A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO CLIMATE REFUGEES

Friends of the Earth

climate justice

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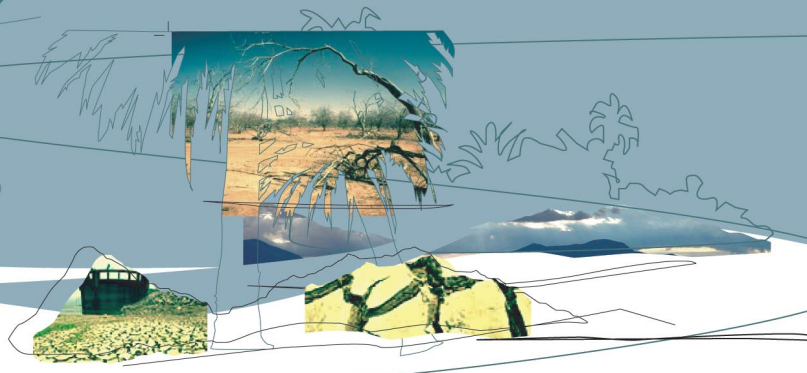
CLIMATE CHANGE AND HISTORICAL EMISSIONS



Fact Sheet One: Climate change and historical emissions

While the earth has always endured natural climate change variability, we are now facing the possibility of irreversible climate change in the near future[1]. The increase of greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere from industrial processes has enhanced the natural greenhouse effect. This in turn has accentuated the greenhouse 'trap' effect, causing greenhouse gases to form a blanket around the earth, inhibiting the sun's heat from leaving the outer atmosphere. This increase of greenhouse gases is causing an additional warming of the Earth's surface and atmosphere. A direct consequence of this is sea-level rise expansion, which is primarily due to the thermal expansion of oceans (water expands when heated), inducing the melting of ice sheets as global surface temperature increases.

Forecasts for climate change by the 2,000 scientists on the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) project a rise in the global average surface temperature by 1.4 to 5.8°C from 1990 to 2100. This will result in a global mean sea level rise by an average of 5mm per year over the next 100 years. Consequently, human-induced climate change will have "deleterious effects" on ecosystems, socio-economic systems and human welfare[2].

Historical Emissions

Historical measures of greenhouse gas emissions clearly identify industrialised countries as being the most significant contributors of human induced climate change. Over the past 150 years, industrial economies have perpetuated a rise in greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide (CO2), which has resulted from energy generation, minerals extraction and processing, industrial agriculture and motorised transport. Whilst the USA was responsible for 29% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions between 1850 and 2000, Australia remains the greatest per capita emitter of greenhouse gases in the industrialised world. In the year 2000, Australia's domestic emissions averaged at 6.7 tonnes of CO2 equivalents per person[3]. In contrast to these figures, to stabilise climate change it is estimated that every person would be entitled to 1.4 tonnes of CO2 per year. This is significantly less than what Australian's produce now.

How do we measure the severity of climate change?

In 2004, the European Climate Forum (ECF) held a Symposium to examine the risks associated with climate change, outlining three concepts of danger[4]. First, "determinative dangers" were identified with very serious levels of climate change and were noted as inevitable if early intervention was not taken. Indicators of determinative dangers include the extinction of "iconic" species, loss of ecosystems, loss of human cultures and large numbers of climate refugees.

Second, "early warning dangers" were acknowledged, whereby dangers are likely to become more severe with increased warming. Early warning dangers include increased drought frequency and artic sea ice retreat. The final danger identified referred to "regional dangers". These concern threats to food security, water resources, infrastructure, and ecosystems.

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[1] Climate Change Secretariat Bonn, 2002, *A Guide to the Climate Change Convention and its Kyoto Protocol.*
[2] United Nations, 1992, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.*
[3] Baumert, K. and J. Pershing, 2004, *Climate Data: Insights and Observations*. Pew Centre on Global Climate Change
[4] European Climate Forum."What is Dangerous Climate Change?" *Initial Results of a Symposium on Key Vulnerable Regions* Climate Change and Article 2 of the UNFCCC. December 14, 2004.

