

Pacific Climate Change & Migration Project NEWSLETTER

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Report Highlights Factors Affecting Climate Change and Human Mobility in Tuvalu



Image: Tuvalu, Gary Braasch.

A study on the relationships between human mobility and climate change in Tuvalu has been produced as part of the Pacific Climate Change and Migration (PCCM) Project. The three-year PCCM project is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The PCCM project has been working to increase the protection of individuals and communities that are vulnerable to climate change displacement and migration through targeted national and regional policies; and to increase labour mobility opportunities for Pacific Islanders, through well-managed labour migration schemes.

The report presents the results of the first nationally representative study of relationships between household vulnerability, human mobility and climate change in the Pacific. Findings are based upon quantitative and qualitative fieldwork carried out in Tuvalu in 2015 by researchers from the United Nations University (UNU), UNESCAP and the University of the South Pacific (USP).

The objective of the Tuvalu household study is to build institutional capacity and knowledge to enable Tuvalu to better plan and manage the impacts of climate change on migration. Specifically, through developing migration indicators, providing information on labour migration and gathering data on community attitudes to climate change-related migration, the report can contribute to the development of climate change responses and national action strategies to mitigate the risk of displacement and enhance national capacity to effectively participate in regional, bilateral and global schemes on labour migration.

Project fieldwork involved implementation of a total of 320 household surveys in Funafuti (170), Nanumea (70), and Vaitupu (80). Participatory Research Approach (PRA) tools and a Q study were used to complement the overall analysis. The results from the fieldwork were used to build an agent based model (ABM) to project future flows of migration within and out of Tuvalu.

Migration Experiences of Women and Men

The Tuvalu household surveys also highlighted that the proportions of migrating men and women are almost identical. However, only men engage in seafaring and women are slightly more likely to engage in both internal and international migration.

Overall, the proportions of women and men travelling to different destinations are approximately equal. For international migrants, women are more likely to migrate to Fiji, while men are more likely to go to other international destinations. For

internal movements, women are relatively more likely to move to Vaitupu while men are relatively more likely to move to Funafuti.

It seems that on the whole, women have significant control over decisions which affect them, as 45 per cent of household representatives claim women themselves make these decisions and in eight per cent of households decisions are made by both genders. However, in 36 per cent of households the answer of "other" was given, perhaps indicative of the sensitive nature of the question.

Highlights from the Tuvalu Household Surveys on Climate Change and Human Mobility

- **Climate related environmental hazards are already affecting households and livelihoods in Tuvalu**

Ninety seven (97) per cent of household survey respondents in Tuvalu reported that they had been impacted by natural hazards between 2005 and 2015, with droughts and irregular rains impacting 90 per cent. Sea-level rise, floods and saltwater intrusion reportedly also affected the vast majority of households involved in the survey. People living on the outer islands were more likely to have been affected than people living in Funafuti.

- **Both internal and international migration is a common experience in Tuvalu. Some migration is triggered by environmental risks**

Members of approximately three quarters of participating Tuvalu households migrated in the 10 years preceding the 2015 survey. Over half of all movements were to international destinations (54%)- primarily from Funafuti to Fiji and New Zealand. Internal migration was also common (43 %). Seafaring, undertaken exclusively by men, accounted for just 3 per cent of all movements. Migrants from Funafuti are much more likely to have migrated internationally than internally in the decade prior to the survey, while migrants from the outer islands were more likely to have migrated internally than internationally. Some 42 per cent of migrants moved to acquire educational advancement, while 33 per cent moved to acquire employment. Environmental factors appear to have triggered 9 per cent of all reported movements.

- **Migrant households are less vulnerable than non migrant households. This could relate to the importance of remittances enabling adaptation**

Households in which one or more members migrated during the decade prior to the survey are on average less vulnerable than households in which migration did not occur at all. Households in which one or members migrated internationally tend to be less vulnerable than those in which household members migrated within Tuvalu. Notably, households receiving remittances from internal migrants report lower average incomes than those receiving remittances from international migrants.

