

Małgorzata Kocierz

University of Wrocław

ORCID: 0009-0005-3153-7745

Adaptation to climate change: IOM and UNHCR approaches to communication on climate migration

Abstract

The role of international organisations in climate change communication is crucial, as global cooperation on climate migration relies mainly on these actors. This study analyses how the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) communicate to the public about climate migration. Qualitative analysis of the data collected from the online platforms of these organisations shows that the main frames appearing in the discussion of the climate migrants are 'migration as adaptation' and 'climate migrants as victims'. This article suggests that narratives in IOM and UNHCR's coverage share many similarities, however the content of their messages slightly differs. UNHCR focuses on activities in the countries concerned, while IOM disseminates its role as an advocate for climate migrants.

Keywords: climate change, climate migration, climate change communication, international organisation, discourse analysis.

Adaptacja do zmian klimatu: Podejścia IOM i UNHCR do komunikowania o migracjach klimatycznych

Streszczenie

Rola organizacji międzynarodowych w komunikacji na temat zmian klimatu jest kluczowa, ponieważ globalna współpraca w zakresie migracji klimatycznej opiera się głównie na tych podmiotach. Celem artykułu jest analiza sposobu, w jaki Międzynarodowa Organizacja ds. Migracji (International Organisation for Migration, IOM) i Wysoki Komisarz Narodów Zjednoczonych ds. Uchodźców (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR) przekazują opinii publicznej komunikaty na temat migracji klimatycznej. Jakościowa analiza danych zebranych z platform internetowych tych organizacji pokazuje, że głównymi ramami pojawiającymi się w dyskusji o migrantach klimatycznych są „migracja jako adaptacja” i „migranci klimatyczni jako ofiary”. Autorzy artykułu wskazują, że narracje w relacjach IOM i UNHCR mają wiele podobieństw, jednak treść ich komunikatów nieznacznie się różni. UNHCR koncentruje się na działaniach w danych krajach, podczas gdy IOM rozpowszechnia swoją rolę jako rzecznika migrantów klimatycznych.

Słowa kluczowe: zmiana klimatu, migracje klimatyczne, komunikowanie o zmianach klimatu, organizacje międzynarodowe, analiza dyskursu.

Introduction

Climate-induced migration is receiving increasing attention in environmental and climate change communication studies. In climate migration policy as well as climate change communication, a major role is performed by international organisations as one of the main actors managing global cooperation. Separating climate change communication from environmental communication issues is necessary due to the specificity of the climate change phenomenon. Communication is of great importance in conveying, interpreting and making meaning of selected aspects of climate change¹.

This study aims to analyse how international organisations communicate about climate migration, specifically the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). These actors are highly relevant in the management of climate migration and climate change policy; as global cooperation relies primarily on them. Since 1998, IOM has funded and implemented more than 1,000 projects worldwide to address environmental migration, as well as climate migration². UNHCR, in turn, is conducting local and regional operations in more than 130 countries, particularly in 22 climate-vulnerable states³.

The author argues the issue of climate change migration, which is receiving more attention on the agenda of UN-associated global organisation. In order to answer the research question 'how the discourse on climate migrants is presented in the communication of international organisations, specifically IOM and UNHCR', it is important to consider used narratives, phrases, and specific words as they are key elements in the creation of the climate migration discourse. The qualitative research method and discourse analysis are expected to reach the aim of this study, which focus on the factors that shape international organisations communication on climate migration.

Literature review

While much has been written about climate migration policy and adaptation, very few studies have focused on the issue of communication, discourse, and narratives portraying climate migrants. The majority of papers addressed the definitional and legal issues associated with the term 'climate refugees' and 'climate migrants'⁴. The prevailing view in the literature is that the term 'climate refugees' is incorrect and creates legal

¹ S.C. Moser, *Reflections on climate change communication research and practice in the second decade of the 21st century: what more is there to say?* „Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change” 2016, No. 7, pp. 345–369.

² <https://www.iom.int/climate-action> (accessed on: 27.09.2024).

³ <https://www.unhcr.org/us/what-we-do/build-better-futures/environment-disasters-and-climate-change/climate-change-and> (accessed on: 27.09.2024).