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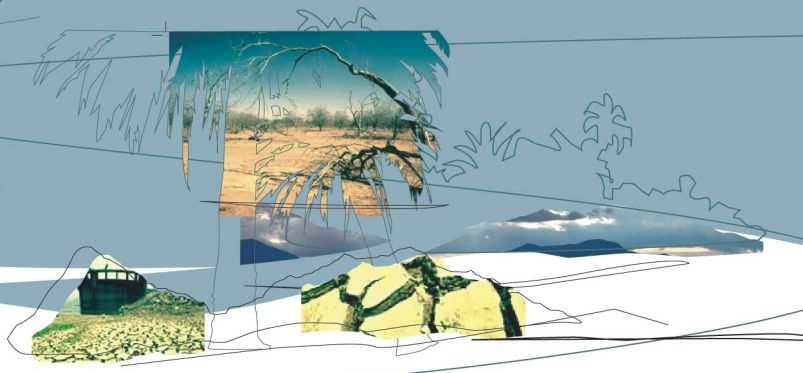

Global efforts to address climate change: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

To address critical issues surrounding climate change, the United Nations organised the 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, formally known as the Conference on Environment and Development (UNECD)[5]. Outcomes from UNECD included the creation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was endorsed by world governments on May 9, 1992[6]. The UNFCCC is a non-binding agreement aimed at reducing the consequences of climate change, and entered into force on March 21, 1994, following ratification by 50 parties. Australia ratified on December 30, 1992[7].

UNFCCC responsibilities

The UNFCCC's primary objective is to achieve the "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would *prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system*…within a time-frame that is sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner"[8] (emphasis added).

The UNFCCC requires parties to be guided by five primary principles when acting to implement the Convention. These include: developed countries taking the lead in the struggle against climate change; full consideration granted to the special needs of developing countries; precautionary measures taken to avert or minimize climate change causes and ease its impacts; policies developed in line with each country's specific needs; and cooperation to promote an open international economic system. (See UNFCCC website for full document: http://unfccc.int/2860.php)

Setting targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions—Kyoto Protocol

A number of conferences have been held by parties to the convention to negotiate targets and timetables for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The third Conference of the Parties (COP3) was held in 1997 at Kyoto, Japan. A key outcome from COP3 saw the formation of an implementation plan known as the Kyoto Protocol on December 11, 1997. The conditions of Kyoto require Annex 1 Parties (developed nations with economies in transition) to accept legally binding targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, the agreement is binding over the first commitment period, from 2008-2012. Emission targets for Kyoto were set at approximately 95% of the 1990 emissions of the individual nations involved. However, Australia, Norway and Iceland negotiated an increased target. Successful lobbying at the conference saw Australia's target increased to 108% of 1990 levels. Specifically, Australian representatives argued that the countries high population growth and dependency on carbon intensive technologies would lead to significant economic costs if a decrease in emissions was pursued. Whilst policies to meet emission targets are the responsibility of individual nations, those that fail to do so will be forced to further reduce their emissions in the following period (after 2012)[9].

[5] Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Legislation Committee, 2004, *Kyoto Protocol Ratification Bill 2003 (No. 2).* Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
[6] Climate Change Secretariat Bonn, 2002, *A Guide to the Climate Change Convention and its Kyoto Protocol.*
[7] Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Legislation Committee, 2004.
[8] United Nations, 1992, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.*
[9] Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Legislation Committee, 2004.

WHAT CAUSES PEOPLE TO BECOME CLIMATE REFUGEES?

Fact Sheet Two: What causes people to become Climate Refugees?

