



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM

Topic: Environmental Migrants



From the Secretary General

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of the Secretariat, it is my honor to welcome you all to the 8th edition of PeruMUN, the largest and oldest high school MUN conference in our country.

In PeruMUN we believe in creating the citizens our country needs. Citizens who don't only ask for change, but lead the way to change through innovation, creativity and diplomacy. We are committed to make this PeruMUN truly memorable. Expect high quality academic content, a competitive climate and distinguished experts from international organisations, who will provide insights on the topics addressed in each committee. At PeruMUN, delegates will have the opportunity to share ideas, contribute solutions and promote change, all of this in a supportive learning environment provided by our wonderful team of Directors, Assistant Directors and Moderators.

Our mission as Secretariat is to provide an international level experience and give you the tools to achieve academic and personal growth. We strive to do our best to close the ever expanding education gap through an equal opportunity environment, where delegates from different backgrounds can share their own experiences and enrich each other with their own cultural heritage.

As Secretary General, I hope PeruMUN will raise awareness on the different subjects that plague our country today, such as: corruption, gender inequality, domestic abuse and xenophobia. Furthermore, I hope that this newfound awareness can translate into change through concrete actions. As Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg have taught us, it is never too early to advocate for better policies and demand a response from our political representatives.

If I can assist you with further questions or comments, do not hesitate to contact me.

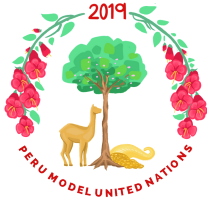
We are excited to meet you and see you soon!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alessp'.

Alessandra Pinto
Secretary-General

Peru Model United Nations 2019



United Nations Environmental Program

Topic Area: Environmental Migration

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)! My name is Nennele Rivadeneira, and I will have the distinct pleasure of being your Director during these following days on this edition of Peru Model United Nations (PeruMUN). We are very excited to start this journey with you all, having good expectations of you and hoping that you come with innovative solutions and a lot of desire to debate.

To tell you a little bit about myself, I graduated from Villa Maria La Planicie last year, and I'm currently studying Law at Universidad de Lima. In my high school years, I joined my school's Model United Nations (MUN) team back in 2016, debating in several conferences here in Peru and in two others abroad. Thanks to MUN, I made amazing friends, learned new things, and stayed with great memories and experiences. Because I ended up loving MUN so much, I joined Peruvian Debate Society (PDS) this year and am really excited for the things that are coming. As I look back now, I can tell you that MUN is truly an amazing tool for self-development and growth, helping us gain really useful skills for life, so I hope that you can enjoy this committee as much as I do and take advantage of this unique opportunity.

Almudena, Fatima and I cannot wait to meet you! Do your best while preparing for debate, and come to committee with your best attitude to make discussion a really fruitful one! Portray confidence and have fun! Needless to say, but we will not have tolerance for delegates being rude, undiplomatic or not playing fair and by the rules of the game (ZERO plagiarism). Finally, we hope we can all have a good time this weekend :) If you have any doubts regarding position papers, the topic or the committee in general, do not hesitate to ask us! You can contact us through the mail to which you will send your position papers or to my personal one (nennelerivadeneira@gmail.com). We will gladly help you.

Good luck to everyone and see you at the conference!

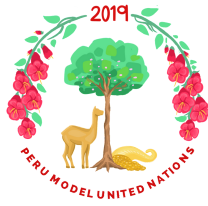
Best Regards,

Nennele Rivadeneira

Nennele Rivadeneira

Director, UNEP

Peru Model United Nations 2019



United Nations Environmental Program

Topic Area: Environmental Migration

Dear delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)! My name is Almudena Rivera, and I will have the honor to serve as your Assistant Director during these following days on this edition of Peru Model United Nations (PeruMUN).

To tell you a little bit about myself, I am a junior student at Villa Maria La Planicie. When I graduated I would like to pursue the career of marketing and fashion business which is my passion. My MUN journey started back in 2017 when I joined my high school's Model United Nations (MUN) team, and since then, I have not stopped debating as it is one of my biggest passions. I have successfully participated in national conferences such as Harvard National Model United Nations Latin America (HNMUN-LA) and the Ivy League Model United Nations Conference (ILMUNC) Peru. I am a person who loves new challenges, experiences and going out my comfort zone, that is why joining MUN was definitely one of the best decisions I've could ever made. Since the first conference I fell in love with the dynamics and the adrenaline I felt. Besides I met wonderful people that now I can call friends and memories that I will never forget. Furthermore it helped me to extend my knowledge, overcome myself, discover skills I didn't know I had and do things I've never thought I would do.

