



## Global Report on Internal Displacements 2025

**For Prelims:** [Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre \(IDMC\)](#), [Global Report on Internal Displacements](#), [Desertification](#), [Food Security](#), [1951 Refugee Convention](#), [Global Compact on Migration \(2018\)](#), [Loss and Damage Fund](#), [European Union](#), [Green Climate Fund](#), [Non-refoulement Principle](#).

**For Mains:** Status of internal displacement and climate refugees, Current framework to Handle refugees, Challenges faced by refugees and way forward.

[Source: DTE](#)

### Why in News?

The [Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre \(IDMC\)](#) released the [Global Report on Internal Displacements 2025](#) highlighting the **number of disaster-related internal displacements** and climate refugees **globally in 2024**.

**Note:** IDMC is the world's leading source of data and analysis on **internal displacement**. It was established in 1998 as part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

- Internal displacement is the **forced movement** of people **within their own country** due to **conflict, disasters, or climate change**, **without crossing international borders**.

### What are Key Findings of the Global Report on Internal Displacements 2025?

- **Global Displacements:** Total global internal displacements reached **45.8 million**, the highest since records began in **2008** and **more than double the annual average** over the past decade.
- **Disasters as Displacement Drivers:** Disasters drove most displacements, with **99.5% linked to [climate-related extreme weather](#)** worsened by [climate change](#).
- **India Related Findings:** India saw **5.4 million displacements in 2024**, the highest in 12 years, with [floods](#) causing two-thirds of them.
  - Violence caused **1,700 displacements**, with Manipur accounting for **1,000**, remaining the main hotspot for such movements.
- **Conflict and Climate Relation:** **20.1 million** were displaced by conflict, mostly in **climate-vulnerable countries**, with the number of nations facing both **disaster and conflict displacement tripling since 2009**.

### Who are Climate Refugees?

- **About: [Climate refugees](#)** (environmentally displaced persons or climate-induced migrants) are individuals or communities who are **forced to leave their homes and regions** due to the **adverse effects of climate change** and **environmental degradation**.
  - These impacts make living conditions **unviable**, driving **internal displacement** and **cross-border movement**.
- **Causes:**
  - **Rising Sea Levels:** Low-lying coasts, **small islands, and deltas** face rising seas, forcing communities to relocate as land and homes become uninhabitable.
    - E.g., [sea level rise](#) could displace somewhere between **2-110 million people in Bangladesh**.
  - **Extreme Weather Events:** More frequent and severe disasters like **storms, floods, and [wildfires](#)** are displacing people by destroying **homes, infrastructure, and livelihoods**.
    - E.g., In 2022, disasters caused **32.6 million displacements**, 98% due to weather-related hazards.
  - **Desertification and Land Degradation:** [Desertification](#) in regions like **sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East** force pastoralists and farmers to migrate in search of fertile land and water.
    - E.g., From **2015 to 2019**, land degradation in India **doubled from 4.42% to 9.45%**, affecting 30.51 million hectares.
  - **Water Scarcity:** Climate changes reduce freshwater and agriculture, driving migration for **stability and [food security](#)**.
    - Over **1 billion migrants** exist, with water shortages driving **10% of global migration**. **17 countries**, home to **25%** of the population, face **extreme water stress**.
- **Consequences:**
  - **Humanitarian Crises:** Climate displacement can cause **food and water shortages**, health crises, and overcrowded camps.
  - **Urban Strain:** Climate refugees **add pressure to already overburdened cities**.
  - **Social Conflicts and Tensions:** Resource competition can lead to **unrest** between displaced persons and host communities.
  - **National Security Concerns:** Unmanaged displacement poses **security risks**, particularly in fragile regions.

