

# Climate-induced migration: the next challenge?



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## Climate change could force more than a billion people to flee their homes, says major health report

The movement of people is set to cause an international health crisis, the research from The Lancet suggests

Andrew Griffin | @\_andrew\_griffin | Tuesday 31 October 2017 00:20 GMT | 76 comments

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**Patrick Sakdapolrak**

Department of Geography and Regional Research  
University of Vienna

## Key messages

1. Climate change **increasingly threatens** the **human security** of vulnerable populations and has an **effect on patterns of human mobility**
2. The relationship between **climate change** and **migration** is **complex**. Apocalyptic narratives are unhelpful in the search for adequate solutions
3. Migration must be considered not only as a problem. **Migration** can be part of the **solution** for successful adaptation

## Outline

- 1. Why is it important to view the linkages between climate change and migration?**
- 2. Climate change and migration – a complex relationship**
- 3. Migration – part of the solution**

# Why is it important?



Hurrikane Katrina  
USA  
2005



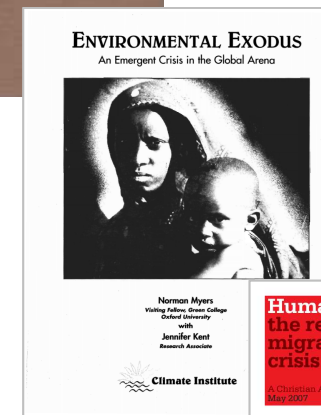
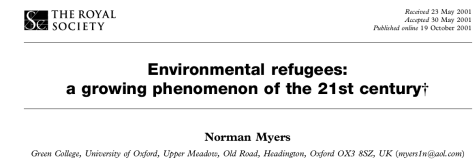
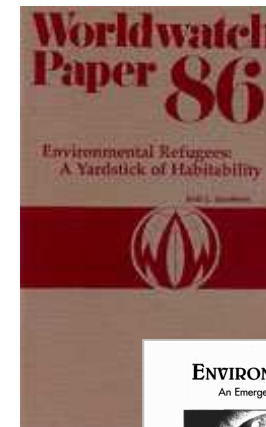
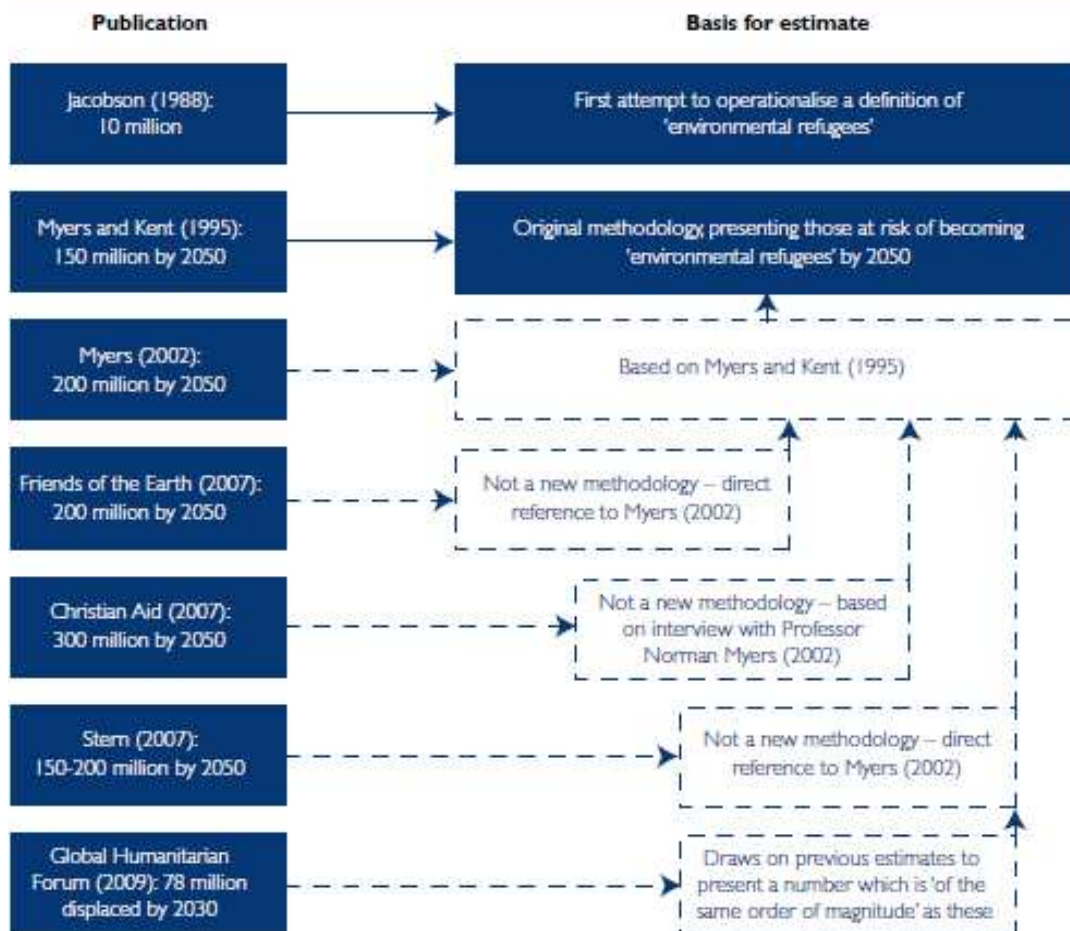
Drought  
Horn of Africa  
2017



