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Sub Saharan migration flows to Europe in the light of climate change

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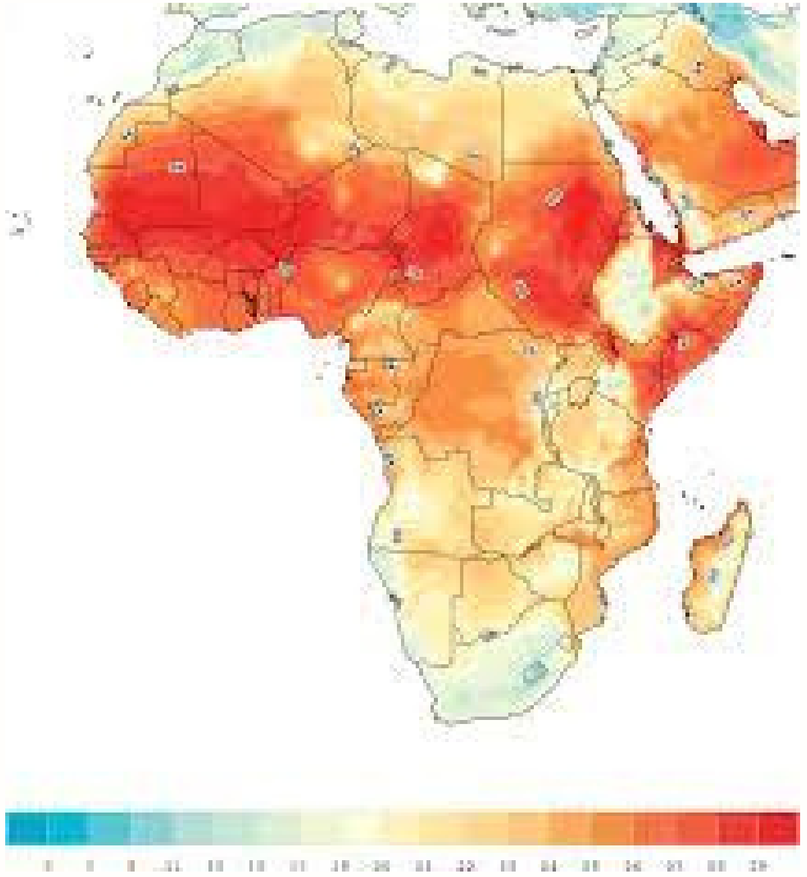
Problem description

- IPCC report: 1.5°C and 2°C will be exceeded during the 21st century
- Climate extremes
- 200 million climate migrants worldwide by 2050

Hotspot: Sub Saharan Africa

- Long periods of climate variability
- Northern Africa may see 19 million climate migrants moving
- Force of migration to Europe



Need to address

Migrant crisis 2015

- 1.3 million migrants
- Policy and practical issues
- Need for long-term strategy

Mental health

- Importance of mental health climate migrants
- Understudied

System thinking

- Interdisciplinary perspective

RQ:

