

Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security programme

# Overview of the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCMHS) programme and presentation of IOM-ILO Policy Brief on Labour Mobility and Climate Change



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# PCCMHS: The context

Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security programme



- **The science:** “Small islands are projected to experience multiple inter-related risks at 1.5°C that will increase with warming of 2°C and higher (high confidence)”; Migration and/or relocation may be an adaptation option
- **The reality:** “Human mobility” used as an umbrella term referring to different types of movements observed in the context of climate change.
- **The evidence:** Pacific Climate Change Migration project 2013-2016 (UNDP, ILO, ESCAP)
- **The policy frameworks:** Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, Boe Declaration, 2050 strategy

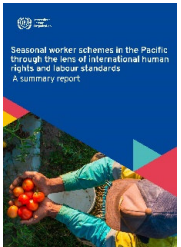


# PACIFIC CLIMATE CHANGE MIGRATION AND HUMAN SECURITY 2019-2022

**Implementing Partners:** IOM, ILO, ESCAP, OHCHR, PDD and PIFS  
**Donors:** UN Trust Fund for Human Security and New Zealand Aid Programme  
**Countries:** Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

**Objective 1:** A human security-based response to climate change and disaster-related migration, displacement and planned relocation

Development of a Regional Rights-Based Framework through Regional, National and Community-level consultations



**Objective 2:** Migrants and communities in the Pacific benefit from safe labour migration as a sustainable development and climate change adaptation strategy



Governments supported with policy development, countries of destination, employers

**Objective 3:** Contribute to the evidence base on good practices in responding to climate change-related mobility with particular focus on the role of the human security framework

Community based activities to support capacity building of migrants and communities of origin





## Connecting the dots between PCCMHS and Labour Mobility for Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience in the Pacific

- Continuity from PCCM → PCCMHS → Labour mobility MPTF project
- Regional framework on Climate related mobility
  - *Labour mobility considered as a modality of action under the regional framework*
  - *MPTF project supports related outcomes*
- Regional dialogues on labour mobility occurring in parallel with finalization of the framework on climate mobility
- PCCMHS Phase II activities on labour mobility will be designed and synchronized with the Labour Mobility MPTF project

June 2022



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Pacific communities are affected by a range of sudden-onset and slow-onset hazards that have been intensified by climate change. Sudden-onset hazards affecting Pacific countries include tropical storms and related storm surges, king tides, heavy rains and winds. Slow-onset processes include drought, sea-level rise, rising sea temperatures, ocean acidification, coastal erosion, temperature rises and changes to rainfall variability and the El Niño and La Niña climate patterns (IOM, 2020). In many cases, sudden-onset and slow-onset events are linked, often affecting the same communities. Climate change impacts interact with other drivers that shape mobility patterns in the region and this is likely to increase the demand for both internal and international migration opportunities. In the short-term, migration linked to climate change is likely to follow current movement patterns toward labour market opportunities in urban areas and Pacific Rim countries. Many Pacific Island Countries participate in labour mobility schemes with Australia and New Zealand and some also have special access agreements with New Zealand and the United States of America. However, some countries that experience the greatest migration pressures, including Tuvalu and Kiribati, have the fewest international migration options (ILO, 2014b) as they have no special access agreements and have been less successful under the existing labour mobility schemes than other Pacific Island countries for a variety of reasons including remoteness, the lack of diasporas in Australia and New Zealand, and lack of resources in relevant government departments.

# Climate Change and Labour Mobility in the Pacific Islands Policy Brief

Authored by: Carmen Voigt Graf

Technical review by IOM and ILO

# Understanding the context and terminology

1. The term **climate mobility** refers to any type of movement potentially arising in the context of climate change, including forced or voluntary, with varying degrees of permanence, and within or across borders
2. For sudden-onset disasters that have immediate impacts leading to the destruction of homes and productive assets, there is an increased likelihood of **displacement**.
3. To mitigate risks of displacement, governments and communities are also considering **planned relocation** of communities or individuals.
4. Some people proactively seek **migration** to adapt to climate change, especially when slow-onset hazards such as sea-level rise gradually erode livelihoods.

# Labour mobility in the context of climate change in the Pacific

## *Overview of existing migration flows in Pacific Island countries*

- In the Pacific islands, mobility has long been used to diversify livelihoods and as a response to environmental risks.
- There are several seasonal and temporary labour migration schemes and access agreements, even though none of the schemes explicitly refers to climate mobility (see Table 1).
- Several PICs have maintained close relationships with either New Zealand, France or the United States, and these relationships have resulted in access agreements.



