

Climate change, migration and the incredibly complicated task of influencing policy

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. It’s an honor to be asked to fill in for Walter Kälin with whom I worked closely when we served as co-directors of the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement for four years.

Today I would like to talk about some of the challenges and opportunities of using research to influence policy on issues related to climate change and migration. Although I come from an academic background in international relations, most of my professional life has been centered on influencing policy and the last decade or so, using research to influence policy.

There are larger issues around the relationship between academics and policy-makers which I acknowledge but will not address. Governments commission research in support of their policy objectives. Sometimes academics, in their quest to be relevant to policy-makers, run the risk of being coopted by governments. Sometimes they simply lose sight of larger issues by focusing on the minutiae of policy details. And of course there are major political issues around what kinds of research gets funded.

Many, perhaps most, of us come to this field of study with a belief that climate change is a major threat to our world and that good research can provide a basis for the development of policies to reduce this threat. There is a fundamental dilemma, however, of how to simultaneously work to mitigate the effects of climate change while at the same time preparing for the consequences of a lack of mitigation. I was recently at a conference talking about mobility as a form of adaptation to climate change and was challenged by another researcher who in essence said that this was defeatist thinking and that everyone in the academic community should stop research on adaptation and focus on efforts to prevent the terrible changes likely to result in a 4 degree warmer world. I have heard similar arguments from some governments whose countries are likely to be affected by climate change saying that to work on adaptation is to admit that global warming is unstoppable.

I hope that there is enough room in this emerging field of climate change and mobility for work on both mitigation and adaptation and in this regard, hope that we can learn from disaster risk reduction – where it seems to be widely understood that disaster risk reduction measures are of paramount importance but that investment in strengthening disaster response mechanisms is also important. The two go hand in hand. Similarly I think we have to recognize the complementary nature of efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change even as we plan, research and invest in adaptation measures.

My sense is that the field of climate change and mobility is in a state of formation. As this conference has demonstrated, there are many researchers from different disciplines and approaches who are doing work on particular aspects of climate change and mobility, from conceptual analysis to household-level field studies. Field work is being carried out, PhD students are using different conceptual approaches in writing their dissertations on related issues, conferences are being held in different places, individual scholars and groups of scholars are drafting new legal frameworks on climate change migration. It’s an exciting time to be working in this area and it is wonderful to see the variety of approaches and initiatives which have emerged in the past decade. But I don’t sense yet that there is a common paradigm for

understanding the relationship between climate change and mobility or even a common vocabulary. It feels like the chaos of a 'field in formation' or perhaps we are on the verge of a paradigm shift.¹

In the absence of a clear paradigm – which sets out the questions to be asked and posits relationships between them – many of us have latched on to the language of article 14(f) of the 2010 Cancun Adaptation Framework which calls for “Measures to enhance understanding, coordination and cooperation with regard to climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation, where appropriate, at the national, regional and international levels”² But there are differences in understanding what these terms – climate change induced displacement, migration and planned relocation – mean. And there are differences in approaches to influencing policy.

If we want our research to influence policy – to provide solid evidence for policy-makers to make decisions about climate change and mobility, I suggest that we need to confront four dilemmas.

Dilemma 1. Understanding migration in the context of climate change: it's not easy

Global warming caused by human activity is already having major impacts on our planet and is likely to make parts of the world uninhabitable, leading to migration, displacement and planned relocation. But we know that the relationship – with a few possible exceptions – is not as straightforward as the early writers on this issue predicted.

In particular, I want to highlight three difficulties with understanding mobility in the context of climate change:

First, how can we responsibly deal with the **multi-causal nature of population movements**? Can we even talk of 'climate change-induced displacement or migration'? We know that decisions to move are rarely mono-causal and that the line between 'voluntary' and 'forced' is often quite blurry. Even in seemingly straightforward cases such as Syria, where all those leaving the country are assumed to be forcibly displaced given the brutal civil war, it is not so simple. Two weeks ago in Turkey, I was struck by the importance of economic factors in determining mobility. I kept hearing about families trapped in Aleppo, being bombed daily who said they could not leave because they did not have the funds to support their families in another country. People may feel they need to flee because of conflict and violence, but be unable to do so for economic reasons. Even within families, people were reaching different decisions based on their individual risk assessments of the costs of going versus staying.

