



Climate Migration in Countries Along the Equator

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Abstract

Climate migration is felt mostly within countries along the equator. The geographic location of these countries leads to extreme effects of greenhouse gasses. Currently plans to help climate change are difficult to formulate because of poor funding, and political controversy that follows the topic. However, an FMA and a pushed United Nations stance on greenhouse gasses can help push for a change. An FMA will work for the legal coverage of climate migrants and allow for a proper integration.

Keywords: Adversity, FMA, climate, migrants, controversy

Introduction

Overcoming adversity happens everyday. In exploration of the theme of overcoming adversity, "In their Own Words: Resilience among Haitian Survivors of the 2010 Earthquake," discusses how Haitian earthquake survivors were displaced throughout South America and across Mexico. This document exhibits the theme because these climate displaced individuals continued to live their life after a huge natural disaster. Similarly to this, in "How to build a Resilient Future Using Ancient Wisdom," it is shown that methods have been passed to confront climate change problems. This video includes indigenous methods that were used in indigenous regions. Hope is given that these solutions can work

in today's world. These sources connect to the theme overcoming adversity because people are overcoming their climate related adversities everyday. The climate migration crisis of people in countries along the equator is facing many. Umair Irfan, highlights that "between 31 million and 72 million people" in regions along the equator "would be displaced by 2050" because of climate related issues "even under an aggressive effort to cut global emissions" (Irfan 1). The climate migration crisis is widespread and prevalent. Abrahm Lustgarten, accentuates the idea that by around "2100 temperatures will be so high in places such as India and Eastern China" that when going outside for only "few hours will be enough to kill even the fittest of

people” (Lustgarten). This information leads to the question, what is the most effective way to solve the conflict of climate migration of people in countries along the equator? Expert perspectives involved, are that of an environmental, legal/political, and economic background. By pushing the United Nations stances on greenhouse gasses and implementing an FMA (free movement agreement), there will be a delay in climate change’s environmental extremities, a feasible long term solution, and an inclusion of climate migrants to their new countries legal system.

Environmental Issues

This conversation with experts will revolve around the environmental perspective of environmental issues such as agricultural difficulties, flooding, and drought. Demola Okeowo, a member of the European Advisory Committee finds that “our planet is getting warmer at an alarming rate as a result of human activity” (976). Okeowo highlights that the effects of greenhouse gasses are detrimental on migration (976). This insight that Okeowo gives provides an explanation to why the global temperatures are rising at such an alarming rate (976). William A. Cohn, a worker in the field of transitioning systems for sustainable food, elaborates on this by discussing his discoveries in his work that show that extreme global conditions are leading to disease and weather problems (53). Humans are now starting to feel “the effects of increased asthma” (Cohn 53). Nina Golgowski, discusses a cause for climate migration by explaining that the AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States) are one of few organizations focusing most of their effort into combating greenhouse gas emissions. Low effort given by bigger countries and countries that are the main cause of greenhouse gas emissions are strengthening the issue (Golgowski). If greenhouse gasses are not battled in some form soon then these countries such as the

AOSIS countries that are already affected will be overrun with water (Golgowski).

Legal Controversy

These perspectives are discussing the political and legal controversies of climate change. Uma Kothari, a professor of Migration at the Global Development Institute, believes that political responses to climate change “are mediated by an array of understandings and claims” (133). Differently from Kothari, R. Rene Rocha, who works in the department of political science, highlights that the “migratory behavior of immigrants are well understood by scholars” (78). The political controversy that revolves around climate change makes it difficult for countries to find an adequate solution when discussing migrants (Rocha et al. 78). Rachel Furlow, a researcher focused on African and European countries, found that climate change is a result of government actions and policies (14). This alternative perspective helps add “focus on the political economy of climate change mitigation and adaptation” (Furlow 14). There is clear evidence that a legal solution is plausible but there is undeniably a difficult pathway. The legal/political discussion here revolves around the disagreements about climate change within government bodies.

Improperly Funded Climate Action Plans

The future economic discussion will consider the costs that are associated with directly combating climate change. Elizabeth C. Hirschman, a professor at Rutgers University, focusing on law and social science, finds that plans for climate change action have improper funding (11). The ARC’s (Appalachian Regional Commission) funding “will provide only a small portion of what is required” (Hirschman 11). Improper funding will ultimately control the future climate impact (Hirschman 11).

The plans are bound to be ineffective when they are barely possible and it can also lead to a later initiation date (Hirschman 11). Buzz Hardin, a graduate of the University of Arkansas, concurs with the idea of limited funding toward climate change solutions (618). Hardin specifically finds that “funding for research into climate engineering technologies is largely a private, corporate affair” (618). So it is virtually impossible for an engineering group to make change (Hardin 618). Kenneth Alan Adams, a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Psychohistory, finds that technology against climate change would cost an inefficiently grand amount of money (3). Governments are not willing to give up the money associated with technological and engineering solutions, which means this is off the table (3). In summary these perspectives discuss the economic hardships in solving climate change.

Solution

Propose a heavier stance against greenhouse gasses. This stance would be pushed by the United Nations because it cannot realistically be enforced within so many countries' governments. Governments will all need to agree to cover their country's specific greenhouse gas emissions. This will allow for climate migrants to stay in their native land longer because it will lead to a delay in climate change. The second part of this solution is the enactment of an FMA, which is a free movement agreement. A free movement agreement would allow for legal coverage of climate migrants when they have to leave their country due to a climate crisis. This coverage includes work, health, and protection. This would solve issues because climate migrants are not currently recognized under refugee laws and are completely unprotected. At this point governments can opt to push migrants away. By pushing the United Nations stances on greenhouse gasses and implementing an FMA (free movement

agreement), there will be a delay in climate change's environmental extremities, a feasible long term solution, and an inclusion of climate migrants to their new countries legal system.