⁴ See: E. El-Hinnawi, *Environmental Refugees*, United Nations Environment Programme, Hertfordshire, 1985; N. Myers, *Environmental Refugees*, “Population and Environment” 1997, Vol. 19, pp. 167–182; F. Biermann, I. Boas, *Preparing for a Warmer World: Towards a Global*

confusion because it gives the misleading impression that persons described as ‘climate refugees’ are subject to the legal protection guaranteed to refugees under the 1951 Refugee Convention⁵. Instead, the term ‘climate migration’ is recommended, which IOM indicates as a movement of people who predominantly due to climate change leave their habitual place of resident⁶. It can be both individual and collective, forced and voluntary, temporary and permanent, caused by a sudden or gradual phenomenon, as well as internal and international.

The latest research highlights the complex role of international organisations in communicating about climate migration. Initially, research on climate communication focused on scientific findings and reports that summarised high-level conferences, political meetings, or particularly serious extreme events⁷. A significant number of papers have been published recently on the discourse, framing, and narratives of climate migrants⁸. Global organisations and especially the IOM have been the subject of discourse analysis and framing research⁹, however, comparative analysis of case studies has been attempted in a limited number of papers¹⁰.

To fulfil the research objectives, this study adopts Goffman¹¹ framing theory. The theory implies focusing on selected elements of reality, while excluding others and then organising these elements around a central idea. The core of the framing theory is that actors can shape how certain elements of reality will be perceived and interpreted (agenda-setting theory)¹². The way a particular story is presented, and the use of particu-

Governance System to Protect Climate Refugees, „Global Environmental Politics” 2010, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 60–88.

⁵ See F. Biermann, I. Boas, *Preparing for a Warmer World...*

⁶ International Organization for Migration, *Glossary on Migration*, “International Migration Law” 2019, p. 31.

⁷ S.C. Moser, *Reflections on climate change...*

⁸ M. Sakellari, *Communicating climate change induced migration: the role of NGOs*, „Open Research Europe” 2024, Vol. 3, pp. 163–175; M. Sakellari, *Key opinion shapers’ perceptions of climate migration: Why and how to put climate justice at the centre of climate change education*, [version 1; peer review: 1 approved] „Open Research Europe” 2023, Vol. 3, pp. 213–229; M. Sakellari, *Media coverage of climate change induced migration: Implications for meaningful media discourse*, „Global Media and Communication” 2022, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 67–89; B. Shomron, N. Tirosh, *Contemporary migrants and media capabilities – understanding communication rights in international migration policies*, „Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies” 2021, Vol. 47, No. 17, pp. 4040–4057.

⁹ M. McKenzie, *Climate change education and communication in global review: tracking progress through national submissions to the UNFCCC Secretariat*, „Environmental Education Research” 2021, Vol. 27, No. 5, pp. 631–651; S. Schriever, *Framing Migration as Adaptation: IOM’s Aspirations to Manage Climate Migration*, „Geopolitics” 2024, pp. 1–29; M. Panizzon, L. Jurt, *Through the Looking-Glass: The IOM Recasting the Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration Narrative at the UN and in West Africa*, „Geopolitics” 2024, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 1166–1197.

¹⁰ B. Green, A. Pécoud, *Talking about Migration in Times of Crisis: A Textual Analysis of Narratives by IOM and UNHCR on Migrants and Refugees*, „American Behavioral Scientist” 2023, pp. 1–25.

¹¹ E. Goffman, *Frame analysis: an essay on organisation of experience*, Northeastern University Press, Boston 1974, p. 21.

¹² *Ibidem*.

lar phrases, images, or videos, affects how audiences perceive that message. International organisations should therefore pay attention to the manner in which they present messages to their target audience. Literature on climate change migration discourses differs in various ways¹³. The majority of scholars on climate change communication have concentrated more on message design rather than the frame production process¹⁴. However, Sakellari has recently explored the phenomenon of framing in media coverage and institutional communication of climate change issues¹⁵. D'Amato and Lucarelli indicate how narratives produced by states, international organisations and NGOs can be used to describe, codify, quantify the human mobility¹⁶.

The literature review identified six dominant discourses relating to the issue of climate migration. Global organisations use certain narratives that portray climate migrants as victims or security threats, as well as refer to the concept of 'us versus them' or climate justice¹⁷. Moreover, climate migration is seen as an adaptation strategy, risk management/crisis response¹⁸. Multiple actors contribute to considering climate migrants as victims or potential threats, especially Western countries¹⁹. The victim frame focuses on climate migrants as fragile beings who are forced to relocate due to the adverse effects of climate change. This frame has often been used to raise awareness of the issue of climate migration and to advocate for support and action²⁰. Whereas the security frame addresses the fear of mass migration and potential threats to human security and the occurrence of conflicts in the receiving countries²¹. This implies a pejorative connotation of the term 'climate migrants' and can have negative

¹³ S. Ajeb-Karlsson, C.D. Smith, D. Kniveton, *Discursive review of the textual use of 'trapped' in environmental migration studies: The conceptual birth and troubled teenage years of trapped populations*, „Ambio” 2018, Vol. 47, No. 5, pp. 557–573.