We hope that you have the best experience, gain more knowledge and don't forget to have fun! Enjoy this weekend and never forget the importance of diplomacy at all time. We invite you to take risks, don't be afraid to speak up and leave your comfort zone. Give your 110%!

I am very excited to meet everyone. Best of the luck!

Best Regards,

Almudena Rivera

Almudena Rivera

Moderator, UNEP

Peru Model United Nations 2019

INTRODUCTION

The Earth, currently, is being more threatened than ever due to the ongoing environmental crisis. High pollution indexes together with the lack of interest or capacity for a revolutionary shift in environmentally aware practices have managed to bring together a series of factors responsible for the creation of a world in which every single individual is found in a condition of threat and danger.



Perhaps, one of the most remarkable effects of the crisis is climate change, together with the consequences it englobes. Rising sea levels, extreme droughts, fiery wildfires, intense heat, freezing winters, appearance of meteorological and climatological phenomena, ecosystems' degradation and the extinction of species; they all affect livelihoods, and to some extent, we have been able to adapt to the changes that have been produced in nature. However, lately, the intensity of these events has escalated so much to the point in which it has started to forcibly induce displacement, because the places in which people resided became simply unliveable; the conditions that once permitted the continuation of life and development of human activities are now gone and lacking. With that, the humankind is starting to fear nature, especially with the latest announcements and predictions from studies backed up by various organizations and the UN itself, stating that at the current pace of human acting and consumerism, the year 2050 could be the point of no return.

In that same line, evidence of this point of no return is starting to become tangible when analyzing menaces to which some specific territories are starting to become subjected to; menaces such as the absolute disappearance of territory due to "sinking", complete exhaustion of local resources, toxic air pollution indexes, etc.

Up to now, there is no clear consensus on what can be specifically defined as an environmental migrant, and there tends to be a confusion and discussion with what is an environmental refugee or an environmentally displaced person, opening the gates for several edges to focus on during debate.

HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the principal environmental authority within the United Nations organisational structure. Created in 1972 during the Stockholm Conference in the Human Environments, it helps to implement measures for countries to meet environmental requirements at regional and global reach, through strengthening of practices and standards with its accumulated expertise. Its aim is to trigger alliances and encourage leadership for environmental care through information, inspiration and capacitation of nations and populations for improving their life quality without endangering resources, ecosystems and the environment that surrounds us to prevent their disappearance for future generations. The six areas of focus include:

1. Climate Change
2. Post-Conflict and Disaster Management
3. Ecosystem Management
4. Environmental Governance
5. Harmful Substances
6. Resource Efficiency/Sustainable Consumption and Production

Considering these mentioned UNEP responsibilities, it is by linking the tasks that correspond to some of these focus area to find the solutions and guidelines for solving this weekends matter, which is Environmental Migrants.

HISTORY OF THE TOPIC

At this time, this topic does not have a "lengthy" past, for saying it like that, as what we will someday call the history of environmental migration is what is happening right now, and what will happen based on the decisions and the effects that result from such that we all collectively make as part of humankind. But, leaving that idea aside, the terms "environmental" and "migrants" have existed for a really long time. However, not only until recent decades, the use of both terms altogether gained popularity and worldwide knowledge to create the bases for the concept of what is an "environmental migrant", due to the need for the creation of a category into which people facing the previously stated situations could fall into.

Therefore, following the broad working definition proposed by the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM), which includes and considers the complexity of the many issues at stake, we could

describe them as the following: “Environmental migrants are persons or groups of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move within their country or abroad.”



Hence, by having this “definition” at hand, it is imperative to understand that there tends to be a mistaken notion when people use the term “environmental refugee” or “climate refugee” as a synonym for “environmental migrant”. In committee, you may refer to any of them, depending of the situation or topic of discussion at the moment, but be careful when using each definition, because even though they may seem really similar they are actually not. These two, are usually used when talking about forced migration in the context of climate or environmental change. Currently, they are not recognised by international law, and even some agencies such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) suggest that their use should be avoided as they may mislead or even weaken the global legal frameworks that deal with the protection of refugees. They are not legally valid terms, in theory, as the 1951 Refugee Convention did not include nor recognise as part of their definition criteria any sort of environmental factor. Plus, reducing migration in a climate change context or situation to the status of refugee fails to recognise some key ideas that define these migratory movements, such as:

- **“Climate migration is mainly internal:** when migration is internal, people moving are under the responsibility of their own state, they do not cross borders and are not seeking protection from a third country or at the international level.
- **Migration is not necessarily forced,** especially for very slow onset processes migration is still a matter of choice, even if constrained, so countries need to think first migration management and agreements rather than refugee protection.

