

OPPORTUNITY #12

HOW TO ESCAPE A CLIMATE DISASTER?

THE CLIMATE VISA

A globally recognised permit for people in climate-stressed regions to legally migrate

WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

Climate change is redrawing the global map.

As many as 48 countries – mostly islands – could disappear by 2100 because of rising sea levels.¹¹⁵ On land, the Sahara Desert expanded by 8%, or 100 kilometres, southwards between 1950 and 2015, and continues to expand at that rate.¹¹⁶ This, and other impacts of climate change from shoreline erosion, coastal flooding and agricultural disruption, might necessitate people migrating and resettling in other areas.¹¹⁷

There could be 216 million climate refugees by 2050¹¹⁸ searching for safer and more economically stable places to live, 143 million of them in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America.¹¹⁹

Equally as dramatic, 1–3 billion people could be forced to move to places with climate conditions that are outside – and largely hotter than – those that humanity has tended to live within over the past 6,000 years. Billions will also be living in countries that do not have the infrastructure to adapt well to climate change impacts and conditions that make life more challenging.¹²⁰ The Middle East is one such region, experiencing record high summer temperatures above 50°C and being scarcely equipped to deal with the challenges to come.¹²¹

SECTORS

AGRICULTURE & FOOD · ADVANCED MATERIALS & BIOTECHNOLOGY · AUTOMOTIVE, AEROSPACE & AVIATION · CHEMICALS & PETROCHEMICALS · CONSUMER GOODS · EDUCATION · ENERGY, OIL & GAS · FINANCIAL SERVICES & INVESTORS · HEALTH & HEALTHCARE · INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY · INFRASTRUCTURE & CONSTRUCTION · INSURANCE & REINSURANCE · LOGISTICS, SHIPPING & FREIGHT · MANUFACTURING · MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT · METALS & MINING · PROFESSIONAL SERVICES · REAL ESTATE · TRAVEL & TOURISM · UTILITIES



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THE OPPORTUNITY TOMORROW

Not all countries and regions will experience the worst impacts of climate change¹²² and those less affected could collaborate to help those suffering the most.

Multiple countries could work together to create a 'climate visa' scheme that provides people in climate-stressed regions with the opportunity to migrate in a managed way to host countries looking to grow their populations or with the capacity to absorb them. The opportunity lies in establishing such a scheme ahead of the moment of need, ensuring economic, political and humanitarian feasibility.

BENEFITS

Informed by modelling of likely migration movements, the scheme will win the support of climate-stressed countries as reducing their populations makes it easier to manage the impact of climate change. It improves the life chances of millions who can migrate legally to regional partner countries or countries with declining populations.

RISKS

Risks include host countries taking in too few climate refugees or failing to respect agreements, loss of young and educated workers affecting the economic dynamism of climate-stressed regions and challenges of integrating new migrants.

A consequence may also be loss of indigenous cultures and collective trauma of being dislocated from former homelands.