

Climate, peace and security under the lenses of mixed movements

Towards inclusive Nature-based Solutions (Nbs) combining humanitarian, peace and development approaches



Inter-Agency Coordination
Platform for Refugees and
Migrants from Venezuela

Subject

Climate change and environmental degradation have a clear impact on peace and security and vice versa. As such, biodiversity issues are closely intertwined with human mobility, including the impact of biodiversity loss in displacement. At the same time, Nature-based Solutions (NbS) can potentially prevent displacement and be used to foster integration between hosting countries' communities and displaced persons /migrants and marginalized groups. While enhancing resilience to climate change and generating social, economic and biological benefits, NbS and cross-cutting environmental solutions could also strengthen prevention and conflict sensitivity in the context of adaptation and resilience.

Goal and target

GBF-T9 GBF-T11, GBF-T21 & GBF-T22

Objectives

- To demonstrate that solutions for displacements and environmental preservation are mutually beneficial and should be further enhanced.
- To promote and socialize local communities' experiences, including forcibly displaced and migrants' networks including the human mobility implications, in the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) at local level.
- To bring to light relevant recommendations for national and regional policies and practices - with a view of further including displaced populations and migrants in relevant frameworks on biodiversity conservation.

Description

The goals and targets set forth in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework represent the minimum global effort required to halt and reverse the loss of nature by 2030. As noted in the COP 15 decision adopting the KM-GBF, the National Biodiversity Action Plans (NBSAPs) play a central role and set the ambition and targets to protect, conserve, and use biodiversity in a sustainable manner as well as ensure equitable distribution of its benefits.

The plans can only be sustainable if parties and other Governments are enabling the participation and the full and effective contributions of women, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities, civil society organizations. Taking into account the unique displacements dynamics within Colombia and in the region, it would seem important to question the role of displaced communities and the nexus between displacement, climate change and peace.

This side-event therefore aims at questioning the nexus between climate change, environmental degradation/biodiversity conservation and displacement in the context of Colombia as well as other experiences from the hemisphere. Evidence shows that climate change and biodiversity degradation, while potential source of conflict, have also a greater impact on marginalized (notably already displaced people) and indigenous groups as well as a disproportionate effects on women and girls, in part related to sexual and gender-based violence associated with both natural hazard- and conflict-related emergencies.

This event will therefore exemplify the role that forcibly displaced and migrants' communities can play in supporting the implementation of nature-based solutions to preserve the environment and the biodiversity. With their unique mandate, as well as local presence and community footprint, humanitarian & development organizations have also a particular role to play, notably to support mitigation measures based on knowledge gathered and produced by local communities, to support human and environmental health. This side event will bring to light operative and policy directions that need to be considered when designing or implementing humanitarian and development strategies responding to mixed movements, as well as NBSAPs.

To do so, this event will review the experiences in incorporating these key approaches based on the expertise of United Nations agencies involved in the regional and national response to mixed movements with the notable participation of locally displaced communities, of national and academic institutions, supported by IOM, UNHCR and UNEP.

Conceived as complementary to other civil society side events as well as regional platforms, this side event will particularly complement the proposal from the IBC on Climate Change and Resilience. It will focus on the lessons learnt from displaced communities and indigenous populations and showcase the implications of biodiversity preservation on human mobility.

Ultimately, communities' feedback, but also findings from humanitarian and academic institutions researching this subject will be woven to crucially enhance the national strategies and action plans.

Methodology

1. Introduction & presentation (10 minutes)

UNHCR - **Florent Marty**, Senior Regional Risk Management and Compliance Adviser

IOM – **Pablo Escribano**, Regional Specialist on Migration, Environment and Climate Change

Keynote speakers: UNEP - **Susan Gardner**, Ecosystem Division Director

2. First Panel discussion: Assessment of the problem (15 minutes, 1 main question to each panelist given 5 minutes to respond per question)

This panel will frame the nexus between climate change, environmental degradation/biodiversity conservation, and displacement in the context of the Latin America and Caribbean regions, drawing on experiences from Colombia and Haiti. Evidence recognizes that climate change and environmental degradation threaten livelihood protection, hampering resilience and sustainable development while acting as a potential source of conflict. It has a broader impact on marginalized (notably already displaced people) and Indigenous groups, as well as a disproportionate effect on women and girls, leading to gender-based violence and gender inequality.