¹⁴ J. Painter, *Journalistic Depictions of Uncertainty About Climate Change Across Countries* [in:] *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Climate Science*, Oxford University Press USA, Oxford 2016; M. Sakellari, *Media coverage of climate change...*

¹⁵ M. Sakellari, *Communicating climate change...*; M. Sakellari, *Key opinion shapers' perceptions of climate migration...*; M. Sakellari, *Media coverage of climate change...*

¹⁶ S. D'Amato, S. Lucarelli, *Talking migration: Narratives of migration and justice claims in the European migration system of governance*, “The International Spectator” 2019, Vol. 54, No. 3, pp. 1–170 [in:] M. Panizzon, L. Jurt, *Through the Looking-Glass...*, p. 1171.

¹⁷ S. Schriever, *Framing Migration as Adaptation...*, p. 3; L. Vanhala, E. Calliari, *Governing people on the move in a warming world: Framing climate change migration and the UNFCCC task force on displacement*, “Global Environmental Change” 2022, No. 76, pp. 102578–102579; H. Ransan-Cooper, C. Farbotko, K.E. McNamara, F. Thornton, E. Chevalier, *Being(s) framed: The means and ends of framing environmental migrants*, “Global Environmental Change” 2015, No. 35, pp. 106–115; D. Faber, C. Schlegel, *Give me shelter from the Storm: Framing the Climate Refugee Crisis in the context of Neoliberal Capitalism*, “Capitalism Nature Socialism” 2017, Vol. 28, No. 3, pp. 1–17.

¹⁸ M. Sakellari, *Climate change and migration in the UK news media: How the story is told*, “International Communication Gazette” 2021, Vol. 83, No. 1, pp. 63–80.

¹⁹ M. Sakellari, *Media coverage of climate change...*, p. 73.

²⁰ H. Ransan-Cooper, C. Farbotko, K.E. McNamara, F. Thornton, E. Chevalier, *Being(s) framed...*

²¹ I. Boas, C. Farbotko, H. Adams, H. Sterly, S. Bush, K. van der Geest, H. Wiegel, H. Ashraf, A. Baldwin, G. Bettini, *Climate migration myths*, “Nature Climate Change” 2019, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 901–903.

consequences in terms of xenophobia and unwillingness to accept and assimilate with resettled people²².

The 'us versus them' frame, in turn, refers to the distinctions between the developed North and the developing South²³. Indeed, climate-induced migration events occur mostly in the Global South. As a result, a hierarchical relationship between the secure North and the suffering South is emerging²⁴. The intertwined approach of climate justice to climate migration indicates an international injustice where richer countries in the Global North are the leaders in greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change and at the same time developing countries are the most vulnerable to negative effects of climate change like floods, sea level rise, droughts and desertification, or extreme weather events.

The perspective of migration as an adaptation strategy has replaced the previous frame of viewing climate-induced migration as a response to crises and threats that cannot be prevented²⁵ or a scenario that must be avoided at all costs²⁶. However, adaptation framing consists of a pragmatic, technical approach focusing on taking action and adopting policies that introduce migration management strategies²⁷. A criticism that has emerged regarding the adaptation discourse is motivated by the fact that it is used to shift the responsibility from the states driving climate change through carbon emissions to those who are affected by environmental hazards²⁸.

Discourses and framings of climate migration in the IOM and UNHCR messages

The qualitative research method and discourse analysis were performed in order to answer the research questions of this article, which focus on the factors that shape international organisations communication on climate migration. Through an analysis of publications dating from 1st January 2022 to 30th June 2024, this paper studies how IOM and UNHCR address climate migration through releases on their websites. The aim was to find publications with a main focus on climate change and migration. The selection of articles was carried out through search engines on the websites by

²² A. Baldwin, *Pluralising climate change and migration: An argument in favour of open Futures*, "Geography Compass" 2014, Vol. 8, No. 8, pp. 516–528.

