



STAGE	ANNEX
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ANNEX 2: CASE STUDIES



1 Artic climate change and the threat to the Sami culture

Watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUCWAXnw8zQ>

The Arctic is warming twice as fast as the rest of the world. This is putting its unique ecosystem at risk, and with it the existence of Europe's only recognised indigenous people, the Sami, who have lived in the Arctic for millennia. Increasingly unpredictable and extreme weather is jeopardising Sami livelihoods and their rights as indigenous people. The Sami have a clear message for decision makers, from the front lines of climate change: now is the time to act.

The Sami, the only recognised indigenous people of Europe, are native to Sápmi, which spans the northernmost parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia. This region is an important habitat for Arctic and sub-Arctic wildlife; polar bears, moose, seals, walruses, whales and birds have all evolved to survive in the harsh climate of the lowland tundra, mountains and forests. Sápmi is home to an estimated 80,000-100,000 Sami, with 20,000 – 40,000 in Sweden, 50,000 – 65,000 in Norway, 8,000 in Finland and 2,000 in Russia. They identify as one distinct people irrespective of the national borders now in place across their land. They have existed in harmony with nature as far back as recorded history, through sustainable use of their land and natural resources.

While Sami livelihoods have become more diverse, reindeer husbandry remains important to their identity and rights. Moreover, they have a unique way of 'listening' to the reindeer – they are strongly attuned to different reindeer behaviours and how they represent changes in the environment. The particular relationship of reindeer husbandry represents a true connection between people, environment and wildlife that has persisted with the Sami for millennia. Now, it is threatened by climate change.

Indigenous people tend to feel the effects of climate change first, as their livelihoods often depend on natural resources. Not only are Sami livelihoods, culture and identity fundamentally linked to reindeer husbandry, but it also forms the basis for their rights as an indigenous people in Sápmi. It is vital for



the Sami that reindeer survive the changing climate. The decline of reindeer populations as a result of climate change, along with threatening Sami livelihoods, may also mean the loss of important rights to land access. The Swedish Reindeer Herding Act (1971: 437) stipulates that, while all Sami are entitled to basic rights as an indigenous people, in order to exercise the full breadth of these rights – including rights to land – they must be part of a herding community and practice reindeer herding. *“In practice, Sami rights in Sweden are strongly tied to the reindeer herding practice. This narrow construction of Sami identity and rights is a direct consequence of the colonial politics that have characterized the issue since the late 1800s. At that time, state policy was of a dual character – assimilate (non-herding Sami were stripped of their rights and language) and segregate (Sami herders were to maintain what the state viewed as traditional ways of living).”* – says Annette Lóf, Researcher, Centre for Sami Research, Umea University. There is a distinct lack of regional co-operation between Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia on Sami rights, resulting in a lack of legislation that is common to the whole of Sápmi. Sami rights across Sápmi must be fully addressed by the four governments in control of Sápmi land, through consultation with Sami representatives such as the Sami Council and parliaments

Mental health issues among the Sami people are becoming prevalent, with the threat of climate change to their traditional way of life cited by many as a cause of stress. Half of Sami adults in Sweden suffer from anxiety and depression, and 1 in 3 young indigenous reindeer herders have contemplated suicide. Suicide rates in Sweden among the Sami people can be up to four times higher than the national average.

The Sami are acutely aware of climate change and the compounding competition for land use. Maxida Mäarak is an artist and activists who fights for the rights of her people through songs, videos, and interviews, who states that ‘I am a Sami activist mainly because I have no choice. I feel a huge responsibility to use [my] voice for my people and the important issues that we struggle with... When I meet people who have never heard about the Sami, the issues or the political problems, [they] get upset. A lot of people are good people, but as long as you keep them not knowing, it’s so much harder for us to keep on fighting. If we don’t start to really take the climate issue seriously, the future is





not bright for anyone. We will probably be the first ones that get really affected by it. But I do see hope, my generation is the first that is allowed to get into powerful positions [and can] speak for ourselves.’ Through the Sami Council and Parliament, Sami activists are calling for flexibility in their use of Sápmi, in order to keep their herds alive. While these adaptation measures are necessary to allow indigenous peoples to cope with climate change, there also needs to be an international focus on the core issue: to protect Sami culture and the unique ecosystems of the Arctic, urgent international action is needed to address anthropogenic climate change.