Moderator: IOM – **Pablo Escribano**, Regional Specialist on Migration, Environment and Climate Change

- **Harrinson Cuero**, Adviser to the vice-president of Colombia (5 minutes)

National perspective: What are some key challenges that exist in Colombia in the intersection between human mobility and environmental issues from the perspective of peace with nature agenda?

- **Erika Castro-Buitrago**, Delegate for collective rights and the rights of the environment, Defensoria del Pueblo de Colombia (5 minutes)

What do we know - what does the research tell us - about the nexus between climate and biodiversity, peace and displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean?

- **María Inés Salamanca**, Deputy Representative, UNWOMEN Colombia (5 minutes)

How do gender dynamics influence the nexus between human mobility and biodiversity issues and what are key issues at stake at COP16 in this regard?

- **Q/A** (15 minutes)

Harrinson Cuero: What are some concrete ways in which the biodiversity agenda that will arise from COP16 can integrate human mobility considerations?

Erika Castro-Buitrago: How does academic research progress guarantee that the triple nexus is addressed by policymakers in terms of human rights?

María Inés Salamanca: What do you see as major avenues for synergies between COP16 and COP29 to advance action on gender equality at the intersection between human mobility and environmental issues?

3. Second Panel discussion: Solutions / experiences and practices (15 minutes)

This second panel will explore solutions and innovative approaches to address the nexus between biodiversity and human mobility, looking at concrete ways in which initiatives integrate displaced populations but also how biodiversity conservation actions can help prevent and minimize displacement. In doing so, the panel will look into synergies between biodiversity conservation, human mobility approaches and the Sustainable Development Agenda to promote an enhanced attention to human mobility at COP16.

Moderator: UNHCR - Florent Marty, Senior Regional Risk Management and Compliance Adviser

- **Ronald Toussaint**, Biodiversity Expert and chief of cabinet of MoE (Haiti) (5 minutes)

What was UNEP's strategy to respond to migration & displacements in Haiti caused by the loss of biodiversity and climate change? How was this strategy relevant?

- **Diana Colón**, Community Representative, Turbo Guardians of the Mangrove (5 minutes)

Bases on your experience in Guardians of the Mangrove, why it is important to work for the conservation of biodiversity, and how do you do it at community level?

- **Wanjira Mathai**, Managing Director, Africa and Global Partnerships, World Resources Institute (5 minutes)

What are key opportunities you see in environmental movements in East Africa to address the nexus between human mobility, biodiversity and climate change?

- **Q/A** (15 minutes)

Ronald Toussaint: What are the mutual benefits of applying the use of NBS for biodiversity and community development through the lens of the nexus approach?

Diana Colón: What impact has the Mangrove Guardians project had on biodiversity? From the environmental point of view, but also in terms of local integration, protection, livelihoods for displaced people and host community?

Wanjira Mathai: How can grassroot organizations engage in biodiversity conservation to prevent displacement and integrate people on the move?

4. Words of Conclusion:

Paul Judex Edouarzin Governance Specialist in Haiti, UNEP (5 minutes)

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased understanding of the nexus between climate peace, and security under the lenses of mixed movements and human mobility.
- Enhanced visibility and recognition of Nature-based solutions and other adaptation measures' role in increasing communities' resilience to climate change while fostering integration and generating social, economic and biological benefits for both guests and host population.
- Recognized the need to shift from a short-term emergency approach to a medium-long perspective, going beyond emergency by working on the Humanitarian – Development Nexus for more sustainable and durable solutions, including identifying humanitarian, development and peace actions as results of joint context analysis and planning.
- Recognized the importance to integrate displaced population and marginalized communities into national preparedness plans, into policy and practical recommendations to relevant stakeholders (humanitarian, development and environmental actors at local and regional levels) – towards inclusive NBSAPs.
- Enhanced networking and collaboration among stakeholders.

