

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE**

**Eighteenth Session**

**MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE: INSTITUTIONAL**

**DEVELOPMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLICY PROCESSES**



## **MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLICY PROCESSES**

### **Introduction**

1. The purpose of this paper is to inform the membership about developments at IOM since the Administration last briefed the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance, in June 2015, on the complex issue of migration, environment and climate change (MECC). The paper also discusses contributions to relevant policy processes on human mobility in the context of climate change and environmental degradation. It does not provide an update on operational activities undertaken in the wake of natural disasters, which are the responsibility of the Department of Operations and Emergencies.

### **Institutional developments relating to migration, environment and climate change**

2. IOM has been active in the field of migration, environment and climate change since the early 1990s, building a comprehensive programme of work that spans policy, research, the development and deployment of data collection tools, capacity-building, advocacy, partnerships, international migration law, communication, knowledge management, fundraising and operational activities. The result is increased awareness that human mobility in a changing climate is a global issue that needs to be better understood for better action.

3. In recognition of the growing importance of environmental migration on international policy agendas and of IOM's role in the global governance of environmental migration, the Member States have regularly asked to be updated on developments in this thematic area. The subject has been discussed in depth on eight occasions since 2007 in governing body meetings: at the Ninety-fourth and 105th Sessions of the Council (see documents MC/INF/288 and C/105/49), at the Third, Ninth, Fourteenth and Sixteenth Sessions of the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance (see documents SCPF/21, SCPF/71, S/14/8 and S/16/13), and as part of the 2008 and 2011 International Dialogues on Migration.

4. Pursuant to the Member States' request that environmental migration be given greater visibility and to the recommendation emerging from the IOM structure review (2014), the Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division was established within the Department of Migration Management at IOM Headquarters on 1 January 2015.

5. The Division was established to better connect IOM's policy, evidence-building and operational activities. It reflects various developments: (i) the increased relevance of environmental and climate-induced migration to international and national policy agendas; (ii) the Organization's expanded cooperation with environmental and climate-focused partners; (iii) the greater number of activities with a MECC focus and components.

6. The Division is the first institutional structure at an intergovernmental organization to be fully devoted to questions of human mobility in relation to climate and environment. It speaks to IOM's commitment to support the efforts of its Member States – many of which are experiencing the adverse effects of climate change – to understand and tackle new challenges linked to climate-related migration.

7. The Division's institutional responsibility is to oversee, support and coordinate the development of guidance for activities, programmes, projects and partnerships with a

migration, environment and climate change dimension within the Organization. It also works to inform the policy debate at all levels (migration policy, climate policy, etc.), supporting evidence and data collection and developing internal and external capacities.

8. Coordination and cooperation with all IOM departments is one of the Division's main tasks, as activities often cut across various units, in particular within the Department of Migration Management, the Department of International Cooperation and Partnerships and the Department of Operations and Emergencies. This reflects the need to address the linkages between climate change adaptation and natural disasters from a human mobility perspective, in order to foster sustainable development and promote well-managed migration that is respectful of human rights.

9. Using the results-based approach, the Organization seeks to achieve three outcomes by 2020: (i) targeted international, regional and national entities and forums recognize the role of human mobility in frameworks addressing climate change; they request, and act on, IOM's advice and with its support; (ii) IOM anticipates and acts on future opportunities and needs in the area of migration, environment and climate change; (iii) IOM's role as an agenda-setter on matters in this field is recognized. IOM has already integrated environmental and climate concerns into the institutional Migration Governance Framework.

10. The Organization is building up a solid portfolio of migration, environment and climate change activities. As of March 2016, 44 IOM offices worldwide reported that they were implementing activities in this regard.

11. In 2016 and 2017, the Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division will prioritize a number of key internal strategic objectives: to operationalize activities with a migration, environment and climate change focus throughout the Organization; to enhance internal staff expertise on the matter; to mainstream environmental and climatic factors into other migration management areas such as border management, assisted voluntary returns, diaspora investments, skill transfers and labour migration; and to advance on environmentally sustainable guidelines for project and office development.

12. In 2015, the Division prioritized internal capacity-building efforts in order to deliver on its mid- and long-term strategic objectives. This included the recruitment of two experts in the Professional category and the training of IOM MECC focal points for each of the nine Regional Offices and three Special Liaison Offices, which took place in October 2015 in Geneva.

13. In connection with the Division's establishment, a new project endorsement line was created to allow offices to develop and endorse activities focusing on environmental and climate migration, and a new programme area, entitled "Migration, Environment and Climate Change", added to the Programme and Budget. By April 2016, over USD 1.3 million had been reported under the new line. Funding needs for 2016 are estimated at USD 27,080,000, as outlined in *Migration Initiatives 2016: Migration governance and sustainable development*.

14. In addition, the IOM Development Fund is currently funding 11 active projects on migration, environment and climate change in 15 countries. The Fund seeks to prompt the development of fully fledged long-term programmes on climate migration by enhancing national capacities.

15. It being key to build the capacity of policymakers from various policy areas to address the challenges and opportunities linked to human mobility, climate and the environment, IOM has developed a comprehensive capacity-building programme that includes the first training manual on migration, environment and climate change and relevant courses. It benefitted for that purpose from the support of the IOM Development Fund and a project funded by the European Commission and entitled Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Evidence for Policy. To date, over 300 policymakers have been trained in 40 countries.

