The Securitisation of Climate-Induced Migration: Critical Perspectives

Climate Service Center Hamburg
June 10-12, 2012

Conference Proceedings

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Table of Contents

Workshop Programme ......................................................................................................................... 2
Workshop Summary ............................................................................................................................. 5
Concept Note ..................................................................................................................................... 6
Abstracts ........................................................................................................................................... 10

COST Action IS1101
Climate Change and Migration: Knowledge, Law and Policy, and Theory
# Workshop Programme

**Monday, June 11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session 1: Theories of securitization and CIM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Which theoretical perspectives have been, and can be, applied to conceptualise the securitisation of climate migration?</td>
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<td>Securitization theory, climate change and migration</td>
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<td><em>Julia Trombetta</em></td>
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<td><em>Angela Oels</em></td>
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<td>The Biopolitics of Climate-Induced Migration</td>
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<td><em>Julian Reid</em></td>
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<td>Chair: <em>Chris Methmann</em></td>
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<td>Discussant: <em>Andrew Baldwin</em></td>
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<th>11:00</th>
<th>Session 2: Concepts of security in the climate change and migration discourse</th>
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<td>What kind of security concepts characterise discourses on CIM?</td>
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<td>From Defence to Resilience. Pursuing Security in an Age of Risk</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Olaf Corry</em></td>
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### Session 3: Discourses of CIM

**Which discourses render climate-induced migration governable?**

- The green-washing of the anti-immigration discourse. An environmental history perspective
  *Marco Armiero*

- Invisible images imaging the invisible: Picturing Climate Refugees as the Human Face of Global Warming
  *Chris Methmann*

**Chair:** Delf Rothe  
**Discussant:** Julian Reid

### Session 4: The securitisation of CIM and its political implications in different cases

**Which actors are involved in the securitisation of CIM? What are the policy implications of the securitisation of climate migration? What are its effects in terms of (de-)politicisation of migration and the environment?**

- Discourses on policy responses to climate-induced migration in Bangladesh
  *Alice Baillat*

- "Extending the Wall into North Africa: The Political Implications of Casting Morocco as a "Transit State"
  *Gregory White*

- Climate migration and security in the UK: Examining the role for interests and beliefs in securitisation processes
  *Ingrid Boas*

**Chair:** Marco Armiero  
**Discussant:** Delf Rothe

### Keynote Lecture

**Everyday Exposures – Financialization, Contingency and Default**

*Melinda Cooper*

followed by a wine reception with a parallel COST-Workshop on “Temporalities of Debt and Guilt”.
# Tuesday, June 12

## 9:00  **Session 5: Empirical perspectives**

**What are the empirical connections between climate change, migration and security?**

New or all threats to the destabilisation of the system? How climate induced changes are perceived and handled in vulnerable social-ecological systems

*Maria Manez*

Security dimensions of ‘climate migration’ in Kenya: Experiences from a field study in the Tana Delta

*Jeanette Schade*

Migration and Climate Adaptation in Regional Contexts

*Jürgen Scheffran*

Chair: *Giovanni Bettini*

Discussant: *Francois Gemenne*

## 11:00  **Session 6: Countering securitisation - alternatives to a security framing of CIM**

**What are the positive and negative implications of constructing climate migration as a security issue? Which alternatives to a security framing of CIM do exist?**

Fraternity, Responsibility, Sustainability: The International Legal Protection of Climate Migrants at the Crossroads

*Benoit Mayer*

Securitising, insecuritising and de-securitising the mobility and environmental change nexus: practices, domains and the everyday

*Bruno Magalhaes*

Why climate refugees are not the canaries in the coalmine. An escape from environmental determinism

*Francois Gemenne*

Chair: *Jürgen Scheffran*

Discussant: *Chris Methmann*
The Securitisation of Climate-Induced Migration: Critical Perspectives

Workshop Summary

On June 10–12, 2012, the Institute of Political Science at the University of Hamburg hosted the inaugural workshop of the COST Action IS 1101 – Climate Change and Migration: Knowledge, Law and Policy, and Theory. In recent years, climate change has come to be discussed as a security issue, climate-induced migration serving as a case in point for the dangers arising in a warming world. In light of this, the workshop aimed to bring together a range of critical perspectives on this securitisation of climate-induced migration.