Materials to be Socialized:

- Planet on the move: Reimagining conservation at the intersection of migration, environmental change, and conflict.
- "Guardians del Mangle" (Guardians of the Mangrove) - an example of how community groups, including forcibly displaced by armed conflicts, are working for the care and recovery of the wildlife and mangroves in Turbo, northern Colombia.
- UNEP City Adapt examples of how adaptation projects in cities affected by climate risks can increase climate resilience while producing benefits for the involved communities.
- UNHCR Strategic Plan for Climate Action (2024-2030).
- IOM Institutional Strategy on Migration, Environment and Climate change 2021 - 2030

Biographies

Moderators and Host Agencies

Florent Marty

Regional Senior Risk Adviser for the Americas and the Caribbean, UNHCR



Florent is the UNHCR Regional coordinator on Climate Action, covering the Americas and the Caribbean from the Regional Office Panama City. He supports UNHCR offices in the region in evidencing the challenges faced by forcibly displaced populations in the Americas and advocating for their inclusion in relevant policy and operational frameworks linked to the environment and climate change nexus. Previously, Florent Marty worked at UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, in Iraq, Jordan, Sudan, Syria, Chad and spearheaded Inter-Agency coordination and appeals processed in Armenia, Slovakia and Chad. Florent holds a master's degree in political science and international relations from La Sorbonne and Science Po Lyon.

Pablo Escribano

Regional Migration, Environment and Climate Change Specialist for the Americas and the Caribbean, IOM



Pablo is the IOM Regional Thematic Specialist on Migration, Environment and Climate Change, covering the Americas and the Caribbean from the Regional Office in San Jose, Costa Rica. He supports IOM offices in the region in addressing the multiple aspects of environmental migration and contributes to giving visibility to the challenges faced in the Americas on the migration, environment and climate change nexus. Previously, Pablo Escribano worked at IOM's Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland and in the IOM Regional Office in Brussels, Belgium. Pablo holds a master's degree in political science and history from Sciences Po Paris.

Keynote Speaker

Susan Gardner

Director, Ecosystems Division, UNEP

Ms. Susan Gardner has three decades of experience in international environmental policy working for both the Mexican and United States governments. Before joining UNEP, she was a senior official in the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration focused on fisheries and natural resource management. Prior to this position, she was Deputy Director of the Office of Science and Technology Cooperation in the U.S. Department of State where Dr. Gardner led efforts on Advancing Women and Girls in Science and established the ASEAN-U.S. Science Prize for Women. Based on her contributions to the Global Mercury Partnership and the Minamata Convention, she was awarded the Gold Medal for Exceptional Services from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



Dr. Gardner also worked for the Mexican Federal Government as an environmental scientist at the Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas del Noroeste where she created the first Ecotoxicology Programme. Her work earned her the distinction of membership in the Mexican Sistema Nacional de Investigadores and board certification as a fellow of the Academy of Toxicological Sciences. Her research generated over 30 publications including a book and book chapters on topics related to natural resource management and sustainable development.

Dr. Gardner is a dual national of Mexico and the United States of America. She has a Doctoral Degree in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences from the University of Washington, a Master's of Science Degree in Toxicology from North Carolina State University, and a Bachelor's Degree in Marine Science from Long Island University. In her current position as UNEP's Ecosystems Division Director, she leads global programmes to support countries to promote nature-based solutions for sustainable development including for food system transformation, climate resilience, biodiversity protection and disaster risk reduction. Her work on combating ocean pollution included leading the process that achieved a global agreement to negotiate a treaty to end plastic pollution.

Panelists

Harrinson Cuero Campaz Advisor to the Colombia Vice president on environmental affairs



Harrinson Cuero Campaz is the advisor to Colombian Vice president Francia Marquez on environmental affairs. He is a black scholar and a member of a black organization in Colombia focused on defending collective rights, such as identity, territory and self-governance. Graduated in ecology, specialized in environmental law and holding a master's degree in territorial planning and environmental management. He has extensive experience in territorial planning, coordinating multi-disciplinary working groups with civil society and local authorities and designing community-based protection strategies. Harrinson has published several articles on the participation of peasant and afro-descendent communities in decision-making.