- **Migration experiences of women and men are different**

Men and women migrate in approximately equal numbers. However, men are more likely to migrate for work, whereas women are more likely to migrate to advance their education. Given the limited number of regional institutions through which Tuvaluans can readily pursue an education, men tend to migrate to a wider range of destinations. Migration decisions affecting women are sometimes made by male members of the household.

- **There is unmet demand for migration**

While one or more persons in 73 per cent of households experienced migration during the 10 years preceding the survey, eight per cent of the surveyed population reported both an interest in migrating and an inability to do so. The main reason for the desire to migrate not being realized was a lack of money, accounting for half of all instances. These potential migrants were from households with below average incomes. These households were more vulnerable than both migrant and non-migrant households.

- **Future migration is likely to be influenced by environmental change and household economics**

The majority of surveyed household respondents feel that migration would be a necessary strategy if climate change impacts worsen their basic living conditions. Environmental factors thought likely to trigger future migration include: sea-level rise (76% of respondents), saltwater intrusion (74 %), drought (72 %t), and floods (71 %). When considering their own ability to migrate in the future, only 53 per cent of surveyed householders perceived that they would be able to afford the process.

Modelling clearly indicates the potential for significant future increases in migration both within Tuvalu and internationally. The Agent-Based Model (ABM) simulates migration trends through 2055 under various climate change scenarios. Model runs indicate that by the year 2055, internal migration could increase by as much as 87 per cent, and international migration could more than double. The population of Funafuti has increased dramatically during the last two decades as a result of high birth rates and high rates of internal migration. This is placing stress on the local infrastructure and environment. According to the model, by 2055, a natural increase in the population of Funafuti will combine with in-migration to result in a 25 per cent rise in the population of Funafuti. This could significantly worsen conditions in the capital.



Image: United Nations University

CANCC Leaders Summit Adopts Funafuti Declaration on Climate Change

The Funafuti Declaration on Climate Change was adopted and signed by leaders of the Coalition of Atoll Nations on Climate Change (CANCC) following a successful Leaders Summit which concluded in Funafuti, Tuvalu on 7 October, 2016.

Coinciding with the news of the Paris Agreement coming into force much earlier than expected, the Declaration, signed by CANCC leaders from Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tokelau and Tuvalu, calls for expedited access to climate change finance, a United Nations legal framework to protect the rights of those displaced by climate change and a Pacific regional climate change insurance facility, among other important issues.

It also calls upon Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to fast track the implementation of the Paris Agreement ahead of the UNFCCC COP22 climate change conference in Marrakech, Morocco in November 2016. The Funafuti Declaration stresses the urgency in implementing the Paris Agreement, particularly to save low-lying atoll countries.

Speaking at a Press Conference following the signing, Tuvalu Prime Minister and the current Chair of CANCC, Hon. Enele Sosene Sopoaga said: "It is very gratifying that the leaders of atoll nations have come together to craft the Funafuti Declaration, a canoe which we see as a vessel to protect and save our people. We will leave no one behind."

Emphasising that the way forward now was through strong advocacy of the Funafuti Declaration, PM Sopoaga said: "The Declaration is the common position of leaders of atoll nations. We need to work

together with our development partners and with regional organisations to raise awareness of the contents of the document.

"We are calling for an international legal framework to protect the rights of those displaced through climate change as they are not refugees. We are also calling for a Pacific Islands Climate Change Insurance Facility and we invite scholars and all our partners to think seriously about this."

Prime Minister Sopoaga said that the idea behind Tuvalu hosting the CANCC summit was about fostering trust, respect and partnership. He commended leaders of CANCC nations Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Tokelau, as well as partners from the European Union, United States, Sweden, Republic of China (Taiwan), Fiji, Australia and New Zealand. He further applauded the high level support from UNDP and UNESCAP as well as regional organisations namely the Pacific Island Development Forum, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and Pacific Community (SPC) at the summit.