This is much more complex in the case of climate change. While we can say that climate change acts as a force multiplier, intensifying the effects of natural disasters, it is difficult to say that a particular storm was the result of climate change, much less to assess the role of climate change in prolonging drought. It is of course more difficult to determine the role played by climate change in a specific situation given the interplay of political, social, demographic and economic factors. It may be, for example, that global warming makes an area uninhabitable for a given population, but could perhaps support a smaller population.

¹ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996 (original edition 1962).

² United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Decision

1/CP.16 *The Cancun Agreements: Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working*

Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention, FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1(15 March 2011), available from <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf>.

Since the world wars, the issue of causality has been central to twentieth century responses, with migrants often classed as either “forced” or “voluntary.” For example, the 1951 Refugee Convention gives specific recognition to those who have crossed an internationally-recognized border and cannot return due to a well-founded fear of persecution. Yet, the line between “forced” and “voluntary” movements is often a false dichotomy, as many people move due to a mix of drivers and motivations rather than a single cause. People may be moving to escape both conflict and drought, or seeking both safety and better livelihood opportunities. The inherent difficulty of categorizing people in complex situations as either “voluntary” or “forced” migrants has led to the emergence of the terms “mixed migration” and the “migration-displacement nexus.”³

This creates a dilemma in working on policy. Policy-makers don’t do well with nuanced understandings. They do better with simplistic dichotomies, like ‘forced’ and ‘voluntary.’

Secondly, there is **no consensus in our field about the appropriate terms to use** about the people we are talking about. Climate change refugees, climate change-induced displacement, environmental migrant, environment-induced migrant, eco-migrant, crisis migrant – our terms are all over the place. Many of us recoil from the term ‘climate change refugee’, but at least it conveys a meaning that our alternative language struggles to address.⁴ We use different terms, often with different meanings, which confuses policy-makers.

Thirdly, there is the difficulty of **how to situate those who move because of the effects of climate change in the broader context of population movements undertaken for other reasons.** The fundamental question is: should people displaced by the effects of climate change receive preferential treatment compared to those displaced by volcanoes or tsunamis? In comparison with those forced to leave their communities because of wars or grinding poverty?

There is a tendency in doing advocacy work to pit groups against each other. For example, those working with refugees and asylum-seekers often make the case that these groups deserve preferential treatment because, unlike economic migrants, they have no choice but to flee. On the policy level, they may make their case with policy-makers, but by doing so, make it more difficult for those advocating for migrants’ rights. And they simplify the line between voluntary and forced movement of people. I fear we run the risk of privileging climate change-induced movement (if we can figure out what that means) by setting them against other categories of people who may be equally as needy. This is most obvious in cross-border movements but may also apply to internal movements.

A fourth difficulty in the policy realm is that **we really don’t know how many people we are talking about.**

Since the first report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 1990, it has been recognized that one of the major effects of climate change will be on human mobility.⁵ The report warned that even a modest rise in global sea levels could lead to the creation of tens of millions of ‘environmental refugees.’ Since then many reports and studies have been published on climate change, migration and

³ Susan F. Martin, Sanjula S. Weerasinghe, and Abbie Taylor, *Humanitarian Crises and Migration: Causes, Consequences and Responses*, London and New York: Routledge, 2014, 8. The term ‘mixed migration’ also has a number of other meanings including, for example, cases where persons who are refugees move using the same modes and routes as persons who are moving for economic reasons

⁴ Gemenne, François. "One Good Reason to Speak of ‘Climate Refugees’." *Forced Migration Review* 49 (2015): n. pag. *Fmreview.org*. Oxford University & Refugees Study Centre, May 2015. Web. <<http://www.fmreview.org/en/climatechange-disasters.pdf>>.