# Existing migration flows in Pacific Island countries

- **Compacts of Free Association:** Citizens of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau are allowed to live and work in the United States with some restrictions
- **Recognized Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme:** New Zealand offers employment opportunities in New Zealand's horticulture and viticulture industries
- **Pacific Access Category (PAC):** grants residence to a certain number of citizens from Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, and Tuvalu
- **Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP):** Australia provides seasonal employment opportunities in agriculture as well as in select locations in accommodation and tourism.
- **Australia's Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS):** Designed to meet business demand across all sectors in rural and regional Australia

*Note: SWP and PLS have been merged under the Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme in Australia.*





# Impacts of labour migration on climate change adaptation

## *Lowering population pressures*

- Reduces pressure on the environment
- Important for atolls and overcrowded urban areas

## *Diversifying household incomes*

- Generating remittances
- In Tonga, remittances represent 37.7% of GDP - the highest of any country in the world.

## *Skills development*

- English language and agricultural skills used in homeland
- Remain competitive in domestic labour markets
- Transfer of knowledge and skills to the local community

**Table 2: Remittances in selected Pacific Island countries, 2020**

Country	Remittances, 2020 (US\$ million)	Remittances % of GDP, 2020
Fiji	312	7.2
Kiribati	19	9.5
Marshall Islands	31	13.2
Palau	2	0.9
Papua New Guinea	2	0.0
Samoa	150	18.7
Solomon Islands	28	1.8
Tonga	194	37.7
Tuvalu	0	-
Vanuatu	76	8.8

# Challenges arising from labour mobility

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- *Competition over limited opportunities to participate in Labour Mobility Schemes*
  - Increased risk of conflict
- *Loss of traditional knowledge, skills and labour*
  - Brain-drain
  - Shortage of agricultural labour in some sending communities, especially during peak harvest times
- *Negative impacts of disrupted flows of migration flows*
  - Challenges relating to COVID-19 leading to loss of employment
- *Increased risk of trafficking and deterioration of work conditions*



# The employment impact of climate change adaptation: Green jobs and just transition

- Investment in adaptation infrastructure and reforestation can lead to employment gains
- Job creation potential of the transition to a low carbon economy will outweigh that of job losses
- **Green Jobs Initiative (ILO/UNEP/ITUC/IOE):** Aligning environment and employment objectives and policies
- **Just Transition (ILO):** “Involves maximizing the social and economic opportunities of climate action, while minimizing and carefully managing any challenges, through effective social dialogue, respect for fundamental labour rights and consistency with international labour standards.”
- **Guidelines for Just Transition:** Decent work can be advanced if social dialogue is maintained and there is a mix of coherent policies across:
  - labour markets
  - social protection
  - macro-economics
  - occupational safety and health
  - environment



# Recommendations:

## a) Policy Design


- **Policy coherence:** - Ensuring complementarity of migration policies with climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction policies, national adaptation plans, disaster management strategies, and other relevant plans and policies.
- Adherence to *International Labour Standards* and other international conventions
- Adoption of **national labour migration policies**
- **Skills development** for the international and domestic labour markets that are required in Green Jobs and for a Just Transition should be enhanced through training.



**Global Compact**  
FOR **Migration**

OFFICE USE ONLY Client no. / Date received / / Registration no.

**INZ 1092**

 **Immigration New Zealand**

**Pacific Access Category Registration Form**

This form is available free of charge from Immigration New Zealand.

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**Information about registering for the Pacific Access Category**

**What is the Pacific Access Category?**

The Pacific Access Category (PAC) allows a set quota of people to be granted residence in New Zealand each year. This quota is open to:

- citizens of Kiribati;
- citizens of Tuvalu; and
- citizens of Tonga.

**Who can be granted residence under the PAC?**


To qualify for residence under the PAC, the principal applicant must:

- be a citizen of Kiribati, Tuvalu or Tonga; and
- have registered for the annual PAC ballot and been advised by Immigration New Zealand (INZ) that their registration has been drawn from the ballot (see How do I register for the PAC? on page 2); and
- be aged between 18 and 45 (inclusive) at the closing date of the PAC registration period; and
- have an acceptable offer of employment in New Zealand, or have a partner included in their application who has an acceptable offer of employment; and
- meet a minimum level of English language ability; and
- meet the minimum income requirement, if they have dependent children; and
- meet health and character requirements (if a partner and dependent children are included in their application they must also meet health and character requirements); and
- lodge their application for residence under the PAC within eight months of the date INZ advises them in writing that their registration has been drawn from the ballot.

