search of ecosystems that can still support rural livelihood
- International migration is highly likely and indeed may be the only option in the cases of small-island states (e.g. Tuvalu and Maldives) and of countries that share threatened coastal areas (e.g. India and Bangladesh)

Environmental displacement and climate change: what is known and what is expected (2)

∞ *What is expected?*

- Climate change will exacerbate the breakdown of ecosystem-dependent livelihoods
- Most environmentally induced migration would remain within national boundaries, particularly in the case of sea-level rise
 - increasing numbers of IDPs (internally displaced people)
- Previous migration systems and networks could provide clues about direction of flows
 - If/where international migration takes place, the direction of flows will likely be determined by prior migration ties between sending and receiving countries, and on political considerations within receiving countries

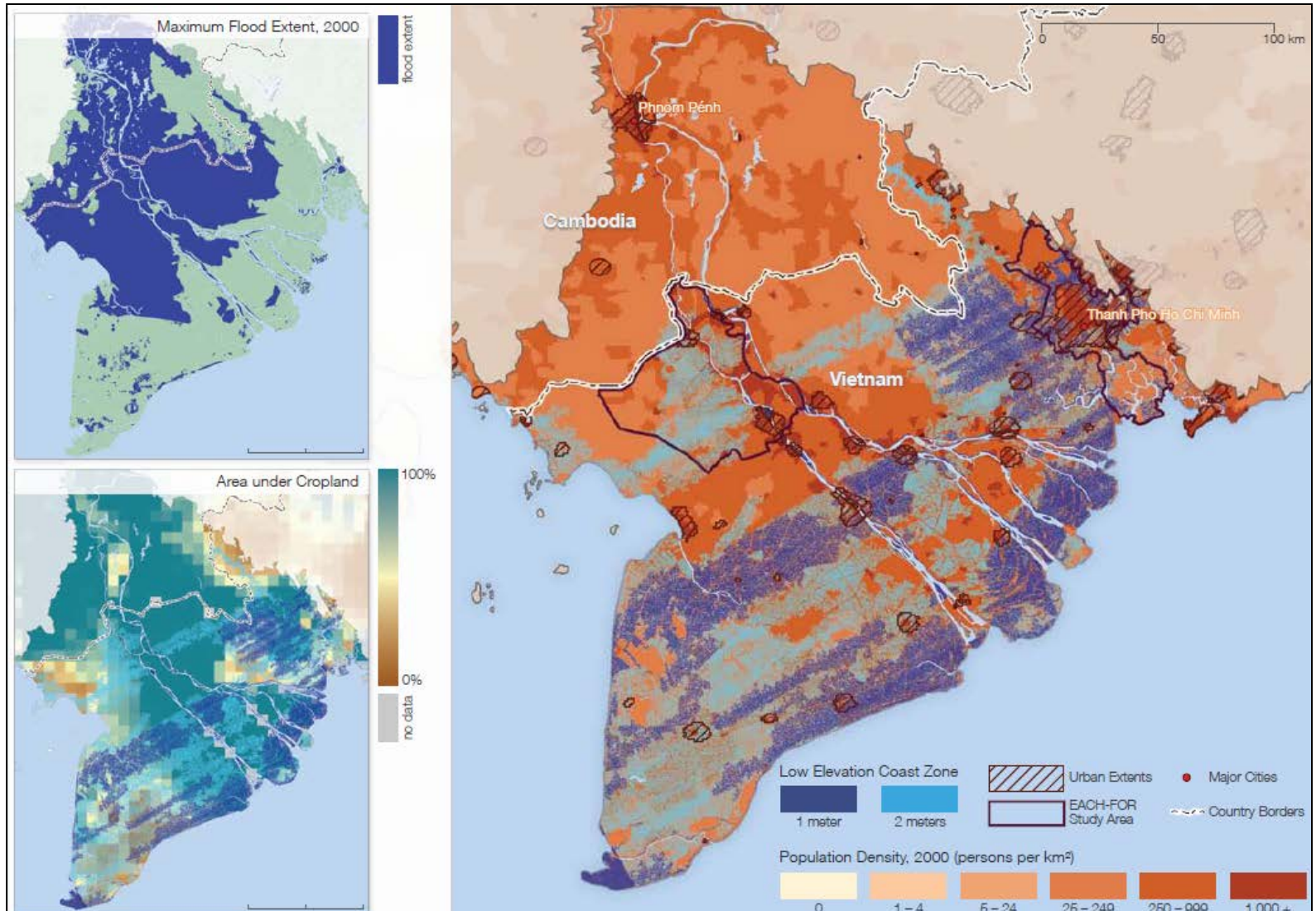
Environmental displacement and climate change: what is known and what is expected (3)

