

Environmental Change, Conflict and Human Migration in the Mediterranean: Challenges and Open Issues

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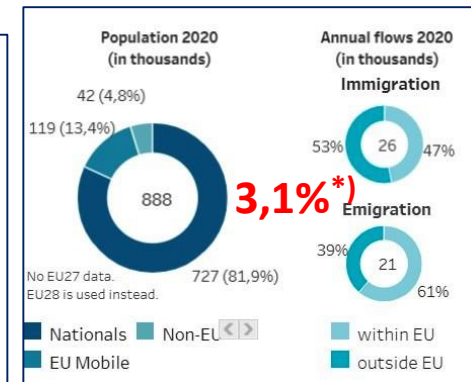
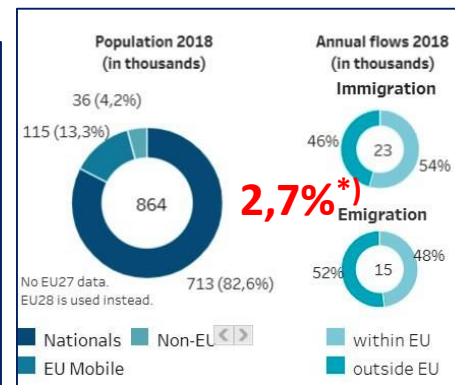
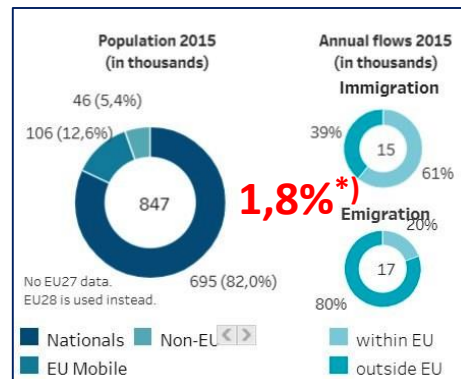
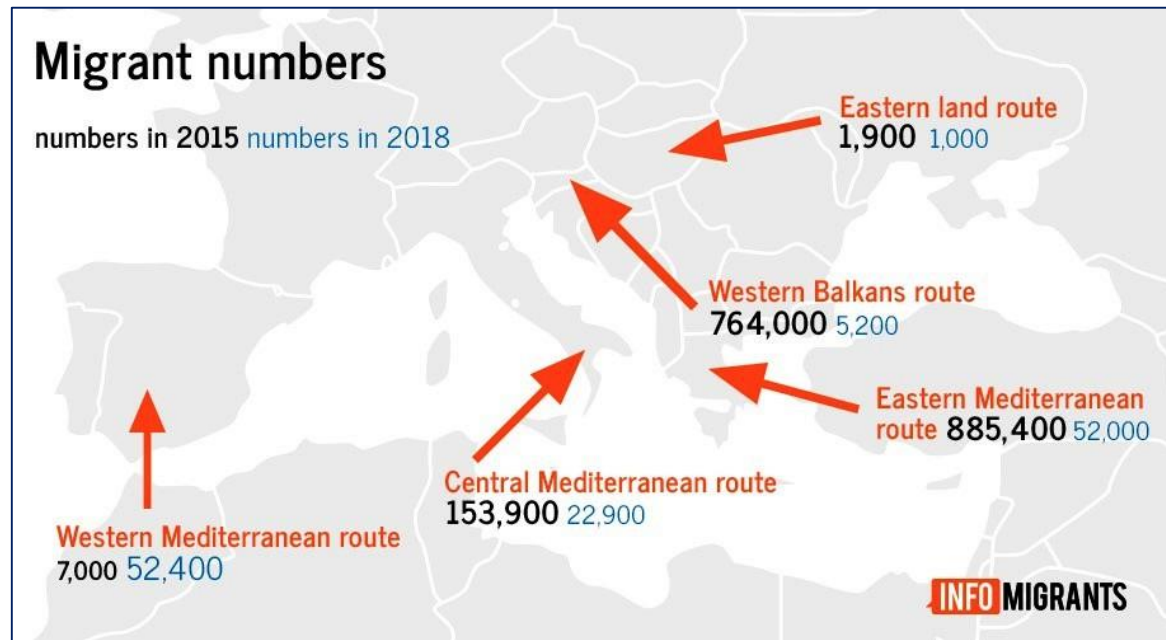
Mediterranean Experts on Climate
and environmental Change

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Introduction/Background

- Despite high past numbers, **internally displaced persons** dominate Mediterranean migration
- Non-EU countries** (Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey) host the majority of migrants
- Climate change** exposure is one of the factors leading to migration
- Immigrants to Cyprus underline the **continued high number migrants** in the Mediterranean
 - 2015: 15 000
 - 2018: 23 000
 - 2020: 26 000

