

The *Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS)* has the pleasure of inviting you to a Migration seminar on:

Migration and Climate Change
Wednesday, 10 December 2008, 13.00-15.00
Danish Institute for International Studies
Main Auditorium
Strandgade 71, ground floor, 1401 Copenhagen K

Background

Climate change will force people to flee – current estimates of the number of displaced range from 25 million to one billion by the year 2050. One year before the Copenhagen climate summit this DIIS seminar discusses the topic of climate change and displacement. What types of displacement is likely to be triggered by climate change? What are the protection possibilities and gaps in existing international law? Can successful climate change adaptation prevent displacement?

This Migration Seminar will put special emphasis on two themes:

1) Environmental displacement and protection in international law

The widely used terms “environmental refugee” and “climate refugee” have no legal basis in international refugee law and create confusion regarding the link between climate change, the environment and displacement. It is foreseeable that much movement prompted by climate change will occur within countries, and many displaced will thus be internally displaced persons. To a large extent the displaced may be included in existing categories of protected persons in international law, but there may be some protection gaps. Some suggest amending the 1951 Refugee Convention to accommodate environmental displacement. Other tools and mechanisms to address the gap include temporary or complementary protection.

2) Adaptation as prevention

The current determinism in the climate change and displacement debate must be challenged. Climate change does not necessarily lead to displacement.

Where the Kyoto protocol (1997) dominantly addressed the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by the industrialized nations to avoid climate change, the Copenhagen agreement will also address the consequences of climate change that can no longer be avoided. Adaptation is about finding and implementing ways of adjusting to the change. Can successful adaptation, including disaster risk reduction, reduce the need to migrate?

Vikram Kolmannskog has a specialised LLM in Human Rights Law (Distinction, LSE), LLM (Oslo), Cand.mag. (Humanities, Oslo) and BA (Humanities, Oslo). As Legal Coordinator on Climate Change with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Kolmannskog coordinates the organisation’s work related to climate change and has authored and edited the NRC report *Future floods of refugees* (available at www.nrc.no). He has written and lectured widely on the subject of climate change and displacement in international law, both in academic and policy fora, including the Commission on Sustainable Development in New York May 2008 and the Climate Summit in Poznan December 2008.

Programme

13.00-13.10 **Introduction**

[Birgitte Mossin Brønden](#), Analyst, DIIS

13.10-13.30 **Environmental displacement and protection in international law**

Vikram Kolmannskog, Legal Coordinator, Norwegian Refugee Council

13.30-13.40 **Discussant**

[Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen](#), PhD Candidate, DIIS

13.40-14.00 **Coffee Break**

14.00-14.20 **Adaptation as prevention**

Vikram Kolmannskog, Legal Coordinator, Norwegian Refugee Council

14.20-15.00 **Open Discussion**

Chair: *Birgitte Mossin Brønden*, Analyst, DIIS

Practical Information

The seminar will be held in *English*.

Participation is *free of charge*, but *registration is required*. Please use our [online registration form](#) no later than **Tuesday, 9 December 2008 at 12.00 noon**.

Please await confirmation by e-mail from DIIS for participation.

Sincerely,

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