Erika Castro-Buitrago

Delegate for collective rights and the rights of the environment, Defensoria del Pueblo de Colombia



Expert lawyer in Environmental Law from the Faculty of Jurisprudence of the Universidad del Rosario. PhD in Environment and Land Management (outstanding cum laude). She has been a professor and researcher at the Faculties of Law and Engineering of the University of Medellin and has been a professor of postgraduate courses at the University of Rosario, UPB and the University of the Andes. She was an expert advisor to the IACHR on access to environmental information in the Office of the Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression. She created the environmental law firm Atierra where she worked in the field of corporate environmental law in Antioquia. Author of several books and articles on environmental law.

María Inés Salamanca Vidak

Deputy Representative, UN Women Colombia.



María Inés is a sociologist from the University of Chile, with a master's degree in International Development obtained from Cornell University, United States, and a postgraduate degree in Population and Sustainable Development. Her professional career began at the age of 20 at the United Nations, as a United Nations Volunteer (UNV). María Inés has held key roles as Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Specialist at the UN Women Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean, based in Panama, where she strengthened strategic alliances with various actors in the region in order to promote gender equality and contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

She was also head of the UN Women office in Chile, establishing the first office in the country, where she placed on the public agenda issues such as the elimination of violence against women and girls, as well as promoting the economic autonomy of women and encouraging their leadership and political participation. She has worked as an advisor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile, where she served at the Chilean Mission to the United Nations in New York, following up on matters of the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. Prior to that, she worked at FLACSO Chile and also in civil society organizations.

Ronald Toussaint

Former Minister of Environment and Chief of staff of the current Minister of Environment (Haiti)



Currently acting as the Chief of Cabinet of the Minister of the Environment, Joseph Ronald Toussaint was a former Minister of Environment and is a well-known Haitian specialist in this Sector where for more than 25 years of career, he accumulated a confirmed expertise and a solid experience in various environmental fields such as Environmental Governance, Legal Environmental and Policy Framework, Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity. In addition, he has an excellent knowledge of international environmental governance and very familiar with international negotiation rules prevailing in Environmental Multilateral Treaties mainly the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Accord on Climate, the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol.

Diana Colón

Community Representative, Turbo Guardians of the Mangrove

Diana, born in Belén de Bajirá, Chocó, moved to the Pescador neighborhood in Turbo, Antioquia, at age five. She became a community leader at 20, helping children, youth, and mothers gain independence and guiding young people away from gang conflicts. In 2018, inspired by Secarlos, she joined the “Guardianes del Mangle” initiative to protect the mangrove ecosystem she cherishes. Diana remembers playing among the mangroves as a child and recognizes their importance for her community’s well-being. Today, she leads awareness and clean-up activities, as well as the “Semillero de Arte” (Art Workshop) for children and adults.

“Guardianes del Mangle” (Guardians of the Mangrove) is a community-led group from the Pescador 1 and 2 neighborhoods in Turbo, Colombia, composed of 18 members, including individuals displaced by armed conflict and artisanal fishermen. The group is dedicated to the conservation and restoration of local mangrove ecosystems. Their mission is to protect the environment by planting mangroves, promoting the recovery of biodiversity, and raising awareness about the importance of maintaining a healthy relationship with nature. Additionally, they regularly organize cleaning activities as part of their environmental restoration efforts. These activities include conducting community clean-up days to remove solid waste from the mangrove areas, which helps improve water flow, reduce pollution, and create a healthier ecosystem. Through their work, Guardianes del Mangle aims to improve coastal resilience, safeguard local wildlife, and strengthen the community’s resilience to environmental hazards. The mangroves, which offer crucial environmental protection, are severely threatened by climate change and have been degraded due to the mismatch between the expanding population and inadequate waste management systems. This degradation has led to negative health impacts for residents and limited livelihood opportunities. Therefore, there is an urgent need for solutions to support the integration and independence of displaced communities. UNHCR Colombia is partnering with Pescador 1 and 2 communities through the Guardians of the Mangle, to develop and test new strategies for mangrove restoration, helping to create green economic opportunities and provide a safe environment for displaced and host communities.