Global future  
outlook  
2100

# How many people move?

**Figure 1.1: Previous estimates of the numbers of environmental migrants/refugees**



Source: Foresight Report 2011

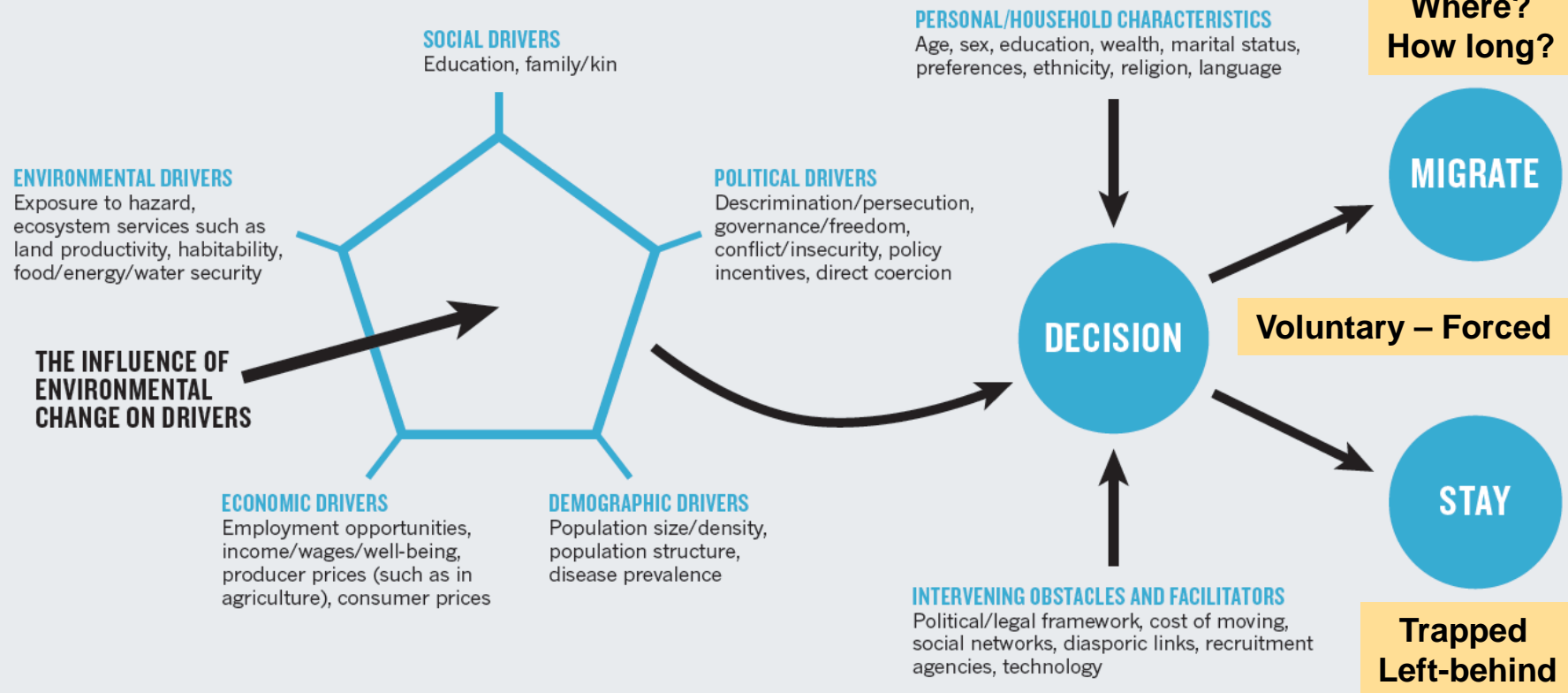
## Problematic numbers

- Weak scientific basis → “**Guesstimates**”
- Risk exposed population, stocks or flows of migration?
- **Simplistic** and **deterministic** understanding of human mobility
- Use of numbers driven by interests

# It is complex ...

## THE DRIVERS OF MIGRATION

Many factors influence whether a person or family will migrate. Their effects are closely intertwined, so it makes little sense to consider any of them in isolation.





## Selected empirical evidence

- Pakistan / *Mueller et al. 2014*: flooding has modest to insignificant impacts on migration; heat stress means more long-term migration of men [→ **Relief efforts**]
- US / *Thiede et al. 2013*: black/low-education least likely to evacuate prior to Hurricane Katrina; most likely to have been unable to evacuate [→ **Social status**]
- Thailand / *Promburom et al. 2011*: migration despite successful in situ adaptation; positive effects of migration [→ **Feed back loops**]



## It is complex ...

**Migration** in the context of climate change can be ...

- ... an indicator for **failed adaption**
- ... a sign for **successful adaptation**

**Immobility** in the context of climate change can be ...

- ... a sign for **failed adaptation**
