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Policy coherence at the nexus of environment, development and migration governance

German Environment Agency

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Background

In 2020, 281 million people crossed borders - 3.6 % of the world's population. Significantly more people also migrated within their home countries. There are many reasons why people migrate: In addition to political, social, economic or demographic factors, environmental destruction, natural disasters and the effects of the climate crisis play a major role. Ecological aspects are often only one of many motives for a decision to migrate or flee.

The **interactions** between environmental and climate change and human mobility have been the subject of intense scientific and political debate since the 1990s. The political **challenges** of environmental and climate change-related flight and migration are complex. It is about more than supporting refugees or planning resettlement measures. Rather, sustainable development should be promoted on the ground and in the global system.

The international community has formulated policy goals on human migration in recent years, including in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Some policy processes also specifically address environmental mobility and migration, from the national to the international level. In principle, many policies can have an impact on flight and migration decisions: development and sustainability policies, health, education and social policies, rural development or urban planning in countries of origin, national and international environmental, climate and disaster protection, migration, foreign and security policies as well as asylum and domestic policies in host societies. In view of this, it is necessary to make **policies in the environment, development and migration nexus more coherent**.

Project Objectives

Against this background, the research project pursues several objectives:

- **Analysis:** It examines the status quo on policy coherence in the environment, development and migration nexus at different political-administrative levels (international, European, national) with the help of a literature and document analysis and interviews with experts. Relevant regulations and actors at international, European and national level in several policy fields are examined: Human rights, sustainable development, migration policy, disaster prevention, and environmental and climate protection. The "Leave-No-One-Behind" principle of the 2030 Agenda is included, i.e. the special consideration of vulnerable groups including gender and (in)equality aspects.
- **Recommendations:** Based on the analyses, options for action and recommendations for improved coherence between environmental protection, international cooperation and migration policy are developed. The focus here is on starting points for the further development of policies with reference to flight and migration for the environment ministry. In addition, appropriate approaches for fact-based communication on (environmentally induced) flight and migration will be developed.
- **Stakeholder involvement:** Relevant stakeholders will be involved in the project through expert interviews and two workshops. In view of the need to strengthen coherence in the Nexus thematic field, the actors should also exchange views beyond established structures and discuss options for action and recommendations.

Work Programme

- **Work package 1: Status quo analysis and interviews**
Based on a review of secondary literature and relevant policy documents, policy coherence in the nexus of sustainable development, environment and climate, disaster risk reduction and migration/human mobility will be analysed. Central regulatory structures, processes, policies and actors are considered. In a second step, the findings will be condensed through interviews with relevant actors and experts and reflected on the basis of the actors' practical perspectives.
- **Work package 2: Consolidation, workshops and process input**
The results of the analysis will be compiled and processed in such a way that they can be translated into action-oriented policy recommendations. These will be discussed with experts and actors in two workshops and will also be introduced into a relevant process at European or international level.
- **Work package 3: Narratives, framing and fact-based communication**
Work package 3 pursues two goals with regard to communication: On the one hand, common narratives and framings on human, "environmental" mobility are to be analysed and classified. Second, to improve communication on mobility for three target groups and in different communication media.