⁵ IPCC, *Climate Change: The IPCC Scientific Assessment*, 1990, available online at: http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_ipcc_first_assessment_1990_wg2.shtml., Ch5-10.

displacement with differing projections about the scale, timing, and political consequences of such population movements.⁶ The Stern Review in 2006 cited estimates that 150- 200 million people may become permanently displaced by the middle of the century due to rising sea levels, more frequent floods and more intense droughts.⁷ The following year, the international NGO Christian Aid said it believed an even higher number – one billion people – would be permanently displaced by climate change by 2050.⁸ The UNDP's 2008 Human Development Report stated that "Global temperature rises of 3-4 percent could result in 330 million people being permanently or temporarily displaced through flooding."⁹ While the estimate of up to 200 million people displaced by climate change by 2050 seemed to be widely used, the UK government's Foresight report points out that they can often be traced back to a single source: the work of Oxford-based scientist Professor Norman Myers, whose methodology has been heavily criticized. The Foresight report concludes: "Trying to produce global estimates of 'environmental migrants' is methodologically unsound, unhelpful for policy purposes and may even be counterproductive."¹⁰

Many other influential reports on displacement and climate change have taken a similar approach, noting that tens of millions could be displaced by climate change, but declining to produce exact estimates. Koko Warner notes, "Although the precise number of migrants and displaced people may elude science for some time, the mass of people on the move will likely be staggering and surpass any historical antecedent. Most people will seek shelter in their own countries while others will cross borders in search of better chances."¹¹ Others, such as Stephen Castles and Richard Black, have questioned the very notion of climate change migrants, noting that environmental causes closely interact with political and economic factors to trigger displacement.¹² In fact, climate change is likely to influence different patterns of population movement requiring different policy solutions. As Jane McAdam has argued, "[t]he commonality of climate change as a driver is an insufficient rationale for grouping together a disparate array of displacement scenarios and proceeding to discuss policy responses in generic terms."¹³

In sum, the early estimates of the numbers who might be forced to move because of the effects of climate change were all over the place and there seems to be a general feeling that given the difficulties in defining the target population, it is simply not useful to devote much energy to coming up with better estimates. But the fact is that policy-makers pay attention to numbers and there is a common

⁶ See for example: N. Stern, *The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change* (Cambridge, 2006) available online at: http://mudancasclimaticas.cptec.inpe.br/~rmclima/pdfs/destaques/sternreview_report_complete.pdf; German Advisory Council on Global Change, *World in Transition: Climate Change as a Security Risk* (Berlin: German Advisory Council on Global Change); Norwegian Refugee Council, *Climate Changed: People Displaced* (2009) available online at: <http://www.nrc.no/?did=9448676>; Christian Aid, *Human Tide: The Real Migration Crisis*, May 2007, available online at: www.christianaid.org.uk/images/human-tide.pdf; Foresight Report, above note 3; J. McAdam, *Climate Change Displacement and International Law: Complementary Protection Standards*, Legal and Protection Policy Research Series, PPLA/2011/03, May 2011, available online at: <http://www.unhcr.org/4dff16e99.html>; S. Park, *Climate Change and the Risk of Statelessness: The Situation of Low-lying Island States*, Legal and Protection Policy Research Series, PPLA/2011/04, May 2011, available online at: <http://www.unhcr.org/4df9cb0c9.html>; R. Zetter, 'Protecting Environmentally Displaced People: Developing the Capacity of Legal and Normative Frameworks', *Refugee Studies Centre* (Oxford, February 2011) available online at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4da579792.html>; UNHCR, 'Climate change, natural disasters and human displacement: a UNHCR perspective', 2008; UNHCR Expert Roundtable on Climate Change and Displacement: Identifying Gaps and Responses, 'Summary of Deliberations on Climate Change and Displacement', Bellagio, Italy, 22-25 February 2011, available online at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4d9f22b32.html>.

⁷ Stern Review, 77.

⁸ Christian Aid, *Human Tide*, 6.

⁹ UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008: *Fighting Climate Change: Human solidarity in a divided world*, available at: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr_20072008_summary_english.pdf, 18.

¹⁰ Foresight Report, 25.