It is now widely accepted in the scientific community that climate change will lead to both incremental and rapid ecological change and disruption. The impacts of climate change, which include increased droughts, desertification, and sea level rise, along with the more frequent occurrence of extreme weather events, will lead to an increased number of climate refugees around the world. In determining which nations are most likely to encounter the displacement of citizens, a complex assessment of the nation's geographic vulnerability to climate change, as well its social, economic and political structures must be considered.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change there are regions of the world that have already been declared as being extremely vulnerable to climate change. These include: low-lying and small island developing states and North Africa. Although climate change is a global phenomenon that will impact upon critical life supporting systems such as weather and hydrology cycles, FoE Australia is regionally concerned with the Pacific, including Micronesia and Polynesia, and has therefore focused upon the significant potential of climate refugees in this region.

Climate Change, Pacific Islands and Sea-Level Rise

Home to 22 Island states, and with a combined population of approximately 7 million people, the Pacific is considered one of the most culturally diverse regions of the world. Like many Indigenous peoples, Pacific Islanders have been living in this region for over 10,000 years.

Whilst they contribute the least to global greenhouse gas emissions, emitting an estimated 0.06 percent of the world's emissions, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has declared them three times more at risk to climate change than countries of the global north.

Food Security

Rising sea levels have meant that king tides, spring tides and sometimes high tide are increasingly washing through the crop gardens in several of the smaller atolls in both Melanesia and Polynesia. Salt-water intrusion reduces the land's productive capabilities and has already affected communal crop gardens on six of Tuvalu's eight islands. In addition, the increased incidence of coral bleaching from rising ocean temperatures is depleting fisheries[1]. Coral reefs provide an environment for subsistence fishing across the Pacific, especially coastal fishing and are therefore critical to the survival of small island states.

Water Security

Rainwater is the main water source for many small island states including Tuvalu, Kiribati and the Cook Islands. Across most island states, water shortages have been experienced as rainfall patterns (influenced by interannual variations or ENSO) become more variable. Drought in Papua New Guinea, the Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Fiji are direct consequences of variations in climatic and oceanic conditions. Further contributing to water insecurity, underground reserves of fresh water in the Pacific are also showing signs of vulnerability to climate change.

[1] "Rising Waters" video www.itvs.org

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In coral atolls, a thin layer of fresh groundwater sits atop the saltwater lens, and is used as a fresh water reserve. These underground reserves are threatened by reduced precipitation rates from changes in climate, as well as sea-level rise.

Increase in Vector and Water Borne Diseases

Warmer temperatures lead to increased incidence of malaria. In the highlands of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, which previously were too cold for mosquitoes to survive, there have been reports of malaria. In addition, El Niño cycles have been linked to cholera, and over recent years there have been outbreaks of cholera in the Federated States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands[2].

Infrastructure and Land Losses

Previously attributed to unsustainable coastal development, coastal erosion is now increasingly exacerbated by storm and wave action. This is of particular concern to island states where coastal areas constitute a large proportion of their total land area. There have been reported losses of sandbanks and shorelines in Tuvalu (the motu of Tepuka Savilivili), and in the Carteret Islands since the 1960s. Some islands in Fiji have retreated 30m in the past 70 years[3]. In Kiribati the motu of Tebua Tarawa, once a landmark for fisherman, is now under water.
Also, coastal roads, bridges and plantations are suffering increasing erosion, even on islands that have not experienced inappropriate coastal development. More over, increased occurrences of climatic extremes such as more intense storms and increased incidence of floods are impacting on housing and community infrastructure including culturally significant sites. For example, in Majuro, the capital of the Marshall Islands, sea walls have been constructed to try to protect existing infrastructure and halt the impact of erosion[4].

Sea Level Rise

According to the IPCC, sea levels are predicted to rise worldwide by 0.09 to 0.88m between 1990 and 2100. In such scenarios, Pacific Islanders are 6 to 8 times more likely to be affected by coastal flooding than people in Australia and New Zealand. This is not surprising given that the Pacific includes the smallest and lowest lying nations in the world. Combined with their high population density, this means that Pacific peoples are extremely vulnerable to sea-level rise. The Tuvaluan Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Mr Lagitupu Tuilimu, stated in 2001 that scientists have predicted countries like Tuvalu will be totally submerged within around fifty years[5].