Wanjira Mathai

Managing Director, Africa and Global Partnerships, World Resources Institute



Wanjira Mathai spearheads transformative initiatives that promote sustainable economic development. With over two decades of strategic leadership, she has inspired environmental and social change across Africa, particularly among the youth.

As Managing Director for Africa and Global Partnerships at the World Resources Institute (WRI) and Africa adviser to the Bezos Earth Fund (BEF), she is shaping NGO and philanthropic work on the continent, directing attention, research, and funding to helping the most climate-vulnerable places and local communities. She has led the iconic Green Belt Movement (GBM) in Kenya as the former Chair- the organization her mother, Wangari Maathai (2004 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate) founded in 1977- pioneered investment in women entrepreneurs in renewable energy and is driving a movement to restore 100 million hectares of African land. She has raised the prominence and visibility of global issues such as climate change, youth leadership, sustainable energy and landscape restoration.

Wanjira currently serves as Chair of the Wangari Maathai Foundation (WMF), as a Leadership Council member of the Clean Cooking Alliance. She is a member of the High-Level Group of the Africa-Europe Foundation and the European Climate Foundation Advisory Council. Wanjira is one of a few Six Seconds EQ Practitioners in Kenya and was named one of Time's 100 Most Influential African Women in 2018, 2020, 2021 and 2023.

Paul Judex Edouarzin

Governance Specialist in Haiti, UNEP



Paul Judex Edouarzin is the Governance Specialist for UN Environment in Haiti. He has 22 years of professional experience, 16 of them in environment. With expertise in biodiversity, natural resources management and environmental governance, he has experience working at international, regional, national and local levels. He speaks French, Haitian Creole (native languages), Spanish and English. His qualifications include a Master's in Education for science in higher education, with a focus on biology and ecology. Before joining UNEP, he worked as teacher in Haiti, Director of Soils and Ecosystems at the Ministry of Environment and Director of the Rural Centre of Sustainable Development at the WINNER/USAID project.

Specific activities under Judex's responsibilities include, among others, sustainable development, protected areas and biodiversity conservation, support to Haiti's participation in the Caribbean Biological Corridor, governance, climate change adaptation projects and support to the Ministry of Environment to develop capacities for MEA implementation in Haiti.

Agenda

Time (75 mins based)	Activity	Details/participants
5'	Introduction and Presentation of panelists	Florent Marty & Pablo Escribano, UNHCR & IOM
5'	Keynote speakers	Susan Gardner Ecosystem Division Director, UNEP
First Panel (15 mins)	Interactive based on questions / presentation by each Panelist (5 mins each)	Harrison Cuero, Adviser to the vice-president of Colombia. Erika Castro-Buitrago, Delegate for collective rights and the rights of the environment, Defensoria del Pueblo de Colombia María Inés Salamanca, Deputy Representative for Colombia, UNWOMEN
Q/A (15 mins)	Interaction and deeper discussion on the topics presented.	Moderation: Pablo Escribano, IOM
Second round (15 mins)	Interactive based on questions / Presentation by each Panelist (5 mins each)	Ronand Toussaint, Biodiversity Expert and chief of cabinet of MoE (Haiti) Diana Colón, IDP Representative, Turbo Guardians of the Mangrove. Wanjira Mathai, Managing Director, Africa and Global Partnerships, World Resources Institute
Q/A (15 mins)	Interaction and deeper discussion on the topics presented.	Moderation: Florent Marty, UNHCR
Words of conclusion (5 mins)	Integration of lessons learnt / recommendations - way fwd for inclusive NBSAPs	Paul Judex Edouarzin, UNEP

Target Audience:

- National and local governments.
- Displaced Indigenous and community organizations.
- Migrants Women's networks.
- Youth groups.
- International organizations/NGOs.
- Researchers and academics.

Logistics

Date and time: October 28, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm.

Hybrid

Translation provided (youtube channel)

Host Organization

UNHCR/IOM/UNEP (R4V)

Contact Person & Responsible person

Florent Marty – UNHCR