¹¹ Koko Warner et al, *In Search of Shelter: Mapping the effects of climate change on human migration and displacement*, May 2009, available at: http://ciesin.columbia.edu/documents/clim-migr-report-june09_media.pdf, 1.

¹² Stephen Castles, *Environmental Change and Forced Migration: Making sense of the debate*, UNHCR New Issues in Refugee Research Working Paper No. 70, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/research/RESEARCH/3de344fd9.pdf>, 1-2.

¹³ J. McAdam, "Disappearing States," *Statelessness and the Boundaries of International Law*, in J. McAdam, *Climate Change and Displacement: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, (Oxford/Portland 2010) 107.

understanding that the more people affected by a particular phenomenon, the more urgent the issue and the more deserving of policy-makers' attention. Four million Syrian refugees are more a cause of international concern than 4,000 refugees. We simply do not have definitive (or even tentative) numbers or projections about the number of people who may move because of effects of climate change. Or the number of people whose decision to move will be affected in some measure by the effects of climate change.

To summarize: dilemma one is how to conceptualize human mobility and climate change, specifically how to deal with the multi-causal nature of population movements, how to situate those moving because of the effects of climate change in the broader population of people moving for other reasons and how to impress policy-makers with the urgency of the situation without being able (responsibly) to talk about the magnitude or potential magnitude of the situation.

The temptation may be – especially for climate change advocates – to simplify the message, to highlight the differences between those who move because of the effects of climate change and those moving for other reasons, to dramatize the numbers – but I would caution against that. I think we need to find better ways of explaining the complexity of situations, of illustrating how climate change interacts with other factors – such as economics and demography. By the way, I wish we had a catchier word than 'mobility' as an umbrella term for different types of movement. It just doesn't resonate with either the public or policy-makers. And, of course, we need a different way of saying 'movement where climate change is a contributing factor.'

Dilemma 2. Policies related to climate change and migration are discussed in different arenas, including (in alphabetical order):

- Climate change (IPCC, UNFCCC)
- Development (UNDP, World Bank)
- Disaster risk reduction (ISDR)
- Environmental protection (UNEP)
- Human rights (Human Rights Council, OCHCR)
- Humanitarian response (UNHCR, UNICEF, OCHA, IFRC)
- Migration (IOM)
- Security (UN General Assembly¹⁴, NATO)

I've just listed the names of key international institutions, but each of these arenas has a rich array of national governmental structures, national and international NGOs, research bodies and individual experts,, advocacy groups and grassroots organizations.

Conceptually these eight arenas are all linked. Good development planning incorporates disaster risk reduction measures. Migration can be a form of adaptation to climate change. Humanitarian actors have experience in responding to displacement which will likely increase as a result of the effects of climate

¹⁴ See for example: http://www.un.org/pga/290615_hle-climate-change/

change. Climate change mitigation and adaptation projects may displace people. Protecting the human rights of those who move because of the effects of climate change may include environmental assessments of the areas to which they move. Military planners and analysts increasingly see climate change as a national security issue, focusing on mobility but also on resources, geopolitical concerns, and the effects of climate change as a contributor to conflict. (I'm not going to talk much about military approaches to climate change and mobility – beyond noting that defense ministries are increasingly incorporating issues around climate change and mobility into their scenario planning.)

Not only are discussions of climate change and migration taking place in different academic arenas, but both national and international policies related to climate change and migration are being made by different people/organizations. Those negotiating climate change agreements in Paris come from different ministries than those preparing emergency disaster response or deciding national laws on displacement. It is a mistake to assume that people working in a government on related issues talk to each other. Similarly you cannot assume that research carried out on disaster risk reduction, for example, will influence – or even reach – those participating in the Conference of Parties negotiations.