Examples of potential impacts of sea level rise can be noted all around the world. In Bangladesh, around half of the country's population lives in areas less that five meters above sea-level. Similarly, a one metre rise in sea-level would affect 67% of the Netherlands population. The mega cities of London, Shanghai, Hamburg, Bangkok, Jakarta, Bombay, Manila, Buenos Aires and Venice are all built on low-lying coastal areas. The city of Manhattan in New York is another example of an island that is under threat from sea-level rise.

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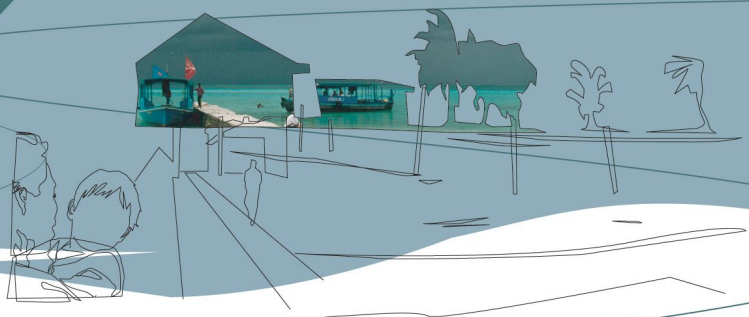
[2] "Climate Change and the Pacific" Australian Conservation Foundation, January 2003, Virginia Simpson
[3] "Rising Waters" video www.itvs.org
[4] From "Climate Dangers and Atoll Countries" Jon Barnett and Neil Adger, Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, October 2001, Working Paper 9.
[5] Tuilimu, Lagitupu. Government of Tuvalu Statement to Third UN Conference on LDC. May 17, 2001. <http://ro.unctad.org/conference/address/tuvalu17_e.htm>

CASE STUDY ON TUVALUAN TO NEW ZEALAND PROGRAM



Fact Sheet Three: Case Study of Tuvalu and New Zealand – Pacific Access Category (PAC)

Climate change is already having disastrous effects on humans around the world, as seen in the tiny island nation of Tuvalu. Residents have been forced to flee their homes, in search of a less vulnerable environment. As environmental refugees, these people need the help from countries like Australia to offer refuge from the impacts of climate change.

Tuvalu

Located in the Pacific Ocean 3,400km northeast of Australia, Tuvalu is a nation made up of eight tiny coral atolls and has a total area of 26 square kilometres. It is one of the world's lowest-lying countries, with its highest point standing a mere four and a half metres above sea level. With a population of 11,636 people, approximately half of all Tuvaluan's live just three metres above sea level, making them extremely vulnerable to effects of climate change such as sea level rise[1].

In December 8, 1997, former Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Bikenibeu Paeniu, presented a speech to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Kyoto regarding the suffering that Tuvalu is experiencing from sea level rise, strong winds, and an increased frequency of cyclones, flooding and tide surges. He described the effects as "almost unbearable," as vegetation, food crops and whole villages have been destroyed, threatening the health and lives of the Tuvaluan people[2].

Tuvalu is the first country in which residents have been forced to evacuate because of rising sea levels[3]. Nearly 3000 Tuvaluans have already left their homelands. In support of their crisis, the New Zealand government has established an immigration programme called the Pacific Access Category, which currently sees seventy-five residents migrate to NZ each year.

The Pacific Access Category

The Pacific Access Category (PAC) is an immigration deal that was formed in 2001 between the governments of Tuvalu, Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga and New Zealand[4], to enable environmental refugees who are displaced from their homes by the effects of climate change to move to a less vulnerable environment. Each country has been allocated a set quota of citizens who can be granted residency in New Zealand each year. The PAC allows 75 residents each from Tuvalu and Kiribati, whereas Tonga and Fiji have a quota of 250[5].

