

■ Environmental migration scenarios: major aspects

Scenario	Nature of Migration	Affected Countries & Regions	Legal Protection	Legal Loopholes
Natural catastrophe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temporary, voluntary or forced movement within national borders or across international borders - Permanent forced relocation 	<p>Coastal areas and sea deltas</p> <p>China, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Japan, Egypt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal movement protected by guiding principles for IDPs and international human rights law (HRL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unlike refugees, those moving across international borders are not legally entitled to admission to another country - UNHCR protection only for persons who are excluded from other aid due to their ethnic, religious or national affiliation
Slow-onset environmental degradation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gradual processes, beginning with voluntary movement in- and outside a country through to flight - Possible relocation processes 	<p>Coastal areas and arid regions</p> <p>Sub-Saharan Africa, Central and South East Asia, Latin America</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal movement protected by guiding principles for IDPs and international HRL - Environmental migrants crossing international border protected by individual national regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition of impact of climate change as “cumulative grounds” in the context of the GRC is questionable - EU protection is at the discretion of the European Council - Application of the principles of non-refoulement questionable
Sinking islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gradual processes with voluntary movement inside and outside a country through to flight - Forced and permanent migration due to loss of state territory 	<p>Small island states</p> <p>Maldives, South Pacific island states such as Kiribati, Tuvalu and Palau, Caribbean Islands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal movement protected by guiding principles for IDPs and international HRL - UNHCR protection in event of ensuing statelessness - Protection due to obligation of every state to protect against a threat to the right to life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If a state loses its territory it is unclear whether the citizenship of those affected would continue to be recognised or whether they would be rendered stateless, thereby becoming the responsibility of the UNHCR - EU protection is at the discretion of the European Council
Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flight from regions of conflict within a state or across international borders 	<p>States and regions lacking resources</p> <p>Sub-Saharan Africa, Near and Middle East, South and South East Asia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal flight protected by guiding principles for IDPs and international HRL - Movement across international borders protected in cases of verifiable persecution under the Geneva Refugee Convention as well as the principles of non-refoulement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protection after movement over international borders only in cases of verifiable persecution
Expropriation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programmes for permanent internal forced relocation 	<p>States prone to natural catastrophe and lacking resources</p> <p>China, India, Bangladesh</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibly protected by national legislation - International HRL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No binding international protection