



Photo Credit: Freepik.com

## Climate Change and Mobility: A Negative Consequence or a Form of Climate Adaption?

By S. Nanthini

Migration is not a new phenomenon. As of mid-2020, there are [an estimated 281 million people who are international migrants](#). Due in part to easier travel options and methods of communication with those at home, people are moving around the world more than ever before. Common reasons for migration include better livelihood opportunities, study opportunities, escaping persecution, and displacement as a result of conflict/disasters.

With climate change steadily climbing the list of most pressing threats to humanity as seen in the [2023 Global Risks Report](#), it is therefore prudent to take into account its effect on drivers of migration. After all, climate change is acknowledged as not just a threat in and of itself, but also a significant “threat multiplier.” In other words, the current climate crisis is likely to increasingly shape patterns of migration by increasing insecurities caused by people’s vulnerabilities to its impacts. Not only is climate change triggering potential increases in displacement – both internally and internationally – through more direct impacts such as disasters, the indirect impacts of climate change in the form of deteriorating living conditions and livelihoods are taking its toll on communities as well. For example, as sea-level rise continues to increase, [low-lying islands in the Pacific are likely to face increasing encroachment by the sea](#). This would render the homes inhabitable and livelihoods not sustainable, forcing their populations into permanent displacement in the future.

The statistics surrounding internally displaced people in particular are potential-ly an insight to what awaits in the future. As of end-2022, [71.1 million people worldwide are still internally displaced](#). Not only is this the highest number ever recorded, but it is also a staggering 20 percent increase since the previous year. In 2022 alone, [32.6 million people were internally displaced](#), with more than half

### IN THIS ISSUE

CLIMATE CHANGE

ENERGY SECURITY

FOOD SECURITY

HEALTH SECURITY

HUMANITARIAN  
ASSISTANCE AND  
DISASTER RELIEF

MIGRATION

of these displacements triggered by disasters including the monsoon flooding in Pakistan and the drought in Somalia. As adverse impacts from climate change continue to intensify – as the [IPCC Sixth Assessment Report](#) has clearly declared – so will the stress on humanity, particularly those who live and work in climate-exposed regions and sectors – in other words, most of humanity.

On the other hand, it is important to note that the link between climate change and mobility is still complex and cannot be simplified into a simple environmental determinism narrative. Rather than climate change being seen as the main cause behind a person’s mobility choices, it should be regarded as just one factor which should be considered together with the broader political, social and economic context – all of which play a part in such decisions.

As a “threat multiplier,” climate change is instead likely to multiply a person’s existing vulnerabilities and therefore, magnify their insecurity. For example, those living in rural areas may find that their ability to maintain their livelihoods degrade over time due to slow-onset environmental change in the form of drought together with environmental degradation as a result of resource exploitation. These insecurities may also exacerbate tensions in conflict-affected contexts. Once their ability to cope is outpaced by their insecurity, this may lead to a decision to migrate in search of better opportunities. In this case, migration is a tool that vulnerable communities can use to adapt to their insecurities – a form of climate adaption to the insecurities which have been amplified as a result of climate change.

Migration is not new. However, the causes, processes, and importantly, scale of migration as is taking place in the present day have not been seen in generations due to the ongoing climate crisis. In today’s interconnected world, climate change is clearly not just a threat in and of itself, but also in the ways in which it interacts with the economic, environ-

mental, political and societal context – intensifying existing vulnerabilities and forcing a rise in insecurity. Migration therefore should not be just regarded as a negative consequence of the adverse impacts of climate change, but also a form of climate adaption.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

**Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2023, “Global Report on Internal Displacement.”**

**Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2023, “Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report.”**

**Mixed Migration Centre, 2022, “Stories of climate mobility: understanding the impacts, informing effective response,” 25 November.**

**Sarah M. Munoz, 2021, “Environmental Mobility in a Polarized World: Questioning the Pertinence of the ‘Climate Refugee’ Label for Pacific Islanders”, *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, Vol. 22, No.4, pp. 1271–1284.**



Photo Credit: Prachatai via Flickr/Creative Commons

# CLIMATE CHANGE



Photo Credit: freedomnaruk on Freepik.com

## NEWS & COMMENTARIES

### Global heat in ‘uncharted territory’ as scientists warn 2023 could be the hottest year on record

The likelihood is growing that 2023 could be the hottest year on record, and the climate crisis could be altering our weather in ways scientists don’t yet understand.

**Laura Paddison**  
CNN | 8 July 2023

### The big idea: Why climate tribalism only helps the deniers

What we want to achieve is the same: to reduce carbon emissions. The problem is that we are stubborn about how we get there. We often have strong opinions about what the evils are, and how to fix them. We need to become less fixated on the ideal pathway and compromise and take a route that reduces emissions effectively and quickly, using a combinations of solutions,.