Following the Australian government's refusal to accept any Tuvaluan environmental refugees. New Zealand agreed to accept the entire Tuvaluan population of 11,000 [6]. Although New Zealand's immigration policies are far more supportive towards environmental refugees than Australia's policies, Pacific Islander's still face a number of impediments to reaching safer ground. Principal applicants must meet set requirements before being eligible to enter the PAC ballot.

[1] "Tuvalu seeks new home," Sun-Herald, July 20, 2003. <http://www.smh.com.au/articles>
[2] Paeniu, B., "Tuvalu and Global Warming", Speech to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, December 8, 1997. <http://www.tuvaluislands.com/kyoto-panieu.htm>
[3] Brown, L. "Environmental Refugees", Friends of the Earth. <http://www.foe.org.au/ci_ecoref.htm>
[4] "Tuvalu premier gets sinking feeling over immigration deal with New Zealand", AFP, May 6, 2004. Tuvalu News. <http://www.tuvaluislands.com/news/archives/2004/2004-05-06b.htm>
[5] "Registration Form for Pacific Access Category", New Zealand Immigration Service. <http://www.immigration.govt.nz>
[6] Brown, L. "Environmental Refugees", Friends of the Earth. <http://www.foe.org/au/ci/ci_ecoref.htm>

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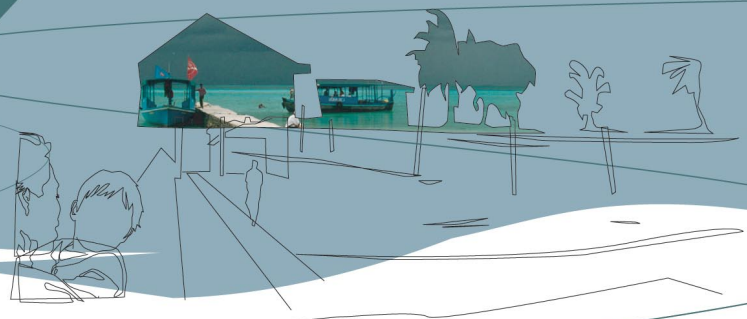


The Pacific Access Category (cont).
These requirements exclude part of the Tuvaluan population by stipulating that: applicants possess citizenship status for Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga or Fiji; are aged between 18 and 45; have an acceptable offer of employment in New Zealand; have a minimum level of skills in English language; have a minimum income requirement if the applicant has a dependant; exhibit certain health and character requirements; and have no history of unlawful entry into New Zealand since July 1, 2002.

In short, this means that the elderly and the poor – those most vulnerable – may have trouble being accepted as principal applicants. Furthermore, an "acceptable" offer of employment is defined as "permanent, full-time, genuine, and paid by a salary or wages". Considering their location and level of access to required resources, Tuvaluans may have difficulty gaining employment in New Zealand before they arrive in the country, thereby excluding them from access to the program.

Australia's role:
In 2000, the Tuvaluan government appealed to both Australia and New Zealand to take in Tuvaluan residents if rising sea levels reached the point where evacuation would be essential[7]. The Australian government refused to implement a program to grant Tuvaluan environmental refugees residency in Australia. In response to Tuvalu's crisis, Immigration Minister Phillip Ruddock stated that accepting environmental refugees from Tuvalu would be "discriminatory"[8].

With regard to Australia's response, Senior Tuvalu official, Mr Paani Laupepa expressed that while New Zealand has helped out their neighbours, "Australia on the other hand has slammed the door in our face"[9].

Whilst Tuvaluan's stress their need to be granted environmental refugee status in the face of climate change, their primary request from other countries is for climate change to be taken seriously with responsible actions being taken where necessary. This is particularly highlighted with Tuvaluan Governor-General Sir Tomasi Puapua's contribution to the 57th Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2002: "Taking us as environmental refugees, is not what Tuvalu is after in the long run. We want the islands of Tuvalu and our nation to remain permanently and not be submerged as a result of greed and uncontrolled consumption of industrialized countries. We want our children to grow up the way we grew up in our own islands and in our own culture"[10].