Unified Delay of Environmental Impacts

There will be a delay in the extreme effects of climate change in a unified manner. Uma Kothari, a professor of Migration at the Global Development Institute, highlights that the responses to climate change impacts are often done with variations of power (133). Kothari finds “a wide range of actors, including scientists, government bodies, nongovernmental agencies and activist groups” all have similarities in their approaches (133). These different groups however, do not all have the same push behind their approaches so they are left weak without unification (Kothari 133). Kenneth Alan Adams, a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Psychohistory provides his insight by ensuring the ideology that “we have entered a new era, “the end of normal” our world will “never [be] normal again” (Adams 3). Therefore this counteracting movement by the United Nations will be necessary in enacting an adequate countermovement for climate change (Adams 3). Only a delay in climate change through political unification can there be an agreement on a plausible idea to push back on climate change. It is not an option to solve but if political and legal controversy can be pushed aside. Brian Banks, a writer for the Canadian Geographic magazine believes that the push from the United Nations and the agreements that countries will make in terms of climate change action, will provide a suitable temporarily delaying, environmental solution (1). This includes restorative forest, agricultural, wetland, and grassland movements (Banks 1).

Legal Feasibility of FMA Implementation

The legal feasibility of implementing an FMA is entirely possible when putting it in conversation with other legal solutions. Firstly, Tamara Wood, a lecturer in law believes that "free movement of persons have a number of key benefits" (63). Wood finds that they have had success before in the past when it comes to the Caribbean by "facilitating cross-border mobility in the context of disasters and climate change" (63). In the Caribbean there was a hurricane that led to the placement of a free movement agreement that allowed for the short-term stay of climate displaced people (Wood 63). Since there has been success in the past there can be long-term application of the free movement agreements in modern day society. In "How to build a Resilient Future Using Ancient Wisdom," there is an alternative discussion on how past indigenous methods are providing relief in times of climate crisis. This hidden solution is improbable because it would not work long term and in every environment. These improbabilities lead to a more legal focused solution. Ama Francis, a non-resident fellow at the Climate Displacement Project Strategist at the International Refugee Assistance Project, highlights that "FMAs are more politically feasible than a global multilateral agreement" (129). Therefore FMAs will help to considerably decrease the financial burdens of current climate migrants (Francis 129). Other global agreements are not plausible when thinking of long-term solutions (Francis 129). A regular agreement is not going to change things.

Legal Inclusion of Climate Migrants Conclusion

The legal inclusion of climate migrants in the countries they relocate to will allow for a safe introduction and presence in the countries they so choose. R. Rene Rocha, of the department of political science accentuates the idea behind the

evidence that shows that the "enforcement of immigration laws in the interior of the country" tends to end up "redistributing undocumented labor" instead of "reducing its presence". Immigration laws when followed are in reality just pushing immigrants around the countries they relocate to. There is no solution behind the current laws thus we have to abolish the laws currently in place that are doing next to nothing to help. Laws are for the protection of the people and they should not be in place if they are not doing just that. Ama Francis, a non-resident fellow at the Climate Displacement Project Strategist at the International Refugee Assistance Project helps to push the ideology that FMAs can lessen legal burdens of climate migrants (129). Francis believes that "FMAs serve as a useful protection framework in the climate context" because of their complexities (129). If the FMA put in place lowers the amount of relocation within a country then this is a perfect substitute for the Immigration laws that are not currently doing their job. It is mentioned during "In their Own Words: Resilience among Haitian Survivors of the 2010 Earthquake" that Haitian survivors of an extreme earthquake were pushed out of their country in hopes of survival. Whilst they migrated through South America they were continuously pushed up through Central America and by the United States border. Their lack of legal coverage in the countries they fled to is what is drawing attention to the lack of legal inclusion for climate migrants. Countries can always opt to kick these migrants out of their country because climate migrants are not counted as refugees.

Limitations and Implications

There are implications and limitations that should be discussed when taking this solution into account. Limitations include human rights difficulty, people taking advantage of FMA rights, and political controversy. Human rights as a concept are difficult to properly teach. FMAs rely on the understanding

of human rights to teach and provide protection for those who need it. The lack of understanding can delay the process of implementing FMAs. In addition, it is possible that people may take advantage of FMA rights. However, this limitation is to be taken with a grain of salt because there are always people who take advantage of laws for self benefit. Another important limitation that should be recognized is that political controversy. Political controversy faces a lot of topics, and there is nothing much to do about it. Some politicians will disagree with the FMA and campaign against its enforcement. Implications include a reshape of the concept of climate migration, an overall change in tone toward climate migration, and legal acceptance. When the FMA is put into action it will help bring climate migration into a new light. There will be a much easier process of relocation for those in need. A change in tone toward climate migration can occur and lead to an increase in global warming awareness. However, legal inclusion of climate migrants is a more significant implication of implementing an FMA.

Conclusion

There needs to be a change now. Climate migration is something that people are facing everyday and if nothing is done to help better these individuals' lives then it will only worsen. Climate change will only progress further and will continue to ruin lives, so why not take a stand now? This is a society where taking action is a choice. There is talk dismissing climate change as a problem when it is extremely clear that people are affected. Countries do not acknowledge this though, because the majority of climate migrants are low income. It should be instinctive for a human being to help others.

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