²³ H. Ransan-Cooper, C. Farbotko, K.E. McNamara, F. Thornton, E. Chevalier, *Being(s) framed...*

²⁴ C. Farbotko, *Tuvalu and climate change: Constructions of environmental displacement in the Sydney morning herald*, "Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography" 2005, Vol. 87, No. 4, pp. 279–293 [in:] M. Sakellari, *Climate change and migration in the UK news media...*, p. 76.

²⁵ S. Schriever, *Framing Migration as Adaptation...*, p. 4.

²⁶ K. Warner, *Human migration and displacement in the context of adaptation to climate change: The Cancun adaptation framework and potential for future action*, "Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy" 2012, Vol. 30, No. 6, pp. 1061–1077 [in:] S. Schriever, *Framing Migration as Adaptation...*, p. 4.

²⁷ S. Schriever, *Framing Migration as Adaptation...*, p. 4.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

using the keywords ‘climate change’, ‘migration’, ‘climate migration’, ‘climate migrant’, and ‘climate refugee’. Within the selected timeframe, 572 publications were collected on the IOM website, belonging to specific categories: news (290), stories (208), situation reports (3), statements and speeches (2), videos (61), and blog (8). On the UNHCR platform, 297 publications in the following categories were extracted: news and press releases (254), reports and publications (12), events and meetings (19), and miscellaneous (12). Four repetitive publications from the UNHCR website were excluded. The final study material consisted of 869 publications: IOM (572) and UNHCR (293). Each selected article was analysed by content analysis and narrative review method to identify six key framings and discourses. Then a comparative analysis of the materials of the two surveyed organisations was undertaken.

This study addresses climate migration, which was initially seen as a failure of climate change mitigation and adaptation, until the shift in the early 2000s toward promoting climate migration as a certain adaptation strategy²⁹. This is indicated *inter alia* by the shift from calling people forced to relocate due to climate change from ‘climate refugees’ to ‘climate migrants’, as it has a profound impact on the narrative of the communication process. International organisations, in particular IOM and UNHCR, have been highly influential in changing the terms used from ‘climate refugees’ to ‘climate migrants’, thus confirming its large role in managing climate migration, even though it traditionally falls outside its mandate³⁰. IOM has adopted an inclusive approach and uses the term ‘migrant’ to include all people who change their place of residence regardless of the reason for their displacement, its forced nature or their legal status³¹. However, UNHCR, as an organisation which works specifically with refugees, clarified in 2016 in a FAQs document³² that the term ‘refugee’ will be avoided when referring to people who have been displaced by climate change, due to not being covered by the 1950 Refugee Convention. Instead, the phrase ‘refugees and migrants’ may appear in publications, as sometimes these individuals, through additional circumstances, fall into both categories. UNHCR ensures that this distinction is noticeable by providing annotations in communications on climate migrants as to why they cannot be referred to as ‘refugees’.

The above-mentioned publications on global organisations’ online platforms may take a variety of forms and their catalogue is very similar in the two organisations in question. IOM’s extensive output includes newsletters, briefs, brochures, and info sheets, books, European Migration Network (EMN) publications, reports, specialist journals, as well as handbooks, toolkits, and guidelines. In addition, IOM publishes

²⁹ R. Felli, *Managing climate insecurity by ensuring continuous capital accumulation: ‘climate refugees’ and ‘climate migrants’*, “New Political Economy” 2013, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 337–363.

³⁰ S. Schriever, *Framing Migration as Adaptation...*

³¹ B. Green, A. Pécoud, *Talking about Migration in Times of Crisis...*, p. 14; International Organization for Migration, *Glossary on Migration...*

³² <https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2016/3/56e95c676/refugees-migrants-frequently-asked-questions-faqs.html> (accessed on: 27.09.2024).

annual World Migration Reports and The Annual Reports, which present the full range of IOM's activities supporting migrants in the previous year.

UNHCR publications consist of mainly press releases and news releases, event and meeting coverage, reports and publications, as well as handbooks and tool books. Among the most important are four flagship reports: the annual The Global Report, which presents the work carried out by UNHCR in a particular year; the Global Trends report and the Mid-Year Trends report, both on migration statistics for the year, and The Global Appeal on UNHCR's plans for the coming year. Climate migration is also included in these documents.

A review of the research material identified in recent years the two following framings in the messages of both international organisations: 'migration as adaptation' and 'climate migrants as victims'. IOM's and UNHCR's communication are in line with the adaptation narrative and focus on the actions taken to support climate migrants, both at the site of climate hazards and at their new destination. The adaptation narrative includes publications on the Organisation's cooperation with state and local authorities, as well as strategic partners. The most frequently mentioned activities are: ensuring safe migration, creating and developing early warning systems, providing access to vital supplies, and adjusting to new conditions through adaptation policies and programs.