As Tuvaluan's have advocated, disastrous consequences of climate change will only be avoided if world leaders accept their global responsibility for implementing policies that will restrict greenhouse gas emissions.

[7] "Tuvalu," Index Mundi. <http://www.indexmundi.com/about.html>
[8] "Screw you Tuvalu," [media release] *The Australian Institute,* October 14, 2001. <http://www.tai.org.au/MediaReleases_Files/MediaReleases/MRScrewTuvalu141001.htm>
[9] ibid.
[10] Puapua, Tomasi. *Tuvalu Statement*, 57th Session of the UN General Assembly.

PREDICTIONS OF CLIMATE REFUGEES TO 2050

Fact Sheet Four: Predictions of climate refugees to 2050

At the time of the Tampa crisis, former US president Bill Clinton commented "If you're worried about 400 people, you just let the world keep warming up like this for the next 50 years and your grandchildren will be worried about 400,000 people."

Of those who are displaced, where will they go? Do we believe they will stay where they are and quietly starve? No, they will do what any of us would: move and seek refuge elsewhere.

According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in their *World Disasters Report 2001*, more people are now forced to leave their homes because of environmental disasters than war. Furthermore, there are approximately 25 million people who could currently be classified as being environmental refugees. This totals 58 per cent of the world's total refugee population. Although, this figure is far from concrete as there is no set definition of what constitutes an environmental refugee and hence no central tally kept through the UN. For instance, in China, the government estimates that some 30 million people are already being displaced by the impacts of climate change. Some authorities have set the figure higher, at 72 million.

Whatever the case, these estimates clearly indicate that significant numbers of people are already being displaced by climate change.

Regardless of fluctuating estimates, it is certain that the numbers of environmental refugees will continue to grow in coming decades. According to Norman Myers of Oxford University, at a conservative estimate, climate change will increase the number of environmental refugees six-fold over the next fifty years to 150 million. This equates to 1.5 percent of the predicted global population in 2050 of 10 billion. Importantly, Norman Myers studied more than 2,000 sources of information to come to this estimate, and has since increased his figure to 200 million.

In concluding on his projected scenarios, Myers worked from the assumption that nothing would be done to slow global warming. He suggests that displacement will occur through a variety of factors, and will occur in the following regions by 2050[1]:

REGION	PEOPLE (millions)
China	30
India	30
Bangladesh	15
Egypt	14
Other delta areas and coastal zones	10
Island states	1
Agriculturally dislocated areas	50
TOTAL	150

[1] Myers, N, 1994, "Environmental refugees: a crisis in the making". In *People & the Planet*, Vol.3, No.4, 1994.

PREDICTIONS OF CLIMATE REFUGEES TO 2050

Myers is seen as a key source regarding climate induced displacement, and other researchers are increasingly agreeing with his figures, with some suggesting even larger numbers. Such examples of climate refugee projections include:

- Australian climate scientist Dr Graeme Pearman predicts that a 2°C rise in temperature would place 100 million people 'directly at risk from coastal flooding' by 2100;[1]

- Richard Nicholls of Flood Hazard Research Centre, Middlesex University, suggested in 2004 that between 50 and 200 million people could be displaced by climate change by 2080;[2]

- The International Organisation for Migration estimated that eventually one billion people could be 'environmentally displaced from their original habitat'[3].

- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the international science body that regularly produces assessment reports on climate change, suggested 150 million environmental refugees would exist by 2050. In this projection, the impacts of climate change, including coastal flooding, shoreline erosion and agricultural degradation were seen as major factors contributing to bulk of environmental refugees.

[1] Rehn, 2005.
[2] Nicholls, R.J., 2004, "Coastal flooding and wetland loss in the 21st century: changes under the SRES climate and socio-economic scenarios". *Global Environmental Change*. 14(1):69-86.
[3] Lonergan, S and A. Swain, 1999, "Environmental Degradation and Population Displacement". Global Environmental Change and Human Security Project, Research Report No. 2, May 1999. Victoria, BC, Canada.

