

Climate change and migration



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Climate migration: Class Overview

- Climate migration to Europe: hype or reality?
- Assignment

Please do ask questions during the lecture 😊

Climate change and migration



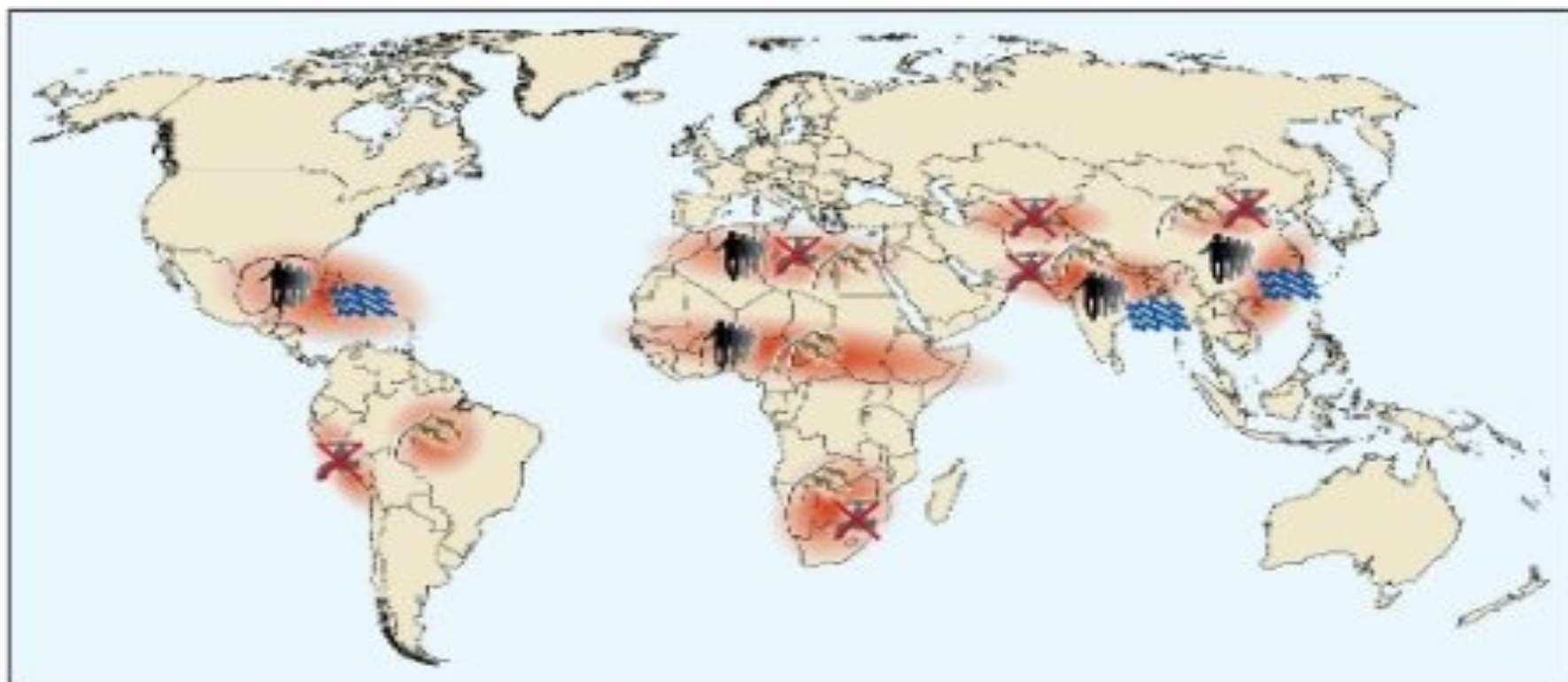
Sudden versus slow-onset events

Bangladesh – floods/storms



Kenya – drought





Conflict constellations in selected hotspots



Climate-induced degradation
of freshwater resources



Climate-induced decline
in food production



Hotspot



Climate-induced increase
in storm and flood disasters



Environmentally-induced
migration

Various estimates

- 200-250 million by 2050 according to Myers
- 300 million flooded each year by 3-4 degree temp incr.
- “Hundreds of millions” according to Stern Report “even though not tested”
- 250 million at high risk in Ganges Brahmaputra
- Etc.