IOM in Bangladesh provides technical assistance to the Government in various areas of migration management to ensure safe, orderly, and regular migration. (IOM, 27.07.2022)³³.

In Indonesia, where most of the arrivals have been recorded, IOM is working closely with the government, NGO partners and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to facilitate access to basic services. IOM has provided protection, health services – including mental health – in addition to refurbishing temporary shelters and ensuring water supply, access to food, sanitation and waste management. (IOM, 31.01.2023)³⁴.

UNHCR has emergency teams in neighbouring countries and is working with national authorities and partners to register new arrivals, ensure their most immediate needs are met and relocate them away from border areas. (UNHCR, 22.09.2023)³⁵.

UNHCR and partners are distributing relief items to the newly displaced [...]. Families are also receiving cash assistance to buy local building materials to repair or reinforce shelters and meet other urgent needs. (UNHCR, 17.11.2023)³⁶.

³³ <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-deputy-director-general-calls-solidarity-rohingya-refugees-and-host-communities-commends-bangladeshs-migration-management-and-climate-change-leadership> (accessed on: 20.09.2024).

³⁴ <https://www.iom.int/news/increasing-arrivals-rohingya-boats-iom-scales-support> (accessed on: 20.09.2024).

³⁵ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/five-things-know-about-crisis-sudan> (accessed on: 20.09.2024).

³⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing-notes/severe-floods-affect-tens-thousands-displaced-people-horn-africa> (accessed on: 20.09.2024).

The Director General of the International Organization for Migration, António Vitorino, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, are calling for more international support to address challenges faced by migrants, refugees and internally displaced people in Niger, and vulnerable host communities. (UNHCR 11.02.2024)³⁷.

[...] we work with partners to support governments and local responders to create or expand early warning systems and preparedness measures to include areas that host displaced people. (UNHCR, 11.03.2024)³⁸.

Although there is no direct reference to migrants as victims, international organisations provide extended descriptions of the threat, emphasizing the scale of the problem, as well as the number of people who are forced to relocate.

Last year, disasters including the floods in Pakistan and typhoon Noru in the Philippines led to 32.6 million internal displacements, the highest ever recorded. [...] “We are seeing the continuing trend of unprecedented large-scale disasters causing significant loss of life, destruction of homes and livelihoods and new levels of displacements. Enhancing our common efforts on climate action and investing in safe, regular and orderly migration pathways is more important than ever,” said IOM Director General, António Vitorino. (IOM, 11.05.2023)³⁹.

[...] extreme weather linked to climate change, including floods and droughts, has affected hundreds of thousands of people across the country, destroying crops and livestock and making it increasingly difficult for families to put food on the table. (UNHCR, 22.09.2023)⁴⁰.

As of June 2023, 3 million people are internally displaced due to drought across these countries [Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia], with an estimated 6.6 million internally displaced people living in drought-affected areas. (IOM, 30.10.2023)⁴¹.

Climate-related displacement hits the poorest and most vulnerable hardest, including refugees and internally displaced people who have already been forced to flee their homes because of conflicts and other crises. [...] Climate change exacerbates the risk of displacement. The past decade saw on average 24 million displacements caused by disasters every year: 92 per cent were triggered by weather-related hazards (with floods accounting for nearly half of these). (UNHCR, 22.05.2024)⁴².

³⁷ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/news-releases/iom-and-unhcr-call-more-international-support-niger-after-joint-visit> (accessed on: 20.09.2024).

³⁸ <https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/build-better-futures/climate-change-and-displacement/strengthening-climate-adaptation> (accessed on: 25.09.2024).

³⁹ <https://iom.int/news/record-number-609-million-internal-displacements-2022-idmc-report> (accessed on: 19.09.2024).

⁴⁰ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/five-things-know-about-crisis-sudan> (accessed on: 19.09.2024).

⁴¹ <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-hackathon-bridges-data-gaps-climate-change-and-migration> (accessed on: 19.09.2024).

⁴² <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/climate-crisis-fuels-flooding-and-deepens-displacement> (accessed on: 19.09.2024).

The vast majority of UNHCR content consists of detailed stories of particular people. Their names and short bios are provided along with photos in which migrants demonstrate their problems and issues. The visuals contain images of poor living conditions as a result of climate change, therefore they are emotionally marked and fit into the victim frame. Used words and phrases that intentionally (or not) evoke empathy and compassion in the audience. This form of storytelling makes climate migrants no longer anonymous and nameless to the viewer. Providing stories of real people can raise awareness of an issue and help build public engagement⁴³.