**Hannah Ritchie**  
The Guardian | 10 July 2023

### Underground climate change is weakening buildings in slow motion

Underground hotspots may threaten the very same structures that emit the heat in the first place. Such temperature changes make the ground around them expand and contract enough to cause potential damage.

**Allison Parshall**  
Scientific American | 11 July 2023

### Climate change is making our oceans change color, new research finds

More than 56% of the world’s oceans have changed colour to an extent that cannot be explained by natural variability. Tropical oceans close to the equator in particular have become greener in the past two decades, reflecting changes in their ecosystems.

**Jack Guy**  
CNN | 12 July 2023

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### Work toward net zero in Asia Pacific: The rise of the green collar workforce in a just transition

43 per cent of the Asia Pacific workforce is employed in industries that are vulnerable to climate extremes and the economic transition to net zero.

**Deloitte**  
2023

### Vulnerability of blue foods to human-induced environmental change

Over 90% of global blue food production faces substantial risks from environmental change, with the major producers in Asia and the United States facing the greatest threats.

**Ling Cao, et al.**  
Nature Sustainability | 2023

## EVENT & ANNOUNCEMENT

### World Water Week 2023

World Water Week 2023 will focus on innovation at a time of unprecedented challenges. The theme, ‘Seeds of Change: Innovative Solutions for a Water-Wise World,’ invites a rethink of how water is managed, and urges consideration of the ideas, innovations, and governance systems that are needed in an increasingly unstable and water scarce world.

**Stockholm, Sweden**  
20-24 August 2023

# ENERGY SECURITY



Photo Credit: frimufilms on freepik.com

## NEWS & COMMENTARIES

### Big policy moves turn spotlight on South-east Asia's renewables in H2 2023

Policy changes across South-east Asia's clean energy front, where mostly state-owned or led companies dominate the power sector's renewables push, are set to dynamise the region's energy transition efforts.

**Anita Gabriel**

*The Business Times* | 3 July 2023

### Fukushima: Japan gets UN nuclear watchdog approval for water release?

After a two-year review, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Japan's plans were consistent with global safety standards.

**Sakura Murakami**

*Reuters* | 4 July 2023

### The 'game-changing' technology the nuclear industry is betting on for a revival

A new generation of nuclear entrepreneurs bet that buying SMRs in bundles would significantly increase the number of reactors built over time, as a power plant that may have once built a single 1,200-megawatt reactor instead orders six 200-megawatt machines or opts for dozens of even smaller ones.

**Alexander Kaufman**

*Yahoo* | 7 July 2023

### ASEAN regulators' involvement with energy storage lags behind renewable energy support

Many countries in the ASEAN region are advancing their adoption of renewable energy with the support of regulators, but the same can not yet be said for energy storage technologies.

**Andy Colthorpe**

*Energy Storage News* | 11 July 2023

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### The future of small modular reactors: Implications for nuclear governance

The report claims that like conventional, large nuclear power plants, small modular reactors should also be tightly governed to attain the goal of protecting people and the environment from radiation and minimize the possibility of accidents.

**Julius Cesar Trajano and Alvin Chew**

*NTS Insight* | 2023

### The role of critical minerals in clean energy transitions

Clean energy technologies – from wind turbines and solar panels, to electric vehicles and battery storage – require a wide range of minerals and metals. The type and volume of mineral needs vary widely across the spectrum of clean energy technologies.

**International Energy Agency**

*International Energy Agency* | 2023

## EVENT & ANNOUNCEMENT

### Report Launching: Measures and Investment for Clean Energy and Power Sector Resilience in ASEAN

It presents best practices, lessons learnt, and policy recommendations to push the clean energy agenda forward for ASEAN.

**Recorded Webinar**

27 June 2023

# FOOD SECURITY



Photo Credit: user6702303 on Freepik.com

## NEWS & COMMENTARIES

### Linking the major granaries

China-ASEAN agricultural development and food cooperation have moved forward since the Joint Statement on China-ASEAN Food Security Cooperation in 2022, including Chinese investment in Mekong countries. Moving forward, cooperation will need to be deepened in linking logistics infrastructure, towards an “international regional food corridor between the central and western provinces in China and ASEAN countries.”

**Cui Hao and Zhai Kun**

China Daily | 20 June 2023

### Existing technologies can increase food supply without harming the environment: Tharman

Singapore’s Senior Minister, Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, stressed the importance of improving agricultural productivity to address global hunger during his speech at the UN FAO’s 43<sup>rd</sup> Session in Rome. He also emphasised the need to adopt new proven techniques to grow more with less (land, water, and other inputs), such as sensor-based drip irrigation technologies in China.

