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**UPDATE ON POLICIES AND PRACTICES RELATED TO MIGRATION, THE ENVIRONMENT
AND CLIMATE CHANGE AND IOM'S ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME**

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Introduction

1. The purpose of this paper is to inform the membership about developments at IOM relating to migration, the environment and climate change and IOM's Environmental Sustainability Programme since the Administration last briefed the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance on the subject in October 2017. This is the fifth update requested by the membership since 2014,¹ reflecting the relevance of the topic for Member States. The paper discusses IOM institutional developments, contributions to global and regional policy processes, activities relating to migration, environment and climate change, and next steps.²

Institutional developments relating to migration, the environment and climate change

2. The Director General is currently developing a new institutional strategy, which acknowledges that that climate change has had, and will continue to have, a significant impact on the current and future migration landscape. Integral to this vision is the acknowledgement that to better anticipate future challenges, building resilience should be a priority. Therefore, contemporary migration policies and practices cannot afford to ignore the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on migration; while at the same time, the effect of migration on the environment needs to be taken into account. IOM is continuously investing in building its institutional capacity to deliver in this regard and to support its membership in addressing current environmental migration challenges.

3. Since the early 1990s, IOM has developed a comprehensive programme of work addressing all facets of the migration, environment and climate change nexus, from emergency response to hazards to migration management. The Organization's activities take place at global, regional, national and subnational levels and focus on policy analysis and development, capacity-building, research and data collection, knowledge management, advocacy, partnership development, international migration law, fundraising and operational activities.

4. Since it was established in 2015, making it the first institutional structure in an intergovernmental organization to be fully devoted to questions of human mobility in relation to climate and the environment, the Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division has increased in size and now includes staff at Headquarters, at the IOM Office in New York and in five regional offices. Temporary project staff are recruited regionally and nationally on a project-by-project basis to implement activities in the field. With the help of this growing institutional structure, IOM is able to develop activities worldwide.

5. Recognizing the cross-cutting nature of the topic, and its links, in particular, with the Organization's operational response in the context of disasters (including disaster risk reduction, preparedness, emergency response and recovery), IOM has strengthened its internal coordination mechanisms through the creation of a programme officer post on environment, climate change and disaster displacement. This post is co-hosted by the Department of Migration Management and the Department of Operations and Emergencies and helps to ensure systematic and strategic

¹ Migration, the environment and climate change was discussed at the 105th Session of the Council (see document C/105/49), and by the Standing Committee on Programmes and Finance at its fourteenth, sixteenth, eighteenth, and twenty-first Sessions (see documents S/14/8, S/16/13, S/18/8 and S/21/7, respectively). The topic was also discussed at the International Dialogue on Migration in 2008 and 2011.

² The paper focuses mainly on activities under the responsibility of the Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division, which comes under the Department of Migration Management, and does not focus on IOM's crisis-related programming, such as disaster risk reduction and emergency response.

cross-departmental and cross-divisional collaboration and sharing of expertise. These efforts are intended to create strong linkages between IOM's policy work and operations in the field, supporting a coherent and strategic institution-wide approach to climate- and disaster-related human mobility.

Institutional developments relating to IOM's Environmental Sustainability Programme

6. IOM launched its institutional programme of work on environmental sustainability in 2017 with the objective of mainstreaming environmental sustainability principles into the Organization's policies, strategies, programmes, projects, facility management and operations and to ensure that IOM's efforts in this cross-cutting area are in line with United Nations commitments and standards.

7. In 2017, IOM joined the United Nations Environment Management Group, and has been an active member of its related Issue Management Groups, especially the Issue Management Group on Environmental Sustainability Management. In addition, IOM has stepped up its engagement with global initiatives linked to environmental sustainability and migration. In order to facilitate the deployment of environmentally sustainable practices linked to renewable energy and environmental assessments, IOM has co-led the development of the Global Plan of Action for Sustainable Energy Solutions in Situations of Displacement and its workplan, and coordinates regularly with the environmental sustainability focal points of a number of humanitarian agencies.

8. At the internal policy level, one key result has been the development of IOM's first environmental policy, which seeks to align IOM activities with global environmental standards to improve the environmental sustainability, resource efficiency and the quality of project outcomes. The draft environmental policy is currently under internal review and should be ready for implementation in the second half of 2019. Environmental sustainability principles have also been officially incorporated into some key internal policies, such as the results-based management framework.

9. At the project level, an environmental marker system is currently under development to assess, manage and monitor environmental risks and impacts at the project level; this tool could be launched within the Prima for All system in 2020, depending on the availability of funding. In 2017, a greenhouse gas inventory was piloted in three IOM offices, with the objective of establishing a customized template for environmental performance reporting in line with United Nations standards. The use of this inventory was expanded throughout 2018, with seven regional offices surveyed.

10. Looking ahead, IOM will develop an environmental sustainability strategy in line with the upcoming strategy for sustainability management in the United Nations system 2020–2030 and will establish an environmental performance monitoring system, contingent upon available funding.