“Our house got seriously damaged,” she recounts. “Lots of people became homeless in the refugee and local communities. Our livestock also died.” (UNHCR, 8.12.2023)⁴⁴.

Opira Bosco Okot, 26, is a South Sudanese refugee in his final year at university in Kampala. He and his family have felt the impacts of the climate crisis in Uganda and at home. (UNHCR, 9.11.2022)⁴⁵.

“My experience as a refugee has made me look at climate change in a very different way. Having lived in a region both susceptible to conflict and climate related disasters, I have come to understand that these issues are actually interconnected and exacerbate vulnerabilities.” – Najeeba Wazefadost, refugee climate activist. (UNHCR, 24.02.2024)⁴⁶.

Whereas, IOM focuses on event and meeting releases related to successful co-operation and policy work, capacity building and operational activities, as well as scientific activities, research, and academic conferences⁴⁷.

“We have all known for years that climate change will force people to move and we see the evidence of this every day,” said António Vitorino, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). “We can no longer talk about climate change or environmental degradation, without talking about human mobility.” (IOM, 25.07.2024)⁴⁸.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and 47 other partners are appealing today (14/02) for USD 84 million to provide humanitarian and development assistance to over 1 million migrants and the communities hosting them, many of whom are vulnerable,

⁴³ A. Corner, J. Clarke, *Talking climate: From research to practice in public engagement*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham 2017; L. Ghirardello, G. Isetti, *Is tragedy the true language of science? Unleashing the emotional power of theatrical storytelling for climate change communication*, “GAIA – Ecological Perspectives for Science and Society” 2023, Vol. 32, No. 3, pp. 296–303.

⁴⁴ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/young-refugees-champion-climate-action-zimbabwe-s-tongogara-camp> (accessed on: 18.09.2024).

⁴⁵ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/refugee-i-have-seen-impacts-climate-crisis-close> (accessed on: 20.09.2024).

⁴⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/get-involved/take-action/how-do-you-flee-climate-change> (accessed on: 20.09.2024).

⁴⁷ B. Green, A. Pécoud, *Talking about Migration in Times of Crisis...*, p. 5.

⁴⁸ <https://www.iom.int/news/african-heads-state-and-governments-meet-uganda-call-concerted-efforts-tackle-climate-change> (accessed on: 19.09.2024).

and in need of urgent help along the Eastern Route from the Horn of Africa to Yemen. (IOM, 14.02.2024)⁴⁹.

As the world convenes in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, between 30 November and 12 December 2023, for the 28th Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC (COP28), the International Organization for Migration is calling for common ambition and concrete actions to address climate change and its impacts on migration. (IOM, 29.11.2023)⁵⁰.

Discussing these findings, there is a distinctive educational approach in the communication of both international organisations through raising awareness of climate migration and indicating its directions and trends⁵¹. However, the content is primarily aimed at a Western audience⁵², who is not directly exposed to the need for resettlement due to climate risks. As a result, the majority of releases introduce and deepen the audience's understanding of the problem, rather than informing them of opportunities for direct assistance to dedicated people. This is affected by several other factors, such as difficulties in accessing global organisations' platforms and low literacy levels among people who live in climate-vulnerable places. Through two-way communication, climate migrants can be included and involved in the decision-making process, not only with local governments but even with international organisations. Articulating their needs, and voicing their concerns and proposals is essential to improving climate change communication and climate migration management.

Conclusion

Global cooperation on climate migration relies mostly on the international organisations, such as IOM or UNHCR⁵³. Due to their involvement in direct action, these actors have close contact with migrants and have a real understanding of their situation. This legitimises global organisations as validated communication sources. IOM and UNHCR are therefore opinion leaders and the narrative they contain in communicating about climate migrants influences public opinion, for instance, the change in the discourse of climate migration. Among the six narratives on climate migration highlighted above, the study indicates the adaptation discourse as currently prevailing in messages that emphasise the actions of organisations and migrants determined to protect their places of residence or adapt to new conditions. However, there is an indirect framing

⁴⁹ <https://www.iom.int/news/over-1-million-migrants-need-assistance-horn-africa-iom-and-partners-appeals-usd-84-million> (accessed on: 19.09.2024).

