

Task Force: Final Report

Question: How can the global refugee regime be reformed to address the emergence of people permanently displaced due to rising sea levels caused by climate change in the Pacific island states and Bangladesh?

Group Members

- Caitlin Celestine Fernandez
- Eunice Lim Chian Hwee
- Kylie Si-Min Teo
- Roshnie Pillay
- Viktoriya Kho

Executive Summary

In recent years, climate change has emerged as a major concern for many nations and international organisations. One of the devastating effects of climate change is sea level rise which disproportionately affects many low-lying nations as they are experiencing increased flooding and a loss of habitable land for their population. During our research, we uncovered a significant gap within the current global refugee regime; there is no international framework designed to assist communities facing permanent displacement due to rising sea levels. Although there have been attempts by international organisations to assist the populations at-risk and the implementation of adaptation strategies by nations impacted by rising sea levels, these attempts have been insufficient to secure the rights and safety of the affected communities facing permanent displacement due to rising sea levels.

In this final report, we have selected the Pacific island states and Bangladesh as our case studies as experts have forecasted that these countries will be the most adversely affected by rising sea levels within the next 50 to 100 years. The main objective of this final report is to

thoroughly assess the current global refugee regime and existing measures that have attempted to address the issue of sea level rise and assist the populations in the Pacific island states and Bangladesh. Based on our assessment, we will highlight key policy issues affecting the Pacific island states and Bangladesh. To this end, this final report will put forth several normative justifications which will underpin our policy recommendations. Our policy recommendations will take the form of a multi-stakeholder approach and suggest actions that can be undertaken by private actors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and national governments in the Pacific island states, Bangladesh, and other developed nations.