Furthermore, these different areas of work – though conceptually related – have each evolved with different histories, mandates, constituencies, stakeholders, budgets, culture and jargon. It is sometimes really hard to even have conversations between people working in these different areas because the terminology is so different ('resettlement' to humanitarian actors means something completely different than it does for those working in development-induced displacement; terms such as 'disaster risk' and 'common but differentiated responsibilities,' are passionately defended by their proponents while poorly understood by others). I find it amazing that even when climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction advocates are working on the same issues, they use different terminology, often meet in different forums, are funded through different mechanisms, and sometimes view each other as competitors. I was heartened in this regard to see efforts to bring together the climate change adaptation network with the regional platform on disaster risk reduction in the Pacific.¹⁵

In addition to the different policy and research arenas, we can add to the mix our different disciplinary backgrounds. Lawyers don't look at the world in the same way as anthropologists or economists. Meteorologists and urban planners both have much to contribute to climate change and migration, but they approach the issues differently. The difficulties those of us working in the field have in communicating with each other, much less trying to influence policies, are evident.

The fact is that although we recognize the importance of interdisciplinary work – especially in this field -- it is more comfortable to talk with others in our own areas than to take the trouble to reach out to those in other fields. I feel very comfortable in humanitarian circles, moderately so in development, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and human rights arenas, but less so in the minutiae of climate change negotiations or environmental law. Even among the 20+ scholars working on climate change at Brookings, we are working on such different issues – the US government's clean energy plan, new security threats in the Arctic, pricing pollution and energy efficiency mandates – that we have a hard time understanding each other's work.

We need to try to get beyond the different terms and jargon of our own disciplines. All of this takes time – it is more work for me to read an article in a geography journal than a political science one. Interdisciplinary approaches often demand that we move beyond our comfort zones; the issue of climate

¹⁵ Elizabeth Ferris, "Bringing together disaster risk reduction and climate change networks: historic meeting in the Pacific," 13 July 2013, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2013/07/23-disaster-management-climate-change-pacific-meeting-ferris>

change and human mobility has already inspired important interdisciplinary efforts and much more is possible.

If we want to influence policy, we need to move toward simpler language. Policy-makers (at least sometimes) recognize the importance of research but they have little patience with abstract theoretical research written primarily for other academics. They are more apt to read short research reports than long academic articles. They like having a limited number of options spelled out. They are apt to ask 'so what?' and 'what can we do about it?'

To summarize: the second dilemma stems from the fact that climate change and migration (or mobility) is an issue in different policy arenas where different disciplines have specific contributions to make. Getting past our different disciplinary backgrounds, and even such seemingly mundane issues as agreeing on terminology is an obstacle to joint work, including joint advocacy toward policy-makers.

Dilemma 3. Different strategies for influencing policies.

A third dilemma revolves around the different strategies for influencing policies at the global level. There are many cases where new initiatives have been started within existing international structures. For example, the International Organization for Migration has the Migration, Environment, and Climate Change: Evidence for Policy (MECLEP) which works through six research institutions and has undertaken work in six pilot countries.

There are other policy initiatives which have had their origins outside of existing institutional bodies. For example, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were developed by the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons and the Brookings Project on Internal Displacement through an expert group of international lawyers with an active dissemination strategy.¹⁶

I'd like to talk about two such initiatives related to climate change and mobility which are taking different approaches.

The Nansen Initiative has been a state-led consultative process looking at cross-border disaster-displacement, growing out of the Nansen Conference organized by the Norwegian government in 2011. The Nansen Initiative was set up to explore ways of addressing the particular legal gap for those displaced across international borders in the context of disasters, including the effects of climate change. The Norwegian and Swiss governments took this to heart and initiated a process, under the leadership of the Special Envoy of the Chairmanship, Walter Kälin, which included setting up a small secretariat, establishing a broad-based consultative committee and undertaking an ambitious schedule of regional consultations with governments, accompanied by civil society consultations in each region. Established in 2012, the Nansen Initiative also commissioned a number of studies on themes related to cross-border disaster-displacement and held small technical workshops on specific issues. The Nansen Initiative decided early on not to try to come up with a set of definitive guidelines (à la the Guiding Principles) but rather to build consensus around a Protection Agenda. The work of the initiative is guided by a Steering Group, chaired by Switzerland and Norway, also includes Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Germany, Kenya, Mexico and the Philippines. UNHCR and IOM also participate as "Standing Invitees" to the Group.

