P06 / Climate Diasporas and Transnational Adaptation Governance: Migration, Health, and Policy Across Borders

Topic : Regulation and Regulatory Governance

Chair : Mariéme NGOM (Université Iba Der Thiam de Thies (UIDT))

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Climate change and human mobility are increasingly recognized as intertwined policy challenges (Black et al., 2011; Foresight, 2011; Adger et al., 2015), yet public policy scholarship has paid comparatively little attention to the role diaspora communities play in shaping, financing, or contesting adaptation policy in their countries of origin. Research on migration and adaptation has largely examined mobility as a household or community strategy in origin regions (Tacoli, 2009), and the migration-development literature has framed migrants and their associations as transnational development agents (Faist, 2008; for a critical review, see de Haas, 2010). Work on co-development and migrant networks in the Sahel (Scheffran et al., 2012) is a notable exception, showing how diaspora ties can support local adaptation projects. What remains largely unexamined is whether, and how, diasporas gain access to the formal processes through which adaptation policy is decided. This panel addresses that gap by examining diasporas not merely as recipients of climate-driven displacement narratives, but as active political and institutional actors: sources of remittances directed toward adaptation, participants in transnational health and environmental research, and voices increasingly present in high-level diplomatic exchanges between host and origin countries.

The panel builds on the observation that transnational communities operate within transnational social fields (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004), navigating two simultaneous policy environments, the regulatory and health systems of their host countries and the climate vulnerabilities of their countries of origin, without a coherent governance framework connecting the two. This engages debates on cross-scale governance (Cash et al., 2006) and on the social limits to adaptation (Adger et al., 2009). It is particularly visible in transnational health-environment research examining how indoor climate, housing conditions, and migration-related environmental exposure affect wellbeing. This research connects to the migration-health agenda (Abubakar et al., 2018; Schwerdtle et al., 2018) and to the climate-health evidence base (Watts et al., 2021; Cissé et al., 2022), but remains weakly linked to adaptation policy. It is equally visible in diaspora associations that increasingly engage directly with heads of state and development agencies on climate and economic partnership agendas.

The panel asks: How do diaspora communities participate in, or find themselves excluded from, the formal architecture of adaptation policy-making in their countries of origin? What institutional mechanisms, if any, translate diaspora engagement into policy influence rather than symbolic representation? And how are health and environmental risks associated with migration itself, rather than only climate risks “back home”, being addressed by current adaptation and migration policy frameworks?

Hypotheses include: (1) diaspora associations function as informal policy entrepreneurs whose influence exceeds their formal recognition in national adaptation planning; (2) transnational health-environment research remains institutionally siloed from climate adaptation policy despite substantive overlap; and (3) high-level diplomatic engagement with diaspora communities rarely translates into structured policy consultation mechanisms. We welcome comparative, empirical, and theoretically oriented contributions from migration studies, public policy, health policy, and environmental governance.

CALL FOR PAPERS

This panel invites papers examining the intersection of migration, diaspora engagement, and climate or environmental policy across borders. We welcome contributions that analyze the political and institutional role of diaspora associations in shaping adaptation, environmental, or development policy in countries of origin, including their financing mechanisms, advocacy strategies, and access to formal policy processes. We are also interested in papers examining transnational health-environment research, including studies on housing, indoor climate, and migration-related environmental exposure, and how such research is or is not connected to climate adaptation or public health policy frameworks. Papers addressing the diplomatic and

