

Climate Related Migration in Asia and the Pacific



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Nautilus Peace and Security Weekly Report—Contributor's blog entry for Climate Change Adaptation.

[Go to the Weekly Report for 28 June 2012.](#)

The environment is becoming a noteworthy reason for migration in Asia and the Pacific, especially in low-lying coastal zones and eroding river banks. In the year 2010 alone, climate related disasters and weather extremities forced around 31.3 million people in this region to relocate their dwellings. This includes more than 10 million Pakistanis who confronted one of the nation's worst floods, destroying countless families, homes, land, livestock, etc. Moreover, 2011 saw a further 10 million people leaving their homes. Climatologists caution that such extreme events will become more common with climate change. Therefore, it is imperative that governments not hang back in taking action. By initiating measures immediately, they can lessen vulnerability, build resilience, and employ migration as an adaptation tool, rather than letting it become a distraction and cause for nervousness.

The report, titled 'Addressing Climate Change and Migration in Asia and the Pacific,' warns governments to adopt practical steps to hold off imaginable disasters. Previously, most of the studies have spotlighted on the humanitarian, safety and security concerns of displacement coupled with climate change. However, ADB in this report aims to foster development which would help people dwell in their areas or migrate to safer low risk areas before a disaster occurs. The course of action which the report suggests revolves around consistent economic growth, making use of financial markets to manage any potential risks, and generate employment opportunities. No doubt, such policies are beneficial in two ways. Firstly, by creating economic growth, it will expand the public's financial wellbeing and help people to stay where they are. Secondly, economic growth will lead to

creating more jobs which would ultimately expand openings for people to willingly migrate and find livelihoods in lower-risk areas. The ADB's development related strategies focus on financial progress, and emphasize the effective utilization of markets and insurance to address migration related to climate change.

We need to analyze how the ADB's development related strategies would assist people in their migration decisions related to climate change. Though the ADB's rational and obvious focus is on economic growth being the main driver of development, there are various other development policies, which concentrate less on economic growth but can still offer practical solutions to people who want to migrate, or who do not want to migrate and are willing to adapt to climate change. Also, we need to look in depth at a number of financial mechanisms that create incentives for people to move and markets to manage the risk of natural hazards.

"Climate-induced migration should be seen not only as a threat to human well-being but also as a potential tool to promote human adaptation to climate change."

—[Saleem Janjua](#), NAPSNet Contributor

*The **Nautilus Peace and Security Weekly Report** presents articles and full length reports each week in six categories: Austral security, nuclear deterrence, energy security, climate change adaptation, the DPRK, and governance and civil society. Our team of contributors carefully select items that highlight the links between these themes and the three regions in which our offices are found—North America, Northeast Asia, and the Austral-Asia region. Each week, one of our authors also provides a short blog that explores these inter-relationships.*

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