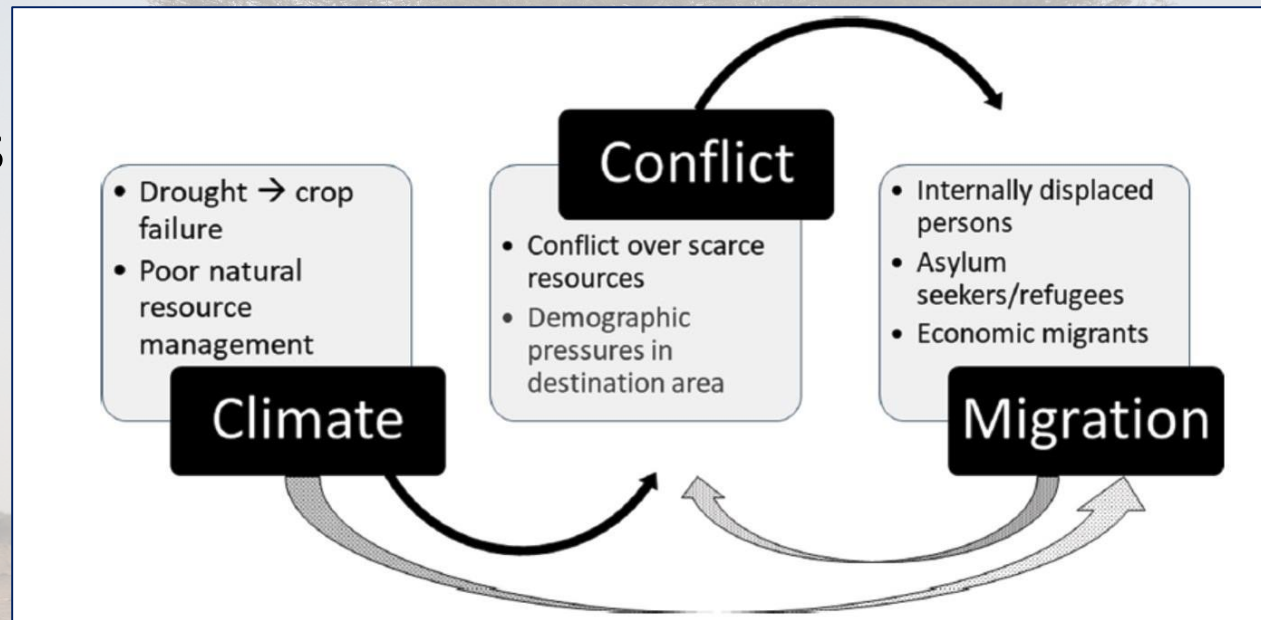


***) = percentage of total population**

<https://futureearth.org/about/who-we-are/international-offices/femrc/>

Climate Change, Conflicts and Migration

- While there is evidence for a **Climate Change-Conflicts-Migration Nexus**, there is no simple causal link
- Climate change has (mostly adverse) consequences for water- and food security
- Competition for natural resources
⇒ **conflicts**
- Conflicts ⇒ **internal or cross-border migration**
- Various **inter-relationships**



Schematic relationships between Climate, Conflicts and Migration;
source: Abel et al. (2019)

Climate Change and Human Livelihood¹⁾

- Impacts of climate change likely to **undermine human livelihoods** (water- and food security)
- **Biodiversity loss** may pose the most immediate and important **threat to human survival**
- **Reduced agricultural productivity** results in severe risks to **food security**
- This will result in **highly elevated food prices** that are unaffordable to poor population groups
- This may cause **inappropriate coping strategies** by threatened communities
- Climate change may also **reduce/inhibit human mobility**