- ... a indicator for **successful adatation**

[degree of freedom and choice people  
have in their decision to move or to stay]

## Climate-induced migration – the next challenge?

[→ for whom?]

Increasing importance of climate related reasons for migration

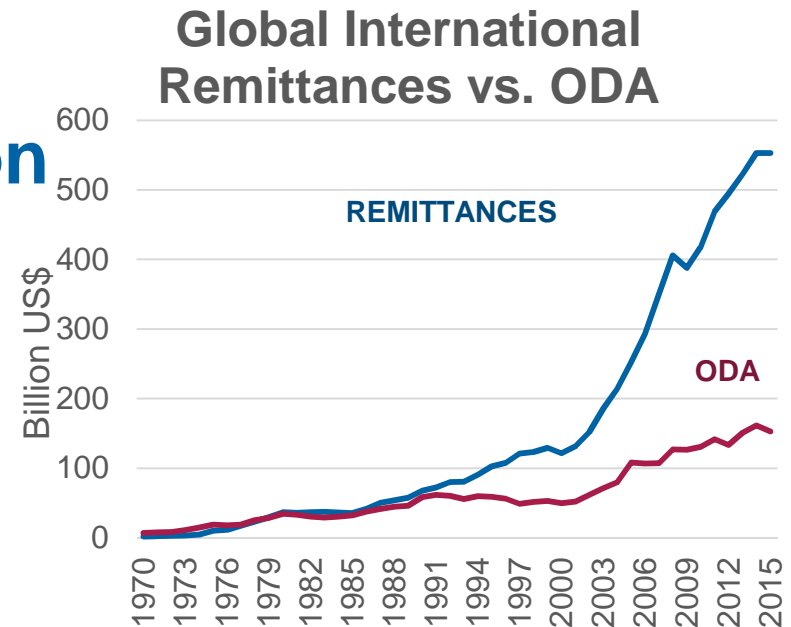
Those most exposed and least capacity:

- a) **„Critical regions“**: fragile social-ecological systems
- b) **Vulnerable, poor households**:  
„economic“ and „climate migration“ strongly entangled
- c) **„trapped population“**: the most vulnerable often cannot move

## Part of the solution - Migration as & for adaptation

- Migration **as normality**  
→ 240 million international & 750 million domestic migrants
- Migration **as adaptation**  
→ Risk diversification
- Migration **for adaptation**  
→ potential to strengthen resilience through flow of money and ideas

Source: Worldbank 2016



Rural-urban migrant set up an integrated farm, NE Thailand

## What should be done?

1. **Strengthen the capacity** of the vulnerable **to adapt**  
– increase their freedom to decide to move or to stay
2. Put **human security** in the centre regardless where people are  
– acknowledge the special vulnerabilities of migrants on the journey and in the place of destination
3. Make **migration** work for adaptation

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