The first part of the workshop was dedicated to theoretical and conceptual issues. The first session introduced various theoretical approaches to the study of securitisation, the prominent Copenhagen and Paris Schools as well as the Foucauldian concepts of governmentality and biopolitics being among them. The second session dealt with concepts of security that might play a role in securitising climate-induced migration. The debate demonstrated that even seemingly progressive and emancipatory concepts such as the established concept of human security or the rather new and increasingly popular notion of resilience, are not unproblematic in terms of securitisation, with often unwanted side-effects.

The second part of the workshop then moved on to the empirical application of these theories and concepts. Session 3 presented examples from the US anti-immigration discourse, which is increasingly driven by fears of environmentally-induced migration, and an analysis of the visual representation of ‘climate refugees’, which often presents them as helpless and passive victims in need of Western assistance. In Session 4, regional studies from Bangladesh, Morocco and the UK provided an in-depth analysis of processes of securitisation on the ground. It emphasised the multifaceted and dynamic nature of securitisation as a highly political process.

The final part of the workshop focused on challenging the securitisation of climate-induced migration. Session 5 contained a range of case studies that contrasted the discourse of climate-security with the actual empirical reality on the ground. The presentations showed that climate change is far removed from leading directly to migration, resulting in security problems. Instead, local impacts of climate change lead to a variety of different perceptions, triggering a range of different responses, with migration being only one option among many. Session 6, finally, discussed the potential for desecuritisation, again drawing on different theoretical approaches. The debate revolved around alternative discourses for framing climate-induced migration, including the possibility of framing migration as a potential, as a strategy of adaptation.

The concluding discussion highlighted some avenues for future research. First, traditional securitisation in the sense of promoting exceptional or even military responses seems to be largely absent from climate-induced migration. Instead, more critical engagement with alternative conceptions of security such as human security and resilience is necessary. Second, participants agreed that the state of the art is strong in addressing these theoretical-conceptual issues, but more empirical investigation into actual discourses of securitisation is necessary. Furthermore, more differentiation is necessary here. Discourses of securitisation follow a different logic in the US than in Bangladesh, and different social sectors are likely to respond differently to a security discourse. The fact that there is not one discourse of securitisation has to be acknowledged. Third, participants of the workshop were struck that hardly any voices of those concerned are present in the Western debate on the securitisation of climate-induced migration. Future events and research should actively include voices from the global South. Finally, a concern of many participants was that – in light of our critical analysis – few options for framing climate-induced migration in a progressive manner seem to be left. How is it possible to counter fears of future floods of refugees without appearing as a climate skeptic? And how can we raise awareness for the hardships people will inevitably face in a changing climate without stepping into the security trap?
Concept Note

Why to study the securitization of climate-induced migration from critical perspectives?

Background and aims of the workshop

Despite some progress in the last couple of years (Laczko and Warner 2009; EACH-FOR 2009), the scientific evidence about climate-induced migration is still rather thin, and a lot of methodological insecurities remain (Jakobeit and Methmann 2010; Gemenne 2011). Yet climate refugees are gatecrashing the media agenda in many, especially developed, countries (Oels and Carvalho 2011; Farbotko 2005; Farbotko and Lazrus 2011). This has spurred a lively legal debate about how to deal with those displaced by global warming (Biermann and Boas 2010; Docherty and Giannini 2009; McAdam 2011). ‘Climate refugees’, furthermore, are becoming a concern for policy makers in various political domains – among them the UNFCCC, UNHCR and IOM, or the European Union. It seems that persistent gaps in the knowledge about and growing public and political attention to climate-induced migration go hand in hand. That ‘climate refugees’ are so present Western discourses although we have relatively small knowledge about the topic, can at least partly be traced back to a general ‘securitisation’ of climate change (Brzoska 2009; Trombetta 2008; Detraz and Betsill 2009; Methmann and Rothe 2012). These rhetoric moves often draw on the image of ‘climate refugees’ in order to give the security concerns associated with climate change a 'human face'. Therefore, a variety of actors such as NGOs, scientists, the media and politicians present climate-induced migration as a security issue. While most scholars working on climate-induced migration seems to oppose couching Climate-induced migration in terms of military security, a lot more express sympathy to the concept of human security (e.g. Brauch et al. 2009).

