

Questionnaire in relation to Human Right Council Resolution A/HRC/35/20 on human rights and climate change

1. Please describe the relationship between the adverse effects of climate change and the rights of migrants, and human rights obligations to mitigate and adapt to climate change that can be derived from them.

The events such as sea-level rise, desertification, loss of ecosystem services etc. trigger the climate- induced migration. This type of migration is considered one of the forms of adaptation in order to reduce damages caused by the long-term impact of the event. Moreover, forced displacement driven by either economic or social instability would be implicated by climate change impact prompting the destabilization processes, or aggravating pre-existing conflicts.

The above mentioned phenomena directly and indirectly threaten the full and effective enjoyment of a range of human rights by people throughout the world, including the rights to life, water and sanitation, food, health, housing, self-determination, culture and development.

More than 5,000 landslides and mudflows, the areas of erosion downwash and spots of avalanches were recorded in Georgia by 2015. About 250 settlements are under periodic threat, which causes stress of local population and consequent increase of mental disorders. Thousands of hectares of arable lands are falling into disuse, hundreds of kilometers of roads and their communications are deformed and require rehabilitation, resettlement of eco-migrants became serious problem.

2. Please describe any relevant commitments, legislation and other measures that you have taken to adapt to and mitigate climate change and / or protect migrants affected by climate change. Please also note and identify any relevant mechanisms for ensuring accountability for these commitments including about their means of implementation for these commitments.

The current number of eco-migrants in Georgia is unclear. Data from 2006 showed up to 37,000 families were registered as eco-migrants however this cannot be confirmed as there was no law that defined what it meant to be ecologically displaced or an agency that officially registered affected people and families.

The Government is now undertaking a nationwide project to formalize this data and determine how many eco-migrants are in Georgia, to define by law what it means to be displaced by a natural disaster and to create a comprehensive database of affected people and families.

Since 2013, the Government has undertaken effective steps to address the issue of eco-migrants. With this aim, Department of eco-migrants was created in the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons From Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia

(hereinafter – the Ministry). The main duty of the department is to provide houses for eco-migrant families. It is noteworthy that the houses purchased by the Government are directly transferred to the eco-migrant families' ownership.

In 2013, normative act N779 was adopted, which defined the concept of eco-migrant family and procedures related to their resettlement. "The Commission on Regulating Issues of Resettlement of Families Damaged and Displaced by Natural Disasters" has been established, consisting of representatives of governmental agencies, Office of Public Defender and non-governmental and international organizations.

- 3. Please share a summary of any relevant data as well as any related mechanisms to measure and monitor impacts of climate change on the enjoyment of human rights for migrants, especially for vulnerable groups such as children, women or migrants living with a disability and the allocation of resources to address these impacts.**

The impacts of climate change on human rights are conducted through the vulnerability assessment projects in various municipalities. Increased heat waves have had significant impact on the health and wellbeing of especially vulnerable groups such as children and elderly. Certain adaptation measures have been implemented as well as the action plan has been developed on heat waves as well as various environmental disasters to reduce the implications of the adverse impacts. The monitoring mechanisms are not yet in place.

- 4. Please identify and share examples of good practices and challenges in the promotion, protection and fulfilment of the human rights of migrants in the context of the adverse impacts of climate change.**

In 2013-2016 project "Developing Climate Resilient Flood and Flash Flood Management Practices to Protect Vulnerable Communities of Georgia" was implemented. The project objective was to improve resilience of highly exposed regions of Georgia to the extreme events that are increasing in frequency and intensity as a result of climate change. The measures implemented in frames of this project will reduce risks of displacement of people / risks of climate-induced migration flows.

- 5. Please provide any additional information you believe would be useful to understand efforts made and challenges faced as well as the necessary means of implementation for climate change adaptation and mitigation related to the protection of migrants and persons displaced across international borders because of the sudden-onset and slow-onset adverse effects of climate change.**

Nowadays none of the international cooperation instruments sufficiently covers the climate-induced migration issues. The United Nations General Assembly "New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants" underlines the significance of climate change and natural disasters causing role in migration without provision of tangible actions needed.

In 2013 particular attention was paid to the issue on “displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change” (described in the section on “Loss and Damage” of the COP decision) during the

19th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). International climate community has agreed to create a task force in order to complement and build upon the work of existing bodies and experts with the aim of developing recommendations, and to report on progress thereon in its annual report.

Since there is no international mechanism or institution on these matters, the responsibility for preparing countries for more people in protracted or permanent displacement as a result of environmental change would rely on their recognition.

Possible activities that could be conducted in Georgia are as following:

- Commit the necessary resources, and establish clear responsibilities for “climate refugees” in the country, including planned relocations and resettlements;
- Scale up of medium to long-term efforts to help “climate migrants” to make new homes and integrate in the communities of their locality;
- Develop a method for considering the relevant parameters and assigning weights to the indicators to calculate the climate refugee distribution;
- Establish a monitoring system for identifying disasters solely triggered by climate change, and calculating the number of displaced people without sustainable livelihood and adaptation options to survive in affected areas.
- Call on all relevant international organizations for improved coordination of humanitarian assistance following climate change related catastrophic events, anticipating such to occur with higher frequency and severity. It should be pushed not only for better preparedness and more investment in response capabilities, but also improved coordination in capacity building.