**Samuel Deveraj**

The Straits Times | 2 July 2023

### EU sets out first-ever soil law to protect food security and slow global heating

The European Commission has proposed a law that will seek to revive and protect the health of soils, amidst climate change and inappropriate approaches to intensive farming. The law includes country-level targets and reporting for soil health, including fertiliser use and erosion, and sets to provide pecuniary rewards to farmers who submit to a voluntary certification scheme and pass it.

**Patrick Greenfield**

The Guardian | 6 July 2023

### China to up food security ahead of Japan releasing radioactive water

China’s customs authority has flagged the potential food safety issues (i.e., radioactive contamination of ocean-sourced food products) owing to the release “nuclear-contaminated” water from Japan’s nuclear powerplants powerplant. Specific contentions raised include the “reliability of (water) purification devices and the completeness of monitoring plans on the (...) Japanese side (...)”

**Zhong Nan**

China Daily | 7 July 2023

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### Digital technology utilization in the agriculture sector for enhancing food supply chain resilience in ASEAN: Current status and potential solutions

This project report provides the findings from the assessment of utilisation of digital technologies in agriculture to achieve food supply chain resilience and food security in Southeast Asia, conducted in 2020-2021. It is the second component of the larger project, “Enhancing Food Supply Chain Resilience and Food Security in ASEAN.”

**Jose Ma. Luis Montesclaros, Paul Teng and Mely Caballero-Anthony**

Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies and Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia. | 2023

### Agricultural transformation for small (island and developing) states

Demonstrated successes like Singapore show that structural transformation may take a path in which the agriculture sector is initially sacrificed in favour of more high value urban activities. This alternate development pathway, which emphasises urban industrialisation, may serve as a “leapfrogging” model for small cities and small developing states in a contemporary, technology-enabled landscape.

**Paul Teng and Jose Ma. Luis Montesclaros**

Asian Journal of Agriculture and Development 20(1): 13-30 | 2023

## EVENT & ANNOUNCEMENT

### TEC-FAO Thematic Dialogue: Water-Energy-Food Nexus

During this webinar, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change’s (UNFCCC) Technology Executive Committee (TEC) alongside the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) called for the adoption of “a comprehensive and interconnected approach that addresses the water-energy-food nexus” and an “inclusive transformation.” Key initiatives highlighted include partnerships across ministries addressing each of the key issues (water, energy, food, etc.), and across borders too.

**Recorded Webinar**

8 June 2023

# HEALTH SECURITY



Photo Credit: DC Studio on Freepik.com

## NEWS & COMMENTARIES

### The best medicine for improving global health? Reduce inequality

*This article assess progress in the health-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. It discusses how economic inequality led to retrogression in health issues, particularly during COVID-19. It argues that public health should be seen as investment in a country's future economy.*

Nature | 11 July 2023

### Air pollution: The invisible health threat

*The article introduces how the World Health Organization strengthens national capacity to deal with air pollution. Some of the efforts include training programmes for health professionals in developing countries and the development of a toolkit for health workers.*

**WHO**

12 July 2023

### El Niño increases global health threats that require a One Health response

*This article explains how El Niño will heighten the risks for droughts, fires, floods, and storms and thus increase the incidence of health threats such as vector-borne diseases and heat stress. It argues that a one health approach is needed to tackle the threats, which is based on science and appreciates the interconnections of humans, other animals, and plants.*

**Laura H. Kahn**

Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists | 13 July 2023

### 'End of AIDS' still possible by 2030: U.N.

*This article discusses why and how the world will be able to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. The numbers of infection and death are now much lower than ten years ago, and the coverage of anti-retroviral therapy has increased significantly. However, a lack of funding and social stigmatisation of HIV carriers, among others, remain barriers in the battle against the disease.*

**Robin Millard**

Japan Today | 14 July 2023

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### World health statistics 2023: Monitoring health for the SDGs, sustainable development goals

*This report is the 2023 edition of the WHO's annual compilation of health and health-related indicators. It reviews more than 50 health-related indicators from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and WHO's Thirteenth General Programme of Work.*

**WHO**

19 May 2023

### Global and regional governance of One Health and implications for global health security

*WHO launched the Community Engagement Research Initiative to fill critical research gaps and accelerate action in mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable populations. This report provides the findings and recommendations of four country research teams that conducted evaluative action-based research in Cambodia, Laos PDR and Malaysia.*

**Azza Elaiem et al.**

The Lancet, Vol.401, Iss.10377, p688-704 | 2023

## EVENT & ANNOUNCEMENT

### When and How to Respond to Public Health Misinformation

*In this webinar, the speakers discussed the differences between misinformation and disinformation, when to respond to misinformation, and approaches for responding across multiple channels.*

**Recorded Webinar**

28 March 2023

# HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF



Photo Credit: EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid on Flickr.com

## NEWS & COMMENTARIES

### **Rohingya hit hardest after Myanmar junta cuts aid to storm survivors**

Less than a month after Cyclone Mocha made landfall in Rakhine state, the junta banned aid groups from accessing affected areas. This has disproportionately affected more vulnerable populations, in particular the Rohingya living in Rakhine state.

