

Project title:**International Legal Approaches to Climate Change, Human Rights, and Human Mobility: Frameworks and Future Directions**

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Abstract:

This project explores international law's response to the growing challenges of climate change, human rights, and human mobility. As climate change drives displacement, existing legal frameworks—such as human rights and refugee protections—are inadequate for addressing the needs of those affected. Through a review of international treaties, policy analysis, and case studies in vulnerable regions, this study assesses the effectiveness of current laws and identifies legal gaps. The project aims to propose a framework for integrating human rights principles into climate adaptation and migration policies, offering actionable recommendations to protect the rights of climate-displaced populations globally.

2. Background of this research project

Climate change has profound impacts on human rights and mobility, as it exacerbates issues such as displacement, loss of livelihoods, and environmental degradation. The growing number of climate-related migration and displacement brings urgent challenges, as these individuals often lack legal protections under existing international frameworks. The current human rights and refugee laws do not adequately address displacement due to climate-related events, leaving gaps in the protection of those affected.

Moreover, while international agreements such as the *Paris Agreement* and *Global Compact for Migration* recognise the link between climate change and human rights, they lack enforcement mechanisms. Therefore, a comprehensive study on international law's capacity to respond to climate-induced human mobility is essential for shaping policies that protect human rights and promote sustainable adaptation practices.

The primary objective of this project is to explore and evaluate international legal frameworks addressing the intersection of climate change, human rights, and human mobility, and to propose recommendations for future legal approaches.

3. Potential research questions

Here are some potential research questions for the project:

1. Legal Frameworks and Effectiveness

- What international legal frameworks currently address climate change-related displacement, and how effective are they in protecting the rights of climate-displaced persons?
- How does international law distinguish between climate-induced displacement and traditional forms of forced migration?

2. Human Rights Protections

- In what ways are human rights frameworks (such as the ICCPR, ICESCR, and regional conventions) equipped to protect individuals facing climate-induced displacement?
 - What human rights challenges do climate-displaced persons face, and how well do current international frameworks address these challenges?
- 3. State Responsibility and Obligations**
- What obligations do states have under international law to support climate-displaced persons, particularly when displacement occurs across borders?
 - How might the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" apply to countries disproportionately contributing to climate change versus those most affected by climate displacement?
- 4. Policy and Legal Gaps**
- What gaps exist in the international legal framework concerning climate-induced migration, and what new legal protections could address these gaps?
 - How does the lack of an internationally recognised status for climate-related migration and displacement impact the rights and protections available to displaced individuals?
- 5. Integration of Climate and Migration Policies**
- How can human rights principles be better integrated into climate adaptation and migration policies to provide legal protections for climate-displaced communities?
 - What role can regional bodies (e.g., the African Union, Pacific Island Forum) play in developing climate migration policies tailored to vulnerable regions?
- 6. Case Studies and Comparative Analysis**
- How have different countries or regions responded to climate-induced displacement, and what lessons can be drawn from their policies?
 - What specific legal or policy measures have been effective in regions heavily affected by climate displacement, such as the Pacific Islands, and how could these be adapted or adopted globally?
- 7. Future Directions for International Law**
- How could an international convention on climate displacement be structured to balance state sovereignty with the need for cross-border protections?
 - What are the ethical and legal implications of recognising climate change as grounds for asylum or protected status in international law?

References

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