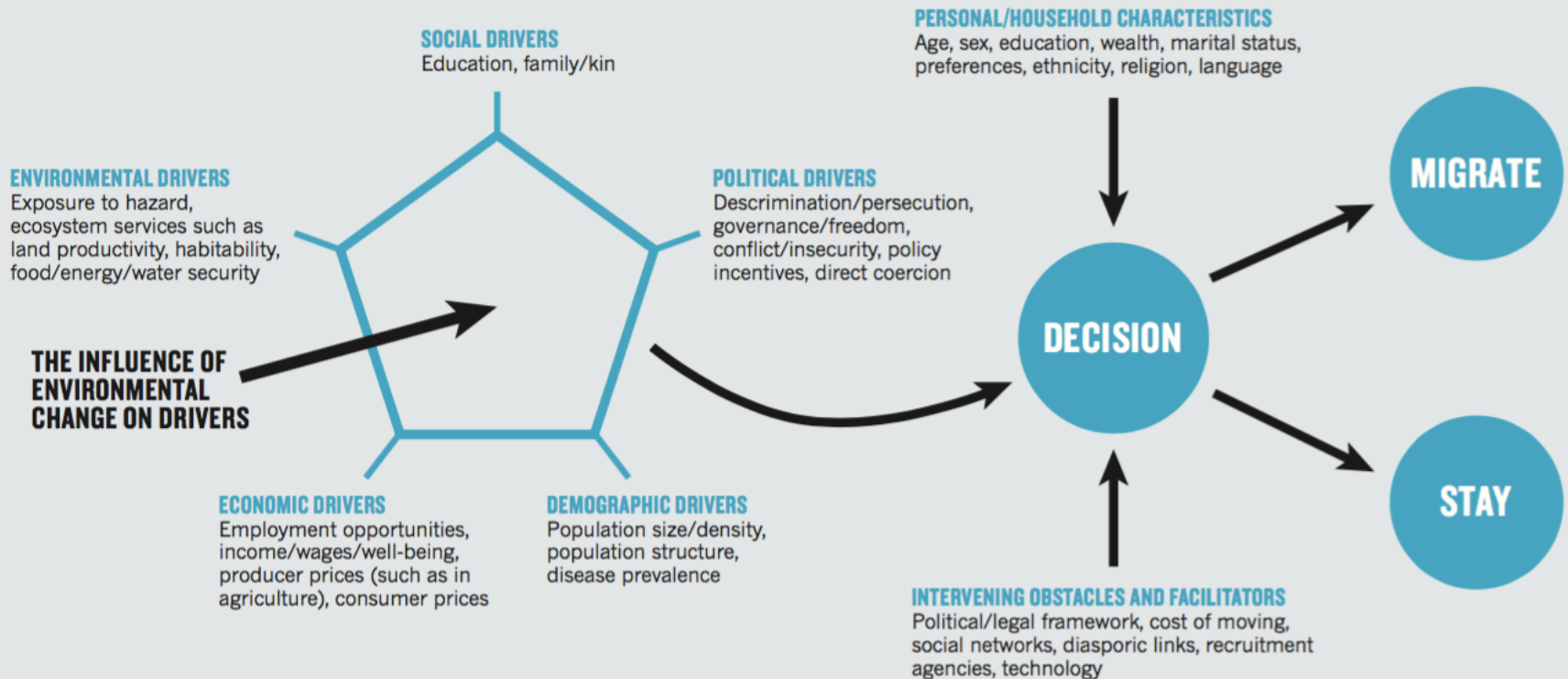
This is too simplistic

- People usually remain displaced within their home country
- People may not move (choose to stay or no resources to move)
- Migration is multi-causal
- So these estimates have been criticized for being mere “guess work”. They simplify reality



THE DRIVERS OF MIGRATION


Many factors influence whether a person or family will migrate. Their effects are closely intertwined, so it makes little sense to consider any of them in isolation.



News › World › Middle East


Climate change key in Syrian conflict – and it will trigger more war in future

Report warns that drought and rising temperatures could lead to major upheaval among region's unstable regimes

Tom Bawden | @BawdenTom | Monday 2 March 2015 |  0 comments

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Prince Charles

Prince Charles: climate change may have helped cause Syrian civil war

The heir to the throne linked drought in the Middle East to the conflict that has created a refugee crisis and spawned Islamic State

How Climate Change is Behind the Surge of Migrants to Europe

Aryn Baker @arynebaker | Sept. 7, 2015



Even as Europe wrestles over how to absorb the migrant tide, experts warn that the flood is likely to get worse as climate change becomes a driving factor.