POLICY DECISIONS THAT NEED TO BE MADE

Fact Sheet Five: Policy decisions that need to be made

Recognise environmental refugees

'By recognising environmental refugees you recognise the problem. By recognising the problem you start on the road to accepting responsibility and implementing solutions' – Jean Lambert, Greens MEP (Lambert, 2002)[1].

As awareness of this issue grows, it is likely that countries like Australia will have to acknowledge that there are large (and growing) numbers of environmental, and specifically climate refugees. An assessment of the causes behind the movement of these refugees will identify that Australia has a disproportionate responsibility for creating them, and hence an onus to officially recognise them as a separate category of refugee. This suggestion comes from the understanding that while we in Australia only constitute about 0.03% of the world's population, we produce about 1.4% of the world's greenhouse gases created by human populations.

In practical terms, this recognition will mean Australia must make room for environmental refugees, by developing an official program allowing for an annual intake of environmental refugees, as well as changing policies and practices that contribute to the creation of more refugees. Given the simple human imperative of assisting those in need, this program should be created without any reduction in current Australian refugee programs. Andrew Bartlett of the Australian Democrats suggested in 2002 that if Australia considered its contribution of 1-2% of global greenhouse gases, Australia would see that it is directly responsible for roughly 1.2 to 1.4 million displaced people from climate change.

While New Zealand has taken good initiative to employ the Pacific Access Category (PAC), the program carries some flaws. As outlined in fact sheet three, many Tuvaluans are excluded from applying for residency as a "principal applicant" under the PAC scheme. This clearly highlights that immigration policies for environmental refugees need to embrace the wider community of residents if they are to adequately address the needs of those affected in the current and impending climate change crisis.

Collect information on ecologically displaced people

Policy makers need to get a sense of how big the problem is, and how big it is likely to become. We need to start collating the existing information on environmental, and especially climate, refugees. This would include a re-examination of existing climate change research at the global, regional and national levels with the intention of looking at existing data through the 'lens' of displacement.

Educate Australians about environmental refugees

There has been considerable national debate around asylum seekers over recent years, and it has taken the concerted efforts of refugee advocates to raise levels of awareness of refugee issues. Despite recent positive changes in community sentiment, the creation of an environmental refugee program may raise potential fears or concerns in the broader community. Therefore, it would be necessary for the

[1] Lonergan, S and A. Swain, 1999, "Environmental Degradation and Population Displacement". Global Environmental Change and Human Security Project, Research Report No 2, May 1999. Victoria, BC, Canada.

POLICY DECISIONS THAT NEED TO BE MADE

federal government to embark on a high profile educational program that aims to educate the Australian people about environmental refugees, why they need to move, and what our responsibilities to them are.

Increase and modify foreign aid to account for changed conditions

As part of a strategic response, Australia should also consider the levels of foreign aid it provides (currently at a historic low under the Howard government), and investigate whether there needs to be increased funding made available for communities who are impacted by changed climate and weather patterns. As a matter of urgency, all donor governments, including Australia, should integrate climate risk factors into all their Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) program planning and evaluation. The ODA amount Australia contributes is only 0.28% of Gross National Income (GNI) for 2005/06, a minor increase on recent years, and well below the OECD countries' average of 0.41%. Australia's contribution is inadequate compared to the United Nations target of 0.7% of GNI, which was agreed upon in 1970. Furthermore, it should be noted the UN target lags behind a number of Western and Northern European countries that currently provide more than 1% of their GNI to ODA.

Overall, any increase in aid levels should occur with a thorough review of *how* Australia's aid program currently assists recipient communities to adapt to changed conditions under global warming.