∞ *What is expected (cont.)?*

- Cities are increasingly exposed to the impacts of GEC events, which can trigger environmental migration to other regions.
- Cities are the most common destinations of migration inflows, and environmental change outside urban areas can exacerbate their influx of migrants.
- Migration may be a climate change adaptation strategy but the worst-off people might not have the resources to move and may not move very far

Example: Sea level rise, flooding and migration in the Mekong Delta

Warner, K., Erhart, C., de Sherbinin, A., Adamo, S.B., Chai-Onn, T.C. 2009. In search of shelter: Mapping the effects of climate change on human migration and displacement. Policy Paper prepared for the 2009 Climate Negotiations. Bonn, Germany: UNU, CARE, and CIESIN-Columbia University and in close collaboration with the European Commission "Environmental Change and Forced Migration Scenarios Project", the UNHCR, and the World Bank. www.ciesin.columbia.edu/documents/ClimMigr-rpt-june09.pdf - 2009-12-04. Page 14





Policy considerations



Policy issues: basic needs

- ∞ To consider the consequences for the displaced population, particularly in the cases of sudden displacement and displacements located toward the ‘forced’ end of the involuntary/voluntary continuum
- ∞ To consider the implications of environmentally induced displacement for the origin and receiving communities

(Oliver-Smith, A. 2008. *Researching environmental change and forced migration: people, policy and practice*. Position paper presented at the Research Workshop on Migration and the Environment, Bonn)