Extract and adaptation from Environmental Justice Foundation “*Arctic climate change and the threat to Sami culture*” in <https://ejfoundation.org/resources/downloads/EJF-Sami-briefing-2019-final-1.pdf>



Loss of ground in Bangladesh

Watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieAmy-8Qqvk>

Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna Delta, Bangladesh and India: A Transnational Mega-Delta

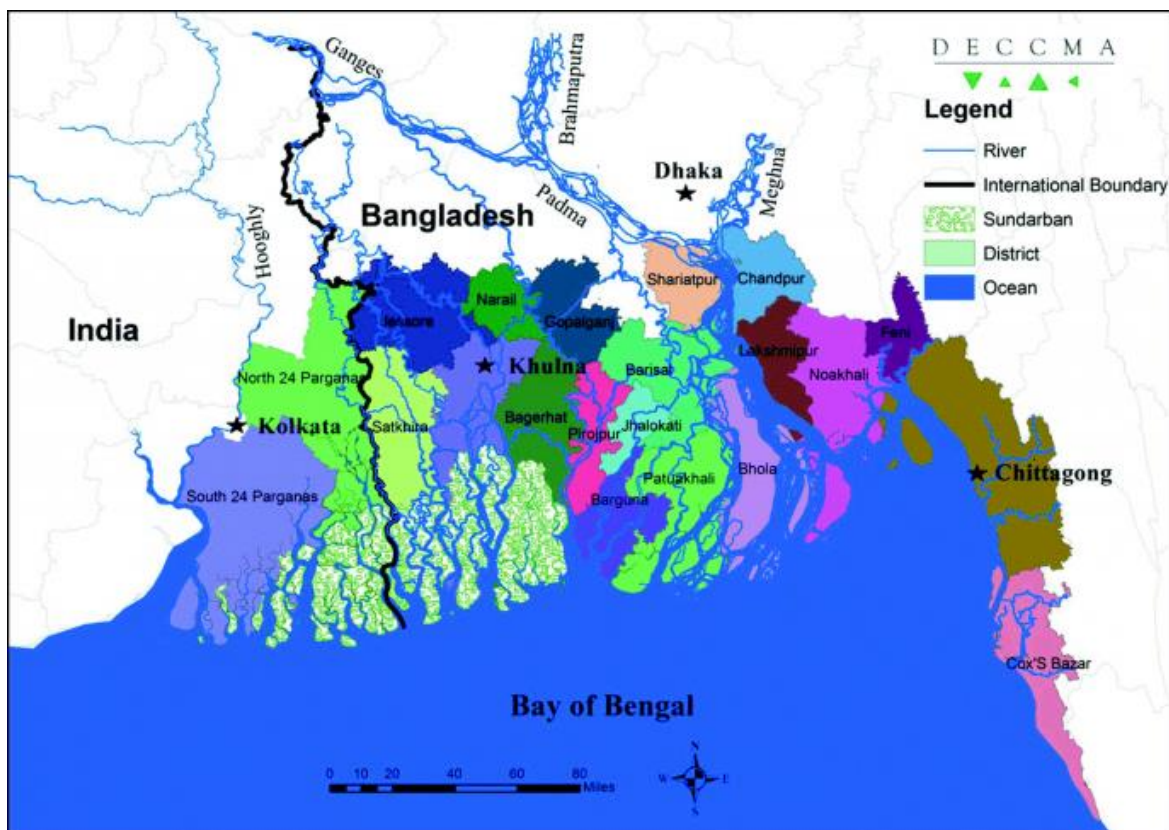
The Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) Delta at the north of the Bay of Bengal is administrated by both India and Bangladesh. It is characterized by a number of livelihood opportunities resulting from high population density, as well as a number of biophysical and socio-economic challenges (flooding, erosion, cyclones, salinisation, water logging, etc.) which are increasing alongside the changing climate and anthropogenic developments.

The people of this region are mainly dependent on the agricultural sector, while people living in the coastal belt are dependent on traditional monsoon rice cultivation as well as livelihood activities such as riverine and marine fishing and activities related to mangroves such as honey collection. Freshwater flooding is a common occurrence in the delta during the monsoon; it generates benefits such as increased soil fertility, aquifer recharge, replenished ecosystem and increased agricultural production. The delta also supports a diversity of ecosystem services that attract and support a large local population. One key



area is the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, covering 10,000 km² which is shared between Bangladesh (60%) and India (40%). The unique biodiversity of this area supports a diversity of livelihood options for the people living on its periphery (Gopal and Chauhan 2006).

The Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna Delta showing the coastal zone with administrative districts in both India and Bangladesh. The coastal population is exposed to climate hazards, including fluvio-tidal floods, tropical cyclones accompanied by storm surges, riverbank erosion, salinity intrusion due to seasonal low flow levels in rivers and upstream water diversion, high levels of salinity in groundwater and arsenic contamination of shallow aquifers. Climate change and land use impacts are expected to reinforce many of these stresses (Dastagir 2015).



These environmental stresses are believed to be enhancing already substantial displacement and migration. However, while the country has seen many planned and autonomous adaptations to minimise forced migration and displacement, situations often arise when people have little choice but to move



(Mortreux et al. [2018](#)). Consequently, for effective planning, it is important for policymakers to have an understanding of how effective adaptation options are, the circumstances under which people migrate, and if or when people see migration as an option in the context of available adaptation choices.

From Springer “Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna Delta, Bangladesh and India: A Transnational Mega-Delta” https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-23517-8_2

Climate Security in the Bay of Bengal

The BoB region is one of the most climate-vulnerable in the world. Its strategic, political, social and economic fault lines are also extensive. Together they create fertile ground for volatile security dynamics, social friction and violent conflict. It is a textbook example of the complex relationship between climate change and security, and how an aggregate of both could create emerging challenges for policy-planners. This report studies the impacts of climate change on transnational and intra-country conflict fault lines, as well as strategic and military dynamics in the BoB by overlaying climate threat profiles over security- and conflict-centric analysis. The broader objective is to arrive at a better understanding of how climate threats interact with conflict and security in the region. The report has six key findings:

1. Climate threats could intensify regional inter-state military competition and conflict
2. Climate-induced migration will be a major conflict driver
3. Land loss, exacerbated by climate threats, will be a key conflict driver
4. Climate threats will affect the overall resilience of displaced communities
5. Frequent adverse weather events pose a major long-term threat to national governance and security





6. Strategic assets in the BoB region are highly vulnerable to climate threats.

IPCS-Clingendael Institute Special Report # 212 in https://www.planetarysecurityinitiative.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/Climate_Security_in_the_Bay_of_Bengal_3eproef.pdf

Climate change affects the **human rights** of migrants from the Sahel region

Watch this video: https://youtu.be/cl4Uv9_7KJE?t=1874 (from 31´14” to 36´00” or to 40´34” if more time given).

“Throughout human history, individuals, families, and communities have used migration as a strategy for adapting to changing environmental conditions,” said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, when presenting the report. “But a rapidly heating climate requires new solutions to ensure that such migration is a choice and not a necessity.”

As the global climate crisis unfolds, people living in the Sahel region are directly experiencing its adverse effects when they migrate and, consequently, on their dignity and human rights.

Temperatures in the region are rising 1.5 times faster than the global average, according to the report. Rainfall is erratic and wet seasons are shrinking, yet flooding is frequent. Livelihoods are disappearing as harvests reduce and pastureland is lost. Those living in cities, particularly in coastal areas, are also at risk, with rising sea levels and increasing floods.

No longer left with any choice, many people are being forced to move. Others may not even have the option of moving, making a vulnerable situation even worse.

According to **Adenike Oladosu**, a climate and women’s rights activist from Nigeria, and one of the many stakeholders UN Human Rights is consulting with in the Sahel, migration is no longer a simple strategy that people can use to adapt to changing circumstances.





“Forced migration due to climate change is directly affecting our peace and security,” she said.

Oladosu highlighted increasing clashes between nomadic herders and farmers over land use and ownership, particularly in the Lake Chad region. The flow-on effects of this are many, she said, and include a significant impact on the human rights of women and girls.

“Women’s and girls’ empowerment is being destroyed,” she said. “They are prone to sexual abuse, and child marriage is now seen as a strategy by some to cope with the crisis caused by the changing climate. On top of that, girls and young women are dropping out of school, and they are losing their livelihoods.”

For Oladosu, environmental and climate justice encompasses more than just climate action. It is about taking concrete steps to ensure “social justice, gender justice and equality”, something she works towards through her activism.