**Also:**

- Principal applicants who are citizens of Tonga must be in Tonga, or lawfully in New Zealand, at the time their application for residence under the PAC is made. They must also have been born in Tonga or born overseas to a Tongan citizen who was born in Tonga.
- Principal applicants who are citizens of Kiribati must be in either Kiribati or Fiji, or lawfully in New Zealand, at the time their application for residence under the PAC is made. They must also have been born in Kiribati or born overseas to a Kiribati citizen who was born in Kiribati.
- Principal applicants who are citizens of Tuvalu must be in either Tuvalu or Fiji, or lawfully in New Zealand, at the time their application for residence under the PAC is made. They must also have been born in Tuvalu or born overseas to a Tuvaluan citizen who was born in Tuvalu.

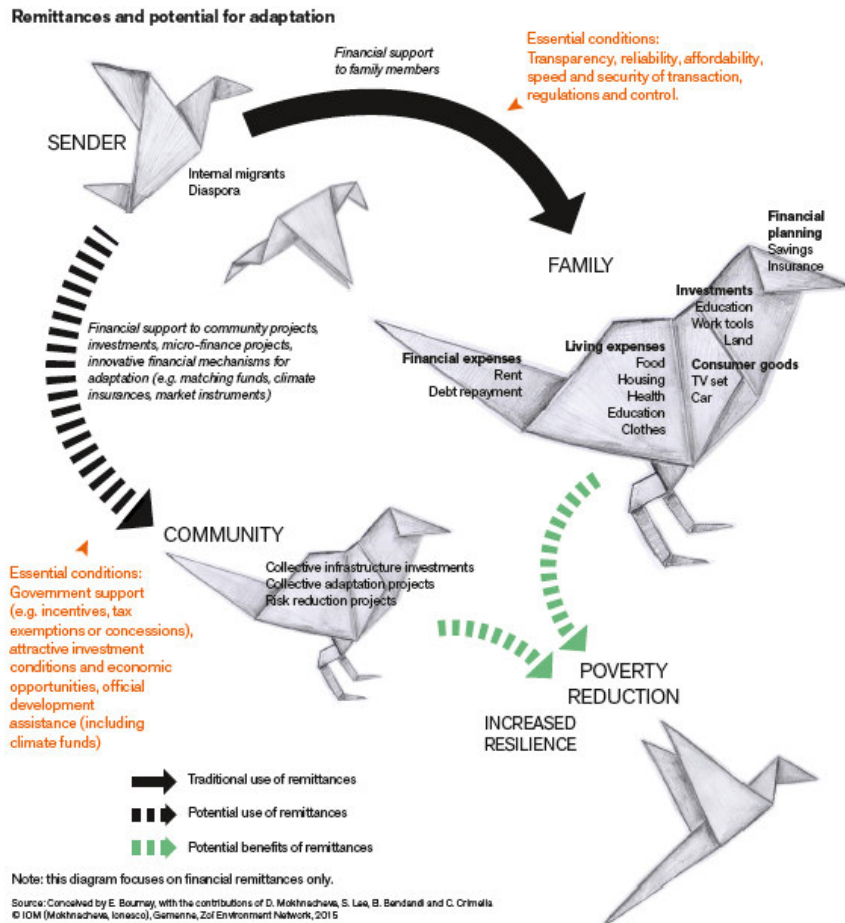
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 For further information on immigration visit [www.immigration.govt.nz](http://www.immigration.govt.nz) April 2013

## b) Labour Mobility Programmes & Access Agreement

- Explore options to **grant special access and concessions** under labour mobility agreements to states that have experienced economic loss as a result of climate change.
- Consider negotiating **bilateral or regional agreements** that facilitate labour mobility as an adaptation measure

# Recommendations Cont'd



- **Humanitarian Visas:** Developing new visa options for those who cannot remain in, or return to, areas of origin due to climate change.
- **Identifying new markets** and supporting training to facilitate entry into industries
- **Social protection** and **worker welfare:** Any new bilateral labour agreements that are signed should include strong social protection measures.
- Increase intra-Pacific labour mobility through **localizing selected positions**
- **Improving use of remittances:** Incentives need to be provided to encourage migrants' investments in national and community resilience to climate change

# Recommendations: Data Collection and Research

- Develop harmonized **labour market indicators** with which to compare data between countries and over time
- **Immobile populations:** impacts of climate change on immobile populations who do not have the means to migrate or decide not to migrate should be further researched and considered in relevant policies
- **Social impacts** of labour mobility scheme requires further research
- **Labour force data** including additional surveys addressing skills gaps may help governments to better develop the capacity to respond to disasters.

A man in a blue IOM vest and red shirt is shown in profile, pointing towards a vast, hilly landscape under a dramatic, cloudy sky. The vest has the IOM logo and text on it. The background features rolling green hills and a valley with some buildings, all under a sky with heavy, dark clouds and some light breaking through.

Thank you!

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