IOM contributions to relevant global and regional policy processes

11. The two objectives of IOM policy work on environmental migration are: to integrate environmental and climate concerns in migration-related policy processes; and to mainstream migration questions into environmental and climate change processes, in order to enhance policy coherence and support States in addressing the challenges linked to environmental migration.

12. In 2018, IOM focused on contributing to and creating synergies between two historic turning points for the governance of environmental migration: the development and adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, and the development and adoption by the Twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP24) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) of the Recommendations from the report of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts on integrated approaches to averting, minimizing and addressing displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change (decision 10/CP.24).

13. The 2015 Paris Agreement recognized that States have obligations regarding the human rights of migrants when taking climate action and resulted in the establishment of the Task Force on Displacement, the mandate of which was to develop recommendations to avert, minimize, and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change. Following a two-year process, decision 10/CP.24 was adopted in December 2018 by COP24. As a founding member of the Task Force on Displacement, IOM closely supported the development of the Recommendations, notably by taking the lead on the implementation of several components of the Task Force workplan and submitting regular technical inputs. In May 2018, on behalf of the Task Force, the Platform on Disaster Displacement and IOM jointly organized a global stakeholder meeting that was instrumental to the development of the Recommendations. In December 2018, The Task Force was mandated by COP24 to continue its work, and IOM is closely involved in discussions on the strategic ways forward.

14. IOM works closely with UNFCCC at both global and regional levels. At the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP23, in November 2017, and COP24, in December 2018, respectively), IOM led the coordination among United Nations agencies, notably by co-organizing the flagship United Nations events on human mobility and climate change with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). IOM is also increasing its regional cooperation with UNFCCC and is currently partnering with the UNFCCC Regional Cooperation Centre in Panama to assess the integration of human mobility in the climate change strategies of a group of pilot countries in the Americas.

15. Objective 2 of the Global Compact – adopted in December 2018 – clearly recognizes climate change, environmental degradation and natural disasters as drivers of migration; while possible actions linked to enhancing the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration in the context of environmental change are outlined in Objective 5. In addition, several other objectives are of direct relevance to environmental migration issues. Throughout the negotiation process, IOM offered regular technical inputs to States, upon request, on environmental migration dimensions, through policy papers; the organization of and participation in regional and national consultations; and the organization of regular informal briefings to diplomats in New York, in partnership with UNFCCC and the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. Regional-level policy support has been identified as one key priority, notably in connection with the implementation of the Global Compact.

16. IOM contributed to policy discussions related to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by organizing and participating in side events on implementation of Goals 6, 7 and 15 (water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; and life on land, respectively) during the 2018 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

17. IOM has intensified its engagement on the migration–water nexus by contributing to key policy and coordination processes, working closely with relevant agencies, academia and Member States. In 2018, IOM joined UN-Water, the United Nations system-wide coordination body dedicated to enhancing coherence on water-related issues. Migration linked to water insecurity has also been identified as a priority by IOM offices in many countries, based on, among other things, data collected through the Displacement Tracking Matrix in 2018. IOM has organized and co-organized several awareness-raising events, including at the International High-level Conference on the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” 2018–2028, the 2018 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and World Water Week. IOM has also strengthened its internal coordination system between its water, sanitation and hygiene programming and its policy work on water and migration.

18. IOM has continued to work closely with a number of relevant partners through joint policy and operational work, including the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Environment Programme and UNHCR. Examples of contributions include inputs to the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (COP13, in September 2017) and the fourth session of the United Nations Environmental Assembly (March 2019). IOM maintains working partnerships on environmental migration with over 400 entities, including academia, civil society, United Nations agencies and the media. IOM continues to view partnership development as an essential component of its technical support to States on such a cross-cutting topic, and is prioritizing the development and consolidation of cooperation frameworks with entities with complementary expertise.

19. Acknowledging the crucial importance of the regional policy dimension, IOM has strengthened its involvement in regional policy processes, contributing to regional discussions on migration, the environment and climate change in all regions of the world, notably with the Indian Ocean Commission, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, the Regional Conference on Migration, the South American Conference on Migration and the Southern African Development Community.

20. As a standing invitee to the Steering Group of the Platform on Disaster Displacement, IOM has continued to support the implementation of the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change of the Nansen Initiative, the Platform's Strategic Framework and its Workplan 2016–2019, thereby contributing to addressing the protection needs of persons displaced across borders in the context of disasters and climate change. In particular, IOM, working in close partnership with other Platform partners, including UNHCR, supported the implementation of strategic priorities related to:

- (a) Addressing knowledge and data gaps, including by co-chairing and advancing the work of the Platform's Data and Knowledge Working Group and contributing to research;
- (b) Supporting the identification and use of effective practices through capacity-building for government officials and the development of guidance documents;
- (c) Promoting policy coherence and policy development, through active joint engagement and advocacy and the provision of technical support in key global and regional policy processes.