This tendency mirrors a division which is made in the general literature on securitisation. The Copenhagen School, which can be credited with coining the term 'securitisation', understands security in the traditional militarist sense of the term (Buzan, Waever and De Wilde 1998; Buzan and Waever 2009). By contrast, the Welsh School attempts to turn security into an ‘emancipatory’ project by redefining its contents in human terms (Booth 1991). This concept of ‘human security’ thus shifts the referent object of security from the state to the well-being of its people (UNDP 1994). Both approaches display a certain normative agreement in that they are critical of securitisation in terms of military security. They accuse it of championing exceptional measures, undermining human rights and democratic participation. And both display sympathy to the notion of human security for setting these wrongs right (Floyd 2007). This dichotomy between military and human security implicitly also informs large parts of the emerging debate about the securitisation of climate-induced migration.

The workshop seeks to challenge this simple dichotomy. It starts from the insight that it was precisely the case of migration that added a third, more ‘sociological approach’ (Balzacq 2010) to the debate on securitisation. Most prominently, the so-called Paris School has argued that the securitisation of migration is not so much achieved by the speech acts of high-ranking politicians, but in the realm of mid-level ‘security professionals’ as well as public discourses, drawing on images of fear (Bigo 2002; Bigo 2007; Huysmans 2006). This literature highlight the more subtle and implicit politics of security beyond the official language of exceptionalism (Huysmans 2006; Huysmans and Buonfino 2008). Moreover, scholars inspired by the Foucauldian notion of risk have started to question the stark normative distinction between
traditional and human security. For example, the humanitarian ‘politics of pity’ in the field of human trafficking, which is advocated by many NGOs, is easily connectable to more traditional conceptions of security (Aradau 2004). Others have attacked the concept of ‘human security’ for establishing a hierarchy between North and South, rendering the latter as ‘victims’ (Duffield and Waddell 2006) and giving way to a biopolitical regime of governing bare life (Duffield 2010). Moreover, it might blur the divisions between the security and development sectors, so that climate refugees might become become a justification for military interventions (Hartmann 2010). In this sense, a Foucauldian perspective is rather critical of the interventionist liberal regime that can emerge from a human security perspective (Reid 2010). In sum, these perspectives highlight the downsides of the human security concept. Both more discourse-oriented (McNamara 2007; Bettini 2012) as well as biopolitics-inspired scholars have started to engage critically with such a framing of climate change and climate-induced migration (Rothe 2011; Oels 2011; Oels 2012).

The aim of the workshop is to connect the different critical perspectives on the securitisation of climate-induced migration, evaluate their respective strengths and so assess the empirical realities of the securitisation of the ‘climate refugee’. This will enable a much more sophisticated normative evaluation of whether and how to present climate-induced migration as a security issue.

**The following questions will be addressed:**

- What are the empirical connections between climate change, migration and security?
- To what extent is climate migration articulated as a security issue?
- Which actors are involved?
- Which theoretical perspectives have been applied to conceptualise the “securitisation” of climate migration?
- What kind of security discourses are raised regarding the issue of climate migration?
- Which alternative discourses render climate-induced migration governable, for example, put forth by those directly affected by global warming?
- What are the policy implications of the securitisation of climate migration? What are its effects in terms of (de-)politicisation of migration and the environment?
- What are the positive and negative implications of constructing climate migration as a security issue?

**References**


Abstracts

(in order of appearance)

Securitization theory, climate change and migration
Maria Julia Trombetta

The debate on securitization theory has seen a recent revival from both the poststructuralist (Hansen 2011, Waever, 2011) and the sociological perspectives (Balzacq 2011, Stritzel 2011). The two approaches suggest different understanding of what counts as successful securitization and their implications. More specifically sociological approaches tend to suggest that securitization occur not only through speech act but also to practices and even risk (Balzacq and Leonard, forthcoming). The problem is that the two perspectives suggest different perspectives on de-politicization. One suggests a move above politics, the other a de-politicization through practices, statistics, controlling at distance through numbers, which resemble the governmentality approach. The case of climate change and migration is relevant because two modalities of security, one based on evoking emergencies and the other based on governmentality seem to coexist providing relevant insights on how it is possible to shift from one modality of security to another and on how the different theoretical perspectives deal with the problem. The focus is on whether and how “speaking” security opens up space for transformation and contestation and whether and how de-securitization can occur as the result of competing securitizing moves. The paper provides an overview of the different perspectives and their implications for governing the migration problem.