⁵⁰ <https://www.iom.int/cop28-think-tomorrow-act-today> (accessed on: 20.09.2024).

⁵¹ A. Azu, K.O. Alakwe, *Communication and Raising Citizen's Consciousness of Climate Change Challenges and Adaptation in Nigeria*, "International Journal of Environment and Climate Change" 2023, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 203–219.

⁵² B. Green, A. Pécout, *Talking about Migration in Times of Crisis...*, p. 19.

⁵³ M. Panizzon, L. Jurt, *Through the Looking-Glass...*, p. 1167.

of migrants as victims of the threat of climate change who, while doing their best, may eventually be unable to overcome the power of nature.

Both IOM and UNHCR share many similarities in climate migration communication, however, the content of their communications slightly differs. UNHCR provides specific examples of activities in the countries concerned, while IOM is disseminating its role as an advocate for climate migrants. This is in line with the 'migration as adaptation strategy' narrative currently practised by UN-related international organisations. For years UN agencies have portrayed climate migrants as helpless victims of climate change⁵⁴, until later when migration became a positive feature, a response to climate-related shocks over stresses⁵⁵. As Schriever points out, the IOM shows its interpretation of adaptation framing due to its decentralised structure, the flexibility of its mandate, and efforts to raise diverse funds⁵⁶. The results of the study are compatible with Thorvaldsdottir and Patz's thesis that IOM messages are more positive and success-oriented than those from UNHCR⁵⁷, which may be a result of IOM taking action to specifically target Western states that fund the organisation's activities⁵⁸. This paper addresses the discourses and framings in the messages of international organisations most involved in the global governance of climate migration. Further research could answer the question of what frames prevail in discourse in other international and regional organisations outside the UN system.

Constant communication on climate migration is crucial in order to raise awareness and educate society. An easily understood messages, examples, comparisons, or metaphors and illustrating the problem is essential⁵⁹. Some of the most effective techniques are the photographs, videos, and stories of migrants, as they grab audiences' attention and stick in their minds⁶⁰. The author argues that communicating extensively about the activities undertaken by international organisations is important in informing audiences about the scale of the problem and the permanent need for action. It provides a form of encouragement to take an interest in the situation of people living in climate-vulnerable places and being forced to migrate. The studied actors repeatedly refer to scientific studies, reports, and statistical data in their communications, which reinforces their position as reliable sources and demonstrates the importance of the voice of science in the communication of international organisations.

⁵⁴ K. McNamara, *Conceptualising Discourses on Environmental Refugees at the United Nations*, "Population and Environment" 2007, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 12–24.

⁵⁵ S. Schriever, *Framing Migration as Adaptation...*, p. 22.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 23.

⁵⁷ S. Thorvaldsdottir, R. Patz, *Explaining sentiment shifts in UN system annual reporting: A longitudinal comparison of UNHCR, UNRWA and IOM*, "International Review of Administrative Sciences" 2021, Vol. 87, No. 4, pp. 794–812.

⁵⁸ B. Green, A. Pécout, *Talking about Migration in Times of Crisis...*, p. 19.

⁵⁹ S.C. Moser, *Reflections on climate change...*

⁶⁰ A. Corner, J. Clarke, *Talking climate...*; L. Ghirardello, G. Isetti, *Is tragedy the true language of science?...*

