

Climate-Induced Migration: Indian Experience

Climate-induced migration is not a new phenomenon but is slowly becoming the new found focus as researchers have begun taking up a range of studies. A lot of literature has already been out there as a result of rigorous research and has been published. The observations and the conclusions drawn on the basis of these studies are really alarming.

Migration has been very prevalent in India also in varied forms. Migration from rural areas to developed urban pockets has been one which has drawn much attention. Also, these urban pockets have faced extreme climate changes not witnessed in the past 100 years as has been acknowledged by the MET Department.

India is one of the hotspots for forced migration due to climate change, with people displaced by drought, floods and a rising sea level.

Most Vulnerable Regions to Experience Worst Form of Climate-induced Migration

Vulnerable Region	Percentage growth in emissions per capita 1990-2011
West Bengal	10 million
Coastal Maharashtra (around Mumbai)	10-12 million
Coastal Tamil Nadu	10 million
Coastal Andhra Pradesh	6 million
Gujarat	5.5 million
Coastal Orissa	4 million
Western Rajasthan	1.4 million
Northern Karnataka	1.3 million
Madhya Pradesh	1.2 million
Interior Maharashtra	1 million
Northern Andhra Pradesh	1 million

Source: Infochange Agenda India, April 2010

Clearly, climate-induced migration within and between countries is a global problem that is likely to worsen in the future. It is a problem too vast for any one country to handle on its own. Protecting the rights and giving a safe environment to the migrants is of vital importance. The policy makers will obviously have to focus now not just on making fair policies but also protect them from these adverse environmental changes.