- **Isolating environment/climatic reasons is difficult,** in particular from humanitarian, political, social, conflict or economic ones. It can sometimes be an impossible task and may lead to long and unrealistic legal procedures.
- Creating a special refugee status for climate change related reasons might unfortunately have the opposite effects of what is sought as a solution: **it can lead to the exclusion of categories of people who are in need of protection,** especially the poorest migrants who move because of a mix of factors and would not be able to prove the link to climate and environmental factors.
- **Opening the 1951 Refugee Convention might weaken the refugee status** which would be tragic given the state of our world where so many people are in need of protection because of persecution and ongoing conflicts.
- Creating a new convention might be a terribly lengthy political process and countries might not have an appetite for it. **Many responses can come from migration management and policy** as highlighted already in the 2011 International Dialogue on Migration and the recently adopted Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The Nansen Initiative that was launched to look at gaps in protection for people being displaced across borders by disasters, after undertaking thematic and regional consultations also concluded with a document that proposes a “toolkit” of migration policies rather than recommending the establishment of a new status for these people.
- **Climate migration discussions should not lose their focus on preventive measures:** the key objective of our generation is to invest in climate and environmental solutions for our planet so that people will not have to leave their homes in a forced way in the future. The Paris Agreement offers anchorage for climate action that considers human mobility to avert, minimise and address displacement in the context of climate change.
- **IOM encourages the full use of all already existing bodies of laws and instruments,** both hard and soft law in humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, instruments on internal displacement, disaster management, legal migration and others.
- **Human rights-based approaches are key for addressing climate migration:** states of origin bear the primary responsibility for their citizens’ protection even if indeed their countries have not been the main contributors to global warming; they should therefore apply human rights-based approaches for their citizens moving because of environmental or climatic drivers.

- **Regular migration pathways** can provide relevant protection for climate migrants and facilitate migration strategies in response to environmental factors. Many migration management solutions are available to respond to challenges posed by climate change, environmental degradation and disasters in terms of international migratory movements and can provide a status for people who move in the context of climate change impacts, such as humanitarian visas, temporary protection, authorization to stay, regional and bilateral free movements' agreements, among several others."



However, such statements related to the denial of protection under the condition of "refugee" do not necessarily mean that migrants have been left unprotected or without support, as every person moving due to environmental reasons are protected under the premises of international Human Rights Law. Together with that, persons that move internally because of man triggered disasters or effects of nature fall under the jurisdiction of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, but depending on the fact if the country ratifies such Principles. And, just recently, on December 2018, due to the fact that a change in the 1951 Refugee Convention could mean a legal risk in matters of refugee protection, Heads of State together with the UN responded by taking a step forward and adopting the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. It took two years to be made and it is the first global agreement and major migration policy that defines a common approach to migration and addresses climate change by dedicating an entire section to it. There, it recognises climate change, environmental degradation and natural disasters as phenomena that are increasingly getting related with internal and international mobilisation, suggesting nations to cooperate and design plans for people moving due to such reasons and to protect them if needed. Experts see this as a significant milestone, but the effectiveness of its work will rely on what governments opt to do, as it is non-binding and of voluntary adoption.

Consequently, the committee must look into searching for solutions that help build resilience through capacity-building in different regions and countries to appropriately and efficiently anticipate, absorb, accommodate or recover from the results of a dangerous climate change-related event. And thus, considering commitments of the UNEP to the Climate Paris Agreement, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) or the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it would be appealing if delegates are able to craft proposals that can include the objectives that these UN actions aim to achieve, such as limiting the increase of Earth's temperature below two degrees Celsius per year, Climate Action, etc.

CURRENT SITUATION

Climate change induced migration is a term that is still unknown to many populations, but a sad reality to many others. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), just in 2018, 17.2 million new displacements from 148 countries and territories were associated with disasters; and according to the IOM, 764,000 people from Somalia, Afghanistan and several other countries were displaced following drought.

Having this in mind, we must be aware that this movements of people currently are and will continue to happen in the near future and in the long-term, also being affected and triggered by natural disasters and environmental degradation. Right now, its effects are undeniably damaging and detrimental, but the International Community should be prepared to cope with what is coming next, as climate change is expected to have major and progressively increasing impacts on human mobility.