**Rebecca L. Root**

*The New Humanitarian* | 28 June 2023

### **What worked, what didn't – and what we need to change: Looking back on a decade of Oxfam's impact**

After 10 years of experience in the field, Oxfam has realised that more work needs to be done in these three areas – tackling extreme vulnerability, valuing women's work and climate justice. There is a need for holistic approaches.

**Katrina Barnes**

*Views & Voices* | 6 July 2023

### **Syrian RLOs and the earthquake response: have we learned a lesson?**

Large-scale tragedies require the voices of those working on the ground. Without increased attention being paid to address the power asymmetry between local and international NGOs, such operations can be mismanaged – particularly there is conflict.

**Muzna Dureid**

*Humanitarian Practice Network* | 7 July 2023

### **You don't need to demand sensitive biometric data to give aid. The Ukraine response shows how.**

While the collection of biometric data is seen almost as a usual practice when it comes to the aid processes of UN agencies, this needs not be the case as has been reflected in the humanitarian response to Ukraine.

**Belkis Willie**

*The New Humanitarian* | 11 July 2023

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### **Humanitarian futures in Southeast Asia**

This report looks at the concept of humanitarian futures, using this concept to provide an alternative perspective to develop humanitarian policy to meet future humanitarian challenges in Southeast Asia.

**Lina Gong**

*S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Policy Brief* | 2023

### **Channeling disaster finance resources in small islands in the G20 countries**

With small islands facing unique issues in times of disasters, there is a need for any financing mechanisms to support sustainable development, climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction as key priorities.

**Hafida Fahmiasari, Danang Parikesit, and Fauziah Zen**

*T20 Policy Brief* | 2023

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **The 18th APRU Multi-Hazards Symposium 2023**

The theme of the symposium is "Advancing Frontiers in Disaster Risk Science, Technology and Policy." All activities and sessions will be clustered around 6 umbrella topics: Climate Hazards, Tectonic Hazards, Public Health & Environmental Hazards, Economic Resilience: Finance & Risk, Strategies for Socioecological Resilience and Managing Risk.

**Singapore**

29–30 November 2023

# MIGRATION



Photo Credit: UN Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid on Flickr.com

## NEWS & COMMENTARIES

### Not all international organisations are the same when it comes to working with refugees

*Despite widespread agreement of the importance of treating refugees as peoples with agency, there are still some organisations whose processes treat them more as burdens who are not able to take care of themselves.*

**Aladdin Aksoy, Saeed Eido and Nawar Maarri**

*The New Humanitarian | 29 June 2023*

### Migrant workers in Asia approach pre-pandemic levels

*As the effects of COVID-19 continue to fade, migrant labour levels are rising across the Asia with figures almost matching pre-pandemic levels. Due in part to labour shortages across industries, demand for migrant workers has rebounded sharply over the past year.*

**Shingeru Seno and Yuichi Shiga**

*Nikkei Asia | 6 July 2023*

### Displacement and decolonisation: refugee participation and leadership in the forced displacement sector

*Five years since the first Global Summit of Refugees, there has been some wins including the inclusion of refugee advisors in the government delegation to the UNHCR by multiple states. However, refugee leadership within the UNHCR still remains elusive.*

**Emily Arnold-Fernández**

*Humanitarian Practice Network | 12 July 2023*

### A treacherous journey

*Already dangerous, the migration journey to Europe through the central Mediterranean is becoming more so under EU policies that criminalise organisations which respond to humanitarian emergencies on that route.*

**Medicins Sans Frontieres | 13 July 2023**

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### Linking Migrant Reintegration Assistance and Development Goals

*The level of development in a country shapes its inhabitants mobility patterns. By improving social and economic conditions in societies, not only are returnees better able to re-integrate quicker, it also reduce the likelihood of migration out again.*

**Migration Policy Institute**

2023

### Skilled to care, forced to work? Recognizing the skills profiles of migrant domestic workers in ASEAN amid forced labour and exploitation

*For the millions of domestic workers across the Asia-Pacific, their work can be exploitative as well as physically and emotionally draining – all the while, they are being underpaid. This is due to domestic work not being considered as formal work. The workers also tend to be excluded from labour and social protection schemes.*

**International Labour Organization**

2023

## EVENT & ANNOUNCEMENT

### COVID-19 Pandemic and the Migrant Population in Southeast Asia: Vaccine, Diplomacy and Disparity

*This webinar examines the how demonstrates how COVID-19 has widened the gaps between citizens, non-migrant and migrant populations in a variety of factors including income and vaccine access with a focus on migrants and citizens in Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore.*

**Webinar**

1 August 2023