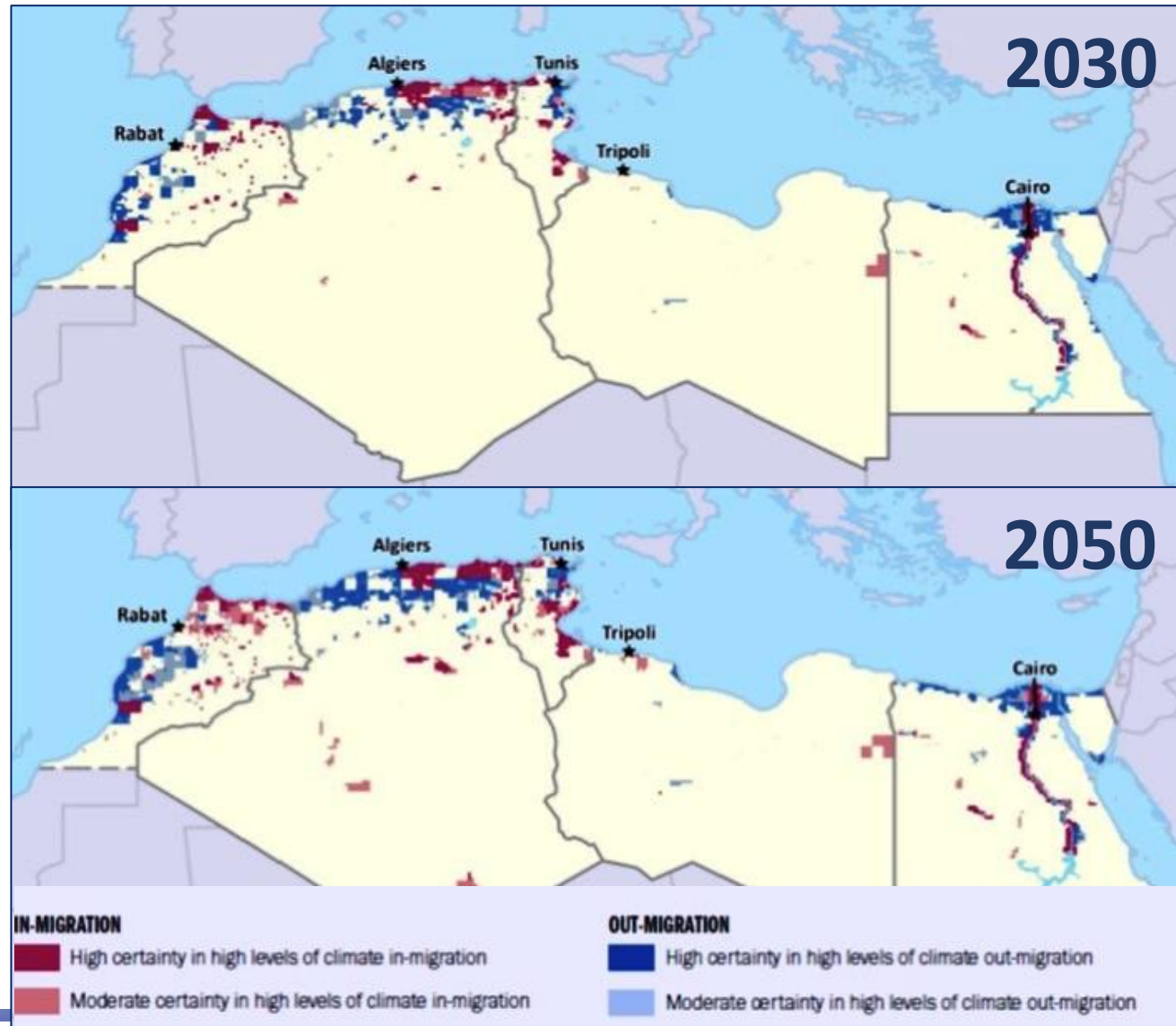
1) Partly derived from J. Vivekananda (2022), pers. comm.

Source: Future of Life Institute; <https://futureoflife.org/2016/07/22/climate-change-is-the-most-urgent-existential-risk/>

Climate Change, Security Risks and Migration

- The apparent increases in out-migrations from North Africa indicate potentially growing migrant flows to the Mediterranean

Hotspots projected to have high levels of climate in-migration and climate out-migration in North Africa, 2030 and 2050; source: Clement et al. (2021) Groundswell Part 2, World Bank, Washington, DC 20433, USA



Additional Obstacles/Drivers¹⁾

- Weak and ineffective governments and national authorities **enhance adverse impacts of climate change**
- **Extreme events**: heat waves, extended droughts, extreme rainfall ⇒ a **particular point in case**
- Additional (often unintended) risks arise from **poorly designed climate and security policies**
- Security risks caused by climate change impacts and conflicts related to **natural resource scarcity** (water) are **exaggerated by weak governance mechanisms and insufficient/inappropriate international agreements**
- Intentional changes in upstream-downstream allocation of river water and lack of appropriate mutual agreements is likely to lead to **extreme risks of conflicts between involved countries**

1) Partly derived from J. Vivekananda (2022), pers. comm.

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MedECC's Special Report

- The *Mediterranean Experts on Environmental and Climate Change* (MedECC) currently prepare a **Special Report on *Environmental Change, Conflict and Human Migration***
- **Key Points/Issues** of the Special report
 - This will be a **synthesis report**; **no new research** envisioned
 - We aim to identify **key global determinants** of migration
 - We also intend to specify **regional/local determinants**
 - We will shed light on the **interactions between determinants** on all levels
 - We will explore the **different perceptions** of societal groups, resulting **vulnerabilities** and their **role for triggering human mobility**