"We also welcome the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on 4 November and congratulate and commend the leadership of Pacific negotiators and all countries who have ratified the agreement. We call on all parties to move forward to implement the articles of the Agreement. This is the beginning of our real work," Prime Minister Sopoaga said.

The Paris Agreement will now enter into force on 4 November after its ratification by 74 parties, accounting for over 56% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The threshold for entry into force of the Agreement was reached following ratification by the European Union, India, New Zealand, China and the United States.



Pacific leaders and development partners at the CANCC Leaders Summit in Funafuti in October 2016.

Funafuti Declaration

Coalition of Atoll Nations on Climate Change (CANCC) Leaders' Summit, Funafuti, Tuvalu, 7th October 2016

1. We, the Heads of Government and heads of delegation from the Coalition of Atoll Nations on Climate Change (CANCC), met in Tuvalu on the 7th of October 2016, and wholeheartedly thank the government and the people of Tuvalu for their kind and warm hospitality and hard work in hosting this meeting.
2. We welcome the entry into force of the Paris Agreement, and encourage all countries that have yet to ratify the Agreement, to do so as soon as possible. We call on all countries to fast track the implementation of the Paris Agreement, taking into consideration the need for urgency of action for the particularly vulnerable atoll countries. We recognize that extensive work needs to be done to ensure that all decisions contributing to its implementation is done in a coherent, coordinated and facilitative manner.
3. We reaffirm our commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which seeks to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030.
4. We also strongly urge all countries to ratify the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol to ensure that we have an ongoing commitment from developed nations to reduce their emissions before the end of 2020.
5. We acknowledge that the Paris Agreement is a first step towards achieving a temperature goal of well below 1.5 degrees C, relative to preindustrial levels, which is fundamentally critical for our future sustainability and our survival.
6. We firmly believe that much more needs to be done. In this regard, we welcome the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in developing a Special Report on 1.5 degrees Celsius. We call on the IPCC to ensure that its Special Report includes consideration of the impacts and vulnerabilities of atoll nations under a 1.5 degree Celsius world.
7. We recognise that people around the world are already being displaced due to climate change. This includes people within our own countries. We strongly believe that people displaced by the impacts of climate change shall be afforded proper protection of their rights to a safe and a secure future. To this end, we call for the development of a legal regime to protect people displaced by climate change and shall work together to further progress a UN resolution to protect people displaced by climate change.
8. We shall therefore, strive to develop a clear timeframe to advance the work of the UN resolution to protect people displaced by climate change, in an expedited manner.
9. We agree to elaborate a clear roadmap that addresses the issues of climate change migration and displacement at the regional, national and local level and endorse efforts to provide education opportunities and the inclusiveness of remote atolls to allow access to formal and vocational education and other related schemes in order to develop the necessary skills and expertise to facilitate migration with dignity.
10. We support other regional initiatives in relation to climate change related migration and displacement such as the Pacific Climate Change and Migration Project and encourage CANCC participation in relevant regional initiatives.
11. We call on the Green Climate Fund Board, the Adaptation Fund and other financial institutions to expedite their work in developing simplified modalities to assist particularly vulnerable nations and communities to the impacts of climate change, like our own, to easily access funds from the Fund.
12. We, CANCC countries commit to developing joint funding proposals, including a possible trust fund, for projects, which will help build resilience and the adaptive capacity of our land and people.
13. We call on the Green Climate Fund to establish clear guidelines on how non-Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change can access funding support under the GCF.
14. We call on regional organisations and development partners to support our efforts to strengthen CANCC capacity to engage with the Green Climate Fund and other sources of climate financing to ensure that all CANCC nations and communities, should have access to funding for projects.
15. We acknowledge the importance of innovative sources of funding to support our climate change efforts. To this end we encourage support from foundations and other philanthropic sources such as the Pacific Rising initiative.
16. We are deeply concerned at the high material and social costs from the impacts of extreme weather and other climate-related events on our nations. We support efforts to develop a Pacific Climate Change Insurance Facility and encourage donors and other regional organisations to provide support for the development of such a Facility.