The vulnerable as becoming dangerous: A Foucaultian perspective on the securitization of climate change induced migration
Angela Oels

A range of diverse actors at the trans- and international level is involved in rendering the “climate change induced migrant” governable as a security issue in one way or another: environmental and migration NGOs, academics, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the conference of the parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP to UNFCCC). In this paper, I draw on Foucault’s governmentality framework in order to distinguish between five modes of securitizing the climate change induced migrant. The analysis is based on document analysis and on recordings of side events at COP-15 in Copenhagen. First, sovereign power conceives of climate change induced migrants as a threat to the state and seeks to clarify the status and related rights of these people in order to include or exclude them. Disciplinary power conceptualises climate change induced migrants as bodies whose lives need to be saved by humanitarian assistance. Traditional biopolitical risk management uses prediction and scenarios to identify climate hot spots in order to invest scarce resources in those regions which are most vulnerable. Risk management through contingency focuses on enhancing people’s adaptive capacity and resilience to current weather variability. Finally, precautionary risk management seeks to preempt the uncertain risk of disorganised mass migration at all costs, for example by military interventions in sovereign states. When analyzing the policy implications of rendering climate change induced migrants governable as a security issue, the paper argues that the vulnerable are constructed as becoming “dangerous” to the industrialised North. At
the same time, Northern responsibility for causing climate change in the first place is denied and affected populations are disempowered.

The Biopolitics of Climate-Induced Migration
Julian Reid

The pathologization of climate-induced migration in the human world is prefigured by the pathologization of climate-induced migration in the animal world. Consider, for example, the phenomenon of the ‘Grolar’ bear; the cross between a Polar and Grizzly bear born of the sexual encounter of migrating Polar and Grizzly bears consequent upon the ‘catastrophe effects’ of climate change, specifically the breaking up of the Arctic sea ice. A team of ecologists lead by Brendan Kelly of the National Marine Mammal Laboratory, in Alaska, argues that with this phenomenon of the ‘cross-breed’ so ‘endangered, native species’ such as the Polar Bear from which the Grolar Bear is emerging will soon disappear. Furthermore ‘the speeding up evolutionary pressures, the forcing of animals into rapid adaptive modes, may not produce biologically favorable outcomes’. Quoting Kelly from an interview with Live Science: “‘This change is happening so rapidly that it doesn’t bode well for adaptive responses.” This cult of mourning for the coming death of existing species life, consequent upon the movement of the earth, migration of species, and fear for the nature of the new forms of life to come, expresses perfectly the ways in which the securitization of climate change is underwritten by a biopoliticized fear of the transformative effects of life’s movement upon existing species; ‘pure' and ‘native' forms threatened by the emergence of impure, foreign, maladapted ones. Yet these movements of life and world, while portending the destruction of our own and other species, are wondrous expressions of the transformative and contingent nature of the relation between life and world. No doubt the human, like the Grizzly and the Polar bear will die off. But that process of extinction will be, and no doubt already is, a creative one. Climate-induced migration is fundamental to that process. Why is it that at this momentous beginning of our end time, we do not have the courage with which to actively welcome and celebrate it? What is it about a civilization or a culture that manages to turn the wondrous phenomenon of the emergence of new forms of life, consequent upon these dramatic changes in a milieu, into a problematic of insecurity and threat? This paper addresses these questions and in doing so argues for a post-biopolitical approach to the phenomenon of climate-induced migration in both human and non-human contexts.

From Defence to Resilience. Pursuing Security in an Age of Risk
Olaf Corry

How, if at all, should we pursue security in an age of risk? The concept of ‘defence’ grew out of the post-war configuration of national security but now sits uncomfortably along side the new wider security agenda, including the risk of migration as a result of climate change. But if defence is not the answer to such risk-security problems, what could be? This paper explores whether the concept of resilience may be playing a similar role in risk-security discourse to the one played by ‘defence’ in threat-based discourse within the security language-game. First an account of the concept of defence is offered, showing how security has conceptually ‘outgrown’ defence including regarding security issues linked to climate-induced migration. Thirdly, it is suggested that ‘resilience’ is in a sense the defence-concept of
risk-security. Resilience has been received critically attention from security scholars interpreting it as a vehicle and multiplier of (neo)liberal power. Moderating this, the final section argues that the rise of resilience is actually linked to wider features of risk society rather than specifically neo-liberalism, that it has diverse effects and that – compared to defence – it has positive as well as negative potential as a political framework for dealing with dangers such as those connected to migration.