Key Decision Makers and how to contact them

As Australian citizens we need to push the government to be proactive about climate refugees. Please take some time to contact these Ministers and Shadow Ministers to let them know what you think about climate change and climate refugees:

Australian recognition of climate refugees

Minister for Immigration
Ms Amanda Vanstone
Suite MF 40
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
minister@immi.gov.au

Shadow Minister for Immigration
Mr Tony Burke
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Tony.Burke.MP@aph.gov.au

Review of Australia's Aid

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade
Mr Alexander Downer
House of Representative
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT 2600
minister.downer@dfat.gov.au

Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Security
Mr Kevin Rudd
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Kevin.Rudd.MP@aph.gov.au

WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT CLIMATE REFUGEES

Fact Sheet Six: What you can do about climate refugees

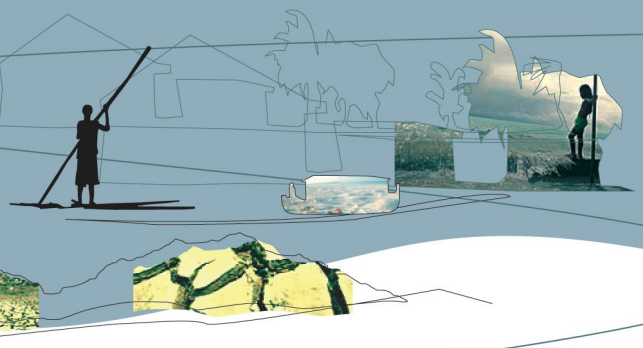
Climate change is the biggest environmental justice issue ever faced, with the poor being the most vulnerable to its effects. There are SEVEN very simple actions you can take to contribute to *climate justice:*

- Immigration Minister Amanda Vanstone is yet to make a statement on environmental or climate refugees. Write to her or email to minister@immi.gov.au and ask her to recognise and accept climate refugees. Further information can be found at www.foe.org.au/nc/nc_enviro_pop.htm#refugees
- Protest to your state government if they are planning to expand or build new coal fired power stations or coal mines. We need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions not increase them – most of Australia's emissions are due to generating energy from coal and phasing this out should be our greatest priority. See the Climate Action Network website www.cana.net.au and find out how you can get involved.
- Talk with your local MP about mandatory renewable energy targets and binding emissions reduction targets for Australia. There is great information on the FoE Australia website to help you understand these issues www.foe.org.au/climate.
- Challenge the estimated $9 billion per year support for the fossil fuel industry in Australia that is financed government subsidies and investments from superannuation funds. Where is your superannuation going? Tell your super fund you don't want your money going to fossil fuel industry.
- Demand that Australia ratify the Kyoto Protocol and thus take responsibility for our contribution of greenhouse gas emissions. There are several petitions and form letters that you can support. See: www.foe.org.au/climate for our Kyoto form letter to Mr Howard and http://www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/525063229?ltl=1115160430#body, http://www.zp.lv/info.asp?en for international petitions.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in your household, transport use and recreational activities, BUT don't be secretive about it! Tell people (family and friends; sales people; work colleagues; your kids school teachers, scout/guide leaders, sports coach; your church and social groups) that you are doing this because of the impact of global warming on the environment and people across the world. Some great websites on how to reduce your impact are www.myfootprint.org and www.redefiningprogress.org/footprint/reducing.html
- As more and more people take to the air, air travel is growing is a greenhouse gas source. We should look at alternative travel options: for further information, see: http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/aviation_climate_change.pdf and http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/press_releases/growth_in_flights_will_wre_31052005.html

SUPPORT FRIENDS OF THE EARTH BY BECOMING A SUPPORTER, MEMBER OR ACTIVE VOLUNTEER. THE WORLD NEEDS FRIENDS!

www.foe.org.au

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Recommended Reading

Lonergan, S and A. Swain, 1999, *Environmental Degradation and Population Displacement*. Global Environmental Change and Human Security Project, Research Report No. 2, May 1999. Victoria, BC, Canada.

Myers, N., 1993, *Environmental Refugees in a globally warmed world*. Bioscience, Vol 43, No. 11, December 1993.

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