16. The *Atlas of Environmental Migration*, an institutional flagship publication that is the first of its kind, was released in 2016 in French and English. The Atlas is conceived as an innovative policy tool providing an overview of environmental migration in maps, illustrations and explanatory texts.

17. IOM is consolidating and developing a whole array of innovative partnerships and cooperation mechanisms to support activity development with key migration bodies and climate and environmental stakeholders. These include: the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the World Meteorological Organization, the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Norwegian Refugee Council, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development. New partnerships with private sector entities and non-governmental organizations are also being developed.

### **IOM's contributions to related global policy processes**

18. In 2015, IOM provided policy, expert and technical input on climate migration for global policy processes such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Nansen Protection Agenda and the UNCCD. As an intergovernmental organization with a migration mandate, IOM welcomes the adoption in 2015 of the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, all of which recognize migrants as a specific group with its own vulnerabilities and strengths.

19. Policy activities are twofold: mainstreaming human mobility matters into environmental and climate-related processes, and mainstreaming climate and environmental matters into migration policy processes.

20. In the lead-up to and during the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP21), in December 2015 in Paris, IOM supported the efforts being made to better understand, acknowledge and act on the realities of climate migration. Its contributions took various forms, inter alia: (i) technical submissions throughout the year (both as an individual institution and as a co-facilitator, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and member of the Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility<sup>1</sup>; (ii) the organization of events like the One UN High-level Roundtable: Human Mobility and Climate Change during COP21, and of press conferences and side events during intermediate negotiation sessions; (iii) communication events, such as the One UN Exhibition on Human Mobility in a Changing Climate and the photo exhibition entitled “Entwined

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<sup>1</sup> See: [http://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/default/files/Research%20Database/Paris\\_COP21-Human\\_Mobility-AdvisoryGroup.pdf](http://environmentalmigration.iom.int/sites/default/files/Research%20Database/Paris_COP21-Human_Mobility-AdvisoryGroup.pdf).

Destinies: Migration, Environment and Climate”, which was held at the Paris History of Immigration Museum and viewed by over 4000 visitors.

21. IOM is strongly encouraged by the inclusion of migration and displacement questions in the Paris Agreement, notably the reference to the rights of migrants in the Preamble, and the decision requesting the establishment of a taskforce to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to “avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change” (Decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 49).

22. IOM is committed to continue supporting the parties to the UNFCCC as they implement the Paris Agreement, and has formally asked to join the new Climate Displacement Task Force that is being established as a follow-up to Decision 1/CP.21. It has made technical submissions to the UNFCCC in 2016 on capacity-building, slow-onset events, loss and damage, and climate displacement. IOM recommends an approach that encompasses the entire migration cycle; it proposes a wide array of projects, ranging from climate adaptation measures allowing people to stay in their places of origin to planned relocation and facilitated migration, so that they can move with dignity. The Organization offers its expertise to develop activities that link policy, evidence and operational initiatives at the local, national, regional and global levels.

23. In order to bolster activities with a climate migration component, IOM has applied to become an implementing entity of the Green Climate Fund; this would allow it to submit human mobility-focused proposals for climate funding with all relevant partners, a key enabler for future action.

24. Preparatory to the 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP22), to be held in November 2016 in Marrakesh, Morocco, IOM organized the first Capacity-building and Training Workshop for Policymakers, in Rabat (April 2016), and a briefing on migration and climate to mark the signing of the Paris Agreement at United Nations Headquarters in New York (May 2016). It is also working to develop and implement concrete activities on climate migration.

25. Policy process priorities for 2016 include contributions to the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-2), which will be held at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, under the overarching theme of “Delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in particular the high-level Symposium on environment and displacement: Roots causes and implications. IOM will also make contributions focused on climate- and disaster-related human mobility at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey. It will provide statements and expertise on migration, environment and climate change to policy processes related to the countries most vulnerable to climate change (CVF), climate and labour (ILO), climate and human rights (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), climate and health (World Health Organization), climate and desertification (UNCCD), and the impact of climate change on small island developing States.

26. The adoption of the Nansen Protection Agenda by 109 States in October 2015 represents a stepping stone for action on human mobility in relation to disasters and climate change. IOM has contributed throughout the three years of the Nansen Initiative as a Standing Invitee, together with UNHCR, on the Initiative’s Steering Group, and as a member of the Nansen Consultative Committee. The Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division coordinated institutional inputs to the Initiative’s regional consultations, common policy

initiatives and research papers. The Director General was a keynote speaker at the Nansen Global Consultation.

27. Starting in 2016, Germany will chair the follow-up to the Nansen Initiative arrangement entitled “The Platform on Disaster Displacement”. IOM will play a key role in the implementation of the Protection Agenda, in a joint institutional arrangement with UNHCR, supported by Germany and via the planned development of activities in cooperation with relevant partners, such as the French Government.

28. In terms of integrating climate and environmental factors into migration policy processes, in 2015 IOM mainstreamed issues relating to climate, the environment and natural disasters into the International Dialogue on Migration, in particular the Conference on Migrants and Cities and the related report, the Fifth Global Meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of Regional Consultative Processes, and the annual consultation with civil society members.

29. Based on its mandate and experience, and according to priorities defined by the membership and in partnership with relevant organizations, IOM is committed to continue addressing the nexus between migration, environment and climate change through advocacy, operational activities, policy dialogue and capacity-building efforts.