## What are Legal and Policy Challenges for Climate Refugees?

- **Lack of Legal Recognition:** Under international law, including the [1951 Refugee Convention](#), climate refugees **aren't recognized**, as it only covers those fleeing persecution for reasons like **race, religion, or political beliefs**.
  - Most countries, including the **US, [European Union](#), and Australia**, don't recognize **climate displacement** as grounds for asylum.
    - In the US, **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)** offers **limited, discretionary relief** for disaster-hit countries.
  - The **Principle of [Non-Refoulement](#)** doesn't cover climate refugees, allowing states to **remove individuals** despite risks of serious harm or rights violations.
  - **India is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol** on refugee protection.
- **Gaps in Migration Plans:** The [Global Compact on Migration \(2018\)](#) mentions climate displacement but is **non-binding**.
- **Statelessness Risks:** Climate refugees may become stateless if they **can't gain residency or citizenship**, facing challenges like lack of **asylum rights, poor living conditions, limited access to healthcare and education**, and potential detention or deportation.
- **Strict Border Controls:** The **European Border and Coast Guard Agency** often blocks climate migrants, while **Australia's Pacific Solution** detains **asylum seekers** offshore, including those from climate-vulnerable islands.
- **Funding Disputes:** The [Loss and Damage Fund](#), agreed at [COP27](#) (2022), became **operational in 2025** amid funding disputes. The [Green Climate Fund](#) focuses on **mitigation**, not relocation or asylum.

## What are Current Provisions for Protection of Climate Refugees?

- **Limited Applicability of 1951 Refugee Convention:** A drought-related famine can cause **conflict** and displacement, potentially **qualifying affected individuals for refugee** protection under the **1951 Convention**.
- **Regional Refugee Instruments:** Some regional frameworks include **more flexible refugee definitions** that could cover climate-related displacement. E.g.,
  - **Organization of African Unity Convention 1969:** It protects those fleeing “**events seriously disturbing public order,**” which can include climate-induced conflicts, such as **floods, droughts, or climate-related displacement**, especially when civil unrest follows such events.
  - **Cartagena Declaration 1984 (Latin America):** It expands the refugee definition to include those fleeing “**massive human rights violations**” or events “**seriously disturbing public order,**” which could encompass climate-related events causing social and political disruption.

## How can the Management of Climate Refugees be Improved?

- **Legal Reforms:** Amend the **1951 Refugee Convention** to include **climate displacement**, establish a new **UN Convention on Climate Refugees** (as advocated by **Pacific Island nations**), and expand regional protection schemes, such as **Latin America's Cartagena Declaration**, to cover **climate migrants**.
- **National-Level Innovations:** It can include the introduction of **Climate Humanitarian Visas** (proposed by **New Zealand**) and **Land Purchase Agreements** (e.g., **Kiribati** buying land in **Fiji** for **relocation**).
- **National Adaptation Plans (NAPs):** Countries facing severe climate impacts should integrate climate migration and displacement into their **NAPs** and **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)** strategies, ensuring preparedness and protections for those displaced.
- **Enhanced Climate Finance:** International climate finance mechanisms, like the **Green Climate Fund** and **Loss and Damage Mechanism**, should support **climate-resilient infrastructure** and the **relocation** of communities displaced by climate impacts.

## Conclusion

The **IDMC 2025 report** highlights the intensifying crisis of **climate-induced displacement**, with disasters driving record displacements globally, including India. Despite growing vulnerabilities, **legal protections** for climate refugees remain **inadequate, demanding urgent reforms, climate-resilient strategies, and financial support** to ensure humane, sustainable management of climate displacement and associated humanitarian challenges.

### **Drishti Mains Question:**

Critically evaluate the effectiveness of global and regional mechanisms in addressing the needs of climate refugees.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### **Mains**

**Q.** Refugees should not be turned back to the country where they would face persecution or human right violation”. Examine the statement with reference to the ethical dimension being violated by the nation claiming to be democratic with open society. (2021)

**Q.** Rehabilitation of human settlements is one of the important environmental impacts which always attracts controversy while planning major projects. Discuss the measures suggested for mitigation of this impact while proposing major developmental projects. (2016)

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