The report outlines some of the ‘numerous, multi-faceted and complex’ impacts of climate change on human rights in the Sahel, such as the rights to life, health, housing, food, water and sanitation, which are all at risk from slow and sudden-onset disasters.

The majority of people’s livelihoods in the Sahel region rely on agriculture, shepherding or fishing, and these livelihoods are deeply affected by climate change. For example, scientists predict that in Mali climate change could eventually cause a 30-40 per cent drop in agricultural capacity. Off the coast of Senegal, fish stocks dropped by 80 per cent in 2017 alone. In Nigeria, notes Oladosu, the decline of agricultural production is a “weapon against peace.”

Climate change is also having significant impacts on the rights to life and health in the Sahel, says the report. Rising sea levels in coastal areas increase the risk of mortality, injuries, physical ill-health, and mental health conditions. Flooding and heavy rainfall may heighten vulnerability to water or insect-borne diseases, while dry seasons and drought can increase the potential for people to consume unsafe water.

In some cases, people choose to leave their homes to avoid these impacts. However, they may not have safe pathways available, a plan or adequate support, and they may face increased risks during their journey and when they arrive.





Others may have no choice but to stay, and they become even more exposed to human rights threats.

Extracts from United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner “Report: How climate change affects the human rights of Sahel region migrants” in <https://www.ohchr.org/es/stories/2021/11/report-how-climate-change-affects-human-rights-sahel-region-migrants>

Alternative Video (Spanish): https://youtu.be/_IGIFU5aZuk
https://www.cidob.org/es/noticias/lineas_de_investigacion_tematicas/cidob/el_sahel_cambio_climatico_in_seguridad_y_migraciones



African Americans and poor women were the most affected by Hurricane Katrina

Watch this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=8NSQYO2es3U>

Racism and Hurricane Katrina

Hurricane Katrina struck the New Orleans area on August 29, 2005, and was the worst hurricane in recent United States history (Knabb, Rhome, & Brown, 2006). The hurricane and its aftermath had a major impact on vulnerable populations in New Orleans, particularly low-income African Americans. African American communities were damaged more than White communities (Logan, 2006), and African Americans affected by the storm have since reported higher rates of unemployment, psychological distress, and general life disruption than Whites (Elliot & Pais, 2006; White, Philpot, Wylie, & McGowen, 2007).

The disproportionate impact of Hurricane Katrina on low-income African Americans seems to be due, at least in part, to the interaction of racial and class injustices in pre-hurricane policies, as well as in the treatment of victims during the hurricane and its aftermath. For example, the city government failed to repair the levees surrounding the low-income African American community despite warnings of their fragility (Park & Miller, 2006). Evacuation policies relied on private means of transportation that were less available to African Americans (Lavelle & Feagin, 2006). Research has shown that African Americans were less likely than Whites to have an evacuation plan in place prior to the





hurricane (Spence, Lachlan, & Griffin, 2007), and were less likely to have evacuated during the storm (Elliot & Pais, 2006).

The government has also been blamed for “bureaucratic failures” during the hurricane, wherein low-income African American citizens were put at heightened risk due to a strict adherence to rules and lack of use of discretion that would assist them (Molotch, 2006). Public administration scholar Christine Stivers (2006) has provided several examples of such failures, ranging from the slow transportation of food and water to the Louisiana Superdome, which served as a “shelter of last resort” to over 25,000 New Orleans residents (Brinkley, 2006), to the denial of small business loans to applicants from the hardest hit areas after the hurricane. Although race and class clearly interacted during the government’s response to the hurricane, many scholars, including Stivers, see racism as one of the major factors accounting for the increased risk of adversity among low-income African Americans during Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath.

Extract from NCBI “African American Women’s Reports of Racism during Hurricane Katrina: Variation by Interviewer Race”

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3583345/>

Katrina, Black women and the deadly discourse on black poverty in America

African American women in the Gulf Coast region are some of the poorest in the nation. Women in general are more vulnerable in times of natural disaster because they are the primary caretakers of the young and the old. These factors and others meant that poor Black women were among those most severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina. They also had minimal resources to cope with the disaster and its aftermath. However, instead of sympathy and support, some conservative pundits have sought to link the suffering caused by Katrina to the lack of patriarchal Black family structures, which they argue could have helped individuals survive in the crisis. Contrary to these stereotypes, many Black women have not only been resilient and self-reliant,





but creative and heroic in the face of crisis. It is their stories that offer hope for the future of New Orleans and our nation.