institutional dimensions of diaspora engagement, including state visits, bilateral partnership frameworks, and diaspora consultation mechanisms, are equally welcome, as are papers critically assessing the “climate migrant” framing in current migration and adaptation policy debates. Contributors are encouraged to situate their work in relation to the literatures on climate-related mobility and adaptation (e.g., Black et al., 2011; Tacoli, 2009; Scheffran et al., 2012), transnational social fields and diaspora development agency (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004; Faist, 2008), and migration-health and climate-health research (Abubakar et al., 2018; Watts et al., 2021). Comparative papers examining diaspora-origin country policy linkages across different national contexts are particularly encouraged, as are papers exploring how second-generation or long-settled diaspora members sustain, transform, or disengage from climate and development advocacy over time. We further welcome papers examining the role of digital platforms and social media in enabling diaspora climate advocacy, as well as papers assessing how host-country institutions, including municipal governments, universities, and civil society organizations, engage with diaspora communities on climate and environmental issues. Both empirically grounded case studies and theoretically oriented papers are welcome, using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods approaches, and papers combining ethnographic and policy analysis methods are of particular interest. We especially encourage submissions from early-career researchers, practitioners working in diaspora or migration policy, and scholars engaging directly with diaspora organizations or transnational research partnerships. Paper proposals should include a title, an abstract of 300 to 500 words outlining the research question, methodology, and expected contribution, and full author affiliations. Selected papers will be grouped into thematically coherent sessions bridging migration studies, health policy, and climate governance, with attention to both Global North and Global South institutional perspectives, and to the practical challenges of translating diaspora engagement into durable policy influence.

References

Abubakar, I., et al. (2018). The UCL–Lancet Commission on Migration and Health: the health of a world on the move. *The Lancet*, 392(10164), 2606–2654. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)32114-7

Adger, W. N., Dessai, S., Goulden, M., Hulme, M., Lorenzoni, I., Nelson, D. R., Naess, L. O., Wolf, J., & Wreford, A. (2009). Are there social limits to adaptation to climate change? *Climatic Change*, 93(3–4), 335–354. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-008-9520-z

Adger, W. N., Arnell, N. W., Black, R., Dercon, S., Geddes, A., & Thomas, D. S. G. (2015). Focus on environmental risks and migration: causes and consequences. *Environmental Research Letters*, 10(6), 060201. https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/10/6/060201

Black, R., Adger, W. N., Arnell, N. W., Dercon, S., Geddes, A., & Thomas, D. (2011). The effect of environmental change on human migration. *Global Environmental Change*, 21(S1), S3–S11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2011.10.001

Cash, D. W., Adger, W. N., Berkes, F., Garden, P., Lebel, L., Olsson, P., Pritchard, L., & Young, O. (2006). Scale and cross-scale dynamics: governance and information in a multilevel world. *Ecology and Society*, 11(2), 8.

Cissé, G., McLeman, R., Adams, H., et al. (2022). Health, wellbeing, and the changing structure of communities. In H.-O. Pörtner et al. (Eds.), *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability* (pp. 1041–1170). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009325844.009

de Haas, H. (2010). Migration and development: a theoretical perspective. *International Migration Review*, 44(1), 227–264. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2009.00804.x

Faist, T. (2008). Migrants as transnational development agents: an inquiry into the newest round of the migration–development nexus. *Population, Space and Place*, 14(1), 21–42. https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.471

Foresight (2011). *Migration and Global Environmental Change: Future Challenges and Opportunities. Final Project Report*. London: Government Office for Science.

Levitt, P., & Glick Schiller, N. (2004). Conceptualizing simultaneity: a transnational social field perspective on society. *International Migration Review*, 38(3), 1002–1039. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2004.tb00227.x

Scheffran, J., Marmer, E., & Sow, P. (2012). Migration as a contribution to resilience and innovation in

climate adaptation: social networks and co-development in Northwest Africa. *Applied Geography*, 33, 119–127.

Schwerdtle, P., Bowen, K., & McMichael, C. (2018). The health impacts of climate-related migration. *BMC Medicine*, 16, 1. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-017-0981-7

Tacoli, C. (2009). Crisis or adaptation? Migration and climate change in a context of high mobility. *Environment and Urbanization*, 21(2), 513–525. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247809342182

Watts, N., et al. (2021). The 2020 report of The Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: responding to converging crises. *The Lancet*, 397(10269), 129–170. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)32290-X