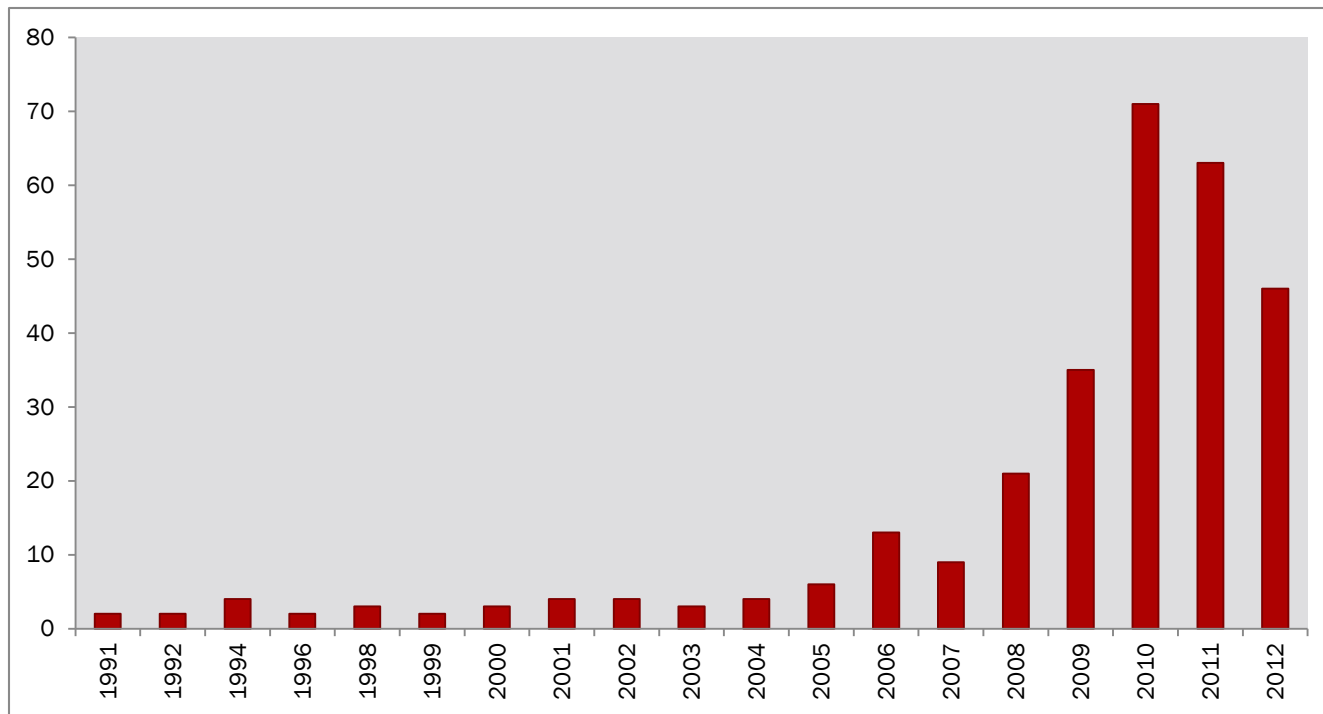
Policy issues: tailored responses

- ∞ Tailoring policy interventions to the stage of environmental degradation:
 - facilitating migration in the early stages of the deterioration process;
 - mitigating forced displacement at irreversible stages;
 - anticipating the issue altogether by promoting sustainable development.

- ∞ “Tailoring” implies a clear understanding of the nexus between environmental change and population mobility (IOM 2007)

- ∞ This requires a “redirection of research toward clarifying conceptual approaches and answering basic questions” (Oliver-Smith 2008: 102)

Policy issues: tailored responses (2)



Analysis of results of a search on “migration and climate change” in Web of Knowledge (July 5, 2012)

Policy issues: tailored responses (3)

- ∞ Discrete categories of environmental migrants as example of redirected research (Renaud et al. 2011:e17):
 - Different categories = different ways the environment trigger migration, different modes/paces of action taken by the affected people.
 - Input for:
 - Determining types of assistance and interventions;
 - Identifying who will be most in need of immediate support from either national governments or international aid agencies; and
 - Planning for resource allocation at a time of crisis or to prevent a crisis.
 - Examples:
 - “environmental emergency migrants” will require unique support, which may need to be mobilized differently than that for “environmentally forced migrants”,
 - “environmentally motivated migrants” will likely require the least support from an emergency response perspective, but the most support in terms of aid for sustainable development and implementation of alternative livelihoods.

Policy issues: a lifecycle approach



Stage	Details
Pre-migration: prevention, mitigation and adaptation to environmental hazards	Actions to mitigate climate change and help individuals to adapt to environmental hazards: “prevention of the underlying causes of environmentally induced migration and developing mechanisms to adapt to climate change and variability is the most critical need [in managing environmental migration]”
Migration / displacement: different types of movements	Migration can be planned or spontaneous, involving individuals, households or entire communities; internal or international; short or long distance; as an orderly movement of people from one location to another, or under emergency circumstances; temporary or permanent. Each of these forms of migration requires different approaches and policy frameworks.
Return or resettlement	Is it possible to return? Are the environmental causes likely to persist? Policies in the receiving communities and countries are also relevant: immigration policies, land use and property rights, social welfare, housing, employment and other frameworks
Integration into home or new location	Influenced by policies in previous stages

Final remarks





In summary...

- ∞ A complex issue, multiple aspects and determinants
- ∞ Climate change effects on population mobility: already detected and likely to increase
- ∞ It is difficult to estimate future trends
- ∞ Policy considerations coming to the front, but issues remain: how to increase awareness, design proactive policies within a human rights approach?



In summary...

The good news:

trans-disciplinary research on environmental displacement due to climate change events, as well as collaboration and interaction between the research, policy and relief communities have increased substantially