¹⁶ See for example, Francois Gemenne, "From the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement to the Nansen Initiative: What the Governance of Environmental Migration Can Learn from the Governance of Internal Displacement." *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 27 (2) 2015 : <http://ijrl.oxfordjournals.org/content/27/2/245.full>, pp. 245-263 and Roberta Cohen, "Lessons learned from the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement," Paper prepared for the Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University, October 2013. <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2013/10/guiding-principles-on-internal-displacement-cohen>

Other interested states participate in the Group of Friends of the Nansen Initiative, co-chaired by the European Union and Morocco. Academics and civil society have been actively engaged in the process, especially through the Consultative Committee and as participants in the regional consultative meetings.

The process is state-led which means that governments were consulted, hosted the intergovernmental consultations, and their views were incorporated each step of the way. The process has been successful in large measure because of Walter Kälin – both his strategic vision for the work and the high international esteem in which he is held -- as well as the financial contributions of some key governments to support the process and a very competent secretariat. The initiative decided early on that it would need to undertake a holistic approach to look at related issues such as the prevention of displacement by addressing regular migration, planned relocation as well as internally displaced persons (and not just cross-border movements), within a diverse set of fields, including humanitarian action, human rights protection, migration management, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, refugee protection and development. The decision on terminology was not to look at disasters caused by climate change but rather population movements occurring *in the context of* disasters and climate change.

The Nansen Initiative has developed and is presently collecting comments on a draft Protection Agenda,¹⁷ with the final version to be validated by states at the Global Consultation in October 2015. One of the strengths of the Nansen initiative has been its focus on very concrete tools which can be used to help governments and others which are faced with the reality of cross-border movements occurring because of disasters, such as humanitarian visas, stays of deportation, bilateral or regional arrangements on free movement of persons, etc. The Protection Agenda will not suggest creation of new international law but rather will include a set of common understandings of the issues and identify and reiterate key principles on protection and include recommendations on the way forward. A major challenge is to find a new institutional arrangement to continue work on the area when the initiative comes to an end in December 2015.¹⁸

The Nansen Initiative has already been successful in putting the issue of cross-border disaster-displacement on the international agenda and in highlighting concrete ways that governments can address these issue. The ultimate effectiveness of the utility of the initiative will be the extent to which governments and regional organizations use the tools that have been developed and disseminated by the initiative.

A second example of an initiative is one I have been involved with for the past few years, which is a joint initiative of the Brookings Institution, Georgetown University, and UNHCR to do further work on the issue of planned relocations. This initiative began, as so many initiatives do, with a meeting organized by UNHCR in Bellagio to explore the connections between climate change and displacement.¹⁹ This was followed by a consultation with academic experts and representatives of both governments and international organizations in Sanremo, Italy²⁰ in March 2014 which considered some of the broad issues and good practices around planned relocations. One of the tasks identified in this consultation was the need to develop some form of guidance for governments that might be called to relocate communities as a result of the effects of climate change. As with the Nansen initiative, the difficulty of ascribing such relocations as being ‘caused’ by climate change was dealt with by referring to disasters and

¹⁷ <http://www.nanseninitiative.org/global-consultations/>

¹⁸ Walter Kälin, “The Nansen Initiative: building consensus on displacement in disaster contexts,” *Forced Migration Review*, (49) 2015, pp. 5-7 www.fmreview.org/climatechange-disasters

¹⁹ UNHCR, Summary of Deliberations on Climate Change and Displacement: report of an expert consultation, Bellagio, February 2011. <http://www.unhcr.org/4da2b5e19.html>,

²⁰ *Planned Relocations, Disasters and Climate Change: Consolidating Good Practices and Preparing for the Future*, Sanremo, March 2014. <http://www.unhcr.org/53c4d6f99.pdf>

environmental changes, including the effects of climate change. The reference to disasters also was intended to address the issue that those affected by disasters not directly or indirectly influenced by climate change also need to be included in such guidance.

The next step in the process was a follow up expert group meeting, convened by Brookings, in collaboration with Georgetown University and UNHCR, in May 2015, again in Bellagio, to draft guidance for governments in carrying out planned relocations.