The exceptions that prove the rule: Overcoming the exceptionalization of climate migration in order to counter its securitization and depoliticization
Giovanni Bettini

Climate-related migration (CM) is one of the emblematic issues/'objects' through which the securitization of climate change is performed. In spite of their different conceptualizations of security, conflicting discourses on CM converge into a set of alarmist/apocalyptic narratives often centred on the victimized figure of the ‘climate refugee’. This convergence signals (the risk for) a depoliticization of the issue (Bettini 2012).

This paper argues that, in order to counter securitization(s) and depoliticization, it is necessary to abandon the exceptionalization of CM. With ‘exceptionalization’ I refer here to problematizations that isolate CM from other on-going processes. Indeed most conceptualizations fail to appreciate the relevance of existing migration for understanding future climate-related mobility (Black et al 2011), and decouple CM from phenomena and transformations (such as ‘urbanization’ and the multi-faceted efforts for governing it) that affect the lives of potential climate refugees and migrants in the ‘global south’.

For overcoming such exceptionalization, I propose to combine a geopolitical and a bio-political perspective to CM. This combination allows to relate the biopolitical subjectivities constructed for/evacuated from the concerned populations (see e.g. the case of climate refugees) to the (re)production of geopolitical rationalities. It thereby promises to shed light on the ways dominant problematization of CM (and the related governance techniques) are functional to the ordered inscription of the (life of) concerned populations into existing relations and to the securing of their ‘good circulation’.

The green-washing of the anti-immigration discourse. An environmental history perspective
Marco Armiero

Currently, a green-washing of the anti-immigration discourse is advancing in the US and Canada, and probably it will reach Europe soon. Several think-tanks – such as the Federation for American Immigration Reform, the Center for Immigration Studies, and the Center for Immigration Policy Reform – are arguing that to save the environment we need to fight against immigration because it will imbalance the relationships between local inhabitants and “their” places. According to that narrative, like locusts, illegal immigrants want to take advantage of the place where they arrive but never belong to it. Green-washing is a powerful rhetorical tool. Nature is by definition neutral, it does not have racial color or political identities; it is ideally well suited to depoliticize the discourse over immigration, shifting from a political/moral realm to some kind of scientific realm. But nature has never been neutral. Race, class, ethnic identities, and gender matter indeed if we want to understand how power relations have historically organized humans’ relationships with the environment. However, that green-washing is not a new phenomenon; starting from
the 19th century, advocates of “nature” showed a deep distrust – actually many times even a racist attitude - towards immigrants. I will illustrate the historical roots of those green arguments against immigrants/immigration, uncovering the controversial relationships between environmentalist cultures and immigrants’ cultures and experiences.

Invisible images imaging the invisible: Picturing Climate Refugees as the Human Face of Global Warming
Chris Methmann

How do you recognise a ‘climate refugee’ when you see one? Research on climate-induced migration agrees that, put simply, you don’t. It is nearly impossible to identify individual people as displaced by global warming. For the casual observer, however, it is impossible not to see ‘climate refugees’. Media coverage, reports, films or fundraising posters (etc.), all picture climate refugees as a ‘human face’ of global warming. Drawing on often unnoticed images, they subliminally render ‘climate refugees’ as individuals with particular properties in particular situations. While a growing body of work deals with the textual representations of climate refugees, engagement with their visual appearance is largely missing. How is it that we all readily recognise those people as climate refugees (in need of ‘our’ help)? How do they problematise climate-induced migration? And what are the implications for political responses – especially in terms of securitisation? This paper combines the postcolonial literature on picturing ‘the poor’ in Western discourses with the risk/security debate in order to elucidate the often unacknowledged field of visibility of climate-induced migration.

Discourses on policy responses to climate-induced migration in Bangladesh
Alice Baillat

This paper is based on some hypothesis developed in an ongoing PhD research on the performative effects of discourses on policy responses to climate-induced migration in Bangladesh over the last two decades. This research dissects a broad variety of discourses – in and on Bangladesh - from practitioners, policy-makers, media, civil society etc in order to analyse the dynamics of discourses and the evolution of contents. The purpose here is to reveal their variable influence on perceptions and practices, depending on context and social authority of discursive agents.