Having noted and compared the different migrations that have been undertaken by many human groups, we can confirm that environmental migration can be of different types, classifying them based on the following indicators:

1. Reason: Forced migration or Voluntary migration
2. Time Length: Temporary migration or Permanent migration
3. Reach: Internal-level migration or International-level migration
 - a. *Internal*: If migration occurs within one same region, city, or country, migration in a near future is more likely to happen than it would if the person migrated abroad. This can be said as social, environmental and geographical factors

- a. this typically provoke such migrations are shared or can be more easily expanded throughout the territories of a single nation's boundaries.
- b. International: Based on the context and socioeconomic background of the main populations that have migrated in the last decades, the mobilization was basically carried out by walking. This means that, due to physical conditions of the human being, international environmental migrations meant a movement from one country to one of the nations that is more proximate to the place from departure (people migrate to any of the countries they share borders with). However, we would like to make an emphasis on the extent to which these type of migrations will escalate in the future, as predictions from different scientific studies anticipate that there are territories that are more prone to sink than others, fact that could explain the possible increase of transcontinental migrations in the following decades or century.

For delegates to better understand current realities, cases that clearly exemplify this crisis would be the following:

Kiribati

With climate change and rising sea levels, Kiribati is in danger of disappearing by 2100. Most houses and local shops have been destroyed due the frequent rise of tides and also, we must take into consideration that agriculture is the main activity for income, the flooding has caused the grounds to become in their most part infertile. To make the matter worse, its geographical location away from societies makes it difficult for the 118,000 civilians to migrate to other locations. Teneti Maamu, the president, believes that climate change is real and has many times urged the International Community to take action regarding the 2030 Agenda and its importance. Most citizens are asking for residential visas in Australia and New Zealand, but the process is complex, added on by the fact that the UN has not recognised for a long time climate change as a reason to obtain the refugee status, increasing the alarming situation for the small nation.



India

Last year, approximately 1,300 people lost their lives and thousands were displaced because of incessant flooding in India, Nepal and Bangladesh. The massive scale destructions left 950,000 houses destroyed and over 41 million people affect. The predictions for this year tend to be worse than last. The situation is equally bad in the states of Tripura, Meghalaya, Manipur and Mizoram. Studies say that extreme weather events like cyclones, droughts and tropical storms are leaving regions destroyed and a large section of the population find their lives uprooted. Events like these leave contamination of drinking water, among others. For that reason, forced to adapt, climate migrants move to big cities in the pursuit of a better and more stable life. In addition, there are numerous indications of the existence of social prejudices that have caused the violation of the right to equality in the administration of justice. In similar circumstances, they are usually condemned more frequently than non-gypsy people, as well as serve a time of superior sentence. On the other hand, victims are not usually fully aware that they have suffered discrimination, not being aware of their rights in the matter, nor of adequate mechanisms to use the judicial system.

In the middle of all this problematic, one of the main ideas that should be in the centre of any consideration or mechanism of response is vulnerability, as the most defenceless people are not only those that do not migrate when in danger, but the ones that are unable to do so. Here, we are witnesses of how once more, poverty only exacerbates and degrades the already deficient conditions to which people with low income and bad life quality are subjected to.

To bring this to an end, we should bear in mind that environmental migration should stop being seen as an absolute portrayal of a positive or negative result. Even though it may adversely worsen present vulnerabilities, it can help people to become more resilient.

BLOC POSITIONS

Even though in order to achieve viable and efficient solutions it is key that all nations come together, we must take into matter the fact that not all countries have the same migration policies, since some are more open to receiving migrants while others are not. It is important that delegates take into account that another factor is if a country is a receiving one or not, because that also comes into play when figuring out each nations position.

- **Countries of origin:** Here, we find the countries that are vulnerable to both the effects of climate change (eg: sinking due to a rise of the sea levels, extreme droughts that do not permit agriculture, etc.) and that are facing crises of resources' scarcity that impede them from living normally and satisfying their basic necessities. These need support for their populations in any form, being either economic, material, by receiving people in their territories, etc.
- **Countries of destination:** Here, we find the countries that are more likely to receive this migrants, either because of their near geographic proximity or because they are believed to be the places that will give these people the best opportunities or will allow them to live a life of quality. However, countries in this bloc must have a solid knowledge of their migration policy, as they may significantly vary, conditioning their relations with other countries in committee.

Finally, since we are discussing such a sensible topic like migration due to climate change, it is fundamental to go over the important documents and which countries have ratified and/or signed them.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER (QARMAs)

- How can UNEP get involved within national mechanisms to aid in the development and the implementation of resource management, pollution, climate change and environmental protection policies to lessen the impact of the environmental crisis on climate-induced migration?
- Which types of collaborative approaches must be taken by member states considering the jurisdiction of UNEP and other UN entities?
- What should be done to reduce environmentally-induced migration rates?
- Should the terms "environmental migrant" and "environmental refugee" be considered within one same category or should they be managed separately? Why?
- Considering that there is no strict definition for determining what exactly can be defined as an environmental migrant, is the base definition proposed by the IOM enough? If not, what other factors or concepts should be considered or included within the definition?

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