

Lunchbox seminar series

Gold Coast

Climate change and migration in the Maldives: Some lessons for policy makers

Abstract:

In many small island contexts natural disasters and environmental change can combine to overwhelm communal coping capacities, at times triggering ad hoc human migration responses which can be lacking in anticipatory foresight, relevant preparedness, community coordination, and needed funding support. In the foreseeable future on-going urbanisation trends, creeping environmental degradation and progressive climate change can be expected to coalesce in many small island contexts to catalyse human migrations in the 21st Century. This makes forward thinking policy development a critical success factor for equitable migration outcomes, both for migrants and their host communities.

This research examines the linkages between climate change and human movement. Extensive government coordinated inter-atoll and inter-island migrations make the Maldives a fertile location for migration research. Although at present the majority of migration across the Maldives is internal and not (yet) climate change related, useful lessons can be learned from how the government has planned and implemented macro-managed migrations across the archipelagic nation. These lessons highlight the important role of education and may also inform climate change adaptation and related migration responses in Pacific island contexts. This study extends previous research by expressly inviting the participation of migrants and host communities. In soliciting these unique grassroots perspectives this research aims to identify and encourage more anticipative and congenial migration processes and outcomes. A short background video to this research appeared in *The Guardian* on 6 August 2015: "Climate refugees: the communities displaced by global warming" <http://gu.com/p/4ba7t/sbl>

Biography:

Dr Johannes M Luetz is Senior Lecturer, Postgraduate Coordinator and Research Chair at CHC Higher Education in Brisbane, Australia. Prior to joining CHC he was a Lecturer at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney in the School of Social Sciences, where he also earned his Ph.D. in Environmental Policy and Management. He has worked extensively with World Vision International on research projects raising awareness of the growing effects of climate change on poor and vulnerable communities in Asia, Africa and Latin America.



Dr Johannes Luetz
CHC Higher
Education

Friday 19th May 2017
Gold Coast campus
Learning Commons
Seminar Room
G11 3.59
12:00-12:50 pm