Bibliography

- Ageb-Karlsson S., Smith C.D., Kniveton D., *Discursive review of the textual use of 'trapped' in environmental migration studies: The conceptual birth and troubled teenage years of trapped populations*, "Ambio" 2018, Vol. 47, No. 5, pp. 557–573.
- Azu A., Alakwe K.O., *Communication and Raising Citizen's Consciousness of Climate Change Challenges and Adaptation in Nigeria*, "International Journal of Environment and Climate Change" 2023, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 203–219.
- Baldwin A., *Pluralising climate change and migration: An argument in favour of open Futures*, "Geography Compass" 2014, Vol. 8, No. 8, pp. 516–528.
- Biermann F., Boas I., *Preparing for a Warmer World: Towards a Global Governance System to Protect Climate Refugees*, "Global Environmental Politics" 2010, Vol. 10, No. 1.
- Boas I., Farbotko C., Adams H., Sterly H., Bush S., van der Geest K., Wiegel H., Ashraf H., Baldwin A., Bettini G., *Climate migration myths*, "Nature Climate Change" 2019, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 901–903.
- Corner A., Clarke J., *Talking climate: From research to practice in public engagement*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham 2017.
- D'Amato S., Lucarelli S., *Talking migration: Narratives of migration and justice claims in the European migration system of governance*, "The International Spectator" 2019, Vol. 54, No. 3, pp. 1–170.
- El-Hinnawi E., *Environmental Refugees*, United Nations Environment Programme, Hertfordshire 1985.
- Faber D., Schlegel C., *Give me shelter from the Storm: Framing the Climate Refugee Crisis in the context of Neoliberal Capitalism*, "Capitalism Nature Socialism" 2017, Vol. 28, No. 3, pp. 1–17.
- Farbotko C., *Tuvalu and climate change: Constructions of environmental displacement in the Sydney morning herald*, "Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography" 2005, Vol. 87, No. 4, pp. 279–293.
- Felli R., *Managing climate insecurity by ensuring continuous capital accumulation: 'climate refugees' and 'climate migrants'*, "New Political Economy" 2013, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 337–363.
- Ghirardello L., Isetti G., *Is tragedy the true language of science? Unleashing the emotional power of theatrical storytelling for climate change communication*, "GAIA – Ecological Perspectives for Science and Society" 2023, Vol. 32, No. 3, pp. 296–303.
- Goffman E., *Frame analysis: an essay on organisation of experience*, Northeastern University Press, Boston 1974.
- Green B., Pécoud A., *Talking about Migration in Times of Crisis: A Textual Analysis of Narratives by IOM and UNHCR on Migrants and Refugees*, "American Behavioral Scientist" 2023, pp. 1–25.
- International Organization for Migration, *Glossary on Migration*, "International Migration Law" 2019.
- McKenzie M., *Climate change education and communication in global review: tracking progress through national submissions to the UNFCCC Secretariat*, "Environmental Education Research" 2021, Vol. 27, No. 5, pp. 631–651.
- McNamara K., *Conceptualising Discourses on Environmental Refugees at the United Nations*, "Population and Environment" 2007, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 12–24.

- Moser S.C., *Reflections on climate change communication research and practice in the second decade of the 21st century: what more is there to say?*, "Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change" 2016, No. 7, pp. 345–369.
- Myers N., *Environmental Refugees*, "Population and Environment" 1997, Vol. 19, pp. 167–182.
- Painter J., *Journalistic Depictions of Uncertainty About Climate Change Across Countries* [in:] *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Climate Science*, Oxford University Press USA, Oxford 2016.
- Panizzon M., Jurt L., *Through the Looking-Glass: The IOM Recasting the Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration Narrative at the UN and in West Africa*, "Geopolitics" 2024, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 1166–1197.
- Ransan-Cooper H., Farbotko C., McNamara K.E., Thornton F., Chevalier E., *Being(s) framed: The means and ends of framing environmental migrants*, "Global Environmental Change" 2015, No. 35, pp. 106–115.
- Sakellari M., *Climate change and migration in the UK news media: How the story is told*, "International Communication Gazette" 2021, Vol. 83, No. 1, pp. 63–80.
- Sakellari M., *Communicating climate change induced migration: the role of NGOs*, "Open Research Europe" 2024, Vol. 3, pp. 163–175.
- Sakellari M., *Key opinion shapers' perceptions of climate migration: Why and how to put climate justice at the centre of climate change education*, [version 1; peer review: 1 approved] "Open Research Europe" 2023, Vol. 3, pp. 213–229.
- Sakellari M., *Media coverage of climate change induced migration: Implications for meaningful media discourse*, "Global Media and Communication" 2022, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 67–89.
- Schriever S., *Framing Migration as Adaptation: IOM's Aspirations to Manage Climate Migration*, "Geopolitics" 2024, pp.1–29.
- Shomron B., Tirosh N., *Contemporary migrants and media capabilities – understanding communication rights in international migration policies*, "Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies" 2021, Vol. 47, No. 17, pp. 4040–4057.
- Thorvaldsdottir S., Patz R., *Explaining sentiment shifts in UN system annual reporting: A longitudinal comparison of UNHCR, UNRWA and IOM*, "International Review of Administrative Sciences" 2021, Vol. 87, No. 4, pp. 794–812.
- Vanhala L., Calliari E., *Governing people on the move in a warming world: Framing climate change migration and the UNFCCC task force on displacement*, "Global Environmental Change" 2022, No. 76, pp. 102578–102579.
- Warner K., *Human migration and displacement in the context of adaptation to climate change: The Cancun adaptation framework and potential for future action*, "Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy" 2012, Vol. 30, No. 6, pp. 1061–1077.