The Great Debate

Cause behind African migrant flood has terrifying implications for the world

By Michael Werz and Max Hoffman | April 21, 2015

🏠 > [Current Issue](#) > [vol. 112 no. 11](#) > [Colin P. Kelley, 3241–3246, doi: 10.1073/pnas.1421533112](#)



CrossMark

← click for updates

Climate change in the Fertile Crescent and implications of the recent Syrian drought

Colin P. Kelley^{a,1}, Shahrzad Mohtadi^b, Mark A. Cane^c, Richard Seager^c, and Yochanan Kushnir^c

Between 2006 and 2011, over half of the country had suffered under the worst drought on record.



This drought was more intense and lasted longer than could be explained by natural variations in weather. This was climate change.

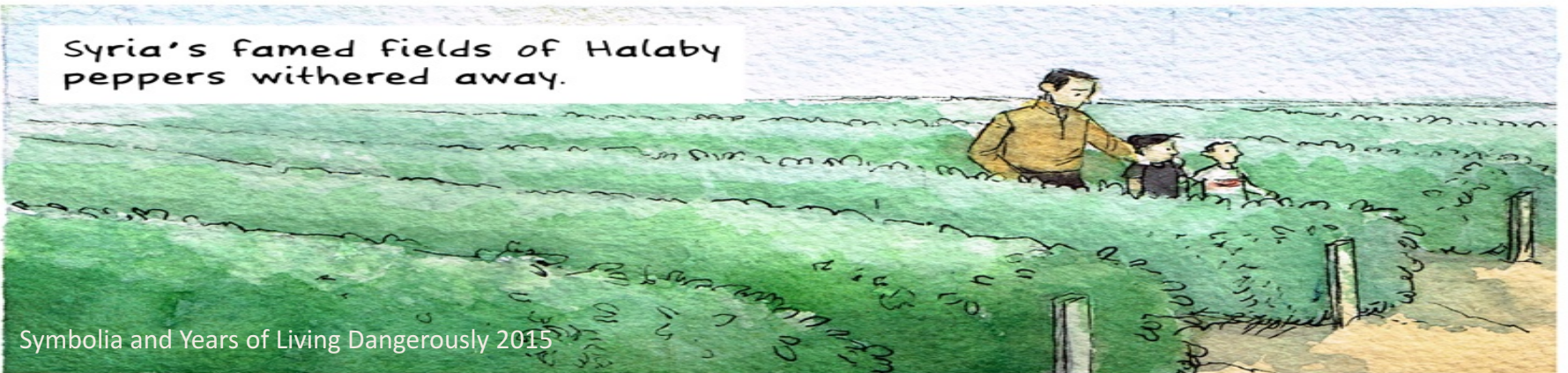
SYRIA

Drought in the Middle East

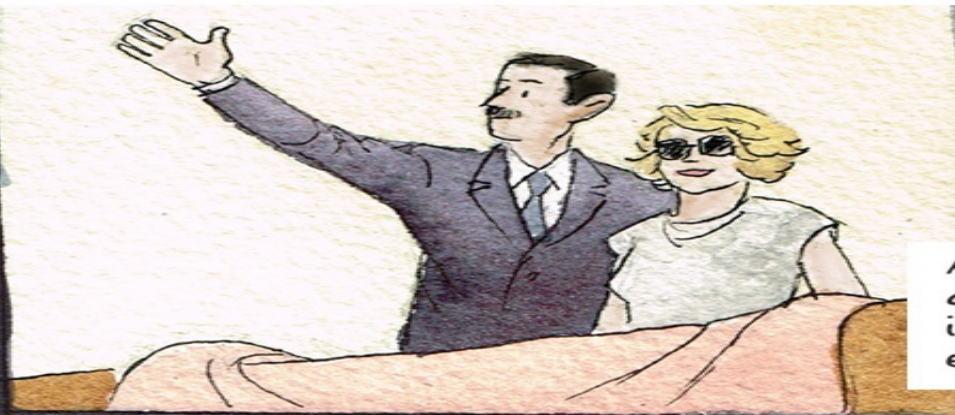
Nearly 85% of livestock died.



Syria's famed fields of Halaby peppers withered away.



President Bashar al-Assad's offered little help. His government awarded well rights along political lines, so farmers had to drill their own illegal wells.



And people who spoke out against him regularly faced imprisonment, torture, and even death.



Nearly a million rural villagers lost their farms to the drought.



They crowded into overcrowded cities like Daraa.



In the cities, the water problem became even more dire.



There weren't enough jobs. Once prosperous farmers were lucky to find work as street sweepers.