In preparation for the Bellagio meeting and reflecting some of the tensions around terminology noted above, the organizers convened a small pre-meeting around the always-exciting issue of definitions. At the March 2014 meeting in Sanremo on Planned Relocation in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change, there was considerable discussion of terminology, particularly around the terms “resettlement” and “relocation.” The report highlighted the need to develop a common understanding of these fundamental concepts, noting that the terms relocation and resettlement are often used interchangeably and that slippages are common between “relocation,” “planned relocation,” “assisted relocation,” “preemptive relocation,” “resettlement,” “evacuations,” and “displacement.” In order to minimize lengthy discussions of definitions of terminology, this smaller ‘pre-meeting’ was held in Washington in February 2015 to see if a small but diverse group of experts from different fields—including international human rights, environmental and climate change law, development-induced displacement, internal displacement, and migration—could arrive at a consensus definition. They did arrive at a consensus definition – although it was further refined at the Bellagio meeting.

To support the development of this draft Guidance, a number of studies and background documents were commissioned,²¹ including an analysis of 30 different frameworks relevant to the issue, ranging from the World Bank’s *Operational Policy on Involuntary Resettlement* to the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*. A common definition of Planned Relocation, recommended in the course of expert meetings, provided a starting point for the development of this draft Guidance:

“Planned Relocation” is defined as: a planned process in which persons or groups of persons move or are assisted to move away from their homes or places of temporary residence, are settled in a new location, *and* provided with the conditions for rebuilding their lives. Planned Relocation is carried out under the authority of the State, takes place within national borders, and is undertaken to protect people from risks and impacts related to disasters and environmental change, including the effects of climate change. Such Planned Relocation may be carried out at the individual, household and/or community levels.

The May 2015 Bellagio meeting, organized with the support of the MacArthur Foundation, brought together experts from different fields and representatives of international organizations and governments to draft Guidance to be used by governments and others when planned relocations are necessary to protect people because of disasters and environmental change, including the effects of climate change. As in the case of the Nansen Initiative, the planned relocations initiative adopted an explicit human rights focus and indeed framed the issue of planned relocations as a way to protect people from disasters and environmental change, including the effects of climate change.

²¹ See documents cited in Elizabeth Ferris, ‘When protecting people from disasters and environmental change means relocating them,’ 14 June 2015, Brookings Institution, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/planetpolicy/posts/2015/06/12-climate-change-disaster-relocations-ferris>

This draft Guidance sets out general principles which are intended to help States in formulating planned relocation laws, policies, plans, and programs. It is a draft, in that comments are being solicited, and it will be amended and finalized by the second quarter of 2016. This draft Guidance will be accompanied by a set of Operational Guidelines, to be developed in 2015-2016. The Operational Guidelines will include specific measures and examples of good practices to assist States to translate the general principles in the Guidance into concrete laws, policies, plans, and programs.

Like cross-border disaster-displacement, the issue of planned relocation is a complex one where expertise from different fields is needed, including disaster risk reduction, development, humanitarian response, human rights, climate change, migration, environmental studies, and law. The Nansen initiative has required more expertise in the areas of law, particularly refugee, human rights and migration law while the Planned Relocation initiative has drawn more heavily on those with experience in development-induced development. Both initiatives have framed their work in terms of disaster risk reduction, human rights and legal principles around displacement. While the Planned Relocation initiative has focused exclusively on movements within national borders (although noting the possible relevance of aspects of the draft Guidance to potential cross-border relocations), Nansen's focus has been on cross-border movements. The Nansen initiative has engaged a much greater array of stakeholders than the Planned Relocation initiative has thus far – in part because funding was available for regional consultations, including civil society meetings. The fact that Nansen had a strong (albeit small) secretariat has also been an added benefit.

Both of these are examples of initiatives to address gaps in international legal frameworks. They are both explicitly focused on human rights. They have both used a broad range of experts. They have both been based largely outside of a single existing institution and as such have been able to remain 'above the territorial fray.' But – like the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement -- their value lies in the extent to which they are used by governments and specifically the extent to which they are incorporated into national laws and policies and then implemented.