21. IOM has stepped up its efforts to increase awareness about disaster displacement and to highlight the joint work of IOM and the Platform on Disaster Displacement. It has submitted information on this work as part of its reporting commitments under relevant frameworks, such as UNFCCC, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Humanitarian Summit. All related information and reports are available on a dedicated page of the IOM's Environmental Migration Portal.³ In order to implement projects and capacity-building activities in support of the Platform's Workplan 2016–2019, IOM has benefited from funding provided by the Governments of Bangladesh, France, Germany and Switzerland, and by the European Union. The funding provided by the Government of Germany for a dedicated staff position at IOM ended in August 2018. In order to ensure continuous support to the Platform, IOM set up temporary funding and staff arrangements, while continuing discussions with donors on funding needs to support the implementation of the Platform's next phase of work (for the period 2019–2022). IOM is actively contributing to the strategic discussions on this matter and remains committed to supporting the next phase of work of the Platform.

³ <https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/platform-disaster-displacement>.

IOM activities on migration, the environment and climate change

22. Since the last update to the Standing Committee, an increasing number of projects on migration, the environment and climate change have been developed and implemented. Fourteen projects are currently active in various regions of the world, the total cost of which amounts to approximately USD 6 million. The projects focus on all dimensions of environmental migration: national and regional policy development; assessing internal, regional or global climate-related migration trends; improving research capacities and responses to disasters and climatic impacts; and capacity-building for policymakers and local authorities on climate-related migration management. Some projects focus on innovative areas, such as one linking returning migrants with climate resilience action in Senegal or another supporting the engagement of the diaspora in agroecology in Morocco.

23. The IOM Development Fund has been an important tool to finance activities on environmental migration, currently investing funds in six thematic projects. At the request of interested governments, the Fund can provide seed funding to national and regional initiatives intended to kick start national, cross-sectoral engagement on environmental migration. Gender considerations are mainstreamed into the design and implementation of such projects, and all projects are evaluated 6 to 12 months after project completion to identify the lessons learned.

24. IOM has provided legal and policy review support at national and regional levels, offering technical inputs to States developing legislation and policies that include environmental migration concerns. Examples of such support include the provision of inputs during the drafting of a migration policy in Kenya, and of the Vanuatu National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-induced Displacement. There is also increasing interest from States in guidance on how to mainstream environmental migration into their policies on migration, and into other relevant policies, such as those on disasters and climate change. Given its specific expertise in this area, IOM is keen to expand its efforts to support States to develop and implement coherent policy and legal frameworks in the various areas relevant to environmental migration (including migration and displacement, labour migration, climate change, the environment, disasters, and land management).

25. The Organization's capacity-building programme on migration, the environment and climate change continues to be a major component of its support to States. The programme, created in 2013, is based on the training manual, which is available in five languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian and Azerbaijani). Between 2017 and 2019, the programme reached over 200 policymakers from 29 countries, through six national workshops and three regional workshops (in the Pacific, Central America, the Caribbean regions). IOM partnered with the Platform on Disaster Displacement and the German Agency for International Cooperation – through its project Sustainable Management of Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change – on the delivery of some of these workshops.

26. In 2017 and 2018, IOM intensified its communication activities on migration, the environment and climate change, including through social media posts (the IOM Environment Twitter account currently has over 5,000 followers, compared with 3,330 in October 2017), the production of a monthly newsletter,⁴ regular updates of the Environmental Migration Portal (five new pages), a new web page on the IOM website, the production of 12 visual stories and 10 videos, and responding to an average of over 20 media requests annually. The Organization also shared its expertise at over 70 high-level and technical events and produced 10 new thematic publications.

⁴ Environmental Migration Portal Newsletters, available at:
<https://us10.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=de24e8e8ad97c261502582454&id=277f364351>.

Next steps (2019–2020)

27. In the upcoming months, IOM intends to intensively contribute, in partnership with relevant entities, to the preparatory work for the United Nations Climate Action Summit 2019, taking place on 23 September in New York. The Summit seeks to galvanize and accelerate implementation of climate action worldwide. IOM is committed to supporting States' efforts to highlight the migration stakes at the Summit by identifying and highlighting existing good practices and potential actions that respond to migration and climate change challenges. In addition, IOM intends to fully support the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General to showcase the achievements of the United Nations system in terms of internal environmental sustainability and climate neutrality and to step up United Nations commitments in that area.

28. In connection with the implementation of the Global Compact and of the Recommendations of the Task Force on Displacement, IOM continues to analyse the policy and operational implications for environmental migration policy and practices, notably at national and regional levels, in order to translate global commitments into effective practices. IOM will work in close collaboration with relevant partners, notably within the framework of the United Nations Network on Migration, to support countries to be better prepared to respond to the migratory challenges posed by climate change and environmental degradation. In that respect, enhanced regional cooperation will be key and IOM intends to intensify its engagement in that area, notably through joint flagship activities. One example of such activities is a project entitled Enhancing Protection and Empowerment of Migrants and Communities Affected by Climate Change and Disasters in the Pacific region, which seeks to develop a regional human security-based response to climate change and disaster related-migration.

29. In March 2019, IOM organized a briefing on migration, the environment and climate change, which was attended by over 70 representatives of Member and observer States from the Geneva-based diplomatic missions. Among other things, the briefing enabled the Administration to consult participants on modalities to enhance the active involvement of Member States at the thematic level, in line with the IOM mandate and strategic objectives.