

CURRENT AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA
OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

A. CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION

1. Climate Change – Migration – Conflict: The Sahel Assessment

In June 2008, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Conflict, Mr. Jan Egeland, together with United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) representatives embarked on a mission to the Sahel region and underscored that the region is "ground zero" for vulnerable communities struggling to adapt to climate change. The key findings of this United Nations high-level mission brought attention to the linkages between (a) climate change risks and impacts; (b) escalating tensions and potential conflicts over scarce natural resources, and (c) increasing migration pressures due to disasters, conflicts and associated livelihood losses.

Against this background, UNEP, through its Post Conflict and Disaster Management Branch (PCDMB) has decided to complement those findings by carrying out a 50-page desk-based assessment of the Sahel. Through the analysis of the implications of current and anticipated environmental changes on conflict dynamics and migration patterns within and from the Sahel region, the assessment has three interlinked objectives:

- (a) Identifying "hot spots" and recommending intervention options for the international community and local partners in the Sahel;
- (b) Raising awareness, catalyzing support and informing/prioritizing donors' investments to meet climate change adaptation needs;
- (c) Proposing the development of a standard assessment methodology to analyze the interplay between climate, conflict and migration at regional, national and/or sub-national scales.

UNEP/PCDMB has so far involved the following organizations to different degrees in the assessment: Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations University-Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

*2. Climate Change, Environment and Migration in
the Sahel sub-region*

The project is under development and seeking funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Its objective is to predict, analyze and help three Sahelian countries —Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Mauritania— develop solutions and mitigation measures for climate change and environmentally induced migration (CCEIM) within the sub-region. This is a pioneering project that will set the scene for addressing the issue on a more comprehensive basis at the

global level. This project will seek to understand and provide information to policymakers on the effects of climate change on populations as well as migration as a pro-active response to predicted climate impacts. At the global level it will define the scale and nature of this issue and identify how appropriately planned migration can serve as a positive adaptation strategy in vulnerable countries and eco-regions. Information and methodologies developed in this project will contribute to a proposed future project to develop a global climate change environment and migration atlas.

3. Climate Change, Environment and Migration Alliance (CCEMA)

UNEP recognizes that migration is a cross-cutting issue which requires bringing together partners with different perspectives based on the idea of complementary but different mandates and expertise. UNEP is a founding member of the Climate Change, Environment and Migration Alliance, with IOM, OCHA, the Stockholm Environment Institute, UNU-EHS and others. Its role within the alliance has been focused on environmental issues as they relate to migration. Further, IOM and UNEP recently signed a memorandum of understanding to provide the framework for cooperation between the two organizations on migration and the environment.

4. The Mali Project

The project in the Inner Niger Delta in Mali is being carried out by IOM, UNDP and UNEP and is entitled “Addressing climate change implications on migration and human security: Practical actions, empirical research and policy recommendations”. The objective of the project is to assist populations in the Niger Inner Delta to better adapt to the consequences of climate change on their environment and livelihood through a combination of practical action and improved planning which integrates migration and human security issues.

B. PASTORAL COMMUNITIES

UNEP is jointly implementing with IOM (East Africa Regional Office) and OCHA (Kenya Office) the project entitled “Security in mobility” focusing on pastoral communities within the Horn of Africa. Activities will initially focus on the Sahel and other parts of Africa to better understand the migration-environment nexus.