17. We also recognize that some cultural and natural resources have a high value beyond simple economic valuations. Compensating for damage or loss of these resources due to climate change may need other approaches that are not covered by insurance.

18. We acknowledge that the shipping and aviation sectors are significant contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions. We therefore strongly support initiatives being developed by the Republic of the Marshall Islands to establish a Centre for Sustainable Sea Transport. We call on the Green Climate Fund and other donor sources to support such an initiative.

19. We further call on the International Maritime Organisation and the International Civil Aviation Organisation to set targets and timetables in line with the Paris Agreement for reducing emissions in their respective sectors, noting that such emissions reductions should take into consideration the special needs of CANCC member countries.

20. We recognize that the arrangements for reporting on finance under the transparency framework shall be effectively developed to ensure transparency and accountability.

21. We strongly support the continuation of the Adaptation Fund and its operation under the Paris Agreement.

22. We welcome the work of the Warsaw Mechanism on Loss and Damage and encourage the Executive Committee to advance its work on developing a Clearinghouse for Risk Transfer and a Task Force on Displacement. We encourage the Executive Committee to elaborate a 5 year work programme as soon as possible so that the provisions of the Paris Agreement can be effectively included in the work of the Warsaw Mechanism.

23. We believe that the Transparency Framework and Global Stocktake under the Paris Agreement are important processes to regularly increase ambition under the Agreement.

24. We firmly recognise that CANCC should have a strong voice in meetings of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement and the Montreal Protocol work on regulating HFCs. To this end, we strongly agree to work together and coordinate their efforts at such meetings.

25. We commit to continue to protect and conserve our oceans, particularly as they are being impacted by climate change. We call on our development partners to support initiatives that we can develop adaptation measures associated with the coastal and marine environment. We fully commit to engaging actively in the Ocean Conference to be held in New York in June 2017.

26. We firmly believe that the Coalition of Atoll Nations on Climate Change is an effective institution for raising the voice of the most vulnerable nations and communities to the impacts of climate change. We call on donors to provide financial support to assist in secretarial support from within our membership to service our membership.



Tuvalu PM Hon. Enele Sosofo and the President of Kiribati, HE Taneti Mamau speak to journalists at a Press Conference following the CANCC Leaders Summit in October 2016.

Small Island Nations Urge UN General Assembly to Act to Save their Existence

Leaders of low-lying island States threatened with being flooded out of existence by rising seas again took to the podium of the United Nations General Assembly on 23 September, 2016 to appeal for urgent action even as the Paris Agreement moves forward to counter climate change.

"The futures of the most vulnerable, like my people and my country, are at stake," President Taneti Maamau of Kiribati told the Assembly's annual general debate on its third day. "We need a major change of global mind-set, a major change in global development pathways, and a major global change in ways we do business.

"We must do this in order to secure the future of my people, and those sharing the same fate, and to ensure that we are not left behind," he stressed.

He noted that in some parts of Kiribati, whole villages had to relocate due to severe coastal erosion and flooding, while crops have been destroyed and fresh water is increasingly contaminated by the intruding sea.

"We call for urgent assistance from our UN family and for UN family members to look into their hearts and help us address this looming life threatening issue at the earliest; an issue that cannot wait for the Paris Agreement ratification process to happen," he said of the accord reached last December to reduce global warming emissions and take other mitigating measures.

President Hilda Heine of the Marshall Islands noted that the Paris Agreement shows the international spirit of cooperation and inter-dependency.

"Of course, I know that Paris is not perfect. We need to do more to increase ambition on mitigation, on adaptation and on finance. We must take every opportunity we can to stay below 1.5 degree limit needed for our survival."