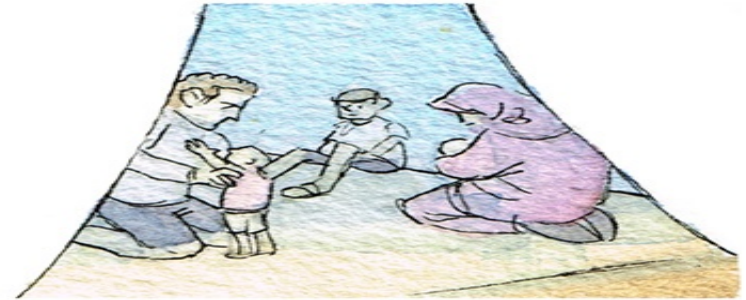


Francisco Femia is the director of the Washington, DC based Center for Climate and Security.

As an international community we're not looking into environmental stress enough.



It is really significant when you look at 1.5 million people entirely losing their livelihood. This was five years of extended drought. People just couldn't live anymore in rural areas.



The fact that there was this massive population displacement from rural areas into urban areas, those dynamics may have contributed to social unrest, and the sustainability of the revolutionary movement.



After decades of cruel leadership, the effects of climate change may have been the ultimate unHINGING stressor for Syria.



But this is an oversimplified picture
that overemphasises the role of
climate change

A more **nuanced** picture is required (I)

- Conflict and migration are **multi-causal**
- Relative importance of climate drivers is unclear
- The relationship between climate change, migration and conflict is often **indirect** and dependent on structural factors

Studies on climate change and conflict



“Some of these find a weak relationship, some find no relationship, and collectively the research does not conclude that there is a strong positive relationship between warming and armed conflict” (IPCC 2014: 772)

A more **nuanced** picture is required (II)

- No evidence that the *transnational* flight of Syrian or African refugees or migrants is primarily caused by climate change

Calais migrant chaos is a taste of what a warmer world may bring

The disruption at the Channel Tunnel between the UK and France is one of many migration crises which a warmer world will worsen



New Scientist, 31 July 2015
(Image: Philippe Huguen/AFP/Getty)

A more nuanced picture is required (II)

- A misrepresentation of climate-related migration and displacement
- Most heavily affected do not have the means to move far away

This is **not to argue** that climate change plays no role

- Though – always in interaction with other factors – thus essential to understand the complete picture
- And thus far there is no evidence that climate change is a central factor in causing this mass movement to Europe

Should we then still govern “climate migration”?

Loss and damage

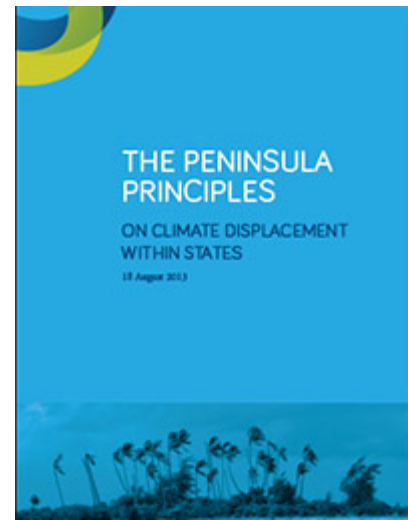
- Paris Agreement: *set up a “task force...to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement* related to the adverse impacts of climate change” (Paris COP21 2015)
 - More info: <http://climatemigration.org.uk/tag/cop21/>

Soft law (human rights) mechanisms

- Soft (non-binding) guidelines for states – politically less sensitive
 - Nansen Initiative – guidelines cross-border displacement in context climate change
 - Peninsula Principles on Climate Displacement within States

Peninsula Principles on Climate Displacement within States

- Contains guidelines for states in the phases of planning, displacement, post-displacement and return, and implementation
- Contains guidelines such as:
 - Prioritise adaptation to prevent displacement
 - No relocation without consent
 - Enjoyment of full rights in new places
 - Develop a framework for return
 - Respect free movement



Assignment

- Discuss the case of Bangladesh (see A4) in groups of max 5, on the basis of the 'drivers of migration' model.
- ***“What are the drivers (and intervening factors) in this case of displacement and migration, and how important is the role of the environment?”***
- **Displacement** means forced migration, often short-term and short distance.
- **Migration** can be more long-term or seasonal, and has a somewhat more voluntary character to it.

Answer

- **Initial displacement:**
 - Environmental driver (cyclone) in combination socio-economic vulnerability (poor most affected)
- **Migration:**
 - Environment (affected the land/houses)
 - This environmental driver in turn also influenced the economic driver (decrease of agricultural productivity)
 - Economic (in need of other employment + available work in the city).
 - Facilitating factor: social network connections in the city.













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THANK YOU!