

PDD Key Messages: Climate Change and Displacement in the Climate Change Negotiations under the UNFCCC

1. Background

Large-scale movements of people, with climate change as one of the drivers, affect regions across the world particularly countries and communities most vulnerable to climate change including Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries. In 2017, it is estimated that 18.8 million people were **newly displaced** as a result of disasters linked to natural hazards, a majority (95 %) of which were weather and climate related. This number does not include those compelled to move in the context of **slow-onset events and processes** linked to the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation.

Looking towards the future, the World Bank projects that in three regions (Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America) alone, without additional and concrete climate and development action by 2050, more than 143 million people could be forced to move within their own countries to escape the slow-onset impacts of climate change.

The challenges of human mobility, including forced displacement, related to climate change have been discussed in the context of climate change negotiations under the UNFCCC for more than a decade. A landmark decision was the inclusion of human mobility in the **Cancun Climate Change Adaptation Framework** at the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties (**COP16**)¹, in Mexico in 2010. Another one was the decision in 2015 at **COP21**² in Paris, France to establish a **Task Force on Displacement** to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change.

The Task Force has now delivered on this its mandate, and the recommendations on integrated approaches have been forwarded by the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM) Executive Committee (Excom) for consideration by Parties at the 24th session in Katowice, Poland, 3–14 December 2018³.

2. PDD Key Messages for the Twenty-fourth session of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 24)

The recommendations are the result of the joint efforts undertaken by the Task Force on Displacement involving a broad range of stakeholders. Their implementation will help Parties, stakeholders and affected communities to better **understand displacement, address displacement risks and be better prepared** to respond to displacement challenges. They reference a range of actions and policy instruments that aim to strengthen policies, institutional frameworks, tools and guidelines on climate change and other type of action, as well as the preparedness and other capacities of national and local governments. The recommendations also recognize the importance of **action and support** to enhance knowledge, data collection and monitoring of risks, including coordination and policy coherence.

The recommendations are very comprehensive and contain suggestions on integrated approaches on what **actually can or should be done** to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse effects of climate change and disasters, and they **identify a range of relevant stakeholders**, under, as well as outside of the UNFCCC, that can support their implementation.

¹ Reference: FCCC/1/CP.16 <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf>

² Reference: FCCC/1/CP.21 <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/l09.pdf>

³ Reference: FCC/SB/2018/1 <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/1e.pdf>

By supporting the recommendations with a view to taking these strides forward, Parties will draw upon and build on earlier decisions and strides made in the context of implementing the Cancun Climate Change Adaptation Framework and the work of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage under the UNFCCC.

Key messages

Parties should consider the recommendations at this 24th session because they will **complement and in crucial ways contribute to ongoing international efforts and processes**, such as the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the two 2018 Global Compacts, for Migration and on Refugees.

Parties should welcome, adopt and commit to support implementation of the recommendations by the WIM Executive Committee and the work of the Task Force on Displacement, because they:

- outline **what can or should be done** to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse effects of climate change and disasters **and how**, e.g. in the form of drawing on international standards, national law, policies and strategies, including tools, guidelines, policy instruments and effective practices.
- are **comprehensive**, describing integrated approaches that can help people at risk of displacement stay in their homes and avert displacement (through mitigation and national adaptation planning), move safely out of harm's way to minimize the impact of displacement (e.g. planned relocation as a measure of last resort), and address the assistance and protection needs when displacement cannot be averted and to find solutions.
- **draw on and complement current international commitment and efforts** to address the challenges of human mobility in the context of the adverse effects of climate change.
- **present tools and measures** that can enhance understanding and help affected countries better assess climate change related risk, vulnerability and exposure to hazards.
- invite the Adaptation Committee and the Least developed Countries Expert Group together with the WIM Excom to assist developing country Parties to **include human mobility challenges into relevant national planning processes**, including national adaptation plans.
- provide opportunities to **scale up efforts regarding finance, technology and capacity-building** to assist developing countries to strengthen efforts to develop integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement.
- **identify a range of relevant stakeholders**, under as well as outside of the UNFCCC, offering opportunities to take the recommendations forward in an integrated, coordinated and complementary manner.
- offer an opportunity to **strengthen coordination, coherence and collaboration when averting, minimizing and addressing displacement** across relevant bodies and processes under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, programs and platforms.
- represent a **road map and next steps**, areas of work, activities and functions of an extended mandate of the WIM Task Force on Displacement, including in supporting the implementation of the WIM five-year rolling workplan.

The outcomes of these considerations by Parties at COP24 will be critical and shape the international community's forging of a comprehensive approach to preempt, plan for and address displacement related to the adverse effects of climate change today and in the future.