Special Issue

Future Directions for the Concept of 'Climate Refugees'

Message from the Guest Editor

The concept of "climate refugees" has been salient since the 1980s, but it has taken on special urgency in recent decades. With this attention the concept has become the subject of contentious debates focusing on definitions, demographic estimates, time horizons, and the complex interplay between environmental change and human migration. The considerations are further complicated by legal and historical questions about refugee protection and migration regimes. Some scholars are keen to explore accountability and justice questions—e.g., advanced-industrialized countries are responsible for the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to the climate change that displaces people in the Global South. Others are focusing on the implications for national and international security-i.e., climate change is a "threat multiplier" that will destabilize countries and regions with people on the move.

Guest Editor

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