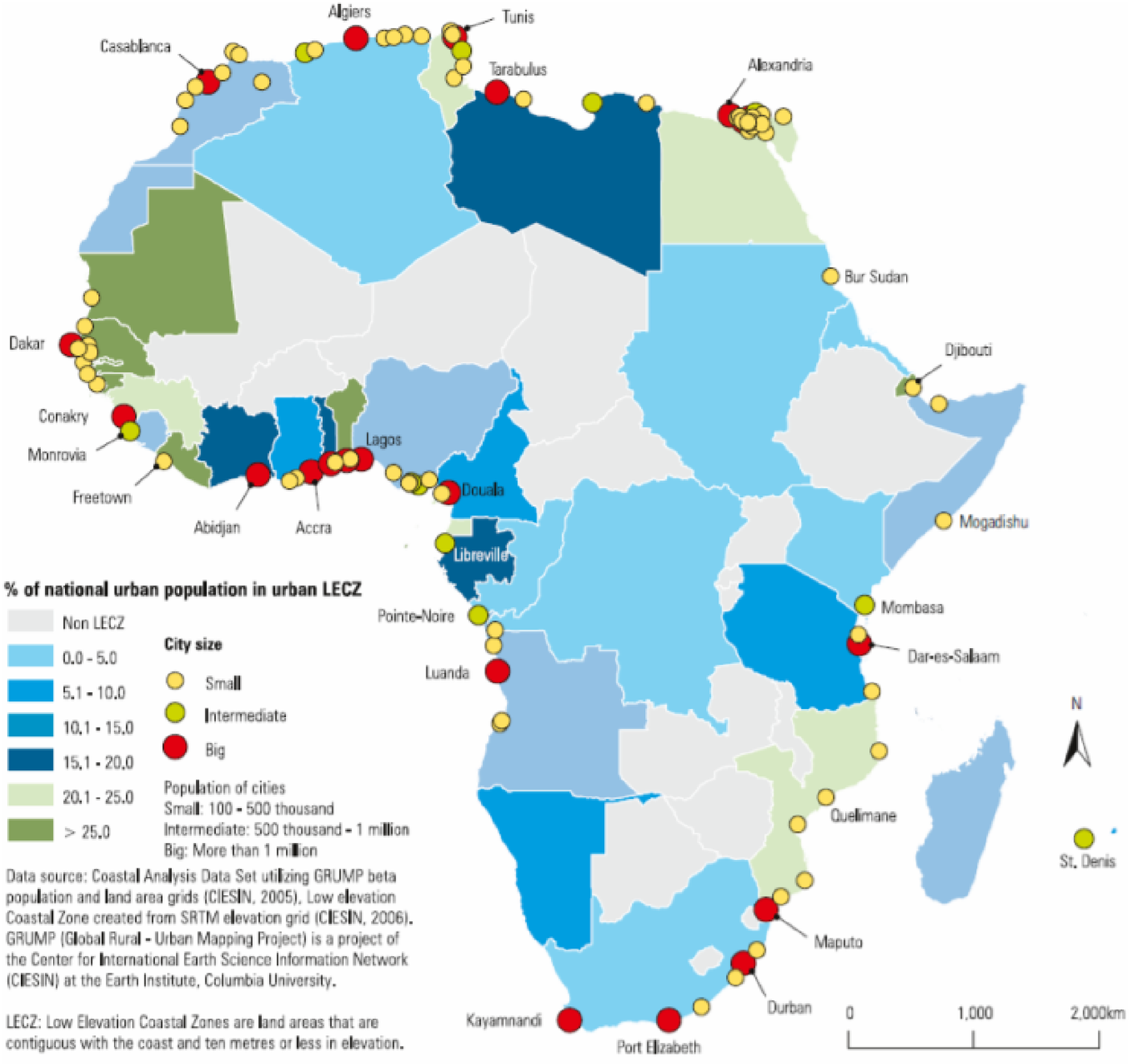
Under what conditions climate change influences the migration flow from Sub-Saharan Africa towards Europe, and to what extent can the EU react more effectively with regards to mental health policies?

Assessment Criteria

- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Useful indicators of the effectivness of policies

The conditions which influence the migration flows from Sub Saharan Africa

- Climactic conditions
  - Global warming increase by 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2100
  - Heat extremes increase in temperature and occurrence
  - Decreased precipitation
  - Increased aridification/desertification
  - Sea-level rise is expected to be 10% higher than the global average
- Socio-Economic conditions
  - Heavy reliance on primary industry
  - Pre-colonial power structures
    - Characterized by asymmetric power structures
- EU Policy design
  - Addresses causes of climate change processes
  - Establishes economic, political, and social stability



Data source: Coastal Analysis Data Set utilizing GRUMP beta population and land area grids (CIESIN, 2005), Low elevation Coastal Zone created from SRTM elevation grid (CIESIN, 2006). GRUMP (Global Rural - Urban Mapping Project) is a project of the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) at the Earth Institute, Columbia University.