Following the focus of the workshop on the securitization of climate-induced migration, this paper suggests to address this specific issue in the context of Bangladesh. This country being located in the South Asian region where transborder migration is already a sensitive issue, we can question how migrations due to climate change are going to be securitized in this region. We will concentrate on Bangladesh and Indian perceptions of climate-induced migration from Bangladesh that is presented as a growing security concern especially for India. Indeed, it is interesting to point out that Bangladeshis migrants, in the context of climate change, are showed in Indian newspapers as a threat for national security whereas this issue is neglected in Bangladeshis one. This will be the opportunity to observe how a common problem can be constructed and orchestrated in different ways, depending on perceptions and specific interests.
Finally, we will also address the policy implications of the securitisation of this question in terms of bilateral and regional relations.

"Extending the Wall into North Africa: The Political Implications of Casting Morocco as a 'Transit State'"
Gregory White

The securitization of climate-induced migration (CIM) has implications not only for advanced-industrialized countries, but also for "transit states." Morocco, for its part, has increasingly been cast as a transit state to which migrants have travelled in recent years, ostensibly in an effort to gain access to Spain and the European Union. This changing role has had profound implications for Morocco’s domestic political economy. Moreover, as climate change accelerates, the threat-defense logic of increased CIM will likely play out in disconcerting modes within Morocco as well as in the broader North Atlantic region. Morocco’s new portrayal as a transit state—even if CIM may be overstated as a concern—is a way of deepening authoritarianism, on both sides of the Mediterranean.

Climate migration and security in the UK: Examining the role for interests and beliefs in securitisation processes
Ingrid Boas

The UK has been one of the leading countries to approach climate change through a security lens. Climate migration often comes up in this debate. Climate migration is portrayed as a consequence of climate change leading to conflict and instability. According to securitisation theory as set out by the Copenhagen School, such security language may result into extraordinary measures. While there is some evidence for that (White 2011; Hartmann 2010), such security language on climate migration and climate change also frequently endorses regular governance practices, such as the mitigation of carbon dioxide emissions. This raises the questions, tackled by several scholars (Trombetta 2008; Corry 2011; Methmann and Rothe 2012, forthcoming; Bettini 2012, forthcoming: 15), why security language in areas of climate change often results into such regular governance mechanisms.

This paper tries to address this question by looking into the role for interests and beliefs in securitisation processes. The case study of the securitisation of climate migration in the UK Government shows that interests and beliefs rather than security language predominantly informs which governance measures are promoted. Security language on climate migration has mainly been strategically employed by the UK’s Foreign Commonwealth Office in the light of climate change diplomacy. Such security language therefore mainly endorsed regular climate change practices. Moreover, such security language also did not yet convince a wider audience in the UK Government that extraordinary security measures need to be developed. Such language is either not supported by this wider audience and countered by desecuritisation acts or the exceptional type of security practices are deemed inappropriate.
New or all threats to the destabilisation of the system? How climate induced changes are perceived and handled in vulnerable social-ecological systems
Maria Manez

Using the case of the Iberian Peninsula I would show how the nexus between climate threats, financial crisis and illegal migration have put climate or environmental migrants in a difficult position and how the political discourse and rhetoric is increasingly linking migration to the destabilisation of the system.

Security dimensions of ‘climate migration’ in Kenya: Experiences from a field study in the Tana Delta
Jeanette Schade

Experiences from a field study carried out during the severe East African drought of 2011 in the Tana Delta on climate change, climate policies and human rights are assessed with regard to the diverse security implications which were involved. This certainly touches the question of human security of the local population as well as of the nomadic pastoralists who migrate into the Tana Delta during dry spells, and who get into conflict with each other. It also sheds light on the underlying structures and power relations that make the habitants and other traditional users of the delta so vulnerable to climate change, and beyond that also to climate policies. Unfortunately, in current climate (migration) debates these societal dimensions often get out of sight - intentionally or not - which rightfully can be called a de-politicizing effect. The question of security had moreover a cross-border dimension, expressed in the statement of the Kenyan Minister of the Interior that refugee flows from Somalia help terrorists to infiltrate the country. Thus the case study gives opportunity to discuss the various security dimensions and approaches related to ‘climate migration’ on the background of one example. It also brings into mind the simultaneity of those dimensions in geographically confined areas.