Turning to her own country's development efforts, she stressed the role of education and other steps to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that seek to end poverty, hunger and other social issues by 2030.

"Our own national growth and well-being must be driven by a commitment to improve delivery on basic social development, our health, food supply and environment, especially targeting the most vulnerable groups in our islands," she said, noting that the Marshall Islands has the highest rates of diabetes in the world.



Her Excellency, Hilda Heine, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands addresses the 71st session of the UN General Assembly. Image: UN

PCCM Seed Funding for National Activities

ESCAP has entered into three Letters of Agreement (LoA) with the Governments of Nauru, Kiribati and Tuvalu under the Pacific Climate Change and Migration (PCCM) project. The LoAs provide seed funding for specific government led and managed activities to advance and support further enhancement of national capacities to address the impacts of climate change on migration; and to further enhance national and/or regional knowledge sharing and cooperation, including through more robust regional migration schemes. All activities under the LoAs will be completed before the end of 2016.

Nauru

In Nauru, the seed funds are managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to support the partnership objective to increase regional and international labour market opportunities through recognising potential foreign labour markets and training or capacity needs of Nauru nationals.

The seed funds will provide specific support for:

- (i) Quality assurance in identifying the national readiness towards potential regional labour markets;
- (ii) Identification of training capacity requirements and educational gaps towards labour mobility;
- (iii) Identifying areas of improvements in compilation of national labour market data;
- (iv) Provision of restrictions and possible gaps towards potential labour market mobility development.

The three outputs will result in the development of a National Employment Policy (NEP) and ensure integration of the policy through the national Sustainable Development Strategy and relevant departments; the Development of Labour Market Database for Labour Market Analysis and Skills Development.

Kiribati

In Kiribati the Office of Te Beretitenti (Office of the President) is managing implementation of the seed funds. The Kiribati LOA supports capacity building and strengthening the national response to climate change in relation to urbanization and migration.

The seed funds will provide specific support for:

- (i) A Ministerial workshop on Climate Change Policy involving Ministers/ Senior officials (DS, Directors) whereby discussion on the Climate Change Policy and its inputs will be captured in consultation with Phoenix and Line Islands representatives;
- (ii) A National Summit for Island councils (Mayor, Clerk, Women and Youth representatives) to be held over a span of two days for Island Councils to provide inputs and raise concerns/issues, provide recommendations on Climate Change Policy;
- (iii) Advocacy and promotion of the National Climate Change Policy locally to be executed by the Kiribati Youth Group and by the MFA regionally and internationally;
- (iv) Maximising I-Kiribati Employment in the Northern Australia Workers Program through supporting the Ministry of labour and Human Resource Development to develop a systematic plan and support mechanism to link both the demand and supply sides, that is - requirements of employers in Australia and the work-ready pool from Kiribati to fast track the process and ultimately secure decent employment for I-Kiribati workers under this new program.

Tuvalu

In Tuvalu the LoA and the seed funds are managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade, Tourism, Environment and Labour. The LoA supports capacity building and actions to strengthen Tuvalu's National Sustainable Development Strategy goals in relation to urbanization and migration.

The Seed Funds will provide specific support for:

- (i) The Coalition of Atoll Nations on Climate Change (CANCC) Meeting:

Funds have been used to support the regional meeting of CANCC in October 2016. The expected outputs from the meeting include: A Green Climate Fund Workshop for CANCC officials (outcome being a joint CANCC proposal to the Green Climate Fund); Technical Meeting of CANCC officials; CANCC High Level Dialogue on key topics; and a Leaders Declaration as an outcome of the meeting.

- (ii) Policy Research, Development and Analysis:

Support in research and drafting of a National Policy Paper / Position Paper on Migration taking into account both internal and external migration as means of operationalizing the chapter on migration in the new National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 (Te Kakeega III) – Chapter 11).