LECZ: Low Elevation Coastal Zones are land areas that are contiguous with the coast and ten metres or less in elevation.

All grids 1km resolution.

Policy recommendation I: existing literarure

Case study: European migration crisis of 2015

- High morbidity of mental illnesses
- Low use of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)

Linguistic barriers:
European capitals have shown that only 53% had interpreters available

Stigma:
Mental illness is still a taboo in many countries

System is overcrowded

Policy recommendation I: Policy proposal

Case study: European migration crisis of 2015

- Germany launched a pilot training refugees as psychosocial peer counsellors
- Problem Management Plus (PM+)

Linguistic barriers:
European capitals has shown that only 53% had interpreters available

Stigma:
Mental illness is still a taboo in many countries

System is overcrowded

Policy recommendation II: existing literarure

Case study:

- Lack of credibility of asylum seekers and refugees
- Undefined characteristic of 'vulnerability'

Climate Refugees are not yet recognized by governments

Many EU member states do not provide mental health identification procedures

Not diagnosing mental health disorders can worsen the quality of life

Policy recommendation II: Policy proposal

- PALOMA2, Finland –-> five regional centres with the aim of promulgating knowledge
- PROTECT –-> fill-out a questionnaire to identify mental health conditions
- MSF, Germany –-> counselling programme

Precise identification of climate refugees

Provision of more extended legal protection

Organization of mental health screening processes

Policy recommendation I & II: Assesment

- Mental health is an integral part of the SDGs
- One could assess the effectiveness of the program through the progress made in a multitude of SDGs
- In particular:

THE GLOBAL GOALS

Policy recommendation III: existing literature

- ·No official definition of a climate refugee
- ·1951 Refugee Convention requires political, social, religious, or ethnic persecution
- ·Climate refugees have no legal rights in international laws
- ·Governments have no obligations to accommodate climate refugees
  - Climate displacements falls between policy gaps

Makes refugees more vulnerable when traveling to Europe

Makes it easier for states to avoid their humanitarian obligations

Makes refugees voiceless to choose their country of residence under the Dublin Regulation

Policy recommendation III: Policy proposal

- No national transfer between EU member states for asylum seekers with mental health issues
- European wide legal protection and lobbying for global legal framework on climate displacement and mitigation
- Increased commitment to the enforcement of the rule of law

Stronger national jurisprudence

EU-wide legal framework to encourage global response

Address populist rhethoric and governance through enforced rule of law

Policy recommendation III: Assesment

- SDG 16 indicators:
  - Bribery incidence
  - Internally displaced people (within the EU)
  - Detected victims of human trafficking
- SDG 17 indicators
  - FDI inflows
  - Export of commercial services from developing countries
  - Financial resources to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries

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Policy recommendations

Here we incoorperate case studies, previous literature and the SDGs in order to asses our policy recommendations

Recommendation I: Peer counselling

Proposes to further investigate the use of peer counselling and Problem Management Plus (PM+).

Recommendation II: Early mental health screening

Aims to provide a standard mental health screening at the early stages of the asylum seekers.

Recommendation III: Create legal protection and obligations

Aims to create legal protection for climate refugees, both in the EU and in the international community, to prevent unnecessary mental health damage

Future research and challenges

- Interdisciplinary examination of mental health among refugees
  - Causes, processes, and consequences
  - Flaws and shortcomings are inevitable due to the scope and relative lack of academic research
    - Future research and general discussion is encouraged
- SDG Methodology
  - Use of SDG methodology can miss important details
    - especially with regards to mental health
  - Different methodology is encouraged in future research
- Focus on Sub-Saharan Africa
  - National, regional, and local contexts are also important
  - Future research encouraged to integrate multi-level governance approach

Thank you for your attention!

Are there any questions?

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