Extract from Katrina, Black women and the deadly discourse on black poverty in America in <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/du-bois-review-social-science-research-on-race/article/abs/katrina-black-women-and-the-deadly-discourse-on-black-poverty-in-america/E04FE6CA7FCFFD71176607A0196AFC5D>



Australian wildfires

Watch this video: Australian wildfires, climate change and the family farm: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqNWr0SYwCI>

And/or this one: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQpSG4yQatg>

In recent years, the fires that devastate huge tracts of forest area around the entire planet have not stopped repeating themselves. In Brazil, for example, 223,000 forest fires were recorded in 2020, the highest number in a decade⁷⁷. The impacts on ecosystems and people are devastating. Fires also contribute to the climate crisis. Forests are thermal regulators that capture a huge amount of carbon dioxide so that, when burned, the environmental services of capture are lost, and large amounts of carbon are emitted due to the combustion of biomass.

The reasons for these fires are multiple and depend on the local context. They highlight an incorrect or insufficient management of forest masses and the generation of fires for the change of land use for livestock, crops or urbanization, to which are added the increase in temperature and droughts. In addition, there is evidence that, among other aspects, climate change influences the incidence and dispersion of these phenomena. Thus, “the current climate crisis explains the evolution of fires towards more dangerous, rapid and uncontrollable episodes, due to the rise in temperatures, heat waves and prolonged periods of drought, which result in the dryness of the soil and vegetation. Deforestation and the use of slash-and-burn practices also increase the risk of droughts and fires, which in turn act as threat multipliers that



increase the risk of displacement. Between 2008 and 2020, wildfires caused around 3.3 million internal displacements worldwide.

Extract from CEAR & Greenpeace “Huir del Clima” <https://www.cear.es/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/informe-huir-del-clima.pdf>

Bushfires disproportionately impact Indigenous Australians

First Nations Australians suffered worse impacts from the Black Summer bushfires due to inappropriate planning and unsuitable interventions by authorities during the crisis, researchers at The Australian National University (ANU) argue.

The researchers have published a report examining the first-hand experiences of Indigenous Australians during the 2019-2020 bushfires, and say the findings are also reflected in the current northern New South Wales floods.

Indigenous Australians experienced racism and unfair treatment in the face of the bushfire catastrophe, in addition to loss of home, land and lives, the ANU researchers found.

The new paper from the ANU Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research argues that "at the height of the [bushfire] crisis, stories emerged of culturally unsafe and unwelcoming relief and recovery services".

In the absence of support from external sources, the paper highlights the requirement of Aboriginal communities and organisations to step up and evacuate community members, who worked to provide immediate support in the areas of health, housing, food, and mental health supports, and take steps to protect their cultural and heritage values. In this context, despite their unfair treatment, these communities were not just victims but pro-active groups who adapted to the emergency and responded despite a lack of resources. This is something which, as the paper points out, proves the need to better involve Aboriginal communities and organisations in disaster planning and management. In fact, there has been a recognised role played by traditional Aboriginal land-management practices, through controlled burning, in the historical prevention of wildfires (see below).

"So many Aboriginal people were affected by the bushfires. They experienced extreme trauma both from the fire itself and the response from non-





Indigenous organisations and government agencies," lead author and ANU PhD candidate Bhamie Williamson said.

"There is a huge gap in policy when it comes to supporting Indigenous peoples in disasters, with very little regard as to how disasters impact Indigenous peoples in ways that are different to others."

The paper points explicitly to the lack of inclusion of Aboriginal peoples when it comes to disaster planning.

"In disaster planning, preparation is everything, and there are no emergency management plans that discuss the unique needs of Aboriginal people," Mr Williamson said.

"The lack of planning involving First Nations peoples meant that the response during the Black Summer bushfires was inadequate, ineffective and inappropriate."

As the paper points out, none of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (2011), the Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework (2018), the Victorian Management Action Plan 2016-2019, or the New South Wales State Emergency Management Plan mentioned indigenous people or provided any particular strategy for supporting them in emergencies.

From Australian National University "Bushfires disproportionately impact Indigenous Australians" in <https://www.anu.edu.au/news/all-news/bushfires-disproportionately-impact-indigenous-australians>

(*) About aboriginal Tradition Could Prevent Bushfires in Australia
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baWHw9rjCIE>