- (iii) Review of the National Climate Change Policy:

Supporting the National Advisory Council on Climate Change (NACCC) in its ongoing tasks by supporting the National Review Committee to carry out a mid-term review of the actions stipulated in the existing policy on climate change.

- (iv) Increase employment opportunities overseas:

Research of new markets for Tuvaluan workers; and review existing marketing strategies for Australia/New Zealand, taking into account domestic employment conditions and marketing efforts of competing Pacific countries.

Investigation of job opportunities for Tuvaluans in the hospitality and care industries in Cook Islands.

- (v) Support the National Council of Women in its effort to revive and teach young women the weaving culture of Tuvalu.

- (vi) Support to local NGOs

Support to national CSO umbrella organisation Tuvalu Association of NGOs (TANGO) in the provision of training to local NGOs in proposal writing and reporting (including financial acquittals) and support in the development of a climate change and migration strategic plan for local organisations.



PCCM Seed Funding has been used to support women's groups in Tuvalu to preserve their culture of weaving.

Five Facts on Climate Migrants

Fact 1: Climate migrants are not legally considered refugees, according to international refugee law

The media and advocacy groups often refer to climate migrants - people on the move in relation to drought, floods, and storms - as "climate refugees". However, these people are not legally considered refugees. 'Refugee' is a legal term which has a very specific meaning centering on a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion" (Art. 1, 1951 Refugee Convention). According to this convention, people leaving their countries for reasons related to climate stressors may not be considered refugees because the Convention does not recognize the environment as a persecuting agent.

Fact 2: Climate migrants are people who leave their homes because of climate stressors

Climate stressors, such as changing rainfall, heavy flooding, and sea level rise, put pressure on people to leave their homes and livelihoods behind. It makes their homes uninhabitable. These people could live anywhere in the world ranging from Pacific island states like Kiribati and Tuvalu that are dealing with sea-level rise, to farmers in countries in West Africa who cannot cultivate their crops or raise livestock anymore because of drought and flooding.

Fact 3: The vulnerable are most likely to feel pressure to migrate

Countries with a combination of low adaptive capacities, vulnerable geographies and fragile ecosystems (such as small island states, the Sahel Belt and low-lying mega deltas) will face the question: Do I stay or do I go? At the same time, it is often the poorest and most vulnerable who do not have the resources or capacity to leave their homes. The majority of environmentally-induced migrants are likely to come from rural areas, as their livelihoods often depend on climate sensitive sectors, such as agriculture and fishing. However, climate migration out of urban areas is also possible as sea level rise affects the densely populated coastal areas.

Fact 4: No one knows how many climate migrants will exist

There are no reliable estimates of the number of people on the move today or in the future as a result of environmental factors. The reason for this is twofold: a difficulty untangling the reasons for migration and a lack of official figures on within country movement. Oftentimes places that experience climate stressors are also affected by conflict situations, political instability, low levels of economic development and human rights abuses. This makes it difficult to establish a direct causal link between the movement of people and the environment. The environment, including climate change impacts, is usually one of multiple factors involved in a person's decision to leave their home. Furthermore, a lot of movement more directly attributable to climate stressors is within a country (e.g. from rural to urban areas) and not across international borders. This movement is often not officially documented.

Fact 5: Climate migration is a reality faced by people the world over

People are already moving because of climate stressors and changing weather patterns. Whether salinity intrusion in Bangladesh is making it difficult for farmers to continue cultivating rice or flooding in Kenya is killing livestock and destroying crops, people's livelihoods are being threatened by climate stressors. In many cases, people will adapt to these stressors by migrating.



Pacific climate warriors (Image: 350.org)

*For the purpose of brevity, this article refers to those whose decision to migrate is related to environmental stressors such as drought, floods, storms, as climate migrants. Though this is not an official term used in policy or academia.

(Source: United Nations University, Institute for Environment and Human Security. <http://ehs.unu.edu/blog/5-facts/5-facts-on-climate-migrants.html>)

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