Dilemma 4. A final dilemma is '**what do we want policy-makers to do?**' And how should we engage with the public -- where terms like 'climate change refugee' resonate (and at least in some quarters there are still those who don't accept that climate change is real). How do we engage the public when our research is mainly read by those who are already committed to 'our' issues/perspectives? How do we engage the public when our messages are not clear? What do we ask policy-makers to do?

Last week, two of my colleagues at Brookings, Dan Byman and Jeremy Shapiro wrote a blog on "the 11 worst Washington insider policy clichés"²² which included such trite prescriptions as 'increase high-level engagement,' calls for a "more comprehensive approach," "for development of a strategy for issue X," the government should "pay greater attention to." They noted that such recommendations are common but meaningless. While my colleagues are known for their somewhat skeptical approach and were writing in a very different context, they remind us that such generalities are not as useful as more specific actionable items. If we want to have influence on policies related to climate change and migration, we need to be clear about what it is we want. General exhortations to 'pay more attention to the issue' are likely not to be effective in bringing about change.

²² Daniel Byman and Jeremy Shapiro, "What U.S. Foreign Policy Really Needs Is...The 11 worst Washington insider policy clichés"" Foreign Policy.com, 5 June 2015. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/06/05/the-11-worst-useless-foreign-policy-pundit-cliches/>

Finally, although I have focused on problems and dilemmas in this talk, I want to conclude by underscoring some very positive developments in this emerging field of climate change and mobility.

1. Climate change will affect mobility in developed and developing countries. In all regions, people will migrate, be displaced, and will be relocated by their governments because of the effects of climate change. Unlike the polarized discussions around mitigation efforts, there are important opportunities for mutual learning on mobility as an adaptation strategy. Governments and people in places such as Miami and Manila have a lot to learn from one another. This is an opportunity to work beyond the North-South divisiveness that has characterized so much of the negotiations around climate change.
2. A more nuanced view is emerging of the way that climate change intersects with other factors to lead people to move. This may be difficult to communicate to policy-makers and the general public, but is a more realistic and accurate perspective.
3. More field-based research is being published which provides some of the evidence that policy-makers need. Studies such as "Where the Rain Falls,"²³ Robin Bronen's work on the Arctic,²⁴ Jane McAdam's historical studies on previous efforts of planned relocations in the Pacific,²⁵ and the many excellent case studies we have heard at this conference are building a rich empirical base which will support all of our efforts.
4. I am encouraged by cross-disciplinary encounters such as this conference and indeed the whole COST initiative as well as initiatives such as the World Bank's KNOMAD Working Group on Environmental Migration²⁶ and by the fact that more diverse institutions are grappling with the issue of climate change (from the Universal Postal Union to the African Union, from FEMA to UNDP). As more institutions and scholars from different disciplines begin looking at the relationship of climate change and mobility, we should see more cross-pollination of ideas.
5. There seems to be more awareness in the general public that climate change will lead more people to move.
6. Finally, there is growing awareness by governments that this is an area that needs to be addressed (even if they're not sure how to do so). This opens up possibilities for researchers to engage with policy-makers – to share the results of their studies and to influence the policies that will affect the lives of many people. There are opportunities for us to make a difference in the course of human history.

²³ Koko Warner, Tamer Afifi, Kevin Henry, Tonya Rawe, Christopher Smith, Alex de Sherbinin, "Where the Rain Falls: Understanding Relationships between Changing Rainfall Variability, Food and Livelihood Security, and Human Mobility," 2012 by Care UN University, Institute for Environment and Human Security, Columbia University. http://wheretherainfalls.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/2755WTRF_report_lowres.pdf

²⁴ Robin Bronen, "Climate-induced Community Relocations: Creating an Adaptive Governance Framework based in Human Rights Doctrine," *NYU Review of Law and Social Change*, 35 (2) 2011: 101-148.

²⁵ Jane McAdam, "Lessons from planned relocation and resettlement in the past," *Forced Migration Review*, (49), 2015, pp. 30-32. www.fmreview.org/climatechange-disasters

²⁶ <http://www.knomad.org/thematic-working-groups/environmental-change-and-migration>