Migration and Climate Adaptation in Regional Contexts
Jürgen Scheffran

Throughout history, human migration has been an adaptive response not only to poverty and social deprivation but also to environmental and climatic change. While climate change may undermine human livelihood and increase migration pressure in affected regions, there is unclear empirical evidence how affected communities will respond. Strengthening social resilience could prevent or slow down distressed migration. Where communities are threatened by climate change, migration would be a legitimate adaptive response supported by institutions that help to accommodate migrants and avoid conflicts. Voluntary migration may diversify livelihood of households and create new opportunities for building human and social capital through acquisition of new knowledge, income and other resources. Co-development links strategies for development in the communities of origin and the communities of destination which are connected through social networks and cooperative gains. This contribution will investigate the linkages between climate adaptation and migration, with exemplary cases in the African Sahel and Southern Asia.
Fraternity, Responsibility, Sustainability: The International Legal Protection of Climate Migrants at the Crossroads
Benoit Mayer

Many lands are becoming uninhabitable because of anthropogenic global warming, either through the rise in sea level and increasingly severe climate dangers (e.g. Bangladesh, the Maldives) or through desertification (e.g. Nigeria, Egypt), resulting in large displacements. An argument for an international protection of climate migrants may be derived from different notions and different branches of literature, resulting in dramatic differences relating to the nature and the scope of states’ obligations, as well as to the content of climate migrants’ protected rights. Firstly, fraternity – through the notions of an international responsibility to protection Human Rights of foreign populations whose state is unable to do so – would call to an expensive protection of environmental migrants, yet failing at convincing states to commit themselves in early and preventive or systematic action. Responsibility – through state responsibility for an internationally wrongful act, the common but differentiated responsibility principle or the doctrine of unjust enrichment – would single out climate change induced migrants, but, in the current state of international law, it may be difficult to implement as a genuinely legal concept. Lastly, sustainability may call for an international action focusing on the protection of peace and security. In particular, the development of the notion of a “human security” is an attempt at reconciling the strong incentive of the security discourse with the human rights protection paradigm.

Securitising, insecuritising and de-securitising the mobility and environmental change nexus: practices, domains and the everyday.
Bruno Magalhaes

Influenced by a more systematic investigation of the nexus through case studies published in the mid and late 2000s, a growing number of experts and policy players now reject the maximalist treatment of environmental change as a necessary cause of human mobility. To avoid a potential securitisation of the borders and the trapping of populations in vulnerable areas, these authors and operational agencies now defend the representation of the nexus as a complex challenge for policy makers. In my intervention, I draw on this on-going transition from a threat framing to the representation of the nexus as a complex challenge to interrogate the work that security language and practices do in establishing the nexus as a major policy concern. In specific, I take issue with the suggestion that the shift from a threat to a challenge narrative represents as a movement away from an impertinent security framing. My intervention engages with this reading by contrasting a focus on the securitisation of the migration and environmental change nexus and a focus in its insecurity rendition. I develop this contrast around three axes: Axis A differentiates analysis interested in how the nexus is discursively defined as a threat to different referent objects from analyses that look at how governmental techniques employed contribute to the nexus’s insecuritisation. Axis B compares how securitisation and insecuritisation studies deal with the intertwining of national, human, societal and other domains of security in the discussion on migration and environmental change. Finally, axis C compares the “de-securitisation solutions” that can be derived from a focus on the securitisation and insecurity rendition of the nexus. I will that, in light of the more fluid understanding of insecurity rendition, arguments for treating migration positively as an adaptation mechanism need to be reinterpreted as part of the nexus’s insecuritisation. De-securitisation is achieved
not by down-ranking the security framing of human mobility, but through direct engagement with the security assumptions that underlie the definition of the nexus as a policy concern.

Why climate refugees are not the ‘canaries in the coalmine’. An escape from environmental determinism
Francois Gemenne

Massive population displacements are now regularly forecasted as one of the most dramatic possible consequences of climate change. Recent empirical studies, such as the EACH-FOR project (www.each-for.eu), have shown that environmental factors were increasingly important drivers of migration movements, both forced and voluntary.

The dominant perspective on the issue, however, is rooted in environmental determinism: migration is conceived as a threat to human security, the only choice left when all other adaptation strategies have failed. Environmental ‘refugees’ are depicted as the expiatory victims of climate change, subjects of a humanitarian catastrophe in the making.

This is especially the case for inhabitants of small island states, described by the IPCC as ‘especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change, sea-level rise, and extreme events’ (Mimura et al. 2007: 689). Over time, the threats posed by sea-level rise to the very existence of these states have been highlighted, and their inhabitants have often been described as the first potential ‘climate refugees’. Most media reports now describe small island states as ‘lost paradises’ and their citizens as ‘canaries in the coalmine’ of global warming, a view that has often been reinforced by official discourses in climate negotiations.